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Upcoming Events

Monday, Oct. 11

No School - Native American Day

Tuesday, Oct. 12

12:43 p.m. to 2:43 p.m.: PSAT Pre-Administration
Volleyball at Tiospa Zina (7th/C match at 5 p.m.,
8th/JV at 6 p.m., varsity to follow)
7 p.m.: School Board Meeting

Wednesday, Oct. 13

Elementary School LifeTouch Pictures, 8-11 a.m.
PSAT Testing for sophomores and juniors during
first hour

Thursday, Oct. 14

High School LifeTouch Pictures, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.
3:30 p.m.: Region 1A cross Country Meet in
Webster

4:00 p.m.: Junior High Football Jamboree in Groton

Volleyball hosts Milbank (7th/C match at 6 p.m.,
8th/JV at 6 p.m. with varsity to follow

Friday, Oct. 15

7 p.m.: Football at Sisseton

Saturday, Oct. 16

Oral Interp at Florence
State Soccer in Sioux Falls
JV Volleyball Tourney in Milbank

Starting 10/24/21, you must dial the area code for all calls. This change supports 988 as the new 3-digit code to reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

Help Wanted

Applications will be accepted for skating rink manager and attendants for the City of Groton. Contact City Hall 397-8422 for an application or print one online at <http://city.grotonsd.gov/>. EOE.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.
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United Methodist Church

Groton and Conde

Sunday, October 10, 2021

Conde Worship 9:00 AM
NO Sunday School 10:00 AM
Groton Worship 11:00 AM

Monday, October 11, 2021

PEO - outside group 7:30 PM

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

Bible Study 10:00 AM

Wednesday, October 13, 2021

Community Coffee Hour 9:30 AM
Confirmation Snack Time 3:30 PM
Confirmation 4:00 PM
UMYF 7:00 PM

Sunday, October 17, 2021

Laity Sunday/ Children's Sabbath
Conde Worship 9:00 AM
Sunday School 10:00 AM
UMW Bake Sale 10:00 AM
Groton Worship 11:00 AM
UMW Awards Presentations 11:00 AM

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Groton

Sunday, Oct. 10

9am Worship
10:15 Sunday School

Monday, Oct. 11

6:30am Bible Study

Tuesday, Oct. 12

7pm Church council

Wednesday, Oct. 13

6pm Confirmation
7th & 8th grade
7:30pm Conf. 9th grade

Saturday, Oct. 16

10am Rosewood

Sunday, Oct. 17

9am Worship w/ Communion
10:15 Sunday School
3pm Avantara (Sunday School serving)

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton &

St. Joseph Catholic

Groton and Turton

Weekend Mass Schedule

Saturday 4:30pm Groton
Sunday 8:30am Groton & 11:00am Turton

Weekday

Tues 5:00pm Turton, W-F 8:30am Groton
Sat 10am Newman Center

Confessions:

Sat. 3:45-4:15pm & Sun. 7:45am to 8:15am (G)
Sun. 10:30-10:45am (T)

St. John's Lutheran Church

Groton

Sunday, Oct. 10

8 a.m.: Bible Study
9 a.m.: St. John's
11 a.m.: Zion
9:45 a.m.: Sunday School

Wednesday, Oct. 13

3:45 p.m.: Confirmation

Sunday, Oct. 17

8 a.m.: Bible Study
Worship with Holy Communion
9 a.m.: St. John's
11 a.m.: Zion
10:00 a.m.: Sunday School

To submit your monthly or weekly church calendar, email to
news@grotonsd.net

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Wolves Put Up Season Highs in Win over Winona State

Winona, Minn. – The Northern State University football team tallied their fourth win of the 2021 season, defeating Winona State. The Wolves spoiled the Warrior homecoming, downing WSU for the first time since a 37-34 victory in 1999. Winona State was previously on a 14-game win streak over Northern.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 52, WSU 49

Records: NSU 4-2, WSU 3-3

HOW IT HAPPENED

- Hunter Trautman kicked off the scoring as the clock ticked down in the first quarter, notching a 3-yard rushing score with 2:20 remaining
- Vance Barnes extended the Wolves lead in the second, off a 12-yard pass from Trautman
- Winona State cut the Northern State lead in half with 10:34 remaining in the quarter, however the Wolves receiving front proceeded to break things open
- Dewaylon Ingram put the Wolves up by seven with a 26-yard reception and Dakota Larson notched two short yardage receptions (two and nine yards) to close out the half
- The Warriors scored between the Larson touchdowns and the two teams entered the locker room with Northern holding a 35-14 halftime lead
- WSU opened the quarter with a rushing touchdown of their own at 12:32 and Ingram quickly responded adding his second receiving score of the game; a 72-yarder
- The two teams traded touchdowns to close out the third; a 39-yard Winona State receiving touchdown and 5-yard rushing score from Northern's Brett Brenton
- The Wolves led 49-28 heading into the final 15 minutes of regulation as Winona State looked to mount a comeback
- Winona out-scored Northern 21-3 in the final frame, however a 38-yard field goal by Payton Eue at 7:42 made the difference in the game
- Offensively, NSU recorded a game high 34 first downs, 166 yards rushing, and 418 yards passing
- They averaged 4.5 yards per carry and 13.1 yards per completion, scoring each of the five times they entered the red-zone
- Defensively, the Wolves forced three interceptions, tied their season high of five sacks (for a loss of 32 yards), and held the Warriors to 4-of-14 on third down
- Trautman put together arguably his best game of the season, throwing for 418 yards and five touchdowns with a 72-yard long and 68.1 pass completion percentage
- Brenton rushed for nearly 100 yards and the receiving duo of Ingram and Larson each tallied over 100 yards receiving
- Zach Bohnenkamp, Trey King, Luke Gunderson, Brock Baker, and Luke Choul each recorded a sack on the day, while Hunter Hansen, Chance Olson, and Nate Robinson nabbed the team's three interceptions

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

- Hunter Trautman: 418 yards passing, 32-of-47 passing, 5 touchdowns, 16 yards rushing, 1 rushing touchdown
- Brett Brenton: 98 yards rushing, 8.2 yards per rush, 1 touchdown
- Dewaylon Ingram: 178 yards receiving, 25.4 yards per reception, 2 touchdowns
- Dakota Larson: 112 yards receiving, 10.2 yards per reception, 2 touchdowns
- Chase Teiken: 7 tackles, 1.0 tackle for a loss of 16 yards

UP NEXT

Northern State returns to Dacotah Bank Stadium next Saturday for a 6 p.m. contest versus Minot State. Saturday's match-up is the Annual Blackout Cancer game sponsored by Sanford Health. For a full list of game day promotions [CLICK HERE](#). Fans are also reminded that all game day information and protocols are posted on the Dacotah Bank Stadium homepage.

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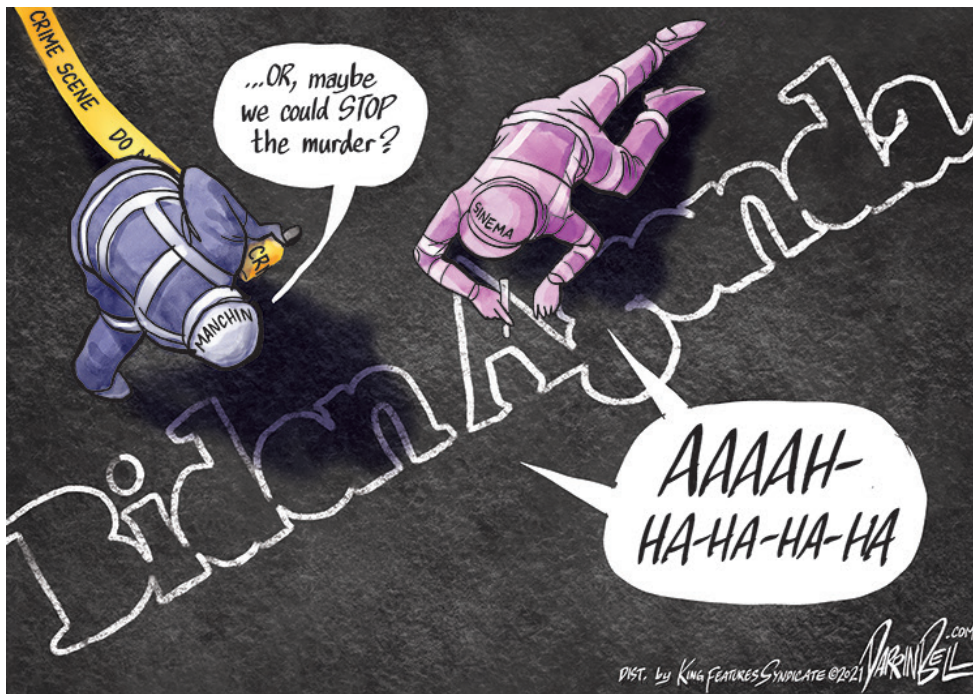
THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

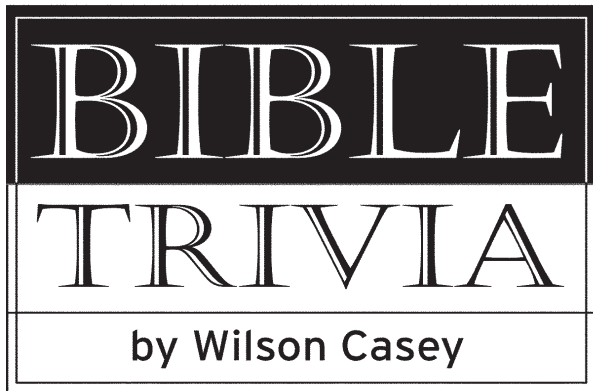


*“Even the stork in the heavens
knows her appointed times;
and the turtledove,
the swift,
and the swallow
observe the time of their coming.
But My people do not know
the judgment of the Lord.*

 JEREMIAH 8:7

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1. Is the book of 1 Timothy in the Old Testament or New Testament or neither?

2. When the 7th seal was opened, there was silence in heaven for ...? *1 breath, Half an hour, Full day, 3 days*

3. What region of 10 cities did Jesus mention in His ministry? *Pentateuch, Trinidad, Lilliom, Decapolis*

4. From 1 Kings 19, how many days and nights did Elijah fast? *7, 21, 40, 70*

5. Muppim, Huppim and Ard were all whose sons? *Gabriel, Michael, Benjamin, Paul*

6. Who was the first king of Israel? *David, Benjamin, Saul, Abraham*

ANSWERS: 1) New; 2) Half an hour; 3) Decapolis; 4) 40; 5) Benjamin; 6) Saul

“Test Your Bible Knowledge,” a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online.

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by Healthy Exchanges

Chunky Tomato Soup

Soups have always been one of my favorite foods, and autumn has always been my favorite season. When you combine them, magic happens! Stir up this “pot of pleasure” on a cool fall night and let it warm you up with pleasure-pleasing taste!

- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 3/4 cups (one 14 1/2-ounce can) beef broth
- 1 (10 3/4-ounce) can reduced-fat tomato soup
- 1 teaspoon Italian Seasoning
- 1 1/2 cups peeled and chopped fresh tomatoes
- 1 1/2 cups chopped, unpeeled zucchini

1. In a medium saucepan sprayed with olive oil-flavored cooking spray, saute onion for 6 minutes. Add beef broth, tomato soup and Italian seasoning. Mix well to combine.

2. Stir in tomato and zucchini. Bring mixture to a boil. Lower heat and simmer for 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender, stirring often. Serves 4 (1 1/4 cups each).

* Each serving equals: 94 calories, 2g fat, 3g protein, 16g carb., 604mg sodium, 2g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 2 Vegetable, 1 Starch.

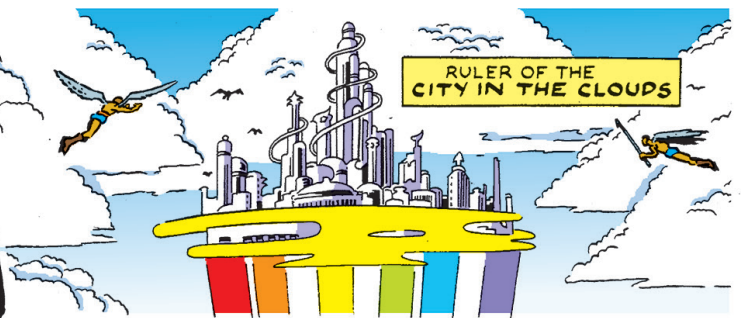
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Character Profile:
Vultan



RULER OF THE
CITY IN THE CLOUDS

FLASH GORDON

By JIM KEEFE

10-3

HAVING DESTROYED THE LIZARD-MEN'S LAIR, FLASH AND HIS CREW MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR DEPARTURE.

VULTAN, IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU UP AND AROUND AGAIN!

BELIEVE ME, I'LL BE IN BETTER SPIRITS ONCE WE'RE SAFELY AWAY FROM HERE.

THE STORM IS WEAKENING. WE SHOULD LEAVE NOW BEFORE IT'S FEEDING TIME FOR ANY MORE FLYING CARNOSAURS.

EVERYONE TO THEIR STATIONS.

TENGSI!..?



WHAT IS IT, WHAT'S WRONG?

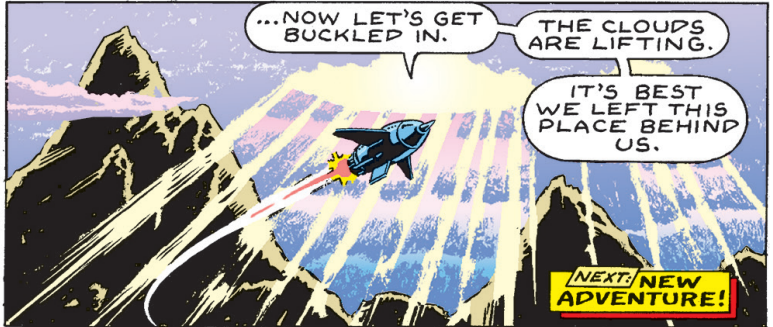
DO YOU SEE ANOTHER OMEN?

NO...NOTHING'S WRONG.

IT'S JUST...A LONG TIME AGO THOSE DEMONS TOOK AWAY SOMEONE VERY CLOSE TO ME.

NOW THAT THEY'VE BEEN DEFEATED...I DON'T KNOW, I FEEL...

DEFEATED THANKS TO YOU, MAYBE THAT'S HELPED BALANCE THE SCALES...



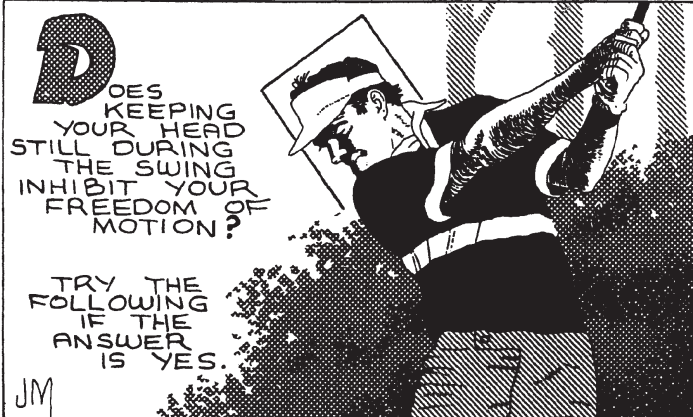
...NOW LET'S GET BUCKLED IN.

THE CLOUDS ARE LIFTING.

IT'S BEST WE LEFT THIS PLACE BEHIND US.

NEXT: NEW ADVENTURE!

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



D OES KEEPING YOUR HEAD STILL DURING THE SWING INHIBIT YOUR FREEDOM OF MOTION?

TRY THE FOLLOWING IF THE ANSWER IS YES.

JM



FORGET THE THOUGHTS "HEAD STILL" OR "HEAD DOWN," AND INSTEAD THINK "HEAD BACK." TO HELP PROMOTE THE CORRECT ACTION AS WELL AS THE IMAGE, SET YOUR HEAD AT ADDRESS JUST BEHIND AN IMAGINARY VERTICAL LINE EXTENDING UP FROM THE BALL. THEN KEEP IT THERE THROUGH IMPACT.

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Extreme Flatulence Is Noxious, Embarrassing

DEAR DR. ROACH: In 2008, I had a partial sigmoid colectomy. Since then, have had no recurrence of diverticulitis. The surgeon recommended that not use laxatives, but rather take fiber gummies to keep things moving easily in addition to drinking lots of fluids.

I am doing that, but my flatulence could power all the homes in a small city. It is difficult to control outbursts, which are noxious and embarrassing in the extreme. Is there any other way to avoid hard stools, straining and other unhealthy gastrointestinal situations? -- J.S.

ANSWER: I am sorry for your embarrassment, but I agree with the surgeon that getting fiber and plenty of water is the safest and best way to prevent problems. However, maybe it isn't just the fiber, but your diet that is at least partially responsible for the increased gas. You could try reducing your intake of foods in the cabbage family, onions, beans, corn and other gas-producers. Avoid carbonated beverages and any beverage containing artificial sweeteners such as sorbitol or xylitol. In some people, changing the bacteria that live in your gut (your microbiome) through probiotic supplements and a change of diet can reduce the amount of gas produced.

There are other types of fiber supplements besides fiber gummies that might be better tolerated, or you can get fiber from food.

DEAR DR. ROACH: For 58 years, I've been walking around with a visible tracheostomy scar on my throat, leading the curious to ask: "Yuck. What happened there?" My answers have changed over the years, but were usually something like: "I was 4. A doctor had to cut my throat open so I could breathe." But now, I don't wait for the question. Lately, my scar has helped me do some show-and-tell about what causes this near-fatal closing of the windpipe and why doctors don't see kids dying from Haemophilus influenzae anymore. Could you elaborate? -- M.A.P.

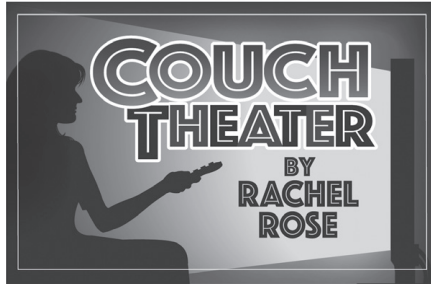
ANSWER: Haemophilus influenzae (often called H. flu or Hib), despite its name, is not the cause of influenza (the "flu" is caused by a virus). H. flu is a species of bacteria that can cause meningitis, pneumonia and the condition you had, epiglottitis -- an inflammation of the epiglottis, the structure that closes your trachea when you swallow.

Before the vaccine for Hib became available, epiglottitis was a feared and not uncommon problem. Back then, doctors were exhaustively taught how to rapidly recognize the life-threatening H. flu epiglottitis so that children could be treated quickly, which sometimes meant an emergency tracheostomy (a direct hole through the throat into the windpipe to allow breathing). That is the procedure that caused the scar on your neck. Despite treatment, 3% to 6% of cases of invasive H. flu were fatal. Your scar may be yucky, but you are lucky to have survived.

During the time I was in medical school, routine vaccination for H. flu became widespread, and the disease essentially went away. History records a 99% drop in this infection. I've only ever seen one case. Essentially the only people at risk for this disease now are those who are deliberately unvaccinated.

Your story is important: Many people feel that the diseases we vaccinate against are "no big deal," but thousands of kids per year died of conditions we thankfully almost never see today. Without continued vaccination, those days will come back.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.



Halloween Kills (R) — Available on streaming the same day it opens in theaters, “Halloween Kills” sustains our craving for Jamie Lee Curtis slasher sequels. Curtis once again brings the screams as Laurie Strode, and now with her daughter (played by Judy Greer) and granddaughter in tow, she’s still trying to fend off killer Michael Myers. By this point, Myers should be in a nursing home, but he’s still managing to free himself from burning basement cages in order to terrorize the masses. This time, though, he faces a huge mob of survivors of his previous attacks who are determined to definitively take him down for real. Available Oct. 15. (Peacock)

I Know What You Did Last Summer — A Prime original, this series is based on the 1997 movie, which was based on the 1973 young adult novel of the same name. In it, a group of teens hit and kill a person while driving on a dark road at night. Leaving the body behind, they vow to each other to keep it a secret. But guilt and fear bubble up after anonymous notes start appearing, claiming knowledge of their crime. The ‘90s movie was gorier than the novel, but this series claims to hold truer to the original story, which was propelled more by the psychological stresses and interpersonal relationships than revenge violence. Available Oct. 15. (Prime Video)

The Trip — You know those horror flicks where a couple goes away for a nice quiet getaway in a woodsy cabin, only to encounter some psycho who tortures and slowly kills them? This isn’t one of those flicks. A couple does go off on a weekend getaway in a woodsy cabin, but the twist is that they each go there fully intending to

kill the other. A Netflix original, “I Onde Dager” is a Norwegian action thriller about a highly dysfunctional couple who also are really inept at successful combat. Depending on your point of view, you’ll either find it hysterical or really sad. Subtitled for those of you who don’t speak Swedish and Norwegian. (Netflix)

Guilty Party — If you can tear your thoughts away from the fact that Kate Beckinsale continues to



Ryan Green/Universal Pictures

Jamie Lee Curtis returns in “Halloween Kills”

look remarkably more gorgeous the older she gets, this new series has an intriguing plot. Beckinsale plays a reporter who has fallen from grace, but finds a redemption story to throw herself into, despite doubts from her colleagues regarding her motivations. The imprisoned woman whose story she tries to tell has suspicions, too. Throw in some Western gun smugglers, marriage woes and past secrets, and there are enough side stories for two more seasons. (Paramount+)

Phoebe Robinson: Sorry, Harriet Tubman — The writer/actress/comedian’s debut comedy special was filmed soon after the country came out of pandemic lockdown, and as such many of the jokes center on all things quarantine. We’re all tired of living that way, and frankly the jokes about it aren’t that inspired. But when Robinson delves into other socially relevant topics like race/gender/politics, the pace picks up and jokes are fresher. (HBOMax)

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1. What was AC/DC's first Top 40 single?
2. Who was the first to release "Saving All My Love for You"?
3. Who was the 1973 song "You're So Vain" written about?
4. Which Elton John album was originally titled "Vodka and Tonics"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "I gotta take a little time, A little time to think things over."

Answers

1. "You Shook Me All Night Long," in 1980. There's been debate about who actually wrote the song. The girlfriend of Bon Scott, who died that year, claims to have his old notebook of lyrics, with parts of this song written down long in advance. Others have said the

same thing. Yet Scott wasn't credited.

2. The first were Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis Jr. in 1978. Whitney Houston followed with a cover in 1985.

3. Writer and singer Carly Simon revealed in 2015 that the second verse was about actor Warren Beatty. The other verses were about other men.

4. "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road," in 1973.

5. "I Want to Know What Love Is," by Foreigner, in 1984. The song topped charts around the world and has since been covered by numerous others, including Mariah Carey and Wynonna Judd.

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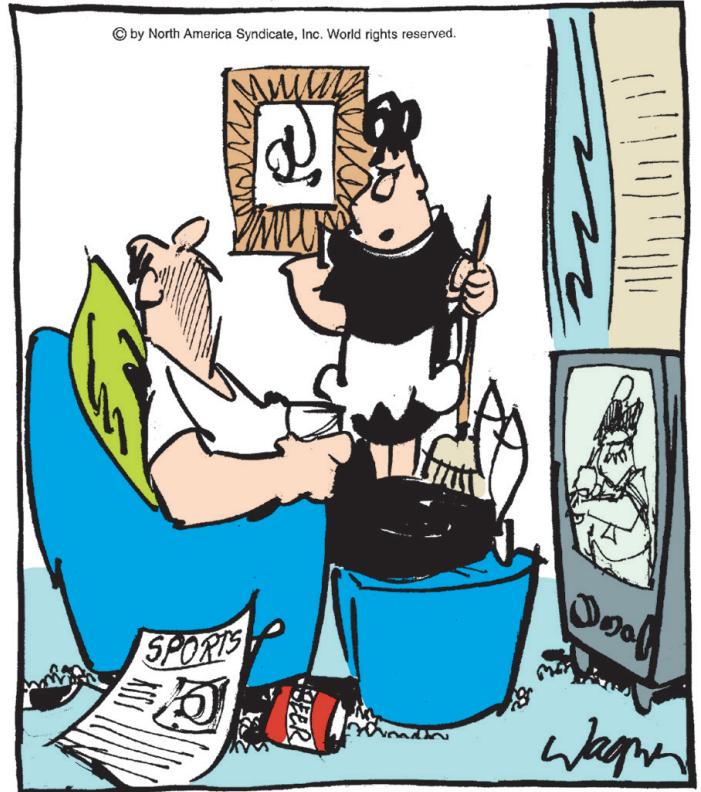
Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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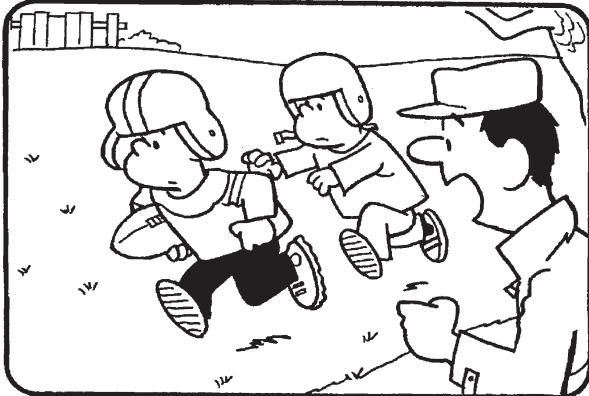
GRIN and BEAR IT by Wagner



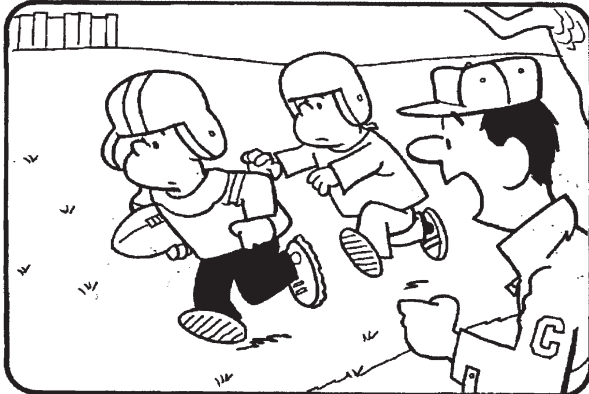
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Hedge is missing. 2. Cap is different. 3. Strap is missing. 4. Fence is different. 5. Letter is added. 6. Leg is moved.



- Update window treatments to compensate for dropping temperatures. Trade your sheers for sturdy, draft-blocking panels.

- To easily get keys on a keychain, use a staple remover to create an opening to slip the keys on. It is very effective and will keep you from getting frustrated.

- When hammering a nail, try this save-your-finger trick: Use a clothespin to hold the nail steady, and then use your hammer to drive it in. Hammering into the wall? Push the nail through a strip of cardboard, and then hold the cardboard over the right spot. No more banged-up fingers or thumbs!

- “At a party, someone spilled a cup of red wine on one of my throw pillows. I love the pillow, since it is just the right size and really soft, but I could not get the stain out. So I cov-

ered it with a new fabric. I ended up doing all the assorted pillows in the same fabric, and it made a big change in the room. I wish I had done it sooner.” —*I.F. in Pennsylvania*

- Bringing some plants indoors? Use styrofoam packing peanuts in the bottom of pots when planting. They aren’t as heavy as rocks, but they do just as good a job. It makes the pots easier to move around should you need to.

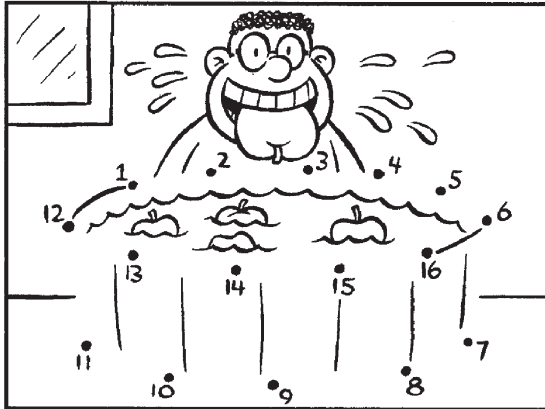
- “For easy-cleanup pancakes, use a turkey baster to ‘squirt’ the batter in the griddle or skillet. No drips, and it usually results in a pretty good circle, too!” —*A.J. in Florida*

Send your tips to Now Here’s a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



IT'S CRUNCH TIME!

