

# Groton Daily Independent

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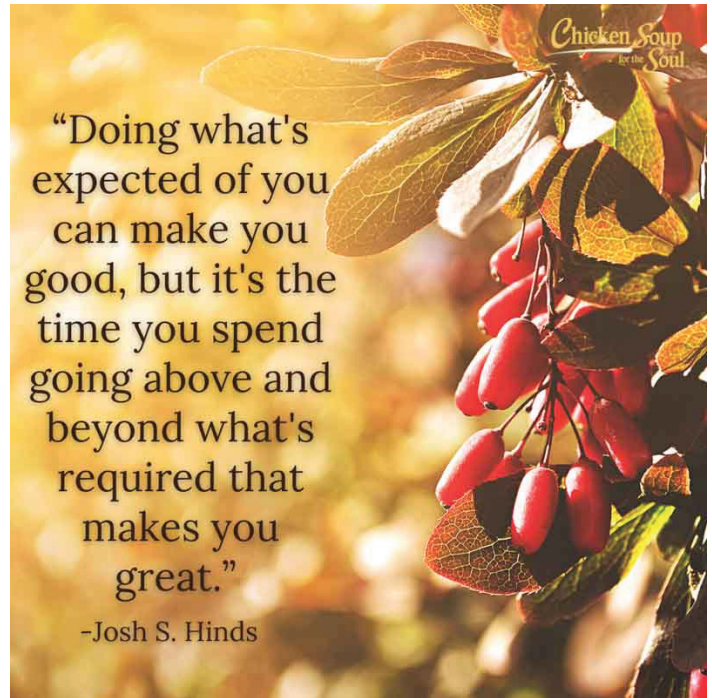
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“Doing what's expected of you can make you good, but it's the time you spend going above and beyond what's required that makes you great.”

-Josh S. Hinds

## Upcoming Events

### 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 7 p.m. Council Meeting at City Hall

### Wednesday, Oct. 20

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

### Thursday, Oct. 21

First Round Football Playoffs

### 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

## Ice Skating Opportunity

Ice skating opportunity on Sunday, Oct 24 in Watertown -- one of our guest skaters at the carnival for the past few years, Kathryn Pfaff, would like to invite our ice skaters to their Come Skate with Us event on Sunday, Oct 24 in Watertown. It will be held at the Maas Ice Arena in Watertown from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. with some mini classes available.

**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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## Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

Just when Vikings fans think they can put the defibrillator back on the wall, the Minnesota Vikings needed overtime to beat the Carolina Panthers. Final score: 34-28.

### First Half:

The Vikings get on the board early after a Brashaud Breeland interception and take a 3-0 lead on a Greg Joseph field goal. After a Justin Jefferson fumble, the Panthers go up 7-3 on a short run by Chubba Hubbard. The Vikings get three points back after an 11-play drive, once again ending in a 25-yard field goal.

In the second quarter, the Vikings managed a nine-play 83-yard drive, ending in a short touchdown pass and first catch of the season by Chris Herndon. The Panthers come back to kick a 47-yard field goal. The score at half-time ends at 12-10.

For the most part, the first half was a defensive battle, with short fields ending in quick scores. The second half was a different story.

### Second Half:

It was pretty quiet until the 6:49 mark in the third quarter. That's when the game became interesting.

The Panthers got things started by blocking a Viking punt and picking it up for a touchdown. Kirk Cousins and company quickly responded, marching the team down the field 75 yards in five plays ending with a Dalvin Cook 16-yard run. A two-point conversion failed.

After another Panther turnover, the Vikings needed only four plays and a 5-yard touchdown pass to Adam Thielen. It finally looked like the Vikings were about to put a game away for the first time this season.

The Vikings add another Joseph field goal early in the fourth quarter to extend the lead 28-17. Then all the craziness broke loose.

Sam Darnold, the Panthers quarterback that struggled all day, sprints for 45 yards up the middle of the field, setting up a field goal and cutting the lead to eight.

The Vikings managed to burn some time off the clock and punt the ball inside the 5-yard line. When it looked over, Darnold hits a 47-yard pass over the middle on fourth down. A few plays later, Darnold hit Anderson for a short touchdown, followed by a 2-point conversion. The game is tied 28-28 with 45 seconds remaining. A failed 47-yard field goal as time expired takes the game to overtime.

The Vikings won the toss and marched the team down the field, hitting KJ Osborn on a 27-yard touchdown to end the game.

### Statistical Leaders:

Kirk Cousins 33 for 48, 373 yards, 3 TD pass

Dalvin Cook 29 carries for 140 yards rushing, 1 TD

Adam Thielen 11 catches for 126 yards, 1 TD

### The highlight of the day:

CJ Ham, the powerhouse fullback, scampered 30 yards on his lone carry of the game- the longest run of his career.

### The irony of the day:

After winning two games in a row, a team would prefer to keep the momentum going and play next week. But for this Vikings team and the craziness of the first six games of the 2021 season, the bye week could not get here any sooner. They know they are right on the cusp of a great season but need to figure out how to finish games.

### Next game: Bye Week

Trick or Treat!! After the bye week, the Dallas Cowboys come to town on Halloween Night. US Bank Stadium will be rockin'. Dak Prescott has returned this season and maybe playing the best football of this career. The wide receiver duo of Ceedee Lamb and Amare Cooper might be the second-best duo in the game - right behind Thielen and Jefferson.

## Will America Protect Our Mothers?

In medicine, we routinely ask people about their family health history. Knowing that your mother had diabetes, or that your grandfather battled alcoholism, helps us be alert for health conditions to which you may be predisposed. Sometimes, though, what is revealed by those histories isn't a medical problem, but a family tragedy.

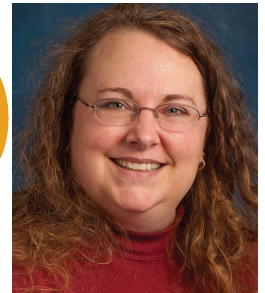
Earlier in my career, my older patients commonly told me that their grandmother, or even their mother, died in childbirth. Today, it is all too easy to forget just how perilous it can be to be pregnant. In the early 1900s, nearly one mother died for every 100 live births. Even today, approximately 800 women around the world die from pregnancy related causes EVERY DAY, and a woman's lifetime risk of dying as a result of pregnancy hovers around one in 200. In some countries, that risk is around one in 20. In others, it is less than one in 10,000. Infants, and their older siblings, face a grim future without those mothers. Many infants don't survive to their first birthdays. Older siblings have an increased risk of death before age five.

Although most maternal deaths occur in the developing world, where access to trained birth attendants or clean birthing conditions is limited, the United States ranks disturbingly high among developed nations. In fact, our rates were higher in 2017 than in 2000. A woman's risk of death varies with her age, education, socioeconomic status, and most dramatically, race. Black women face a risk of pregnancy related death more than triple that of white women, and indigenous women face approximately twice the risk. Wealth, health, and education are not enough to close these gaps. Serena Williams and Beyonce have both spoken publicly about their own life-threatening pregnancy complications. More research is needed to understand and address these disparities, and maternal mortality rates in general.

Sometimes death is caused directly by a pregnancy: bleeding, eclampsia, embolisms of amniotic fluid into the mother's lungs, infections. Sometimes death results from the added stress of pregnancy combined with another disease. Weakened hearts, for example, may not meet the additional demands of pregnancy and delivery. Historically, influenza has killed disproportionate numbers of pregnant women. My own great grandmother was one of them. Similarly, a pregnant woman who contracts Covid is 20 times more likely to die than one who doesn't. Women who struggle with depression or substance abuse may fall victim to overdoses or suicides triggered by the stress of pregnancy and caring for a newborn. Domestic violence may start or escalate during pregnancy, and too many women die at the hands of current or former partners.

The good news is that nearly two thirds of maternal deaths are thought to be preventable. We simply need the societal will to make changes and save lives.

Debra Johnson, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at [www.prairiedoc.org](http://www.prairiedoc.org) and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show celebrating its twentieth season of truthful, tested, and timely medical information, broadcast on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



**Debra Johnston, MD**

## GHS offers local internships

### Madeline Flihs at Beauty Brew Coffee Shop and Boutique

by Dorene Nelson

Groton Area High School offers a variety of business classes. One of these classes, School Internships, offers seniors the opportunity to work in various local businesses of their choice.

The purpose of this internship is to teach students responsibility by working for someone other than their family. It helps them learn how to work with the public and with customers who might not be all that agreeable at times.

Internships could also help students decide on a part-time job while they are in college or maybe even to help them choose a future occupation.

The business teacher, Becky Hubsch, has set up this experience for the seventeen students enrolled in her School Internship class.

All students must be at their chosen place of work during the first period of the school day. The student interns must contact the place they would like to work and have their own personal transportation.

Madeline Flihs, daughter of Jeff and Bridget Flihs, is interning first semester at Beauty Brew Coffee Shop and Boutique. Flihs has two sisters and a brother, all younger than she is.

"I participate in volley ball, soccer, and lacrosse," she listed. "Lacrosse is a club sport in Aberdeen."

"I work in Beauty Brew every school day from 8:30-9:20," Flihs explained. "I can do this again second semester but have to select a different business."

"We get to select the places where we intern," she stated, "but it is up to us to contact that business and ask if they would be interested in having us work for them. It costs the businesses nothing except the time needed to explain our duties."

"I chose to intern in the coffee shop for several reasons," Flihs admitted. "First of all, I already knew Karla Tracy as one of my volleyball coaches."

"Secondly, I like making the wide variety of coffee and tea drinks that are available here," she smiled. "I also like the 'pay' I receive—a chai tea every day! You can't beat that!"

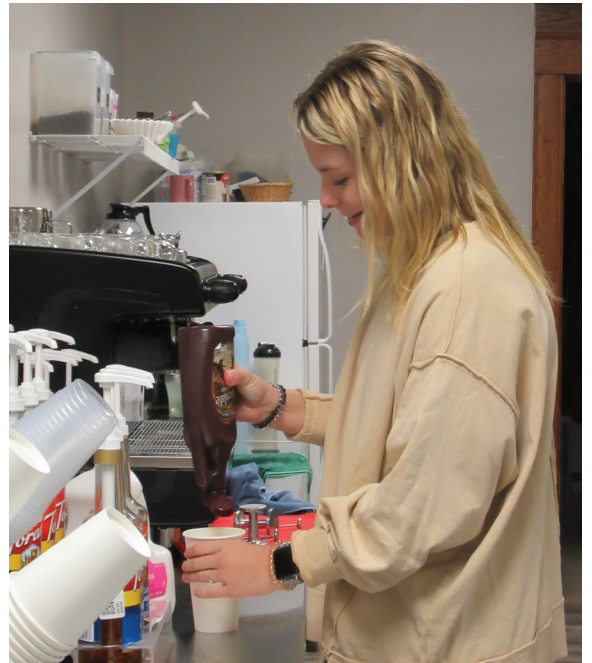
"Working at Beauty Brew has been fun and educational," Flihs stated. "It was easy to learn how to run the machine and make the drinks the way the customers wanted."

"That actually is the best part of this job: making a wide variety of drinks and helping the customers," she said. "People are always so happy to get their cup of coffee!"

"The hardest part of this job is learning the many drink recipes and knowing how to run the equipment," Flihs admitted. "However, it wasn't really all that hard, and I've really enjoyed the experience."

"We started the school year in the classroom for the first week or two, learning how to make a resume and filling out time cards," Flihs explained. "After that first week, we are expected to go to our chosen place of 'employment' every day."

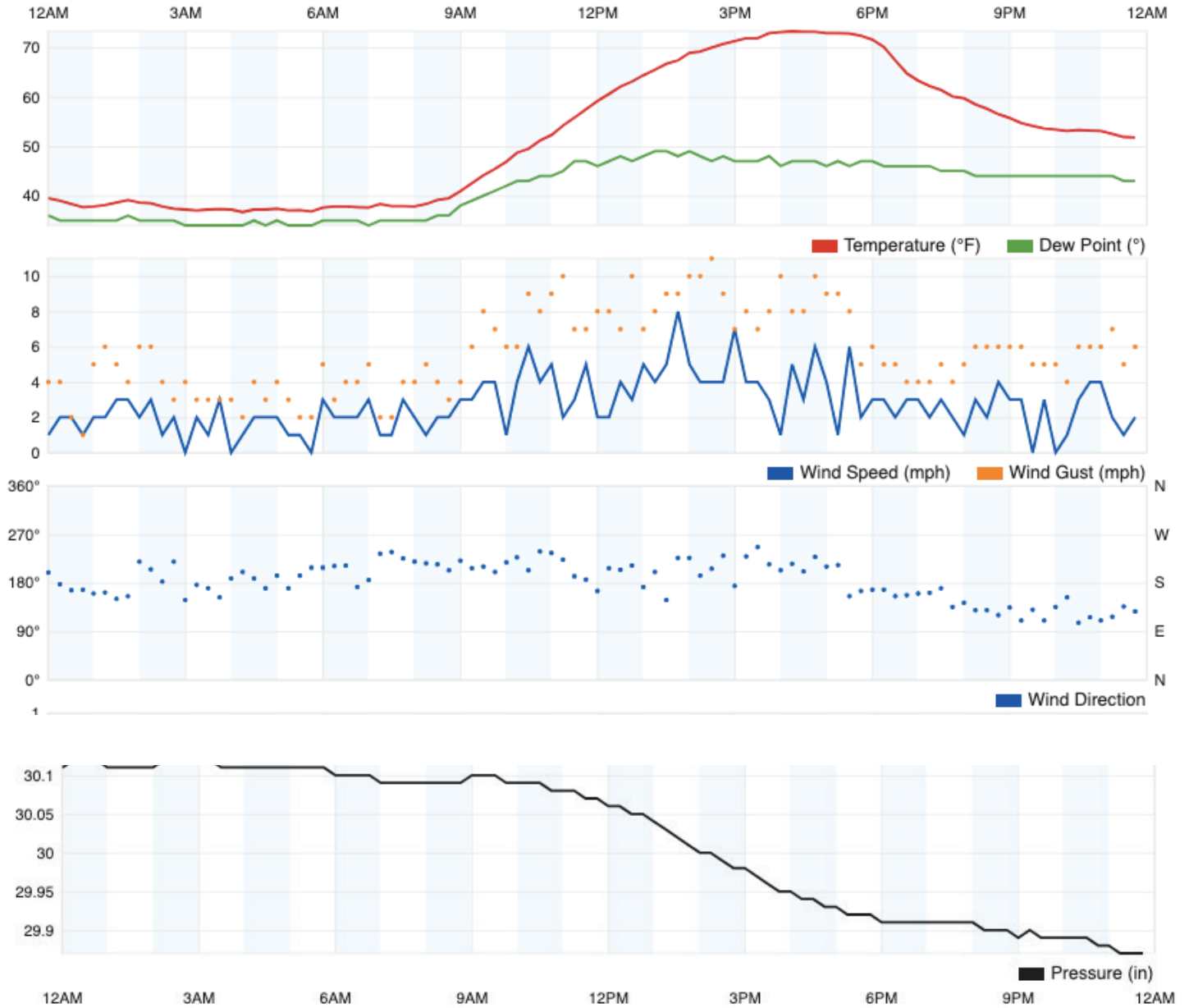
"Next year I plan to attend SDSU and major in either human biology or pre-med," she said.



