

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Upcoming Events

### 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 65 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

### Monday, Oct. 18

Volleyball at Langford. JV at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity.

### Tuesday, Oct. 19

Volleyball hosts Northwestern. 7th/C match at 5 p.m., 8th/JV at 6 p.m., Varsity to follow

### Wednesday, Oct. 20

Senior Scholarship Info Night at GHS Library Conference Room, 6 p.m.

### Thursday, Oct. 21

First Round Football Playoffs

"You attract the right things when you have a sense of who you are."

-Amy Poehler



### Friday, Oct. 22

End of First Quarter  
Volleyball at Aberdeen Roncalli. (7th at 5 p.m., 8th at 6 p.m., JV at 6 p.m. followed by varsity.

### Saturday, Oct. 23

State Cross Country at Yankton Trail Park in Sioux Falls.

Oral Interp at NSU Invitational  
ACT Testing at GHS, 8 a.m. to Noon

**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.**

## **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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## **Friendly Fellows & Daisies October Meeting**

The Friendly Fellows & Daisies 4-H Club held its October 3, 2021 meeting at the Claremont Church. The club did its community service project which included cleaning ditches along Highway 37 for their Adopt-A-Highway project. The meeting was called to order by Vice President Andrew Marzahn. Trey Smith let the American Flag Pledge, and Riley Zoellner led the 4-H pledge. The roll call topic was Favorite Halloween costume. The treasurer's report was read by club leader Mike Frey. Walker Zoellner made a motion to approve the treasurer's report and Hudson Eichler seconded the motion and the motion passed by the members. The secretary's report was read by Blake Pauli. Ashlyn Warrington made a motion to approve the secretary's report and Kella Tracy seconded the motion and the members all approved the secretary minutes. Next on the agenda was old business which was reminding members to send out thank yous to Brown County Fair sponsors. Hailey Pauli made a motion to close old business and Kella Tracy seconded the motion which the members approved. New business included reading of the Newshound, discussing the upcoming recognition event, and election of officers. Logan Warrington moved to close new business and Hudson Eichler seconded the motion which the members all approved. Ashlyn Warrington made a motion to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Hailey Pauli and the members approved. Hailey Pauli gave a talk about "How to Show a Calf." Walker Zoellner gave a talk about "Krull Broker Elegance." Andrew Marzahn served lunch at the meeting.

## Make that appointment now

A friend of mine from my old school stops in once a month. He sells paper products, and I only need so much, so he doesn't often get an order, but anyone who's ever done that job knows you couldn't do it if it wasn't about the people. "I just like seeing you," he said.

It's an opportunity to catch up on hometown news, the changes in our families, and ultimately, the state of business. "We're hanging in there," is my usual answer. I once told a date about myself. "Well, I went into AM personality radio just as it was dying. It was a dinosaur. Then I went into newspapers on the cusp of the Internet Age. And I collect fossils." She howled.

My friend who sells paper in an ever-increasingly paperless PDF world, lamented the COVID supply chain issues. He's having a hard time getting paper cups and copy paper is being rationed because there are few warehouses anymore. With computer logistics, product travels from the manufacturer to the end-user in a "just in time" supply chain. That's when everything's going right. But get a ship stuck in a canal for a couple of weeks, clog up the shipping lanes, and we're reminded of just how vulnerable we are.

The COVID complications that took place more than a year ago still affect supplies in the same way an accident and rush hour slowdown used to affect my drive home in Denver. The accident might have been cleared up 45 minutes earlier, but the traffic snarl was still there.

That's what happened to health care. Routine tests and surgeries were stalled. A few months into the pandemic, most cancer screenings were down nearly 90 percent. Unfortunately, cancer didn't just go away. The number of diagnoses just dropped. I was one of the lucky ones. I was able to run the COVID gauntlet for treatment with a precarious timeline. I needed chemo and radiation, and then, if things went exactly right, the prize was major surgery at Mayo. They used the word "cure." I clung to that word like a life raft. But a COVID setback had the potential to set me back, possibly beyond a cure.

Two weeks ago, I had my first scans since all of that and they came back clean as a whistle, which is what we expected, but you mentally prepare yourself to dig in and fight again. I wonder how many people weren't as fortunate I was and lost their lives because of our health care supply chain issues. If you can avoid hospitalization through a vaccine, you aren't just helping yourself, you're helping others you'll never know about. I've been in the trenches. I know.

I'd vowed to myself that I wasn't going to spend a lot of time talking about cancer, but it's Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and I realized that I needed to do what we all should be doing, our part to make lives around us better. So schedule that mammogram today. And if something doesn't feel quite right, get it checked out. I had no idea that acid reflux could lead to esophageal cancer, so it was a shock to see my doctor come in with a long face after my endoscopy. He and his nurse were more shook up about it than I was, but that might have had something to do with the anesthetic.

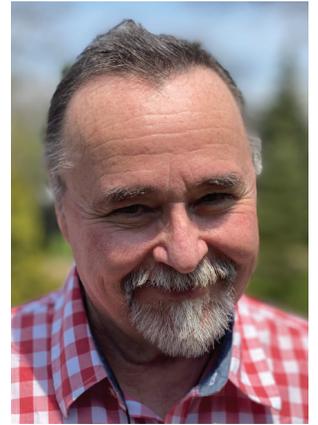
I was driving back from treatment one day talking to my sister on the phone. "I feel guilty," she said. "I never had to go through the chemo and radiation that you and (our sister) Patty (bladder cancer) have had to endure."

"Good grief," I said. "You lost a breast!" But they'd caught it early. No further treatment was necessary. She's a retired RN. She knew enough to go in when she discovered a lump.

You get my message. No excuses. Get checked out. Many hospitals offer discounted mammograms. I get the natural human psychology. Somehow, we feel better not knowing even if there's a niggling suspicion in the back of our minds. Most tests will come back clean, and I can tell you there are no sweeter words in the world than "cancer-free."

Advances in treatment mean it's no longer a death sentence. Just in my small circle of friends and family, I can count a dozen success stories. A couple of them were on the ropes. Patty's immunotherapy treatment has her cancer on the run. "I feel like we're both in the same canoe paddling like hell," I told her one day.

Make that appointment. And paddle on.



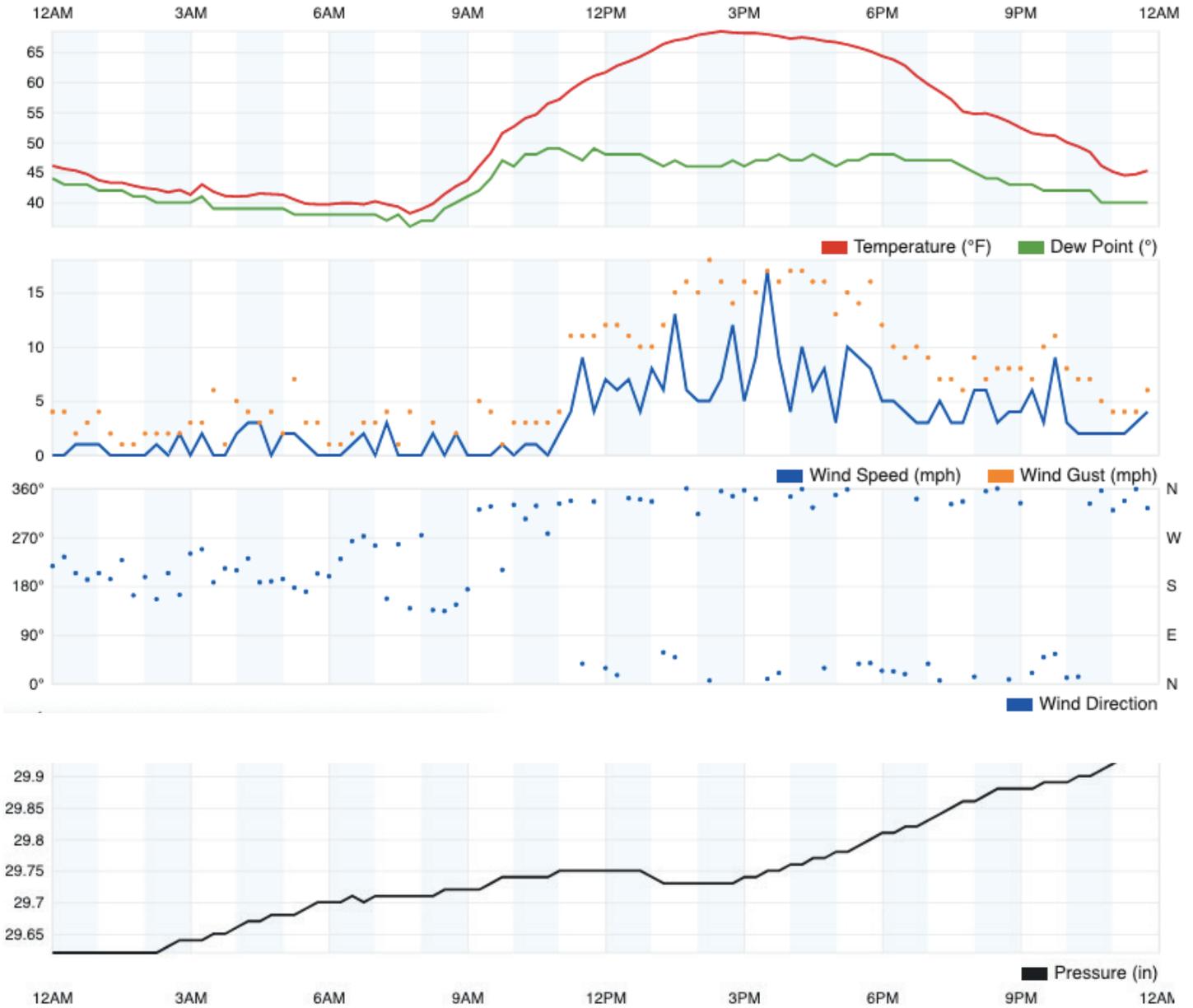
## That's Life

by Tony Bender

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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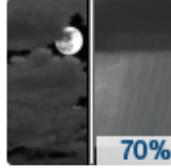
Today



Mostly Sunny  
then  
Increasing  
Clouds and  
Breezy

High: 62 °F

Tonight



Mostly Cloudy  
then Showers  
Likely

Low: 49 °F

Wednesday



Showers and  
Patchy Fog

High: 62 °F

Wednesday  
Night



Mostly Cloudy

Low: 39 °F

Thursday



Partly Sunny

High: 52 °F

## Wet Weather Returning

especially overnight tonight through Wednesday morning

Today  
55-62°



Afternoon: Increasing Clouds  
Chance of Showers over central SD

Tonight  
43-50°



Rain Showers

Wed  
55-63°



Rain Showers  
A few Thunderstorms possible



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

[www.weather.gov/abr](http://www.weather.gov/abr)

Created:  
10/12/2021 1:53 AM

More rain is headed our way, with storm total rainfall of around a half inch to just over an inch possible. The highest rainfall amounts are expected over north central South Dakota, with most of the rain falling overnight tonight into Wednesday morning. A few rumbles of thunder will be possible Wednesday. Showers will come to an end late Wednesday afternoon into Wednesday evening.

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## Today in Weather History

October 12, 1997: High winds upward of 60 mph were recorded throughout western South Dakota.

1836 - A third early season storm produced heavy snow in the northeastern U.S. Bridgewater NY received 18 inches, a foot of snow fell at Madison NY, and for the third time all the mountains of the northeastern U.S. were whitened. (David Ludlum)

1918: On October 10, 1918, two men working near a railroad siding northwest of Cloquet, Minnesota, saw a passenger train pass by the siding, and soon after, that discovered a fire burning through grass and piles of wood. The fire could not be contained, and by October 12, fires had spread through northern Minnesota. At least 450 lives were lost, and 52,000 people were injured or displaced, 38 communities were destroyed, 250,000 acres were burned.

1918 - Forest fires ravaged parts of Minnesota from the Duluth area northeastward, claiming the lives of 600 persons. Smoke with a smell of burnt wood spread to Albany NY and Washington D.C. in 24 hours. Smoke was noted at Charleston SC on the 14th, and by the 15th was reported in northeastern Texas. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1962 - The "Columbus Day Big Blow" occurred in the Pacific Northwest. It was probably the most damaging windstorm of record west of the Cascade Mountains. Winds reached hurricane force, with gusts above 100 mph. More than 3.5 billion board feet of timber were blown down, and communications were severely disrupted due to downed power lines. The storm claimed 48 lives, and caused 210 million dollars damage. (David Ludlum)

1979: The lowest barometric pressure ever recorded occurs in the center of Typhoon Tip on this day. A fly reconnaissance mission recorded the low pressure of 870 hPa or 25.69 inHg. Typhoon Tip was the most extensive tropical cyclone on record with a wind diameter of 1380 miles at its peak.

1987 - Floyd, the only hurricane to make landfall the entire season, moved across the Florida Keys. Floyd produced wind gusts to 59 mph at Duck Key, and up to nine inches of rain in southern Florida. Sixteen cities in the Ohio Valley and the Middle Mississippi Valley reported record low temperatures for the date. Record lows included 27 degrees at Paducah KY, and 24 degrees at Rockford IL and Springfield IL. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Twenty cities in the Upper Midwest reported record low temperatures for the date, including International Falls MN with a reading of 17 degrees. The town of Embarass MN reported a morning low of 8 degrees. Snow showers in the northeastern U.S. produced five inches at Corry PA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Temperatures again warmed into the 80s in the Central Plains Region and the Middle Mississippi Valley, with 90s in the south central U.S. Six cities reported record high temperatures for the date, including Fort Smith AR with a reading of 92 degrees. Strong winds along a cold front crossing the Great Lakes Region and the Ohio Valley gusted to 61 mph at Johnstown PA. (The National Weather Summary)

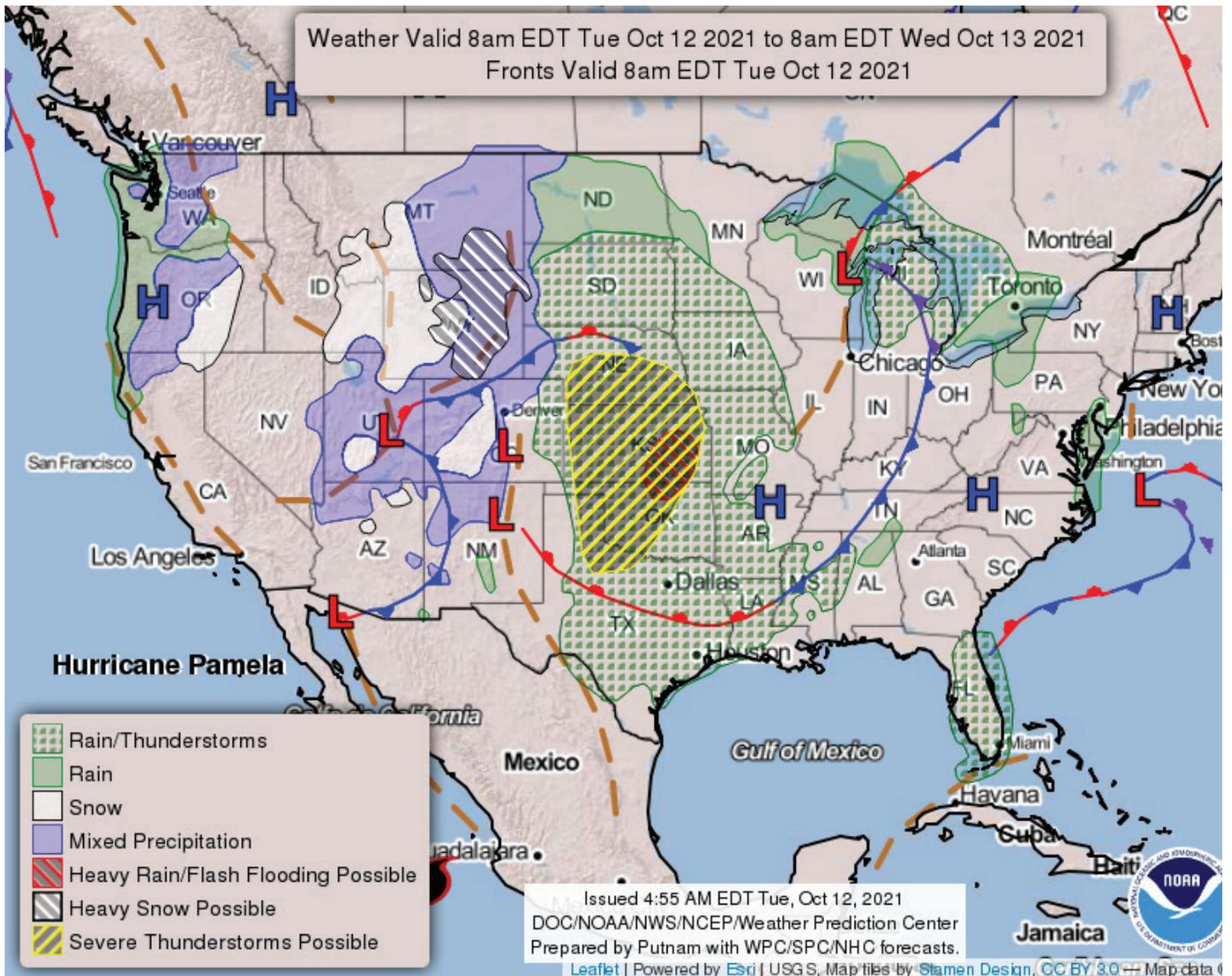
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp: 68.4 °F at 2:30 AM**  
**Low Temp: 38.2 °F at 7:45 AM**  
**Wind: 18 mph at 2:15 PM**  
**Precip: 0.00**

**Record High: 89° in 1910**  
**Record Low: 11° in 1917**  
**Average High: 62°F**  
**Average Low: 35°F**  
**Average Precip in Oct.: 0.90**  
**Precip to date in Oct.: 1.30**  
**Average Precip to date: 19.23**  
**Precip Year to Date: 16:72**  
**Sunset Tonight: 6:53:36 PM**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:45:12 AM**



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## THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

No matter where you travel - from the darkest jungle to the highest mountain - you will find some type of music. It could be rap or rock and roll, hip-hop or jazz, rhythm and blues or opera, music for a marching band, the painful music of the pagan, the repetitive Middle Eastern style, or the majesty of hymns or worship music. All music makes a statement about the one who is making it and the ones who are listening.

Sometimes the music sounds sad and sorrowful or joyful and uplifting. Then again it might be the music of marches that stirs up our patriotism on the Fourth of July. Music can bring tears to our eyes or a smile to our face when it reminds us of a loved one. When we sit quietly in church or lift our arms to God, it can elevate our hearts to His presence or excite our senses when we hear music that proclaims the glory of God's goodness and grace, love, and salvation. But can there be more?

Of course! The Psalmist wrote of the music that should always fill the heart of a Christian: "Praise the Lord, O my soul, all my inmost being, praise His holy Name!"

Praise, in the life of the believer, is personal. If we remind ourselves of the work of Jesus while on this earth, we remember that He did His greatest works with individuals. Even when He was dying on the cross for our sins, He ministered to the one next to Him: "Lord," he cried, "remember me!" And Jesus said, "This day you will be with me in heaven!" Even as our prayer for pardon is personal, so should our praise to our God be personal. When praise becomes personal, it works from the inside out!

Prayer: Lord, fill our hearts with praise! May our souls be filled with songs of joy and hymns of gladness, always! Let our praise fill our lives with hope! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Praise the Lord, O my soul, all my inmost being, praise His holy Name. Psalm 103:1

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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

### SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Monday:

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$73 million

Powerball

11-20-33-39-65, Powerball: 24, Power Play: 3

(eleven, twenty, thirty-three, thirty-nine, sixty-five; Powerball: twenty-four; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$38 million

### Monday's Scores

The Associated Press undefined

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Baltic def. Tri-Valley, 25-15, 25-14, 25-10

Elk Point-Jefferson def. South Sioux City, Neb., 25-21, 25-20, 25-15

Elkton-Lake Benton def. Lake Preston, 25-14, 25-15, 25-16

Garretson def. Lennox, 25-11, 25-14, 25-14

Miller def. Kimball/White Lake, 20-25, 25-17, 25-17, 25-15

Mobridge-Pollock def. Ipswich, 25-21, 25-14, 28-26

Oldham-Ramona/Rutland def. Colman-Egan, 25-18, 25-17, 17-25, 25-21

Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Howard, 25-12, 25-18, 25-18

Scotland def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-12, 27-25, 23-25, 19-25, 15-8

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

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

### The Latest: UN chief decries pandemic's harm to the poor

By The Associated Press undefined

UNITED NATIONS — The United Nations chief says the pandemic has forced more than 100 million people into poverty and left over 4 billion people with little or no social support, health care or income protection.

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told an International Monetary Fund panel Monday that global solidarity "is missing in action" and people living in conflict-affected and poor countries are suffering most of all.

In Guterres' words, "Vaccine inequality is a moral outrage that is condemning the world to millions more deaths and prolonging an economic slowdown that could cost trillions of dollars, hitting the poorest countries hardest of all."

Guterres says indications the world is in a substantial economic recovery mask the huge divergence between the situations in rich countries and in the least developed nations.

MORE ON THE PANDEMIC:

- Moderna has no plans to share its COVID-19 vaccine recipe
- Merck asks FDA to authorize promising COVID-19 pill
- Russia's new COVID-19 cases, deaths near all-time high
- New Zealand's doctors and teachers must soon be vaccinated

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— Sydney opens to vaccinated after 100-plus days of lockdown

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

LONDON — A U.K. parliamentary report has concluded that Britain's Conservative government waited too long to impose a lockdown early in the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report Tuesday says that caused the nation to miss a chance to contain the disease and led to thousands of unnecessary COVID-19 deaths.

A joint report from the House of Commons' science and health committees says the deadly delay resulted from ministers' failure to question the recommendations of scientific advisers, resulting in a dangerous level of "groupthink." That caused British authorities to dismiss the more aggressive virus strategies adopted in Asia.

It was only when the National Health Service risked being overwhelmed by rapidly rising infections that Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government finally ordered a lockdown.

RALEIGH, N.C. — North Carolina officials say nearly all of the 10,000 employees working in 14 state-operated health care facilities are fully vaccinated against the coronavirus.

Officials said Monday that 6% of the workers got an approved medical or religious exemption or a special accommodation, while the remaining 94% are fully vaccinated.

Three-fourths of the workers had been vaccinated when the state health department announced the vaccine mandate in July. The remaining workers and those with just one of the two shots had until the end September to become fully vaccinated or secure an approved exemption.

The state says just 16 workers, or less than 0.2% of the total workforce, were fired for their refusal to comply with the directive.

SEATTLE — Amazon says it will allow many tech and corporate workers to continue working remotely indefinitely as long as they can commute to the office when necessary.

The new policy was announced in a blog post. It's a change from Amazon's previous expectation that most employees would need to be in the office at least three days a week after offices reopen from the COVID-19 pandemic in January.

Most of Amazon's more than 1 million employees worldwide cannot work remotely because they are in the company's fulfillment and transportation division.

About 50,000 tech and office employees in Seattle work at the company's headquarters campus. Their absence will hurt nearby businesses.

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — California's coronavirus death toll has reached another once-unfathomable milestone — 70,000 people — even as the state emerges from the latest infection surge with the lowest rate of new cases among all states.

Last year at this time, cases in the state started ticking up and by January California was in the throes of the worst spike of the pandemic. Daily deaths approached 700.

The latest surge started in summer and was driven by the delta variant that primarily targeted the unvaccinated. At its worst during this spike, California's average daily death count was in the low hundreds.