Here at Aunt Hattie's Apple Mill you can find anything that's made from apples. Listed below are the names of five apple varieties and five apple desserts. To make a game of it, we've scrambled the letters in each word. Unscramble them, in apple-pie order, in under 5 minutes.

TYPES OF APPLES

1. Smhocntni
2. More
3. Nipswea
4. Nnajhtoa
5. Lorncdat

APPLE DESSERTS

6. Boclbre
7. Numgdislp
8. Rsltedu
9. Wponadyd
10. Leapspecua

1. McIntosh, 2. Rome, 3. Winesap, 4. Jonathan, 5. Cortland, 6. Cobbler, 7. Dumplings, 8. Strudel, 9. Pandowdy, 10. Applesauce.

BOBBIN' ALONG! Connect the dots to complete the harvest-game picture. Also, why did the jelly roll?

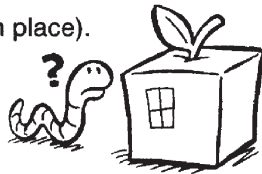
EGGTRAORDINARY! Farmer Brown owns a peacock that wandered over to Farmer Jones's place and laid an egg in his back yard. Who owns the egg, Farmer Brown or Farmer Jones?



No one. Peacocks are male peafowls and do not lay eggs.

A SQUARE APPLE! Now you've seen everything! To solve this word-square you must find the four five-letter words that match the definitions below. All words must read the same both across and down.

1. Firm, edible fruit (Apple, in place).
2. Where people vote.
3. Earnest requests.
4. South American animal.
5. Short literary composition.



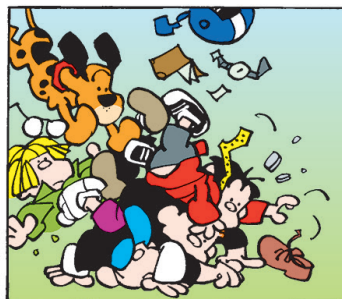
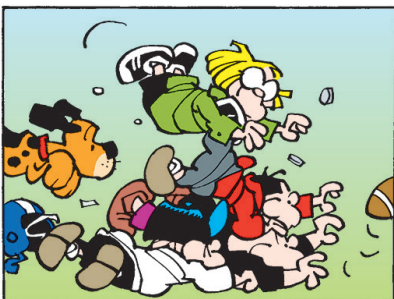
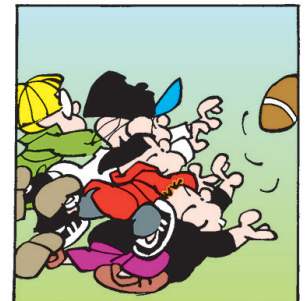
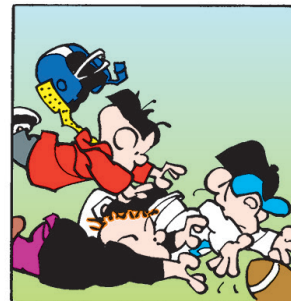
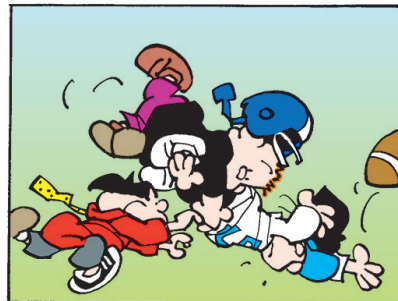
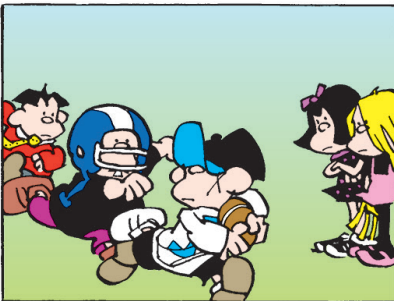
1. Apple, 2. Polls, 3. Pleas, 4. Llama, 5. Essay.

1	A	2	P	3	P	4	L	5	E
2	P								
3	P								
4	L								
5	E								

Illustrated by David Coulson

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Russian range
- 6 First lady before Michelle
- 11 Salem's state
- 12 Cancels
- 14 Mexican revolutionary
- 15 "Are you happy I'm back?"
- 16 Low digit
- 17 Omits
- 19 Soak (up)
- 20 1492 vessel
- 22 Rock's Brian
- 23 Spanish ayes
- 24 Devour
- 26 Religious doctrines
- 28 — Moines

	1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	
11							12					13
14							15					
16				17		18				19		
20			21		22				23			
24				25		26		27				
			28		29		30					
31	32	33				34		35		36	37	38
39					40		41		42			
43				44				45		46		
47			48				49		50			
51							52					
	53						54					

- 30 Actress Long
- 31 Fairly shared
- 35 Snares
- 39 "— Smile Be Your Umbrella"
- 40 Director Howard
- 42 Half a sextet
- 43 Egg (Pref.)
- 44 Pale purple
- 46 Club —
- 47 "New World Symphony" composer
- 49 Recital piece
- 51 Bagel choice

- 52 Handsome guy
- 53 Hinder
- 54 Classical language
- 7 Black birds
- 8 Young — (tots)
- 9 Putin's land
- 10 Nearly
- 11 Ultraviolet filter
- 13 Old photo tint
- 18 Ky. neighbor
- 21 Actress McDonald of "Private Practice"
- 23 Brainy
- 25 Pod dweller
- 27 "Shoo!"
- 29 Picket-line
- participant
- 31 Trudges
- 32 Gunned, as an engine
- 33 Idle
- 34 "You've got mail" co.
- 36 Designer Giorgio
- 37 Bakery pan
- 38 Fizzy drinks
- 41 Twangy
- 44 Hobbling
- 45 Musical finale
- 48 Squealer
- 50 "Kidding!"

DOWN

- 1 Muse of astronomy
- 2 Show contribution
- 3 Khan title
- 4 Used-car sites
- 5 Plumber's tool
- 6 Spoof

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— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

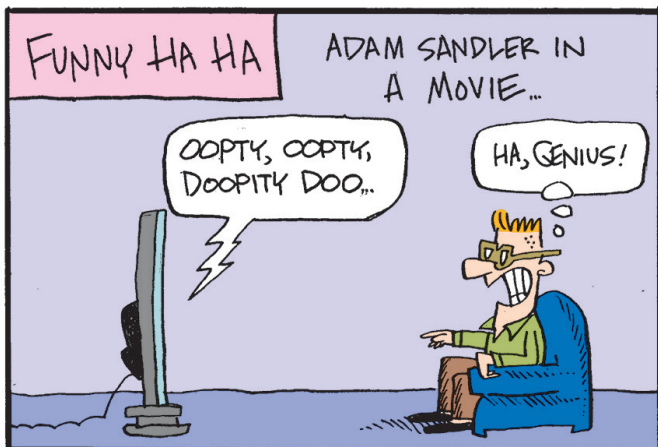
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LAFF - A - DAY

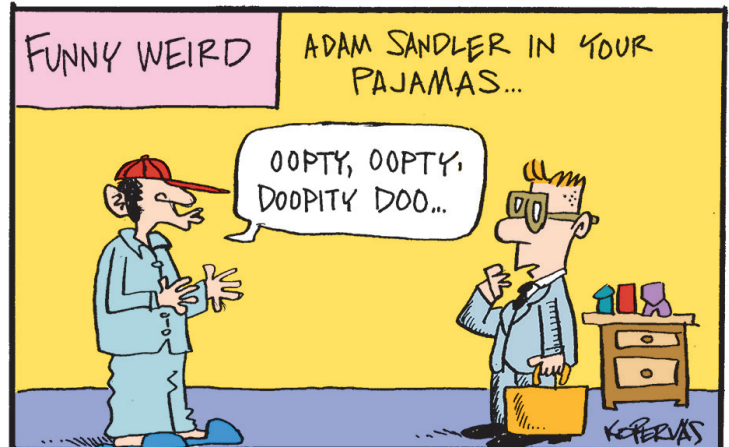


“Are you mad at me about something, Mr. Bryant? You haven’t delivered any mail to me in weeks.”

Out on a Limb



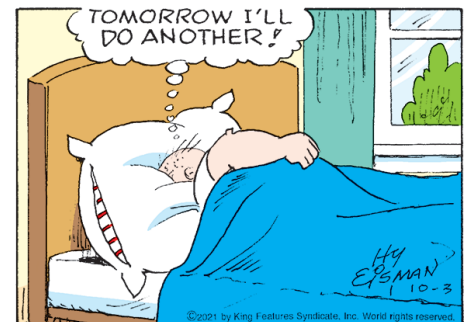
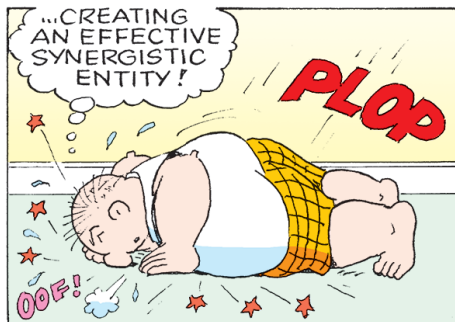
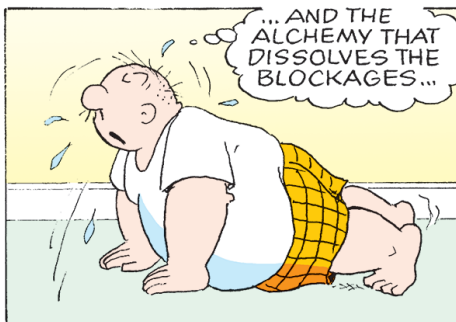
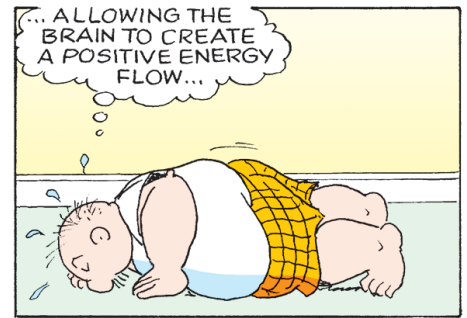
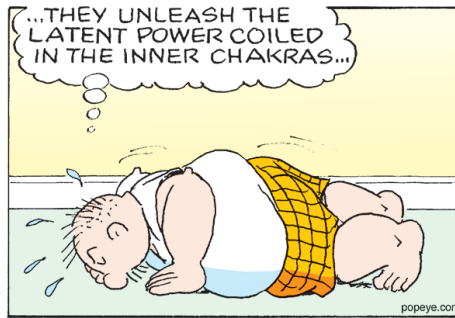
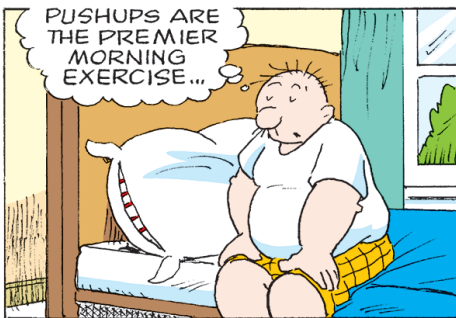
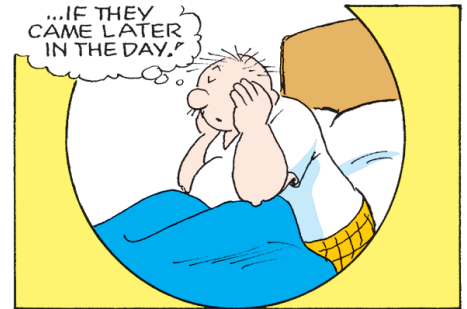
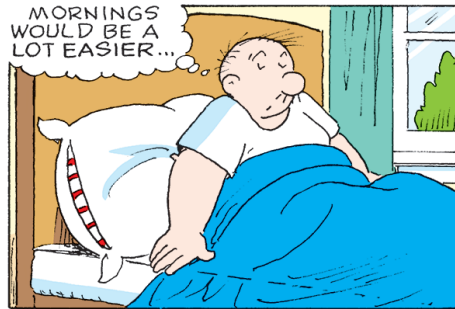
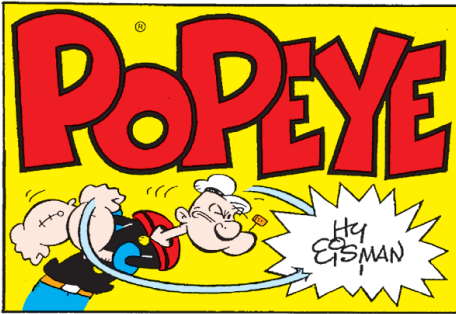
by Gary Kopervas



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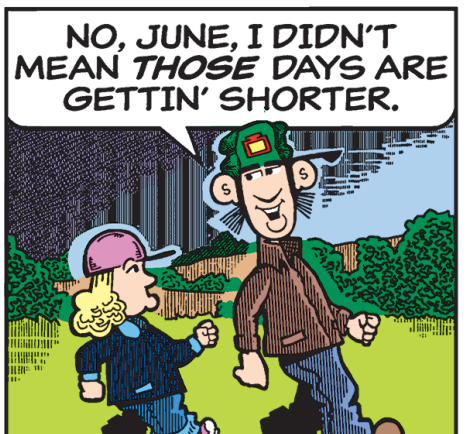
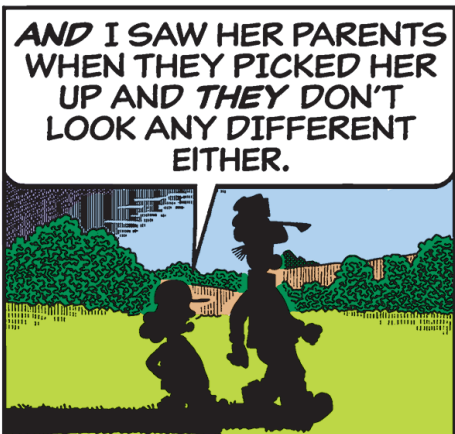
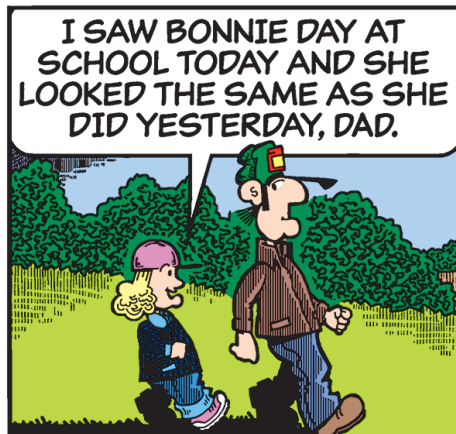
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R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



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Hal Foster's
Prince Valiant
BY GIANNI AND SCHULTZ

LOVE IS IN THE AIR—OR, RATHER, THE STEW. HAVING PARTAKEN OF THE "BEST VENISON EVER," VAL AND ALETA HAVE WANDERED OFF. GAWAIN AND BOANN HAVE COUPLED UP, AND PRUDENCE BECOMES UNNATURALLY FRISKY WITH IG.



ALTHOUGH HE SHOULD BE OVERJOYED WITH ATTENTION FROM THE GIRL, IG IS A PRACTICAL SORT—AND SOMETHING DOES NOT ADD UP.

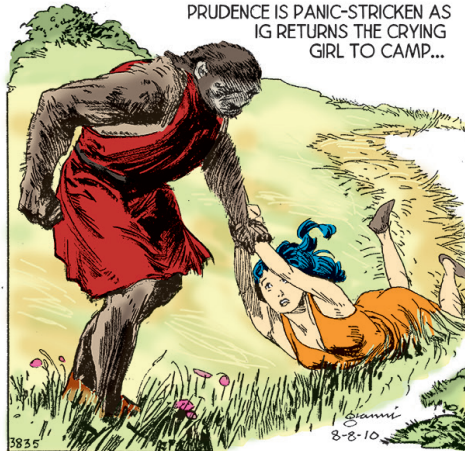


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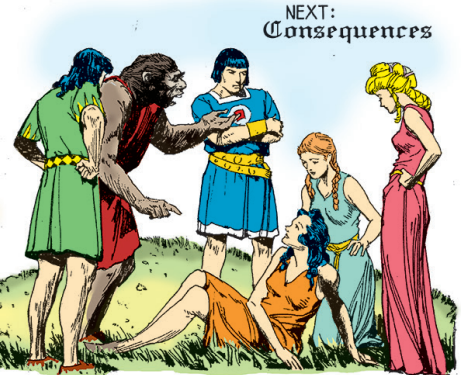
"PRUDENCE—I KNOW YOU TOOK MAGIC ELIXIR FROM THUATHA SURGEON! NOW EVERYONE ACTING STRANGE AFTER EATING STEW!"



PRUDENCE IS PANIC-STRICKEN AS IG RETURNS THE CRYING GIRL TO CAMP...



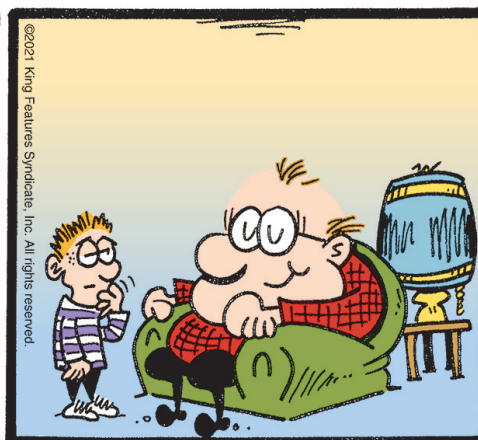
... AND SOBERS EVERYONE WITH HER STORY BEHIND THEIR REJUVENATION. VAL STRUGGLES FOR GRAVITY: "GIRL, YOUR FOOLISHNESS HAS MADE US ALL GUILTY..."



NEXT:
Consequences

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Do We Really Need a Booster Shot?

Depending on when we went for the COVID vaccine, we could be eligible for the booster now ... or not. Elderly seniors, as well as those in nursing homes and the immunocompromised, were first in line early in the year. The rest of us straggled in over the next several months. At this point, it's unknown whether there should be a six- or eight-month wait before the booster.

The Pfizer booster (called Comirnaty) is now available to those 65 and older and some others depending on risk and medical conditions. At this writing, Moderna is asking for authorization, and there is no booster yet for the J&J vaccine.

Do we actually need a booster? We're all wondering (my pharmacist says half of their calls are about boosters), and the answers are a mixed bag.

A pulmonary physician at a major university hospital said if we're under 65 and relatively healthy, no, we don't need one.

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services says that the vaccines we already received will start to wear off, so yes, we should get the booster, starting with seniors and nursing-home residents.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is calling for booster shots only for the immunocompromised, but not others.

The World Health Organization is calling for a moratorium on shots until poor countries get theirs.

While we wait for real answers, keep your vaccine record card where you can find it. You'll need it, should you decide to get a booster.

What am I going to do? I'm going to stall. I'm going to wait to see how the booster plays out. With the highly contagious Delta variant being such a menace right now, I'd like to see if perhaps that's going to be added to the booster vaccine.

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1. Who holds the NHL career record for major fighting penalties with 333?

2. At the 2021 European Beach Handball Championships, what violation caused members of Norway's women's beach handball team to be fined by the European Handball Federation?

3. What is the name of the San Francisco 49ers' gold-miner mascot?

4. In 2006, the sports TV channel known as Outdoor Life Network (OLN) became rebranded as what?

5. Actor Mark Harmon ("NCIS") was the starting quarterback for what college football team from 1973-74?

6. In 1981, what Chicago Cubs infielder dubiously achieved the "anti-Triple Crown" by having the lowest number among qualified batters in average, RBI and home runs?

7. What is the name of the Old Line



State college football rivalry series between the University of Maryland Terrapins and the Navy Midshipmen?

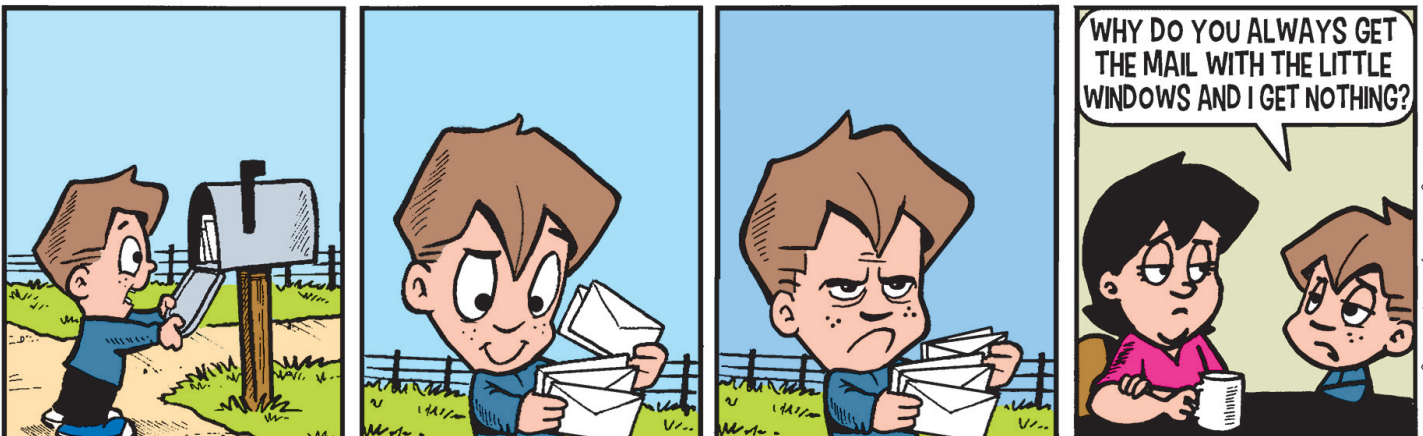
Answers

1. Tie Domi.
2. Wearing shorts instead of bikini bottoms.
3. Sourdough Sam.
4. Versus.
5. The UCLA Bruins.
6. Ivan DeJesus (.194 BA, 13 RBI, 0 HR).
7. The Crab Bowl Classic.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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Ticks Plague This Playful Bulldog

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I don't get it. My bulldog "Chester" was out in the yard with me on a cool morning while I raked the first leaves of fall. When he came in, he had four ticks around his neck! They were hungry, too. I pulled the ticks off, but every time he goes outside now, he has one or more ticks burrowing into his fur. I thought cool weather causes ticks and fleas to die off. What's happening? — *Burt G., Manchester, Vermont*

DEAR BURT: Believe it or not, tick (and flea) activity can increase in early fall. Temperatures are still warm enough for these pests to thrive, especially under fallen leaves and in high grass. And they're always hungry, so they'll latch onto a warm body as soon as they get the opportunity.

You're doing exactly the right thing to combat ticks. As soon as Chester comes inside, you're checking his coat for ticks and removing them as soon as you see them. And you're raking the leaves in the yard regularly so that they don't build up.

Here's a few more things you can do that may reduce the number of ticks in your yard:

— Keep the grass mowed right up until the first hard frost.

— Cut back tall grasses and underbrush on your property.

— Move woodpiles away from the house.

— Don't let Chester roll in the leaf piles, and block his access to untamed areas of brush or tall grasses.

— Use a flea-and-tick- prevention collar or treatment on Chester. Talk to his veterinarian about the best product to use.

— If heavy tick infestation doesn't abate, consider treating your yard with a flea-and-tick spray made for this purpose.

Send your tips, questions or comments to ask@pawscorner.com.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

* Bob Marley gave a songwriter credit on "No Woman, No Cry" to his friend Vincent Ford, who ran a soup kitchen in his hometown of Trenchtown, to ensure the royalty checks would keep it open.

* You're more likely to die on your way to purchase a lottery ticket than you are to actually win the lottery.

* *Stenocereus Eruca*, commonly known as the Creeping Devil, is a species of cactus that lies on the ground and grows at one end while the other end slowly dies "creeping" (growing) up to 2 feet

a year. It can also clone itself to survive.

* Babe Ruth paid a fan \$20 to return the baseball he hit for his 700th career home run.

* When he retired in 1990 after molding 1.4 billion crayons, Crayola's most senior crayon molder, Emerson Moser, revealed he was actually blue-green color blind.

* In 2017, social robot Sophia was given citizenship by Saudi Arabia -- the first robot to be given legal personhood anywhere in the world.

* The Western lowland gorilla's scientific name is *Gorilla gorilla gorilla*.

* Speaking of names, SpongeBob was originally created as SpongeBoy, but Nickelodeon discovered that the moniker was already copyrighted by a mop.

* A study revealed that people scored higher in a mental agility test while wearing a lab coat they believed was a doctor's coat. The effect was not there when they believed the same white coat was a painter's coat.

* Using &%#@ instead of swear words is called a Grawlix.

* In Singapore, you can't walk naked in your own house. Well, you could, but you'd be facing a possible fine of \$1,136, so we don't recommend it.

Thought for the Day: "Good books, like good friends, are few and chosen; the more select, the more enjoyable." —Louisa May Alcott

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THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

BY AL SCADUTO

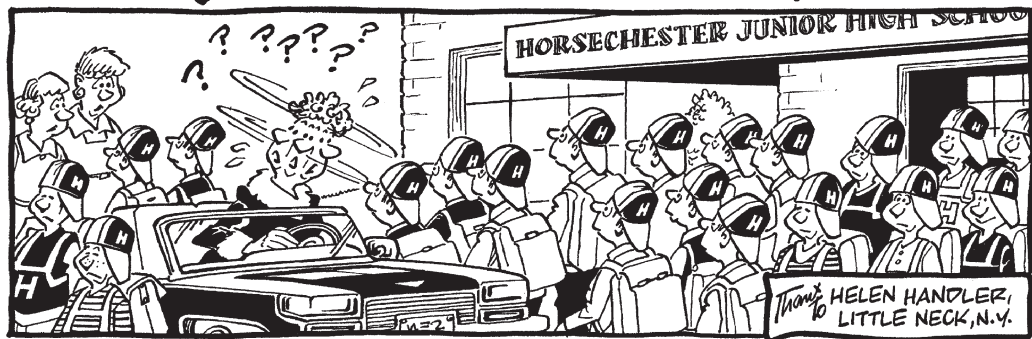
LUNCH COUNTER CHARACTER
NO. 1,753 - THE LITTLE OLD
LADY WHO DISPOSES OF
HER TEA BAG IN THE
ASHTRAY...





SERVICE-STATION
SERMON-



SIGN OF THE
TIMES DEPT.
(WHO'S WHO DIV.)
PICKING UP
YOUNG WOMBO
AT SCHOOL...
OUT COME THE
BOYS AND IT'S
AN ARMY OF
LOOK-
ALIKES....



These flowers are available in beautiful shades of white, yellow, orange, lavender, purple and red, as well as some that display two colors.

Chrysanthemums

They prefer full sunlight during the growing season, but once the blooms appear, they will last longer if they are moved to a shadier spot. These plants contain substances that are toxic to cats, dogs and horses if ingested, so be sure to keep this in mind when choosing a location to display them.

- Brenda Weaver

Source: www.gardendesign.com

VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

Punishment Doesn't Fit the Crime

One year ago, a federal grand jury indicted a Virginia woman for a whole raft of scams and fraud against veterans. Most disheartening is the fact that she was a former veteran.

There was a long laundry list (nine counts) of things she did. She had veterans apply for HISA grants (Home Improvements and Structural Alterations), which are for doing work on their homes and making improvements. Not only did she not complete the work, she pocketed the money.

Then she managed to have the income and retirement benefits of a veteran diverted into her own account. She took out loans in the elderly veteran's name, with the money going into her pocket, and used the veteran's credit and debit cards.

But she didn't stop there. In another scheme, she linked veterans with landlords, but kept the money they paid for

security deposits and rent.

The legal names for these are wire fraud and aggravated identity theft and involved 27 victims.

While a Department of Justice press release stated that "elder abuse and financial fraud targeted at seniors is a key priority," nowhere in the sentencing does it call out the specific punishment for that. They carefully listed the types of elder abuse (physical abuse, financial fraud, scams and exploitation, caregiver neglect and abandonment, psychological abuse and sexual abuse), but don't seem to have made it specifically part of this case.

At the time of the indictment, this miserable excuse for a human faced a possible 20 years in prison, plus two years after pleading guilty to one count of wire fraud and one count of aggravated identity theft. In the recent sentencing, she got a mere 9.5 years.

Why is that? Why do the powers-that-be think it's OK to give much shorter prison sentences to these people? Where is the deterrent in talking about the "serious nature of these fraud schemes" when you don't follow it up with serious jail time?