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Sunny

High: 76 °F

Tonight



Partly Cloudy

Low: 42 °F

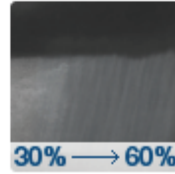
Tuesday



Mostly Sunny  
then Partly  
Sunny and  
Breezy

High: 56 °F

Tuesday  
Night



30% → 60%

Chance  
Showers then  
Showers  
Likely and  
Breezy

Low: 36 °F

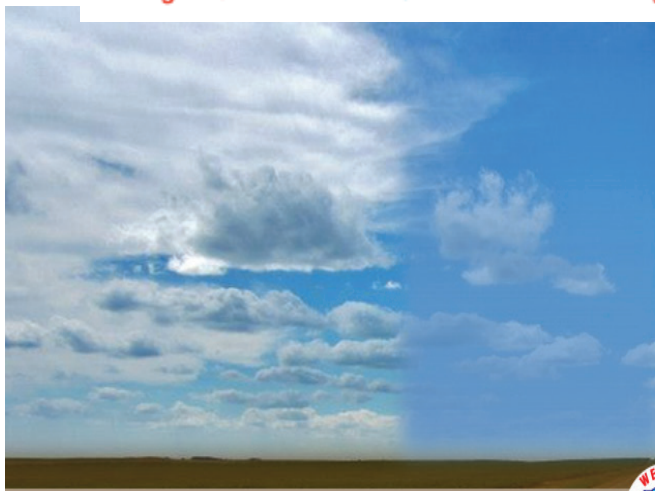
Wednesday



70%

Showers  
Likely and  
Breezy

High: 44 °F



## Today through Tuesday

Dry & Breezy.  
Increasing Clouds.

*Elevated Fire Weather Concerns Today!*



High: 75 to 81°  
Low: low to mid 40s

National Weather Service

Aberdeen, SD



## Tuesday Night through Wednesday

Rain Showers.

Over central SD: possibly mixing with  
light Snow Showers early Wednesday morning.



Highs Tuesday: 53 to 63°, lowest over central SD

Lows: 30 to 41°, lowest over central SD

Highs Wednesday: 40s



Dry and breezy conditions will be the theme today, resulting in elevated fire weather concerns. Rain showers will move into the area Tuesday night, and linger into Wednesday. For central South Dakota, precipitation will likely mix with and could briefly change over to snow showers. Light snow accumulations of generally an inch or less will be possible over grassy surfaces of western Corson and Dewey Counties early Wednesday morning.

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## Today in Weather History

October 18, 2012: An area of low pressure rapidly intensified once it moved east of the northern plains. This strengthening resulted in very strong northwest winds across the region. Some of the higher reported wind gusts include 77 mph at the Fort Pierre and Grand River RAWS sites, 74 mph at the Pierre airport, and 70 mph at Murdo, Presho, and Hayes public observation sites.

1906 - A hurricane struck South Florida drowning 124 persons stranded in the Florida Keys. (David Ludlum)

1910 - Northeasterly winds as high as 70 mph (from a hurricane moving northward up the Florida peninsula) carried water out of Tampa Bay and the Hillsboro River. The water level lowered to nine feet below mean low water. Forty ships were grounded. (The Weather Channel)

1916: A tropical depression organized to a tropical storm on October 11 in the western Caribbean. It moved westward, reaching hurricane strength on the 13th before hitting the Yucatán Peninsula on the 15th as a 110 mph hurricane. It weakened over land, and it emerged over the southern Gulf of Mexico as a tropical storm. It quickly re-strengthened to a Category 3 hurricane, hitting Pensacola on October 18. The maximum wind velocity at Mobile was 115 mph from the east at 8:25 am. Pensacola had winds of 120 mph at 10:13 am when the wind instrument tower was blown down.

1930 - A big early season lake effect snowburst on the lee shores of Lake Erie and Lake Ontario produced 47 inches at Gouverneur NY and 48 inches just south of Buffalo. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Thunderstorms in northeastern Texas produced golf ball size hail at Atlanta, along with wind gusts to 86 mph, and four inches of rain. Damage from the storm was estimated at more than a million dollars. Sunny and mild weather continued across much of the rest of the nation. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Eight cities in the southwestern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Red Bluff CA with a reading of 96 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Unseasonably cold air began to invade the central and eastern U.S. Light snow fell across northern Maine, and snow was also reported in the Great Lakes Region, including the Chicago area. Bismarck ND was the cold spot in the nation with a low of 9 degrees above zero. Five cities in Florida reported record high readings for the date, as temperatures warmed above 80 degrees. Miami FL reported a record high of 90 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

2005 - With the formation of Hurricane Wilma, the 2005 Atlantic hurricane season tied the record for the most named storms for any season (21 storms in 1933), and also tied the record for the most hurricanes in a single season (12 in 1969). Wilma peaked at category-5 intensity on the 19th, with a minimum central pressure falling to 882 millibars (26.05 inches of mercury), the lowest pressure ever recorded in the Atlantic Basin. Wilma also became the most rapidly-intensifying storm on record, with a maximum-sustained surface wind speed increase of 105 mph in a 24-hour period.

2005: Hurricane Wilma developed a tiny, well-defined eye and began intensifying rapidly, reaching Category 5 strength with a record-setting pressure of 882 millibars by October 19. The rapid intensification from a tropical storm to Category 5 hurricane in 24 hours was the fastest ever recorded in the Atlantic Ocean, and the second-fastest worldwide, after Super Typhoon Forrest.

2007: A destructive fall tornado hit Nappanee, Indiana causing extensive damage along its 20-mile path across northeast Marshall, Northwest Kosciusko and southwest Elkhart Counties. High-end EF3 intensity winds near 165 mph were estimated based on the most severe damage over southeast Nappanee. Over 100 structures sustained significant damage or were destroyed in town alone. Despite the widespread damage and time of day, only minor injuries were reported.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp: 74 °F at 4:20 PM**

**Low Temp: 37 °F at 4:11 AM**

**Wind: 11 mph at 2:29 PM**

**Precip: 0.00**

**Record High: 90° in 1910**

**Record Low: 12° in 1930**

**Average High: 58°F**

**Average Low: 32°F**

**Average Precip in Oct.: 1.37**

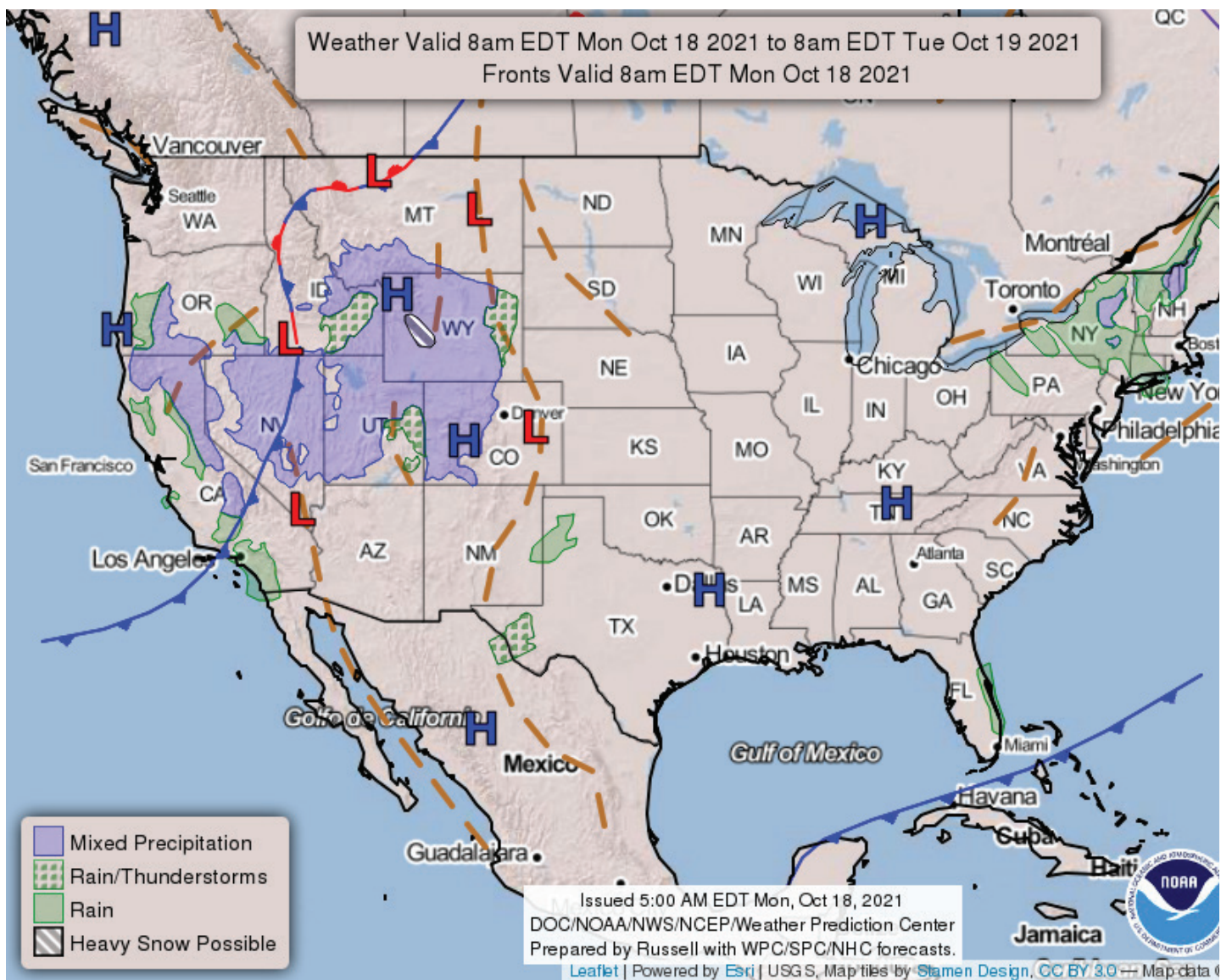
**Precip to date in Oct.: 1.94**

**Average Precip to date: 19.70**

**Precip Year to Date: 17.36**

**Sunset Tonight: 6:43:04 PM**

**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:53:10 AM**





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## RESCUED FROM "THE PIT"

Time has a way of bringing about a "lapse in memory." Many of the important events in our lives - especially when God has intervened in a very dramatic way - have been forgotten over the years. Yes, there are moments when they come to mind, but for the most part, unless we record them somewhere, they are forgotten. Certainly, this is a shortcoming for many of us, and it would be good if we had a "remember this gift" list.

No doubt that is why God had David add the "benefit of remembering this gift" to his list of "Do not forget."

"Do not forget that he redeems - or more literally - rescues you - from the pit." In the previous verse, we are reminded of His healing. Now we are reminded to "store this 'benefit' - being rescued from death - inside of us."

"The pit" quite literally means "death." Those who have ever "walked through the valley of the shadow of death" understand the significance of the "walking back into the light" of life. So, we dare not forget the great benefit and blessing of the restoration of health and healing, hope and happiness.

But we must also remember and constantly recall the "benefit" of having been rescued from "eternal death!" Jesus promised us that, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me, will never die." This great benefit, eternity with Him, is the greatest of all benefits!

May we remember and rejoice, recall and realize each day that we experience the benefit of His blessings and eternal life, and the hope it gives us.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to somehow - in some way - understand the value of Your benefits that we enjoy every day - beginning with Your salvation, In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Who redeems your life from the pit. Psalm 103:4a

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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

## News from the Associated Press

### Zoo regroups following leopard's death, possibly from COVID

By ANNIE TODD Sioux Falls Argus Leader

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Great Plains Zoo announced that one of their snow leopards, Baya, died of a respiratory illness, possibly COVID-19, last week.

In the days since Baya's death, while felt deeply across the zoo's community and overall conservation efforts, the animal's passing has also raised questions on how zoos get these kinds of exotic animals, and whether the Sioux Falls zoo will gain another in the future.

The zoo is accredited through the Association of Zoos and Aquariums along with 240 others across the world. These zoos are able to participate in programs that facilitate breeding among specific animal populations, including snow leopards. It can take months for transfers to happen, but when they do, it continues a long-standing mission of animal conservation.

The Great Plains Zoo has been involved in the breeding program "for a long time," said Matt Eschenbrenner, the director of animal care and conservation.

"We do plan on remaining involved in snow leopard breeding," Eschenbrenner said. "We have the space to bring in another female to continue being a part of this breeding program."

"It's not, 'Hey, we're down a snow leopard. Send us another one.'"