Data collected by Johns Hopkins University showed the state with 70,132 deaths by midday Monday. It's the most in the nation, surpassing Texas by about 3,000 and Florida by 13,000, although California's per capita fatality rate of 177 per 100,000 people ranks in the bottom third for the U.S.

"There's very little if anything ever to compare that to," Dr. Mark Ghaly, California's health secretary, said of the level of deaths.

GENEVA — An expert group advising the World Health Organization on vaccines has recommended

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that older people and those with compromised immune systems get an extra dose of COVID-19 vaccine as part of their regular schedule, in line with what many rich countries including Britain, France and the U.S. have already recommended for their populations.

At a press briefing on Monday, the WHO's vaccines director, Dr. Kate O'Brien, said the group was advising that people who have weaker immune systems "should receive an additional dose" of all of the WHO-approved vaccines beyond the normally recommended two doses, to produce an immune response to protect them from severe disease, hospitalization and death.

O'Brien said this third dose should be given to people sometime between one to three months after the second dose and was not considered a booster.

She emphasized that this recommendation does not apply to healthy, younger adults who have a normal immune response to vaccination and have no underlying conditions. The WHO's expert group recommended that people get the same vaccine they received for their original immunization where possible.

**SIOUX FALLS, S.D.** — A tiger at a Sioux Falls zoo has contracted COVID-19.

KELO-TV reported that officials at the Great Plains Zoo say Keesa tested positive for the virus. Staff noticed Keesa was coughing and acting lethargic during the first week of October. The source of Keesa's infection is unknown.

Other big cats at the facility, including two tigers and a pair of snow leopards, also have shown COVID-19 symptoms. All the animals are being tested and have been taken off exhibit for care and observation. The zoo's veterinarian, Loudon Wright, said most of the cats are recovering.

Other zoos across the country have reported COVID-19 infections in big cats. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has approved a vaccine for susceptible animals. Great Plains Zoo officials say when they receive the vaccine their animals will be inoculated.

**BRATTLEBORO, Vt.** — The state of Vermont is hoping to use \$5 million in COVID-19 relief funds to help buy out and move mobile homes in areas at risk of flooding.

The plan builds on lessons learned during flooding from Tropical Storm Irene in 2011, and aims to assist mobile home residents with finding a new place to live if they accept the buyout, said Vermont Emergency Management Hazard Mitigation Officer Stephanie Smith.

Vermont Public Radio said a recent statewide report listed flood danger as one of the key areas of concern for mobile home parks across the state. The report singled out parks in Starksboro, Braintree and Bennington as having the greatest risk of damage.

Vermont has wide discretion over how it spends the more than \$2.7 billion in American Rescue Plan Act funding it's expected to receive.

## NUMBERS

On Monday the Vermont Department of Health reported 222 new cases of the virus that causes COVID-19, bringing the statewide total since the pandemic began to just under 35,900.

There were 41 people hospitalized with COVID-19, including 12 in intensive care.

The state is reporting a total of 335 fatalities.

The seven-day rolling average of daily new cases in Vermont has risen over the past two weeks from 199.57 new cases per day on Sept. 25 to 207.29 new cases per day on Oct. 9.

The seven-day rolling average of daily deaths in Vermont has risen over the past two weeks from 1.71 deaths per day on Sept. 25 to 2.00 deaths per day on Oct. 9.

The Associated Press is using data collected by Johns Hopkins University Center for Systems Science and Engineering to measure outbreak caseloads and deaths across the United States.

**SEATTLE** - Most of Washington's health care workers have been fully vaccinated against the coronavirus, with a week left before the state's immunization deadline.

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As of Monday morning, 88% of health care workers had showed proof of vaccination, the Washington State Hospital Association reported. The results include data from 94% of the state's hospitals, collected after Oct. 4.

The Seattle Times reports the remaining 12% of workers include those who are partially vaccinated, have an approved exemption and accommodation, have applied or plan to apply for an exemption that hasn't yet been reviewed, have not yet provided vaccination verification, or are choosing not to be vaccinated.

The hospital association said it believes 2% to 5% of hospital staff could leave the workforce because of the mandate.

All health care workers must be fully vaccinated by Oct. 18 or face "nondisciplinary dismissal" for failure to meet job requirements, Gov. Jay Inslee announced in August. Final vaccination numbers won't be available until early November, the hospital association said.

**WAUKESHA, Wis.** — A parent has sued a southeastern Wisconsin school district after her son contracted COVID-19 from a classmate.

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported that Shannon Jensen filed the lawsuit in federal court against the Waukesha School District and school board on Oct. 5. Jensen is seeking an injunction ordering the district to comply with U.S. Centers for Disease Control COVID-19 guidelines.

According to the lawsuit, the board in May removed a student mask requirement and other COVID-19 mitigation measures. One of Jensen's son's classmates came to school with symptoms in September and didn't wear a mask. Jensen's son was seated next to the sick student and was wearing a mask but still became infected. Jensen's other two sons later tested positive as well.

School Board President Joseph Como declined comment on the lawsuit.

The Minocqua Brewing Company Super PAC is funding the lawsuit. The brewing company is owned by Kirk Bangstad, who has aired his frustrations about how former President Donald Trump's administration responded to the pandemic. He ran unsuccessfully against incumbent Republican state Rep. Rob Swearin last year.

**WEST HAVEN, Conn.** — A Connecticut mayor has asked for a forensic investigation into the city's spending of federal pandemic relief money after coming across issues she says make her suspect fraud.

West Haven Mayor Nancy Rossi, who is also a certified public accountant, said in a video posted on the city's YouTube page that she came across several large expenditures that might be fraudulent. An FBI spokesperson says agents visited City Hall on Friday but would not confirm whether an investigation was underway.

**COLOMBO, Sri Lanka** — Sri Lankan authorities have decided to inoculate schoolchildren for COVID-19 starting next week.

According to the Health Ministry, inoculations will begin on Oct. 21 and initially, the vaccine will be given to students in the age group of 18 and 19 years. They will be given only the Pfizer vaccine.

The ministry says everyone over 20 years old has been given a first dose while 82% have received both doses.

Sri Lanka lifted a six-week lockdown on Oct. 1 after COVID-19 cases and deaths showed a rapid decline. The government still maintains strict restrictions. Public gatherings are banned and trains halted.

## South Dakota redistricting hits the road amid GOP infighting

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

**SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP)** — South Dakota lawmakers redrawing the state's political boundaries kicked off a three-day tour of public input meetings on Monday amid intra-party Republican bickering and competing proposals for new legislative districts.

The House and Senate committees, both dominated by Republicans, had previously sought accord in

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the once-in-a-decade process. But as they presented divergent map proposals at a public-input meeting in Box Elder, the schism between the House and Senate was on full display. Each side sought to use the tour — dubbed “the redistricting roadshow” by lawmakers — to gain support for their respective proposals.

The Legislature will convene on Nov. 8 to consider new political boundaries, which must also be approved by Gov. Kristi Noem. If they can’t reach a consensus by Dec. 1, redistricting would be determined by the state Supreme Court.

Senate Pro Temp Lee Schoenbeck — one of the most influential Republican lawmakers — accused House members of maintaining “gerrymandered” boundaries in order to preserve current districts that are favorable to their plans for reelection.

“It looks like someone accidentally spilled something on the map,” he said of one district proposed by the House. “They are making a concerted effort to create or protect districts for people.”

Republican Rep. Drew Dennert, who proposed the House’s map, acknowledged that his proposal kept boundaries close to their current version — but contended that is a good thing. He was confident that the public meetings would show support for his map, which he said “best represented” the communities of the state.

He charged that Schoenbeck was “a very intelligent political operative,” who had taken to attacking the House proposal because he was losing support.

House Speaker Spencer Gosch, a Republican, also accused Schoenbeck of employing “DC political tactics.”

“Baseless and hypocritical accusations are only meant to divide,” he said in a statement. “The rest of the Legislature will continue to work in a fair and open manner to ensure that all South Dakotans are represented.”

Meanwhile, members of Native American communities used the meetings to press for greater representation in the Legislature. At the first meeting on Monday, advocates pushed for compact political boundaries around northern Rapid City — which has a large number of Native Americans — that would allow the community to elect someone who represented their interests. Federal law requires that racial minorities receive adequate representation in legislative boundaries.

Democratic Sen. Troy Heinert argued that a map proposed by the Senate would do that best. He also raised concerns that the U.S. Census Bureau had undercounted the population on American Indian reservations. He saw Monday’s second meeting, held on the Rosebud Indian Reservation, as an opportunity to underscore that point.

“My biggest hope is that as the committee members drive through our reservation, they see how vast it is, but also how many housing units there are,” he said. “You have to trust your eyes on this.”

However, the committee chair, Republican Sen. Mary Duvall has consistently pointed out that the process has to be primarily based on census numbers.

The lawmakers will wind their way through the state, making a total of seven stops this week and culminating with two meetings in Sioux Falls on Wednesday. Both sides of the fight said they hoped a consensus would begin to emerge by the time the Legislature meets next month.

“I don’t think there’s anything wrong with having two different maps. The question is, is there a majority of both bodies that are going to support one of them,” Schoenbeck said. “If there isn’t, then the Supreme Court is going to look at it.”

## Boy Scouts ready to sell campground to state for \$2 million

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Boy Scouts of America is set to sell a campground to the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department for \$2 million.

The Sioux Falls Argus Leader reported Monday that department officials confirmed at their October meeting that the Boy Scouts are ready to finalize the sale of the 223-acre campground to the agency in late November. The state appraised the property at \$3.59 million earlier this year.

The campground sits between Newton Hills State Park and the Johnson Game Production Area. Boy Scout

leaders have talked about selling it since 2011. A push from national scout leaders to upgrade existing facilities led to them to approach GFP officials about a sale last year. The campground was built during the 1930s and would require extensive improvements to bring it up to Boy Scouts of America standards.

## Tiger at Sioux Falls zoo contracts COVID-19

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A tiger at a Sioux Falls zoo has contracted COVID-19.

KELO-TV reported that officials at the Great Plains Zoo say Keesa tested positive for the virus. Staff noticed Keesa was coughing and acting lethargic during the first week of October. The source of Keesa's infection is unknown.

Other big cats at the facility, including two tigers and a pair of snow leopards, also have shown COVID-19 symptoms. All the animals are being tested and have been taken off exhibit for care and observation. The zoo's veterinarian, Loudon Wright, said most of the cats are recovering.

Zoo employees wear personal protective equipment when working with animals susceptible to COVID-19, but Wright said someone who was asymptomatic likely passed the disease to the cats.

Other zoos across the country have reported COVID-19 infections in big cats. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has approved a vaccine for susceptible animals. Great Plains Zoo officials say when they receive the vaccine their animals will be inoculated.

## Justices' views on abortion in their own words and votes

By MARK SHERMAN and JESSICA GRESKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Abortion already is dominating the Supreme Court's new term, months before the justices will decide whether to reverse decisions reaching back nearly 50 years. Not only is there Mississippi's call to overrule *Roe v. Wade*, but the court also soon will be asked again to weigh in on the Texas law banning abortion at roughly six weeks.

The justices won't be writing on a blank slate as they consider the future of abortion rights in the U.S. They have had a lot to say about abortion over the years — in opinions, votes, Senate confirmation testimony and elsewhere. Just one, Clarence Thomas, has openly called for overruling *Roe* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, the two cases that established and reaffirmed a woman's right to an abortion. Here is a sampling of their comments:

CHIEF JUSTICE JOHN ROBERTS

Roberts voted to uphold restrictions in two major abortion cases, in the majority in 2007 to uphold a ban on a method of abortion opponents call "partial-birth abortion" and in dissent in 2016 when the court struck down Texas restrictions on abortion clinics in a case called *Whole Woman's Health*. But when a virtually identical law from Louisiana came before the court in 2020, Roberts voted against it and wrote the opinion controlling the outcome of the case and striking down the Louisiana law. The chief justice said he continues to believe that the 2016 case "was wrongly decided" but that the question was "whether to adhere to it in deciding the present case."

Roberts' views on when to break with court precedent could determine how far he is willing to go in the Mississippi case. At his 2005 confirmation hearing, he said overturning precedent "is a jolt to the legal system," which depends in part on stability and evenhandedness. Thinking that an earlier case was wrongly decided is not enough, he said. Overturning a case requires looking "at these other factors, like settled expectations, like the legitimacy of the Court, like whether a particular precedent is workable or not, whether a precedent has been eroded by subsequent developments," Roberts said then.

In the same hearing, Roberts was asked to explain his presence on a legal brief filed by the George H.W. Bush administration that said *Roe's* conclusion that there is a right to abortion has "no support in the text, structure, or history of the Constitution." Roberts responded that the brief reflected the administration's views.

JUSTICE CLARENCE THOMAS

Thomas voted to overturn *Roe* in 1992, in his first term on the court, when he was a dissenter in *Planned*

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Parenthood v. Casey. He has repeatedly called for Roe and Casey to be overturned since.

In 2000, he wrote in dissent when the court struck down Nebraska's ban on "partial-birth abortion." Recounting the court's decision in Roe, he wrote, "In 1973, this Court struck down an Act of the Texas Legislature that had been in effect since 1857, thereby rendering unconstitutional abortion statutes in dozens of States. As some of my colleagues on the Court, past and present, ably demonstrated, that decision was grievously wrong. Abortion is a unique act, in which a woman's exercise of control over her own body ends, depending on one's view, human life or potential human life. Nothing in our Federal Constitution deprives the people of this country of the right to determine whether the consequences of abortion to the fetus and to society outweigh the burden of an unwanted pregnancy on the mother. Although a State may permit abortion, nothing in the Constitution dictates that a State must do so."

JUSTICE STEPHEN BREYER

Breyer has been the lead author of two court majorities in defense of abortion rights, in 2000 and 2016. He has never voted to sustain an abortion restriction, but he has acknowledged the controversy over abortion.

Millions of Americans believe "that an abortion is akin to causing the death of an innocent child," while millions of others "fear that a law that forbids abortion would condemn many American women to lives that lack dignity," he wrote in the Nebraska case 21 years ago, calling those views "virtually irreconcilable." Still, Breyer wrote, because the Constitution guarantees "fundamental individual liberty" and has to govern even when there are strong divisions in the country, "this Court, in the course of a generation, has determined and then redetermined that the Constitution offers basic protection to the woman's right to choose."

JUSTICE SAMUEL ALITO

Alito has a long track record of votes and writings opposing abortion rights, as a jurist and, earlier, a government lawyer.

Alito has voted to uphold every abortion law the court has considered since his 2006 confirmation, joining a majority to uphold the federal "partial-birth" abortion law and dissenting in the 2016 and 2020 cases.

As a federal appeals court judge, he voted to uphold a series of Pennsylvania abortion restrictions, including requiring a woman to notify her spouse before obtaining an abortion. The Supreme Court ultimately struck down the notification rule in Casey and reaffirmed the abortion right in 1992 by a 5-4 vote.

Working for the Reagan administration in 1985, Alito wrote in a memo that the government should say publicly in a pending abortion case "that we disagree with Roe v. Wade." Around the same time, applying for a promotion, Alito noted he was "particularly proud" of his work arguing "that the Constitution does not protect a right to an abortion."

JUSTICE SONIA SOTOMAYOR

Sotomayor joined the court in 2009 with virtually no record on abortion issues, but has voted repeatedly in favor of abortion rights since then. Recently, when the court allowed Texas' restrictive abortion law to take effect, Sotomayor accused her colleagues of burying "their heads in the sand." She was in the majority in the Texas and Louisiana abortion clinic cases.

Sotomayor's displeasure with the court's recent Texas ruling was evident at a recent virtual appearance she made. "I can't change Texas' law, but you can," she said.

JUSTICE ELENA KAGAN

Kagan also has repeatedly voted in favor of abortion rights in more than 11 years as a justice. She is also arguably the most consistent voice on the court arguing for the importance of adhering to precedents and can be expected to try to persuade her colleagues not to jettison constitutional protections for abortion.

Kagan was in the majority when the court struck down the Texas and Louisiana restrictions on abortion clinics. More recently, Kagan called Texas' new abortion law "patently unconstitutional" and a "clear, and indeed undisputed, conflict with Roe and Casey."

Kagan had already grappled with the issue of abortion before becoming a justice. While working in the Clinton White House she was the co-author of a memo that urged the president for political reasons to

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support a late-term abortion ban proposed by Republicans in Congress, so long as it contained an exception for the health of the woman. Ultimately, President George W. Bush signed a similar late-term abortion ban without a health exception. The Supreme Court upheld it.

JUSTICE NEIL GORSUCH

Gorsuch has perhaps the shortest record on abortion among the nine justices. He was in the majority allowing Texas' restrictive abortion law to take effect. In dissent in 2020, he would have upheld Louisiana's abortion clinic restrictions. As an appeals court judge before joining the Supreme Court in 2017, Gorsuch dissented when his colleagues declined to reconsider a ruling that blocked then-Utah Gov. Gary Herbert from cutting off funding for the state branch of Planned Parenthood. But Gorsuch insisted at his Senate confirmation hearing that he was concerned about procedural issues, not the subject matter. "I do not care if the case is about abortion or widgets or anything else," he said.

JUSTICE BRETT KAVANAUGH

Kavanaugh's name was added to former President Donald Trump's shortlist of Supreme Court candidates shortly after he sided with the administration in a 2017 case involving abortion. Trump chose him for the court the following year. As a justice, Kavanaugh dissented from the Louisiana decision and voted to allow the new Texas law to take effect, though he has taken a less absolutist stance than some of his conservative colleagues. In the Louisiana case, for example, Kavanaugh wrote that more information was needed about how the state's restrictions on clinics would affect doctors who provide abortions and seemed to suggest his vote could change knowing that information.

Kavanaugh's most extensive writing on abortion came while he was a judge on the federal appeals court in Washington. The Trump administration had appealed a lower court ruling ordering it to allow a pregnant 17-year-old immigrant in its custody to get an abortion. The administration's policy was to decline to help those minors get abortions while in custody.

Kavanaugh was on a three-judge panel that postponed the abortion, arguing that officials should be given a limited window to transfer the minor out of government custody to the care of a sponsor. She could then obtain an abortion without the government's assistance. The full appeals court later reversed the decision and the teenager obtained an abortion. Kavanaugh called that decision out-of-step with the "many majority opinions of the Supreme Court that have repeatedly upheld reasonable regulations that do not impose an undue burden on the abortion right recognized by the Supreme Court in *Roe v. Wade*."

Kavanaugh was criticized by some conservatives for not going as far as a colleague, Judge Karen Henderson, who stated unambiguously that an immigrant in the U.S. illegally has no right to an abortion. At his appeals court confirmation hearing, Kavanaugh dodged questions on his own personal beliefs on *Roe v. Wade*.

JUSTICE AMY CONEY BARRETT

Barrett's one public vote on the Supreme Court concerning abortion was to allow the Texas "fetal heart-beat" law to take effect. She also cast two votes as an appeals court judge to reconsider rulings that blocked Indiana abortion restrictions.

In 2016, shortly before the election that would put Trump in office, she commented about how she thought abortion law might change if Trump had the chance to appoint justices. "I ... don't think the core case — *Roe*'s core holding that, you know, women have a right to an abortion — I don't think that would change," said Barrett, then a Notre Dame law professor. She said limits on what she called "very late-term abortions" and restrictions on abortion clinics would be more likely to be upheld.

Barrett also has a long record of personal opposition to abortion rights, co-authoring a 1998 law review article that said abortion is "always immoral." At her 2017 hearing to be an appeals court judge, Barrett said in written testimony, "If I am confirmed, my views on this or any other question will have no bearing on the discharge of my duties as a judge."

## IMF board confident about leader despite data-rigging claims

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER and ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writers

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WASHINGTON (AP) — The International Monetary Fund expressed “full confidence” in its managing director Tuesday in response to allegations that while she was a World Bank official, she and others pressured staffers to change business rankings in an effort to placate China.

The IMF’s 24-member executive board said in a statement that its review “did not conclusively demonstrate that the managing director, Kristalina Georgieva, played an improper role.”

But it said a probe into possible misconduct by World Bank staff was continuing. The United States, the IMF’s largest shareholder, said it planned to closely monitor the further investigation into the issue. The World Bank and IMF are both global lenders in the United Nations system.

Georgieva has denied any wrongdoing in response to an investigative report by the WilmerHale law firm. The report found she played a role in pressuring World Bank staff to amend data affecting 2018 rankings that were meant to show how welcoming China and other nations were to businesses.

Countries used the annual Doing Business report, which evaluated tax burdens, bureaucratic obstacles and regulatory systems, to attract foreign investment.

The rankings have been discontinued due to the controversy, which also prompted criticism that China, the world’s second-largest economy, has too much influence over international finance organizations.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen spoke with Georgieva by phone and said the report “raised legitimate issues and concerns,” the Treasury Department said in a statement.

However, the Treasury agreed that “absent further direct evidence with regard to the role of the managing director there is not a basis for a change in IMF leadership.”

Yellen said it was crucial to defend the integrity of the IMF and the World Bank.

The “U.S. believes proactive steps must be taken to reinforce data integrity and credibility at the IMF, and that the institution and its leadership must renew their commitment to upholding transparency and whistleblower protections surrounding policies, research, and analysis to provide accountability and public oversight over key decisions,” the Treasury statement said.

The IMF had said late Friday it was seeking more “clarifying details” in its investigation and the board met again with Georgieva on Sunday.

Georgieva appeared before a panel for more than five hours last week after a presentation by WilmerHale that alleged she and other World Bank officials had pressured staff to alter the data.

The 190-nation IMF and World Bank annual meetings are being held this week in Washington and the controversy surrounding the Doing Business report was threatening to overshadow the agenda of those meetings.

Georgieva, a 68-year-old Bulgarian economist, has served as managing director of the IMF since 2019. She was the fund’s first leader to come from an emerging market economy rather than one of the traditional European economic powers, like Germany or France.

In taking over the leadership of the IMF, she succeeded Christine Lagarde, who stepped down to take over as head of the European Central Bank.

## Report says UK’s slow virus lockdown cost 1000s of lives

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The British government failure to impose a lockdown in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic ranks among England’s worst public health blunders, lawmakers concluded Tuesday in the country’s first comprehensive report on the pandemic.

The deadly delay led to thousands of unnecessary deaths and derived from the failure of government ministers to question the recommendations of scientific advisers, resulting in a dangerous level of “group-think” that caused them to dismiss the more aggressive strategies adopted in East and Southeast Asia, the report said.

It was only when Britain’s National Health Service risked being overwhelmed by rapidly rising infections that Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s Conservative government finally ordered a lockdown. in late March 2020.

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"Decisions on lockdowns and social distancing during the early weeks of the pandemic - and the advice that led to them - rank as one of the most important public health failures the United Kingdom has ever experienced," states the joint report from the House of Commons' science and health committees. "Painful though it is, the U.K. must learn what lessons it can of why this happened if we are to ensure it is not repeated."

Lawmakers said their inquiry was designed to uncover why the U.K. performed "significantly worse" than many other countries during the initial period of the pandemic. The U.K. has recorded more than 137,000 coronavirus deaths, the highest toll in Europe after Russia.

But government officials said they did what they could with the information they had in a time of crisis. "It was an unprecedented pandemic," Cabinet minister Stephen Barclay told Sky News. "We were learning about it as we went through, and of course with hindsight, there's things we know about it now that we didn't know at the time."

Bereaved families reacted to the parliamentary report with outrage, furious that the people who died of COVID-19 received scant mention in the 150-page document. They said the joint committee only was interested in "speaking to their colleagues and friends."

"The report it's produced is laughable and more interested in political arguments about whether you can bring laptops to...meetings than it is in the experiences of those who tragically lost parents, partners or children to COVID-19," said Hannah Brady, spokesperson for COVID-19 Bereaved Families for Justice. "This is an attempt to ignore and gaslight bereaved families, who will see it as a slap in the face."