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CONGRESSMAN
DUSTY JOHNSON
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



Guest Column: The Meaning of Native American Day from the Perspective of a Lakota Woman By Shawnee Red Bear

This guest column is written by Shawnee Red Bear, who works in Congressman Johnson's Washington DC office

This Monday, October 11th, marks the 31st year South Dakota will celebrate "Native American Day". South Dakota is one of just 14 states that observes Native American Day instead of Columbus Day.

South Dakota is home to the 9 tribes of Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota speaking Natives. As a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Lakota woman, Native American Day is about more than just honoring Native American history and culture.

My entire upbringing revolved around being "Indian". In fact, I always assumed "Indians" were everywhere. My summers were filled with native traditions like attending powwows, an event filled with dance, song, and socializing; chokecherry picking, a fruit indigenous to much of North America; and hanging out with my Unci (Lakota for grandma). As a child, I paid little attention to life outside the reservation.

As I got older, I began to learn about the dark history that plagued my people. Forced assimilation and western religions attempted to strip our ancestors of their cultural identity.

Outside of states like South Dakota, the stories of the thousands of Native children who were taken from their families against their will and shipped off to boarding schools to be "civilized" are not often told. Hundreds of those children never made it home and tribes are still working to get their remains back.

"Celebrating" Native American Day doesn't come with flag waving and parades, it is more solemn than that. As a 30-year-old single mother residing on the Pine Indian Reservation, I am only a few generations removed from these atrocities that attempted to eradicate my people and my culture.

But this isn't the end of our story. Across the country, native people have begun to reclaim our cultural identity, revitalize our native languages, and bring awareness to our tragic history.

I am excited to see Lakota language preservation programs being funded and offered in our communities. I am proud of the work that the Murdered Missing Indigenous Women movement has done to bring justice to families. I am grateful that the remains of Native children who died at Carlisle Indian School are being returned home to Rosebud Sioux Tribe here in South Dakota. These are all steps in the right direction to reconcile the past.

For me, Native American Day means knowing that it is no longer discouraged to be a strong Lakota Winyan (woman). I am proud of how far my people have come.

Shawnee Red Bear is the Fall 2021 Ben Reifel Fellow in Rep. Dusty Johnson's Office, a member of the Oglala Lakota Tribe, and the Oglala Sioux Tribe Veteran Service Officer & Director of Veteran Services. She served in the United States Marine Corps from 2009-2013 and currently resides in Pine Ridge.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Don't wait till Monday to celebrate Native American heritage

The second Monday in October has been recognized as a federal holiday since 1968. In 1990, South Dakota was the first state to do things a little differently than the rest of the nation. In South Dakota, we recognize Monday, October 11th, as Native Americans' Day. We recognize that the Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota people and their culture is part of who we are collectively as South Dakotans. We recognize them traditionally as the O'ceti Sakowin meaning the Seven Council Fires — more commonly known throughout the world as the Great Sioux Nation.

In 1990, Governor George S. Mickelson led the "Year of Reconciliation." It's been my goal in public office to continue that mission of recognizing and respecting the nine tribal nations that share our geography. It is my goal to come to the table with tribal leaders to support tribal communities, businesses, and families.

One of the people who is instrumental in my work with Native Americans is Dave Flute, Secretary of Tribal Relations. As a veteran with the 235th Military Police Company and a proud Native American leader across the Great Plains, Dave has spent his life in service to his people and his country. He's taught me a lot about what is important to the Native Americans in South Dakota and how to strengthen the relationship between our communities.

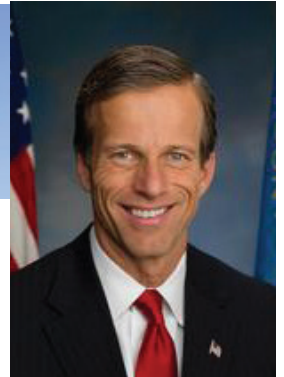
My vision for South Dakota is strongly based in family values. This is common ground I share with every tribal leader. I have learned a lot about the Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota values through this lens. Providing strong support systems for youth, families, and elders are missions I share as a mother, caregiver, and as a South Dakotan. Strong families are what make South Dakota special. "Tiwahe wasagypi wicawake'ye." (I believe in strong families.)

Through the Department of Social Service's Foster One and Stronger Families Together program, I have supported and urged Native families to open their homes, to adoption and foster care. We need more Native families to open their hearts and homes to children. Much like tribal communities, South Dakota was built by families supporting families. "Oyate kin na tiwahe tawapi okciyapo." (Communities and families need to help each other.)

This holiday weekend, I encourage every South Dakotan to reach into their own community to support Native-owned businesses, learn more about the local Native American culture, and recognize the shared values we have as South Dakotans. Don't wait until Monday to celebrate Native American heritage.

For information about resources, events, and other Tribal initiatives, go to sdtribalrelations.sd.gov.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Government Overreach at Its Worst

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) already knows how much money you make. And now, it wants to know exactly how you spend it. Washington Democrats are attempting to fund part of their reckless tax-and-spending spree through a new proposal that would increase funding to the IRS by \$79 billion so they can double – yes, double – the size of the agency. Their proposal would require banks, credit unions, and other financial service providers to report to the IRS when a business or customer makes total deposits or withdrawals that exceed a certain amount – \$600 if the president has his way. Essentially, anyone who has a job or has saved a bit of money could be subject to Washington bureaucrats snooping through his or her checking account.

South Dakotans want no part of this big government overreach, and I couldn't agree more. My office has heard from thousands of concerned South Dakotans who do not want IRS agents prying into their most basic, personal information. They won't, if I have anything to do about it.

We do not need the government monitoring every purchase law-abiding Americans make from the App Store or how many times they buy a cup of coffee or what they're getting their kids and grandkids for Christmas. This proposal is a blatant invasion of privacy. And for anyone familiar with the IRS, it's not at all reasonable to believe the agency has the capability to manage all of this additional information given its troubling record of already failing to protect confidential taxpayer information. Flooding the IRS with more – and I would argue highly unnecessary – data, while at the same time burdening taxpayers, financial institutions, and already overwhelmed IRS service centers with more paperwork lacks common sense.

How would a proposal this far out of the mainstream even be a serious topic of discussion in Washington? Great question. A big reason is that Democrats are looking for new ways to fund part of their multi-trillion dollar tax-and-spending spree. The Democrats' proposal to double the size of the IRS and track taxpayers' financial activity should never have even seen the light of day. But these days, there is pretty much no area of life that Democrats think wouldn't be better run by the federal government. If there was a clearer difference between the two parties, I'm not sure one exists.

Rest assured, I am working hard to stop this nanny-state style monitoring of your bank account. I recently led dozens of my colleagues, including every Republican member of the Senate Finance Committee and Senate Banking Committee, to stand up to Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and push back against this excessive intrusion into Americans' private lives. I also cosponsored legislation to place necessary guardrails around the IRS and protect taxpayers' rights. South Dakotans entrusted me to stand up for them against invasive, radical policies, and I will continue to be a tireless fighter on their behalf.

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Count on your local paper

When I was growing up, there were a lot of things I could count on: more than one Rounds brother to a bedroom, a prayer before meals and a local newspaper in the house.

I learned early on the local newspaper was not only a source of information, but also a source of income. One of my first jobs as a kid was delivering the Minneapolis Tribune. When I got my driver's license, I began distributing papers to the other paperboys. That job required me to be up at 4 AM to meet the truck that would drop off the papers. Those were some early mornings and during the winter months I think I almost ruined dad's Plymouth Station wagon driving through snow-packed roads and below zero temperatures with more than 500 pounds of newspapers. I'd always have one of my little brothers in the backseat helping put together the inserts so we could get done in time for 8:30 AM church. When I was in high school, I began working for the Capital Journal cleaning the presses with Derald Gross and delivering the afternoon edition of the paper to other paperboys in the area.

As a young paperboy, I didn't fully understand the importance of the newspaper I was tossing on the front step, but I certainly do today. In our fast-paced, digitally-generated news world, there is something special about picking up a local newspaper – even if you get a little “newsprint” on your hands. It's reassuring knowing you can trust the reporter because they are a neighbor or, in most cases, a friend. A newspaper is meant to be a source of unbiased information and local newspapers in South Dakota provide just that.

My office subscribes to local newspapers from across the state, and every time I get a chance, I take the opportunity to peruse them. You can learn so much from the local paper like who is getting married, who is having a birthday and who recently passed away. You can also keep up on the local sports teams and what is happening with various organizations in town. Sure you can see a lot of things on social media today, but let's face it, most of us don't have hours to scroll through and see all that is happening.

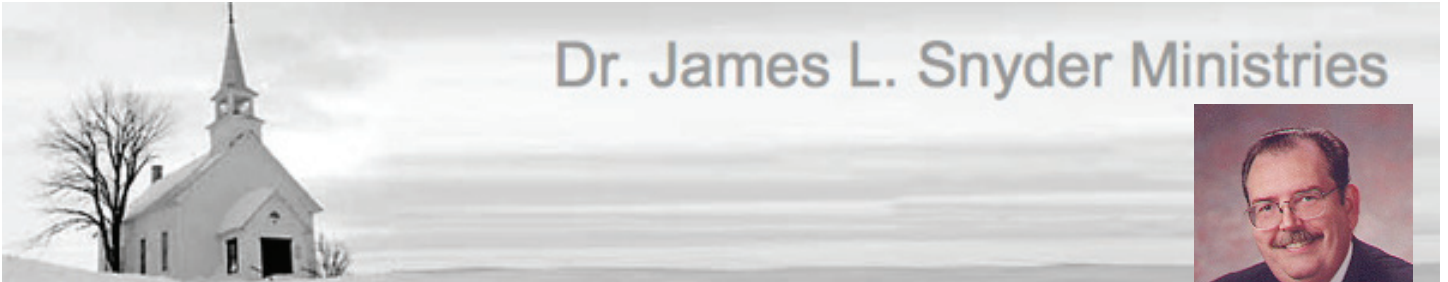
As an elected official, I've seen firsthand the importance of the local newspaper in effectively conveying a story. I've always done my best to fulfill requests from our South Dakota media because I know how important timely, reliable news is to the people of this state.

Unfortunately, across our nation, more and more towns are losing their newspaper leaving communities without a central gathering place for the news. Nationally, statistics show that more than one-fourth of local papers have shut their doors during the last 15 years. As someone who cares about the integrity of my news source, I would hate to see that trend continue. Thankfully, in South Dakota, our state continues to be served by over 120 newspapers which publish either daily or weekly.

As we celebrate National Newspaper Week, I want recognize and thank everyone working for our state's local newspapers. From the editor to the advertising sales rep and the reporter to the delivery person, you all play a vital role in keeping our communities connected, vibrant and strong. And that's something I know I can count on.

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



What Would Life Be Without Mistakes?

Let me be clear from the beginning. I have made a lot of mistakes during my life. I have made mistakes that I don't even know about to this day. Even the ones I do know about, I cannot remember very clearly.

Mistakes are a part of life. Unfortunately, some people believe they live their whole life without making any mistakes.

That's mistake number one.

I am where I am today because of the mistakes in my life. I have learned a lot from my mistakes, except I have not learned not to make any more mistakes.

If somebody has not made mistakes in life, I would have to give that award to the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Perhaps the closest she has ever come to making a mistake was in marrying me, but that certainly was not my mistake at all. Marrying her was the best choice I have ever made in life.

I suppose she does make mistakes, but she knows how to fix them before anybody notices them. I wish I knew how she does that.

Those who think they make no mistakes in life are just kidding themselves and are not really living.

I remember several years ago a mistake I made. I planned to fill up my truck with gas for the week. It was clearly on empty. I should never have let it get that low, but I did.

As I drove to the gas station, I thought of something I needed to pick up at Publix, which was on the way. So I stopped, went in and bought the item I wanted and then went out to get in my truck and go get some gas.

As I turned the key to start the engine, it did not start. I didn't know what to do at the time. I tried my best to start it, but nothing I did managed to start it.

Then, I looked at the fuel tank gauge and saw that it had passed empty, and according to that, the truck was out of gas.

That was a big mistake. That mistake brought me a terrible consequence.

I sat in the truck for a few moments staring at my cell phone. I knew what I had to do, but I didn't want to do it. In a few minutes, I tried to start it again, and I had the same result.

Quietly sitting in the truck, I continued staring at my cell phone. I had no option at the time. I had to do what I had to do.

So, I called the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

"My dear," I said as sweetly as possible, which is above my pay grade, "could you get a can of gasoline and bring it to me? I'm over here at Publix."

I heard silence on the other end, and then I heard chuckling.

"Are you telling me," she said, trying not to chuckle, "that your truck is out of gas?"

Of course, she knew the answer to that question, but she used it to poke me.

"No," I said sarcastically, "I just want to know if you can bring me a can of gasoline to Publix."

I think she could feel the frustration in my voice.

That certainly was another mistake added onto the first mistake.

"Oh," she said, "I might be able to get over there in about three hours."

I did hear her chuckling over the phone. I pretended I did not hear her chuckling, which was another

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mistake.

I hung up the phone and sat in my truck thinking that I had a three-hour wait until she got there with the gas for the truck.

On my fourth deep sigh, I saw my wife driving her van and park right next to my truck. I saw her through the window with the biggest smile I've ever seen her wear.

She got out of her van and said, "Is this the truck that's out of gas?"

At this point, I had exhausted all of my mistakes and just soberly nodded my head in the affirmative.

She got a can of gas out of her van and set it down next to my truck. I picked it up and emptied it into my truck's gas tank.

When finished, I put the can back in her van and closed the door. Then, I looked at her and simply said, "Thank you so much for your help."

She chuckled and said, "Do you think you ought to go and fill your truck up with gas now?"

Being all out of mistakes at this point, I told her, "I'm going right now and fill this truck up with as much gas as I can get."

I took my time going to the gas station and filling up my truck because I knew I would experience the next stage of my wife's giggling about my mistake as soon as I got home.

My biggest lessons have come from mistakes I've made. But the lessons only come when I deal with the error and make it right.

I like what David said, "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults" (Psalm 19:12).

It's one thing to deal with the mistakes at hand, but it's another thing to be cleansed from secret faults. So I'm learning to deal with the mistakes that I don't know I'm making each day.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What's the latest on efforts to force Procter & Gamble to stop using virgin forest fiber for its toilet paper products? -- P. Brody, Boulder, CO

Strolling down the toilet paper aisle, one is faced with a grave decision: 3-ply or ultra-plush? For consumers, factors like price, size and comfort always come to mind first while consuming this household product, yet why do we fail to prioritize the environmental impact of toilet paper?

The average American household consumes an average of three rolls of toilet paper per week, or an annual average of 100 pounds of the stuff, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), a leading non-profit environmental group. Procter and Gamble (P&G), like other major companies have continued to employ traditional toilet paper production processes that devastate forests, earning the company an F grade for all its tissue brands according to a recent report from NRDC.

P&G sources northern bleached softwood kraft (NBSK), the primary softwood pulp in most U.S. tissue products, from Canada's boreal forest. An indispensable global carbon sink (a natural environment that absorbs carbon from the atmosphere), the boreal forest constitutes 25 percent of the planet's remaining intact forest and contains twice as much carbon as the world's oil reserves.

Although P&G promised in a 2020 resolution to begin eliminating deforestation from its supply chains, the company actually increased logging and production of NBSK from Canada's boreal forest in 2021. This excessive logging has prompted a continual collapse of this vital ecosystem, where the forest now emits more carbon into the atmosphere than it absorbs.

In Canada, the logging industry alone accounts for more than 26 million metric tons of carbon emissions every year, substantially more than the total emissions from passenger cars and trucks. Rather than making a change to sourcing and production methods, P&G is busy deflecting the responsibility of sustainability upon consumers—as with other common products like cars or straws.

"As the climate crisis worsens, the tissue industry's continued reliance on a devastating 'tree to toilet pipeline' has become only more untenable," said Shelley Vinyard, NRDC's boreal corporate campaign manager. "Major corporations like P&G must start responding to the pressure and accept their own, much larger, role in the climate catastrophe."

Though consumers can certainly make a difference by selecting bamboo-based or recycled fiber toilet paper, the weight of the responsibility falls upon large corporations. Forests have no voice against the exploitations of the logging industry, so companies like P&G must stop taking half-measures and turn their resolutions into reality.



Activists are demanding that Procter & Gamble stop cutting down Canada's boreal forest to make pulp for toilet paper.

Credit: Vie Studio, Pexels.

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Storm rages through Groton

It short of a war zone scenario. It was touted early in the day that the area was in the center of severe weather. The system was developing between the Missouri and James River. A severe thunderstorm watch was issued. A radar indicated tornado was located in northwest Spink County. Tornado warnings were issued. A tornado was spotted on the ground in the Verdon area. One after another emergency notices were sounding on the phones. The outdoor sirens were sounding in Groton. The weather alert radio kept going off with one warning after another. Then it hit. Sleets of rain came down. High wind swept through the area. There was no hail, but the wind left a field of downed trees, some power lines and vehicles and buildings damaged from downed trees. After the storm left, a pair of rainbows filled the eastern sky with the main rainbow about as bright as has ever been seen.

In Groton, four homes had downed power lines. There were blinks of a second or two outage, but no sustained outages were reported. A big tree came crashing down behind Ron Rehfuss that broke a couple of pins off the cross arm on the primary side and ripped his service line off the house. The tree blocked off the alley. Three other services around town had their services taken off their homes due to tree branches coming down on their lines. By 8 p.m., all services were repaired.



Tree uprooted and other branches down at the Groton Cemetery.

(Photos by Kim Weber)

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Jody Bull



Clint Fjelstad



**Service line down at
Kenny Howard**

(Photos by Wynella Abeln)

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(Photos by Tina Kosel)

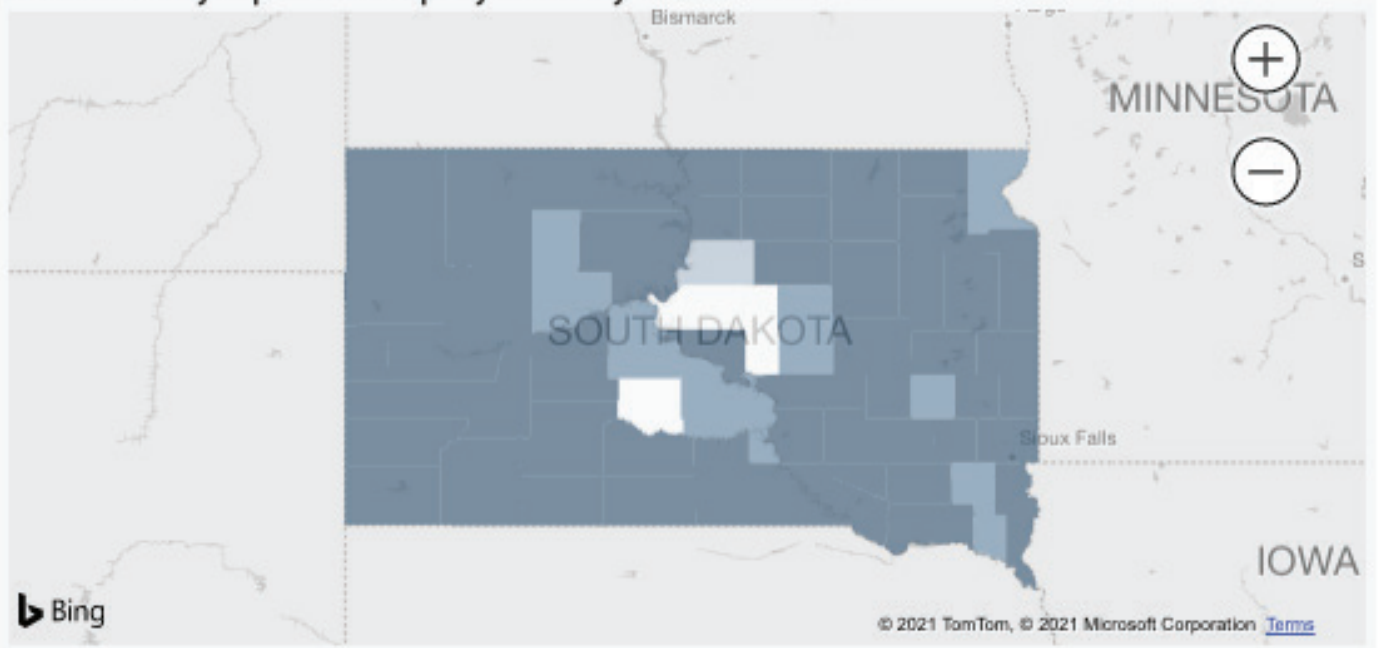
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South Dakota COVID-19 Report

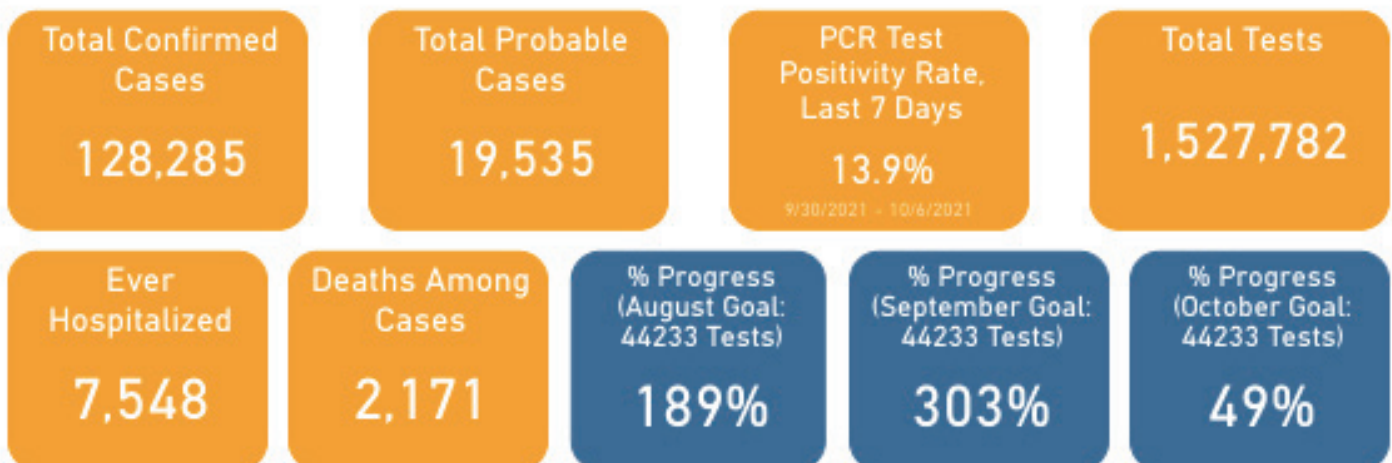


Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread Low Moderate Substantial High

Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange boxes.



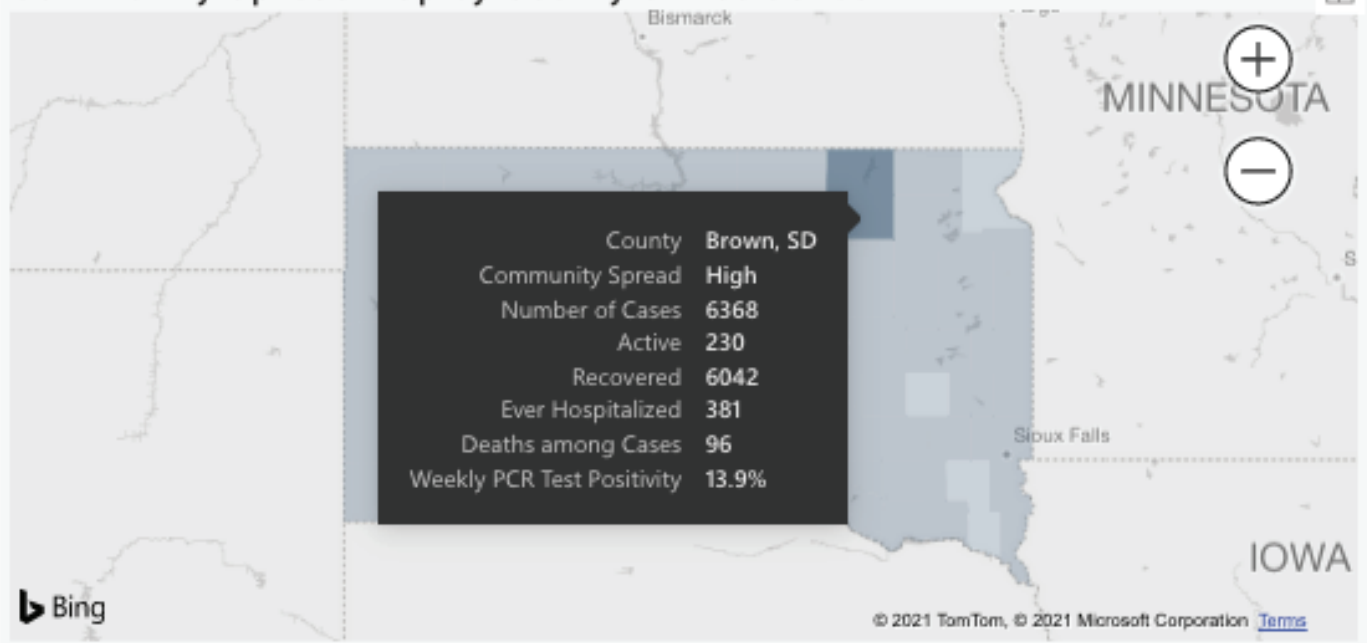
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Brown County COVID-19 Report

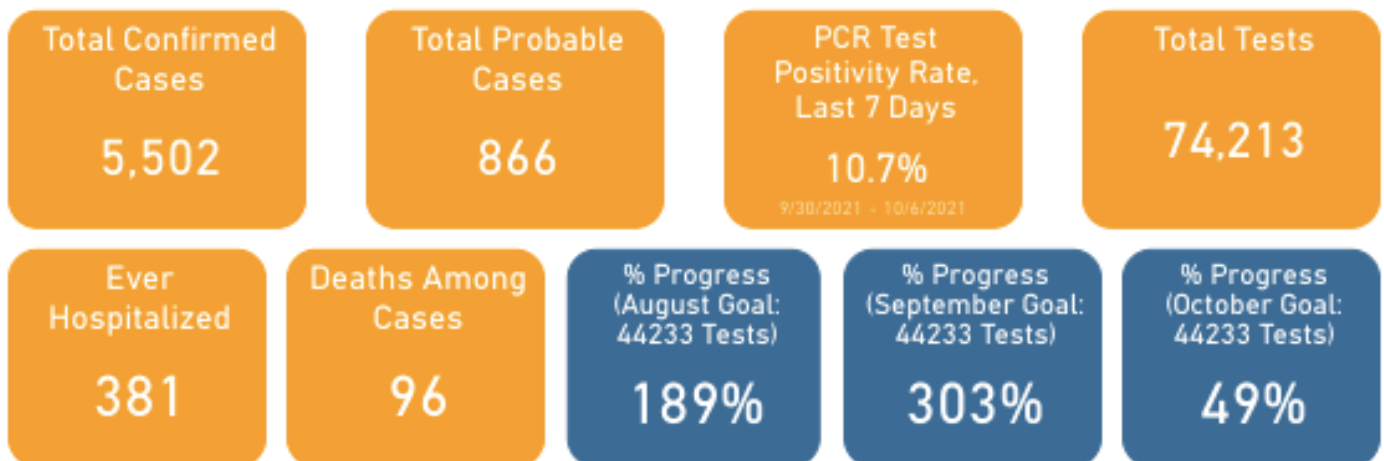


Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread Low Moderate Substantial High

Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange boxes.