Before a zoo can get a new snow leopard, the institution must fill out an annual survey through a breeding and transfer program, part of the Species Survival Plan, which holistically examines if the facility can take another leopard and if all the good things happen, even have space for future cubs, Eschenbrenner said.

Still, if a snow leopard dies during the program, the zoo can't get another animal right away, the Sioux Falls Argus Leader reported.

"It's not, 'Hey, we're down a snow leopard. Send us another one. That's not how it really works,'" he said.

Right now, the survey is happening and Eschenbrenner says the zoo can be involved in the program for the upcoming year. However, it's a months-long process, because of all the conversation that must be had to bring the animal from one zoo to another.

"I'm just not sure when a snow leopard will physically be here on grounds," he said

The animals transferred to different zoos are part of the Species Survival Plan, which also helps build genetic diversity and biologically sound populations, according to their website.

Baya was specifically chosen for Strut, another snow leopard at the zoo, and a whole team was designed with specific guidance to help the two mate. Baya had been at the Great Plains Zoo since early 2021.

While the breeding and transfer program between the zoos is free, if babies are born, some will stay with their home zoo. Others will eventually be transferred elsewhere to help zoos with future breeding attempts, Eschenbrenner said.

The Sioux Falls zoo has had five cubs born during the late 1990s and early 2000s, Eschenbrenner said.

"It's not an easy thing. You don't just put leopard and leopard together and cubs come out. It's a huge process," he said. "That's a huge challenge in zoos, mimicking natural habitats, natural cycles in an unnatural location."

Snow leopards, who are considered a vulnerable species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, are solitary creatures. In the wild, male and females mate during the first three months of the year, and then mothers raise the cubs alone.

There are between 3,920 and 6,390 snow leopards in the wild, according to the Snow Leopard Trust, a conservation website.

Breeding programs help boost the population while maintaining the goal of reintroducing the animals back into the wild in the future even if it's three or four generations after, Eschenbrenner said.

As the zoo fills out the survey for the breeding program, officials want to make sure all their big cats are better after its potential COVID-19 outbreak.

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"We can't even think about bringing in another animal until we know everything has passed and our animals are healthy, 100%," Eschenbrenner said.

Eschenbrenner said the zoo is still waiting for the results of Baya's death and while they suspect it was COVID-19, it's not known for sure.

One of the zoo's Amur tigers tested also positive for the virus Oct. 6, the day before Baya died. Five other big cats have shown symptoms for the illness, including Strut.

Most of the cats have been on prophylactic antibiotics to treat their symptoms and have been improving greatly.

"We're keeping a very close eye on everybody," Eschenbrenner said. "But a lot of them at this point are monitoring symptoms and letting them ride this out a little bit is where we're at."

Eschenbrenner says the zoo plans to administer a COVID-19 vaccine to the animals once it's fully approved.

## South Dakota pheasant hunters see blue skies, lots of birds

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Pheasant hunters from around the country making their annual trek to South Dakota were greeted Saturday with warm weather and blue skies on opening day.

Despite extreme drought conditions in the spring, when pheasants nest and hatch, a mild winter and positive field reports from throughout the state should help the success rate, wildlife officials said.

"We didn't have any significant snow events," said Matt Morlock, acting director for Pheasants Forever in South Dakota. "So birds could get out and feed in open fields and then tuck right back into thermal cover during the few cold snaps we had."

Phil Miller, a dentist from Georgia who makes yearly hunting trips to South Dakota, said he likes the state's "welcoming culture," all the way from the greetings at the airport to the hosts in the field.

"We love to just get out. I've bagged probably more today than I did the last two years combined," Miller said Saturday.

Wildlife officials said more than 1.1 million pheasants were harvested by 121,000 hunters in South Dakota last year, when the state Legislature extended the season from 79 to 107 days.

Miller's friend, Tom Jackson, said he was happy to be back in pheasant country after missing the 2020 season.

"I'd love to bag plenty of birds for the next few days but I just also like getting out here to South Dakota," said Miller, a Georgia doctor. "It's a wonderful place to be."

## Colleges collaborate to preserve tribal language, culture

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The tribal college on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation and the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks are working together on a project to digitally preserve Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara language and culture.

The schools will use a \$500,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to fund the initiative, which includes a separate effort to boost the study of American Indian history in the Dakotas.

Faculty and students at Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College in New Town will conduct oral interviews with Three Affiliated Tribes elders and then inventory, preserve and digitize what officials say is "critically endangered" language resources and other at-risk traditional knowledge. The UND team will help with the digital collection.

Together, the schools will create educational resources for the state's new K-12 Native American history curriculum and as part of a special program on the tribal campus, The Bismarck Tribune reported.

The North Dakota Legislature earlier this year approved a bill that requires elementary school instruction to include an emphasis on the state's federally recognized Indian tribes: the Three Affiliated Tribes, Standing Rock Sioux, Spirit Lake Nation, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, and Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Nation.

The Standing Rock and Sisseton Wahpeton reservations both stretch into South Dakota.

## UK prime minister to lead tributes to slain lawmaker Amess

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will lead a special session of tributes in Parliament on Monday to the Conservative lawmaker stabbed to death as he met constituents, an attack that has fueled concern about politicians' safety and the level of vitriol directed at them.

A 25-year-old British man with Somali heritage, Ali Harbi Ali, is being held under the Terrorism Act on suspicion of murder in David Amess' killing. Police say the suspect appears to have acted alone and may have had a "motivation linked to Islamist extremism."

The death the popular legislator who had served in Parliament for almost 40 years shocked Britain, especially its political class. It came five years after Labour Party lawmaker Jo Cox was shot and stabbed to death by a far-right extremist.

The House of Commons returns Monday from a three-week break, and most of the scheduled business has been replaced by tributes to Amess. That will be followed by a service at the medieval St. Margaret's Church in the shadow of Parliament.

The government has ordered a review of lawmakers' security following the attack on Friday. British politicians are protected by armed police when they are in Parliament but generally are not given such protection when they meet with constituents in the districts they represent.

Many politicians say the amount of abuse they receive, both online and in person, has soared in recent years. Police in Wales said Monday they had arrested a 76-year-old man on suspicion of sending a death threat to Labour lawmaker Chris Bryant, the latest in a string of threats to politicians.

Bryant said the tenor of politics was "more sour now than I've known it in 20 years."

Nick Thomas-Symonds, crime and policing spokesman for the main opposition Labour Party, said he and many other politicians received "intimidation while out on the streets, death threats, terrible letters, awful emails."

"I don't know a member of Parliament who has not suffered in that way," he told the BBC. "It's clear that something now has to change."

The killing has also renewed debate about the threat from individuals radicalized by Islamic extremist or far-right ideology.

Multiple media outlets have reported that the suspect had been referred several years ago to a government-sponsored program designed to steer people away from extremism, but was not considered a current subject of interest by the security services.

Police have until Friday to question the suspect, and are working to determine what, if any, connection he had to Amess and why he targeted the lawmaker. The politician's meeting with voters in the seaside town of Leigh-on-Sea was public and open to all.

Amess' family said in a statement that they were struggling to comprehend what had happened.

"We ask people to set aside their differences and show kindness and love to all," said the politician's wife and five children. "This is the only way forward. Set aside hatred and work towards togetherness."

## Commerce head out to save US jobs, 1 computer chip at a time

By JOSH BOAK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo only wears watches made by Bulova — a company that laid off her scientist father, closed its Rhode Island factory and moved production to China in 1983.

The watches give Raimondo, a former Rhode Island governor, a sense of mission as President Joe Biden's de facto tech minister, a responsibility that is focused on adding the kinds of cutting-edge factory jobs that are now abroad.

"It's been a tribute to my dad," Raimondo said of her watch choices in an interview, "and a reminder to me that we need to do more to get good manufacturing jobs in America."

Biden has tasked Raimondo with ensuring the United States will be the world leader in computer chips.

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America's place atop the world as an economic and military power — as well as her political fortunes — might ride on her performance.

The computer chip has become the essential ingredient for autos, medical devices, phones, toys, washing machines, weapons and even some watches. But a global shortage is dragging on growth and fueling inflation. Without computer chips that serve as the switches for today's economy, the United States could be eclipsed by China and other nations that support their semiconductor industries.

To end the shortage, Raimondo, 50, must bring back production of chips as well as solar panels and batteries on the premise that these sectors are key to prosperity. This means consulting semiconductor executives almost daily, following data on plant shutdowns in Asia, seeking additional government support for these industries and making her department something more than a generic envoy to business.

"If we do our job right, and I believe that we will, 10 years from now you'll see a fundamentally more vibrant, larger and revitalized manufacturing industry," Raimondo said. "It is a national security problem that we don't make any leading edge semiconductors in America, that we don't make enough solar panels in America, that we don't make critical batteries in America. This leaves us vulnerable, not just economically."

Raimondo's tenure at Commerce has been high-profile for a department that some presidents have paid little heed.

The prior secretary was advertised as a killer negotiator, but Wilbur Ross was best known for falling asleep at events for President Donald Trump and trying to explain tariffs by holding up a soup can on TV. The Obama administration went a full year with only an acting secretary.

Raimondo bonded with Biden, who often quotes his own parents when pitching his policies. Political allies noted her own ambitions after she was interviewed last year as Biden's prospective running mate. The Commerce Department could be the stepping stone in a Democratic Party increasingly shaped by college-educated women.

"She is someone, like the president, who knows the pain a job loss has on a family, and has never forgotten where she comes from and the real impact economic and trade policies have on real people," said White House chief of staff Ron Klain.

Rhode Island contains grand Newport mansions that once belonged to America's wealthiest families and the factories that drew Italian immigrants such as Raimondo's grandparents. This mix of size and breadth of social class gives its politics an unusual intimacy.

Joseph Raimondo lost his chemist job at the Bulova plant when his youngest child was in sixth grade. His daughter's admirers and even some detractors say that formative event made her competitive and as meticulously detail-oriented as a watchmaker.

She has been known to email staff on policy ideas as late as midnight and as early as 6 a.m. Tech CEOs say she works like them: direct, focused, full of questions.

Rhode Island was still a manufacturing state when Raimondo left for college in 1989. More than 20% of the state's jobs were in manufacturing then; now only 8% are, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Raimondo's story is a microcosm of the the American economy, which emerged from World War II with its manufacturing might intact. But lower wages overseas siphoned off factory jobs and the economy was reengineered for college graduates and a digital age.

The smartest or luckiest children of former steelworkers and autoworkers got degrees from the best universities, as did Raimondo.

Like so many of her generation who witnessed America's industrial decline through family experiences, Raimondo labored to be part of the meritocracy. She clerked for a federal judge and became a venture capitalist, while marrying a similarly pedigreed husband, Andy Moffit. Federal ethics disclosures peg her wealth at as much as \$10 million.

Raimondo has long been interested in the finer details of what makes people and systems tick. Bob Walsh, executive director of Rhode Island's leading teachers union and a former banker, recalls getting quizzed by Raimondo over lunch.

"Why do you do what you do?" Raimondo asked him. "You could make much more money doing some-

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thing else.”

Before winning her first term as governor in 2014, Raimondo took controversial steps as state treasurer to shore up Rhode Island’s strained public pension fund. This meant bucking the teachers union to raise the retirement age and suspend cost of living adjustments. Many unions opposed her in the primary. But Walsh backed her personally in the general election and provided an organizational endorsement for her 2018 reelection.

In overwhelmingly Democratic Rhode Island, Raimondo learned to govern by building coalitions within a diverse caucus. State Sen. Sam Bell, one of Raimondo’s top Democratic opponents, said she was “brilliant and effective” — but in ways that he believes gutted Medicaid and other services for the poor.

Now, Raimondo’s ability to parse numbers to explain policy comes into play on multiple fronts as she pushes Biden’s infrastructure deal, addresses clogged supply lines and promotes the \$52 billion CHIPS Act to increase computer chip manufacturing and research.

“She is powerful in presenting data,” Walsh said. “Her ability to make a strong presentation and understand the multiplicity of issues can once again be an advantage.”

For much of her lifetime, the key to economic growth was efficiency — payrolls held in check and inventories kept to just-in-time lest any excess supplies reduce profits.

Then the pandemic disrupted chip production right when demand was increasing as people working from home became more dependent on their electronics. The fragile supply chain also took hits from extreme weather and other factors.

“If ships stop running, then all those efficient supply chains fall apart very, very quickly,” said Revathi Advaiti, who talks frequently to Raimondo as CEO of Flex, one of the world’s largest electronics manufacturer services companies. “The pandemic is just one part of it. Our view is that this has been coming about for a long time.”

The United States now needs a more diverse network of manufacturers closer to home to avoid shut-downs and minimize the damage from disasters. It needs fail-safes that make it easier for factories to restart after being shut. That also means it needs more high-tech manufacturing jobs.

Raimondo anticipates the computer chip shortage will last well into next year — and hurt. The White House noted in a September report that the shortage could lop a full percentage point off economic growth this year.

“We all probably underestimated how disruptive COVID is to our supply chains,” Raimondo said. “We just abruptly shut down our economy. Automakers just stopped ordering semiconductors.”

The United States once accounted for 40% of chip-making worldwide; now it’s 12%. The cost of making a chip in the United States is 30% higher than in Taiwan and South Korea. A chipmaker must spend tens of millions of dollars on a prototype before seeing any revenue, a barrier for start-ups.

For the trappings of a technocrat, Raimondo is making choices on personal terms. When Biden interviewed her for Commerce, he knew about her father. The move to Washington seemed a natural fit, but Raimondo worried about uprooting her teenage children, Cecilia and Thompson.

Her brother’s advice: Take the job. For their father.

## Protestors disrupt flame lighting for Beijing Winter Games

By NICHOLAS PAPHITIS and THANASSIS STAVRAKIS Associated Press

ANCIENT OLYMPIA. Greece (AP) — Three activists protesting human rights abuses in China broke into the archaeological site where the flame lighting ceremony for the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics was being held Monday and ran toward the newly lit torch holding a Tibetan flag and a banner that read “No genocide games.”