Lawmakers released their findings amid frustration with the timetable for a formal public inquiry into the government's response to COVID-19. Johnson says the inquiry will start next spring.

The report was based on testimony from 50 witnesses, including former Health Secretary Matt Hancock and former government insider Dominic Cummings. It was unanimously approved by 22 lawmakers from the three largest parties in Parliament: the governing Conservatives and the opposition Labour Party and the Scottish National Party.

The committees praised the government's early focus on vaccines as the ultimate way out of the pandemic and its decision to invest in vaccine development. These decisions led to Britain's successful inoculation program, which has seen almost 80% of people 12 and over now fully vaccinated.

"Millions of lives will ultimately be saved as a result of the global vaccine effort in which the U.K. has played a leading part," the committees said.

But they also criticized the government's test-and-trace program, saying its slow, uncertain and often chaotic performance hampered Britain's response to the pandemic.

The government's strategy during the first three months of the crisis reflected official scientific advice that widespread infection was inevitable given that testing capacity was limited; that there was no immediate prospect for a vaccine; and the belief that the public wouldn't accept a lengthy lockdown, the report said. As a result, the government sought merely to manage the spread of the virus, instead of trying to stop it altogether.

The report described this as a "serious early error" that the U.K. shared with many countries in Europe and North America.

"There was a groupthink that the way you tackle a pandemic should be similar to a flu pandemic," Jeremy Hunt, a former British health minister who now heads Parliament's health committee, said. "I was part of that groupthink, too, when I was health secretary."

Hunt said that before the coronavirus hit, "an American university said we were the second-best prepared country in the world" for a pandemic.

"We know that clearly wasn't the case," he said.

Trish Greenhalgh, a professor of primary care health services at the University of Oxford, said the report "hints at a less-than-healthy" relationship between government and scientific bodies. With COVID-19 still killing hundreds of people every week in Britain, advisory committees continue to debate exactly what evidence is "sufficiently definitive" to be considered certain, she said.

"Uncertainty is a defining feature of crises," Greenhalgh said. "Dare we replace 'following the science'

with 'deliberating on what best to do when the problem is urgent but certainty eludes us'? This report suggests that unless we wish to continue to repeat the mistakes of the recent past, we must."

Even senior officials like Cummings and Hancock told the committees they were reluctant to push back against scientific consensus.

Hancock said as early as Jan. 28, 2020, he found it difficult to push for widespread testing of people who didn't show symptoms of COVID-19 because scientific advisers said it wouldn't be useful.

"I was in a situation of not having hard evidence that a global scientific consensus of decades was wrong but having an instinct that it was," he testified. "I bitterly regret that I did not overrule that scientific advice."

Follow all AP stories on the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-pandemic>

## House returns to stave off default with debt limit vote

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Members of the House are scrambling back to Washington on Tuesday to approve a short-term lift of the nation's debt limit and ensure the federal government can continue fully paying its bills into December.

The \$480 billion increase in the country's borrowing ceiling cleared the Senate last week on a party-line vote. The House is expected to approve it swiftly so President Joe Biden can sign it into law this week. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen had warned that steps to stave off a default on the country's debts would be exhausted by Monday, and from that point, the department would soon be unable to fully meet the government's financial obligations.

A default would have immense fallout on global financial markets built upon the bedrock of U.S. government debt. Routine government payments to Social Security beneficiaries, disabled veterans and active-duty military personnel would also be called into question.

"It is egregious that our nation has been put in this spot, but we must take immediate action to address the debt limit and ensure the full faith and credit of the United States remains intact," said House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md.

But the relief provided by the bill's passage will only be temporary, forcing Congress to revisit the issue in December — a time when lawmakers will also be laboring to complete federal spending bills and avoid a damaging government shutdown. The yearend backlog raises risks for both parties and threatens a tumultuous close to Biden's first year in office.

The present standoff over the debt ceiling eased when Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., agreed to help pass the short-term increase. But he insists he won't do so again.

In a letter sent Friday to Biden, McConnell said Democrats will have to handle the next debt-limit increase on their own using the same process they have tried to use to pass Biden's massive social spending and environment plan. Reconciliation allows legislation to pass the Senate with 51 votes rather than the 60 that's typically required. In the 50-50 split Senate, Vice President Kamala Harris gives Democrats the majority with her tiebreaking vote.

In his focus on the debt limit, McConnell has tried to link Biden's big federal government spending boost with the nation's rising debt load, even though they are separate and the debt ceiling will have to be increased or suspended regardless of whether Biden's \$3.5 trillion plan makes it into law.

"Your lieutenants on Capitol Hill now have the time they claimed they lacked to address the debt ceiling through standalone reconciliation, and all the tools to do it," McConnell said in the letter. "They cannot invent another crisis and ask for my help."

McConnell was one of 11 Republicans who sided with Democrats to advance the debt ceiling reprieve to a final vote. Subsequently, McConnell and his GOP colleagues voted against final passage.

Agreement on a short-term fix came abruptly. Some Republican senators said threats from Democrats to eliminate the 60-vote threshold for debt ceiling votes — Biden called it a "real possibility" — had played a role in McConnell's decision.

"I understand why Republican leadership blinked, but I wish they had not," said Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas. The current debt ceiling is \$28.4 trillion. Both parties have contributed to that load with decisions that have left the government rarely operating in the black.

The calamitous ramifications of default are why lawmakers have been able to reach a compromise to lift or suspend the debt cap some 18 times since 2002, often after frequent rounds of brinkmanship.

"Global financial markets and the economy would be upended, and even if resolved quickly, Americans would pay for this default for generations," warned a recent report from Moody's Analytics.

## Holocaust survivor-author Eddie Jaku dies in Sydney aged 101

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Holocaust survivor Eddie Jaku, who last year published his best-selling memoir, "The Happiest Man on Earth," has died in Sydney, a Jewish community leader said. He was 101.

"Eddie Jaku was a beacon of light and hope for not only our community, but the world," New South Wales state Jewish Board of Deputies chief executive officer Darren Bark said in a statement.

"He will always be remembered for the joy that followed him, and his constant resilience in the face of adversity," Bark added.

Jaku died on Tuesday.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison paid tribute to Jaku's decision to "make his life a testimony of how hope and love can triumph over despair and hate."

"He will be sadly missed, especially by our Jewish community. He was an inspiration and a joy," Morrison added.

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg, whose Jewish-Hungarian mother also survived the Holocaust and arrived in Australia in 1950 as a stateless child, said "Australia has lost a giant."

"He dedicated his life to educating others about the dangers of intolerance and the importance of hope," Frydenberg said in a statement.

"Scarred by the past, he only looked forward. May his story be told for generations to come," Frydenberg added.

Jaku said in a speech in Sydney in 2019: "I do not hate anyone. Hate is a disease which may destroy your enemy, but will also destroy you."

"Happiness does not fall from the sky. It's in your hands. I'm doing everything I can to make this world a better place for everyone," he said.

Jaku was born Abraham "Adi" Jakubowicz in April 1920 in the German city of Leipzig. His parents and many of his wider family did not survive the war.

He was tossed out of school in 1933 at the age of 13 because he was Jewish, but managed to finish his high school education in another city under an alias in 1938 with a qualification in precision engineering.

Jaku said his qualification spared him the gas chambers in the years that followed because he worked as a slave laborer.

He was sent to and escaped from concentration camps including Buchenwald and Auschwitz, where his parents were gassed on arrival.

He escaped from what he suspected was a death march as an Auschwitz prisoner as Allies approached. He spent months in hiding before U.S. troops found him near starved and sick with cholera and typhoid.

In 1946, he married in Belgium his Jewish wife Flore, who had spent a comparatively uneventful war in Paris pretending to be Christian, and they migrated to Australia in 1950.

The husband worked at a Sydney garage and his wife as a dressmaker before they went into real estate together.

Forever marked with an Auschwitz prisoner number tattooed on his left arm, he also became a volunteer at the Sydney Jewish Museum, sharing his experiences and philosophies of life with visitors.

"When anybody left Eddie having spoken to him, they really just felt as if their whole outlook on life had changed," museum chief executive Norman Seligman told Nine Network television.

Jaku said with the birth of his first son Andre, "I realized I was the luckiest man on Earth." He is survived by his wife of 75 years, his sons Andre and Michael, four grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

## California oil spill legal fight likely to last years

By BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — It took little more than 48 hours from the moment a major oil spill was discovered off Southern California until the first lawsuit was filed against the Houston company that owns and operates the ruptured pipeline.

Finding the cause, who is to blame and if they will be held accountable will take much longer.

Several federal and state agencies are investigating in parallel as they seek the cause of the pipe rupture, how quickly pipeline operators responded and determine whether criminal charges are warranted.

Coast Guard Capt. Jason Neubauer said investigators are trying to find which ship among thousands of possibilities may have snagged the pipeline with its anchor in the past year, possibly during rough seas and high winds in January.

"We are not ruling out anybody at this time," Neubauer said.

A possible leak off the Orange County coast south of Los Angeles was first reported Oct. 1. The spill was confirmed the next morning, and crude came ashore on Huntington Beach and then spread south to other beaches. Much of the coastline nearby was shut down more than a week, crippling businesses that cater to beachgoers and boaters.

The Coast Guard has estimated between about 25,000 gallons (94,635 liters) and 132,000 gallons (495,889 liters) spilled.

It could take a long time for investigators to comb through marine tracking data to see which ships passed over and anchored near the Amplify Energy pipeline running from platform Elly to the Long Beach port.

Investigations by federal prosecutors, the Coast Guard and several other federal agencies, including the National Transportation Safety Board, could lead to criminal charges, civil penalties and new laws or regulations.

"Criminal charges — when they're warranted — you absolutely want to go after for all the reasons that you pursue criminal charges: accountability, deterrence, punishment," said attorney Rohan Virginkar, a former assistant U.S. attorney who helped prosecute BP for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010. "But really in these environmental cases, it's about finding somebody who's going to pay for the cleanup."

Coast Guard investigators already have boarded two vessels and plan to track down others, many from overseas, Neubauer said. They will inspect anchors for damage and review all logs kept by the captain, deck officers and engineers, and the voyage data recorder — the equivalent of the so-called black box on airplanes. They will also interview crew.

Under some environmental laws, prosecutors only have to show negligence to win a conviction, Virginkar said. That could lead to a charge against a shipping company for anchoring outside an assigned anchorage or too close to a pipeline marked on nautical charts.

The accident occurred where huge cargo ships anchor waiting to unload at the Los Angeles-Long Beach port complex — the nation's largest.

Other investigators, including federal pipeline regulators, will focus on Amplify Energy, which owns the three offshore oil platforms and the pipeline.

They will review pipeline inspections for evidence of corrosion that might show it was being operated negligently and seek any information that records were falsified, which is what they found in the BP case, said attorney William Carter, a former federal environmental crimes prosecutor. A forensic analysis will be performed after the cracked is retrieved from 100 feet (30 meters) of water.

The Amplify pipeline was required to have thorough inside and outside checks on alternating years. The most recent showed no issues requiring repairs, according to federal documents.

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Prosecutors will also scrutinize control room data to see if there were pipeline pressure drops that would have indicated a possible leak and what was done to respond, Carter said.

The company could be prosecuted if it realized there was a leak and did not quickly call state and federal hotlines to alert the Coast Guard, fish and wildlife officials and multiple other agencies that respond to spills, Carter said.

Prosecution for an untimely response is fairly common in spills, he said.

"The elements necessary for that violation are: I knew there was a release, and I didn't immediately report it — regardless of the cause," Carter said. "I mean, it could have been lightning or an earthquake did it and you knew it, and you didn't report it in a timely fashion."

Plains All American Pipeline was convicted for that crime for a breach in a pipe on land that sent tens of thousands of gallons of crude pouring onto a Santa Barbara beach and into the ocean in 2015.

In the Amplify pipeline leak, federal regulators said a low-pressure alarm at 2:30 a.m. Oct. 2 alerted control room operators on platform Elly to a possible leak. The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration said the line wasn't shut down until 6:01 a.m. and the Coast Guard wasn't notified until 9:07 a.m.

Amplify CEO Martyn Willsher has refused to answer questions about the reported pressure drop, including the fact that the first report to authorities made on behalf of the company listed the incident at 2:30 a.m. He has insisted the company didn't know of the spill until a company inspection boat saw the sheen at 8:09 a.m.

Carter said lawyers probably told Willsher not to discuss the timeline because he could incriminate himself.

If charged with failure to report the spill quickly, the company could also face charges for allowing oil to harm endangered species and other wildlife that might have been saved by a more prompt response.

Federal prosecutors have five years to bring felony charges. Carter said they would likely wait until they know the cost of the damage to demand restitution.

Federal penalties for failing to notify authorities can be \$500,000 or it could be as much as double the total damage. State penalties could run up to \$10 per gallon spilled that wasn't recovered.

Regardless of whether a ship is ultimately found to be the cause of the spill, the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 requires whoever spills the oil to pay for the cleanup, said attorney James Mercante, a maritime lawyer. Amplify, however, can later seek to recover its losses from other liable parties.

Mercante said the law was passed in the wake of the Exxon Valdez tanker spill in Alaska in 1989 to speed the cleanup without finger-pointing.

"The spirit and purpose is to get the oil cleaned up and then fight it out," Mercante said. "It will take years and years and years to be resolved."

So far, two proposed class-action lawsuits have been filed on behalf of a disc jockey who runs beach-front events in Huntington Beach and a surf school that operates in the city known as "Surf City USA."

Those cases will rely heavily on government investigations and will take years to play out.

## Fishing, Northern Ireland: EU, UK back to Brexit wrangling

By RAF CASERT and JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — It was late on Christmas Eve last year when the European Union and Britain finally clinched a Brexit trade deal after years of wrangling, threats and missed deadlines to seal their divorce.

There was hope that now-separated Britain and the 27-nation bloc would sail their relationship toward calmer waters.

Don't even think about it.

Such was the bile and bad blood stirred up by the diplomatic brinkmanship and bitter divorce that, two months from another Christmas, insults of treachery and duplicitousness are flying again.

"It was written in the stars from the start," sighed Professor Hendrik Vos of Ghent University. "There were a lot of loose ends. Several issues that would invariably lead to problems, like fisheries and trade in Northern Ireland."

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It was the economically minute but symbolically charged subject of fish that held up a trade deal to the last minute. And fishing is also providing a wedge of division now.

This week France was rallying its EU partners for a joint stance and action if necessary if London wouldn't grant more licenses for small French fishing boats to roam close to the U.K. crown dependencies of Jersey and Guernsey that hug France's Normandy coast.

In France's parliament last week, Prime Minister Jean Castex accused Britain of renegeing on its promise over fishing.

"We see in the clearest way possible that Great Britain does not respect its own signature," he said, adding that "all we want is that a given word is respected."

In a relationship where both sides often fall back on cliches about the other, Castex was harking back to the centuries-old French insult of "Perfidious Albion," a nation that can never be trusted.

His Europe Minister Clement Beaune added to this late Monday. "The European Union scrupulously implements the agreement it reached with the United Kingdom. We expect the same from Britain."

Across the English Channel, Brexit supporters in British politics and the media often depict a conniving EU, deeply hurt by the U.K.'s decision to leave, and doing its utmost to make Brexit less than a success by throwing up bureaucratic impediments.

The schism has crystalized in the worsening fight over Northern Ireland, the only part of the U.K. to share a land border with an EU country. Under the most delicate and contentious part of the Brexit deal, Northern Ireland remains inside the EU's single market for trade in goods, in order to avoid a hard border with EU member Ireland.

That means customs and border checks must be conducted on some goods going to Northern Ireland from the rest of the U.K., despite the fact they are part of the same country.

The regulations are intended to prevent goods from Britain entering the EU's tariff-free single market while keeping an open border on the island of Ireland — a key pillar of Northern Ireland's peace process.

The U.K. government soon complained the arrangements weren't working. It said the rules and restrictions impose burdensome red tape on businesses. Never short of a belligerent metaphor, 2021 has already brought a "sausage war," with Britain asking the EU to drop a ban on processed British meat products such as sausages entering Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland's British Unionist community, meanwhile, say the Brexit deal undermines the peace process by weakening Northern Ireland's ties with the rest of the U.K.

Britain accuses the EU of being needlessly "purist" in implementing the agreement, known as the Northern Ireland Protocol, and says it requires major changes to work.

The bloc has agreed to look at changes, and is due to present proposals on Wednesday. Before that move, Britain raised the stakes again, demanding even more sweeping changes to the jointly negotiated deal.

In a speech in the Portuguese capital, Lisbon, on Tuesday, U.K. Brexit minister David Frost will say the EU must also remove the European Court of Justice as the ultimate arbiter of disputes concerning trade in Northern Ireland.

That is a demand the EU is highly unlikely to agree to. The bloc's highest court is seen as the pinnacle of the free trade single market, and Brussels has vowed not to undermine its own order.

"No one should be in any doubt about the seriousness of the situation," Frost will say in Lisbon, urging the EU to "show ambition and willingness to tackle the fundamental issues at the heart of the Protocol head on."

Frost plans to say that if there is no resolution soon, the U.K. will invoke a clause that lets either side suspend the agreement in exceptional circumstances.

That would send already testy relations into a deep chill and could lead to a trade war between Britain and the bloc — one that would hurt the U.K. economy more than its much larger neighbor.

Some EU observers say Britain's demand to remove the court's oversight shows it isn't serious about making the Brexit deal work.

Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney accused Britain of “shifting the playing field” and dismissing EU proposals without seeing them.

“This is being seen across the European Union as the same pattern over and over again — the EU tries to solve problems, the U.K. dismisses the solutions before they’re even published and asks for more,” Coveney said.

Jill Lawless reported from London.

Follow AP’s coverage of post-Brexit developments at <https://apnews.com/hub/Brexit>

## **EXPLAINER: Can the Taliban suppress the potent IS threat?**

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — With the Taliban in power in Afghanistan, there’s a new enemy ascending.

The Islamic State group threatens to usher in another violent phase. Except this time the former insurgents, the Taliban, play the role of the state, now that the U.S. troops and their allied Afghan government are gone.

The Taliban promised the United States to keep the extremist group in check during successive rounds of peace talks. Under the 2020 U.S.-Taliban accord, the Taliban guaranteed that Afghanistan would not become a haven for terrorist groups threatening the U.S. or its allies.

But it is unclear if they can keep their pledge, with a sudden uptick in IS attacks since the Taliban takeover on Aug. 15.

A deadly bombing Friday in the northern province of Kunduz killed 46 worshippers inside a mosque frequented by Shiites. Other deadly IS attacks have struck in the capital, Kabul, and provinces to the east and north, while smaller-scale attacks target Taliban fighters almost daily.

“Historically, the majority of IS attacks have targeted the state ... Now that the U.S. and the international presence is mostly gone, they need to go after the state — and the state is the Taliban,” said Andrew Mines, research fellow at Program on Extremism at George Washington University.

### LONG RIVALRY

Both the Taliban and IS advocate rule by their radical interpretations of Islamic law. But there are key ideological differences that fuel their hatred of each other.

The Taliban say they are creating an Islamic state in Afghanistan, within the borders of that country.

IS says it is THE Islamic State, a global caliphate that it insists all Muslims must support. It is contemptuous of the Taliban’s nationalist goals and doesn’t recognize them as a pure Islamic movement. For similar reasons, IS has long been a staunch enemy of al-Qaida.

Both the Taliban and IS advocate particularly harsh versions of Islamic Shariah law and have used tactics like suicide bombers. But when it ruled territory in Syria and Iraq, IS was even more brutal and carried out more horrific punishments than the Taliban did.

IS emerged in Afghanistan in 2015 with the name Islamic State in Khorasan Province, at a time when the group was at its peak, controlling much of Iraq and Syria. It drew members from Afghan and Pakistani militants, including a wave of Taliban defectors.

The group initially found support among Afghanistan’s small Salafist movement in eastern Kunar and Nangarhar provinces. The Salafis had largely been marginalized by the Taliban, and by connecting with the rising IS, the Salafist movement found a means to establish military strength.

But IS’s brutal ways have since led some Salafi clerics to voice opposition. In the years after its emergence, IS was badly hurt by military setbacks at the hands of the Taliban and by U.S. airstrikes, before surging again the past year.

The Taliban downplay IS’s capabilities and dismiss them as a fringe group with no mainstream appeal.

“They have no roots here,” influential Taliban figure Sheikh Abdul-Hameed Hamasi told The Associated Press.

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## END-GAME

Still, the potency of the IS threat is undeniable.

Two deadly bombings have hit Kabul, including one outside the airport at the height of evacuations before the U.S. exit that killed 169 Afghans and 13 U.S. service members. Smaller scale attacks are also on the rise.

"The intensity and breadth of attacks ... show the capacity and level of national reach which has caught the Taliban by surprise," said Ibraheem Bahiss, a consultant with the International Crisis Group. IS "is no short-term threat."

It could be a while until IS has the capability to hold territory again. Its immediate aim is to destabilize the Taliban and shatter the group's image as a guardian of security.

For now, its strategy is slow and methodical. It is reaching out to tribes and other groups to recruit from their ranks while stamping out dissent among moderate Salafis and carrying out jailbreaks, assassinations, and attacks on Taliban personnel.

"Package all of that together, that is an entire method of insurgency the Taliban is not equipped to handle," said Mines.

Bill Roggio of the Long War Journal, produced by the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies think tank, offered a different view, saying he believes the Taliban can uproot IS on their own, even without the backup of U.S. airstrikes that nearly eliminated IS.

Roggio said the Taliban have shown themselves capable of rooting out some IS cells, using their vast local intelligence-gathering networks. He noted that IS — unlike the Taliban during their insurgency — don't have access to safe havens in Pakistan and Iran.

The Taliban have rejected cooperating with the U.S. against IS, ahead of the two sides' direct talks last weekend.

IS's future trajectory in Afghanistan will depend largely on its ability to recruit more members and win over large segments of the population.

Since their inception, they have been poaching Taliban members. In 2015, a former Taliban commander, Abdul Rauf Khadim, was appointed deputy of IS in Afghanistan and reportedly offered financial incentives to other Taliban fighters to join the group.

In 2020, when IS re-emerged in Afghanistan, it was under a new leader drawn from the Haqqani Network, currently a faction of the Taliban.

Hard-line members of the Taliban could join IS as the Taliban leadership, now in power, has to make compromises whether at home or abroad. The Taliban have promised a more inclusive government, though the temporary administration they set up is entirely made up of Taliban members.

The more the Taliban cooperate with international states, the more they run against the image of the mujahedeen resistance fighter. "That is a key identity the Taliban will lose," Mines said.

## TREATMENT OF MINORITIES

As the Taliban shift from insurgency to governance, one key test will be whether they act to protect minority groups that their fighters once tyrannized, such as the Shiite Hazaras.

The Hazaras have endured multiple campaigns of persecution and displacement throughout Afghanistan's history. When the Taliban were first in power in the 1990s, they carried out massacres against the community, in some cases in retaliation for massacres of ethnic Pashtuns.

IS has targeted Hazaras because most are Shiite Muslims, killing hundreds in brutal attacks targeting their places of worship in what it calls a war on heretics.

Friday's mosque attack in Kunduz was an opportunity for the Taliban to project a new image as a state power. The Taliban acted swiftly: Special forces swept the scene, investigations were launched, the provincial police chief made lofty promises to protect minority "brothers."

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Associated Press correspondent Kathy Gannon contributed to this report.