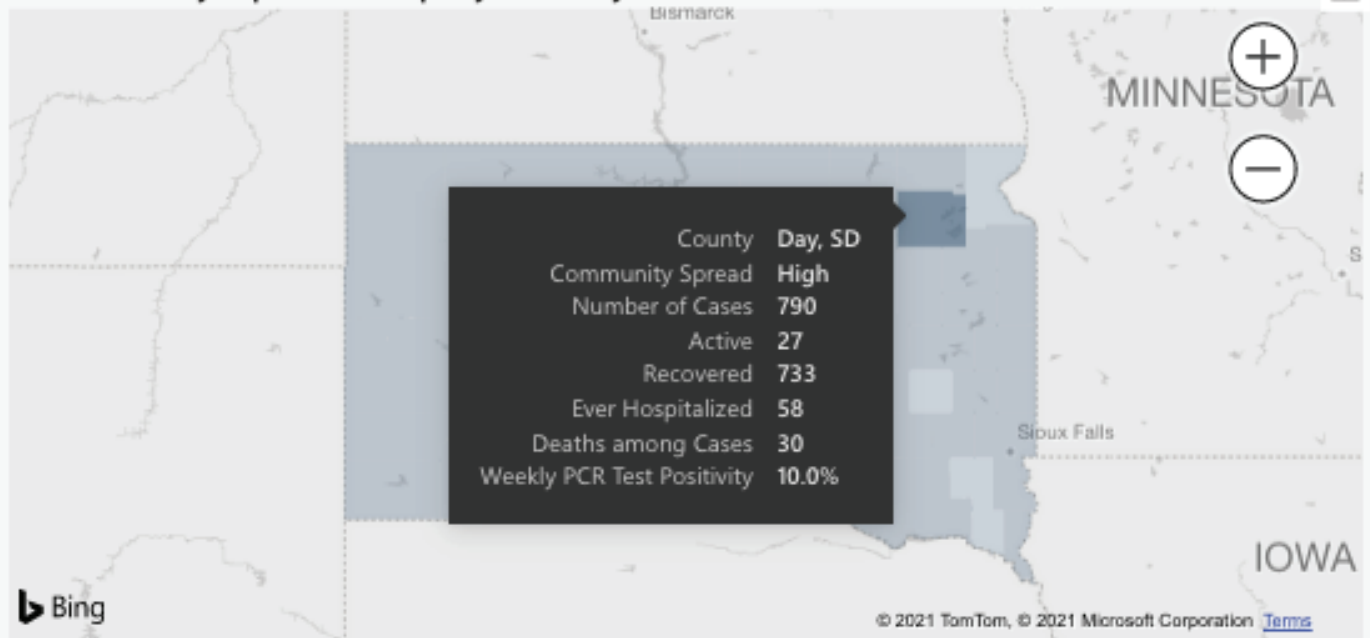
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Day County COVID-19 Report

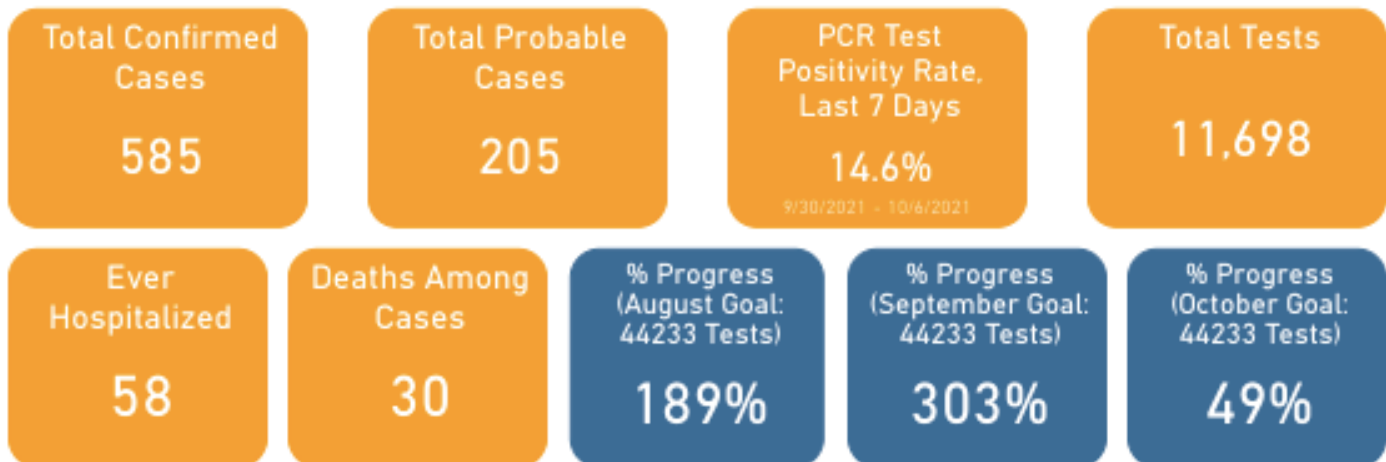


Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread Low Moderate Substantial High

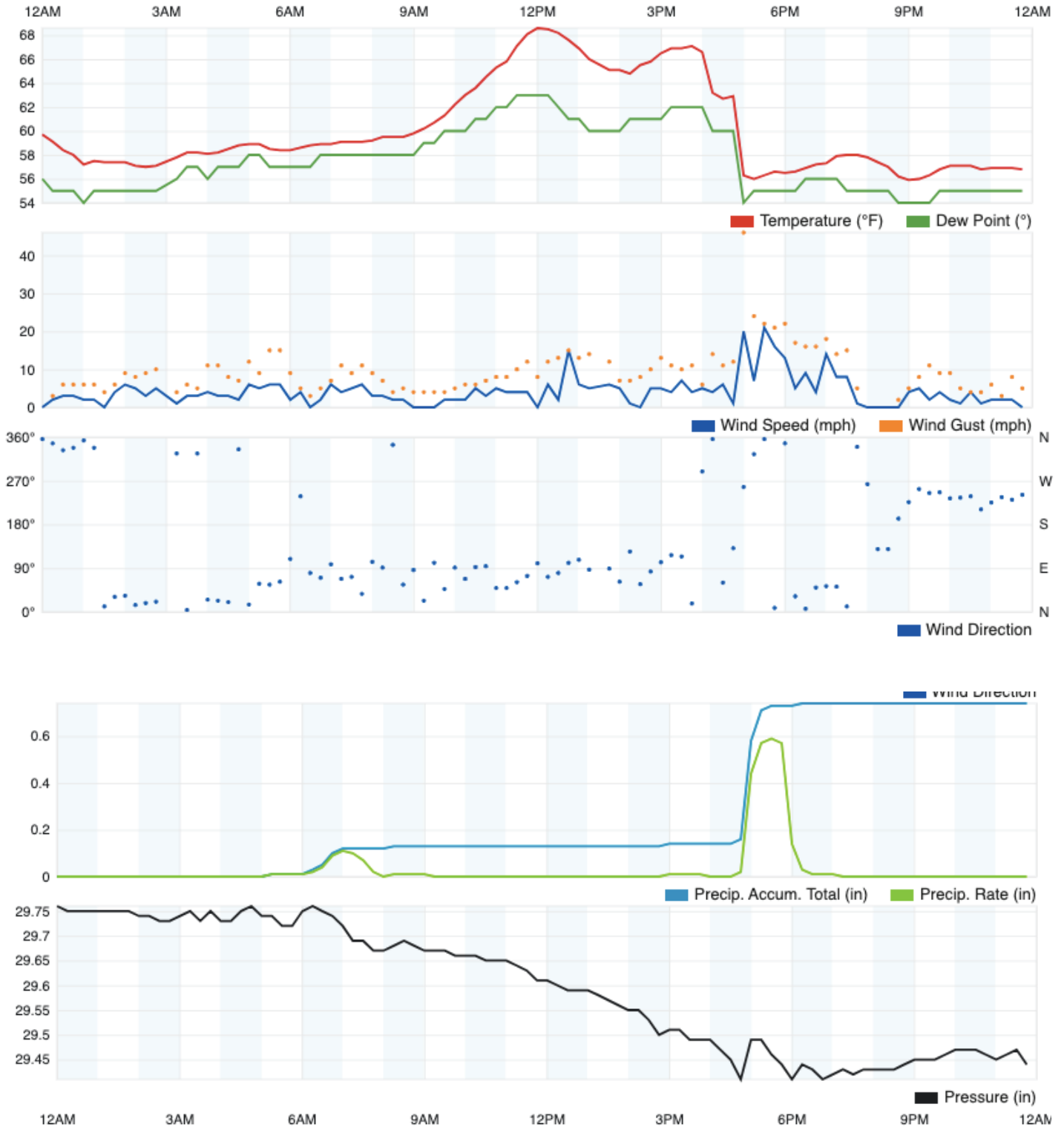
Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange boxes.



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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Columbus Day	Monday Night	Tuesday
 90% → 60%				
Breezy. Showers then Showers Likely	Decreasing Clouds	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny
High: 56 °F	Low: 38 °F	High: 67 °F	Low: 40 °F	High: 62 °F

NWS ABERDEEN  WEATHER.GOV/ABR 10/10/2021 3:01 AM

Scattered Showers Today Dry Monday

Today	Monday
50 to 69°	60 to 70°

Lingering showers are expected today, especially over northern sections of the state. Monday will be dry and warmer. #sdwx #mnwx

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Today in Weather History

October 10, 1928: The temperature reached 90 degrees at Minneapolis, Minnesota, the latest such reading on record.

October 10, 1982: October 8th through October 10th, 1982, record amounts of snow piled up in the northern Black Hills. Not only was the storm an unprecedented breaker because it came so early in the season, but it was also a record snowfall producer for any time of year. Amounts of three to six feet were typical across the northern hills. On October 9th, 1982, thirty-two inches of snow buried Lead. The thirty-two inches that day is the most on record for 24 hours in South Dakota.

1780: The Great Hurricane of 1780 made landfall on the island of Barbados on this day with estimated wind gusts of 200 mph. This hurricane went on to affect the islands of St. Vincent, where only 14 of 600 homes stood at Kings Town. St. Lucia, Martinique, Dominica, and Puerto Rico were all impacted by this hurricane. This storm is the deadliest Atlantic hurricane on record, with between 20,000 and 22,000 deaths.

1804 - A famous snow hurricane occurred. The unusual coastal storm caused northerly gales from Maine to New Jersey. Heavy snow fell across New England, with three feet reported at the crest of the Green Mountains. A foot of snow was reported in the Berkshires of southern New England, at Goshen CT. (David Ludlum)

1846: A major hurricane, likely a Category 5, moved through the Caribbean Sea. This Great Havana Hurricane struck western Cuba on 10 October. It hit the Florida Keys on 11 October, destroying the old Key West Lighthouse and Fort Zachary Taylor.

1928 - The temperature at Minneapolis, MN, reached 90 degrees, their latest such reading of record. (The Weather Channel)

1949: A rapidly deepening area of low pressure produced gale to hurricane-force winds across much of Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Michigan, and the Dakotas. Sustained 1-minute winds reached 85 mph at Rochester, MN, and 79 mph at La Crosse, WI, during the early afternoon. Winds gusts were as high as 100 mph. This storm produced extensive damage to buildings and power lines. Also, many corn crops were flattened.

1970: A slow-moving tropical depression produced 41.68 inches of rain in Jayuya, Puerto Rico from October 2-10th, 1970.

1973 - Fifteen to 20 inch rains deluged north central Oklahoma in thirteen hours producing record flooding. Enid was drenched with 15.68 inches of rain from the nearly stationary thunderstorms, which established a state 24 hour rainfall record. Dover OK reported 125 of 150 homes damaged by flooding. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1979 - A storm blanketed Worcester, MA, with 7.5 inches of snow, a record snowfall total for so early in the season for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Eleven cities in the north central U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Colorado Springs CO with a reading of 23 degrees, and Havre MT with a low of 11 degrees above zero. Light snow was reported as far south as Kansas. Omaha NE reported their third earliest snow of record. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Sunny and mild weather prevailed across the nation for Columbus Day. The afternoon high of 77 degrees at Kalispell MT was the warmest reading of record for so late in the autumn season. Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced wind gusts to 56 mph at Lorain OH. Snowflakes were observed at Milwaukee WI around Noon, but quickly changed to rain as temperature readings were in the lower 60s. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced torrential rains along the northeast coast of Florida. Augustine was deluged with 16.08 inches of rain. The heavy rain caused extensive flooding of homes and businesses, and left some roads under three feet of water. Ten cities from South Carolina to New England reported record low temperatures for the date, including Concord NH with a reading of 23 degrees. Temperatures dipped into the 30s in the Carolinas. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2009: Nome, Alaska, experiences its first-ever October thunderstorm with five lightning strikes between 8 and 9 PM ADT.

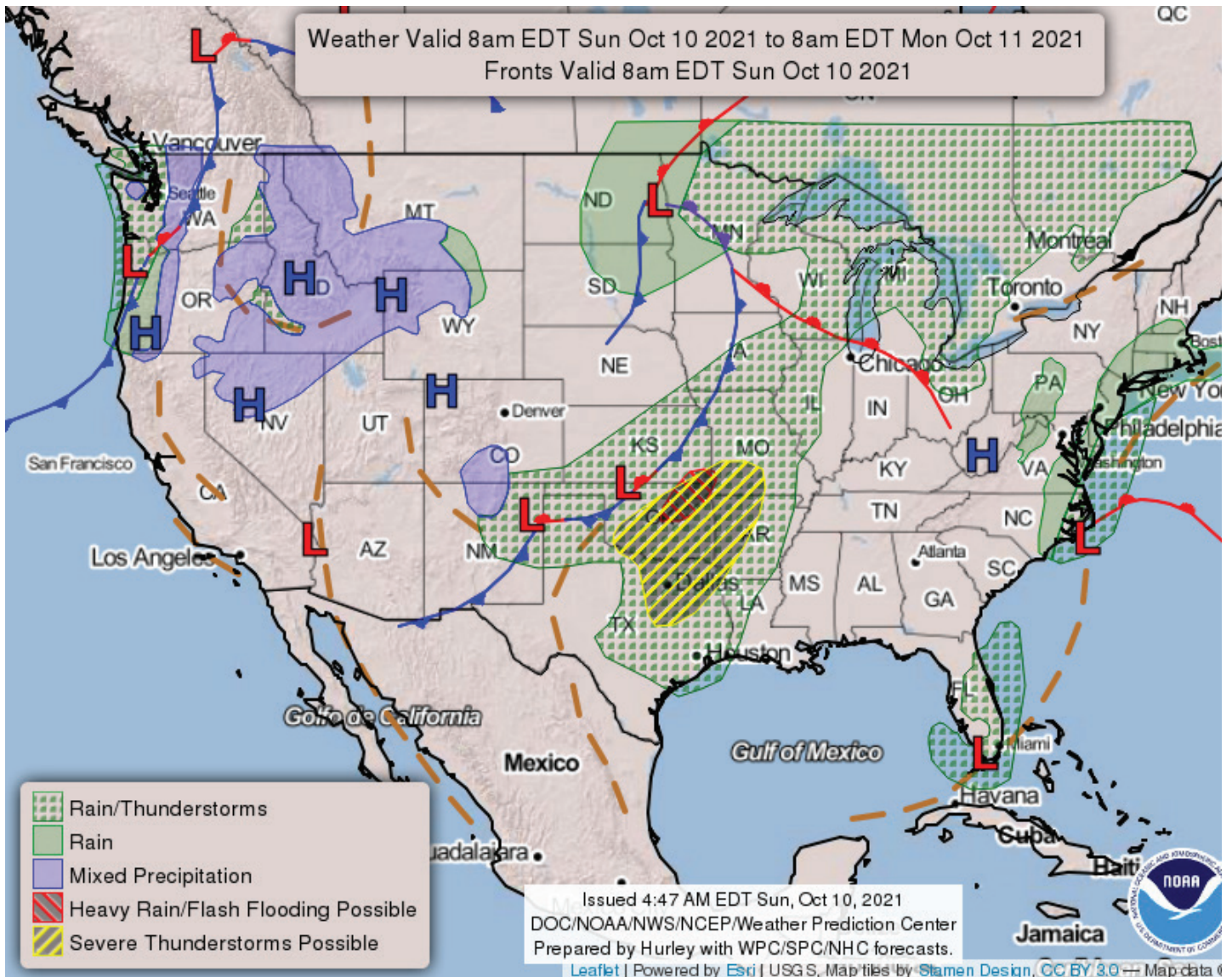
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 68.6 °F at Noon
Low Temp: 55.9 °F at 9:00 PM
Wind: 46 mph at 5:00 PM
Precip: 0.74

Record High: 93° in 2015
Record Low: 10° in 1919
Average High: 63°F
Average Low: 36°F
Average Precip in Oct.: 0.75
Precip to date in Oct.: 1.02
Average Precip to date: 19.08
Precip Year to Date: 16.44
Sunset Tonight: 6:57:12 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:42:35 AM



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WHERE DID IT ALL COME FROM?

Years ago, a man who had difficulty believing that God created the universe stopped by my brother's office for a visit. As he was sitting there, he noticed Michael's new computer. After typing a few lines and watching the cursor blink and the printer spit out what was printed, he asked, "Where did this amazing machine come from?"

Remembering that he was an atheist, Michael replied, "Oh, a friend of mine just threw a bunch of bars and bolts, guides and keys, nuts and rollers, screws and springs and some toner stuff into a bucket, shook it for a minute or two, turned it upside down and out came this 'creation.'"

"O.K., Preacher, I get it," he admitted. "What you're telling me is that just as there had to be someone design and put the computer together, there must have been Someone to design and put the universe together."

There are many who argue for or against the existence of God. The Bible, however, does not. It simply states that "God is." In Psalm 102:25 we read, "In the beginning You laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands." This obviously means that God "was" before anything existed, and that the heavens and earth are the work of His hands. Creation is finite and transitory, but our God is not. Even though what is will one day no longer exist, we need have no fear.

As Peter reminds us "in keeping with His promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness." WILL YOU BE THERE?

Prayer: We rejoice, Lord, for Your promise that one day we may live with You in the "home of righteousness." With hope we await that day! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: In the beginning You laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. Psalm 102:25-26

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2021 Community Events

- Cancelled** Legion Post #39 Spring Fundraiser (Sunday closest to St. Patrick's Day, every other year)
03/27/2021 Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
04/10/2021 Dueling Pianos Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm
04/24/2021 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
04/25/2021 Princess Prom (Sunday after GHS Prom)
05/01/2021 Lions Club Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
05/31/2021 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
6/7-9/2021 St. John's Lutheran Church VBS
06/17/2021 Groton Transit Fundraiser, 4-7 p.m.
06/18/2021 SDSU Alumni & Friends Golf Tournament at Olive Grove
06/19/2021 U8 Baseball Tournament
06/19/2021 **Postponed to Aug. 28th:** Lions Crazy Golf Fest at Olive Grove Golf Course, Noon
06/26/2021 U10 Baseball Tournament
06/27/2021 U12 Baseball Tournament
07/04/2021 Firecracker Golf Tournament at Olive Grove
07/11/2021 Lions Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 10am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
07/22/2021 Pro-Am Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/30/2021-08/03/2021 State "B" American Legion Baseball Tournament in Groton
08/06/2021 Wine on Nine at Olive Grove Golf Course
08/13/2021 Groton Basketball Golf Tournament
Cancelled Lions Club Crazy Golf Fest 9am Olive Grove Golf Course
08/29/2021 Groton Firemen Summer Splash Day at GHS Parking Lot (4-5 p.m.)
09/11/2021 Lions Club Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
09/12/2021 Sunflower Classic Golf Tournament at Olive Grove
09/18-19 Groton Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
10/08/2021 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
10/09/2021 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm (Saturday before Columbus Day)
10/29/2021 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
10/29/2021 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat (Halloween)
11/13/2021 Legion Post #39 Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
11/25/2021 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)
12/04/2021 Olive Grove Tour of Homes
12/11/2021 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-Noon

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News from the  Associated Press

Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press undefined

PREP FOOTBALL=

Lemmon/McIntosh 52, Dupree 0

Sioux Falls Lincoln 38, Sioux Falls Jefferson 18

Tri-Valley 20, Lennox 14

Woonsocket/Wessington Springs/Sanborn Central 40, Rapid City Christian 0

Some high school football scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

Information from: ScoreStream Inc., <http://ScoreStream.com>

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) _ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Saturday:

Dakota Cash

01-10-11-15-18

(one, ten, eleven, fifteen, eighteen)

Estimated jackpot: \$135,000

Lotto America

06-22-45-48-51, Star Ball: 4, ASB: 2

(six, twenty-two, forty-five, forty-eight, fifty-one; Star Ball: four; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$3.2 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$73 million

Powerball

12-17-30-45-62, Powerball: 5, Power Play: 2

(twelve, seventeen, thirty, forty-five, sixty-two; Powerball: five; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$31 million

Camp's 2 TDs carry South Dakota past North Dakota, 20-13

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Carson Camp threw two touchdown passes and Mason Lorber added two field goals, including a 54-yarder in the fourth quarter, as South Dakota held off North Dakota 20-13 in a Missouri Valley Conference showdown Saturday afternoon.

Camp fired seven yards to Caleb Vander Esch and Lorber converted from 37-yards out in the first quarter to put the Coyotes up 10-0.

North Dakota's Tommy Schuster tossed a 14-yard scoring pass to Brock Boltmann to make it 10-7 after one quarter and neither team scored again in the first half.

Camp hit Wesley Eliodor from 24-yards out to make it 17-7, but Brady Stevens kicked a 41-yard field goal to get the Fighting Hawks back within 17-10. Lorber pushed the lead back to 10 points with his 54-yard field goal and Stevens hit from 25-yards out with 5:52 left to set the final margin.

Camp completed 16 of 23 passes for 179 yards for South Dakota (4-2, 2-1). Travis Theis carried 23 times for 138 yards.

Schuster was 24-of-37 passing for 208 yards, but the Hawks (2-3, 0-2) were held to just 50 yards on the ground.

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More AP college football: <https://apnews.com/hub/college-football> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25.
Sign up for the AP's college football newsletter: <https://apnews.com/cfbtop25>

Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press undefined

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Centerville def. Iroquois, 26-24, 25-18, 27-25

Wagner def. Madison, 25-13, 25-16, 25-18

East/West Tournament=

Brandon Valley def. Douglas, 25-13, 25-18

Brandon Valley def. Rapid City Central, 25-14, 25-14

Brandon Valley def. Spearfish, 25-14, 25-16

Brookings def. Douglas, 25-14, 28-26

Brookings def. Rapid City Central, 25-21, 25-17

Brookings def. Spearfish, 25-17, 25-8

Rapid City Stevens def. Watertown, 23-25, 25-22, 25-17

Rapid City Stevens def. Yankton, 17-25, 25-23, 25-14

Watertown def. Sturgis Brown, 25-15, 25-14

Yankton def. Sturgis Brown, 25-17, 25-13

Little Wound Triangular=

Lakota Tech def. Little Wound, 27-25, 25-10

Little Wound def. Oelrichs, 25-12, 25-16

Metro Invitational=

Gold Bracket=

Bismarck Century, N.D. def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 25-21, 25-16

Fargo Davies, N.D. def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 20-25, 27-25, 17-15

Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Jamestown, N.D., 25-27, 25-14, 16-14

Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Sheyenne, N.D., 25-19, 25-10

Sioux Falls Washington def. Jamestown, N.D., 25-23, 25-14

Sioux Falls Washington def. West Fargo, N.D., 25-16, 25-10

Championship=

Sioux Falls Washington def. Bismarck High, N.D., 25-17, 25-16

Silver Bracket=

Bismarck Legacy, N.D. def. Sioux Falls Jefferson, 20-25, 25-22, 15-10

Kindred, N.D. def. Sioux Falls Jefferson, 25-12, 25-12

Seventh Place=

Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Mandan, N.D., 25-22, 25-9

Some high school volleyball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

Information from: ScoreStream Inc., <http://ScoreStream.com>

EXPLAINER: The Texas abortion law's swift impact, and future

By PAUL J. WEBER Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Most abortions in Texas are banned again after clinics that had raced to provide them during a two-day legal reprieve canceled appointments Saturday following a whiplash appeals court ruling.

The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals issued a one-page order Friday night, reinstating a Texas law that

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prohibits abortions once medical professionals can detect cardiac activity, usually around six weeks — and before some women know they're pregnant.

Enforcement of the nation's strictest abortion law is left up to private citizens who are deputized to file civil lawsuits against abortion providers, as well as others who help a woman obtain an abortion in Texas. Since taking effect in September, clinics in other states, including neighboring Louisiana and Oklahoma, have been inundated with patients from Texas.

Friday's order from the New Orleans-based 5th Circuit is just the latest in the legal battle over the Texas law, known as Senate Bill 8. It came two days after a federal judge in Austin suspended the law, allowing providers to resume abortions.

Here are some questions and answers about the law and what's next:

WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT?

Abortion providers say the ramifications have been punishing and "exactly what we feared." Some women are being forced to carry pregnancies to term, they say, or waiting in hopes that courts will strike down the law.

More than 100 pages of court filings in September offered the most comprehensive glimpse at how the near-total ban on abortion in Texas has played out. Physicians and executives at Texas' nearly two dozen abortion clinics described turning away hundreds of patients, and some who showed up for appointments could not proceed because cardiac activity had been detected.

One Planned Parenthood location in Houston normally performed about two dozen abortions daily, but in the 10 days after the law took effect, the clinic had done a total of 52.

Clinics in nearby states, meanwhile, say care for their own residents is being delayed to accommodate women making long trips from Texas. Doctors say recent patients from Texas have included rape victims, as the law makes no exceptions in cases of rape or incest.

Whole Women's Health has four clinics in Texas and was among providers that performed abortions in the state Thursday and Friday, after the lower court ruling allowed them. President and CEO Amy Hagstrom Miller said she didn't have the number of abortions performed during the reprieve.

WHAT WAS THE LANDSCAPE IN TEXAS BEFORE?

More than 55,000 abortions were performed last year in Texas, which already had some of the nation's strictest abortion laws, including a ban after 20 weeks of pregnancy.

Abortion providers in Texas have experience when it comes to abruptly ramping up operations again. In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic last year, abortions in Texas were all but banned for weeks under orders by Republican Gov. Greg Abbott that postponed surgeries "not immediately medically necessary."

But providers were reporting staffing issues and worried some clinics would permanently shutter. A decade ago, Texas had more than 40 abortion clinics, but more than half of them closed for good during a protracted legal battle over a 2013 law that was ultimately overturned by the Supreme Court.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Biden administration could bring the case back to the Supreme Court and ask the justices to quickly restore the federal judge's order that blocked the law.

The law has already made one trip to the Supreme Court. The justices voted 5-4 not to intervene to prevent it from taking effect, but they said further challenges were possible. With the Biden administration's challenge underway, the law could return to the justices quickly.

The federal judge who suspended the law — Robert Pitman, who was appointed by former President Barack Obama — wrote in a blistering 113-page opinion that the law was an "offensive deprivation" of the constitutional right to an abortion.

Whether the Biden administration's lawsuit — which calls it "clearly unconstitutional" — was likely to

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succeed was a factor in Pitman putting the law on hold.

Texas Right to Life, the state's largest anti-abortion group and a driver of the new law, has cheered the fact that it has stopped abortions every day that it has been in effect.

HOW ARE OTHER STATES RESPONDING?

After Texas' law went into effect, Republican lawmakers in at least half a dozen states said they would consider introducing similar bills, with the goal of enacting the kind of abortion crackdown they have sought for years. Those states include Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Mississippi, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Meanwhile, two dozen state attorneys general, all Democrats, submitted a brief in the Biden administration's lawsuit saying a substantial reduction of abortion access in one state would result in health care systems being burdened elsewhere.

The City Council in Portland, Oregon, briefly considered a boycott of Texas businesses because of the new law but instead decided to set aside \$200,000 to fund reproductive care.

The growing anti-abortion campaign is intended to reach the U.S. Supreme Court. Abortion opponents hope the conservative coalition assembled under President Donald Trump will end the constitutional right to abortion as established by the high court in the landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling.

North Dakota photo business closure leaves couples in lurch

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The abrupt closure of a North Dakota-based photography business has left couples in a four-state area scrambling to locate wedding photos or find new photographers for upcoming nuptials.

Glasser Images owner Jack Glasser said in a statement Friday that due in large part to COVID-19, the Bismarck studio "simply couldn't keep up with our ongoing costs, debt repayment, salaries, rent and other business expenses." He told customers in an email he cannot offer refunds.

The move has Johnny Thompson and his wife Crystal Brunner-Thompson wondering if they will ever receive photos of their August wedding. They paid more than \$2,000 for the Bismarck event.

"I'm an only child," Brunner-Thompson said. "My parents are never going to get to do this again. I have no photos with my parents. I'd never seen my dad get emotional. It's just stuff you can't get back."

Glasser Images photographed weddings throughout the Dakotas, Minnesota and Colorado without charging for travel costs, according to the company website.

The North Dakota Attorney General's Office said it had fielded more than 170 complaints about the situation by Friday afternoon and was investigating.

Glasser's attorney, Tim O'Keefe, told The Bismarck Tribune that he and Glasser will try to talk with customers in the next couple of days.