The protesters climbed over a fence to enter the grounds and attempted to reach the Temple of Hera, where the ceremony was being held. They were thrown to the ground by police and detained.

“How can Beijing be allowed to host the Olympics given that they are committing a genocide against the Uyghurs?” one protester said, referring to the treatment of Uyghur Muslims in China’s northwest region

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of Xinjiang.

The flame was lit at the birthplace of the ancient Olympics in southern Greece under heavy police security. With the public excluded amid pandemic safety measures, and a cloudless sky over the verdant site of Ancient Olympia, the flame was ceremoniously kindled using the rays of the sun before being carried off on a mini torch relay.

Earlier, other protestors were detained by Greek police before they could reach the site. Pro-democracy protests also had broken out during the lighting ceremony for the 2008 Beijing Summer Games.

Despite widespread international criticism of China's human rights record, the International Olympic Committee has shied away from the issue, saying it falls outside its remit.

In his speech in the ancient stadium of Olympia, where in antiquity male athletes competed naked during a special truce among their often-warring cities, IOC President Thomas Bach stressed that the modern Games must be "respected as politically neutral ground."

"Only this political neutrality ensures that the Olympic Games can stand above and beyond the political differences that exist in our times," he said. "The Olympic Games cannot address all the challenges in our world. But they set an example for a world where everyone respects the same rules and one another."

Tibetan rights activists said in a press release that China was trying to "sportswash" its human rights abuses "with the glamour and veneer of respectability the Olympic Games brings."

Beijing will become the first city to have hosted both winter and summer Olympics.

In a tightly choreographed performance shortly afterwards, a Greek actress playing the part of a pagan priestess knelt to light the Olympic flame, using a bowl-shaped mirror to focus the sun's rays on a fuel-filled torch.

Standing in front of the few remaining columns of the ruined, 2,600-year-old Temple of Hera, she offered a symbolic prayer for the ancient Greek god of light, Apollo, to light the flame.

"Mountains fall silent, birdsong cease," she intoned as a TV drone buzzed overhead and ranks of photographers clicked their shutters.

Shortly later, the protester's shouts were heard.

Yu Zaiqing, the vice president of the Beijing organizing committee, said the Games brought "confidence, warmth and hope" during the pandemic, which first appeared in China.

"We can and will deliver a streamlined, safe and splendid Olympic Games to the world," he said.

Police were much in evidence at and around the archaeological site where the ancient Games were held from 776 BC and for more than 1,000 years, until the Christians stamped them out. Anyone heading for the venue had to have an accreditation and pass through checkpoints and metal detectors.

On Sunday, two protesters were detained on the Acropolis in Athens trying to raise a banner to draw attention to human rights abuses in China.

The Olympic flame will be taken to Athens and handed over to Beijing organizers on Tuesday at the renovated stadium where the first modern Olympics were held in 1896.

The Beijing Winter Games will run from Feb. 4-20. Only spectators from mainland China will be allowed to attend. Everyone at the Olympics — including athletes — will be expected to be vaccinated, or else have to spend 21 days in quarantine.

More AP Olympics: <https://apnews.com/hub/olympic-games> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## Crunch time: Biden faces critical next 2 weeks for agenda

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden is entering a crucial two weeks for his ambitious agenda, racing to conclude contentious congressional negotiations ahead of both domestic deadlines and a chance to showcase his administration's accomplishments on a global stage.

Biden and his fellow Democrats are struggling to bridge intraparty divides by month's end to pass a bipartisan infrastructure bill and a larger social services package. The president hopes to nail down both



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before Air Force One lifts off for Europe on Oct. 28 for a pair of world leader summits, including the most ambitious climate change meeting in years.

But that goal has been jeopardized by fractures among Democrats, imperiling the fate of promised sweeping new efforts to grapple with climate change. There's also rising anxiety within the party about a bellwether gubernatorial contest in Virginia and looming Senate fights over the federal debt limit and government funding that could distract from getting the president's agenda across the finish line.

Biden is trying to stabilize his presidency after a difficult stretch marked by the tumultuous end of the Afghanistan war, a diplomatic spat with a longtime ally and a surge in COVID-19 cases that rattled the nation's economic recovery and sent his poll numbers tumbling.

His team has continued its strategy — one that served it well during the campaign and earlier this year — of blocking out the outside noise to stay focused on a singular mission, this time to pass the two-part package that will give Democrats a platform on which to run in next year's midterm elections.

"These bills, in my view, are literally about competitiveness versus complacency, about opportunity versus decay, and about leading the world or continuing to let the world move by us," Biden said Friday while pushing the legislation in Connecticut.

Yet beneath the White House's pleas for patience — reminding people that hard things take time — is a bubbling sense of urgency that a deal needs to be struck rapidly.

For the White House, there are the explicit target dates, including an end-of-month deadline on transportation funding and Biden's upcoming foreign trip. But there are also more abstract imperatives: proving Democrats can deliver on their promises to voters and protecting Biden's waning political capital.

With new urgency, the administration has sent signals to Capitol Hill in recent days that it is time to wrap up negotiations, that a deal needs to be reached, according to two White House officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss private conversations. Biden himself has expressed impatience and will be increasing his own personal outreach this week to push lawmakers to find a compromise and bring the bills to a vote, the officials said.

West Wing officials are still optimistic that an agreement will ultimately be struck, but there are also fears that the messy, drawn-out negotiation has clouded the tangible benefits of what Biden aims to deliver to voters.

Biden sought to address some of that when he traveled to Hartford, Connecticut, last week to showcase initiatives to sharply reduce the cost of early childhood care — perhaps one of the only pieces of the legislation that is a lock to make the final package.

Even Democratic leaders are divided on the best way to shrink the overall price tag of the package in order to win over more votes. Biden said Friday he prefers including all of the wish-list proposals, but trimming down the length of the programs to cut costs. His thinking is that a future Congress can vote later to extend programs that the American people will find popular.

But days earlier, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi suggested the opposite tack — approving a narrower set of programs to last for a longer time period.

Some Democrats have pushed for passing the bipartisan infrastructure deal by Oct. 31 even if the larger social services package is not settled, a move many progressives dislike because they could lose leverage for the latter bill.

The fate of climate change provisions is particularly perilous.

West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin's objections to a program aimed at speeding the nation's transition away from fossil fuels threatens the heart of Biden's plans to combat climate change just before he tries to assert American leadership on the issue at the upcoming global conference in Scotland.

The Democrats' razor-thin margins in both houses of Congress have empowered individual lawmakers like Manchin and Arizona Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, vexing fellow lawmakers and the White House. White House aides have not abandoned the clean energy program but are exploring alternate means to string together a mix of policies to cut emissions, officials said.

Abandoning the provisions could wound Biden in Glasgow, at a summit that the administration has held

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out as a vital opportunity not just to combat climate change but to reassert U.S. leadership on the issue after four years of retrenchment under President Donald Trump. The United States will be bringing a major footprint to the gathering — including former President Barack Obama — but it risks falling behind European nations that have taken more concrete steps to cut emissions.

Biden's stop in Scotland early in November will follow his participation in a summit of world leaders in Rome. But Chinese President Xi Jinping's decision to skip the gatherings — delaying the first meeting between the leaders of the two superpowers — could diminish their relevance. Still, Biden is expected to meet in Italy with French President Emmanuel Macron as the men look to repair relations after a U.S. submarine deal with Australia scuttled a French contract and led the French to briefly withdraw their ambassador from Washington.

Also looming is the Nov. 2 gubernatorial election in Virginia, which is regarded as a referendum on Biden and the Democrats' chances of retraining control over Congress next year.

Terry McAuliffe, who previously served as the state's governor, is locked in a closer-than-expected race with Republican businessman Glenn Youngkin in a state that Biden won by 10 points last year.

McAuliffe has been surprisingly public in his criticism of the administration's legislative strategy, urging Democrats to pass the infrastructure bill before Election Day to give him something to show voters. White House officials privately expect McAuliffe to emerge with a narrow win and believe they can ignore worries about a smaller-than-expected margin of victory.

But a tight outcome, or a Youngkin win, could rattle Democrats uncertain about Biden's political coattails — potentially making them less likely to take risky votes for his agenda — and would buoy Republicans heading into the midterms.

## Russia's coronavirus infections exceed 8 million

By JIM HEINTZ Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia's total number of coronavirus infections has topped 8 million, more than 5% of the population, and the daily infection toll hit a new record.

The national coronavirus task force said Monday that 34,325 new infections over the past day raised the pandemic-long total to 8,027,012. It also said 998 people died of COVID-19 in the previous day, bringing the total number of deaths to 224,310.

The death toll is minutely lower than the record 1,002 tallied on Saturday, but shows the country continuing to struggle with the virus as vaccination rates remain low.

Russian authorities have tried to speed up the pace of vaccinations with lotteries, bonuses and other incentives, but widespread vaccine skepticism and conflicting signals from officials stymied the efforts. The task force said Monday that about 45 million Russians, or 32% of the country's nearly 146 million people, are fully vaccinated.

Despite the mounting toll, the Kremlin has ruled out a new nationwide lockdown like the one early on in the pandemic that badly hurt the economy, eroding President Vladimir Putin's popularity. Instead, it has delegated the power to enforce coronavirus restrictions to regional authorities.

Some of Russia's 85 regions have restricted attendance at large public events and limited access to theaters, restaurants and other venues. However, daily life is going on largely as normal in Moscow, St. Petersburg and many other Russian cities.

The highest concentrations of cases are mostly in comparatively urbanized western Russia and in the developed areas along the Pacific Coast such as Vladivostok and Khabarovsk, but the sparsely populated Siberian region of Sakha and Chukotka in the extreme northeast also show high case rates of more than 150 infections per 100,000 people over a seven-day period.

Russia's coronavirus death toll is Europe's largest. The official record ranks Russia as having the fifth-most pandemic deaths in the world following the United States, Brazil, India and Mexico.

However, state statistics agency Rosstat, which also counts deaths in which the virus wasn't considered the main cause, has reported a much higher pandemic death toll — about 418,000 people with COVID-19

as of August. Based on that number, Russia would rank as the fourth hardest-hit nation in the world, ahead of Mexico.

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

## Sites where Germans killed Jews are dedicated in Poland

By VANESSA GERA Associated Press

WOJSLAWICE, Poland (AP) — The Polish witnesses of the German crime in Wojslawice lived for decades with the memories of their Jewish neighbors executed in 1942. They remembered a meadow that flowed with blood, a child who cried out for water from underneath a pile of bodies, arms and legs that still moved days after the execution.

In the years that followed, those who had seen the crime shared their knowledge with their children, warning them to stay away from the spot behind the Orthodox church where some 60 Jews, among them 20 children, were murdered on that October day.

"When I was a young boy I was running around these meadows but the elders were saying: 'please do not run there because there are buried people, buried Jews,'" said Marian Lackowski, a retired police officer whose late mother witnessed the execution in the small town in eastern Poland.

Born after the war, Lackowski has devoted years to ensuring that the victims receive a dignified burial, a mission he finally fulfilled Thursday as he gathered with Jewish and Christian clergy, the mayor, schoolchildren and other members of the town.

Beginning at the town hall, the group walked solemnly down a hill to the execution site, their silence broken only by roosters and barking dogs. After they arrived at the spot, church bells rang out from the town's Catholic church and a trumpet called at noon. Jewish and Christian prayers were recited and mourners lit candles and placed stones in the Jewish tradition at a new memorial erected over the bones. "May their souls have a share in eternal life," it reads.

The mass grave site in Wojslawice is tragically not unique. During the German occupation of Poland during World War II, the Germans imprisoned Jews in ghettos and murdered them in death camps including Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor. But they also shot them in fields and forests near their homes, leaving behind mass graves across Poland, many of which have only come to light in recent years.

Germany invaded Poland in 1939 the act that started the war and began some five years of brutal occupation. Ethnic Poles were considered racially inferior by the Germans and sent to labor and concentration camps and sometimes executed on the streets. Jews were targeted for total destruction, a goal that the Third Reich came close to achieving.

Amid the occupation, ethnic Poles were sometimes bystanders of the Holocaust, sometimes the saviors of Jews and sometimes the executioners' helpers. It's a traumatic history that was largely suppressed during the decades of communist rule but has been the subject of soul searching since.

Poland's nationalist government seeks to highlight Polish heroism and play down Polish crimes — to the point it has been accused by Israel of historical whitewashing.

Nonetheless, across Poland many regular people are engaged at the local level in preserving Jewish cemeteries or doing other work to preserve remembrance of the nation's lost Jews.

Agnieszka Nieradko, co-founder of a Warsaw-based foundation devoted to finding the unmarked graves and securing them, said the large scale of unmarked graves started to become clear about a decade ago. The person she credits with their discovery is Zbigniew Nizinski, a Protestant man whose religious convictions led him to pay tribute to the Polish Jews who helped make Poland a multicultural land for the centuries before the Holocaust.

Nizinski, often traveling by bike, would go to small communities and ask local people where the Jewish cemetery was. The response was often: Did he mean the old prewar cemetery, or the unmarked wartime grave? Nizinski would then report his discoveries to the Rabbinical Commission for Jewish Cemeteries in

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Poland and created a foundation to help dedicate the sites.

Eventually the task was too much for Nizinski, and Nieradko and Aleksander Schwarz co-founded a foundation in 2014 under the auspices of the rabbinical commission to find and preserve as many Holocaust graves as possible, a race against time as eyewitness grow older and die.

The foundation is called Zapomniane, which means "Forgotten," but Nieradko has since come to realize that forgotten doesn't really capture the full truth of the unmarked graves.

"They operate somewhere on the margins of local history but they have never been forgotten. When we go to those places, we don't discover anything new for these people," she said. "Everyone knows about Jews buried in the forest or Jews buried somewhere on the meadow. It is oral history that is transmitted from generation to generation."