## Hurricane Ida in Louisiana: Caskets, vaults still displaced

By REBECCA SANTANA Associated Press

LAFITTE, La. (AP) — Hurricane Ida swept through Louisiana with furious winds that ripped roofs off buildings and storm surge so powerful it moved homes. What it wrought on the living it also wrought on the dead, moving vaults and caskets and adding another layer of trauma for families and communities recovering from the powerful storm.

“Once you bury a relative, you expect that to be the permanent resting place,” said the Rev. Haywood Johnson Jr., who lives in the small community of Ironton, south of New Orleans along the Mississippi River. Ida’s surge destroyed nearly every home in the community and pushed heavy vaults — including those containing Johnson’s mother and other relatives — from their resting spots into the streets.

“Some of those tombs weigh a couple of tons. And the water just came and disrupted it like they were cardboard boxes. That was the force of the water,” Johnson said.

Louisiana’s location in a hurricane-prone region coupled with cultural burial practices that often lay the dead to rest above ground make the problem common in the aftermath of strong hurricanes or other flooding.

Ryan Seidemann chairs the state’s Cemetery Response Task Force, which was formed after the 2016 floods in Baton Rouge led to widespread problems at cemeteries across the flood-stricken region. Members of the task force start surveying cemeteries as soon as they can after a storm to assess damage.

In some cases, storm surge or flooding from heavy rain can move the vaults so far that it’s not immediately clear where they were buried. Often made of thousands of pounds of concrete or cinder block, vaults can have air pockets inside and the concrete itself can actually be more buoyant than people realize, Seidemann said.

“They float. They tend to go wherever the water goes. We’ve recovered them from yards, from levees, from underneath stairwells,” he said. “There’s no rhyme or reason, really, to where they come to rest, and then it’s kind of our logistical problem to figure out how to get them out of there.”

And recovery is just the first step. The team then has to identify the remains and often works with families to get Federal Emergency Management Agency aid for reburial costs. Even as they’re working on post-Ida recovery, Seidemann said the task force is still dealing with damage from hurricanes last year that sent remains into coastal marshes.

In the aftermath of a hurricane, having remains displaced is like “opening up old wounds” for families, Seidemann said: “They’re going to have to go through the whole grieving process again.”

It’s also upsetting for people struggling to rebuild their homes or their businesses who come across a vault or casket on their yard or road, although Seidemann said people are generally patient and just want the remains returned to provide closure for families.

Thomas Halko lives along Bayou Baratavia where it intersects with Goose Bayou in southeastern Louisiana. In the middle of his property is a small family cemetery often referred to as the Lafitte Cemetery or the Perrin Family cemetery.

After the hurricane, Halko found thick layers of mud washed over the property, one of his houses pushed off its 4-foot-high pillars and two of the heavy stone vaults in the cemetery moved. One came to rest atop the levee that separates the property from the bayou. Across the road was another vault that Halko thinks was in the cemetery.

“It took quite a beating,” Halko said, speaking of the cemetery. Gesturing to the vault on top of the road, he said: “That’s one example.”

Edward Perrin has relatives buried there as well as in other cemeteries in the long ridge of land that stretches toward the Gulf of Mexico. He said at least one vault became dislodged after Rita and had to be recovered. The 87-year-old said he had thought he might want to be laid to rest at the family’s cemetery on Goose Bayou but the graves disturbances have made him reconsider.

“All of this water situation is causing problems with worshiping and burying and living,” he said.

Families sometimes strap down graves or use sandbags to keep them in place ahead of a storm, said

Arbie Goings, a task force member who is also a retired funeral director. When they do get displaced, identifying remains can be challenging, especially in cases of long dead people with fewer, if any, ways to match things like dental records or DNA.

Some caskets have a little plastic tube — called a memory tube — screwed into its end where a funeral home can put identifying information, Goings said. In some cases, they've found the name at the foot of the casket or embroidered into a piece of cloth covering the bottom part of the person, he said.

Often family members can give key identifying details. He recalled one case where they identified a woman's remains by the marbles her grandchildren put in her casket in honor of her love of the game.

In some cases, they exhaust all options. A handful of people who could not be identified after the 2016 floods are buried at Plainview Cemetery in Denham Springs. And sometimes, despite extensive searching, caskets go missing and are never found.

Seidemann estimated it could take as long as two years to return all the remains displaced by Ida to their rightful places. That's about how long it took after the 2016 floods in the Baton Rouge area.

The team has been in Ironton and Lafitte gathering the vaults and caskets scattered by the water. When they are identified, they will be reburied. In Ironton, the Rev. Johnson said he hopes to have a ceremony at that time to honor the dead.

Follow Santana on Twitter @ruskygal.

## Risky move: Biden undercuts WH executive privilege shield

By COLLEEN LONG and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — It's a risky move by President Joe Biden that could come back to haunt him — and future presidents — in the hyperpartisan world of Washington politics.

Democrat Biden has agreed to a request from Congress seeking sensitive information on the actions of his predecessor Donald Trump and his aides during the Jan. 6 insurrection, though the former president claims the information is guarded by executive privilege.

The move by Biden isn't the final word; Republican Trump says he will challenge the requests and a lengthy legal battle is likely to ensue over the information. Courts have ruled that former presidents are afforded executive privilege in some cases.

But the playbook for the legal world is different from the political world. And in the political world, "every time a president does something controversial, it becomes a building block for future presidents," said Saikrishna Prakash, a law professor at the University of Virginia who studies presidential powers.

Biden's decision not to block the information sought by Congress challenges a tested norm — one in which presidents enjoy the secrecy of records of their own terms in office, both mundane and highly sensitive, for a period of at least five years, and often far longer. That means Biden and future presidents, as well as Trump.

While not spelled out in the Constitution, executive privilege has developed to protect a president's ability to obtain candid counsel from his advisers without fear of immediate public disclosure and to protect his confidential communications relating to official responsibilities.

But that privilege has its limitations in extraordinary situations, as exemplified during the Watergate scandal, when the Supreme Court ruled that it could not be used to shield the release of secret Oval Office tapes sought in a criminal inquiry, and following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The Jan. 6 insurrection belongs among those ranks, Biden's White House counsel wrote to the keeper of records, the Archivist of the United States. An armed mob of Trump supporters stormed the building in an attempt to stop the certification of Biden's election victory.

"This committee is investigating a dark day in our democracy — an attempt to undermine our Constitution and democratic processes by the former president — and that context, I think, is important here, too," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said of the congressional panel seeking the records.

The argument that the special circumstances of the attack justify the extraordinary release should guard

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against the erosion of executive privilege for presidencies going forward, some experts said.

"By ratcheting up how extraordinary and extreme it is, it limits the precedent going forward," said Jonathan Shaub, an assistant professor of law at the University of Kentucky J. David Rosenberg College of Law and a former attorney-adviser in the Office of Legal Counsel in the Obama administration.

But those other exceptions occurred in a pre-Trump world, where there were clear customs and norms, and generally, one set of facts. Today, a large part of the country believes Trump's lies that he is the rightful winner of the 2020 election, even though there is no credible evidence to support his claims of mass fraud, and Trump and his allies have gone to great lengths to recast the events of Jan. 6 to make the rioters out to be warrior patriots.

If history is any guide, once the door to reviewing past presidential records is ajar, future Congresses and presidents could swing it open further as politics warrant.

It's a path followed by other Washington norms in the increasingly rancorous capital. In 2013, Democrats deployed the so-called nuclear option to eliminate the filibuster that would require 60 votes to approve most presidential appointments and nominations, but maintained it for legislation and Supreme Court picks. In 2017, when Republicans took control of Washington, they took the tactic further, and during the Trump years, they put three justices on the high court by simple majority votes.

Presidents tend to be protective of their ability to keep White House documents private, both for themselves and their predecessors. But any White House move to deny the congressional request for records on Trump's activities could antagonize Democratic legislators just when Biden needs their support to advance his agenda.

The documents requested by the congressional committee are part of a lengthy and contentious investigation into how the Jan. 6 mob was able to infiltrate the Capitol and disrupt the certification of Biden's presidential victory in the most serious assault on Congress in two centuries. More than 630 people have been charged criminally in the attack, the largest prosecution in U.S. history.

Thousands of documents have been sought from the Trump administration as they try to determine how the insurrection could have happened. Many of those requests went to the National Archives, where Trump's correspondence during his time in office is held.

According to an executive order on presidential records, the archivist of the United States "shall abide by any instructions given him by the incumbent President or his designee unless otherwise directed by a final court order."

"Congress is examining an assault on our Constitution and democratic institutions provoked and fanned by those sworn to protect them," White House counsel Dana Remus wrote in a letter to the archivist. "The constitutional protections of executive privilege should not be used to shield, from Congress or from the public, information that reflects a clear and apparent effort to subvert the Constitution itself."

Trump responded with his own letter to the National Archives formally asserting privilege over nearly 50 documents.

Referring to the Presidential Records Act, Trump wrote, "I hereby make a protective assertion of constitutionally based privilege with respect to all additional records." He said if the committee seeks other information he considers privileged information, "I will take all necessary and appropriate steps to defend the Office of the Presidency."

## Plane crash kills 2, burns homes in California neighborhood

By JULIE WATSON Associated Press

SANTEE, Calif. (AP) — A twin-engine plane that killed at least two people and left a swath of destruction in a San Diego suburb nose-dived into the ground after repeated warnings that it was flying dangerously low, according to a recording.

The Cessna 340 smashed into a UPS van, killing the driver, and then hit houses just after noon Monday in Santee, a suburb of 50,000 people. The pilot also is believed to have died, and at least two people on the ground were hurt, including a woman who was helped out the window of a burning home by neighbors.

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An investigator from the National Transportation Safety Board was expected to be at the scene Tuesday morning, according to an agency tweet.

The plane was heading in to land at Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport in San Diego when it crashed. Shortly before, when the plane was about a half-mile from the runway, an air traffic controller alerted the pilot that the aircraft was too low.

"Low altitude alert, climb immediately, climb the airplane," the controller tells the pilot in audio obtained by KSWB-TV.

The controller repeatedly urges the plane to climb to 5,000 feet, and when it remains at 1,500 feet warns: "You appear to be descending again, sir."

KGTV-TV, an ABC affiliate, posted video the station said it received from a viewer showing the plane arcing in the sky and then plunging into the neighborhood in a burst of flames.

The plane was owned by Dr. Sugata Das, who may have been piloting the aircraft and died in the crash. He worked at Yuma Regional Medical Center in Arizona, the hospital's chief medical officer said.

Das, a licensed pilot, lived in San Diego and commuted back and forth to Yuma, according to a website for a non-profit organization he served as director. He leaves two young sons.

United Parcel Service of America Inc. confirmed one of its workers died, although the employee's name wasn't immediately released.

People a block away from the scene said their homes shook from the thunderous crash.

Neighbors ran to help and helped rescue a couple believed to be in their 70s from one burning home.

Michael Keeley, 43, ran barefoot outside and saw flames engulfing the UPS truck and a home on the corner. He joined two neighbors at the burning home in calling through an open window.

With thick smoke inside the home and flames licking the roof, Keeley reached through the window to grab a woman's arm and help her climb out. Her forearms were burned, and her hair was singed, he said.

"I'm glad I didn't have to go inside with my bare feet," said Keeley, a probation officer.

At the same time, other neighbors knocked down the couple's fence to rescue the woman's husband from the backyard.

Keeley said after the couple escaped to the sidewalk, the woman pleaded for help for her dog that was believed to be inside the home.

"She kept saying, 'My puppy, my puppy,'" he said.

But moments later, there were explosions inside the home. The group helped the couple walk a safe distance away until paramedics arrived.

Andrew Pelloth, 30, lives across the street from the couple and was working from home when he heard a whirring and then a huge boom.

"My initial thought was that it was a meteorite coming down," he said. "I could hear it falling, and then some kind of explosion."

Pelloth looked outside and saw the UPS truck on fire. He grabbed a fire extinguisher and then joined other neighbors who pulled the boards off the couple's fence to rescue the woman's husband.

Erik Huppert, 57, who ran down to help after his house shook, said he saw the man walking in the backyard after they pulled off the boards.

"Both were definitely in shock, but at least they were alive," said Huppert, a military contractor.

No one was home at the other house that was destroyed, which sold only a month ago, Pelloth said.

Associated Press writers Elliot Spagat in San Diego and Christopher Weber in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

## Walk it off: Red Sox eliminate Rays 6-5 with late sac fly

By KYLE HIGHTOWER AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — Back in raucous Fenway Park for postseason baseball a year after a last-place finish, the Boston Red Sox are getting the bounces, knocking big hits in bunches and even benefiting from a

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little small ball.

Hardly a perfect team, even by their own estimation, Alex Cora and the wild-card Red Sox are four wins from a return to the World Series anyway.

Kiké Hernández delivered Boston's second straight walk-off win, scoring pinch-runner Danny Santana with a sacrifice fly in the ninth inning to send the Red Sox to the AL Championship Series with a 6-5 win over the Tampa Bay Rays on Monday night.

After winning Game 3 of their best-of-five AL Division Series on Sunday with Christian Vázquez's two-run homer in the 13th, Boston took Game 4 for its first set of back-to-back walk-off postseason wins since 2004 ALCS Games 4 and 5, both from David Ortiz against the Yankees.

"We always said we had a good baseball team that had some holes, and we still have some holes, but at the end, for how bad it looked sometimes, we're still here. We're still in the dance," Cora said.

Rafael Devers had a three-run home run off rookie Shane McClellan to ignite a five-run third inning that put Boston in front 5-0. Tampa Bay battled back and tied it in the eighth.

The wild-card Red Sox will await the winner of the other ALDS matchup between the Houston Astros and Chicago White Sox. Houston leads 2-1 going into Game 4 in Chicago on Tuesday, a makeup of Monday's rainout.

"Since day one, you guys believed in this group," Cora told his players before setting off a bubbly clubhouse celebration.

Boston improved to 15-3 in potential clinching postseason games since 2004 and have won each of their last eight. It's their first under second-year chief baseball officer Chaim Bloom, who came over from the Rays before the 2020 season and promptly oversaw the unpopular trade of Mookie Betts.

With Cora rehired last offseason following a one-year suspension for his role in the Astros' cheating scandal, the retooled Red Sox are four games from the World Series a year after finishing last in the AL East.

The 2018 champs have needed a little luck. Vázquez's homer Sunday came half an inning after Tampa Bay missed out on the go-ahead run on a bizarre ground-rule double that bounced off right fielder Hunter Renfroe and over the outfield fence.

That all followed a Game 2 rout in which Boston slugged a franchise postseason-record five homers in a 14-6 drubbing. The Red Sox hit .341 as a team with nine homers and a .915 OPS in the series.

For the Rays, it's an abrupt end to aspirations of back-to-back trips to the World Series after winning 100 games during the regular season and rolling to the AL East title.

"There's no doubt there's disappointment," Tampa Bay manager Kevin Cash said. "We had high aspirations to get deep into this thing. We ran into a Red Sox team that they just beat us — no other way around it. They got the big hits."

The Red Sox are the second team to clinch a postseason series with consecutive walk-off wins. The other was the Minnesota Twins in the 1991 World Series, according to STATS.

Vázquez led off the ninth with a single to left field and moved to second on a sacrifice bunt by Christian Arroyo. Travis Shaw hit a bouncing ground ball to third that went for an infield single when Yandy Díaz bounced his difficult throw to first baseman Ji-Man Choi. Vázquez got to third and Santana entered to run for him.

"Old school baseball right there," Cora said. "We won the ALDS playing good fundamental baseball."

Hernández, who was 9 for 20 in the series, scored Santana with a fly ball to left.

"I had the chance to win the game last night and I didn't do it," Hernández said. "I was thinking, walking to the plate, I was like, 'I'm about to finish this game.'"

Rays postseason star Randy Arozarena ripped a tying single with no outs in the eighth inning off Ryan Brasier and advanced to second on the throw. Garrett Whitlock relieved and got through the eighth without further damage, then pitched a scoreless ninth for the victory.

"Once AC said you've got to keep going, that's all I was focused on," Whitlock said.

Red Sox starter Eduardo Rodríguez allowed two runs and three hits with six strikeouts over five innings, plus one batter. It was redemption after he lasted just 1 2/3 innings and gave up two runs in Boston's

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5-1 loss in Game 1.

Devers finished with three hits. Wander Franco had a two-run homer for Tampa.

The Red Sox led 5-0 after three but Tampa pulled within 5-3 on Austin Meadows' RBI single in the fifth and Franco's two-run homer in the sixth off Tanner Houck.

After being solid on the mound throughout 2021 and in a Game 1 win, Tampa's pitching struggled over the last three games, with the Red Sox outscoring the Rays 26-15.

Right-hander Collin McHugh was the opener Monday and pitched two scoreless innings, allowing one hit before handing the ball off to Game 1 starter Shane McCannan.

The rookie was pitching on three days' rest and coming off a strong performance in which he earned the win after pitching five scoreless innings.

Boston had his number this time.

McCannan quickly gave up a single Vázquez and walked Kyle Schwarber. He seemed on his way to getting out of trouble after he got Hernández to fly out for the second out of the inning.

But Devers jumped all over a first-pitch fastball and launched a line drive into the first row of the center field bleachers.

Xander Bogaerts singled. That was followed by Verdugo's double off the Green Monster that scored Bogaerts. J.D. Martinez kept it going with a single off the Monster that brought Verdugo.

McCannan's line for the night: five hits, five runs, a walk and home run.

"Down 5-0 nothing in the third inning, that was pretty devastating," Cash said. "We claw back in it and we came up short tonight."

TRAINER'S ROOM

Red Sox: Manager Alex Cora said reliever Hansel Robles, who gave up a solo home run to Franco and game-tying double in Game 3, remained under the weather ahead of Monday's game.

UP NEXT

Boston will hit the road for the ALCS opener Friday night.

More AP MLB: <https://apnews.com/tag/MLB> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## As Shatner heads toward the stars, visions of space collide

By TED ANTHONY AP National Writer

"Risk is our business," James T. Kirk once said. "That's what this starship is all about. That's why we're aboard her."

More than a half-century later, the performer who breathed life into the fabled Enterprise captain is, at age 90, making that kind of risk his own business and heading toward the stars under dramatically different circumstances than his fictional counterpart. And in doing so, William Shatner is causing worlds to collide, or at least permitting parallel universes to coexist — the utopian spacefaring vision of "Star Trek" and the evolving, increasingly commercial spot that "space" holds in the American psyche.

When Shatner boards Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin NS-18 in Texas at around dawn Wednesday, his one small step into the craft creates one of the ultimate crossover stories of our era.

It's about space and exploration, sure, and certainly about capitalism and billionaires and questions of economic equity. But it's also about popular culture and marketing and entertainment and nostalgia and hope and Manifest Destiny and, and, and ... well, you get the idea.

"What will I see when I'm out there?" Shatner wondered last week, talking to Anderson Cooper on CNN. An equally valid question is this: What will WE see when he's out there?

It will be a complex blend of human dreams superimposed upon technology and hope, braggadocio and cash, and the notion that space travel elevates us — all orchestrated by a company under criticism for what some call the decidedly un-utopian, tech-bro ways that it operates.

Is all that and "Star Trek" a good fit?

THE WORLD OF 'STAR TREK'

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Since its 1966 premiere with one of the most diverse casts TV had ever seen, "Trek" has grown from Gene Roddenberry's fever dream of a "Wagon Train" to the stars into an intricate transmedia universe full of subtleties and traditions and rules.

Among them: Human beings avoid killing each other. Money is generally outdated, as are hunger and poverty. Greed is aberrant. Noninterference in other cultures is the most sacred principle of all. And within the United Federation of Planets, the spacefaring United Nations of "Star Trek," exploration, not domination, is the coin of the realm. In short, unlike a lot of humanity right now.

That 1966-69 original series used allegory to evade network censors and tell stories about racism and xenophobia and even the Vietnam War. How could they get away with all that? Because the adventures of Kirk's Enterprise took place against a backdrop of 23rd-century space travel — something directly relevant to the world as well, given that humans first set foot on the moon 47 days after the original series' final episode.

Over the next half century, backed by a vocal fan base, "Star Trek" roared back for more and, in the process, led the way in cementing space travel as an ideal canvas for relevant storytelling.

Even as NASA's Apollo era ebbed into the space shuttle program (where an early craft was named "Enterprise") and eventually into uncertainty, "Trek" remained one of the culture's central vehicles for a spacefaring future.

Nichelle Nichols, who played Lt. Uhura on the show, was a particularly tireless advocate, working with NASA to recruit Americans of color and women and make sure they could occupy the center of such ambitions as the missions marched forward.

In the 1980s, movies about the original crew dealt with aging and regret. "Star Trek: The Next Generation" offered a more cerebral but still utopian vision. Another spinoff, "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine," set at an outpost preserving a delicate detente, presented a darker take — but still one in which avarice was anomalous and worthy of scorn. And "Enterprise," a 2001-2005 prequel, offered a season-long arc about the aftermath of a 9/11-style extraterrestrial attack on Earth.

Two of the latest iterations of the myth, "Star Trek: Discovery" and "Star Trek: Picard," have dipped deeper into darkness than their predecessors and have toyed with the notion that not all humanity wants to be quite that utopian.

In all that varying storytelling, though, one constant remained: the notion that human space travel would become a vector of ethics and goodness that elevated the galaxy rather than plundered it.

## THE PROFITABLE FRONTIER

Which brings us to companies like Blue Origin, Elon Musk's SpaceX and Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic — endeavors that build their brands not upon countries but corporations.

They offer the culture a late-stage capitalism variation on the theme — a narrative that space travel isn't just for scientists and diplomats but for you and me, too. If, that is, you and me happen to have a few hundred thousand dollars or more of walking-around money on hand.

"The United States always has had private people working for the public purpose," says Ravi S. Rajan, president of the California Institute for the Arts and a "Trek" fan since childhood. "But how much is done privately and how much is done publicly, that changes."

Many have impugned the billionaire space moguls' actions, including the secretary-general of the United Nations, and the troubles of Blue Origin's corporate culture are well-documented of late.

But the motives of the Amazon founder himself remain unclear. It is evident, though, that the popular culture of space travel has influenced him deeply.

Bezos, who tells a story of exploring space to help ensure Earth's continued prosperity, is a longtime "Trek" fan. He made a cameo as an alien Starfleet official in the 2016 movie "Star Trek Beyond." And according to biographer Brad Stone, Bezos even fleetingly considered calling Amazon "Makeitso.com," after Capt. Jean-Luc Picard's favorite command in "Star Trek: The Next Generation."

"The whole ethos of 'Star Trek' showed people who were different-looking, with different skills, working together. We are in the opening moments of something like that," says Richard B. Cooper, vice president of the Space Foundation, a nonprofit that advocates for the global space industry. "People can look at

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this environment and say, "Hey — I belong there, too."

Prohibitive costs aside (and that's a big aside), Cooper has a point. Though the likes of Shatner may not be "regular people," the shift from the dominance of the test pilot and the scientist tracks with the populism of our era, where — it must be said — the exactitude of science is being called into question as never before. And as Cooper points out, "it gives people hope. And if there's one thing the world's in short supply of, it's that essential payload."

That kind of storyline — hope, heroism, competitive dominance and an unerring sense of competence that can at times overlap with testosterone — could be one key reason why the commercial space outfits are thriving. At a moment when NASA and nation-focused space travel lacks a compelling Hollywood narrative, the entrepreneurs and their marketers step right in.

"American dominance in space, nobody cares about it. It's Bezos who says, 'We can't go on living like this. We have to save the planet,'" says Mary-Jane Rubenstein, a professor of religion and science in society at Wesleyan University. What results, she says, is "a kinder, gentler colonialism" in which humans take to orbit under premises that seem justifiable but require closer scrutiny.