"He's going to do the best he can to take care of everybody, but there are a lot of moving parts right now," O'Keefe said. "At this point, there's not an answer that everybody is going to be satisfied with."

EXPLAINER: New ethics board thrust into Kristi Noem inquiry

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The four retired judges who make up South Dakota's Government Accountability Board usually meet just a handful of times a year, almost entirely unnoticed by the public, and have never advanced a complaint to a public hearing.

They're now preparing for the high-profile task of weighing whether Gov. Kristi Noem twice abused the power of her office.

The board is barely 4 years old, created by the Legislature after public pressure for ethics reforms in state government. It has met a total of 17 times, dismissing most complaints without a public hearing on the grounds that they fell outside its specific purpose to "review and investigate allegations of misconduct" by officials holding a statewide office or by executive branch employees.

WHAT ARE THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST NOEM?

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Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg — a Republican like Noem, but no ally of the governor's — referred two matters to the board. The first is a request from a Democratic lawmaker for an investigation into whether Noem's use of state airplanes broke the law; the other is concerns about whether the governor interfered in a state agency that was evaluating her daughter's application for a real estate appraiser license.

Noem, who is positioned for a White House bid in 2024, has denied wrongdoing and dismissed the cases as political attacks.

Concern from both Republican and Democratic state lawmakers has grown in the wake of an Associated Press report that the governor held a meeting with both her daughter and the director of a state agency that had moved to deny her daughter's application for an appraiser certification.

WHAT CAN THE BOARD DO?

It has broad powers. It can dismiss an ethics complaint in a private conference without even naming who the complaint was against. If it decides to proceed with an inquiry, it can subpoena evidence and witnesses or even request the Division of Criminal Investigation to launch a probe. If it finds violations, the board can take a wide range of actions, from issuing private reprimands to requiring coursework or community service.

"This will be a real test of this new board, one we did not expect, but certainly appropriate," said Karen Soli, the former Democratic lawmaker who spearheaded the effort to create the board.

WHY WAS THE BOARD CREATED?

Soli proposed the board in 2017 and got eager support from Republican lawmakers, who were under pressure from voters after repealing a voter-passed law that overhauled ethics laws. The push for ethics reform came after a series of state government scandals, Soli said, including one that culminated in 2015 with a couple dying in a murder-suicide after stealing hundreds of thousands of dollars from government programs.

The board is bipartisan. Noem appointed one of its members — former Supreme Court Chief Justice David Gilbertson. For many years, Gilbertson was a registered Democrat, but he told the AP last year that he had switched his party affiliation to independent.

"It's comprised of folks who would have the ability to have good judgment, have the ability to say there's nothing here, or we should have a closer look," said Mark Mickelson, who as House Speaker in 2017 helped push the board proposal through the Republican-dominated Legislature.

If any board members recuse themselves, Noem would name a replacement. Governor's spokesman Jordan Overturf said, "we can't comment on hypotheticals," when asked how the governor would handle that.

HOW WILL THE BOARD PROCEED?

That's not clear. The board has established procedures that call for an inquiry to start with an ethics complaint but has never received a referral from the attorney general's office.

Tim Bormann, a spokesman for the attorney general, said the office "does not have any oversight into the workings of the Government Accountability Board."

He also declined to comment on whether the office had sent any documentation to the board.

Overturf said Noem's office had not received a notice of complaint from the board. Once the board receives a written complaint, it has 15 days to notify the person accused of wrongdoing, who in turn would have 15 days to respond.

Assistant Attorney General Katie Mallery, who is assigned to assist the board with procedural matters, said the board has not scheduled any meetings or determined how it will handle the referrals from the attorney general. It usually schedules meetings within 30 days of receiving a complaint.

Once it does meet, the four retired justices are sure to have an audience.

"Something like this could hold the governor accountable, but I certainly didn't imagine it in my lifetime," Soli said. "God bless those four — they have hard work ahead of them."

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Controversial father of Pakistan nuclear bomb dies at age 85

By KATHY GANNON Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Abdul Qadeer Khan, a controversial figure known as the father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, died Sunday of COVID-19 following a lengthy illness, his family said. He was 85.

Khan, who launched Pakistan on the path to becoming a nuclear weapons power in the early 1970s, died in a hospital in the capital Islamabad, Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad said.

Thousands of people attended a state funeral at the massive white-marble Faisal Mosque in the capital. His body was carried by an honor guard and military and political dignitaries offered funeral prayers.

Flags in Pakistan flew at half-staff.

Khan was mired in controversy that began even before he returned to Pakistan from the Netherlands in the 1970s, where he had worked at a nuclear research facility.

He was later accused of stealing the centrifuge uranium enrichment technology from the Netherlands facility that he would later use to develop Pakistan's first nuclear weapon, according to research done by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Khan, who held a doctorate in metallurgical engineering from the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium, offered to launch Pakistan's nuclear weapons program in 1974 after neighbor India conducted its first "peaceful nuclear explosion."

He reached out to then-Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto offering technology for Pakistan's own nuclear weapons program. Still smarting from the 1971 loss of East Pakistan, which became Bangladesh, as well as the capture of 90,000 Pakistani soldiers by India, Bhutto embraced the offer. He famously said: "We (Pakistanis) will eat grass, even go hungry, but we will have our own (nuclear bomb)."

Since then, Pakistan has relentlessly pursued its nuclear weapons program in tandem with India. Both are declared nuclear weapons states after they conducted tit-for-tat nuclear weapons tests in 1998.

Pakistan's nuclear program and Khan's involvement have long been the subject of allegations and criticism.

Khan was accused by the U.S. of trading nuclear secrets to neighbor Iran and to North Korea in the 1990s after Washington sanctioned Pakistan for its nuclear weapons program. For 10 years during the Soviet occupation of neighboring Afghanistan, successive U.S. presidents certified Pakistan was not developing nuclear weapons. The certification was necessary under American law to allow U.S. aid to anti-communist Afghan rebels through Pakistan.

But in 1990, just months after the 1989 withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, Washington slapped Pakistan with crippling sanctions ending all aid to the country, including military and humanitarian.

Pakistan was accused of selling nuclear weapons technology to North Korea in exchange for its No-Dong missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads. A 2003 Congressional Research Report said that while it was difficult to pinpoint the genesis of Pakistan's nuclear cooperation with North Korea, it likely began in the mid-1990s.

At home in Pakistan, Khan was heralded as a hero and the father of the nuclear bomb. Radical religious parties called him the father of the only Islamic nuclear bomb.

Khan was rejected by Pakistan's dictator President Gen. Pervez Musharraf after 2001, when details of Khan's alleged sales of nuclear secrets came under renewed scrutiny. Khan bitterly denounced Musharraf and his attempt to distance the state from his activities, always denying he engaged in any secret selling or clandestine nuclear weapons technology exchanges.

In recent years, Khan mostly lived out of the public eye and tributes from fellow scientists and Pakistani politicians began soon after his death.

Prime Minister Imran Khan called him a "national icon," whose nuclear weapons program "provided us security against an aggressive much larger nuclear neighbor. For the people of Pakistan he was a national icon."

Fellow scientist Dr. Samar Mubarakmand said Khan was a national treasure who defied Western attempts to stifle Pakistan's nuclear program.

"It was unthinkable for the west that Pakistan would make any breakthrough but finally they had to

acknowledge Dr. Khan's achievement of making the country's nuclear weapons," he said. Khan passed at the KRL Hospital in in Islamabad.

Associated Press writer Zarar Khan contributed to this report

Iraqis vote for new parliament hoping for change

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq closed its airspace and scrambled its air force Sunday as voters headed to the polls to elect a parliament that, despite widespread skepticism, some Iraqis hope will deliver reforms after decades of conflict and mismanagement.

The vote was originally scheduled for next year but was brought forward in response to a popular uprising in the capital Baghdad and southern provinces in late 2019. Tens of thousands of people took to the streets to protest endemic corruption, poor services and rising unemployment. They were met with deadly force by security forces firing live ammunition and tear gas. More than 600 people were killed and thousands injured within just a few months.

Although authorities gave in and called the early elections, the death toll and the heavy-handed crackdown prompted many young activists and demonstrators who took part in the protests to later call for a boycott of the polls.

A series of kidnappings and targeted assassinations that killed more than 35 people has further discouraged many from taking part. Apathy is widespread amid deep skepticism that the independent candidates stand a chance against established parties and politicians, many of them backed by armed militias.

"I voted because there needs to be change. I don't want these same faces and same parties to return," said Amir Fadel, a 22-year-old car dealer, after casting his ballot in Baghdad's Karradah district.

A total of 3,449 candidates are vying for 329 seats in the parliamentary elections, which will be the sixth held since the fall of Saddam Hussein after the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the sectarian-based power-sharing political system it produced.

More than 250,000 security personnel across the country were tasked with protecting the vote. Soldiers, police and anti-terrorism forces fanned out and deployed outside polling stations, some of which were ringed by barbed wire. Voters were patted down and searched.

Iraq's President Barham Salih and Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi urged Iraqis to vote in large numbers.

"Get out and vote, and change your reality for the sake of Iraq and your future," said al-Kadhimi, repeating the phrase 'get out' three times after casting his ballot at a school in Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone, home to foreign embassies and government offices.

The 2018 elections saw just 44% of eligible voters cast their ballots, a record low, and the results were widely contested. There are concerns of a similar or even lower turnout this time.

By midday, turnout was still relatively low and streets mostly deserted. In a tea shop in Karradah, one of the few open, candidate Reem Abdulhadi walked in to ask whether people had cast their vote.

"I will give my vote to Umm Kalthoum, the singer, she is the only one who deserves it," the tea vendor replied, referring to the late Egyptian singer beloved by many in the Arab world. He said he will not take part in the election and didn't believe in the political process.

After a few words, Abdulhadi gave the man, who asked to remain anonymous, a card with her name and number in case he decided to change his mind. He put it in his pocket.

"Thank you, I will keep it as a souvenir," he said.

At that moment, a low-flying, high-speed military aircraft flew overhead making a screeching noise. "Listen to this. This sound is terror. It reminds me of war, not an election," he added.

In the Shiite holy city of Najaf, Iraq's influential cleric Moqtada al-Sadr cast his ballot, swarmed by local journalists. He then drove away in a white sedan without commenting. Al-Sadr, a populist who has an immense following among Iraq's working class Shiites, came on top in the 2018 elections, winning a majority of seats.

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Groups drawn from Iraq's majority Shiite Muslims dominate the electoral landscape, with a tight race expected between al-Sadr's list and the Fatah Alliance, led by paramilitary leader Hadi al-Ameri, which came in second in the previous election.

The Fatah Alliance is comprised of parties affiliated with the Popular Mobilization Forces, an umbrella group of mostly pro-Iran Shiite militias that rose to prominence during the war against the Sunni extremist Islamic State group. It includes some of the most hard-line pro-Iran factions, such as the Asaib Ahl al-Haq militia. Al-Sadr, a black-turbaned nationalist leader, is also close to Iran, but publicly rejects its political influence.

In Iraq's autonomous northern Kurdistan region, the race was dominated by the two main Kurdish parties known as the Kurdistan Democratic Party, which dominates the Kurdish government, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

The election is the first since the fall of Saddam to proceed without a curfew in place, reflecting the significantly improved security situation in the country following the defeat of IS in 2017. Previous votes were marred by fighting and deadly bomb attacks that have plagued the country for decades.

As a security precaution, Iraq closed its airspace and land border crossings and scrambled its air force from Saturday night until early Monday morning.

In another first, Sunday's election is taking place under a new election law that divides Iraq into smaller constituencies — another demand of the activists who took part in the 2019 protests — and allows for more independent candidates.

A U.N. Security Council resolution adopted earlier this year authorized an expanded team to monitor the elections. There will be up to 600 international observers in place, including 150 from the United Nations. More than 24 million of Iraq's estimated 38 million people are eligible to vote.

Iraq is also for the first time introducing biometric cards for voters. But despite all these measures, claims of vote buying, intimidation and manipulation have persisted.

The head of Iraq's electoral commission has said that initial election results will be announced within 24 hours.

Associated Press writer Abdulrahman Zeyad contributed reporting.

Terror & tourism: Xinjiang eases its grip, but fear remains

By DAKE KANG Associated Press

XINJIANG, China (AP) — The razor wire that once ringed public buildings in China's far northwestern Xinjiang region is nearly all gone.

Gone, too, are the middle school uniforms in military camouflage and the armored personnel carriers rumbling around the homeland of the Uyghurs. Gone are many of the surveillance cameras that once glared down like birds from overhead poles, and the eerie eternal wail of sirens in the ancient Silk Road city of Kashgar.

Uyghur teenage boys, once a rare sight, now flirt with girls over pounding dance music at rollerblading rinks. One cab driver blasted Shakira as she raced through the streets.

Four years after Beijing launched a brutal crackdown that swept up to a million or more Uyghurs and other mostly Muslim minorities into detention camps and prisons, its control of Xinjiang has entered a new era. Chinese authorities have scaled back many of the most draconian and visible aspects of the region's high-tech police state. The panic that gripped the region a few years ago has subsided considerably, and a sense of normality is creeping back in.

But there is no doubt about who rules, and evidence of the terror of the last four years is everywhere.

It's seen in Xinjiang's cities, where many historic centers have been bulldozed and the Islamic call to prayer no longer rings out. It's seen in Kashgar, where one mosque was converted into a café, and a section of another has been turned into a tourist toilet. It's seen deep in the countryside, where Han Chinese officials run villages.

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And it's seen in the fear that was ever-present, just below the surface, on two rare trips to Xinjiang I made for The Associated Press, one on a state-guided tour for the foreign press.

A bike seller's eyes widened in alarm when he learned I was a foreigner. He picked up his phone and began dialing the police.

A convenience store cashier chatted idly about declining sales – then was visited by the shadowy men tailing us. When we dropped by again, she didn't say a word, instead making a zipping motion across her mouth, pushing past us and running out of the store.

At one point, I was tailed by a convoy of a dozen cars, an eerie procession through the silent streets of Aksu at 4 in the morning. Anytime I tried to chat with someone, the minders would draw in close, straining to hear every word.

It's hard to know why Chinese authorities have shifted to subtler methods of controlling the region. It may be that searing criticism from the West, along with punishing political and commercial sanctions, have pushed authorities to lighten up. Or it may simply be that China judges it has come far enough in its goal of subduing the Uyghurs and other mostly Muslim minorities to relax its grip.

Uyghur activists abroad accuse the Chinese government of genocide, pointing to plunging birthrates and the mass detentions. The authorities say their goal is not to eliminate Uyghurs but to integrate them, and that harsh measures are necessary to curb extremism.

Regardless of intent, one thing is clear: Many of the practices that made the Uyghur culture a living thing – raucous gatherings, strict Islamic habits, heated debate – have been restricted or banned. In their place, the authorities have crafted a sterilized version, one ripe for commercialization.

Xinjiang officials took us on a tour to the Grand Bazaar in the center of Urumqi, which has been rebuilt for tourists, like many other cities in Xinjiang. Here, there are giant plastic bearded Uyghur men and a giant plastic Uyghur instrument. A nearby museum for traditional naan bread sells tiny plastic naan keychains, Uyghur hats and fridge magnets. Crowds of Han Chinese snap selfies.

James Leibold, a prominent scholar of Xinjiang ethnic policy, calls it the "museumification" of Uyghur culture. Chinese officials call it progress.

China has long struggled to integrate the Uyghurs, a historically Muslim group of 13 million people with close linguistic, ethnic and cultural ties to Turkey. Since the Communist Party took control of Xinjiang in 1949, Beijing's leaders have debated whether stricter or softer measures are more effective in absorbing the vast territory, half the size of India.

For decades, policy in Xinjiang swung back and forth. Even as the state granted special benefits to minorities, such as hiring quotas and extra points on entrance exams, glass ceilings, racism, and restrictions on religion alienated and angered many Uyghurs.

The harder the government tried to control the Uyghurs, the more stubbornly many clung to their identity. A few resorted to violence, carrying out bombings and knifings against a state they believed would never accord them genuine respect. Hundreds of innocent civilians, both Han Chinese and Uyghur, perished in increasingly deadly attacks.

The debate ended soon after President Xi Jinping's rise to power in 2012. The state chose forced assimilation, detaining Uyghurs and other minorities indiscriminately by the thousands and branding them as suspected "terrorists."

Today, many checkpoints and police stations are gone and the bombings have stopped, but the racial divide remains clear.

Uyghurs live trapped in an invisible system that restricts their every move. It's near impossible for them to get passports, and on planes to and from Xinjiang, most passengers are from China's Han Chinese majority.

Uyghurs who live outside Xinjiang must register with local police and report to an officer on a regular basis, their moves tracked and monitored. Many Uyghurs living in Xinjiang aren't allowed to leave the region.

Information on Xinjiang within China is heavily censored, and state media now promotes the region as a safe, exotic tourist destination. As a result, Han Chinese outside Xinjiang remain largely unaware

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of the restrictions that Uyghurs face, one of a number of reasons why many in China are supportive of Beijing's crackdown.

Within Xinjiang, Han Chinese and Uyghurs live side by side, an unspoken but palpable gulf between them. In the suburbs of Kashgar, a Han woman at a tailor shop tells my colleague that most Uyghurs weren't allowed to go far from their homes.

"Isn't that so? You can't leave this shop?" the woman said to a Uyghur seamstress.

Down the street from the tailor shop, I spot Lunar New Year banners with slogans in Chinese characters like "The Chinese Communist Party is good" plastered on every storefront. An elderly Han Chinese shopkeeper tells me that local officials printed the banners by the hundreds, handed them out and ordered them put up, although Uyghurs traditionally celebrate Islamic holidays rather than the Lunar New Year.

She approved of the strict measures. Xinjiang was much safer now, she said, than when she had first moved there with her son, a soldier with the Bingtuan, Xinjiang's paramilitary corps.

The Uyghurs "don't dare do anything around here anymore," she told me.

City centers now bustle with life again, with Uyghur and Han children screeching as they chase each other across streets. Some Uyghurs even approach me and ask for my contact — something that never happened on previous visits.

But in rural villages and quiet suburbs, many houses sit empty and padlocked. In one Kashgar neighborhood, the words "Empty House" is spray-painted on every third or fourth residence. In a village an hour's drive away, I spot dozens of "Empty House" notices on a half-hour walk, red lettering on yellow slips fluttering in the wind on door upon door.

Control is also tighter deep in the countryside, away from the bazaars that the government is eager for visitors to see.

In one village we stop in, an elderly Uyghur man in a square skullcap answers just one question — "We don't have the coronavirus here, everything is good" — before a local Han Chinese cadre demands to know what we are doing.

He tells the villagers in Uyghur, "If he asks you anything, just say you don't know anything."

Behind him, a drunk Uyghur man was yelling. Alcohol is forbidden for practicing Muslims, especially in the holy month of Ramadan.

"I've been drinking alcohol, I'm a little drunk, but that's no problem. We can drink as we want now!" he shouted. "We can do what we want! Things are great now!"

At a nearby store, I notice liquor bottles lining the shelves. In another town, my colleague and I encounter a drunk Uyghur man, passed out by a trash bin in broad daylight. Though many Uyghurs in big cities like Urumqi have long indulged in drinking, such sights were once unimaginable in the pious rural areas of southern Xinjiang.

On a government sponsored tour, officials took us to meet Mamatjan Ahat, a truck driver, who declared he was back to drinking and smoking because he had recanted religion and extremism after a stint at one of Xinjiang's infamous "training centers".

"It made me more open-minded," Ahat told reporters, as officials listened in.

Xinjiang officials say they aren't forcing atheism on the Uyghurs, but rather defending freedom of belief against creeping extremism. "Not all Uyghurs are Muslim," is a common refrain.

Controls on religious activity have slackened, but remain tightly bound by the state. For example, the authorities have allowed some mosques to reopen, though hours are strictly limited. Small groups of elderly worshippers trickle in and out.

Xinjiang's unique brand of state-controlled Islam is most on display at the Xinjiang Islamic Institute, a government school for imams.

Here, young Uyghur men chant verses from the Quran and pray five times a day. They get scholarships and opportunities to study in Egypt, officials say as they walk us around. Tens of thousands have graduated, and recently they've opened a new campus — albeit one with a police station installed at the entrance.

"Religious freedom is enshrined in China's constitution," said a student, Omar Adilabdulla, as officials watch him speak. "It's totally free."

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As he speaks, I crack open a textbook on another student's desk. A good Chinese Muslim has to learn Mandarin, it says, China's main language.

"Arabic is not the only language that compiles Allah's classics," the lesson said. "To learn Chinese is our responsibility and obligation, because we are all Chinese."

As I flip through the book, I spot other lessons.

"We must be grateful to the Party and the government for creating peace," reads one chapter.

"We must strive to build a socialist Xinjiang with Chinese characteristics," says another. "Amen!"

Uyghur is still spoken everywhere, but its use in public spaces is slowly fading. In some cities, entire blocks, freshly constructed, have signs only in Chinese, not Uyghur.

In bookstores, Uyghur language tomes are relegated to sections labeled "ethnic minority language books". The government boasts that nearly a thousand Uyghur titles are published a year, but none are by Perhat Tursun, a lyrical modernist author, or Yalqun Rozi, a textbook editor and firebrand commentator. They, like most prominent Uyghur intellectuals, have been imprisoned.

On the shelves instead: Xi Jinping thought, biographies of Mao, lectures on socialist values, and Mandarin-Uyghur dictionaries.

Many Uyghurs still struggle with Mandarin, from young men to elderly grandmothers. In recent years, the government has made Mandarin the mandatory standard in schools.

On the state tour, a headmaster tells us that the Uyghur language continues to be protected, pointing to their minority language classes. But all other classes are in Chinese, and a sign at one school urges students to "Speak Mandarin, use standard writing."

The most heavily criticized aspect of Xinjiang's crackdown has been its so-called "training centers", which leaked documents show are actually extrajudicial indoctrination camps.

After global outcry, Chinese officials declared the camps shuttered in 2019. Many indeed appear to be closed.

On the state-led tour in April, they took us to what they said was once a "training center", now a regular vocational school in Peyzawat County. A mere fence marks the campus boundaries — a stark contrast from the barbed wire, high watchtowers and police at the entrance we saw three years ago. On our own, we see at least three other sites which once appeared to be camps and are now apartments or office complexes.

But in their place, permanent detention facilities have been built, in an apparent move from makeshift camps to a long-lasting system of mass incarceration. We encountered one massive facility driving along a country road, its walls rising from the fields, men visible in high guard towers. At a second, we were blocked by two men wearing epidemic-prevention gear. A third ranks among the largest detention facilities on earth. Many are tucked away behind forests or dunes deep in the countryside, far from tourists and city centers.

In Urumqi, at an anti-terror exhibition in a vast, modernist complex near glass office towers and freshly-laid highways, the Chinese authorities have rewritten history. Though Xinjiang has cycled in and out of Chinese control, and was independent as recently as the 1700s and also briefly in the last century, the territory's past is casually dismissed.

"Although there were some kingdoms and khanates in Xinjiang in the past, they were all local regimes within the territory of China," one display says.

It's written in English and Chinese. No Uyghur script is seen anywhere in the exhibit. Guns and bombs sit in glass cases, ones the exhibit says were confiscated from extremists.

A prim Uyghur woman in a Chinese traditional qipao suit presents a video depicting Beijing's vision for Xinjiang's future, where the sun sets over pagodas and a futuristic skyline. Many scenes look like they could be filmed anywhere in China.

"Our anti-terrorism and de-radicalization struggles have achieved remarkable results," she says, in crisp Mandarin.

Officials dodge questions about how many Uyghurs were detained, though statistics showed an ex-

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traordinary spike in arrests before the government stopped releasing them in 2019. Instead, they tell us during the tour that they've engineered the perfect solution to terrorism, protecting Uyghur culture rather than destroying it.

One night, I was seated next to Dou Wangui, the Party Secretary of Aksu Prefecture, as well as Li Xuejun, the vice chairman of the Xinjiang People's Congress. They are both Han Chinese, like most of Xinjiang's powerful men.

Over grilled lamb and yogurt, we watched grinning Uyghurs dressed in traditional gowns dance and sing. Dou turns to me.

"See, we can't have genocide here," Dou said, gesturing to the performers. "We're preserving their traditional culture."

Texas A&M beats No. 1 Alabama 41-38 on last-play field goal

By KRISTIE RIEKEN AP Sports Writer

COLLEGE STATION, Texas (AP) — During a speaking engagement this spring Texas A&M coach Jimbo Fisher used colorful language to proclaim his team would beat Alabama during coach Nick Saban's career.

He fulfilled that promise in his first try since that vow Saturday night, handing the defending national champions their first loss since 2019 in a thrilling upset.

"Our team beat a really good football team ... and that's what's important to me," Fisher said.

Seth Small made a 28-yard field goal as time expired and Texas A&M stunned top-ranked Alabama 41-38 to end the Crimson Tide's winning streak at 19 games.

The victory came on Fisher's 56th birthday and is certainly Texas A&M's biggest win since Fisher took over in 2018.

"I didn't know what to get him, so we thought as a team that we should get a win for him," Small said.

Alabama (5-1, 2-1 Southeastern Conference) had scored 21 straight points — capped by a TD reception and 2-point conversion grab by Jameson Williams — to take a 38-31 lead with five minutes to go.

Texas A&M (4-2, 1-2) tied it at 38 when Zach Calzada connected with Ainius Smith for a 25-yard touchdown with three minutes left. Calzada was hit as he threw the strike and had to be helped off the field but returned for the next drive after a visit to the medical tent.

Calzada returned after the Aggies forced a punt to orchestrate the winning drive, highlighted by a 17-yard pass to Isaiah Spiller before Small finished it off to send fans streaming onto the field to celebrate.

"I'm proud of our guys," Fisher said. "We made plays at critical times."

Calzada threw for 285 yards and three touchdowns, as the former backup played like a star. Devon Achane returned a kickoff 96 yards for a TD in the third quarter and A&M's defense got after Bryce Young all night.

"This is a great win," Achane said. "It shows us that we're capable of doing great things."

Smith finished with 85 yards receiving and two scores and Jalen Wydermyer had 73 yards receiving and a TD to help the Aggies to the win.

Alabama hadn't lost since falling 48-45 to Auburn on Nov. 30, 2019.

"Everyone needs to remember how they feel and not forget it," Saban said.

It's the first time Saban has lost to one of his assistants after entering the game a perfect 24-0 in those games. He'd beaten Fisher four times, the most of any of his former staffers.

"It doesn't mean anything to me," Fisher said about ending the former assistants streak. "Our football team is learning to play against other great football teams and have success. That's what matters to me."

Texas A&M also ended Alabama's streak of 100 wins over unranked teams, dating to a win over Colorado in the 2007 Independence Bowl to cap Saban's first season.

The Aggies entered the season ranked sixth and gunning for Alabama after the Crimson Tide handed them their only loss last season. But by last week it looked as if this would be a lost season for the Aggies after consecutive defeats by Arkansas and Mississippi State sent them tumbling out of the Top 25.

But instead of falling into a bigger hole this week, the Aggies pulled off the upset to snap an eight-game

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skid against Alabama. It's their first win in the series since Johnny Manziel's spectacular performance led them to a 29-24 win in 2012 on the road when the Crimson Tide was also ranked first.

"We had a couple of tough weeks ... (but) you're defined by how you respond to adversity," Fisher said.

Manziel, who won the Heisman Trophy that season, was among the 106,815 fans at Kyle Field on Saturday night to watch the Aggies beat the Crimson Tide at home for the first time ever. A&M's first win in the series came in a 20-16 win in the Cotton Bowl on Jan. 1, 1968.

Manziel was among those celebrating on the field after the game in the wild postgame party.

The 17 1/2-point underdogs gained control of this one early, racing out to a 24-10 halftime lead behind two takeaways and a splendid start by Calzada. A&M's 24 points in the first half were the most Alabama had allowed to an unranked opponent before halftime during Saban's tenure.

"There were a lot of issues," Saban said.

Young threw for 369 yards and three touchdowns and Williams had 146 yards receiving. Brian Robinson Jr. added 147 yards rushing.

Alabama cut the lead to seven when DeMarcco Hellams blocked a punt by Nik Constantinou and King Mwikuta pounced on it in the end zone for a touchdown in the third quarter.