Nieradko and Rabbi Michael Schudrich, the American-born chief rabbi of the country, frequently travel to communities for ceremonies dedicating new memorials at the sites. Nieradko says over 50 mass grave sites have been commemorated, 70 have been secured with wooden markers and she believes there are more still to be found.

Schudrich said ceremonies like the one Thursday in Wojslawice give the Holocaust victims their much-deserved graves, and offer a sense of closure to local people who witnessed the murders.

Some Jewish survivors and descendants also finally have a grave to visit. Schudrich recalled how one survivor in Israel returned to Poland for the dedication of a memorial where her mother and siblings were killed after she got separated from them at the start of the war.

"She just stood and hugged the matzevah (grave stone) because she never got to see her mother again," he recalled.

The foundation uses ground penetrating radar, a surveying method called light detection and ranging, or LIDAR, and wartime aerial photos made by German army spy planes to precisely define the borders of the graves. But nothing is more important than human memory.

"If you don't have a person to lead you to the grave, all those fancy tools are useless," she said.

Nieradko says the sites of graves are found largely thanks to the testimony of the eyewitnesses. Their memories are often preserved by children and grandchildren.

Exhumations are never carried out because Judaism teaches that human remains are sacred and must not be touched.

After the graveside ceremony, the mourners moved to Wojslawice's renovated synagogue, where the mayor paid tribute to the multiethnic nature of the prewar town, where Poles, Ukrainians and Jews lived side by side.

A man from nearby Chelm whose mother is Jewish stood up during the events to praise the tolerance of the local leaders, lamenting that is not the case everywhere.

Lackowski, who had worked many years to commemorate the burial site, expressed his satisfaction that the victims finally have a proper memorial.

He said that in his work he collected testimony from eight witnesses "who tell horrible stories that the meadow flowed with blood, that a child cried out for a drink from this pile (of bodies), that even after being buried for a few days, there were arms and legs sticking out of this pile that were still moving. It was something terrible."

The few remaining eyewitnesses were mostly too feeble to attend the ceremony. Only 94-year-old Boleslaw Sitarz joined the town's commemorations in the synagogue. He was 15 when he saw the Jews being lined up and taken to the spot behind the Orthodox church. "Screaming, shouting, lamenting did not help," he said. After they were gunned down, he said, dogs came at night and scattered the bodies.

He expressed satisfaction that a ceremony was finally held to honor them. "These were our neighbors," he said.

Nieradko says she and her foundation limit their work to where they are wanted. She has also learned of massacres where local people were involved in the murders, and there is less of a willingness to cooperate and have the spot commemorated.

"We choose sites where there is hope for putting a monument," she said. "The difficult places we just

leave for better times.”

## **New technology offers anonymous way to report abuse, doping**

By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer

A college basketball player hatched the idea after seeing a discrimination case nearly implode his own team, then wondering why nobody had done anything about it sooner.

Ten years later, that player has developed the idea into a key tool for fixing a sports landscape teeming with cases of sexual abuse, along with examples of racism and sexism in the workplace, discrimination, harassment and doping cheats at virtually every level.

The player, David Chadwick, has transformed his idea into a company called RealResponse, which provides customers — mainly university athletic departments and other sports organizations — technology to give athletes and employees a chance to initiate real-time, anonymous complaints by sending a simple text.

On Monday, RealResponse announced a deal with the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, which will use the platform as one of its many resources for whistleblowers to report their concerns about possible doping cases.

In a sign of the company’s breadth, which also illustrates the wide range of possibilities and problems that abound through sports, RealResponse already has deals in place with USA Gymnastics, the NFL Players Association, the National Women’s Soccer League and more than 100 university sports programs. It is also looking to partner with some of thousands of youth and club-sports organizations around the United States.

“I wanted to come up with something that would solve a direct challenge — the lack of confidential, anonymous, real-time ways for athletes and others to share concerns and feedback with administration,” Chadwick said.

The technology is designed to be as simple as possible, specifically for a generation of athletes used to doing almost everything on their cell phones.

It allows athletes or employees to start a report about workplace discrimination, doping violations, sex abuse and other concerns with a simple text. It skips the intake forms and drop-down menus that populate many reporting apps, and has privacy features that allow administrators to gather more information from whistleblowers while allowing those people to maintain their anonymity.

The NFLPA initially bought the service to give players a chance to report inconsistencies in COVID-19 testing protocols. It has since expanded use of the service to, according to a news release, “anonymously and securely report any and all issues ... for everything from training camp issues, drug policy infractions, social injustice concerns, medical issues, COVID-19 policy violations, misconduct, hazing, harassment, and more.”

The germ of the thought for Chadwick came when he played at Rice, where a pair of players left after accusing administrators of discrimination.

“I found myself in the crosshairs of not knowing what was going on, and wondering, if they were going on, why they weren’t uncovered and addressed sooner?” Chadwick said.

He transferred to Valparaiso, and started the research. He contacted more than 200 administrators in university athletic departments, asking them what systems they had in place to receive complaints or concerns from athletes.

“I heard a theme of lots of informal forms of contact, things like ‘I have an open-door policy,’ and ‘I get to know my kids,’” Chadwick said. “But there was no consistency. Some did it non-anonymously, some did it anonymously, some did it with pen and paper, some did it electronically. Overall, there was terrible participation.”

Chadwick’s first iteration of his system allowed athletic departments to conduct end-of-season surveys from players. The feedback the ADs received was jarring: Tales of NCAA violations, drug use, hazing, sexual assault.

“The players very much bought into this and were willing to put very confidential and serious things into the system” Chadwick said. “I thought, we can’t wait for end-of-year surveys to get some of this information.”

RealResponse expanded its technology to include ways for athletes to initiate contact through a simple

text.

The company also offers a way for organizations to keep a record of how they respond to complaints. Some of the biggest scandals in the Olympic sex-abuse cases have involved trying to figure out what authorities did when they received information; these programs keep track.

USADA's sign-on to the platform marks another milestone for the company. One long-running problem in the anti-doping world has been the ability to protect the whistleblowers after they share their information.

"The connection with RealResponse helps remove potential barriers for whistleblowers in communicating with our investigation team," USADA CEO Travis Tygart said.

Chadwick said the ultimate goal is to make that easier in all aspects of sports. Another hurdle to clear is getting organizations to buy in to gathering and more efficiently using the information that, for decades, has often been mishandled or not handled at all.

"In years past, there's been a reluctance to implement a system like ours because of the question 'Do we want to know?'" Chadwick said. "And that's a point of emphasis for us. If you want to know, you should put systems and people in place to not only uncover the issues but to address them."

More AP sports: <https://apnews.com/hub/apf-sports> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## **Afghan Taliban's victory boosts Pakistan's radicals**

By KATHY GANNON Associated Press

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP) — In Pakistan's rugged tribal regions along the border with Afghanistan, a quiet and persistent warning is circulating: The Taliban are returning.

Pakistan's own Taliban movement, which had in years past waged a violent campaign against the Islamabad government, has been emboldened by the return to power of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

They seem to be preparing to retake control of the tribal regions that they lost nearly seven years ago in a major operation by Pakistan's military. Pakistani Taliban are already increasing their influence. Local contractors report Taliban-imposed surcharges on every contract and the killing of those who defy them.

In early September, for example, a contractor named Noor Islam Dawar built a small canal not far from the town of Mir Ali near the Afghan border. It wasn't worth more than \$5,000. Still, the Taliban came calling, demanding their share of \$1,100. Dawar had nothing to give and pleaded for their understanding, according to relatives and local activists. A week later he was dead, shot by unknown gunmen. His family blames the Taliban.

Pakistan's Taliban, known as the Tehrik-e-Taliban or TTP, is a separate organization from Afghanistan's Taliban, though they share much of the same hardline ideology and are allied. The TTP arose in the early 2000s and launched a campaign of bombings and other attacks, vowing to bring down the Pakistani government and seizing control in many tribal areas. The military crackdown of the 2010s managed to repress it.

But the TTP was reorganizing in safe havens in Afghanistan even before the Afghan Taliban took over Kabul on Aug. 15.

"The Afghan Taliban's stunning success in defeating the American superpower has emboldened the Pakistani Taliban...They now seem to believe they too can wage a successful jihad against the Pakistani 'infidel' state and have returned to insurgency mode," said Brian Glyn Williams, Islamic history professor at the University of Massachusetts, who has written extensively on jihad movements.

The TTP has ramped up attacks in recent months. More than 300 Pakistanis have been killed in terrorist attacks since January, including 144 military personnel, according to the Islamabad-based Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies.

The events in Afghanistan have also energized the scores of radical religious parties in Pakistan, said Amir Rana, executive director of the Islamabad-based Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies.

These parties openly revile minority Shiite Muslims as heretics and on occasion bring thousands on to the street to defend their hardline interpretation of Islam. One party, the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan, has a single agenda: to protect a controversial blasphemy law. The law has been used against minorities and

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opponents and can incite mobs to kill simply over an accusation of insulting Islam.

Already buffeted by a growing religiosity, Pakistani society is at risk of transforming into one similar to Taliban-run Afghanistan, Rana warned.

A Gallup Pakistan poll released last week found 55% of Pakistanis would support an "Islamic government" like the one advocated by Afghanistan's Taliban. Gallup surveyed 2,170 Pakistanis soon after the Taliban takeover in Kabul.

Pakistan has shied away from offering unilateral recognition to the all-Taliban government in Afghanistan, but has been pushing for the world to engage with the new rulers. It has urged the United States to release funds to the Afghan government, while urging the Taliban to open their ranks to minorities and non-Taliban.

Pakistan's relationship with the Afghan Taliban is a constant source of angst in America, where Republican senators have introduced a law that would sanction Islamabad for allegedly working against the U.S. to bring the Taliban to power. The charge has angered Pakistan, whose leaders say it was asked and delivered the Taliban to the negotiation table with the U.S., which eventually led to an agreement paving the way for America's final withdrawal.

Pakistan's ties to many of the Afghan Taliban go back to the 1980s when Pakistan was the staging arena for a U.S.-backed fight against Soviet forces in Afghanistan. In particular, the Haqqani group, possibly Afghanistan's most powerful Taliban faction, has a long relationship with Pakistan's intelligence agency, ISI.

Pakistan has turned to Sirajuddin Haqqani, the interior minister in Afghanistan's new Taliban government, for help in starting talks with the Pakistani Taliban, said Asfandyar Mir, a senior expert at the U.S. Institute of Peace.

Some TTP figures in North Waziristan -- a rugged area the group once controlled -- are ready to negotiate. But the most violent factions, led by Noor Wali Mehsud, are not interested in talks. Mehsud's Taliban want control of South Waziristan, said Mir.

It's not clear whether Haqqani will be able to get Mehsud to the table or whether Afghanistan's new rulers are ready to break their close ties with Pakistan's Taliban.

In the attempts to put together negotiations with Islamabad, the TTP is demanding control over parts of the tribal regions and rule by its strict interpretation of Islamic Shariah law in those areas, as well as the right to keep their weapons, according to two Pakistani figures familiar with the demands. They spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to speak to the media and because they fear retaliation.

Bill Roggio of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a U.S.-based think tank, said Pakistan is opening talks with the Taliban to stop the increasing attacks on its military, but he warned that "the government is opening Pandora's box."

"The TTP will not be satisfied with ruling a small portion of Pakistan, it will inevitably want more than what it is given," Roggio said. "Like the Afghan Taliban wanted to rule Afghanistan, the TTP wants to rule Pakistan."

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Associated Press writer Munir Ahmad in Islamabad contributed to this report.

## Jury selection to start in trial over Ahmaud Arbery's death

By RUSS BYNUM Associated Press

BRUNSWICK, Ga. (AP) — Hundreds of people were ordered to report for jury duty Monday in Georgia for what could be a long, laborious effort to find jurors to hear the trial of three white men charged with fatally shooting Ahmaud Arbery as he was running in their neighborhood.

The slaying of the 25-year-old Black man sparked a national outcry fueled by graphic video of the shooting. Father and son Greg and Travis McMichael and their neighbor William "Roddie" Bryan are charged with murder and other crimes in Arbery's death on Feb. 23, 2020, just outside the port city of Brunswick.

Jury selection could last two weeks or more. Arbery's father said he's praying for an impartial panel and

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a fair trial, saying Black crime victims too often have been denied justice.

"This is 2021, and it's time for a change," Marcus Arbery Sr. said in an interview. "We need to be treated equally and get fair justice as human beings, because we've been treated wrong so long."

Before the selection process begins, Superior Court Judge Timothy Walmsley first planned a morning hearing to address legal issues that must be resolved before the trial starts.

Court officials in Glynn County mailed jury-duty notices to 1,000 people, expecting a potentially slow process to find jurors in a community where the slaying dominated news coverage and swamped social media feeds.

The case will be followed closely outside Georgia too. Arbery's killing stoked outrage in the summer of 2020 during a period of national protests over racial injustice. More than two months passed before the McMichaels and Bryan were charged and jailed, only after the video of the shooting leaked online and state investigators took over the case from local police.

Prosecutors say Arbery was merely jogging when the McMichaels armed themselves with guns and chased him in a pickup truck. Bryan joined the pursuit in his own truck and recorded the now-infamous cellphone video of Travis McMichael shooting Arbery three times at close range with a shotgun.

Defense attorneys insist the three men committed no crimes. Greg McMichael told police they pursued Arbery suspecting he was a burglar after security cameras previously recorded him entering a nearby home under construction. He said Travis McMichael fired his gun in self-defense after Arbery attacked him, punching and trying to grab the weapon.

Investigators have testified that they found no evidence of crimes by Arbery in the Satilla Shores subdivision. He was unarmed.

As a precaution against the coronavirus, 600 jury pool members were ordered to report Monday to a gymnasium to provide room for social distancing. They will be summoned to the courthouse in groups of 20, Glynn County Superior Court Clerk Ronald Adams said.

Along with their jury summons, pool members were mailed a three-page questionnaire asking what they already know about the case and what news outlets or social media platforms were their main sources of information.