"It's the billionaires who have the utopian visions," says Rubenstein, author of the upcoming book "Astrotopia: The Dangerous Religion of the Corporate Space Race."

"The states can't muster them," she says. "They have no story."

## LAUNCHING SHATNER

We live in an era where the fictional and the real have an intricate relationship, and sometimes it's hard to separate them. Something like this, a collision of dreams and real-life ambition and achievement, couldn't have a more effective ambassador than the outsized personality that is William Shatner.

"I was there last week rehearsing, whatever they call it," Shatner told Anderson Cooper.

"Training I think is what they call it," Cooper said, to which Shatner responded: "I think of it as rehearsal."

And there it is again — the storyline, compelling as ever, stealing oxygen from other important questions. Should we even be colonizing space? Don't we have enough going on here at home to worry about? Aren't there people with problems more pressing than this who could use the cash?

And what if we encounter life that's not life as we know it, and harm it out of obliviousness or greed? It's not as if that hasn't happened countless times here on the ground, in the land that put a man on the moon but still grapples with a history brimming with horrors from slave markets to smallpox blankets. These are only some of the questions that will ascend and descend with Shatner on Wednesday.

Is it a stunt? Sure. Is it a genius marketing ploy? Absolutely. Is it cynical and self-aggrandizing and designed solely to make more money and grab more attention for the world's richest man? You're going to have to decide that one yourself.

In the meantime, consider the autobiographical song called "Real" that Shatner recorded in 2004 with country singer Brad Paisley.

"I'd love to help the world and all its problems. But I'm an entertainer, and that's all," he says in it. "So the next time there's an asteroid or a natural disaster, I'm flattered that you thought of me — but I'm not the one to call."

Turns out, he is — this time. But next time? In the future of the final frontier and the culture that has grown up around it — in this unusual realm where risk IS the business — that's eventually going to have to be addressed.

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Ted Anthony, director of new storytelling and newsroom innovation at The Associated Press, has been writing about American culture since 1990 and watching "Star Trek" since 1969. His younger son's middle name is Kirk. Follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/anthonyted>

## Justice Department again presses to halt Texas abortion law

By PAUL J. WEBER Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — The Biden administration urged the courts again Monday night to step in and suspend a new Texas law that has banned most abortions since early September, as clinics hundreds of

miles away remain busy with Texas patients making long journeys to get care.

The latest attempt comes three days after the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reinstated the nation's most restrictive abortion law after a brief 48-hour window last week in which Texas abortion providers — following a blistering ruling by a lower court — had rushed to bring in patients again.

The days ahead could now be key in determining the immediate future of the law known as Senate Bill 8, including whether there is another attempt to have the U.S. Supreme Court weigh in.

The law bans abortions in Texas once cardiac activity is detected, which is usually at six weeks and before some women even know they are pregnant. Although other GOP-controlled states have had similar early bans on abortions blocked by courts, the Texas law has proved durable because the state offloads enforcement solely onto private citizens, who can collect at least \$10,000 in damages if they successfully sue abortion providers.

"If Texas's scheme is permissible, no constitutional right is safe from state-sanctioned sabotage of this kind," the Justice Department told the appeals court.

In wording that seemed to be a message to the Supreme Court, the Justice Department raised the specter that if allowed to stand, the legal structure created in enacting the law could be used to circumvent even the Supreme Court's rulings in 2008 and 2010 on gun rights and campaign financing.

It is not clear when the 5th Circuit court will decide whether to extend what is currently a temporary order allowing the Texas law to stand.

Just as some Texas abortion providers last week quickly moved to once again perform abortions for patients past six weeks, the New Orleans-based appeals court set that order aside while it reviews the case. Planned Parenthood, the largest abortion provider in Texas, relayed to the court in a separate filing Monday night numerous stories of Texas women impacted by the law, including one patient who they said was only 12 years old.

"Oklahoma staff are working overtime to care for Texas patients denied abortions," attorneys for Planned Parenthood told the court.

The Biden administration sued Texas over the law last month after it went into effect. Texas officials have defended the restrictions, which were signed by Republican Gov. Greg Abbott in May and say they have no ability to stop private individuals from bringing lawsuits.

## **Texas governor orders ban on private company vaccine mandate**

By JIM VERTUNO Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas Gov. Greg Abbott issued an executive order Monday to prohibit any entity, including private business, from enforcing a COVID-19 vaccine mandate on workers and called on state lawmakers to pass a similar ban into law.

The move comes as the Biden administration is set to issue rules requiring employers with more than 100 workers to be vaccinated or test weekly for the coronavirus. Several major companies, including Texas-based American Airlines and Southwest Airlines, have said they would abide by the federal mandate.

"No entity in Texas can compel receipt of a COVID-19 vaccine by any individual, including an employee or a consumer, who objects to such vaccination for any reason of personal conscience, based on a religious belief, or for medical reasons, including prior recovery from COVID-19," Abbott wrote in his order.

Abbott, who was previously vaccinated and also later tested positive for COVID-19, noted in his order that "vaccines are strongly encouraged for those eligible to receive one, but must always be voluntary for Texans."

Texas has seen a recent decrease in newly reported COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. But a rising death toll from the recent surge caused by the delta variant has the state rapidly approaching 67,000 total fatalities since the pandemic began in 2020.

The governor added the issue to the agenda for lawmakers to address during the ongoing special session Abbott called for redrawing voting maps and new restrictions on transgender student athletes. Montana has passed a law preventing employers from mandating workers get vaccines, and a number of states

have explicitly said schools cannot require vaccinations.

Abbott previously barred vaccine mandates by state and local government agencies, but until now had let private companies make their own rules for their workers. It was not immediately clear if Abbott's latest executive order would face a quick court challenge.

Abbott's new order also carries political implications. The two-term Republican is facing pressure from two candidates in next year's GOP primary, former state Sen. Don Huffines and former Florida Congressman and Texas state party chairman Allen West, have attacked Abbott's COVID-19 policies and have strongly opposed vaccine mandates.

"He knows which the way the wind is blowing. He knows conservative Republican voters are tired of the vaccine mandates and tired of him being a failed leader," Huffines tweeted.

West recently tested positive for COVID-19. He was briefly hospitalized, but also tweeted he remains opposed to vaccine mandates. West announced Monday on his social media accounts that he had returned home.

## At least 2 dead in California plane crash that torched homes

By JULIE WATSON Associated Press

SANTEE, Calif. (AP) — A small plane crashed in a densely populated San Diego suburb Monday, killing two people, including a UPS driver and an Arizona physician, and leaving a trail of destruction that sent neighbors scrambling to save neighbors. At least two others were injured.

Neighbors described the dramatic rescue of a retired couple from one of two burning homes that were destroyed in Santee, a suburb of 50,000 people. Ten other homes were damaged.

Several vehicles, including the UPS delivery truck, were also torched.

"Not to be too graphic, but it's a pretty brutal scene," Justin Matsushita, Santee's deputy fire chief, said as firefighters searched the smoldering ruins.

United Parcel Service of America Inc. confirmed one of its workers died.

"We are heartbroken by the loss of our employee, and extend our deepest condolences to his family and friends," the company said. "We also send our condolences for the other individuals who are involved in this incident, and their families and friends."

The crash also killed Dr. Sugata Das, who worked at Yuma Regional Medical Center in Arizona, the hospital's chief medical officer said.

"As an outstanding cardiologist and dedicated family man, Dr. Das leaves a lasting legacy legacy," Dr. Bharat Magu said in a statement. "We extend our prayers and support to his family, colleagues, and friends during this difficult time."

Das was director of the Power of Love Foundation, a non-profit organization that is involved in helping women and children overseas that are infected or affected by AIDS and HIV, according to its website.

The website said Das, the father of two boys, lived in San Diego and was the owner of a twin-engine Cessna 340 and an instrument-rated pilot who flew between his home and Yuma.

It was unclear how many people were aboard the plane, although fire officials say nobody aboard would have survived the crash.

The condition of the injured couple wasn't immediately known.

The plane was heading in to land at Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport in San Diego when it nosedived into the ground. Shortly before, when the plane was about a half-mile from the runway, an air traffic controller alerted the pilot that the aircraft was too low.

"Low altitude alert, climb immediately, climb the airplane," the controller tells the pilot in audio obtained by KSWB-TV.

The controller repeatedly urges the plane to climb to 5,000 feet, and when it remains at 1,500 feet warns: "You appear to be descending again, sir."

KGTV, an ABC affiliate, posted video the station said it received from a viewer showing the plane arcing in the sky and then plunging into the neighborhood in a burst of flames.

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People a block away from the scene said their homes shook from the thunderous crash. Michael Keeley, 43, ran barefoot outside and saw flames engulfing the UPS truck and a home on the corner. He joined two neighbors at the burning home calling through an open window.

A second home was also in flames. But no one appeared to be home.

With thick smoke inside the home and flames licking the roof, Keeley reached through the window to grab the woman's arm and help her climb out. Her forearms were burned, and her hair was singed, he said.

"I'm glad I didn't have to go inside with my bare feet," said Keeley, a probation officer.

At the same time, other neighbors knocked down the couple's fence to rescue the woman's husband from the backyard.

Keeley said after the couple escaped to the sidewalk, the woman pleaded for help for her dog that was believed to be inside the home.

"She kept saying, 'My puppy, my puppy,' " he said.

But moments later, there were explosions inside the home. The group helped the couple walk a safe distance away until paramedics arrived.

Andrew Pelloth, 30, lives across the street from the couple and was working from home when he heard a whirring and then a huge boom.

"My initial thought was that it was a meteorite coming down," he said. "I could hear it falling, and then some kind of explosion."

Pelloth looked outside and first saw the UPS truck on fire. He grabbed a fire extinguisher and then joined other neighbors who pulled the boards off the couple's fence to rescue the woman's husband.

Erik Huppert, 57, who ran down to help after his house shook, said he saw the man walking in the backyard after they pulled off the boards.

"Both were definitely in shock, but at least they were alive," said Huppert, a military contractor.

No one was home at the other house that was destroyed, which sold only a month ago, Pelloth said. He met the new owner Monday as he arrived to see the damage.

The plane was a twin-engine Cessna C340, according to the Federal Aviation Administration.

It was believed to be a private aircraft flying from Yuma to Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport in San Diego, Santee's deputy fire chief said.

The crash happened about three blocks from Santana High School, which said on Twitter that "all students are secure."

The crash site is a few miles north of Gillespie Field, a small San Diego County airport.

The FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board will investigate.

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Associated Press writers Elliot Spagat in San Diego and Christopher Weber in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

## Jon Gruden resigns as Raiders coach over offensive emails

By JOSH DUBOW AP Pro Football Writer

Jon Gruden has resigned as coach of the Las Vegas Raiders after emails he sent before being hired in 2018 contained racist, homophobic and misogynistic comments.

Gruden released a statement Monday night, saying: "I have resigned as head coach of the Las Vegas Raiders. I love the Raiders and do not want to be a distraction. Thank you to all the players, coaches, staff, and fans of Raider Nation. I'm sorry, I never meant to hurt anyone."

He stepped down after The New York Times reported that Gruden frequently used misogynistic and homophobic language directed at Commissioner Roger Goodell and others in the NFL.

Special teams and assistant head coach Rich Bisaccia will take over on an interim basis.

It was a rapid downfall for Gruden, who is in the fourth year of a 10-year, \$100 million contract he signed with the Raiders in 2018. It started on Friday when the Wall Street Journal reported that Gruden used a racist term to describe NFL union chief DeMaurice Smith in a 2011 email to former Washington

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executive Bruce Allen.

The emails were discovered in a workplace misconduct investigation into the Washington Football Team but ended up costing Gruden his job when they also showed Gruden denounced the drafting of a gay player and the tolerance of players protesting during the playing of the national anthem among other issues.

Gruden apologized for his "insensitive remarks" about Smith, saying they were made out of frustration over the 2011 lockout. But the latest emails sent from between 2011-18 when Gruden was an analyst for ESPN show his use of derogatory language went well beyond that.

A league source confirms the accuracy of the emails and said they were sent to the Raiders last week. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the league hasn't made the emails public.

Raiders owner Mark Davis said last week that the email about Smith was "disturbing and not what the Raiders stand for" and said the team was reviewing the additional emails. Davis issued a statement Monday saying only that he accepted Gruden's resignation.

The Times reported that Gruden used a gay slur to insult Goodell and said he was "clueless" and "anti-football." He also said Goodell shouldn't have pressured the Rams to draft "queers," a reference to Michael Sam, who was the first openly gay player drafted by an NFL team.

Raiders defensive end Carl Nassib came out as gay in June and is the first openly gay player to appear in an NFL game.

In a 2017 email, the Times said Gruden responded to a sexist meme of a female official by saying: "Nice job roger."

The paper also said Gruden criticized Goodell and the NFL league for trying to reduce concussions, and said that Eric Reid, a player who had demonstrated during the playing of the national anthem, should be fired.

The newspaper said Gruden also mocked an article in 2017 about players calling on Goodell to support their efforts promoting racial equality and criminal justice reform.

"He needs to hide in his concussion protocol tent," Gruden wrote.

Gruden and Allen have a long relationship, having worked together in Oakland and Tampa Bay. The emails between the two and other men included photos of women wearing only bikini bottoms, including one photo of two Washington team cheerleaders.

Gruden also criticized President Barack Obama during his re-election campaign in 2012, and then-vice president Joe Biden.

Smith said earlier Monday that he appreciates that Gruden reached out to him following the initial report, but that the email is evidence that the fight against racism is ongoing.

"But make no mistake, the news is not about what is said in our private conversation, but what else is said by people who never thought they would be exposed and how they are going to be held to account," Smith wrote in a Twitter thread.

Gruden's comments to Allen about Smith came during the 2011 lockout of the players by the NFL. Gruden told the Wall Street Journal he was angry about the lockout during labor negotiations and he didn't trust the direction the union was taking.

"Dumboriss Smith has lips the size of michellin tires," Gruden wrote in the email reviewed by the newspaper.

Davis had been trying to hire Gruden almost since he took charge following the death of his father, Al, in 2011. He finally got his prize in 2018 when Gruden agreed to leave ESPN and return to the sideline with a 10-year contract. Gruden had revived the Raiders in his first stint in 1998-2001 and then beat them in the Super Bowl the following season after he was traded to Tampa Bay for a boatload of draft picks.

Gruden has a 117-112 career record but hasn't won a playoff game since the Super Bowl victory over the Raiders in the 2002 season.

His second tenure with the team started with a pep rally introductory news conference but provided few reasons for celebration as Gruden had a 22-31 record, failing to reach a winning record or make the playoffs.

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He traded away stars Khalil Mack and Amari Cooper in his first season to start a rebuild, which has showed only minor progress. After the Raiders went 4-12 in his first season, Gruden tried to make a push in 2019 in the team's final season in Oakland by spending heavily in free agency and trading for star receiver Antonio Brown. But Brown was cut before the season after a series of run-ins with management, and the Raiders went 7-9.

They improved to 8-8 last season and got off to a promising 3-0 start this year before losing the past two games.

Bisaccia has been a special teams coordinator in the NFL for 19 seasons with the Raiders, Chargers, Dallas and Tampa Bay. He has no head coaching experience but his elevation will allow other assistants such as defensive coordinator Gus Bradley to stay in their current roles.

AP Pro Football Writer Barry Wilner contributed to this report

More AP NFL coverage: <https://apnews.com/hub/NFL> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](https://twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## Matt Amodio's history-making run on TV's 'Jeopardy!' ends

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — All good things must come to an end and Matt Amodio's historic run on "Jeopardy!" did just that on Monday's show, leaving the Yale doctoral student with 38 wins and more than \$1.5 million in prize money.

Amodio failed to answer the Final Jeopardy! clue correctly and came third on Monday's show, his streak cut short by new champion Jonathan Fisher, an actor originally from Coral Gables, Florida.

Amodio finished No. 2 on the all-time consecutive wins list behind only Ken Jennings with 74 wins. He won a total of \$1,518,601, which puts him third on the all-time non-tournament cash winnings list behind James Holzhauer (\$2,462,216) and Jennings (\$2,520,700).

"I know going into every bar trivia game that I play that I'm going to come in with a little intimidation factor. But also, I just like the badge that it represents. As somebody who prioritizes knowledge and knowing things, this is really a good one to have following me everywhere," Amodio, a fifth-year computer science Ph.D student at Yale University, said in a statement.

He became known for starting all of his questions with "What's..." instead of using suitable alternatives such as "Who is..." an unorthodox approach that made some longtime viewers groan.

But it was within the quiz show's rules and, as Amodio explained, helped him limit any "unnecessary moving parts" that might undermine his effectiveness.

What became known as the "Amodio Rodeo" proved a welcome distraction for the quiz show and its producer Sony Pictures Television, which saw its effort to replace its late and beloved host Alex Trebek founder.

Sony turned to guest hosts Mayim Bialik and Jennings after its original pick for the job, "Jeopardy!" executive producer Mike Richards, exited the show following the disclosure of his past disparaging podcasts remarks about women and others.

Sony has said it was resuming its search for a permanent host.

## Indigenous Peoples Day marked with celebrations, protests

By FELICIA FONSECA Associated Press

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — Indigenous people across the United States marked Monday with celebrations of their heritage, education campaigns and a push for the Biden administration to make good on its word.

The federal holiday created decades ago to recognize Christopher Columbus' sighting in 1492 of what came to be known as the Americas increasingly has been rebranded as Indigenous Peoples Day.

For Michaela Pavlat, cultural interpreter at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, the day is one of celebration, reflection and recognition that Indigenous communities are fighting for land

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rights, for the U.S. government to uphold treaties, and for visibility and understanding.

"As long as you're on Native land and stolen land, it's Indigenous Peoples Day," said Pavlat, who is Sault Ste. Marie Band of Chippewa Indians (Anishinaabe). "We have a lot of movement and a lot of issues we're facing in our communities, and you can have that conversation every day."

## EVENTS THIS YEAR

More than a dozen protesters linked arms and sat along the White House fence line Monday to call on the Biden administration to do more to combat climate change and ban fossil fuels. Others cheered and chanted in support from across the street as police blocked off the area with yellow tape and arrested the seated protesters.

The Andrew Jackson statue at the center of Lafayette Park was defaced with the words "Expect Us" — part of a rallying cry used by Indigenous people who have been fighting against fossil fuel pipelines. Jackson, a slave-owning president, forced Cherokees and many other Native Americans on deadly marches out of their southern homelands.

"Indigenous people have been on the front lines of protecting the land, the people, and it's time for the government and these huge systems to do more," said Angel Charley, of Laguna Pueblo in New Mexico, who was among the protesters.

Indigenous groups also planned protests in Santa Fe and Albuquerque, New Mexico.

At the Boston Marathon, race organizers honored 1936 and '39 winner Ellison "Tarzan" Brown and three-time runner-up Patti Catalano Dillon, a member of the Mi'kmaq tribe. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, a member of Laguna Pueblo, said she ran for missing and slain Indigenous people and their families, the victims of the boarding school era and the "promise that our voices are being heard and will have a part in an equitable and just future in this new era."

Others gathered for prayers, dances and other commemorations in cities across the U.S.

On social media, people posted educational resources that included maps of Indigenous land, ways to support Indigenous communities, and recommendations for television shows and films that prominently feature Indigenous people, like "Reservation Dogs."

## WHAT'S NEW?

President Joe Biden last week issued the first presidential proclamation of Indigenous Peoples Day, the most significant boost yet to efforts to refocus Columbus Day in recognition of the Italian explorer's brutal treatment of people who already occupied what came to be known as the Americas.

About 20 states observe Indigenous Peoples Day by law, through proclamation or other action, along with cities and universities across the country.

Oregon recognized Indigenous Peoples Day on Monday, months after its Legislature overwhelmingly approved a bill in support of the change from Columbus Day.

In Wisconsin, Gov. Tony Evers joined the leaders from tribes in the state and issued a formal apology for Wisconsin's role in Native American boarding schools era.

## NOT JUST A CELEBRATION

The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian on Monday hosted a virtual conversation about mixed Black and Indigenous identity and how the struggles of one side sometimes get overshadowed by the other.

Joy SpearChief-Morris pointed to the Civil Rights movement and the Red Power movement, which included the Native American occupation of Alcatraz Island off the coast of San Francisco more than 50 years ago.

"Both groups supported each other, but we don't really talk about the Red Power movement," said SpearChief-Morris, who is African American and Kainai Nation (Blood Tribe) from Canada.

The panelists noted that Afro-Indigenous identity goes back generations.

"Everything that we do is to bring about Black liberation and Indigenous sovereignty on this land and to dismantle white supremacy and settler colonialism," said Amber Starks, who is African American and a citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. "And I'd like to add racial capitalism"

Kyle Mays, an assistant professor at the University of California-Los Angeles who is Black and Saginaw

Anishinaabe, acknowledged the work isn't easy.

While Indigenous Peoples Day is "cool," he said, "I don't want a day for celebration. I want justice."

\_\_\_ Associated Press writers Zeke Miller in Washington, Jimmy Golen in Washington and Scott Bauer in Madison, Wisconsin, contributed to this story. Fonseca is a member of the AP's Race and Ethnicity team. Follow her on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/FonsecaAP>

## Southwest cancels hundreds more flights; passengers stranded

By DAVID KOENIG AP Airlines Writer

DALLAS (AP) — Southwest Airlines canceled more than 350 flights Monday following a weekend of major disruptions that it blamed on bad weather and air traffic control issues. The pilots union accused the company of a botched response to what it said would have been a minor challenge for other airlines.

The third straight day of canceled and delayed flights left passengers stranded and steaming from California to the East Coast.

"You can't really relax when you're just sitting there waiting for your next flight to be canceled," said Vanessa Wheeler, who was biding her time at the San Jose, California, airport. She said Southwest canceled six consecutive flights on her over three days before she eventually decided to book a flight home to Las Vegas with Delta Air Lines. She vowed to never fly Southwest again.

Monday's cancellations amounted to 10% of Southwest's schedule, and at least 1,400 other flights, or roughly 40%, were delayed, according to the FlightAware tracking service. Shares of Southwest Airlines Co. fell 4.2%.

The widespread disruptions began shortly after the Southwest Airlines Pilots Association, representing 9,000 pilots, asked a federal court on Friday to block the airline's order that all employees get vaccinated. The union argued that Southwest must negotiate over the issue because it could involve sick leave or disability if pilots have a reaction to the vaccine.

"We are not anti-vaccination at all, but our pilots are extremely worried about how their medicals are going to be handled" if they are unable to fly, union president Casey Murray told The Associated Press. Murray said pilots had not staged a sickout because of the vaccine mandate.

He instead blamed the chaos of the past few days on Southwest's operation, which he said has become "brittle" and "cracks under the slightest pressure." He said the airline uses antiquated crew-scheduling technology that leads to cascading disruptions when flights are canceled in one part of its network.

Unions at both Southwest and American have also argued that management has been too slow to bring pilots back from leaves of absence that the airlines persuaded them to take during the pandemic, leaving them short-handed.

In a video for employees, Southwest Chief Operating Officer Mike Van de Ven said that despite "a very aggressive hiring plan ... we are still not where we want to be with staffing," especially pilots.

The staffing shortage is leading to fewer flights. After massive delays this summer, Southwest trimmed its fall schedule, which Van de Ven said had helped reduce delays in the past month. He said Southwest has already made significant cuts in its original schedules for November and December, "and if we think we need to do more, we will."

There is a risk to fewer flights, however: It leaves Southwest with fewer options to accommodate stranded passengers.

Meanwhile, the Federal Aviation Administration acknowledged delays in part of Florida on Friday but pushed back against Southwest's air-traffic control explanation. The FAA said Sunday that "some airlines" were experiencing problems because of planes and crews being out of position. Southwest was the only airline to report such a large percentage of canceled and delayed flights over the weekend.