But the Aggies took the blow and responded immediately with one of their own. Achane zig-zagged through two waves of defenders and then displayed the elite speed that lets him double as a sprinter on the track team to simply outrun everyone to make it 31-17 with eight minutes left in the third.

"The hole was so big," Achane said. "It was like is this for me?"

Young then capped a 75-yard drive with a 29-yard touchdown pass Williams to cut the lead to 31-24. Williams put his finger to his lips to shush the crowd after the score.

THE TAKEAWAY

Alabama has some things to clean up to get back on track and try to get a chance to defend its title. The Aggies must be kicking themselves that they didn't play better in the last two weeks so this win could have meant a lot more.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

Alabama is certainly to fall a few spots in the poll after the loss and getting a win over the defending champs should be enough to get the Aggies back in the Top 25.

UP NEXT

Alabama: At Mississippi State on Saturday night.

Texas A&M: At Missouri on Saturday.

More AP college football: <https://apnews.com/hub/college-football> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25. Sign up for the AP's college football newsletter: <https://apnews.com/cfbtop25>

Tensions persist between legacy of Columbus, native people

By KATHLEEN FOODY and WILSON RING Associated Press

Monday's federal holiday dedicated to Christopher Columbus is highlighting the ongoing divide between those who view the explorer as a representative of Italian American history and others horrified by an annual tribute that ignores native people whose lives and culture were forever changed by colonialism.

Spurred by national calls for racial equity, communities across the U.S. took a deeper look at Columbus' legacy in recent years — pairing or replacing it with Indigenous Peoples Day.

On Friday, President Joe Biden issued the first presidential proclamation of "Indigenous Peoples' Day," the most significant boost yet to efforts to refocus the federal holiday celebrating Columbus.

But activists, including members of Native American tribes, said ending the formal holiday in Columbus' name has been stymied by politicians and organizations focusing on Italian American heritage.

"The opposition has tried to paint Columbus as a benevolent man, similar to how white supremacists have painted Robert E. Lee," Les Begay, Diné Nation member and co-founder of the Indigenous Peoples' Day Coalition of Illinois, said, referring to the Civil War general who led the Confederate Army.

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Columbus' arrival began centuries of exploration and colonization by European nations, bringing violence, disease and other suffering to native people already living in the Western Hemisphere.

"Not honoring Indigenous peoples on this day just continues to erase our history, our contributions and the fact that we were the first inhabitants of this country," Begay said.

Across the country tension, over the two holidays has been playing out since the early 1990s. Debates over monuments and statues of the Italian explorer tread similar ground, as in Philadelphia where the city placed a box over a Columbus statue last year in the wake of the murder of George Floyd, a Black man, by a white Minneapolis police officer. Protesters opposing racial injustice and police brutality against people of color rallied for months in summer 2020.

Philadelphia lawyer George Bochetto, who has been fighting Democratic Mayor Jim Kenney's administration to uncover the statue, said Saturday many felt efforts to remove it were an attack on Italian-American heritage.

Kenney previously signed an executive order changing the city's annual Columbus Day holiday to Indigenous Peoples Day. Monday will be the first city holiday under the new name.

"We have a mayor that's doing everything he can to attack the Italian American community, including canceling its parade, removing statues, changing the Columbus Day holiday to Indigenous Peoples Day by fiat," Bochetto said.

Kenney spokesperson Kevin Lessard said the statue should remain boxed up "in the best interest and public safety of all Philadelphians."

In 2016, Lincoln, Nebraska, joined other cities adding Indigenous Peoples' Day to the calendar on the same date as Columbus Day. Events on Monday will focus on the newer addition, including unveiling a statue honoring the first Native American physician, Dr. Susan La Flesche Picotte.

Some feel a split day causes further harm. Activists plan a small protest outside the Robert V. Denney Federal Building, calling for an outright end to the holiday in Columbus' name at all levels of government.

"It's patently absurd to honor Indigenous people and the man who tortured and murdered their ancestors," said Jackson Meredith, an organizer. "As far as we're concerned, we're going to keep protesting it until Columbus Day is abolished."

In New York City, the annual Columbus Day Parade returns after a one-year, in-person absence attributed to the coronavirus pandemic. The parade is touted by some as the world's largest Columbus Day celebration.

In May, Italian American activists complained after the Board of Education erased Christopher Columbus Day from the New York City school calendar, replacing it with "Indigenous People's Day." Following the outcry, the schools changed the designation to: "Italian Heritage Day/Indigenous People's Day."

Mayor Bill de Blasio said he supported the compromise.

"We have to honor that day as a day to recognize the contributions of all Italian Americans, so of course the day should not have been changed arbitrarily," de Blasio said.

Chicago's annual Columbus Day parade also returns Monday after the pandemic forced 2020's cancellation of the event that draws 20,000 people. It's a vivid reminder of the ongoing fight over three statues of Columbus, still warehoused by the city after protesters targeted them in summer 2020.

Mayor Lori Lightfoot in July 2020 ordered the statues removed and said demonstrations were endangering protesters and police.

She later created a committee to review monuments in the city, including the fate of Columbus monuments. No plans have been announced publicly, but the Joint Civic Committee of Italian Americans that plans the Columbus Day parade this summer sued the city's park district, demanding that one be restored.

Ron Onesti, the organization's president, said the parade usually draws protesters and expects that on Monday too. He sees the holiday, parade and statues as a celebration of Italian Americans' contributions to the U.S., not just Columbus.

"The outcome I'm looking for is (for) our traditions to be respected and conversations to continue," Onesti said Saturday. "Every plaque that goes along with a statue says it recognizes the Italian community's contributions. So people need to understand that's why it's there, and then let's sit down and figure out

where to go from here.”

Illinois in 2017 designated the last Monday in September as Indigenous Peoples Day but kept Columbus Day on the second Monday of October. A proposal to replace Columbus Day filed this year hasn't received any action.

Chicago Public Schools in 2020 voted to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day, provoking outrage from several alderman and Italian American groups. The city's holiday calendar still lists Columbus Day.

Begay, the Indigenous Peoples Day advocate, said the organization decided to focus on changing Columbus Day first in Cook County, hoping it would be an easier path than convincing state or Chicago officials. But so far, members of the county's board haven't lined up behind the proposal.

“Why are 500 plus years still forgotten?” Begay said. “Why don't we have this single day to recognize these horrible atrocities committed against native people?”

Associated Press Reporter Lawrence Neumeister in New York contributed to this report.

Army general who commanded in Iraq dies of cancer at age 67

By ROBERT BURNS AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Raymond T. Odierno, a retired Army general who commanded American and coalition forces in Iraq at the height of the war and capped a 39-year career by serving as the Army's chief of staff, has died, his family said Saturday. He was 67.

“The general died after a brave battle with cancer; his death was not related to COVID,” a family statement said. “There are no other details to share at this time. His family is grateful for the concern and asks for privacy.”

Odierno died Friday; the family declined to say where. It said funeral and interment information was not yet available.

President Joe Biden lauded Odierno as a “hero of great integrity and honor.” In a joint statement, the president and First Lady Jill Biden recalled that Odierno spoke at the funeral of their son Beau, who served under Odierno in Iraq and died of brain cancer in 2015.

“Ray was a giant in military circles — dedicated first and always to the service members he commanded and served alongside,” the Bidens said, adding that Odierno and his wife Linda were advocates for military children and families.

“We stand with the Odierno family and all our brave service members who were shaped and molded by General Odierno over his lifetime of service,” they said.

At 6-foot-5, Odierno was an imposing figure. He played football as a cadet at West Point and retained a lifelong interest in the sport. Army Secretary Christine Wormuth wrote on Twitter Saturday evening that Odierno embodied the values of West Point and of the Army itself.

“A leader who was larger than life, we will remember him always for his selfless service to our nation and to our soldiers in and out of uniform,” she wrote.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, who succeeded Odierno as the top overall commander in Iraq in 2010, called him a confidant, a friend and a powerful example.

“Ray was known for his loyalty — to mission and to his people,” Austin said in a statement. “He cared deeply about the troops who knew him as ‘General O,’ and he and Linda looked after the families of those troops as if they were their own.”

Odierno served three tours in Iraq. After his first, in 2003-04 as commander of the 4th Infantry Division, he was criticized by some for overly aggressive tactics that some believed fed an insurgency. At an early high water mark, in December 2003, his soldiers involved in the capture of Iraq's deposed president, Saddam Hussein. That success gave hope to quashing an emerging insurgency, but in 2004 the insurgency gained greater momentum and led to the deadly rise of al-Qaida in Iraq.

Odierno returned to Iraq in 2006 and served for two years as commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq.

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In 2008 he took over as the top overall American and coalition commander in Baghdad, leaving in 2010 as combat was winding down and as President Barack Obama was adding troops in Afghanistan.

A native of Rockaway, New Jersey, Odierno graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, in 1976 with a commission in field artillery. He served in a wide range of Army and Defense Department roles with multiple tours abroad, including in Iraq, Germany, Albania and Kuwait. As a three-star general he was assistant to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a job that made him the main military adviser to the secretary of state.

When Odierno retired in 2015, he was succeeded as Army chief of staff by Gen. Mark Milley, the current Joint Chiefs chairman. In a statement Saturday, Milley said Odierno's legacy will "live on through the generations he led."

At a ceremony marking his retirement from the Army in 2015, then-Defense Secretary Ashton Carter described him as a commander whose tenacity and operational savvy gave civilian leaders great confidence.

"His commanding presence calmed the confused, and his courage and compassion helped carry the burden of loss and sacrifice," Carter said.

Three months ago, North Carolina State University announced that Odierno had joined its board of trustees. In 1986 he earned a Master of Science degree in nuclear effects engineering from North Carolina State. He was president of Odierno Associates, a consulting firm in Pinehurst, North Carolina.

No. 3 Iowa beats No. 4 Penn State 23-20, fans storm field

By ERIC OLSON AP College Football Writer

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — Iowa was in victory formation and the emotion was about to spill over as dusk settled over Kinnick Stadium.

Spencer Petras took the last snap, took a knee and took off, apparently thinking he could get off the field before the students and other fans pouring out of the end zone seats could catch him.

He barely made it to midfield. That's where he and his teammates were swarmed and the mosh pit formed on the Hawkeyes logo to celebrate No. 3 Iowa's hard-earned 23-20 victory over fourth-ranked Penn State on Saturday.

"It's a pretty special place when the lights go on and the sun goes down," Iowa coach Kirk Ferentz said.

Petras threw a 44-yard touchdown pass to Nico Ragaini to complete Iowa's comeback from a two-touchdown deficit, all accomplished while Penn State's offense did next to nothing after quarterback Sean Clifford was knocked out of the game.

The Hawkeyes (6-0, 3-0) took control of the Big Ten West with their 12th straight victory and thrust themselves into the College Football Playoff conversation.

"This was like the biggest of the big-time, which was pretty awesome," Ragaini said. "You don't get moments like this every day, taking advantage of the opportunity. It was a mentally draining game for sure, and physically draining.

"On the sideline I was so emotionally drained that I almost teared up out there because we care about each other so much. We all want each other to succeed."

An hour after the game, Ferentz choked up as he reflected on his players' locker room celebration.

"It's fun," he said, pausing. "That's what they're supposed to do."

Penn State (5-1, 2-1) lost for the first time in 10 games and headed back to Happy Valley with a list of injuries that could make its path through the rest of the season difficult.

"It's just a bump in the road," Lions defensive end Arnole Ebiketie said. "We have to get better."

The Hawkeyes' grinding offense isn't built to play from behind, but it managed to come back in the biggest game at Kinnick Stadium since then-No. 1 Iowa beat then-No. 2 Michigan in 1985.

Iowa won the field-position battle thanks to the work of punter Tory Taylor, who repeatedly pinned Penn State deep in its own end after Clifford went out in the second quarter.

Iowa chipped away with field goals by Caleb Shudak to cut it to 20-16. The winning play came on the first play after the Hawkeyes got the ball at the Penn State 44 with 6:35 left.

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Petras rolled to his right and found Ragaini alone on the left side. Linebacker Curtis Jacobs knocked him out of bounds, but not before he got the ball over the goal line. All-America center Tyler Linderbaum was the first man to greet him in the end zone.

Penn State coach James Franklin didn't disclose the nature of Clifford's injury. He was hurt with the Lions leading 17-3 when he took a big hit from linebacker Jack Campbell, and he was out of uniform on the sideline in the second half.

After Ta'Quan Roberson took over for Clifford in the middle of the second quarter, Penn State managed just 50 yards on 46 plays the rest of the way.

"We talk about all of the important statistics all of the time, and we didn't do a good job on any of them," Franklin said. "We did not win the field position battle, we did not win the turnover battle, we did not win the penalty battle, we didn't win the explosive play battle."

Five of Roberson's series started inside the Penn State 10, and a sixth began at the 11. The sellout crowd of 70,000 had a major impact when the Lions were in their own end, their roars forcing numerous false starts as Roberson's claps for the snap went unheard by his linemen.

On the Nittany Lions' last three possessions, they turned over the ball on downs, Matt Hankins came up with Iowa's fourth interception of the game and they turned it over on downs again.

"We weren't counting on the interceptions but that was a great job there," Ferntz said. "We played physical, knocked their quarterback out — hope he's fine. That's the team we have."

THE TAKEAWAY

Penn State: Franklin did not disclose the nature of Clifford's injury. The Lions also lost a couple of key defensive players. P.J. Mustipher, their 326-pound run stopper, went out less than two minutes after kickoff with a left knee injury and didn't return. Neither did safety Jonathan Sutherland, who left in the second quarter with an undisclosed injury.

Iowa: It continues to be all about defense with this team. The offense responded when it had to in the second half, but defense was special throughout. Four more interceptions gave the Hawkeyes a nation-leading 16. The only sour note was an injury to cornerback Riley Moss, who appeared to injure his left knee after an interception.

KNOCKING OFF THE RANKED

Iowa beat a Top 25 team for the third time this season and has won six in a row against ranked opponents for the first time since 1960. It was Iowa's first win over a top-five team since beating then-No. 3 Ohio State in 2017.

UP NEXT

Iowa hosts Purdue on Oct. 16. The Hawkeyes have lost three of the last four in the series.

Penn State has an open date before hosting Illinois on Oct. 23.

More AP college football: <https://apnews.com/hub/college-football> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25. Sign up for the AP's college football newsletter: <https://apnews.com/cfbtop25>

Allen West, Texas GOP gubernatorial hopeful, has COVID-19

GARLAND, Texas (AP) — Tea party firebrand Allen West, a candidate for the Republican nomination for governor of Texas, said Saturday that he has received monoclonal antibody injections after being diagnosed with COVID-19 pneumonia.

The antibodies are used to treat those in the early stages of a coronavirus infection.

"My chest X-rays do show COVID pneumonia, not serious. I am probably going to be admitted to the hospital," West wrote. "There's a concern about my oxygen saturation levels, which are at 89 and they should be at 95."

He also said his wife, Angela West, also tested positive and has received monoclonal antibodies. According to his Twitter account, Allen West did not get vaccinated against the virus, but his wife did.

Allen West on Thursday said he had attended a "packed house" Mission Generation Annual Gala &

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Fundraiser in Seabrook, Texas. On Saturday he tweeted that he is "suspending in-person events until receiving an all-clear indication."

West is a former Texas Republican Party chair and Florida congressman. He announced in July that he would challenge Republican Gov. Greg Abbot, who is running for a third term and has been endorsed by Donald Trump.

West's announcement came a month after he resigned as chair of the Republican Party of Texas.

West won a U.S. House seat in Florida in 2010 and quickly became a tea party favorite and lightning rod, at one point accusing Democrats of having as many as 80 communists in their House caucus. He failed to win reelection in 2012.

He later moved to Texas and largely stayed out of the spotlight until running for chairman of the state GOP party last year.

West then began criticizing Republicans as much as Democrats, calling the GOP speaker of the Texas House a "traitor" for working across the aisle, then leading a protest outside Abbott's mansion over coronavirus restrictions.

In October 2020, West took part in a protest outside Abbot's home, criticizing the Republican governor's executive orders — including a statewide mask mandate and lockdowns due to the coronavirus pandemic. Those restrictions are no longer in place.

GOP doc dispenses sketchy medical advice on virus immunity

By JOHN HANNA AP Political Writer

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — Roger Marshall won't let people forget he's a doctor, putting "Doc" in the letterhead of his U.S. Senate office's news releases. But when he talks about COVID-19 vaccines, some doctors and experts say the Kansas Republican sounds far more like a politician than a physician.

He's made statements about vaccines and immunity that defy both medical consensus and official U.S. government guidance. He's aggressively fighting President Joe Biden's vaccine requirements, arguing they'll infringe on people's liberties and wreck the economy. He's acknowledged experimenting on himself with an unproven treatment for warding off the coronavirus.

Marshall's positions are pushing the first-term senator and obstetrician closer to the medical fringe. But he has company in other GOP doctors, dentists and pharmacists in Congress, several of whom have also spread sketchy medical advice when it comes to the pandemic.

Critics say the lawmakers' statements are dangerous and unethical, and that Marshall's medical degree confers a perception of expertise that carries weight with constituents and other members of Congress.

"He has an enormous role to play here because he's a doctor and a senator," said Arthur Caplan, founder of New York University's medical ethics division and director of a vaccine ethics program. "He bears a very powerful responsibility to get it right."

Marshall says he is fully vaccinated and has said he's urged his parents recently to get booster shots. He and other GOP doctors in Congress appeared in a public service campaign in April to encourage people to get vaccinated.

But that was before Biden's vaccine mandates fired up the party's conservative base and had activists predicting that grassroots opposition could help drive Republicans into power in Congress in 2022. It also was before schools reopened for the fall and angry parents flocked to school board meetings to protest mask mandates.

"Off-year elections are all about turning out your base," said Gregg Keller, a St. Louis-area GOP strategist who's worked for conservative groups and U.S. Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo. "Republicans are fired up."

Recent polling shows about half of Americans — just enough for a majority — favor requiring workers in large companies to get vaccinated or tested weekly. Biden also is requiring the military, government contractors and health care workers to get vaccinated.

But perhaps crucially for Marshall and other Republicans, the polling also showed people are deeply split based on their political party. About 6 in 10 Republicans opposed the mandate for workers, according to

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the survey by The Associated Press and NORC-Center for Public Affairs Research.

Marshall positioned himself as a stalwart Trump supporter in winning his Senate seat last year. The two-term congressman from western Kansas ran against a Democrat and retired Kansas City-area anesthesiologist hewing to public health orthodoxy on COVID-19.

Marshall regularly went unmasked at campaign events and said he took a weekly dose of the anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine promoted by Trump. That was despite the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's warning against using it to prevent a COVID-19 infection.

Marshall has since tried unsuccessfully to pass legislation that would ban vaccine mandates and bar dishonorable discharges from the military for not getting vaccinated. He argues that mandates for workers will cause them to quit or be fired, worsen supply chain problems and drive up inflation.

"Without even touching on the constitutionality of a federal mandate, I want people to realize the impact it's going to have on the economy," he said during a recent interview.

Late last month, he joined lawmakers pushing unsupported theories about COVID-19 immunity. He and 14 other GOP doctors, dentists and pharmacists in Congress sent a letter to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, urging the agency, when setting vaccination policies, to consider natural immunity in people who have had the virus.

The signers included Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, an ophthalmologist, and Texas Rep. Ronny Jackson, who served as doctor and medical adviser to Trump. Most are from states or districts that Trump carried by wide margins last year.

Experts agree that natural immunity arises after an infection, but the general medical consensus is that the degree of protection varies from person to person and is likely to wane over time. That's why the CDC currently urges even those who've had the virus to get vaccinated. A CDC report released in August found the vaccine did boost protection among those who've recovered from the infection. Studies released in September showed that unvaccinated people were 11 times more likely to die than the vaccinated.

The August CDC report cited a study of Kentucky residents and said, "The findings from this study suggest that among previously infected persons, full vaccination is associated with reduced likelihood of reinfection, and, conversely, being unvaccinated is associated with higher likelihood of being reinfected."

Marshall disputes the guidance that people who've had COVID-19 should get vaccinated. In a recent AP interview, he noted his adult children have had COVID-19 and, "I don't think they need the vaccine on top of it."

He argued that the issue requires more investigation: "We could get 20 scientists in here and have a two-hour discussion about it."

Keller, the GOP consultant, said he sees a political incentive for Marshall and other lawmakers to focus on the issue of natural immunity. That challenges the Biden administration policies without attacking vaccines, Keller said.

"Smart Republicans realize that there's a certain amount of trust in the wider electorate in the vaccine," Keller said.

Marshall says that as a practicing obstetrician and as a local health department director, he followed the CDC's guidance on issues such as flu shots not harming pregnant women. But he says he's lost trust in the CDC because of mixed messages early in the pandemic about masks: "It was a tough time for the CDC. It was a tough time for all of us."

Dr. Leana Wen, an emergency physician and former Baltimore health commissioner, said vaccine mandates "clearly work" in containing COVID-19.

"Vaccination is what we have because the price of getting immunity through natural infection is much too high," Wen said, adding that she fears people doing something akin to the "chicken pox parties" some parents have had for their children. "We certainly would not want a policy that could lead people to choose to be infected."

Sabrina Pass, who lives in a small town northwest of Fort Riley, Kansas, said she supports Marshall's positions and said a candidate's willingness to actively fight vaccine mandates will be important to her. She

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is a 37-year-old U.S. Department of Defense employee, the mother of two teenagers and a registered Republican. She sees protests against school mask mandates as "awesome."

But Dr. Beth Oller, a family physician in Rooks County in northwest Kansas, said she's frustrated because Marshall's medical degree is one reason patients who normally trust her about everything else resist her advice to get vaccinated. Musing that "I really don't think he's that stupid," she said he knows how immunity works and why people need flu shots and tetanus boosters.

"He should just be ashamed of himself," Oller said.

Follow John Hanna on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/apjdhanna>

Ruling party narrowly loses Czech vote; PM Babis may be out

By KAREL JANICEK Associated Press

PRAGUE (AP) — Prime Minister Andrej Babis' centrist party on Saturday narrowly lost the Czech Republic's parliamentary election, a surprise development that could mean the end of the populist billionaire's reign in power.

The two-day election to fill 200 seats in the lower house of the Czech Republic's parliament took place shortly after the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists reported details of Babis' overseas financial dealings in a project dubbed the "Pandora Papers." Babis, 67, has denied wrongdoing.

With all the the votes counted, the Czech Statistics Office said Together, a liberal-conservative three-party coalition, captured 27.8% of the vote, beating Babis' ANO (Yes) party, which won 27.1%. In a second blow to the populists, another center-left liberal coalition of the Pirate Party and STAN, a group of mayors, received 15.6% of the vote to finish third, the statistics office reported.

"The two democratic coalitions have gained a majority and have a chance to form a majority government," said Petr Fiala, Together's leader and its candidate for prime minister.

The winning coalition won 71 seats while its partner captured 37 seats to have a comfortable majority of 108 seats. Babis won 72 seats, six less than in the 2017 election.

The five opposition parties, which have policies closer to the European Union's mainstream compared with the populist Babis, put aside their differences in this election to create the two coalitions, seeking to oust the euroskeptic prime minister from power.

Still on Saturday night, the two coalitions announced they have signed a memorandum of their will to govern together.

The result means "an absolute change of the politics in the Czech Republic," analyst Michal Klima told Czech public television. "It stabilizes the country's position in the West camp."

"It's a huge defeat for (Babis)," he added.

The anti-migrant and anti-Muslim force in the Czech Republic, the Freedom and Direct Democracy party, which wants the country to leave the EU, finished fourth with 9.6% support, or 20 seats, less than the 22 seats it won in 2017.

Prior to the vote, Babis led a minority coalition government of ANO and the Social Democrats in the Eastern European country of 10.7 million people, which is a member of both the European Union and NATO. He has also governed with the support of the maverick Communists.

But both the Social Democrats and the Communists, the country's traditional parliamentary parties, failed to win seats in parliament Saturday for the first time since the split of Czechoslovakia in 1993.

Babis has had a turbulent term featuring numerous scandals. Among them, police recommended that he should be indicted over alleged fraud involving EU subsidies, and a recently published EU report concluded that Babis has a conflict of interest over subsidies from the bloc involving his former business empire.

The "Pandora Papers" report that presented details of how many of the world's richest and most powerful people allegedly hide their wealth from tax collectors alleged that Babis put \$22 million into shell companies to buy 16 properties in southern France.

The French properties were not disclosed in the prime minister's required asset declarations, according

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to documents obtained by the journalism group's Czech partner. Babis claimed the report was meant to harm him in the election.

Still, all public polls before the vote had favored his ANO party to win the election.

"We didn't expect to lose," Babis said, congratulating the winner. "We accept that."

He still declared the election results "excellent."

The leader of the strongest party usually gets a chance to form a new government. President Milos Zeman, Babis' close ally, didn't immediately comment but previously indicated that he will first appoint the leader of the winning party, not the winning coalition, to try to form a new government, which would be Babis. The two leaders will meet on Sunday.

"We're the strongest party," Babis said. "If the president asks me to create a government, I'll open the negotiations about it."

Any new government has to win a parliamentary confidence vote to rule, however, and Babis and his potential partner, the Freedom party, don't have enough support for that.

Babis declined to confirm his campaign claim he would leave politics should he be in opposition.

Babis had bet on an aggressive campaign, with migration a major topic even though his country is not a typical destination for migrants and refugees, a move that analysts said divided the nation. He invited Europe's anti-migration champion, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, to attend a campaign rally. Babis is also critical of the European Union plan to tackle climate change, saying it would hurt the country's economy.

Fiala, the leader of Together, pledged to pursue different politics.

"It doesn't matter who you voted for," he said after the results were announced. "We're all Czech citizens who have to live together as neighbors, friends and colleagues. That's what unites us all."

The liberal-conservative Together consists of the Civic Democratic Party, Christian Democrats and the TOP 09 party. The Pirate Party and STAN, the grouping of mayors and independent candidates, formed the other coalition.

Despite their differences on many issues, including climate change, same-sex marriage and the adoption of the euro, the opposition parties all support EU and NATO membership.

Creating a five-party coalition "will be painful and will need to include lots of concessions from both sides. It should be based on the topics they are able to agree on," said Petr Just, an analyst from Metropolitan University Prague.

EXPLAINER: The Texas abortion law's swift impact, and future

By PAUL J. WEBER Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Most abortions in Texas are banned again after clinics that had raced to provide them during a two-day legal reprieve canceled appointments Saturday following a whiplash appeals court ruling.

The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals issued a one-page order Friday night, reinstating a Texas law that prohibits abortions once medical professionals can detect cardiac activity, usually around six weeks — and before some women know they're pregnant.

Enforcement of the nation's strictest abortion law is left up to private citizens who are deputized to file civil lawsuits against abortion providers, as well as others who help a woman obtain an abortion in Texas. Since taking effect in September, clinics in other states, including neighboring Louisiana and Oklahoma, have been inundated with patients from Texas.

Friday's order from the New Orleans-based 5th Circuit is just the latest in the legal battle over the Texas law, known as Senate Bill 8. It came two days after a federal judge in Austin suspended the law, allowing providers to resume abortions.

Here are some questions and answers about the law and what's next:

WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT?

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Abortion providers say the ramifications have been punishing and “exactly what we feared.” Some women are being forced to carry pregnancies to term, they say, or waiting in hopes that courts will strike down the law.

More than 100 pages of court filings in September offered the most comprehensive glimpse at how the near-total ban on abortion in Texas has played out. Physicians and executives at Texas’ nearly two dozen abortion clinics described turning away hundreds of patients, and some who showed up for appointments could not proceed because cardiac activity had been detected.

One Planned Parenthood location in Houston normally performed about two dozen abortions daily, but in the 10 days after the law took effect, the clinic had done a total of 52.

Clinics in nearby states, meanwhile, say care for their own residents is being delayed to accommodate women making long trips from Texas. Doctors say recent patients from Texas have included rape victims, as the law makes no exceptions in cases of rape or incest.

Whole Women’s Health has four clinics in Texas and was among providers that performed abortions in the state Thursday and Friday, after the lower court ruling allowed them. President and CEO Amy Hagstrom Miller said she didn’t have the number of abortions performed during the reprieve.

WHAT WAS THE LANDSCAPE IN TEXAS BEFORE?

More than 55,000 abortions were performed last year in Texas, which already had some of the nation’s strictest abortion laws, including a ban after 20 weeks of pregnancy.