The form also asks whether prospective jurors posted any online comments about Arbery's killing and if they visited the scene of the shooting or did other research into the case on their own.

Attorneys on both sides will spend the coming days questioning the jury pool, in groups and individually, to determine whether they have formed opinions about the case that render them incapable of serving.

Ultimately the judge needs to seat a jury of 12, plus four alternates who will be on standby to fill in for any jurors who get sick or are dismissed before the trial ends.

Once a jury is seated, the trial itself could take more than two weeks, Adams said.

## China's economic growth weakens amid construction slowdown

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — China's economic growth is sinking under pressure from a construction slowdown and power shortages, prompting warnings about a possible shock to its trading partners and global financial markets.

The world's second-largest economy grew by a weaker-than-expected 4.9% over a year ago in the three months ending in September, down from the previous quarter's 7.9%, government data showed Monday. Factory output, retail sales and investment in construction and other fixed assets all weakened.

Manufacturing has been hampered by official curbs on energy use and shortages of processor chips and other components due to the coronavirus pandemic. Construction, an industry that supports millions of jobs, is slowing as regulators force developers to cut reliance on debt that Chinese leaders worry is dangerously high.

"Ripple effects to the rest of the world could be significant" due to weaker Chinese demand for raw materials, said Mo Ji of Fidelity International in a report. "Even developed markets, including the U.S.,



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would not be immune to a significant tightening in global financial conditions as a result of a negative China growth shock accompanied by financial stress.”

Compared with the previous quarter, the way other major economies are measured, output barely grew in the July-September period, expanding by just 0.2%. That was down from 1.2% in the April-June period and one of the past decade’s weakest quarters.

The slowdown adds to pressure on Beijing to prop up activity by easing borrowing controls and spending more on building public works. But forecasters said even if that happens, activity will weaken before policy changes take effect.

“Growth will slow further,” Louis Kuijs of Oxford Economics said in a report.

Chinese leaders are trying to steer the economy to more sustainable growth based on domestic consumption instead of exports and investment and to reduce financial risk.

Construction and housing sales, an important source of demand for steel, copper and other industrial imports, have slowed since regulators ordered developers to reduce their debt levels.

One of the biggest, Evergrande Group, is struggling to avoid defaulting on \$310 billion owed to banks and bondholders. That has fueled fears about other developers, though economists say the threat to global financial markets is small.

Factories in some provinces were ordered to shut down in mid-September to avoid exceeding official goals for energy use and energy intensity, or the amount used per unit of output. Some warned deliveries of goods might be delayed, raising the possibility of shortages of smartphones and other consumer products ahead of the Christmas shopping season.

Factory output barely grew in September, expanding by only 0.05% compared with August. That was down from the 7.3% growth for the first nine months of the year.

Private sector forecasters have cut their growth outlook this year for China, though they still expect about 8%, which would be among the world’s strongest. The ruling Communist Party’s official target is “more than 6%,” which leaves Beijing room to keep its controls in place.

The near-term outlook “remains difficult,” said Rajiv Biswas of IHS Market in a report. Real estate also is suffering from “fears of contagion to some other property developers.”

This year’s economic figures have been exaggerated due to comparison with 2020, when factories and stores were closed to fight the coronavirus.

Output grew by a record 18.3% in the first quarter of 2021, but forecasters said the rebound already was leveling off.

In September, growth in retail spending weakened to 4.4% over a year earlier, down from 16.4% in the first nine months.

Investment in real estate, factories, housing and other fixed assets rose 0.17% in September, down from 7.3% for the first nine months.

The latest figures indicate “the property sector fallout will be a significant drag on growth in the coming quarters,” said Fidelity’s Mo. “Even significant policy easing now, which is still unlikely in our view, will take time to propagate into the real economy.”

Auto sales in the global industry’s biggest market fell 16.5% in September from a year earlier, according to the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers. The group said production was disrupted by shortages of processor chips.

Imports, an indicator of Chinese domestic demand, rose 17.6% in September over a year earlier, but that was about half the previous month’s 33% growth.

National Bureau of Statistics (in Chinese): [www.stats.gov.cn](http://www.stats.gov.cn)

## US, Haiti seek release of 17 missionaries snatched by gang

By DANICA COTO and EVENS SANON Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — U.S. officials are working with Haitian authorities to try to secure the

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release of 12 adults and five children with a U.S.-based missionary group who were abducted over the weekend by a gang notorious for killings, kidnappings and extortion.

The group was snatched by the 400 Mawozo gang, which controls the Croix-des-Bouquets area east of the capital of Port-au-Prince, police inspector Frantz Champagne told The Associated Press on Sunday. The abduction happened Saturday in the community of Ganthier, which lies in the gang's area. It was blamed for the kidnapping of five priests and two nuns earlier this year.

As authorities sought the release of the 16 Americans and one Canadian with the Ohio-based Christian Aid Ministries, local unions and other organizations expected to launch a strike Monday to protest Haiti's worsening lack of security.

The Western Hemisphere's poorest nation is again struggling with a spike in gang-related kidnappings that had diminished in recent months, after President Jovenel Moïse was fatally shot at his private residence on July 7 and a magnitude 7.2 earthquake killed more than 2,200 people in August.

"Everyone is concerned. They're kidnapping from all social classes," Méhu Changeux, president of Haiti's Association of Owners and Drivers, told Magik9 radio station.

He said the work stoppage would continue until the government could guarantee people's safety.

The kidnapping of the missionaries came just days after high-level U.S. officials visited Haiti and promised more resources for Haiti's National Police, including another \$15 million to help reduce gang violence, which this year has displaced thousands of Haitians who now live in temporary shelters in increasingly unhygienic conditions.

The U.S. State Department said Sunday that it was in regular contact with senior Haitian authorities and would continue to work with them and interagency partners.

"The welfare and safety of U.S. citizens abroad is one of the highest priorities of the Department of State," the agency said in a statement.

Christian Aid Ministries said the kidnapped group included seven women, five men and five children, including a 2-year-old. The organization said they were taken while on a trip to visit an orphanage.

"Join us in praying for those who are being held hostage, the kidnappers and the families, friends and churches of those affected," Christian Aid Ministries said in a statement. "As an organization, we commit this situation to God and trust him to see us through."

An annual report issued last year by Christian Aid Ministries said its American staffers had returned to their base in Haiti after a nine-month absence "due to political unrest" and noted the "uncertainty and difficulties" that arise from such instability.

Nearly a year ago, Haitian police issued a wanted poster for the alleged leader of the 400 Mawozo gang, Wilson Joseph, on charges including murder, attempted murder, kidnapping, auto theft and the hijacking of trucks carrying goods. He goes by the nickname "Lanmò Sanjou," which means "death doesn't know which day it's coming."

Amid the spike in kidnappings, gangs have demanded ransoms ranging from a couple of hundred dollars to more than \$1 million, sometimes killing those they have abducted, according to authorities.

At least 328 kidnappings were reported to Haiti's National Police in the first eight months of 2021, compared with a total of 234 for all of 2020, said a report last month by the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti.

Gangs have been accused of kidnapping schoolchildren, doctors, police officers, busloads of passengers and others as they grow more powerful. In April, a man who claimed to be the leader of 400 Mawozo told a radio station that it was responsible for kidnapping five priests, two nuns and three relatives of one of the priests that month. They were later released.

The spike in kidnappings and gang-related violence has forced Haitians to take detours around certain gang-controlled areas while others opt to stay home, which in turn means less money for people like Charles Pierre, a moto taxi driver in Port-au-Prince who has several children to feed.

"People are not going out in the streets," he said. "We cannot find people to transport."

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Coto reported from San Juan, Puerto Rico. Associated Press videographer Pierre-Richard Luxama in Port-au-Prince and AP writers Matthew Lee in Washington and Matt Sedensky in New York contributed to this report.

## Vaccines, masks? Japan puzzling over sudden virus success

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Almost overnight, Japan has become a stunning, and somewhat mysterious, coronavirus success story.

Daily new COVID-19 cases have plummeted from a mid-August peak of nearly 6,000 in Tokyo, with caseloads in the densely populated capital now routinely below 100, an 11-month low.

The bars are packed, the trains are crowded, and the mood is celebratory, despite a general bafflement over what, exactly, is behind the sharp drop.

Japan, unlike other places in Europe and Asia, has never had anything close to a lockdown, just a series of relatively toothless states of emergency.

Some possible factors in Japan's success include a belated but remarkably rapid vaccination campaign, an emptying out of many nightlife areas as fears spread during the recent surge in cases, a widespread practice, well before the pandemic, of wearing masks and bad weather in late August that kept people home.

But with vaccine efficacy gradually waning and winter approaching, experts worry that without knowing what exactly why cases have dropped so drastically, Japan could face another wave like this summer, when hospitals overflowed with serious cases and deaths soared — though the numbers were lower than pre-vaccination levels.

Many credit the vaccination campaign, especially among younger people, for bringing infections down. Nearly 70 percent of the population is fully vaccinated.

"Rapid and intensive vaccinations in Japan among those younger than 64 might have created a temporary condition similar to herd-immunity," said Dr. Kazuhiro Tateda, a Toho University professor of virology.

Tateda noted that vaccination rates surged in July to September, just as the more infectious delta variant was spreading fast.

He cautioned, however, that breakthrough infections in the U.S., Britain and other places where inoculations began months earlier than in Japan show that vaccines alone are not perfect and efficacy gradually wears off.

Japan's vaccinations started in mid-February, with health workers and the elderly first in line. Shortages of imported vaccines kept progress slow until late May, when the supply stabilized and daily inoculation targets were raised to above 1 million doses to maximize protection before the July 23-Aug. 8 Olympics.

The number of daily shots rose to about 1.5 million in July, pushing vaccination rates from 15% in early July to 65% by early October, exceeding the 57% of the United States.

Daily new cases surged just weeks ahead of the Olympics, forcing Japan to hold the Games with daily caseloads of more than 5,000 in Tokyo and around 20,000 nationwide in early August. Tokyo reported 40 cases Sunday, below 100 for the ninth straight day and lowest this year. Nationwide, Japan reported 429 cases Sunday for an accumulated total of about 1.71 million and 18,000 deaths since the pandemic began early last year.

So why the drop?

"It's a tough question, and we have to consider the effect of the vaccinations progress, which is extremely big," said Disease Control and Prevention Center Director Norio Ohmagari. "At the same time, people who gather in high-risk environments, such as crowded and less-ventilated places, may have been already infected and acquired natural immunity by now."

Though some speculated that the drop in cases might be due to less testing, Tokyo metropolitan government data showed the positivity rate fell from 25% in late August to 1% in mid-October, while the number of tests fell by one-third. Masataka Inokuchi, the Tokyo Medical Association deputy chief, said

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falling positivity rates show infections have slowed.

Japan's state of emergency measures were not lockdowns but requests that focused mainly on bars and eateries, which were asked to close early and not serve alcohol. Many people continued to commute on crowded trains, and attended sports and cultural events at stadiums with some social distancing controls.

The emergency requests have ended and the government is gradually expanding social and economic activity while allowing athletic events and package tours on a trial basis using vaccination certificates and increased testing.

To speed up inoculations, former Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, who left office recently, expanded the number of health workers legally eligible to give shots, opened large-scale vaccination centers and promoted workplace vaccinations beginning in late June.

Kyoto University professor Hiroshi Nishiura told a recent government advisory board meeting that he estimates vaccinations helped some 650,000 people avoid infection and saved more than 7,200 lives between March and September.

Many experts initially blamed younger people, seen drinking on the streets and in parks when the bars were closed, for spreading the virus, but said data showed many in their 40s and 50s also frequented nightlife districts. Most serious cases and deaths were among unvaccinated people in their 50s or younger.

Takaji Wakita, director of the National Institute of Infectious Diseases, told reporters recently he is worried people have already resumed partying in nightlife districts, noting that the slowing of infections may have already hit bottom.

"Looking ahead, it is important to further push down the caseloads in case of a future resurgence of infections," Wakita said Thursday.

On Friday, new Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said a preparedness plan to be compiled by early November would include tougher limits on activities and require hospitals to provide more beds and staff for COVID-19 treatment in case infections soar in a "worst-case scenario."

He did not elaborate on details.

Many people are cautious about letting down their guard, regardless of the numbers.

Mask-wearing "has become so normal," said university student Mizuki Kawano. "I'm still worried about the virus," she said.

"I don't want to get close to those who don't wear masks," said her friend, Alice Kawaguchi.

Public health experts want a comprehensive investigation into why infections have dropped off.

An analysis of GPS data showed that people's movements in major downtown entertainment districts fell during the most recent, third state of emergency, which ended Sept. 30.

"I believe the decrease of people visiting entertainment districts, along with the vaccination progress, has contributed to the decline of infections," said Atsushi Nishida, the director of the Research Center for Social Science & Medicine Sciences at the Tokyo Metropolitan Institute of Medical Science.

But people headed back to entertainment districts as soon as the recent emergency ended, he said, and that may "affect the infection situation in coming weeks."

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AP journalist Chisato Tanaka contributed to this report.

Follow Mari Yamaguchi on Twitter at <https://www.twitter.com/mariyamaguchi>

## Coast Guard: 1,200-foot ship dragged California oil pipeline

By MATTHEW BROWN Associated Press

Investigators believe a 1,200-foot (366-meter) cargo ship dragging anchor in rough seas caught an underwater oil pipeline and pulled it across the seafloor, months before a leak from the line fouled the Southern California coastline with crude.

A team of federal investigators trying to chase down the cause of the spill boarded the Panama-registered MSC DANIT just hours after the massive ship arrived this weekend off the Port of Long Beach, the same area where the leak was discovered in early October.

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During a prior visit by the ship during a heavy storm in January, investigators believe its anchor dragged for an unknown distance before striking the 16-inch (40-centimeter) steel pipe, Coast Guard Lt. j.g. Sondra Kay Kneen said Sunday.