Southwest spokeswoman Brandy King said there was no evidence that would indicate the disruptions were caused by any sort of employee protest over vaccinations.

Some passengers were frustrated not just by flight delays but also the lack of a clear reason for them.

"My concern is we had no explanation really that was, I feel, very legitimate or believable," said Brian

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Gesch of Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, who was traveling through Reagan Washington National Airport with his wife. He doubted that weather and air traffic controllers were the real issue. "So we are frustrated and missing a day of work."

Others were just concerned about getting home — any way they could.

Kent Modellmog ended up driving 700 miles (1,127 kilometers) with his 14-year-old son from Phoenix to Dublin, California, after Southwest canceled their flight and he couldn't find a flight on a competing airline that wasn't exorbitantly priced. "I wasn't going to drop \$3,000 to get back," Modellmog said.

The sales director for a consulting company said he flies Southwest dozens of times a year but had "never been in a situation like that."

Savanthi Syth, an airlines analyst for Raymond James, said the weekend problems will increase Southwest's costs and worsen the company's strained relations with unions.

Southwest has struggled all summer with high numbers of delayed and canceled flights. In August, it announced it was trimming its September schedule by 27 flights a day, or less than 1%, and 162 flights a day, or 4.5% of the schedule, from early October through Nov. 5.

The White House has pushed airlines to adopt vaccine mandates because they are federal contractors — they get paid by the Defense Department to operate flights, including those that carried Afghanistan refugees to the U.S. this summer.

United Airlines was the first major U.S. carrier to announce a vaccination requirement. Southwest had remained silent even after President Joe Biden announced his order for federal contractors and large employers. Finally last week, Southwest told employees they must be fully vaccinated by Dec. 8 to keep their jobs. Workers can ask to skip the shots for medical or religious reasons.

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Associated Press reporters Dan Huff in Washington, D.C., and R.J. Rico in Atlanta contributed to this report.

## California's 'Surf City USA' beach reopens after oil spill

By AMY TAXIN Associated Press

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif. (AP) — Surfers and swimmers returned to the waves Monday at a popular Southern California beach that was shut for more than a week after an undersea pipeline leaked crude oil into the ocean.

The reopening of Huntington Beach — dubbed "Surf City USA" — came far sooner than many expected after a putrid smell blanketed the coast and blobs of crude began washing ashore.

City and state park officials decided to reopen the shoreline in Huntington Beach after water quality tests revealed no detectable levels of oil-associated toxins in the ocean. That was good enough for Andrew Boyack, a 54-year-old commercial photographer, who usually surfs the waves in his hometown three or four times a week but has stayed out since the spill.

"There's lots of guys out, so I figure it's probably alright, and I guess they tested it," Boyack said, while rinsing off at an outdoor beach shower.

"It's exercise. It's like, you know, if somebody was a jogger or something. We surf every morning."

This surf-loving city of 200,000 people and nearby coastal communities have been reeling from the spill. The ocean has been closed, a popular air show canceled, fisheries shuttered and local shops have been walloped. The environmental impact on sensitive wetland habitats has been less severe than initially feared, but advocates say they are concerned about the long-term effects of the spill.

The shoreline in nearby Newport Beach also was reopened Monday after water quality testing revealed no unhealthful levels of oil-related toxins, said John Pope, a city spokesman.

Coast Guard officials said a pipeline owned by Houston-based Amplify Energy that shuttles crude from offshore platforms to the coast leaked at least about 25,000 gallons (95,000 liters) and no more than 132,000 gallons (500,000 liters) of crude oil into the ocean.

The spill was confirmed on Oct. 2, a day after residents reported a petroleum smell in the area. Officials

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have said the cause remains under investigation, and they believe the pipeline was likely damaged by a ship's anchor several months to a year before it ruptured.

On an overcast Monday, a handful of people played volleyball and residents walked, jogged and biked on a path along the beach. Surfers in wetsuits jogged to the shore carrying their boards, eager to return to the waves, some after being shooed away over the weekend by lifeguards on jet skis.

Still, there were far fewer people in the ocean than usual, said Sean Rinehart, a 49-year-old surf instructor and chef from Huntington Beach. Rinehart headed out to surf but said he decided not to go in after the smell of dead fish near the pier gave him pause. The last time he surfed was Oct. 2, when he said he wound up in an oil slick. His skin, even now, is still itching, he said.

"I want to go in, but no way," he said.

In Huntington Beach, shops selling everything from bikinis to stars-and-stripes boogie boards to sand toys and fishing gear have taken an economic hit since the spill. Shop owners hope business will bounce back quickly, but they fear it could take longer.

The sand looked clear near the pier, and there was no smell of oil. Workers in hazmat suits tasked with removing oily blobs continued to comb the sand.

Matt Harty, a 61-year-old retired construction supervisor from the nearby community of Seal Beach, said he was glad to return to the waves in Huntington Beach with other early morning surfers. He said he has seen oil spills before and this one didn't seem that bad, and in fact, the beach looks great.

"This is the cleanest I've seen the beach in years, right, because there's been nobody here for a week," Harty said. "I think they cleaned it up really well."

## Report concludes UK waited too long for virus lockdown

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The British government waited too long to impose a lockdown in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, missing a chance to contain the disease and leading to thousands of unnecessary deaths, a parliamentary report concluded Tuesday.

The deadly delay resulted from ministers' failure to question the recommendations of scientific advisers, resulting in a dangerous level of "groupthink" that caused them to dismiss the more aggressive strategies adopted in East and Southeast Asia, according to the joint report from the House of Commons' science and health committees. It was only when Britain's National Health Service risked being overwhelmed by rapidly rising infections that Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative government finally ordered a lockdown.

"There was a desire to avoid a lockdown because of the immense harm it would entail to the economy, normal health services and society," the report said. "In the absence of other strategies such as rigorous case isolation, a meaningful test-and-trace operation, and robust border controls, a full lockdown was inevitable and should have come sooner."

The U.K. parliamentary report comes amid frustration with the timetable for a formal public inquiry into the government's response to COVID-19, which Johnson says will start next spring.

Lawmakers said their inquiry was designed to uncover why Britain performed "significantly worse" than many other countries during the early days of the pandemic so that the U.K. could improve its response to the ongoing threat from COVID-19 and prepare for future threats.

The 150-page report is based on testimony from 50 witnesses, including former Health Secretary Matt Hancock and former government insider Dominic Cummings. It was unanimously approved by 22 lawmakers from the three largest parties in Parliament: the governing Conservatives and the opposition Labour Party and the Scottish National Party.

The committees praised the government's early focus on vaccines as the ultimate way out of the pandemic and its decision to invest in vaccine development. These decisions led to Britain's successful inoculation program, which has seen almost 80% of people 12 and over now fully vaccinated.

"Millions of lives will ultimately be saved as a result of the global vaccine effort in which the U.K. has

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played a leading part," the committees said.

But they also criticized the government's test-and-trace program, saying its slow, uncertain and often chaotic performance hampered Britain's response to the pandemic.

The government's strategy during the first three months of the crisis reflected official scientific advice that widespread infection was inevitable given that testing capacity was limited; that there was no immediate prospect for a vaccine; and the belief that the public wouldn't accept a lengthy lockdown, the report said. As a result, the government sought merely to manage the spread of the virus, instead of trying to stop it altogether.

The report described this as a "serious early error" that the U.K. shared with many countries in Europe and North America.

"Accountability in a democracy depends on elected decision-makers not just taking advice, but examining, questioning and challenging it before making their own decisions," the committees said. "Although it was a rapidly changing situation, given the large number of deaths predicted, it was surprising the initially fatalistic assumptions about the impossibility of suppressing the virus were not challenged until it became clear the NHS would be overwhelmed."

Trish Greenhalgh, a professor of primary care health services at the University of Oxford, said the report "hints at a less-than-healthy" relationship between government and scientific bodies. With COVID-19 still killing hundreds of people every week in Britain, advisory committees continue to debate exactly what evidence is "sufficiently definitive" to be considered certain, she said.

"Uncertainty is a defining feature of crises...", Greenhalgh said. "Dare we replace 'following the science' with 'deliberating on what best to do when the problem is urgent but certainty eludes us'? This report suggests that unless we wish to continue to repeat the mistakes of the recent past, we must."

Even senior officials like Cummings and Hancock told the committees they were reluctant to push back against scientific consensus.

Hancock said as early as Jan. 28, 2020, he found it difficult to push for widespread testing of people who didn't show symptoms of COVID-19 because scientific advisers said it wouldn't be useful.

"I was in a situation of not having hard evidence that a global scientific consensus of decades was wrong but having an instinct that it was," he testified. "I bitterly regret that I did not overrule that scientific advice."

Follow all AP stories on the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-pandemic>.

## Changed race, familiar result: Kenyans sweep Boston Marathon

By JIMMY GOLEN AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — With fall foliage replacing the blooming daffodils and mylar blankets sharing space with masks, the pandemic-delayed Boston Marathon returned Monday after a 30-month absence for a smaller, socially distanced race that ended in a very familiar way.

Benson Kipruto and Diana Kipyogei completed a Kenyan sweep — the eighth since 2000 at the world's oldest and most prestigious 26.2-miler, which moved from its traditional spring date for the first time in its 125-year history because of the coronavirus outbreak.

"We were injured, wounded. Now is the comeback story," said 2014 winner Meb Keflezighi, one of the past champions sharing grand marshal duties with hospital employees who worked through the pandemic. "Hopefully this is an example that post-pandemic, life is getting back to normal."

Although organizers put runners through COVID-19 protocols and asked spectators to keep their distance, there were still sizable crowds in spots from Hopkinton to Boston after an early drizzle cleared and temperatures rose into the 60s.

Participants in the field of 18,000 — down from more than 30,000 in pre-pandemic days — needed to test negative for the coronavirus or prove they were vaccinated before picking up their bib numbers. Masks were required indoors in Boston and on the buses out to the start; they also were handed out along with the finishers' medals and fruit on Boylston Street.

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The race also began earlier and with a rolling send-off to avoid the usual crowding in the starting corals and on the course.

None of the changes proved a problem for the Kenyans.

"There's not a lot different on the course," Kipruto said.

A winner in Prague and Athens who finished 10th in Boston in 2019, Kipruto broke away from the lead pack as it turned onto Beacon Street with about three miles to go and broke the tape in 2 hours, 9 minutes, 51 seconds. Lemi Berhanu, who won the race in 2016, was second, 46 seconds back; Colin Bennie of Princeton, Massachusetts, was the top American, in seventh.

Kipyogei claimed the women's title, a gilded olive wreath and the \$150,000 first prize, finishing in 2:24:45 in her major marathon debut. Edna Kipligat, the 2017 winner, was second, 23 seconds behind.

Marcel Hug won the men's wheelchair race despite making a wrong turn in the final mile, finishing the slightly detoured route just seven seconds off his course record in 1:08:11. Manuela Schär, also from Switzerland, won the women's wheelchair race in 1:35:21.

Hug, who has raced Boston eight times and has five victories here, cost himself a \$50,000 course record bonus when he missed the second-to-last turn, following the lead vehicle instead of turning from Commonwealth Avenue onto Hereford Street.

"At the moment I'm really upset," said Hug, who finished second in the Chicago Marathon by 1 second on Sunday. "I hope in an hour, two hours, I'll feel more happy."

Kipruto waited out an early breakaway by CJ Albertson, who led by as many as two minutes at the halfway point but slowed in the Newton Hills and fell behind near Boston College. Albertson, who is the world record-holder in the 50K (42.2 miles), finished 10th.

A Fresno, California, native, Albertson said he tried to keep things interesting during the pandemic by binging on Peloton classes; he finished atop the leaderboard 57 times and also set a record by running a 2:09 marathon on the treadmill.

"I was just bored and unmotivated, trying to find something to do. I just made stuff up," he said. "Having a race like Boston ... actually racing and competing with the world's best in one of the best atmospheres there is to run in — second to Fresno — nothing else compares. This was an amazing day."

Recreational runners streamed across the Back Bay finish line into the afternoon, turning to the sidewalks and pumping their arms to prompt the thinner crowds alongside the course to cheer.

On Boylston Street, spectators lined up shoulder to shoulder, with few wearing masks; Boston requires them indoors. Some said they weren't concerned about COVID-19 since they were vaccinated and outside.

A rolling start and shrunken field allowed for social distancing on the course, as organizers tried to manage a changing pandemic that forced them to cancel the race last year for the first time since a group of Bostonians returned from the 1896 Athens Olympics and decided to stage a marathon of their own.

Since then, the race has persisted through World Wars and even the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic. But it was first postponed, then canceled last year, then postponed from the spring in 2021.

It's the first time the event hasn't been held in April as part of the Patriots' Day holiday that commemorates the start of the Revolutionary War. To recognize Indigenous Peoples Day, race organizers honored 1936 and '39 winner Ellison "Tarzan" Brown and three-time runner-up Patti Catalano Dillon, a member of the Mi'kmaq tribe.

Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, the first Native American cabinet member, ran the race to commemorate the holiday, with Boston Athletic Association President Tom Grilk personally awarding her finishing medal after she crossed in 4:58:54.

Other celebrities: Hamilton co-star Brian d'Arcy James, who finished in 3:30:22, and race car driver Danica Patrick, who ran a time of 4:01:21. Ben Beach completed his 54th consecutive Boston Marathon — the longest active streak — finishing in 5:47:27.

Police were visible along the course as authorities vowed to remain vigilant eight years after the bombings that killed three spectators and maimed hundreds of others on Boylston Street near the Back Bay finish line.

A light rain greeted participants at the Hopkinton Green, where about 30 uniformed members of the

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Massachusetts National Guard were the first to leave, at 6 a.m. The men's and women's wheelchair racers — some of whom completed the 26.2-mile (42.2 km) distance in Chicago a day earlier — left shortly after 8 a.m., followed by the men's and women's professional fields.

"We took things for granted before COVID-19. It's great to get back to the community and it puts things in perspective," said National Guard Capt. Greg Davis, 39, who was walking with the military group for the fourth time. "This is a historic race, but today is a historic day."

Associated Press writers Jennifer McDermott in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, and Collin Binkley in Boston contributed to this report.

## 3 US-based economists win Nobel for research on wages, jobs

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER, DAVID MCHUGH and DAVID KEYTON Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — A U.S.-based economist won the Nobel prize in economics Monday for pioneering research that transformed widely held ideas about the labor force, showing how an increase in the minimum wage doesn't hinder hiring and immigrants don't lower pay for native-born workers. Two others shared the award for developing ways to study these types of societal issues.

Canadian-born David Card of the University of California, Berkeley, was awarded half of the prize for his research on how the minimum wage, immigration and education affect the labor market.

The other half was shared by Joshua Angrist of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Dutch-born Guido Imbens of Stanford University for their framework for studying issues that can't rely on traditional scientific methods.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said the three "completely reshaped empirical work in the economic sciences."

Together, they helped rapidly expand the use of "natural experiments," or studies based on observing real-world data. Such research made economics more applicable to everyday life, provided policymakers with actual evidence on the outcomes of policies, and in time spawned a more popular approach to economics epitomized by the blockbuster bestseller "Freakonomics," by Stephen Dubner and Steven Levitt.

In a study published in 1993, Card looked at what happened to jobs at Burger King, KFC, Wendy's and Roy Rogers when New Jersey raised its minimum wage from \$4.25 to \$5.05, using restaurants in bordering eastern Pennsylvania as the control — or comparison — group. Contrary to previous studies, he and his late research partner Alan Krueger found that an increase in the minimum wage had no effect on the number of employees.

Card and Krueger's research fundamentally altered economists' views of such policies. As noted by the Economist magazine, in 1992 a survey of the American Economic Association's members found that 79% agreed that a minimum wage law increased unemployment among younger and lower-skilled workers. Those views were largely based on traditional economic notions of supply and demand: If you raise the price of something, you get less of it.

By 2000, however, just 46% of the AEA's members said minimum wage laws increase unemployment, largely because of Card and Krueger.

Their findings sparked interest in further research into why a higher minimum wouldn't reduce employment. One conclusion was that companies are able to pass on the cost of higher wages to customers by raising prices. In other cases, if a company is a major employer in a particular area, it may be able to keep wages particularly low, so that it could afford to pay a higher minimum, when required to do so, without cutting jobs. The higher pay would also attract more applicants, boosting labor supply.

Their paper "has shaken up the field at a very fundamental level," said Arindrajit Dube, an economics professor at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. "And so for that reason, and all the following research that their work ignited, this is a richly deserved award."

Krueger would almost certainly have shared in the award, Dube said, but the economics Nobel isn't given posthumously. Krueger, Imbens said, co-authored papers with all three winners.

Krueger, who died in 2019 at age 58, taught at Princeton for three decades and was chief Labor Depart-

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ment economist under President Bill Clinton. He also was Obama's chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers.

Card and Krueger's paper made a huge impact on other economists. Lisa Cook, an economics professor at Michigan State University, said their paper was "a revelation" that helped crystallize her thinking for her research on racial violence in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and how it inhibited patent filings by Black Americans.

Card's research also found that an influx of immigrants into a city doesn't cost native workers jobs or lower their earnings, though earlier immigrants can be negatively affected.

Card studied the labor market in Miami in the wake of Cuba's sudden decision to let people emigrate in 1980, leading 125,000 people to leave in what became known as the Mariel Boatlift. It resulted in a 7% increase in the city's workforce. By comparing the evolution of wages and employment in four other cities, Card discovered no negative effects for Miami residents with low levels of education. Follow-up work showed that increased immigration can have a positive impact on income for people born in the country.

Angrist and Imbens won their half of the award for working out the methodological issues that allow economists to draw solid conclusions about cause and effect even where they cannot carry out studies according to strict scientific methods.

Card's work on the minimum wage is one of the best-known natural experiments in economics. The problem with such experiments is that it can be difficult to isolate cause and effect. For example, if you want to figure out whether an extra year of education will increase a person's income, you cannot simply compare the incomes of adults with one more year of schooling to those without.

That's because there are many other factors that might determine whether those who got an extra year of schooling are able to make more money. Perhaps they are harder workers or more diligent and would have done better than those without the extra year even if they did not stay in school. These kinds of issues cause economists and other social science researchers to say "correlation doesn't prove causation."

Imbens and Angrist, however, figured out how to isolate the effects of things like an extra year of school. Their methods enabled researchers to draw clearer conclusions about cause and effect, even if they are unable to control who gets things like extra education, the way scientists in a lab can control their experiments.

Imbens, in one paper, used a survey of lottery winners to evaluate the impact of a government-provided basic income, which has been proposed by left-leaning politicians in the U.S. and Europe. He found that a prize of \$15,000 a year did not have much effect on a person's likelihood to work.

Card said he thought the voice message that came in at 2 a.m. from someone from Sweden was a prank until he saw the number on his phone really was from Sweden.

He said he and his co-author Krueger faced disbelief from other economists about their findings. "At the time, the conclusions were somewhat controversial. Quite a few economists were skeptical of our results," he said.

Imbens' wife, Susan Athey, is also an economist and president-elect of the AEA, and Imbens said they sometimes argue about economics in front of their three children.

"This means, I hope, they'll learn that they need to listen to me a little bit more," he said. "I'm afraid it probably won't work out that way."

At home in Brookline, Massachusetts, Angrist said: "I can hardly believe it. It's only been a few hours and I am still trying to absorb it."

He also missed the call from Nobel officials and awoke to a torrent of texts from friends. Fortunately, he said, he knew enough other Nobel Laureates that he got a callback number from them.

As a youth, Angrist dropped out of a master's program in economics at Hebrew University in Israel, although he did meet his future wife, Mira, there. He has dual U.S. and Israeli citizenship.

"I did have sort of a winding road," he said. "I wasn't a precocious high school student."

The award comes with a gold medal and 10 million Swedish kronor (over \$1.14 million).

Unlike the other Nobel prizes, the economics award wasn't established in the will of Alfred Nobel but

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by the Swedish central bank in his memory in 1968, with the first winner selected a year later. It is the last prize announced each year.

Rugaber reported from Washington and McHugh reported from Frankfurt, Germany.

Read more about Nobel Prizes past and present by The Associated Press at <https://www.apnews.com/NobelPrizes>

## More than 130 countries reach deal on corporate minimum tax

By DAVID McHUGH and DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — More than 130 countries have agreed on sweeping changes to how big global companies are taxed, including a 15% minimum corporate rate designed to deter multinationals from stashing profits in low-tax countries.

The deal announced Friday is an attempt to address the ways globalization and digitalization have changed the world economy. It would allow countries to tax some of the earnings of companies located elsewhere that make money through online retailing, web advertising and other activities.

U.S. President Joe Biden has been one of the driving forces behind the agreement as governments around the world seek to boost revenue following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The agreement among 136 countries representing 90% of the global economy was announced by the Paris-based Organization for Cooperation and Economic Development, which hosted the talks that led to it. The OECD said that the minimum tax would reap some \$150 billion for governments.

"Today's agreement represents a once-in-a-generation accomplishment for economic diplomacy," U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said in a statement. She said it would end a "race to the bottom" in which countries outbid each other with lower tax rates.

"Rather than competing on our ability to offer low corporate rates," she said, "America will now compete on the skills of our workers and our capacity to innovate, which is a race we can win."

The deal faces several hurdles before it can take effect. U.S. approval of related tax legislation proposed by Biden will be key, especially since the U.S. is home to many of the biggest multinational companies. A rejection by Congress would cast uncertainty over the entire project.

The big U.S. tech companies like Google and Amazon have supported the OECD negotiations. One reason is that countries would agree to withdraw individual digital services taxes they have imposed on them in return for the right to tax a part of their earnings under the global scheme.

That means the companies would deal with just the one international tax regime, not a multitude of different ones depending on the country.

"This accord opens the way to a true tax revolution for the 21st century," said French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire. "Finally the digital giants will pay their just share in taxes in the countries — including France — where they produce."

On Thursday, Ireland announced that it would join the agreement, ditching a low-tax policy that has led companies like Google and Facebook to base their European operations there.

Although the Irish agreement was a step forward for the deal, developing countries have raised objections and Nigeria, Kenya, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have indicated they will not sign up.

Anti-poverty and tax fairness advocates have said the bulk of new revenue would go to wealthier countries and offer less to developing countries that are more dependent on corporate taxes. The G-24 group of developing countries said that without a bigger share of revenue from reallocated profits, the deal would be "sub-optimal" and "not sustainable even in the short run."

The deal will be taken up by the Group of 20 finance ministers next week, and then by G-20 leaders for final approval at a summit in Rome at the end of October.

Countries would sign up to a diplomatic agreement to implement the tax on companies that have no physical presence in a country but earn profits there, such as through digital services. That provision

would affect around 100 global firms.

The second part of the deal, the global minimum of at least 15%, would apply to companies with more than 750 million euros (\$864 million) in revenue and be passed into domestic law by countries according to model rules developed at the OECD. A top-up provision would mean tax avoided overseas would have to be paid at home. So long as at least the major headquarters countries implement the minimum tax, the deal would have most of its desired effect.

Kirka reported from London. This story was first published on Oct. 8, 2021. It was updated on Oct. 11, 2021 to correct the amount of revenue required for the tax to apply to companies. It should be 750 million euros (\$864 million), not 750 billion euros (\$864 billion.)

## **Tornadoes cause damage in Oklahoma; storms rock central US**

COWETA, Okla. (AP) — Severe storms brought suspected tornadoes and baseball-sized hail to parts of Oklahoma, but there were no reports Monday of deaths or injuries.

The severe weather system that hit Oklahoma late Sunday also brought heavy rain, lightning and wind to parts of Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri and Texas, and more stormy weather is predicted for later this week in parts of the central U.S.