Abortion providers in Texas have experience when it comes to abruptly ramping up operations again. In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic last year, abortions in Texas were all but banned for weeks under orders by Republican Gov. Greg Abbott that postponed surgeries “not immediately medically necessary.”

But providers were reporting staffing issues and worried some clinics would permanently shutter. A decade ago, Texas had more than 40 abortion clinics, but more than half of them closed for good during a protracted legal battle over a 2013 law that was ultimately overturned by the Supreme Court.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Biden administration could bring the case back to the Supreme Court and ask the justices to quickly restore the federal judge’s order that blocked the law.

The law has already made one trip to the Supreme Court. The justices voted 5-4 not to intervene to prevent it from taking effect, but they said further challenges were possible. With the Biden administration’s challenge underway, the law could return to the justices quickly.

The federal judge who suspended the law — Robert Pitman, who was appointed by former President Barack Obama — wrote in a blistering 113-page opinion that the law was an “offensive deprivation” of the constitutional right to an abortion.

Whether the Biden administration’s lawsuit — which calls it “clearly unconstitutional” — was likely to succeed was a factor in Pitman putting the law on hold.

Texas Right to Life, the state’s largest anti-abortion group and a driver of the new law, has cheered the fact that it has stopped abortions every day that it has been in effect.

HOW ARE OTHER STATES RESPONDING?

After Texas’ law went into effect, Republican lawmakers in at least half a dozen states said they would consider introducing similar bills, with the goal of enacting the kind of abortion crackdown they have sought for years. Those states include Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Mississippi, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Meanwhile, two dozen state attorneys general, all Democrats, submitted a brief in the Biden administration’s lawsuit saying a substantial reduction of abortion access in one state would result in health care systems being burdened elsewhere.

The City Council in Portland, Oregon, briefly considered a boycott of Texas businesses because of the new law but instead decided to set aside \$200,000 to fund reproductive care.

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The growing anti-abortion campaign is intended to reach the U.S. Supreme Court. Abortion opponents hope the conservative coalition assembled under President Donald Trump will end the constitutional right to abortion as established by the high court in the landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling.

Texas clinics cancel abortions after court reinstates ban

By PAUL J. WEBER Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas clinics on Saturday canceled appointments they had booked during a 48-hour reprieve from the most restrictive abortion law in the U.S., which was back in effect as weary providers again turn their sights to the Supreme Court.

The Biden administration, which sued Texas over the law known as Senate Bill 8, has yet to say whether it will go that route after a federal appeals court reinstated the law late Friday. The latest twist came just two days after a lower court in Austin suspended the law, which bans abortions once cardiac activity is detected, usually around six weeks, before some women know they are pregnant. It makes no exceptions in cases of rape or incest.

The White House had no immediate comment Saturday.

For now at least, the law is in the hands of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which allowed the restrictions to resume pending further arguments. In the meantime, Texas abortions providers and patients are right back to where they've been for most of the last six weeks.

Out-of-state clinics already inundated with Texas patients seeking abortions were again the closest option for many women. Providers say others are being forced to carry pregnancies to term, or waiting in hopes that courts will strike down the law that took effect on Sept. 1.

There are also new questions — including whether anti-abortion advocates will try punishing Texas physicians who performed abortions during the brief window the law was paused from late Wednesday to late Friday. Texas leaves enforcement solely in the hands of private citizens who can collect \$10,000 or more in damages if they successfully sue abortion providers who flout the restrictions.

Texas Right to Life, the state's largest anti-abortion group, created a tip line to receive reports of violators. About a dozen calls came in after U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman suspended the law, said John Seago, the group's legislative director.

Although some Texas clinics said they had briefly resumed abortions on patients who were beyond six weeks, Seago said his group had no lawsuits in the works. He said the clinics' public statements did not "match up with what we saw on the ground," which he says include a network of observers and crisis pregnancy centers.

"I don't have any credible evidence at the moment of litigation that we would bring forward," Seago said Saturday.

Texas had roughly two dozen abortion clinics before the law took effect. At least six clinics resumed performing abortions after six weeks of pregnancy during the reprieve, according to the Center for Reproductive Rights.

At Whole Woman's Health, which has four abortion clinics in Texas, president and CEO Amy Hagstrom Miller said she did not have the number of abortions her locations performed for patients beyond six weeks but put it at "quite a few." She said her clinics were again complying with the law and acknowledged the risks her physicians and staff had taken.

"Of course we are all worried," she said. "But we also feel a deep commitment to providing abortion care when it is legal to do so, we did."

Pitman, the federal judge who halted the Texas law Wednesday in a blistering 113-page opinion, was appointed by President Barack Obama. He called the law an "offensive deprivation" of the constitutional right to an abortion, but his ruling was swiftly set aside — at least for now — in a one-page order by the 5th Circuit that on Friday night.

That same appeals court previously allowed the Texas restrictions to take effect in September, in a separate lawsuit brought by abortion providers. This time, the court gave the Justice Department until 5

p.m. Tuesday to respond.

What happens after that is unclear, including how soon the appeals court will act or whether they will request more arguments. Texas is asking the appeals court for a permanent injunction that would allow the law to stand while the case plays out.

In the meantime, Nancy Northup, president of the Center for Reproductive Rights, urged the Supreme Court to "step in and stop this madness." Last month, the high court allowed the law to move forward in a 5-4 decision, although it did so without ruling on the law's constitutionality.

A 1992 decision by the Supreme Court prevented states from banning abortion before viability, the point at which a fetus can survive outside the womb, around 24 weeks of pregnancy. But Texas' version has outmaneuvered courts due to its novel enforcement mechanism that leaves enforcement to private citizens and not prosecutors, which critics say amounts to a bounty.

The Biden administration could bring the case back to the Supreme Court and ask it to quickly restore Pitman's order, although it is unclear whether they will do so.

"I'm not very optimistic about what could happen at the Supreme Court," said Carl Tobias, a law professor at the University of Richmond, about the Justice Department's chances.

"But there's not much downside either, right?" he said. "The question is, what's changed since the last time they saw it? There is this full opinion, this full hearing before the judge and the record. So that may be enough."

Police arrest Indian minister's son in killing of farmers

BISWAJEET BANERJEE Associated Press

LUCKNOW, India (AP) — Indian police on Saturday arrested the son of a junior minister in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government as a suspect days after nine people were killed in a deadly escalation of yearlong demonstrations by tens of thousands of farmers against contentious agriculture laws in northern India, a police officer said.

Four farmers died Sunday when a car owned by Junior Home Minister Ajay Mishra ran over a group of protesting farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri, a town in Uttar Pradesh state, officials and farm leaders said.

Farm leaders alleged that Mishra's son was in the car when it ran over the protesters, but Mishra denied it. His driver and three members of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, who were in a car, were all killed by the protesters by beating them with sticks in the violence that broke out after the incident.

Police officer Upendra Agarwal said on Saturday that Ashish Misra was arrested following day-long questioning in the town after "he failed to furnish any supportive evidence to prove that he was not present in any of the three vehicles that plowed through a crowd of farmers killing four of them."

His father Ajay Mishra said that his son was innocent and that he was not present.

The arrest came a day after India's top court criticized the state government for not arresting Ashish Mishra against whom a criminal case of murder is being investigated by the police. On Friday, Mishra made the police wait for hours for questioning before sending a message that he was unwell and couldn't make it.

Darshan Pal, a farmers' leader, and Akhilesh Singh, an opposition Congress party leader, demanded the removal of his father from Modi's government.

Police earlier this week said they had so far arrested six people and filed a criminal complaint against 14 more, including the minister's son, in connection with the deaths of the four farmers. The BJP also lodged a criminal complaint against the farmers over the deaths of its members and the car driver, said Arvind Chaurasia, a senior official in charge of the district.

Police also said they recovered the body of a local journalist where violence ensued Sunday but did not provide further details on how he was killed.

The violence marked an escalation in ongoing protests against agriculture laws that farmers say will shatter their livelihoods. The protests have lasted since the government passed the laws last September and have been one of the biggest challenges to Modi.

Last week, thousands of farmers gathered at the edges of the capital New Delhi to mark one year of demonstrations. The government says the changes in the laws were needed to modernize agriculture and

boost production through private investment. But the farmers say the laws will devastate their earnings by ending guaranteed pricing and will force them to sell their crops to corporations at cheaper prices.

Taliban say they won't work with US to contain Islamic State

By KATHY GANNON Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The Taliban on Saturday ruled out cooperation with the United States to contain extremist groups in Afghanistan, staking out an uncompromising position on a key issue ahead of the first direct talks between the former foes since America withdrew from the country in August.

Senior Taliban officials and U.S. representatives are meeting this weekend in Doha, the capital of Qatar. Officials from both sides have said issues include reining in extremist groups and the evacuation of foreign citizens and Afghans from the country. The Taliban have signaled flexibility on evacuations.

However, Taliban political spokesman Suhail Shaheen told The Associated Press there would be no cooperation with Washington on containing the increasingly active Islamic State group in Afghanistan. IS has taken responsibility for a number of recent attacks, including a suicide bombing Friday that killed 46 minority Shiite Muslims and wounded dozens as they prayed in a mosque in the northern city of Kunduz.

"We are able to tackle Daesh independently," Shaheen said, when asked whether the Taliban would work with the U.S. to contain the Islamic State affiliate. He used an Arabic acronym for IS.

IS has carried out relentless assaults on the country's Shiites since emerging in eastern Afghanistan in 2014. It is also seen as the terror group that poses the greatest threat to the United States for its potential to stage attacks on American targets.

The weekend meetings in Doha are the first since U.S. forces withdrew from Afghanistan in late August, ending a 20-year military presence as the Taliban overran the country. The U.S. has made it clear the talks are not a preamble to recognition.

The talks also come on the heels of two days of difficult discussions between Pakistani officials and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman in Islamabad that focused on Afghanistan. Pakistani officials urged the U.S. to engage with Afghanistan's new rulers and release billions of dollars in international funds to stave off an economic meltdown.

Pakistan also had a message for the Taliban, urging them to become more inclusive and pay attention to human rights and minority ethnic and religious groups.

Later on Saturday, Doha-based Al-Jazeera English reported the talks had kicked off. The news outlet cited Ameer Khan Muttaqi, the Taliban-appointed foreign minister for Afghanistan, as saying the Taliban had asked the U.S. to lift its ban on the reserves of the Afghan central bank.

There was no immediate word from Washington on the talks.

Following Friday's attack, Afghanistan's Shiite clerics assailed the Taliban, demanding greater protection at their places of worship. The IS affiliate claimed responsibility and identified the bomber as a Uyghur Muslim. The claim said the attack targeted both Shiites and the Taliban for their purported willingness to expel Uyghurs to meet demands from China. It was the deadliest attack since U.S. and NATO troops left Afghanistan on Aug. 30.

Michael Kugelman, deputy director of the Asia Program at the U.S.-based Wilson Center, said Friday's attack could be a harbinger of more violence. Most of the Uyghur militants belong to the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, which has found a safe haven in the border regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan for decades.

"If the (IS) claim is true, China's concerns about terrorism in (Afghanistan)—to which the Taliban claims to be receptive—will increase," he tweeted following the attack.

Meanwhile, the Taliban on Saturday began busing Afghans who had fled from the insurgents' blitz take-over in August and were living in tents in a Kabul park back to their homes in the country's north, where threats from IS are mounting following the Kunduz attack.

A Taliban official in charge of refugees, Mohammed Arsa Kharoti, said there are up to 1.3 million Afghans displaced from past wars and that the Taliban lack funds to organize the return home for all. He said the Taliban have organized the return of 1,005 displaced families to their homes so far.

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Shokria Khanm, who had spent several weeks in one of the tents in the park and was waiting Saturday to board the Taliban-organized bus back home to Kunduz, said she isn't concerned about the growing IS threat in the northern province.

"At least there we have four walls," she said but added that she was nervous about the future after fighting between the Taliban and Afghan government troops had destroyed her house.

"Winter is on the way. There is no firewood. We need water and food," she said.

During the Doha talks, U.S. officials will also seek to hold the Taliban to their commitment to allow Americans and other foreign nationals to leave Afghanistan, along with Afghans who once worked for the U.S. military or government and other Afghan allies, a U.S. official said. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the official was not authorized to speak on the record about the meetings.

The Biden administration has fielded questions and complaints about the slow pace of U.S.-facilitated evacuations from Taliban-ruled Afghanistan since the U.S. withdrawal.

Associated Press writers Ellen Knickmeyer in Washington and Samya Kullab in Kabul, Afghanistan, contributed to this report.

Local school boards emerge as hot races in November election

By JULIE CARR SMYTH and PATTY NIEBERG Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — In a school district near the Ohio state capital, school board members up for reelection this year have been subjected to a steady stream of lawsuits and attacks, both in-person and online. In another, an incumbent up for reelection who supports student mask requirements received a letter from someone angered by her stance who warned: "We are coming after you."

A 15-year veteran board member in yet another Ohio district decided against running for reelection because of the escalating public attacks.

It's not just in Ohio. Across the U.S., local school board races have emerged as an intense political battleground in the Nov. 2 elections, with much at stake for students.

Parental protests over COVID-19-related mask mandates, gender-neutral bathrooms, and teachings about racial history, sexuality and social-emotional learning are being leveraged into full-fledged board takeover campaigns that will get their first widespread test in just a few weeks.

"What's happening in 2021 is a prelude to some of the messaging, some of the issues we'll see going into the midterm elections," said Scott DiMauro, president of the Ohio Education Association, the state's largest teachers union.

Local school board elections typically have been relatively quiet affairs where incumbents sail to reelection, often unopposed. This year, candidate training academies organized by national conservative groups and state-level recruitment efforts are encouraging challenges by right-leaning political newcomers. The results could have consequences for public education and coronavirus safety measures across the country.

The thousands of local school districts in the U.S. make it difficult to know how many sitting board members are facing challenges next month from conservative-leaning community members. But the challenges appear widespread.

In Wisconsin, a conservative legal institute is providing free legal advice on school board recalls to parent groups. In Iowa, Gov. Kim Reynolds, a Republican, has taken the unusual step of endorsing a conservative candidate for a local school board seat. And in Colorado, a group calling itself MAD that opposes remote-learning during the pandemic and what it says are partisan leanings in curriculum is endorsing like-minded school board candidates.

"It feels like schools have become a political battleground, and they shouldn't be," said Dan Maloit, a former Army Green Beret who runs the Colorado group. "Kids should be able to walk in and not know what their teachers believe politically or their administrators and be protected from what society's arguing about so that they can focus on learning to read and write, understanding math, learning an unbiased history."

Teachers unions, which for years have helped elect their own allies to school boards, are opposing the

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push. Their position is that many right-wing candidates are conspiracy theorists who are taking moderate positions to get elected, but once in office will oppose mask requirements and other COVID safety protocols, micromanage educators and censor classroom content they dislike.

Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, called it "a craven and anti-democratic attempt to usurp local control over our kids' education."

"Their goal is to limit students' understanding of historical and current events and attack common-sense safety measures such as masking by bullying those who believe in science and teaching honest history," she said in a statement to The Associated Press.

FreedomWorks, a conservative group that supported the rise of former President Donald Trump, launched a candidate academy in March that already has trained about 300 people nationwide, with the largest number from Ohio, said Laura Zorc, the group's director of education reform. About 1,000 people have signed up, she said.

"My message to these parents is: Run for office if you don't like (it) and you don't feel your voice is being heard," Zorc said.

Among those who acted on that message is Jennifer Feucht, a candidate in the Olentangy Local School District outside Columbus who completed training through FreedomWorks' academy. After fighting to lift mask mandates and to get the district to declare its opposition to critical race theory, the mother of three said she has also been the victim of "vicious" attacks on social media.

"I've learned that they're allowed to say things that are untrue because you're a public figure. I never imagined that at the local level," she said.

An especially common claim among the challengers is that schools are teaching Black children that they're victims and white children they're villains as part of their, which they attribute to critical race theory. It's a characterization of districts' responses to last year's racial protests that national education and civil rights organizations have rejected as false and dangerous.

Critical race theory is a way of thinking about America's history through the lens of racism that was developed in the 1970s and 1980s. While there is little evidence it is taught in schools, the concept has become a flashpoint in the culture wars since the killing of George Floyd prompted a national reckoning on race.

Julie Feasel, who had been on that Olentangy school board since 2006, opted to retire this year because all the ugliness made the job exhausting. She said she hadn't faced a candidate challenge since 2013.

"It's the storm of all ages when it comes to public service," she said. "People have to educate themselves as to who's hiding behind the curtain. It's like the Wizard of Oz — who's pulling the strings?"

One of the active groups in Ohio is Ohio Value Voters, which created its own spinoff — Protect Ohio Children Coalition — in April, state business records show. The group's leaders did not return phone calls or emails seeking comment, but its website coaches parents to show up in groups of 30 and employ a "tsunami strategy" to raise hot-button social issues and disrupt board meetings.

The group also keeps an interactive "indoctrination map" that takes aim at districts offering what it describes as critical race theory, comprehensive sexuality education, and social-emotional learning. It also directs parents to the FreedomWorks training academy, stating as one of its goals "replacing radical school board officials through the election process."

Charlie Wilson, a school board member in Worthington, another Columbus suburb, and the immediate past president of the National School Boards Association, said board seats are particularly vulnerable to challengers emerging from that movement in a year like this. It's an off-year election cycle with mostly local races on the ballot, and turnout is expected to be low for all but the most motivated voters.

Wilson said he believes the conservative insurgents — who are often using the phrases "education transparency" and "putting our kids first" — represent a political minority.

"They're basically running with identical messages," he said. "I believe what they're really wanting is they want to end all mention of race, racism, slavery, Jim Crow, the Civil Rights movement, the Holocaust. I cannot tell you the emails I and other board members have received that say, by mentioning race, we

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are racist.”

Zorc called that characterization of the candidates “a scare tactic.”

As a taste of what incumbents are facing, Wilson’s colleague Nikki Hudson, who apologized last year for implying at a meeting that supporters of school resources officers were racist, received a letter that threatened, “We are coming after you.” It added, “You are forcing them to wear (a) mask — for no reason in this world other than control. And for that you will pay dearly.” The letter was referred to the U.S. Department of Justice, which is investigating.

“It’s really demoralizing and sad that we’ve lost that focus on what we really should be about, which is the students,” said Amie Baca-Oehlert, president of the Colorado Education Association, the state’s largest teachers union. “It really seems that adult issues have monopolized the conversations versus thinking about the needs of our students.”

Nieberg reported from Denver. She is a corps member for The Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

This story has been corrected to show that Randi Weingarten is the president of the American Federation of Teachers, not the National Federation of Teachers.

Kurz to quit as Austrian chancellor amid corruption probe

By GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said Saturday that he will step down in a bid to defuse a government crisis triggered by prosecutors’ announcement that he is a target of a corruption investigation.

Kurz, 35, said he has proposed to Austria’s president that Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg become chancellor. But Kurz himself will remain in a key political position: he said he will become the head of his conservative Austrian People’s Party’s parliamentary group.

Kurz’s party had closed ranks behind him after the prosecutors’ announcement on Wednesday, which followed searches at the chancellery and his party’s offices. But its junior coalition partner, the Greens, said Friday that Kurz couldn’t remain as chancellor and demanded that his party nominate an “irreproachable person” to replace him. The coalition government took office in January, 2020.

The Greens’ leader, Vice Chancellor Werner Kogler, welcomed Kurz’s decision as “a right and important step.”

“This means that we can continue our work in government,” he said.

Kurz and his close associates are accused of trying to secure his rise to the leadership of his party and the country with the help of manipulated polls and friendly reports in the media, financed with public money. Kurz, who became the People’s Party leader and then chancellor in 2017, denies wrongdoing.

The Greens said the probe created a “disastrous” impression. In a separate case, anti-corruption authorities put Kurz under investigation in May on suspicion of making false statements to a parliamentary commission, an allegation he also rejected.

Opposition leaders had called for Kurz to go and planned to bring a no-confidence motion against him Tuesday in parliament.

“We are still in a very sensitive phase in Austria — the pandemic is not yet over and the economic upswing has only just begun,” while a reform of the country’s tax system to help curb greenhouse gas emissions has been negotiated but is not yet implemented, Kurz said.

“What we need now are stable conditions,” he told reporters in Vienna. “So, in order to resolve the stalemate, I want to make way to prevent chaos and ensure stability.”

He insisted again that the accusations against him “are false and I will be able to clear this up — I am deeply convinced of that.”

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Kurz said of the Greens' demand for his replacement: "Many tell me that this is unfair and ... you can imagine that I personally would also be grateful if the presumption of innocence in our country really applied to everyone."

He insisted that the accusations against him were being "mixed up" with old text messages that have surfaced in recent days. "Some of them are messages that I definitely wouldn't formulate the same way again, but I am only a human being with emotions and also flaws," he said.

Kurz will keep his party's leadership as well as becoming its parliamentary group leader.

He responded to the demand for an untainted new leader with Schallenberg, 52. Although loyal to Kurz, Schallenberg has a background in diplomacy rather than party politics.

Schallenberg already served as foreign minister in a non-partisan interim government that ran the European Union nation of 8.9 million people for several months after Kurz's first coalition with the far-right Freedom Party collapsed in 2019.

Kurz pulled the plug on that government after a video surfaced showing the vice chancellor and Freedom Party leader at the time, Heinz-Christian Strache, appearing to offer favors to a purported Russian investor.

Austria's next regular parliamentary election is due in 2024.

New river of lava threatens even more buildings on La Palma

LOS LLANOS DE ARIDANE, Canary Islands (AP) — A new river of lava belched Saturday from the La Palma volcano, spreading more destruction on the Atlantic Ocean island where over 1,000 buildings have already been engulfed or badly damaged by streams of molten rock.

The partial collapse of the volcanic cone overnight gave birth to a new lava stream that started to follow a similar path down the Cumbre Vieja ridge toward the western shore of the island to the ocean.

Authorities said the new lava flow is within the area that was hastily evacuated following the Sept. 19 eruption, when 6,000 residents were forced to flee their homes and farms.

Police let residents whose homes could now be in danger make trips to save what they could. Trucks entered the exclusion zone empty Saturday and left with mattresses, furniture and other belongings.

Emergency official Miguel Ángel Morcuende said experts were closely watching the delta of new land being formed off the island's coast since the main lava flow reached the sea last week. He said that parts of it could collapse, causing explosions and large waves, but that would not pose a danger since the immediate area is already evacuated.

A total of 1,186 buildings have been destroyed on La Palma and 497 hectares (1,228 acres) have been covered with lava as of Saturday, according to the European Union's Copernicus Emergency Management Service.

La Palma's airport was operational again after being closed for several days due to volcanic ash. The island is part of Spain's Canary Islands, an archipelago off northwest Africa that is a popular vacation destination for European tourists.

Read all AP stories on the La Palma volcano at <https://apnews.com/hub/volcanic-eruptions>

The Latest: Alabama Gov. Ivey extends help for hospitals

By The Associated Press undefined

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey has extended through the end of the October a COVID-19 state of emergency that relaxes some health care regulations to help hospitals with coronavirus patients.

The order was scheduled to expire Tuesday. The order was aimed at helping hospitals adjust to the caseload from the virus, al.com reported. Ivey first ordered the "limited, narrowly-focused" state of emergency on Aug. 12 because of a surge from the delta variant of the coronavirus and Alabama's low vaccination rate.

The governor's office said Friday's proclamation relaxes regulation to allow expanded capacity in health care facilities and easier shipment of emergency equipment and supplies. It also allows out-of-state doc-

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tors, nurses, and pharmacists to practice in Alabama under expedited licenses or temporary permits.

The number of patients in Alabama hospitals with COVID-19 fell under 1,000 on Friday, the first time since July. The number of new daily cases in Alabama has dropped more than 70% since early September, the governor's office said.

However, the governor's proclamation says the pandemic "continues to present a serious threat to public health, taxing Alabama hospitals, many of which were already struggling to staff their facilities."

MORE ON THE PANDEMIC:

- Marchers in Rome protest workplace vaccine rules, requiring "Green Pass"
- Brazil coronavirus deaths surpass 600,000, second globally behind U.S.
- Russia hits virus death record as autumn surge persists
- San Francisco to welcome cruise ships after 19-month hiatus

— See all of AP's pandemic coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-pandemic>

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

ROME — Thousands of demonstrators marched down Rome's Via Veneto and other main streets on Saturday, some clashing with police, to protest a government rule requiring COVID-19 vaccines or negative tests to access workplaces next week.

The certification in Italy, known as a "Green Pass," takes effect on Friday and applies to public and private workplaces.

To obtain one, people must either have had at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, document recovery from the illness in the last six months or test negative in the previous 48 hours.

Both employees and employers risk fines if they don't comply. Workers in the public sector can be suspended if they show up five times without a Green Pass. This summer, Green Passes were required in Italy to enter museums, theaters, gyms and indoor restaurants, and take long-distance trains and buses or domestic flights.

The protesters held an authorized protest in Piazza Del Popolo. Then some left the vast square and clashed with police as they went to an unauthorized march. Police in helmets and carrying shields and batons blocked them from marching down a street that runs past Premier Mario Draghi's office.

As of Saturday, 80% of those 12 and older have been fully vaccinated in Italy.

CARSON CITY, Nev. — Nevada this week became one of the last states to include rapid antigen tests in its coronavirus tallies.

Health experts say the change could provide a fuller picture of the pandemic. Health officials say they weren't added earlier because their limited resources, with staff had focused on vaccines and contact tracing confirmed cases.

Nevada and Maryland were the last two holdouts that didn't publicly report antigen tests in defiance of federal guidance. Concerns about the supply of rapid tests and varied ways states report them reflects the absence of a national testing strategy.

Nevada's hospitals have been pushed to near capacity during the pandemic, its unemployment broke national records, and 435,000 people have tested positive for the virus. Nevada health officials acknowledge omitting rapid tests from its tally limited the public's understanding of the pandemic's spread in the state.

The rapid antigen tests, which detect the presence of viral proteins rather than the coronavirus itself, return results in minutes. Traditional molecular tests sent to labs can take days to process but are shown to be more accurate.

The rapid tests turnaround times have led to their widespread use in prisons, schools and nursing homes.

SAN FRANCISCO — Cruise ships are returning to San Francisco after a 19-month hiatus brought on by

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the coronavirus pandemic.

Mayor London Breed announced the Majestic Princess will sail into the port of San Francisco on Monday. It's the first cruise ship to dock in the San Francisco Bay Area since March 2020, when the Grand Princess captured the world's attention. The ship was carrying people infected with the coronavirus, and thousands on board were quarantined as it idled off the California coast.

The Majestic Princess will sail from Los Angeles for a weeklong California coast voyage that will include an overnight stop in San Francisco. The port of San Francisco expects to welcome 21 cruise ships through the remainder of the year.

Passengers will have to show they were vaccinated at least 14 days before embarking on the cruise and have proof of vaccination. They must also have a negative COVID-19 test taken within two days of their embarkation, according to a statement from Princess Cruises, a Carnival Corp. subsidiary that operates the vessel.

The CDC's latest cruise ship guidance recommends passengers show proof of vaccination and a recent negative test. It advises travelers who are at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness to avoid cruises.

HONOLULU — Honolulu will allow a limited number of fans at University of Hawaii football games as it begins easing coronavirus restrictions.

The governor and the mayor say they're relaxing rules for outdoor entertainment venues as vaccination rates rise and the decline of case counts, test positivity rates and hospitalizations. Starting Wednesday, outdoor venues can allow up to 1,000 attendees or up to 50% of their full capacity, whichever is smaller.

Attendees will need to be vaccinated, wear masks and maintain physical distance. Restrictions on indoor entertainment, outdoor weddings, golf tournaments and road races will be eased.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The Navajo Nation reported 51 coronavirus cases and one death on Friday. It was the third consecutive day the tribe reported at least one coronavirus-related death after going six days with no additional deaths.

Navajo officials are urging people to get vaccinated, wear masks in public and minimize travel. The tribe's reservation is the country's largest at 27,000 square miles and it covers parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah.

The latest numbers increased the tribe's totals to 34,335 confirmed cases and 1,454 confirmed deaths.

MOSCOW — Russia has reached another record daily death toll from COVID-19, with 968 deaths registered on Saturday.

The national coronavirus task force has reported a persistent rise, with nearly daily records in October. It's about 100 more daily deaths than in late September.

The task force also reported more than 29,000 new daily infections. Authorities says the steep rise in cases and deaths is because of the nation's low vaccination rate.