The impact would have knocked an inch-thick concrete casing off the pipe and pulled it more than 100 feet (30 meters), bending but not breaking the line, Kneen said.

Still undetermined is whether the impact caused the October leak, or if the line was hit by something else at a later date or failed due to a preexisting problem, Kneen said.

"We're still looking at multiple vessels and scenarios," she said.

The Coast Guard on Saturday designated the owner and operator as parties of interest in its investigation into the spill, estimated to have released about 25,000 gallons (94,635 liters) of crude into the water, killing birds, fish and mammals.

The accident just a few miles off Huntington Beach in Orange County fouled beaches and wetlands and led to temporary closures for cleanup work. While not as bad as initially feared, it has reignited the debate over offshore drilling in federal waters in the Pacific, where hundreds of miles of pipelines were installed decades ago.

The DANIT's operator, MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company, is headquartered in Switzerland and has a fleet of 600 vessels and more than 100,000 workers, according to the company.

MSC representatives did not immediately respond to email messages seeking comment. A security guard reached by telephone at the company's headquarters in Geneva said it was closed until Monday.

The vessel's owner, identified by the Coast Guard as Dordellas Finance Corporation, could not be reached for comment.

The DANIT arrived in Long Beach this weekend after voyaging from China, according to marine traffic monitoring websites.

The investigation into what caused the spill could lead to criminal charges or civil penalties, but none have been announced yet, and Kneen said the probe could continue for months.

Attorneys for MSC and Dordellas will have the chance to examine and cross-examine the government's witnesses in the case and also to call their own witnesses, according to the Coast Guard. The investigation also includes the National Transportation Safety Board and other agencies.

Kneen declined to say if any damage was found to an anchor on the DANIT after a team of at least five investigators spent much of Saturday aboard the ship.

At least two other vessels were previously boarded by investigators, who are examining logs kept by the ships' captains, officers and engineers and voyage data recorders — equivalent to the so-called black box on airplanes.

In response to the new focus on the DANIT, the Houston-based owner of the damaged pipeline, Amplify Energy, thanked the Coast Guard for its continued work on the case.

Amplify representatives have not directly responded to questions about an hourslong delay between an alarm indicating a potential problem with the pipeline and the company reporting the leak to federal authorities.

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This story has been corrected to show that Huntington Beach is in Orange County, not Los Angeles.

## Chicago wins first WNBA title with 80-74 win over Phoenix

By CASEY DROTTAR Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Candace Parker returned home to bring Chicago a championship. She did just that, leading the Sky to the franchise's first title.

Allie Quigley scored 26 points and Parker added 16 points, 13 rebounds and five assists and Chicago beat the Phoenix Mercury 80-74 on Sunday in Game 4.

"This one is so sweet," a champagne-soaked Parker said. "To do it with this group. I love this group, I love this team. And to do it here at home, it was just supposed to be."

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The Phoenix players declined to come to the postgame press conference. The door to their locker room was broken and a person familiar with the incident said at least one of the team's players was responsible. The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the investigation was ongoing.

Courtney Vandersloot added 10 points and 15 assists for the Sky, who won the series 3-1, rallying from a 72-65 deficit with 4:42 left. Chicago scored the next nine points to take a two-point lead on Stefanie Dolson's layup. She then added another basket to make it 76-72 with 45.8 seconds left.

Diana Taurasi was fouled on the next possession shooting a 3-pointer and made the first two free throws, but missed the third.

Vandersloot then scored in the lane to seal the victory and set off the celebration. As the final buzzer sounded, Parker sprinted to the corner of the court and hugged her family with tears in her eyes.

"It was amazing to just hug my dad and my mom," Parker said. "It was just an amazing feeling to be from here and see so many people in the stands that have been supporting you since you started. It's just a moment where you just have to really take it in."

It was a full-circle moment for Parker, who triumphantly returned home to Chicago this season after spending 13 years with Los Angeles. She has been continually called the Sky's missing piece throughout the playoffs, a label she proved accurate many times during Chicago's stunning run, winning the title as a six-seed.

"It feels amazing. My high school coach is here," Parker said. "I know Pat's (Summitt) watching. Got the whole city here. We got the whole city here. We are champions for life now."

Brittney Griner was a focal point of Phoenix's offense early on. The seven-time All-Star finished the game with 28 points, 18 of which came in the first half. Griner and guard Skylar Diggins-Smith helped lead a 9-0 run to finish the second quarter and give Phoenix a 44-37 edge at halftime.

Yet, Quigley's fourth-quarter outburst ultimately undid any attempts Phoenix could make to stave off elimination.

"It wasn't our night," Phoenix coach Sandy Brondello said. "Allie made some really big shots for them. We left her open, and she made them. It would be nice to be going back to a Game 5 now, but it's not going to happen this year."

Parker initially had trouble getting into a rhythm offensively, going one for six from the floor with just four points by the end of the first half.

Phoenix's lead stretched to 14 at one point in the third, but the deficit wasn't big enough to shake Chicago's confidence down the stretch.

"We stayed together," Sky coach James Wade said. "It was a microcosm of our season, where you go down and you keep pushing. By the end of it, the crowd took over, our players stayed together and you started to see who we were. I never doubted for a minute that we were going to win that game."

Kahleah Copper, who had been a force in the first four games of the finals, earned MVP honors of the championship.

"I have this edginess and grittiness about me that's going to keep me going," Copper said. "It was very important for me to be consistent coming in this year and better than I was last year. You put the work in and you get rewarded."

## ANOTHER PICTURE

After the game, Parker mentioned a picture she took with her daughter on the court after she won her first championship with Los Angeles. She keeps the photo on her wall, and her daughter's desire to be part of a similar moment helped convince Parker to come back home.

"I asked her if it was OK if I came to Chicago," Parker said. "And she was like 'I want another picture like that.' It's crazy, because she came out to the court and said 'we did it,' and it was just surreal."

## GETTING TECHNICAL

Emotions were high for both teams right from the start, as Taurasi and Copper were each hit with technical fouls within a 50-second span in the first quarter.

## PACKED HOUSE

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The Sky drew a sell-out crowd despite the Chicago Bears hosting the rival Green Bay Packers just down the street at Soldier Field. Chance the Rapper was once again in attendance to support his hometown team.

TIP-INS:

Chicago coach James Wade became the third Black male coach to win a WNBA championship, joining Michael Cooper who did it with the Los Angeles Sparks and Corey Gaines, who did it with Phoenix. ... Phoenix had been 4-0 in the WNBA Finals after losses until Sunday's defeat.

AP Basketball Writers Tim Reynolds and Doug Feinberg contributed to this story.

More AP women's basketball: <https://apnews.com/hub/womens-basketball> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## Top Democrats woo Black voters in Virginia governor's race

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

NORFOLK, Va. (AP) — Voting rights advocate Stacey Abrams on Sunday urged Black churchgoers to turn out for Democrat Terry McAuliffe in next month's Virginia governor's election, saying that what happens in the most watched race this year will "show the world who we are" in future contests with even higher stakes.

Abrams has become a leading national voice in the party since narrowly losing the 2018 race for governor in Georgia. With her appearances at three churches in Norfolk, Abrams is joining other political heavyweights in trying to ensure that a state trending increasingly Democratic in recent years does not flip back to the Republican column on Nov. 2.

McAuliffe, governor from 2014 to 2018 and a former Democratic National Committee chairman, visited separate churches and later led a rally with Abrams outside an early voting station. "We gotta get everybody out to vote," he said.

His Republican opponent, former business executive Glenn Youngkin, held a series of weekend events, including rallying Latino voters in the Washington suburbs.

"I am the daughter of not one, but two pastors," said Abrams, who like all attendees entering Second Calvary Baptist Church showed a card indicating that she was fully vaccinated against the coronavirus.

The pastor, Geoffrey Guns, wore a black T-shirt emblazoned with "VOTE" and told the congregation that what's "coming up is a very important election." He repeated the phrase to louder applause and cries of "Amen."

President Joe Biden won Virginia by 10 percentage points over Donald Trump in 2020, but the McAuliffe-Youngkin race appears to be coming down to the wire. To shore up a contest they hope will give them momentum heading into next year's midterms, when the party's narrow control of Congress is at stake, national Democrats are turning out in force for McAuliffe.

First lady Jill Biden campaigned with him on Friday. Former President Barack Obama is coming this week. Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms visited three Black churches in Richmond on Sunday. Vice President Kamala Harris, in a video to be seen at 300 churches statewide for the next two-plus weeks, calls McAuliffe "the leader Virginia needs at this moment." Biden is planning his own visit.

Youngkin has largely shied away from outside Republican stalwarts, hoping to attract independents disillusioned by Trump. Youngkin also has not campaigned personally with Trump, though the former president phoned into a Virginia rally last week featuring Steve Bannon, a longtime Trump strategist.

Abrams told the congregations that in McAuliffe's first term as governor, he increased funding for education and ensured that tens of thousands of former felons and others who had been removed from voter rolls had their right to the ballot box restored.

"I know you get tired of being called a bellwether state but I'm going to tell you — as someone from one of those newly purplish states — we've got to look to you for wisdom," she said, referring to once reliably Republican Georgia backing Biden and two Democratic senators last cycle.

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During a subsequent stop, Abrams appealed to her audience: "What you say in 2021 will show the world who we are in 2022 and 2024 and beyond."

At Faith Deliverance Christian Center, where congregants gathered in a gymnasium, the pastor, Sharon Riley, thanked Abrams for not being elected Georgia governor because "we now see that God had a plan" and that Abrams' work since in defense of voting rights has made her one of the "most significant" people in the nation.

Abrams said when she first began running for office, she felt mixing politics and church was bad. But, she said, her mother eventually reminded her that "politics is always in the church" and her father said that the Bible "is one of the most intense political texts ever written."

"Voting is an act of faith," Abrams said. "I need you to do the job."

\_\_\_ This story has been updated to correct that last week's Trump Virginia rally featured Steve Bannon rather than being organized by him and to remove reference to Youngkin calling into that rally.

## Jill Biden surprises her South Carolina 'prayer partner'

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WEST COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Jill Biden on Sunday returned to the South Carolina Baptist church where she says she began to repair her relationship with God following her son's death from brain cancer six years ago.

The first lady quietly flew to West Columbia for a surprise appearance at the 50th anniversary celebration for Pastor Charles B. Jackson Sr. of Brookland Baptist Church. But she ended up giving one of the most extensive explanations yet of how her faith wavered after Beau Biden's death and how she found her way back to God with help from her "prayer partner" — Robin Jackson, the pastor's wife.

Biden praised Charles Jackson for presiding over a ministry that helps feed the hungry, provides college scholarships and runs a health and wellness program.

"You brought countless people to God's grace," she told him. "You remind us that we are the body of Christ."

But she opened her remarks by retelling the story of how she and Robin Jackson met, saying the relationship has "shaped my life."

They met in May 2019, shortly after Joe Biden visited the church with his wife after he announced his candidacy for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination.

Both women have said Jackson approached Jill Biden and asked to pray with her.

"And I don't know if she sensed how moved I had been by the service," the first lady said Sunday. "I don't know if she could still see the grief that I feel still hides behind my smile."

"But I do know that when she spoke it was as if God was saying to me: 'OK, Jill, you had enough time. It's time to come home.'"

The Bidens' son Beau, who was 46, married and had two young children, died of brain cancer in 2015. The first lady has said she prayed and prayed that he would live, and was devastated when her prayers went unanswered and he passed away.

"I felt betrayed, broken," she said Sunday, her voice breaking. She said her own pastor emailed her occasionally to check in and invite her back to service.

"But I just couldn't go. I couldn't even pray. I wondered if I would ever feel joy again," she said.

Four years later, she had that chance encounter with Robin Jackson.

"Every Wednesday Robin would text Dr. Jill to let her know she had called their names in prayer," the city's newsletter said in January 2021. "Dr. Jill would always return a text expressing appreciation." Jill Biden uses the professional title "Dr." because of her doctorate degree.

Jill Biden told talk-show host Kelly Clarkson in February 2021 that regular contact with Robin Jackson had made a difference.

"It really helped me find my faith again," the first lady told Clarkson.

She occasionally accompanies the president, a devout Catholic, to Mass and was with him Saturday when



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he worshipped at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Washington.

Her role in celebrating the pastor's 50th anniversary was intended as a surprise for Robin Jackson. The Jacksons' son, the Rev. Charles B. Jackson Jr., said his mother did not know the first lady was coming.

"It took everything in us to keep it from her," he told the audience after the first lady had concluded her remarks, calling her appearance "an expression of love and friendship."

The White House did not publicly announce Sunday's trip and the first lady flew, apparently by coincidence, on an unmarked D.C. Air National Guard airplane. But she also travels in a motorcade with police escorts, and flashing lights and sirens, and U.S. Secret Service agents show up at her destinations ahead of time to make sure the properties are secure.

She arrived at the church about a half-hour before the event began and, wearing a black face mask, shared a front-row pew with the Jacksons and Crystal Person, who is originally from the area and is married to Fran Person, a longtime personal aide to Joe Biden.

Robin Jackson was among religious leaders who recited prayers for Joe Biden during a virtual prayer service the morning after his inauguration in January.

## **Nun imprisoned over peace activism, Megan Rice, dies at 91**

ROSEMONT, Penn. (AP) — Megan Rice, a nun and Catholic peace activist who spent two years in federal prison while in her 80s after breaking into a government security complex to protest nuclear weapons, has died. She was 91.

Rice died of congestive heart failure Oct. 10 at Holy Child Center in Rosemont, Pennsylvania, according to her order, the Society of the Holy Child Jesus.

"Sister Megan lived her life with love full of action and zeal," said Carroll Juliano, American Province Leader for the order. "Her commitment to build a peaceful and just world was unwavering and selfless."

Rice was born in New York to activist parents who would meet with well-known Catholic writer Dorothy Day during the Great Depression to craft solutions for societal problems, she said in a 2013 interview with the Catholic Agitator.