Severe weather is not unusual in the Southern Plains in October, said Chuck Hodges, senior meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Tulsa. But Sunday's storm "was kind of more of a spring setup," he said.

"We had unusually high moisture and a very, very strong weather system that came through," he said.

Tornado warnings and reports of damage popped up across Oklahoma beginning Sunday afternoon, and survey crews with the weather service will head out Monday to determine how many tornadoes struck, Hodges said.

A possible tornado hit the Tulsa suburb of Coweta late Sunday causing significant damage to a high school, homes and a gas station, news outlets reported, and Coweta Public Schools classes were canceled Monday.

Building damage was also reported in Anadarko, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) southwest of Oklahoma City.

Earlier, baseball-sized hail shattered windows and dented cars in Norman, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) south of Oklahoma City.

The National Weather Service confirmed two small tornadoes touched down in rural areas of southwestern Missouri — an EF-1 twister in Newton County around 1 a.m. and an EF-0 in Jasper County around 4:45 a.m. KYTV-TV reported that a mobile home, a couple of barns and an irrigation system were damaged, but no one was hurt.

Lightning that appeared to be from the same line of storms delayed an NFL game between the Buffalo Bills and the Chiefs in Kansas City, Missouri, for about an hour Sunday night.

On Monday, severe storms were possible in parts of Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan while another round of storms is predicted Tuesday in Kansas and Oklahoma, the Storm Prediction Center said.

## **Moderna has no plans to share its COVID-19 vaccine recipe**

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Moderna has no plans to share the recipe for its COVID-19 vaccine because executives have concluded that scaling up the company's own production is the best way to increase the global supply, the company's chairman said Monday.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Nour Afeyan also reiterated a pledge Moderna made a year ago not to enforce patent infringement on anyone else making a coronavirus vaccine during the pandemic.

"We didn't have to do that," Afeyan said. "We think that was the right, responsible thing to do." He added: "We want that to be helping the world."

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The United Nations health agency has pressed Moderna to share its vaccine formula. Afeyan said the company analyzed whether it would be better to share the messenger RNA technology and determined that it could expand production and deliver billions of additional doses in 2022.

"Within the next six to nine months, the most reliable way to make high-quality vaccines and in an efficient way is going to be if we make them," Afeyan said. Asked about appeals from the World Health Organization and others, he contended that such pleas assumed "that we couldn't get enough capacity, but in fact we know we can."

Moderna "went from having zero production to having 1 billion doses in less than a year," Afeyan said, referring to the Massachusetts-based company's sprint to develop the vaccine and produce it in large quantities. "And we think we will be able to go from 1 to 3 billion" in 2022.

"We think we are doing everything we can to help this pandemic," Afeyan added, citing the company's increasing output and its pledge on patent infringement.

He noted that \$2.5 billion (about 2.1 billion euros) and 10 years were spent in developing the platform that makes Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine.

"Others joined the hunt when COVID-19 came along, and we're glad to see that the capacity therefore has been increased considerably beyond what Moderna would have been able to do" by itself, Afeyan said.

Asked how successful he thought others might be if they started from scratch using Moderna patents, he declined to speculate. But "it's hard for me to imagine that they would be able to get any meaningful scale in a short time frame at the quality we would be able to do as a certainty" for 2022.

Asked about recent criticism that Moderna has been furnishing its vaccine mainly to wealthy countries while low-income countries clamor for the product, Afeyan said the company supplied a "quite significant" output to poorer nations, mostly through its work with the U.S. government, which contracted early in the pandemic with the company for doses.

Moderna is working with multiple governments "to help them secure supplies for the express purpose of supplying to low-income countries," the executive said.

"There is more supply in the EU and the U.S. government than they will be able to use," said Afeyan, who is also a co-founder of Moderna.

Separately, Moderna made a commitment in May to Covax, the U.N.-backed vaccine program, to arrange for a total of 500 million doses to go to poorer countries. He said probably 40 million doses would begin to ship in the last three months of this year, with the rest shipping next year.

The COVID-19 vaccine is Moderna's only commercial product. The company announced plans last week to open a vaccine plant somewhere in Africa. Afeyan said he hopes a decision will be made soon on an exact location. Still, it could take years to get the plant up and running.

Afeyan spoke on the last full day of a visit to Italy in which he met Pope Francis, who has appealed for universal vaccine access. He also appeared in Venice to promote a humanitarian prize.

Co-founded by Afeyan, the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative aims to "empower modern-day saviors to offer life and hope" to those urgently needing basic humanitarian aid. Through the prize, the organization has awarded \$5 million in grants to more than 30 humanitarian projects to help people recover from war, famine, genocide, human rights violations and other challenges.

## Partial results show pro-Iran groups losing Iraq election

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — An alliance of Iraqi candidates representing Shiite militias supported by neighboring Iran has emerged as the biggest loser in the country's national elections, according to partial results released Monday.

The results, posted online successively, also showed the bloc of Iraq's populist Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr maintaining the most seats in parliament, leading in several of Iraq's 18 provinces, including the capital Baghdad. Al-Sadr, a maverick leader remembered for leading an insurgency against U.S. forces after the 2003 invasion, appeared to have increased his movement's seats in the 329-member parliament

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from 54 in 2018 to more than 70.

With 94% of the ballot boxes counted, none of the competing political blocs appeared on track to win a majority in parliament and consequently name a prime minister. But as the results stand, al-Sadr's bloc will be able to take a leading role in the political horse-trading to find a compromise candidate and set the political agenda for the next four years.

Al-Sadr's candidates beat out Iran's favored candidates from the Fatah Alliance to come out first, according to preliminary results. The Fatah Alliance, led by paramilitary leader Hadi al-Ameri, is comprised of parties and affiliated with the Popular Mobilization Forces, an umbrella group of mostly pro-Iran Shiite militias. The alliance rose to prominence during the war against the Sunni extremist Islamic State group. It includes some of the most hard-line Iran-backed factions, such as the Asaib Ahl al-Haq militia.

It was not immediately clear Monday how many seats the Fatah Alliance lost, from the 48 they got in 2018.

Voter turnout was 41%, a record low in the post-Saddam Hussein era signaling widespread distrust of the country's leaders and the vote for a new parliament. That's down from 44% in the 2018 elections, which was an all-time low.

Still, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres congratulated the Iraqi people "for the way the elections took place." He appealed for calm as the results are announced and for political discussions on the formation of a new government to be carried out in "an environment of peace, of security and of tranquility."

The weekend's election was held months ahead of schedule as a concession to a youth-led popular uprising against corruption and mismanagement. But the vote was marred by widespread apathy and a boycott by many of the same young activists who thronged the streets of Baghdad and Iraq's southern provinces in late 2019, calling for sweeping reforms and new elections.

Tens of thousands of people protested in late 2019 and early 2020, and were met 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 crack-down — as well as a string of targeted assassinations and attempted killings — prompted many protesters to later call for a boycott of the vote.

Many of the young activists who took part in the 2019 protests also raged against Iran's heavy-handed influence in Iraqi politics, including armed militias who rival the state's authority. Many blamed the militias for taking part with security forces in brutally suppressing the protests, possibly playing a role in Fatah's poor showing.

Al-Sadr, a black-turbaned nationalist leader, is also close to Iran, but publicly rejects its political influence.

The election was the sixth held since the fall of Saddam Hussein after the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. Many were skeptical that independent candidates from the protest movement stood a chance against well-entrenched parties and politicians, many of them backed by powerful armed militias.

Preliminary results showed several independent candidates getting into parliament, although the number of seats was not immediately known.

There was a marked reluctance among young Iraqis — the country's largest demographic — to get out and vote. Many expressed views that the system is immune to reform and that the election would only bring back the same faces and parties responsible for the corruption and mismanagement that has plagued Iraq for decades. The problems have left the country with crumbling infrastructure, growing poverty and rising unemployment rates.

Under Iraq's laws, the party that wins the most seats gets to choose the country's next prime minister, but it's unlikely any of the competing coalitions can secure a clear majority. That will require a lengthy process involving backroom negotiations to select a consensus prime minister and agree on a new coalition government.

Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi has played a key role as a mediator in the region's crises, particularly between regional rivals Iran and Saudi Arabia. Many in the region and beyond will be watching to see if he will secure a second term.

The new parliament will also elect Iraq's next president.

Associated Press writer Edith M. Lederer at the United Nations contributed.

## **Fiona Hill, a nobody to Trump and Putin, saw into them both**

By LYNN BERRY and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vladimir Putin paid scant attention to Fiona Hill, a preeminent U.S. expert on Russia, when she was seated next to him at dinners. Putin's people placed her there by design, choosing a "nondescript woman," as she put it, so the Russian president would have no competition for attention.

Fluent in Russian, she often carefully took in the conversations of men who seemed to forget she was there and wrote it all down later, she recalled in an Associated Press interview. "Hey, if I was a guy, you wouldn't be talking like this in front of me," she remembered thinking. "But go ahead. I'm listening."

Hill expected not to be similarly invisible when she later went to work for another world leader, Donald Trump, as his Russia adviser in the White House. She could see inside Putin's head, had co-written an acclaimed book about him, but Trump did not want her counsel, either. He ignored her in meeting after meeting, once mistaking her for a secretary and calling her "darlin'."

Again, though, she was listening. She was reading Trump like she had read Putin.

The result is "There Is Nothing for You Here," her book out last week. Unlike other tell-all authors from the Trump administration, she isn't obsessed with the scandalous. Much like her measured but riveting testimony in Trump's first impeachment, the book offers a more sober, and thus perhaps more alarming, portrait of the 45th president.

If Hill's tone is restrained, it is damning by a thousand cuts. It lays out how a career devoted to understanding and managing the Russian threat crashed into her revelation that the greatest threat to America comes from within.

In fly-on-the-wall detail, she describes a president with a voracious appetite for praise and little to no taste for governing — a man so consumed with what others said about him that U.S. relations with other countries rose or fell according to how flattering foreign leaders were in their remarks.

"From his staff and everyone who came into his orbit, Trump demanded constant attention and adulation," she writes. Particularly in international affairs, "The president's vanity and fragile self-esteem were a point of acute vulnerability."

Hill describes Putin manipulating Trump by offering or withholding compliments, a maneuver she said was more effective with this president than getting dirt and blackmailing him would have been. At their joint news conference in Finland, when Trump appeared to side with Putin over his own intelligence agencies on Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. election, Hill almost lost it.

"I wanted to end the whole thing," she writes. "I contemplated throwing a fit or faking a seizure and hurling myself backward into the row of journalists behind me. But it would only have added to the humiliating spectacle."

Yet in Trump she saw a rare if ultimately wasted talent. He spoke the language of many average people, disdained the same things, operated without a filter, liked the same food and gleefully shredded the tiresome norms of the elite. While Hillary Clinton sipped Champagne with donors, Trump was out there pitching coal and steel jobs — at least that was the impression.

"He clearly had a feel for what people wanted," she told the AP. "He could talk the talk even if he couldn't walk the walk in having their experiences. But he understood it."

Yet that skill was squandered, in her view. Where it could have been used to mobilize people for good, it was instead used only in service of himself — "Me the People" as a chapter title puts it.

Trump's vanity also doomed his Helsinki meeting with Putin and any chances for a coveted arms control deal with Russia. The questions at the news conference "got right to the heart of his insecurities," Hill writes. If Trump had agreed that Russia had interfered in the election on his behalf, in his mind he might as well have said "I am illegitimate."

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It was clear to Putin that the resulting backlash would undermine even the vague commitments he and Trump had made. "On his way out the door from the conference," Hill writes, "he told his press secretary, within earshot of our interpreter, that the press conference was 'bullshit.'"

Trump admired Putin for his wealth, power and fame, seeing him, in Hill's words, as the "ultimate badass." During the course of his presidency, Trump would come to resemble the autocratic and populist Russian leader more than he resembled any recent American presidents, she writes, and, "Sometimes even I was startled by how glaringly obvious the similarities were."

Putin's ability to manipulate the Russian political system to potentially stay in power indefinitely also made an impression. "Trump sees that and says what's there not to like about that kind of situation?" Hill told the AP.

Trump, a Republican, was impeached by the House in late 2019 for trying to use his leverage over Ukraine to undermine Joe Biden, his eventual Democratic rival, among the first of his efforts to stay in office by unconventional means, stretching to the Jan. 6 insurrection at the Capitol by a mob he had told to "fight like hell."

Hill had served as the national intelligence officer for Russia from early 2006 until late 2009 and was highly respected in Washington circles. But it was only during the impeachment hearings that she was introduced to the nation. She became one of the most damaging witnesses against the president she had served, undercutting his defense by testifying that he had sent his envoys to Ukraine on a "domestic political errand" that had nothing to do with national security policy.

She began her testimony by describing her improbable journey as the daughter of a coal miner from an impoverished town in northeast England to the White House. She also explained her desire to serve a country that "has offered me opportunities I never would have had in England."

Much of her new book expands on that personal journey, a story told with self-deprecating humor and kindness. Along the way, Hill the Brookings Institution scholar weaves in a study of the changing societies she witnessed over the decades as a child in Britain, a student and researcher in Russia and finally as a citizen of the United States.

The changes in all three countries are strikingly similar, due in part to the destruction of heavy industry. The result is what she calls a "crisis of opportunity" and the rise of populist leaders like Putin, Trump and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson able to tap into the fears and grievances of those feeling left behind.

She said she went into the White House worried about what Russia was doing and "came out, having realized fully watching all of this, that actually the problem was the United States ... and the Russians were just exploiting everything."

Hill calls Russia a cautionary tale, "America's Ghost of Christmas Future," if the U.S. is unable to heal its political divisions.

Hailing from a more civil form of politics, President Joe Biden is trying to bring the country together and advance its reputation abroad, she said, but "he's, in a way, a kind of man standing alone and people are not pulling behind him."

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AP video journalist Nathan Ellgren contributed to this report.

## Murano glassblowing model shattered by methane price surge

By COLLEEN BARRY Associated Press

VENICE, Italy (AP) — The Italian glassblowers of Murano have survived plagues and pandemics. They transitioned to highly prized artistic creations to outrun low-priced competition from Asia. But surging energy prices are shattering their economic model.

The dozens of furnaces that remain on the lagoon island where Venetian rulers transferred glassblowing 700 years ago must burn around the clock, otherwise the costly crucible inside the ovens will break. But the price for the methane that powers the ovens has skyrocketed fivefold on the global market since Oct. 1, meaning the glass-blowers face certain losses on orders they are working to fill, at least for the

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foreseeable future.

"People are desperate," said Gianni De Checchi, president of Venice's association of artisans Confortinato. "If it continues like this, and we don't find solutions to the sudden and abnormal gas prices, the entire Murano glass sector will be in serious danger."

A medium-size glassblowing business like that of Simone Cenedese consumes 12,000 cubic meters (420,000 cubic feet) of methane a month to keep his seven furnaces hissing at temperatures over 1,000 degrees Celsius (1,800 degrees Fahrenheit) 24 hours a day. They shut down just once a year for annual maintenance in August.

His monthly bills normally range from 11,000 to 13,000 euros (\$12,700 to \$15,000) a month, on a fixed-price consortium contract that expired on Sept. 30. Now exposed to market volatility, Cenedese is projecting an increase in methane costs to 60,000 euros (\$70,000) in October, as the natural gas market is buffeted by increased Chinese demand, uncertain Russian supply and worryingly low European stockpiles.

Artisans like Cenedese now must factor in an insurmountable increase in energy costs as they fill orders that had promised to lift them out of the pandemic crisis that stilled the sector in 2020.

"We cannot increase prices that have already been set. ... That means for at least two months we are forced to work at a loss," said Cenedese, a third-generation glassblower who took over the business his father started. "We sell decorations for the house, not necessities, meaning that if the prices are not accessible, it is obvious that there will be no more orders."

Cenedese, like others on the island, is considering shutting down one of his furnaces to confront the crisis. That will cost 2,000 euros (\$2,300) for the broken crucible. It also will slow production and imperil pending orders.

His five glass-blowers move with unspoken choreographed precision to fill an order of 1,800 Christmas ornaments speckled with golden flakes bound for Switzerland.

One starts the process with a red-hot molten blob on the end of a wand that he rolls over gold leaf, applying it evenly before handing the form to the maestro, who then re-heats it in one oven before gently blowing into the wand to create a perfect orb. It is still glowing red when he cuts it from the wand, and another glassblower grabs it with prongs to add the final flourish, a pointy end created from a dab of molten glass applied by an apprentice.

As that dance progresses, another starts, weaving and bobbing into the empty spaces. Together, they can make 300 ornaments a day, working from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m.

"No machine can do what we do," said maestro Davide Cimarosti, 56, who has been working as a glassblower for 42 years.

Murano glassblowers decades ago transitioned from wood ovens, which created uneven results, to methane, which burns at temperatures high enough to create the delicate crystal clarity that makes their creations so highly prized. And it is the only gas that the glassblowers are permitted to use, by law. They are caught in a global commodities Catch-22.

For now, artisans are hoping the international market calms by the end of the year, although some analysts believe volatility could persist into the spring. If so, damage to the island's economy and the individual companies could run deep.

The Rome government has offered relief to Italian families confronting high energy prices but so far nothing substantial to the Murano glassblowers, whose small scale and energy intensity make them particularly vulnerable. The artisans' lobby is meeting with members of parliament this week in a bid to seek direct government aid, which De Checchi said is possible under new EU rules put in place after the pandemic.

Beyond economic losses, the islanders fear losing a tradition that has made their island synonymous with artistic excellence.

Already, the sector has scaled back from an industry with thousands of workers in the 1960s and 1970s to a network of mostly small and medium-sized artisanal enterprises employing some 300 glassblowers. Venice's glassblowing tradition dates back 1,200 years, and on Murano it has been passed down from father to son for generations. But even at its reduced size and despite its creative rewards, it struggles to attract young people to toil in workshops where summertime temperatures can reach 60 degrees

Celsius (140 degrees Fahrenheit).

"The value of this tradition, this history and this culture is priceless. It goes beyond the financial value of the glass industry in Murano," said Luciano Gambaro, co-owner of Gambaro & Tagliapietra. "Over 1,000 years of culture can't stop with a gas issue."

This story corrects the meeting with lawmakers to this week, not next week.

## Merck asks US FDA to authorize promising anti-COVID pill

By MATTHEW PERRONE AP Health Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Drugmaker Merck asked U.S. regulators Monday to authorize its pill for treating COVID-19 in what would add an entirely new and easy-to-use weapon to the world's arsenal against the pandemic.

If cleared by the Food and Drug Administration — a decision that could come in a matter of weeks — it would be the first pill shown to treat the illness. All other FDA-backed treatments against COVID-19 require an IV or injection.

An antiviral pill that people could take at home to reduce their symptoms and speed recovery could prove groundbreaking, easing the crushing caseload on U.S. hospitals and helping to curb outbreaks in poorer countries with weak health care systems. It would also bolster the two-pronged approach to the pandemic: treatment, by way of medication, and prevention, primarily through vaccinations.

The FDA will scrutinize company data on the safety and effectiveness of the drug, molnupiravir, before rendering a decision.

Merck and its partner Ridgeback Biotherapeutic said they specifically asked the agency to grant emergency use for adults with mild-to-moderate COVID-19 who are at risk for severe disease or hospitalization. That is roughly the way COVID-19 infusion drugs are used.

"The value here is that it's a pill so you don't have to deal with the infusion centers and all the factors around that," said Dr. Nicholas Kartsonis, a senior vice president with Merck's infectious disease unit. "I think it's a very powerful tool to add to the toolbox."

The company reported earlier this month that the pill cut hospitalizations and deaths by half among patients with early symptoms of COVID-19. The results were so strong that independent medical experts monitoring the trial recommended stopping it early.

Side effects were similar between patients who got the drug and those in a testing group who received a dummy pill. But Merck has not publicly detailed the types of problems reported, which will be a key part of the FDA's review.

Top U.S. health officials continue to push vaccinations as the best way to protect against COVID-19.

"It's much, much better to prevent yourself from getting infected than to have to treat an infection," Dr. Anthony Fauci said while discussing Merck's drug last week.

Still, some 68 million eligible Americans remain unvaccinated, underscoring the need for effective drugs to control future waves of infection.

The prospect of a COVID-19 pill comes amid other encouraging signs: New cases per day in the U.S. have dropped below 100,000 on average for the first time in over two months, and deaths are running at about 1,700 a day, down from more than 2,000 three weeks ago.

Also, the average number of vaccinations dispensed per day has climbed past 1 million, an increase of more than 50% over the past two weeks, driven by the introduction of booster shots and workplace vaccine requirements.

Still, health authorities are bracing for another possible surge as cold weather drives more people indoors.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, health experts have stressed the need for a convenient pill. The goal is for something similar to Tamiflu, the 20-year-old flu medication that shortens the illness by a day or two and blunts the severity of symptoms like fever, cough and stuffy nose.

Three FDA-authorized antibody drugs have proved highly effective at reducing COVID-19 deaths, but

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they are expensive, hard to produce and require specialty equipment and health professionals to deliver.

Assuming FDA authorization, the U.S. government has agreed to buy enough of the pills to treat 1.7 million people, at a price of roughly \$700 for each course of treatment. That's less than half the price of the antibody drugs purchased by the U.S. government — over \$2,000 per infusion — but still more expensive than many antiviral pills for other conditions.

Merck's Kartsonis said in an interview that the \$700 figure does not represent the final price for the medication.

"We set that price before we had any data, so that's just one contract," Kartsonis said. "Obviously we're going to be responsible about this and make this drug as accessible to as many people around the world as we can."

Kenilworth, New Jersey-based Merck has said it is in purchase talks with governments around the world and will use a sliding price scale based on each country's economic means. Also, the company has signed licensing deals with several Indian generic drugmakers to produce low-cost versions of the drug for lower-income countries.

Several other companies, including Pfizer and Roche, are studying similar drugs and are expected to report results in the coming weeks and months. AstraZeneca is also seeking FDA authorization for a long-acting antibody drug intended to provide months of protection for patients who have immune-system disorders and do not adequately respond to vaccination.

Some experts predict various COVID-19 therapies eventually will be prescribed in combination to better protect against the worst effects of the virus.

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## Congress off the rails? Lawmakers barrel toward fall fights

By ALAN FRAM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Year-end pileups of crucial legislation and the brinkmanship that goes with them are normal behavior for Congress. This autumn, lawmakers are barreling toward battles that are striking for the risks they pose to both parties.

Though few doubt that Congress will again extend the government's borrowing authority when it expires in December, no one seems certain of how they'll do it. Democrats don't have the votes yet to enact President Joe Biden's top priorities into law. And Republicans are nervous that Democrats may weaken the filibuster rule that lets the Senate's minority party derail legislation.

Miscalculate and there could be a calamitous federal default, a collapse of Biden's domestic agenda and, for good measure, a damaging government shutdown. Stir in lawmakers whose nerves are already frayed and are looking to tee up issues for next year's midterm elections, and it's a recipe for confrontations that could damage each party if leaders aren't careful.

Here are gambles each side faces:

### DEBT LIMIT

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., blinked last week. And then he said he wouldn't blink again.

McConnell said since summer that Republicans wouldn't supply the votes majority Democrats needed to extend the federal debt limit. But Thursday night, 11 Republicans including McConnell joined Democrats in narrowly overcoming a procedural hurdle so the Senate could subsequently approve \$480 billion in fresh borrowing.

House passage, expected Tuesday, would stave off until December a first-ever federal default that could disrupt the global economy, delay government checks to Social Security recipients and others and unleash voters' wrath on lawmakers.

But the partisan dispute will resume in two months.