The deputy prime minister says 47.8 million Russians, or 33% of the population, have received at least one dose of a coronavirus vaccine.

SAO PAULO — Brazil has topped 600,000 confirmed coronavirus deaths, the second-highest global toll behind the United States.

However, recent fewer cases and deaths have encouraged mayors and governors to admit fans into soccer matches and allow bars and restaurants stay open late.

The country's average daily death toll has hovered around 500 for a month, down sharply from more than 3,000 in April. Almost 45% of the population is fully vaccinated, and a booster shot is being administered to the elderly.

The U.S. has surpassed 710,000 confirmed coronavirus deaths.

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ROME — Italy will offer a third dose of a coronavirus vaccine to all people over 60 who completed vaccination at least six months ago.

The Health Ministry says booster shots also will be offered to those with “fragile” health conditions, regardless of age. Italy already had approved giving a third dose of the vaccine to people over 80 or living in care homes, along with health care personnel, transplant recipients and those with depressed immunity.

Ministry authorities have said a third shot to all who have been vaccinated isn’t under consideration. In Italy, 80% of those 12 or older have been fully vaccinated.

HARRISBURG, Pa. — The proportion of coronavirus infections and hospitalizations among vaccinated Pennsylvania residents has risen sharply in the past month, although the shot remains broadly protective.

That’s according to new statewide health data. The latest Department of Health statistics on so-called “breakthrough” infections show from Sept. 5 to Oct. 4, vaccinated people represented just over a quarter (26%) of more than 135,000 new infections and nearly 5,000 hospital admissions across the state.

That’s up from just 6% of cases and 5% of hospitalizations between January and September. Pennsylvania residents who remain unvaccinated are still far more likely to contract the coronavirus, become hospitalized and die than those who got the shot.

Dr. Denise Johnson, the state’s acting physician general, says the data reinforced the case for booster shots. Last month, U.S. health officials approved a third dose of the Pfizer vaccine for all Americans 65 and older, along with younger people with health issues or those in high-risk, frontline jobs.

LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles County sheriff says he won’t enforce the county’s vaccine mandate in his agency.

Sheriff Alex Villanueva oversees the largest sheriff’s department in the county with roughly 18,000 employees. He said Thursday in a Facebook Live event that he doesn’t plan to carry out the county’s mandate.

Los Angeles County employees had to be fully vaccinated by Oct. 1. The mandate was issued by executive order in August and allows only religious and medical exemptions.

Villanueva says his employees are willing to be terminated rather than get vaccinated. More than 26,000 people have died of the coronavirus in Los Angeles County.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Alabama’s top health official is urging people who’ve not been vaccinated for the coronavirus to get a shot within the next week to help prevent another holiday spike of infections and deaths.

Dr. Scott Harris says it takes five or six weeks for someone to gain the maximum amount of immunity after the initial vaccine in a shot-two process. He says that means time is running out for people to have “the safest possible Thanksgiving.”

Harris says he was “cautiously optimistic” the holidays won’t be as deadly as last year because of vaccinations and the large number of people who have antibodies after contracting the virus.

NEW YORK — A panel of vaccine experts will meet in early November to consider whether to recommend the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children younger than 12.

The Advisory Committee of Immunization Practices scheduled a two-day meeting for Nov. 2-3, health officials said Friday. The Pfizer topic is expected to take up part of the agenda.

The experts are anticipating the U.S. Food and Drug Administration will have decided by then whether to authorize use of the Pfizer vaccine for children between ages 5 to 11. The committee’s job is to help the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention develop recommendations for doctors and the public about which vaccines should be used and how they should be given.

Currently, Pfizer vaccines are authorized only for people 12 and older.

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McConnell seizes on debt standoff to undermine Biden agenda

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the frantic bid to avert a default on the nation's debt, Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell held a position of unusual power — as the one who orchestrated both the problem and the solution.

McConnell is no longer the majority leader, but he is exerting his minority status in convoluted and uncharted ways, all in an effort to stop President Joe Biden's domestic agenda and even if doing so pushes the country toward grave economic uncertainty.

All said, the outcome of this debt crisis leaves zero confidence there won't be a next one. In fact, McConnell engineered an end to the standoff that ensures Congress will be in the same spot in December when funding to pay America's bills next runs out. That means another potentially devastating debt showdown, all as the COVID-19 crisis lingers and the economy struggles to recover.

"Mitch McConnell loves chaos," said Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, chairman of the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee. "He's a very smart tactician and strategist, but the country pays the price so often for what he does."

The crisis has cemented McConnell's legacy as a master of misdirection. He's the architect of the impasse and the one who resolved it, if only for the short term. More battles are to come as Democrats narrow Biden's big agenda, a now-\$2 trillion expansion of health, child care and climate change programs, all paid for with taxes on corporations and the wealthy that Republicans oppose.

To some Republicans, McConnell is a shrewd leader, using every tool at his disposal to leverage power and undermine Biden's priorities. To others, including Donald Trump, he is weak, having "caved" too soon. To Democrats, McConnell remains an infuriating rival who has shown again he is willing to break one institutional norm after another to pursue Republican power.

"McConnell's role is to be the leader of the opposition and it's his job to push back on what the majority wants to do," said Alex Conant, a Republican strategist.

"Nobody should be surprised to see the leader of the Republicans making the Democrats' job harder," he said.

Biden, in comments made via video Saturday to the Democratic National Committee's fall meeting, hinted at the damage McConnell could inflict not just on that agenda but also on the party's broader case to the electorate. The president urged activists at virtual meeting to keep making the case for government solutions, even as Republicans try to undercut that message.

"Just as the Republican Party today offers nothing but fear, lies and broken promises, we have to keep cutting through the Republican fog that government is the problem, and show that we the people are always the solution," Biden said.

The debt showdown left Democrats, who control Washington, portrayed as big spenders, willing to boost the nation's now-\$28.4 trillion debt to pay the bills. But both parties have contributed to that load because of past decisions that leave the government rarely operating in the black.

Republicans risk recriminations from all sides of their deeply divided party. In easing off the crisis, McConnell insulated his Republicans from further blame, but infuriated Trump and his allies, who are eager to skewer the Kentucky senator for giving in.

Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, said he told his colleagues during a private meeting before the debt vote that it was "a mistake for Republican leadership to agree to this deal."

Once a routine vote to ensure the nation's bills are paid, raising the debt limit has become a political weapon, particularly for Republicans, to rail against government spending. The tea party class of Republicans a decade ago brought the nation to the brink of default over the issue and set a new GOP strategy.

In this case, McConnell made it clear he had no demands other than to disrupt Biden's domestic agenda, the now-\$2 trillion package that is the president's signature legislation but is derided by Republicans as a "socialist tax-and-spending spree."

In muscling Biden's agenda to passage, Democrats are relying on a complicated procedure, the budget

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reconciliation process, which allows 51 votes for approval, rather than the 60 typically needed to overcome Senate objections. In the 50-50 split Senate, Vice President Kamala Harris gives Democrats the majority with her ability to cast a tiebreaking vote.

McConnell seized on the Democratic budget strategy as a way to conflate the issues, announcing months ago he wanted Democrats to increase the debt limit on their own using the same procedure. It was his way of linking Biden's big federal government overhaul with the nation's rising debt load, even though they are separate and most of Biden's agenda hasn't been enacted.

The debt raising vote has rarely been popular, and both parties have had to do it on their own, at times. But McConnell struck new legislative ground trying to dictate the terms to Democrats.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., promptly ignored McConnell's demands for the cumbersome process, and set out to pass the debt ceiling bill with a more traditional route.

As the Oct. 18 deadline approached, when Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen warned the government would run out of funds to pay the nation's bills, Schumer's strategy hit the Republican blockade, or filibuster. Only after business pressure mounted and Biden implored Republicans to "get out of the way" did McConnell call a time out.

McConnell orchestrated the way around the problem by allowing the traditional vote on Thursday night and even joining 10 other Republican senators in helping Democrats reach the 60-vote threshold needed to ease off the crisis.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki lauded the Republicans who "did their part tonight, ending the filibuster and allowing Democrats to do the work of raising the debt limit." But she urged the parties to come together to find a more permanent solution.

"We can't allow the routine process of paying our bills to turn into a confidence-shaking political showdown every two years or every two months," she said.

Schumer struck a more acerbic tone.

"Republicans played a dangerous and risky partisan game, and I am glad that their brinkmanship did not work," he said.

That, too, brought trouble: McConnell said in letter to Biden late Friday that such antics assure "I will not provide such assistance again."

That night before voting, McConnell told Republican colleagues that he devised the solution in part because he was worried that Democrats would change the filibuster rules, as they had been discussing as an option of last resort. He had reached out to two key Democrats, Sens. Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Sen. Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, to ensure they weren't thinking of doing that.

And besides, the Republican leader had accomplished his goal: jamming up Biden's agenda, sowing the seeds of fiscal distress and portraying Democrats as a party struggling to govern.

It's the first big fight that McConnell has picked with Biden, and it appears to be the one that could define the final phase of their decadeslong association.

Russian Nobel winner: Peace Prize is for my paper, not me

By JIM HEINTZ Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — As editor of Novaya Gazeta, Dmitry Muratov was well aware that his independent Russian newspaper — a persistent critic of the Kremlin, government corruption and human rights abuses in Russia — was seen as a top contender for the Nobel Peace Prize.

But the prestigious award wasn't on his mind when the announcement came down that he'd been named co-winner. At the time Friday, Muratov was absorbed in an argument on the phone with a reporter, Elena Milashina.

"At that time, there were several calls from Oslo. But only a reckless person would say to Milashina 'Wait, I'll talk to Oslo and then you and I will quarrel,'" Muratov said on Ekho Moskvyy radio.

Finally, he was told by his paper's spokeswoman that he had won the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize, along with journalist Maria Ressa of the Philippines, for their fight for freedom of expression in countries where

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reporters have faced persistent attacks, harassment and even murder.

The 59-year-old Muratov was similarly casual, even sardonic, about the recognition of the prize that came from the Kremlin spokesman, Dmitry Peskov. In the radio interview, the host asked him for comment on Peskov's statement. Muratov said he hadn't read it and the host offered to read it to him.

"Should I rise?" Muratov said, then heard that Peskov said "he is committed to his ideals, he is talented, he is brave."

"All the above is certainly true," Muratov responded.

Other reactions from Kremlin circles were far less generous.

"The Nobel Peace Prize is one of the most controversial nominations of the Nobel Committee. Such decisions devalue the prize itself, it is already difficult to be guided by it," said Dmitry Kiselev, whose weekly news magazine program on state TV is larded with paeans to Russian President Vladimir Putin and disdain for the opposition.

Considering how critical Novaya Gazeta has been toward Putin and his government, Peskov's congratulatory words could be seen as determined spin-control. They also likely reflect relief that the Norwegian Nobel Committee did not choose another Russian nominee for the Peace Prize — imprisoned opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

Navalny's dramatic arrest this year when he returned from Germany after recuperating from nerve-agent poisoning that he blames on the Kremlin gave him international prominence. Many of his supporters were disappointed that his bravery in confronting Russia's government did not earn him the Nobel.

Lyubov Sobol, one of Navalny's closest and most visible aides, congratulated Muratov on Twitter, but added that she believes Navalny is "the most important fighter for peace in our country."

Muratov, though pleased by the recognition, agreed.

"I can tell you directly that if I were on the Nobel committee, I would have voted for him for his absolutely crazy courage," he said.

Novaya Gazeta has courted controversy since its founding in 1993 by Muratov and other former colleagues at the newspaper Komsomolskaya Pravda, the onetime organ of the Communist Youth League. The goal was to create "an honest, independent, and rich publication that would influence national policy," according to his citation for the 2007 International Press Freedom Award.

Although the Nobel has brought him intense international attention, Muratov has been at pains to downplay his personal prominence, saying repeatedly that he regards the award as being given to the whole paper and as a tribute to its six reporters or contributors who have been killed.

The most famous victim was Anna Politkovskaya, who reported on Russia's Chechnya wars and was gunned down in the elevator of her Moscow apartment building in 2006. Muratov's Nobel award was announced one day after the 15th anniversary of her killing. Although six people were convicted of involvement in the shooting, whoever ordered it has not been identified and the statute of limitations on the case expired on Thursday.

Yuri Shchekochikhin, a reporter investigating corrupt business deals and the possible role of Russian security services in the 1999 apartment house bombings blamed on Chechen insurgents, died in 2003 of poisoning and the culprits were never found. Anastasia Baburina was shot to death in 2009 after a news conference with a lawyer representing the family of a Chechen girl raped and murdered by a Russian military officer; the lawyer also died in the attack.

The paper and its journalists also have endured an array of threats, ranging from a severed goat's head and funeral notices sent to the paper, to mysterious dustings of powder at the home of a reporter.

Prominent investigations at the paper in recent years include reporting on the alleged torture and murders of gay men by Chechen officials, publishing bodycam footage of Russian prison officials torturing an inmate and the beheading of a detainee in Syria by men believed to be Russian mercenaries working for a contractor closely tied to Putin.

The paper's report on the "Blue Whale" phenomenon in which Russian youths reportedly were lured online into committing suicide was criticized as possibly overstated, but a Russian man later claimed to

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have organized it and was sentenced to prison.

The Nobel Peace award raised concerns about whether it could subject Novaya Gazeta to being designated as a "foreign agent" under Russian law, a term applied to organizations and individuals who receive foreign funding and are engaged in unspecified political activity. The stipulation apparently is aimed at undermining their credibility.

"I hope that this status of Muratov will protect Novaya Gazeta from the status of a foreign agent and will become some kind of protection for Russian journalists, who are massively announced as foreign agents," said Yevgenia Albats, editor of the Novoye Vremya news magazine. "I hope this will help Russian journalism survive in these difficult conditions."

But a few hours after the Nobel announcement, the Russian Justice Ministry added nine more journalists and three more organizations to its list of foreign agents.

Climate activist Nakate visits huge German coal mine

LUETZERATH, Germany (AP) — Ugandan climate activist Vanessa Nakate on Saturday visited a vast German open-pit coal mine and a village that is to be bulldozed for its expansion, saying the destruction is "really disturbing" and has implications far beyond Germany.

The visit by Nakate and other young climate activists comes a few weeks before U.N. climate talks open in Glasgow, Scotland on Oct. 31.

The Garzweiler lignite mine, operated by utility giant RWE, has become a focus of protests by people who want Germany to stop extracting and burning coal as soon as possible. Activists and local residents say expanding the mine runs counter to Germany's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to meet the Paris climate accord's target of capping global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit).

They also oppose the destruction of villages such as Luetzerath and nearby woods to make way for the mine. Coal mining is due to end in Germany by 2038, but environmentalists say it needs to stop much earlier.

"I came to see how much destruction is being done in Luetzerath with the coal mine and to see how much of this destruction is not just affecting the people in this place, but also the people in my country, Uganda," Nakate told The Associated Press.

Because of rising global temperatures, "the weather patterns are changing in my country and we are experiencing more extreme rainfall and extreme droughts," she said.

"With the expansion of this coal mine, it means people's cultures will be destroyed, people's traditions, people's histories of this place," Nakate said.

Noting the mine's size and its implications for greenhouse gas emissions, she added "it's really disturbing to see how much destruction is taking place."

German activist Leonie Bremer said "it's absurd that my friend Vanessa has to come here from Uganda to show people that what we are doing here in Germany, that what RWE is doing here, that's affecting countries like Uganda."

Follow AP's climate coverage at <http://www.apnews.com/Climate>

Nevada among last states to add rapid tests to virus tally

By SAM METZ AP / Report for America

CARSON CITY, Nev. (AP) — Nevada this week became one of the last states to publicly report rapid antigen tests as part of its coronavirus tallies — a move that experts said could provide a fuller picture of the pandemic but also depend on metrics used to gauge how the virus is spreading.

The change leaves Maryland as the lone U.S. state that doesn't incorporate rapid tests in its online dashboard or include them in virus statistics, as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control recommends, according to an Associated Press review of dashboards and policies for all 50 states.

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Nevada has been among the states hit hardest by the pandemic. The state's hospitals have been pushed to near capacity, its unemployment has broken national records, and 435,000 people have tested positive for COVID-19. Omitting rapid tests from its tally limited the public's understanding of the pandemic's spread in the state, Nevada health officials acknowledge.

Officials told the AP in September 2020 that they were working to publicly report antigen and molecular tests separately on their dashboard. On Monday, they said delays stemmed from the overburdened state public health system having to juggle competing priorities with limited resources.

The rapid antigen tests, which detect the presence of viral proteins rather than the coronavirus itself, return results in minutes, unlike traditional molecular tests sent to labs, which can take days to process but are shown to be more accurate. Their quick turnaround times have led to their widespread use in prisons, schools and nursing homes.

President Joe Biden praised rapid tests last month, but supply shortages and the varied ways that states report them reflect the continued absence of a national testing strategy. Some states report antigen tests separately, with positive results as "probable cases" while others combine them with molecular tests for an overall tally.

On Monday, Nevada added more than 600,000 new tests to the online dashboard that shows coronavirus case and death counts, vaccination rates and positivity rates. The infusion spiked the number of COVID-19 cases reported statewide by 9,700 and decreased the positivity rate by one-sixth, from 10.1% to 8.8%.

University of Nevada, Las Vegas epidemiologist Brian Labus said scientists never assumed testing data provided a complete picture of COVID-19's trajectory and instead used it to pinpoint trends. It's easier to gauge when COVID-19 surges and drops if cases are counted the same way, he said, especially regarding statistics used to determine the need for prevention measures like mask mandates.

One criteria that triggers county mask mandates for indoor public spaces is an 8% positivity rate, which the CDC defines as "substantial" transmission.

"Changing now will probably cause some disruption to that system," Labus said.

While other states have embraced antigen tests, which are also called point-of-care tests, Nevada has been comparatively skeptical. A year ago, federal officials chided the state when it decided to halt their use due to accuracy concerns.

Nevada, which was the only state to stop using the tests, subsequently reversed the ban.

Nevada began reporting rapid tests from prisons toward its cumulative case count in December and approved them for use in school reopening plans and in the protocols for large events like last month's 60,000-attendee Life is Beautiful Music Festival. Those approvals, however, didn't compel the state to include most of the tests toward calculating infection rates.

The Nevada Department of Health and Human Services made the decision to direct resources and staffing toward distributing vaccines and contact tracing and, at the height of the pandemic, didn't have capacity to investigate every positive result from a rapid antigen test, said state epidemiologist Melissa Peek-Bullock.

Although it wasn't consistent to report rapid tests only from state prisons, she said not counting them would have denied inmates, guards and their families vital information about the pandemic's reach in prisons.

With a drop in new cases, Nevada now has the capacity to investigate positive antigen tests as probable coronavirus cases, Peek-Bullock said.

"The reporting of the antigen tests really give us a better picture of what's happening disease burden-wise across our state. With the schools using it, with correctional facilities doing mass use of antigen testing and a lot of employer-based testing — we've just reached a point in the pandemic where we absolutely have to take into account these positive results," she said.

An average of 17,700 antigen tests a week were reported to Nevada health officials in August and the first three weeks of September, state data show.

Nevada wasn't the only state struggling to process hundreds of thousands of different kinds of tests, said Janet Hamilton, the executive director of the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists. Test results aren't transmitted electronically from providers to health departments, forcing them to process

large volumes of paper. Those kinds of time-consuming undertakings stem from a long-term lack of funding for public health systems and infrastructure nationwide, she said.

"We should have electronic case reporting, but public health, until very recently, was never funded to support it. Providers were never incentivized to participate in the process or ensure that their electronic medical record systems were sending data to public health," Hamilton said.

The lack of infrastructure has been particularly severe in Nevada, where officials began the pandemic relaying test information to the federal government via fax machine.

Maryland continues to only report molecular tests. State health officials did not respond to requests for comment.

Though 49 states now publicly report the rapid test positives as probable cases, epidemiologists worry that incorporating them doesn't fully provide a complete picture.

At-home tests, including those that consumers can purchase on Amazon or at their local drug stores, do not require any reporting to health departments. Nevada recommends people whose at-home antigen tests return positive results to confirm it with molecular tests, which gives the state more complete data and allows them to contact trace.

"As epidemiologists, this is something that we are very conscientious of. The data that you have tells the story in either complete or incomplete ways," Hamilton said. "We are telling an incomplete story around the total number of people that actually have COVID-19."

Metz is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

Source: DA seeking to indict Robert Durst in ex-wife's death

By MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A New York prosecutor will seek an indictment in the coming weeks against millionaire real estate scion Robert Durst for the death of his former wife, Kathie Durst, who disappeared in 1982, a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press on Friday.

Westchester District Attorney Mimi Rocah decided in recent days to take the case to a grand jury in the next week or two, according to the person, who was not authorized to speak publicly about the matter and did so on condition of anonymity. The grand jury process is expected to take about a month, the person said.

The news was first reported Friday by News 12 in Westchester.

Kathie Durst's disappearance has shadowed Robert Durst, 78, for years, highlighted in an HBO documentary in which he appeared to admit killing people and culminating last month in his conviction in California for murdering a confidante whom prosecutors say helped him cover up Kathie Durst's killing.

A message seeking comment was left Friday with the Westchester district attorney's office, which previously said that it reopened the investigation into Kathie Durst's death. In a statement issued after Durst's conviction last month, a spokesperson for Rocah's office said its investigation was ongoing.

Durst's lawyer, David Chesnoff, said: "I don't respond to rumors."

Robert Durst is jailed in Los Angeles and scheduled to be sentenced Oct. 14 for the 2000 killing of his friend, Susan Berman. His first-degree murder conviction carries a mandatory sentence of life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Durst, the eccentric heir to a family of New York City developers, is now sick and frail. He sat throughout the trial in a wheelchair, spoke slowly in a strained, raspy voice when he testified in his own defense and read his lawyer's questions from a tablet giving live transcriptions because he struggles with hearing.

Los Angeles prosecutors say Durst shot Berman at her Los Angeles home in December 2000 as she was preparing to tell police about her involvement in Kathie Durst's death. She had told friends she provided a phony alibi for him after his wife vanished, prosecutors said.

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"He's a narcissistic psychopath. He killed his wife and then he had to keep killing to cover it up," Deputy District Attorney John Lewin said after Durst's conviction in the Los Angeles case.

Kathie Durst was 29 and in her final months of medical school when she vanished on Jan. 31, 1982. She and Robert Durst, who was 38 at the time, had been married nearly nine years and were living in South Salem, near the Connecticut border. Her body was never found. At the request of her family, she was declared legally dead in 2017.

Robert Durst claimed to police that on the night of her disappearance, he'd put her on a train to New York City, had a drink with a neighbor and then spoke with Kathie Durst by telephone while she stayed at their Manhattan apartment. They'd been fighting earlier in the evening, he said. A few weeks before that, Kathie Durst went to the hospital with facial injuries she said were caused by Robert Durst.

In the 2015 HBO documentary "The Jinx: The Life and Deaths of Robert Durst," he admitted he made up the details about seeing his neighbor and talking to Kathie Durst by phone, saying he did so because he was "hoping that would just make everything go away."

In the same documentary, after filmmakers confronted Durst with evidence linking him to Berman's killing, he stepped off camera and muttered to himself on a live microphone in the bathroom: "Killed them all, of course."

Robert Durst, who divorced Kathie Durst in 1990 citing abandonment, has never been charged in her disappearance despite several efforts over the years to close the case. Authorities reopened the case in 1999, searching a lake and the couple's home.

While all that was happening, Durst fled to Galveston, Texas, where he was accused of killing a neighbor, Morris Black. Durst then chopped up Black's body and tossed it out to sea. Durst claimed self-defense — that he and Black were struggling for control of a gun — and was acquitted. He was convicted of destroying evidence for discarding the body parts.

Durst, testifying in the Los Angeles trial, denied killing Kathie Durst. After her medical school called to report that she hadn't been going to class, he said he figured she was "out someplace having fun" and suggested that perhaps drug use was to blame.

"It hadn't occurred to me that anything had happened to her," Durst testified in August. "It was more like: what had Kathie done to Kathie?"

Associated Press reporters Brian Melley and Andrew Dalton in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

Follow Michael Sisak on Twitter at twitter.com/mikesisak

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Oct. 10, the 283rd day of 2021. There are 82 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 10, 2014, Malala Yousafzai (mah-LAH'-lah YOO'-suhf-zeye), a 17-year-old Pakistani girl, and Kailash Satyarthi (KY'-lash saht-YAHR'-thee), a 60-year-old Indian man, were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for risking their lives for the right of children to receive an education and to live free from abuse.

On this date:

In 1845, the U.S. Naval Academy was established in Annapolis, Maryland.

In 1911, Chinese revolutionaries launched an uprising that led to the collapse of the Qing (or Manchu) Dynasty and the establishment of the Republic of China.

In 1935, the George Gershwin opera "Porgy and Bess," featuring an all-Black cast, opened on Broadway, beginning a run of 124 performances.

In 1957, the Milwaukee Braves won the World Series, defeating the New York Yankees in Game 7, 5-0.

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy, responding to the Thalidomide birth defects crisis, signed an

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amendment to the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act requiring pharmaceutical companies to prove that their products were safe and effective prior to marketing.

In 1964, the 18th Summer Olympic Games opened in Tokyo.

In 1973, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, accused of accepting bribes, pleaded no contest to one count of federal income tax evasion, and resigned his office.

In 1985, U.S. fighter jets forced an Egyptian plane carrying the hijackers of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro (ah-KEE'-leh LOW'-roh) to land in Italy, where the gunmen were taken into custody. Actor-director Orson Welles died in Los Angeles at age 70; actor Yul Brynner died in New York at age 65.

In 1997, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and its coordinator, Jody Williams, were named winners of the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 2001, U.S. jets pounded the Afghan capital of Kabul. President George W. Bush unveiled a list of 22 most-wanted terrorists, including Osama bin Laden.

In 2004, Christopher Reeve, the "Superman" of celluloid who became a quadriplegic after a May 1995 horse riding accident, died in Mount Kisco, New York, at age 52.

In 2015, twin bombings in Ankara killed 103 people at a peace rally in the worst terror attack in Turkey's modern history.

Ten years ago: NBA Commissioner David Stern canceled the first two weeks of the season after owners and players were unable to reach a new labor deal and end a lockout.

Five years ago: Amid controversy over Donald Trump's past sexual comments about women, House Speaker Paul Ryan effectively abandoned his party's nominee, telling anxious fellow lawmakers he would not campaign for or defend Trump in the election's closing weeks; pro-Trump members rebelled in anger, accusing Ryan of conceding the election to Hillary Clinton.

One year ago: President Donald Trump's doctor said Trump could safely discontinue isolating after treatment for COVID-19, and that by "currently recognized standards" he was no longer considered a transmission risk; the memo did not say whether Trump had tested negative for the virus. Trump made his first public appearance since returning to the White House following coronavirus treatment; hundreds of people gathered on the South Lawn for a Trump address from the Blue Room balcony on his support for law enforcement. Iga Swiatek grabbed the last six games to beat Sofia Kenin 6-4, 6-1 in the French Open final; the 19-year-old became the first Polish tennis player to win a Grand Slam singles championship.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Peter Coyote is 80. Entertainer Ben Vereen is 75. Actor Charles Dance is 75. Rock singer-musician Cyril Neville (The Neville Brothers) is 73. Actor Jessica Harper is 72. Author Nora Roberts (aka "J.D. Robb") is 71. Singer-musician Midge Ure is 68. Rock singer David Lee Roth is 67. Actor J. Eddie Peck is 63. Country singer Tanya Tucker is 63. Actor Julia Sweeney is 62. Actor Bradley Whitford is 62. Musician Martin Kemp is 60. Actor Jodi Benson is 60. Rock musician Jim Glennie (James) is 58. Actor Rebecca Pidgeon is 56. California Gov. Gavin Newsom is 54. Rock musician Mike Malinin (mah-LIHN'-ihn) (Goo Goo Dolls) is 54. Pro Football Hall of Famer Brett Favre is 52. Actor Manu Bennett is 52. Actor Joelle Carter is 52. Actor Wendi McLendon-Covey is 52. Actor/TV host Mario Lopez is 48. Retired race car driver Dale Earnhardt Jr. is 47. Actor Jodi Lyn O'Keefe is 43. Singer Mya is 42. Actor Dan Stevens is 39. Singer Cherie is 37. MLB outfielder Andrew McCutchen is 35. Actor Rose McIver is 33. Actor Aimee Teegarden is 32.