Republicans want Democrats to raise the debt ceiling on their own to underscore their argument that

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Biden's multitrillion-dollar social and environment agenda is unaffordable. Democrats want Republicans to put their imprint on the borrowing limit increase, noting that the \$28 trillion national debt is for unpaid bills already incurred, including \$7 trillion under former President Donald Trump.

By enabling a two-month reprieve on the fight, McConnell angered Republicans who wanted a tougher stance against Democrats including Trump, still an intimidating force in the GOP. Even usual McConnell ally Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., called it "complete capitulation."

Demonstrating the political sensitivities in play, eight of the 11 Republicans who Thursday helped Democrats approve the debt limit increase are either retiring or not seeking reelection until 2024 or later.

Friday night, McConnell said he "will not provide such assistance again," citing "grave concerns" over Democrats' huge domestic bill and "hysterics" by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. More on that later.

Come December, something has to give. But it's unclear how that will happen, and the stakes will be high for leaders to ensure a partisan stare down doesn't tumble out of control.

Oh — by Dec. 3, federal agencies will shut down unless Congress approves legislation financing them.

## BIDEN'S AGENDA

Democratic progressives and centrists are fighting over the final size and contents of Biden's proposed 10-year, \$3.5 trillion package of social safety net, climate change and tax initiatives. The longer their battles rage, the more the party risks letting the struggles themselves define the effort, distracting from the widely popular programs they hope to include.

Due to Senate moderates like Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, Biden has conceded that the final price tag will likely be much smaller, around \$2 trillion. Money for priorities like the environment, health care and education will have to shrink accordingly.

Facing unanimous Republican opposition and paper-thin congressional majorities, Democrats will need near unanimity to succeed. The political consequences for Democrats would be jolting if Biden's highest priority bill, along with an accompanying \$1 trillion infrastructure package, crumble with his party holding the White House and Congress.

"I hope to God that is not the case," Senate Budget Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., said Friday. He predicted both bills would pass but conceded "a horrible possibility" of failure.

## FILIBUSTER FEARS

Democrats have become increasingly open to the idea of weakening filibusters, Senate procedures that have let Republicans wreak legislative havoc by requiring 60 votes in the 50-50 chamber to pass most bills. Manchin and Sinema have said they oppose that change, stymying that option.

GOP leaders worry that if a debt limit standoff moves to the brink of a default, Schumer might be able to persuade Manchin and Sinema to support erasing filibusters against debt limit increases. And that might lead to later, additional exceptions for voting rights or other Democratic priorities.

Those fears are Republicans' "most obvious challenge" in calculating how stubborn to be in the debt limit standoff, said Sen. Kevin Cramer, R-N.D.

## SOUR MOOD

Congress is an angry place these days. Four years of Trump's bellicose presidency, the deadly Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol by his supporters and the high stakes for Democrats pushing Biden's programs have taken a toll.

Frayed relationships are everywhere.

Manchin said Wednesday that he didn't want Democrats' huge domestic programs bill, of which Sanders is a leading author, to make the U.S. "an entitlement society."

Sanders criticized Manchin's desire to curb climate change and health care provisions in the bill. "Does Senator Manchin not believe that our children and grandchildren are entitled to live in a country and a world that is healthy and is habitable?" Sanders asked.

The two represent opposite ends of Democrats' political spectrum. Still, it was a highly unusual public airing of internal differences, and at a crucial moment.

In a letter to Biden, McConnell unleashed a remarkably bitter personal attack on Schumer. McConnell

said Schumer's "childish behavior" alienated Republicans who'd just helped pass the short-term debt limit extension, adding, "It has poisoned the well even further."

"There's a lot of stress being felt, there's a lot of things at stake here in terms of causes that many of us fought for, for a lifetime," said No. 2 Senate Democratic leader Richard Durbin of Illinois. He added, "So the sooner we get this done, the better."

## Gun violence claiming more lives of American teens, children

By JIM SALTER and CLAUDIA LAUER Associated Press

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Gun violence is killing an increasing number of American children, from toddlers caught in crossfires to teenagers gunned down in turf wars, drug squabbles or for posting the wrong thing on social media.

Shootings involving children and teenagers have been on the rise in recent years, and 2021 is no exception. Experts say idleness caused by the COVID-19 pandemic shares the blame with easy access to guns and disputes that too often end with gunfire.

LeGenD Taliferro, a 4-year-old boy who loved dinosaurs and basketball, was sleeping on the floor in an apartment in Kansas City, Missouri, when he was shot on June 29, 2020. A man who had been involved in a dispute with LeGenD's father is awaiting trial for second-degree murder. A probable cause statement said the suspected shooter had been trying to find LeGenD's dad after that altercation.

"Why do we have to resort to violence because we're mad?" LeGenD's mother, Charron Powell, asks. "What are other ways we can figure out an issue without harming somebody?"

The U.S. saw 991 gun violence deaths among people 17 or younger in 2019, according to the website Gun Violence Archive, which tracks shootings from more than 7,500 law enforcement, media, government and commercial sources. That number spiked to 1,375 in 2020 and this year is on pace to be worse. Through Monday, shootings had claimed 1,179 young lives and left 3,292 youths injured.

FBI data backs that up. The agency released a report on Sept. 28 showing homicides in the U.S. increased nearly 30% in 2020, and homicides among people ages 19 and younger rose more than 21%.

Horror stories abound.

In St. Louis, 9-year-old Caion Greene died in March when someone opened fire on his family's car. A 17-year-old is charged in the crime. Police and prosecutors have declined to discuss a motive or say what prompted the shooting.

Two Minneapolis children were gunned down in May. Nine-year-old Trinity Ottoson-Smith was shot in the head while jumping on a trampoline. Police said she was the unintended victim of a bullet meant for someone else. No arrests have been made. Six-year-old Aniya Allen was shot when her mother drove her car through a gun battle.

On Oct. 2 in Milwaukee, an 11-year-old girl was killed and a 5-year-old girl was injured when someone fired into their family's car from another vehicle. Police have not said if they know of a motive and are seeking information from the public.

More often, the victims are teenagers.

Jamari Williams and Kentrell McNeal, both 15-year-old students at Simeon Career Academy High School in Chicago, were killed in separate shootings on Sept. 21. No arrests have been made and police declined to speculate on what led to the shootings.

At Philadelphia's Simon Gratz High School Mastery Charter, five students were killed and nine others were shot or shot at during the last school year. Just weeks into the new school year, two students and a recent graduate have been killed. The school offers a space for memorials to slain students, often helps with funeral expenses and offers counseling services.

"We have gotten exceptionally good at knowing what to do, and how to offer help when a young person loses their life ... we have gotten really good at that," principal LeYondo Dunn said.

A March report from the Children's Defense Fund found that child and teen shooting deaths reached a 19-year high in 2017 and have remained elevated. Black children and teenagers were four times more

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likely than whites to be fatally shot.

The fund's president and CEO, the Rev. Starsky Wilson, said a spike in gun sales during the pandemic has made things worse.

"There are more guns available on the street and there are folks with less opportunity to engage in productive activity," Wilson said. "A combination of those two is really challenging."

Social media also plays a role, experts say. A posted insult can turn quickly into retaliation, said Jason Smith, a homicide division captain in Philadelphia.

"Social media makes it so easy to throw that disrespect," Smith said. "They're doing it in real time."

Dr. Lindsay Clukies, an emergency room doctor at St. Louis Children's Hospital, said she and her staff often see repeat victims.

"It's not uncommon that we see a child with a big scar and we say, 'What happened?' and they say, 'Oh, I was shot once before,'" Clukies said.

"It's so frustrating as a medical provider because we obviously pride ourselves in taking amazing care of kids and saving lives and fixing lives, but these injuries are preventable," Clukies said. "There's nothing that compares to having to tell a parent that their child passed away from a completely preventable thing."

The Justice Department sought to address the violence through "Operation Legend," named for LeG- end Taliferro. His mother takes comfort in the fact that her son's death helped spur a national effort that resulted in hundreds of arrests. Still, the pain never goes away.

"It's really a mental battle to get through every day," Powell said. "It's really difficult to know he's not here and I won't hear his voice."

On the day before Father's Day last year, someone fired shots at a group of boys on the front porch of a Chicago home. The bullet missed the boys but pierced a window into the dining room where 13-year-old Amaria Jones was showing her mom a dance routine she was perfecting for TikTok.

The bullet shattered a TV and everyone scattered for safety. When Amaria's mother returned, she found her daughter on the floor, holding her wounded neck and trying to call out, "Mom." Amaria was pronounced dead at a hospital. No arrests have been made.

"I grew up in this neighborhood and I've been around a lot of gun violence," Mercedes Jones, Amaria's 28-year-old sister, said. "I've ducked bullets flying near my head. I'm used to that. Not Amaria. She didn't hang out like me. She didn't know that lifestyle."

While small children are often caught in the crossfire, teenagers are most commonly targeted — often by other teenagers — in drive-by shootings on interstate highways or gunned down in broad daylight on urban streets.

Shaquille Barbour of Philadelphia was killed June 6, a week before his high school graduation — shot 13 times as he rode his bike home from a corner store. No arrests have been made, and police aren't offering a motive.

His father, Joseph Barbour, still struggles to hold back the anger.

"I don't think people know how hard it is, not to want to retaliate," he said. "These kids are on the street, and it feels like they're hunters. They brag and taunt people after they kill someone, too."

Smith, the Philadelphia detective, said the shootings are as brutal as they are brazen.

"They will empty an entire magazine into someone's torso or their head," he said. "They call it walking a person down. They shoot a person and incapacitate them ... then walk them down, walk until they are standing over them and unload their firearm into that individual."

Efforts and ideas to slow the violence are varied.

Wilson, of the Children's Defense Fund, suggested a threefold strategy: Adopt new gun legislation to strengthen background checks and incentivize safe storage of weapons; invest in social services such as after-school programs and mental health support for young people; and create more economic opportunity, including summer jobs.

Studies have shown that victims of violence are at an elevated risk of becoming violent themselves. So St. Louis Children's Hospital developed its Victims of Violence program that seeks to reduce recidivism by pairing surviving shooting victims with mentors and offering counseling, mediation and a link to social

service agencies.

In Philadelphia, Chief Inspector Frank Vanore said police also monitor social media and if they're aware of a feud, a team of officers and community leaders meet with those involved in the dispute.

A pilot program this year at Philadelphia's Simon Gratz high will provide intensive services to students in danger of becoming a victim — or a perpetrator — of gun violence.

"We are going to have capacity to get about 60 students into the program but with the number of students we've lost, the amount of violence and guns that Philadelphia is seeing, we know there will be more students who need this program than we can get in," Dunn said. "We know it."

Lauer reported from Philadelphia.

## Bing Crosby's heirs sell stake in estate to boost his work

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Harry Crosby was 19 when his father, Bing, died in 1977. But when he goes to a shopping mall or party in December, there's a strong chance he'll hear his dad's voice singing "White Christmas."

He and his family want to hear that voice more during the other 11 months, a desire that led to a deal being announced Monday to sell an equal stake in the rights to Bing Crosby's estate to Primary Wave Music.

It's another example of how the sale of catalog rights has become a booming business, with most involving rock artists who write their own music — Bob Dylan, Paul Simon, Neil Young and Stevie Nicks are examples. The Crosby deal is the most prominent involving a pre-rock artist who primarily interpreted songs written by others.

The deal is estimated in excess of \$50 million.

A younger generation knows Crosby best through "White Christmas" and the duet with David Bowie on "The Little Drummer Boy" made for a television special shortly before his death. Fewer people alive remember Crosby's days as a major recording artist and movie star.

"There were things that became absolutely top hits in the '30s and '40s, for a sustained period of time, and they just went away," Harry Crosby said. "People associate dad with Christmas, but in the '40s and '50s, they didn't associate him with Christmas. They associated dad with tons of things, and that's what I want to bring back."

Some of his hit songs include "Pennies From Heaven," "It's Been a Long, Long Time," "Don't Fence Me In" and "Accentuate the Positive."

Crosby won an Academy Award for best actor for playing a priest in the 1945 film "Going My Way," and made seven "road" movies with his friend, comic Bob Hope. His association with golf is also remembered, as he created the first pro-am tournament and was reportedly a member of 75 golf clubs.

Crosby's family, which includes his widow and two of Harry's siblings, have been interested in a documentary series to tell Bing's story.

Primary Wave's first priority is to increase Crosby's digital footprint, to boost his profile on Spotify and get his music added to playlists for a generation unfamiliar with it, said Larry Mestel, the company's founder and CEO.

"We want to be in business and partner with the greatest of the greats, regardless of the genre, regardless of the era," Mestel said. Primary Wave also works with the estates of Count Basie and Ray Charles.

The challenge lies in infiltrating a new youth culture with the work of a mature artist, he said. Unlike many of the rock-era artists involved in such deals, Crosby obviously isn't around to perform or promote his work.

But while song publishing is at the heart of many such deals, Mestel said Primary Wave takes a broader look at ways to get an artist's name out there and, of course, make money off his likeness or work. He sees enormous potential in Crosby's film properties.

"The way I view dad is not just through the prism of music and film," Crosby said. "He was a pioneer

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in all the different mediums and all the things that came out of that — technology and music and golf, sportsmanship and hunting. There are a lot of different things that describe the human being.”

The times that he hears “White Christmas” while out in public brings a smile to Crosby.

“I miss him a lot,” he said. “It’s a time of reflection. It’s not painful, it’s inspiring. It’s reassuring that with all of the things he did and as hard as he worked, that he’s being recognized again and again.”

## UK police won’t act against Prince Andrew over abuse claim

LONDON (AP) — British police have announced they will not take any action against Prince Andrew after a review prompted by a Jeffrey Epstein accuser who claims that he sexually assaulted her.

Virginia Giuffre claims she was trafficked by Epstein to have sex with Andrew in London in 2001, when she was 17 and a minor under U.S. law. She is suing the prince in a U.S. court.

Andrew, the second son of Queen Elizabeth II, denies the allegations. He told the BBC in a 2019 interview that he never had sex with Giuffre, saying: “It didn’t happen.”

In August, London’s Metropolitan Police force began a review of allegations connected to late convicted sex offender Epstein. Police chief Cressida Dick said at the time that “no one is above the law.”

The force said in a statement late Sunday that its “review has concluded and we are taking no further action.”

It also said it would take no action over allegations, first reported by Channel 4 News, that Epstein’s alleged accomplice, Ghislaine Maxwell, trafficked, groomed and abused women and girls in the U.K.

Maxwell, a British socialite, is in a U.S. jail awaiting trial on charges that she recruited teenage girls for Epstein to abuse.

The force said it is continuing to liaise with other law enforcement agencies who are leading the investigation into matters associated with Epstein.

After weeks of legal skirmishing, lawyers for Andrew acknowledged late last month that the prince had formally been served with Giuffre’s lawsuit. The prince must file responses to the claims by Oct. 29.

Last week, a U.S. judge agreed for Andrew’s lawyers to receive a copy of a 2009 settlement between Giuffre and Epstein that they believe will nullify the civil case against the prince.

Andrew, 61, has been banished from public royal duties amid the scandal over his friendship with convicted pedophile Epstein, who was found dead in a federal detention center in New York in August 2019 while awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges. His death was ruled a suicide.

The Associated Press does not typically identify people who say they are victims of sexual assault unless they choose to come forward publicly, as Giuffre has.

## Cyberattacks concerning to most in US: Pearson/AP-NORC poll

By ALAN SUDERMAN Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Most Americans across party lines have serious concerns about cyberattacks on U.S. computer systems and view China and Russia as major threats, according to a new poll.

The poll by The Pearson Institute and The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research shows that about 9 in 10 Americans are at least somewhat concerned about hacking that involves their personal information, financial institutions, government agencies or certain utilities. About two-thirds say they are very or extremely concerned.

Roughly three-quarters say the Chinese and Russian governments are major threats to the cybersecurity of the U.S. government, and at least half also see the Iranian government and non-government bodies as threatening.

The broad consensus highlights the growing impacts of cyberattacks in an increasingly connected world and could boost efforts by President Joe Biden and lawmakers to force critical industries to boost their cyber defenses and impose reporting requirements for companies that get hacked. The poll comes amid a wave of high-profile ransomware attacks and cyber espionage campaigns in the last year that

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have compromised sensitive government records and led to the shutdown of the operations of energy companies, hospitals, schools and others.

"It's pretty uncommon nowadays to find issues that both large majorities of Republicans and Democrats" view as a problem, said David Sterrett, a senior research scientist at The AP-NORC Center.

Biden has made cybersecurity a key issue in his young administration and federal lawmakers are considering legislation to strengthen both public and private cyber defenses.

Michael Daniel, CEO of the Cyber Threat Alliance and a former top cybersecurity official during the Obama administration, said the poll shows the public is firmly aware of the kind of threats posed online that cybersecurity experts have been stressing for years.

"We don't need to do a whole lot more awareness raising," he said.

The explosion in the last year of ransomware, in which cyber criminals encrypt an organization's data and then demand payment to unscramble it, has underscored how gangs of extortionist hackers can disrupt the economy and put lives and livelihoods at risk.

One of the cyber incidents with the greatest consequences this year was a ransomware attack in May on the company that owns the nation's largest fuel pipeline, which led to gas shortages along the East Coast. A few weeks later, a ransomware attack on the world's largest meat processing company disrupted production around the world.

Victims of ransomware attacks have ranged from key U.S. agencies and Fortune 500 companies to small entities like Leonardtown, Maryland, which was one of hundreds of organizations affected worldwide when software company Kaseya was hit by ransomware during the Forth of July weekend.

"We ended up being very lucky but it definitely opened our eyes that it could happen to anyone," said Laschelle McKay, the town administrator. She said Leonardtown's I.T. provider was able to restore the town's network and files after several days.

The criminal syndicates that dominate the ransomware business are mostly Russian-speaking and operate with near impunity out of Russia or countries allied with Russia. The U.S. government has also blamed Russian spies for a major breach of U.S. government agencies known as the SolarWinds hack, so named for the U.S. software company whose product was used in the hacking.

China has also been active. In July, the Biden administration formally blamed China for a massive hack of Microsoft Exchange email server software and asserted that criminal hackers associated with the Chinese government have carried out ransomware attacks and other illicit cyber operations.

"The amount of Chinese cyber actors dwarfs the rest of the globe, combined," Rob Joyce, the director of cybersecurity at the National Security Agency, said at a recent conference. "The elite in that group really are elite. It's a law of large numbers."

Both Russia and China have denied any wrongdoing.

Older adults are much more likely to view Russia and China as serious threats. A large majority of adults over 60 say the Russian and the Chinese governments are a big threat, but only about half of those under 30 agree.

Democrats — at 79% — are somewhat more likely than Republicans — at 70% — to say the Russian government is a big threat. Former President Donald Trump, a Republican, has routinely downplayed Russian aggression. In his first comments after the SolarWinds hack was discovered in December, Trump contradicted his secretary of state and other top officials and suggested without evidence that China was behind the campaign.

The AP-NORC poll of 1,071 adults was conducted Sept. 9-13, using a sample drawn from NORC's probability-based AmeriSpeak Omnibus, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 3.9 percentage points.

## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

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Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Oct. 12, the 285th day of 2021. There are 80 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 12, 2000, 17 sailors were killed in a suicide bomb attack on the destroyer USS Cole in Yemen.

On this date:

In 1792, the first recorded U.S. celebration of Columbus Day was held to mark the tricentennial of Christopher Columbus' landing.

In 1933, bank robber John Dillinger escaped from a jail in Allen County, Ohio, with the help of his gang, who killed the sheriff, Jess Sarber.

In 1942, during World War II, American naval forces defeated the Japanese in the Battle of Cape Esperance. Attorney General Francis Biddle announced during a Columbus Day celebration at Carnegie Hall in New York that Italian nationals in the United States would no longer be considered enemy aliens.

In 1973, President Richard Nixon nominated House minority leader Gerald R. Ford of Michigan to succeed Spiro T. Agnew as vice president.

In 1976, it was announced in China that Hua Guofeng had been named to succeed the late Mao Zedong as chairman of the Communist Party; it was also announced that Mao's widow and three others, known as the "Gang of Four," had been arrested.

In 1984, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher escaped an attempt on her life when an Irish Republican Army bomb exploded at a hotel in Brighton, England, killing five people.

In 1986, the superpower meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, ended in stalemate, with President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev unable to agree on arms control or a date for a full-fledged summit in the United States.

In 1997, singer John Denver was killed in the crash of his privately built aircraft in Monterey Bay, California; he was 53.

In 2002, bombs blamed on al-Qaida-linked militants destroyed a nightclub on the Indonesian island of Bali, killing 202 people, including 88 Australians and seven Americans.

In 2007, former Vice President Al Gore and the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change won the Nobel Peace Prize for sounding the alarm over global warming.

In 2017, President Donald Trump lashed out at hurricane-devastated Puerto Rico, saying the federal government can't keep sending help "forever" and suggesting that the U.S. territory was to blame for its financial struggles.

In 2019, a Black woman, Atatiana Jefferson, was fatally shot by a white Fort Worth, Texas, police officer inside her home after police were called to the residence by a neighbor who reported that the front door was open. (Officer Aaron Dean, who shot Jefferson through a back window, resigned in the days after the shooting and is charged with murder; he has pleaded not guilty and is scheduled to go to trial in November.)

Ten years ago: A Nigerian al-Qaida operative pleaded guilty to trying to bring down a jetliner with a bomb in his underwear; Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab (OO'-mahr fah-ROOK' ahb-DOOL'-moo-TAH'-lahb) defiantly told a federal judge in Detroit that he had acted in retaliation for the killing of Muslims worldwide. Eight people were killed in a shooting at a hair salon in Seal Beach, California. (Scott Dekraai, whose ex-wife, Michelle Fournier, was among the victims, pleaded guilty to murder in 2014 and is serving life in prison.)

Five years ago: Wells Fargo announced that its embattled CEO, John Stumpf, was stepping down as the nation's second-largest bank found itself roiled by a scandal over its sales practices.

One year ago: At the start of fast-tracked Senate confirmation hearings, Supreme Court nominee Amy Coney Barrett presented her approach to the law as conservative and fair, while Democrats cast her as a threat to Americans' health care coverage during the coronavirus pandemic. At his first campaign rally since he contracted COVID-19, President Donald Trump insisted to supporters in Florida that he had delivered the nation a "rapid recovery" from the pandemic. A Wisconsin judge allowed the state's mask mandate to stand, rejecting an attempt by the Republican-controlled Legislature and a conservative law

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firm to overturn it even as coronavirus cases spiked and the number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 hit a new high. Facebook said it would ban posts that deny or distort the Holocaust. Roberta McCain, the mother of the late Arizona Sen. John McCain, died at 108.

Today's Birthdays: Former Sen. Jake Garn, R-Utah, is 89. Singer Sam Moore (formerly of Sam and Dave) is 86. Broadcast journalist Chris Wallace is 74. Actor-singer Susan Anton is 71. Pop/rock singer/songwriter Jane Siberry is 66. Actor Hiroyuki Sanada is 61. Actor Carlos Bernard is 59. Jazz musician Chris Botti (BOH'-tee) is 59. R&B singer Claude McKnight (Take 6) is 59. Rock singer Bob Schneider is 56. Actor Hugh Jackman is 53. Actor Adam Rich is 53. R&B singer Garfield Bright (Shai) is 52. Country musician Martie Maguire (Courtyard Hounds, The Chicks) is 52. Actor Kirk Cameron is 51. Olympic gold medal skier Bode Miller is 44. Rock singer Jordan Pundik (New Found Glory) is 42. Actor Brian J. Smith is 40. Actor Tyler Blackburn is 35. Actor Marcus T. Paulk is 35. Actor Ito Aghayere is 34. Actor Josh Hutcherson is 29.