Her activism was also heavily influenced by her uncle, who spent four months in Nagasaki, Japan, after it and Hiroshima had been leveled by atomic bombs to hasten the end of World War II, bombings that Rice would later call the "greatest shame in history."

While still a teenager, she entered the Society of the Holy Child of Jesus to become a nun. She made her final vows in 1955 and took on the religious name Mother Frederick Mary. Rice later earned degrees from Villanova and Boston University, where she earned a Master of Science.

She taught at elementary schools in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts for more than a decade before being assigned to work in Nigeria.

Rice spent 23 years in West Africa working as a teacher and pastoral guide. It was there that she started hearing about the plowshares movement, a reference to a Bible passage that refers to the end of all war: "They will beat their swords into ploughshares."

When she returned to the U.S., Rice began her involvement in anti-nuclear activism.

"I felt drawn to the peace movement," she said in the Catholic Agitator interview. "I felt very inspired by direct action on nuclear issues. My uncle was such a strong influence and he was still alive at that time."

Court records show she already had been convicted four times for protest activities when she and two fellow Catholic peace activists, Michael Walli and Greg Boertje-Obed, broke into the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, in July 2012.

The trio cut through several fences and spent two hours outside a bunker storing much of the nation's bomb-grade uranium, where they hung banners, prayed, hammered on the outside of the bunker and spray-painted peace slogans.

They were arrested and charged with felony sabotage. Federal prosecutors described Rice and her codefendants as "recidivists and habitual offenders" who would break the law again "as soon as they are physically capable of doing so," according to court records

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Rice's attorneys sought leniency from U.S. District Judge Amul Thapar, arguing the nun's devotion to Christian nonviolence posed little threat to the public. Rice wrote a letter to the judge asking him to follow his conscience.

But the judge was unmoved, telling the defendants their moral beliefs were "not a get out jail free card." Rice was sentenced to three years in prison and Walli and Oertje-Obed each received more than five years.

The 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals threw out the sabotage charge and the three were freed in May 2015 after serving two years. They were later resentenced to time already served on a lesser charge of injuring government property.

While testifying during her jury trial, Rice defended her decision to break into the Oak Ridge uranium facility as an attempt to stop "manufacturing that...can only cause death," according to a trial transcript.

"I had to do it," she said of her decision to break the law. "My guilt is that I waited 70 years to be able to speak what I knew in my conscience."

## Gang with past abductions blamed for kidnapping missionaries

By DÁNICA COTO and EVENS SANON Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — A notorious Haitian gang known for brazen kidnappings and killings was accused by police Sunday of abducting 17 missionaries from a U.S.-based organization. Five children were believed to be among those kidnapped, including a 2-year-old.

The 400 Mawozo gang kidnapped the group in Ganthier, a community that lies east of the capital of Port-au-Prince, Haitian police inspector Frantz Champagne told The Associated Press. The gang was blamed for kidnapping five priests and two nuns earlier this year in Haiti.

The gang, whose name roughly translates to 400 "inexperienced men," controls the Croix-des-Bouquets area that includes Ganthier, where they carry out kidnappings and carjackings and extort business owners, according to authorities.

Ohio-based Christian Aid Ministries said the kidnapped group consisted of 16 U.S. citizens and one Canadian, for a total of five children, seven women and five men. The organization said they were on a trip to visit an orphanage.

"Join us in praying for those who are being held hostage, the kidnapers and the families, friends and churches of those affected," Christian Aid Ministries said in a statement. "As an organization, we commit this situation to God and trust him to see us through."

Haiti is once again struggling with a spike in gang-related kidnappings that had diminished in recent months, after President Jovenel Moïse was fatally shot at his private residence on July 7 and a 7.2-magnitude earthquake killed more than 2,200 people in August.

The missionary group offers Bible classes, runs a medical clinic, helps orphans and distributes seeds to farmers, among other efforts in Haiti, according to its annual report.

The report for last year said that American staff had returned to their base in Haiti after a nine-month absence "due to political unrest" and noted the "uncertainty and difficulties" that arise from such instability.

An AP team on Sunday visited the group's orphanage in Ganthier, where a couple of children were seen walking through a yard. A security guard confirmed that it was the place the kidnapped missionaries visited before they were abducted. The guard called the orphanage's pastor at the AP's request, but he declined to comment, saying only, "Let's leave things as they are."

Nearly a year ago, Haitian police issued a wanted poster for the gang's alleged leader, Wilson Joseph, on charges including murder, attempted murder, kidnapping, auto theft and the hijacking of trucks carrying goods. He goes by the nickname "Lanmò Sanjou," which means "death doesn't know which day it's coming."

Joseph, who could not be immediately reached for comment, has posted videos detailing the alleged crimes the gang has committed in recent years.

Once, when the gang opened fire on a small bus carrying several passengers and killed an infant, Wilson said it was not their fault because the bus driver refused to stop. In a more recent video, he appears holding a bottle of alcohol surrounded by heavily armed men. Another video from June shows people inside a church fleeing as gunfire erupted outside on a Saturday morning. The gang was accused of raiding the

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area and setting cars on fire.

A senior U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the United States is in touch with Haitian authorities to try to resolve the case.

Christian Aid Ministries came under public scrutiny in 2019, when one of the group's former workers based in Haiti was convicted of felony sexual abuse against minors in Ohio. Jeriah Mast, 40, is serving a nine-year sentence in an Ohio prison. During the hearing, the judge said Mast told him that he also molested at least 30 boys in Haiti in the span of about 15 years, according to The Daily Record newspaper in Ohio.

The religious organization said in a May 2020 statement that it had reached an out-of-court settlement with victims regarding a sexual abuse case in the Haitian community of Petit Goave and had provided other victims with a total of \$420,000 in restitution and other assistance.

Amid the spike in kidnappings, gangs have demanded ransoms ranging from a couple of hundred dollars to more than \$1 million, according to authorities.

Last month, a deacon was killed in front of a church in the capital of Port-au-Prince and his wife kidnapped, one of dozens of people who have been abducted in recent months.

At least 328 kidnappings were reported to Haiti's National Police in the first eight months of 2021, compared with a total of 234 for all of 2020, according to a report issued last month by the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti known as BINUH.

Gangs have been accused of kidnapping schoolchildren, doctors, police officers, busloads of passengers and others as they grow more powerful. In April, a man who claimed to be the gang leader of the 400 Mawozo told a radio station that they were responsible for kidnapping five priests, two nuns and three relatives of one of the priests that month. They were later released.

The spike in kidnappings and gang-related violence has forced Haitians to take detours around certain gang-controlled areas while others simply opt to stay home, which in turn means less money for people like Charles Pierre, a moto taxi driver in Port-au-Prince who has several children to feed.

"People are not going out in the streets," he said. "We cannot find people to transport."

A protest is scheduled for Monday to decry the nation's lack of security.

The kidnapping of the missionaries comes just days after high-level U.S. officials visited Haiti and promised more resources for Haiti's National Police, including another \$15 million to help reduce gang violence, which this year has displaced thousands of Haitians who now live in temporary shelters in increasingly unhygienic conditions.

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Coto reported from San Juan, Puerto Rico. Associated Press videographer Pierre-Richard Luxama in Port-au-Prince and AP writers Matthew Lee in Washington and Matt Sedensky in New York contributed to this report.

## Bill Clinton back home after hospitalization from infection

HAVEN DALEY undefined

ORANGE, Calif. (AP) — Bill Clinton arrived Sunday at his home in New York to continue recovering from an infection that left him in treatment for six days at a Southern California hospital, officials said.

The former president left the University of California Irvine Medical Center around 8 a.m. with Hillary Clinton on his arm. Dressed in jeans and a sports coat and wearing a face mask, he made his way out of the hospital slowly and stopped to shake hands with doctors and nurses lined up on the sidewalk.

He gave a thumbs-up when a reporter asked how he was feeling, and he and Hillary Clinton then boarded a black SUV. They departed in a motorcade escorted by the California Highway Patrol and headed to the airport.

Bill Clinton's "fever and white blood cell count are normalized, and he will return home to New York to finish his course of antibiotics," Dr. Alpesh N. Amin said in a statement shared on Twitter by a Clinton spokesman.

Clinton, 75, was admitted Tuesday to the hospital southeast of Los Angeles with an infection unrelated to COVID-19. He arrived Sunday evening at his home in Chappaqua, New York, to continue his recovery.

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Spokesman Angel Ureña had said Saturday that Clinton would remain hospitalized until at least Sunday to receive further intravenous antibiotics. But all health indicators were “trending in the right direction,” Ureña said.

Hillary Clinton had been with her husband at the hospital and was accompanied there Saturday by daughter Chelsea.

President Joe Biden said Friday night that he had spoken to Bill Clinton, and the former president “sends his best.”

“He’s doing fine; he really is,” Biden said during remarks at the University of Connecticut.

An aide to the former president said Bill Clinton had a urological infection that spread to his bloodstream but was on the mend and never went into septic shock, a potentially life-threatening condition.

The aide, who spoke to reporters at the hospital on the condition his name wasn’t used, said Clinton was in an intensive care section of the hospital but wasn’t receiving ICU care.

In the years since Clinton left the White House in 2001, the former president has faced health scares. In 2004, he underwent quadruple bypass surgery after experiencing prolonged chest pains and shortness of breath. He returned to the hospital for surgery for a partially collapsed lung in 2005, and in 2010 he had a pair of stents implanted in a coronary artery.

He responded by embracing a largely vegan diet that saw him lose weight and report improved health.

Clinton repeatedly returned to the stump, campaigning for Democratic candidates, most notably Hillary Clinton during her failed 2008 bid for the presidential nomination. And in 2016, as Hillary Clinton sought the White House as the Democratic nominee, her husband — by then a grandfather and nearing 70 — returned to the campaign trail.

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Associated Press journalists Olga R. Rodriguez in San Francisco, Lou Kesten in Washington and Joseph Frederick in Chappaqua, New York, contributed to this report.

## Fire crews make big gains against Southern California blaze

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. (AP) — Fire crews made significant progress overnight against a wildfire burning for nearly a week in Southern California coastal mountains, officials said Sunday.

More than 1,600 firefighters were battling the blaze in the Santa Ynez Mountains west of Santa Barbara on land and by air. They were able to stop its forward growth, and the blaze was 78% contained, federal officials said.

The Alisal Fire started last Monday and has scorched nearly 27 square miles (69 square kilometers). It is threatening about 400 structures.

A 1 1/2-acre (0.6 hectare) spot fire that ignited outside a retardant line on the blaze’s northwestern corner was quickly contained by firefighters who used bulldozer and hand lines on the ground and doused the flames with water from the air. On Sunday, few hot spots remained, and fire crews were focused on increasing containment.

Cooler temperatures were forecast for Sunday, but winds with gusts around 20 mph (32 kph) were still expected in the area, officials said.

The fire erupted during fierce winds last week and spread rapidly down the face of the mountain range, leaping a highway and railroad to the beach below. Firefighting weather greatly improved since then, allowing airplanes and helicopters to bombard the fire with retardant and water.

California wildfires have scorched nearly 3,900 square miles (10,101 square kilometers) this year and destroyed more than 3,600 homes, businesses and other structures, according to the state Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

A historic drought in the American West tied to climate change is making wildfires harder to fight. It has killed millions of trees in California alone. Scientists say climate change has made the West much warmer and drier in the past 30 years and will continue to make weather more extreme and wildfires more frequent and destructive.

## Celebrities join Prince William for Earthshot Prize award

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Celebrities joined Prince William in London on Sunday for the inaugural awards ceremony of his Earthshot Prize, an ambitious environmental program that aims to find new ideas and technologies around the world to tackle climate change and Earth's most pressing challenges.

The winners announced Sunday included the government of Costa Rica, which was honored for a project that pays local citizens to restore natural ecosystems, and the city of Milan, which was handed a prize for its Food Waste Hubs program, which recovers food from supermarkets and restaurants and distributes it to those in need.

Actors Emma Thompson, Emma Watson and David Oyelowo joined William and Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge, in handing out the awards at Alexandra Palace in north London.

Guests were asked to "consider the environment when choosing their outfit," and Watson arrived wearing a gown made from 10 wedding dresses from the charity Oxfam. Kate wore an Alexander McQueen dress made for her in 2011, while her husband wore a dark green velvet blazer and a polo neck.

William and his charity, The Royal Foundation, launched the Earthshot Prize last year, inspired by President John F. Kennedy's 1962 "Moonshot" speech that challenged and inspired Americans to go to the moon.

The prize, to be awarded to five winners every year until 2030, is billed as the most prestigious of its kind. Each winner will receive a grant worth 1 million pounds (\$1.4 million) to develop and scale up their ideas.

"There's been lots of amazing ideas over the past decades but it's the implementation that really counts, so that's what this is all about. So it's really a reason to be cheerful," Thompson said.

The other winners were a land-based coral farm in the Bahamas to restore dying coral reefs; a green hydrogen technology developed to transform how homes and buildings are powered; and an India-based technology that creates fuel from agricultural waste in a bid to stop crop burning.

William has said he wanted the initiative to inject some optimism into the climate debate, and on Sunday he urged young people not to give up hope for the future.

"For too long, we haven't done enough to protect the planet for your future. The Earthshot is for you," he said. "In the next 10 years, we are going to act. We are going to find the solutions to repair our planet."

The United States will host next year's award ceremony, he added.

The ceremony came days ahead of the COP26 U.N. climate change summit in Glasgow, which begins Oct. 31. William, his father Prince Charles and Queen Elizabeth II are all expected to attend.

Earlier this week William criticized the space race and space tourism, saying in an interview that the world's greatest minds should be focused on repairing Earth instead of "trying to find the next place to go and live."

Follow all AP stories on climate change issues at <https://apnews.com/hub/climate-change>.

## Father of suspect in UK lawmaker's slaying is 'traumatized'

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The father of a man held for the fatal stabbing of a British lawmaker during a meeting with local voters told British media he was shocked and "traumatized" by his son's arrest, as police continued questioning the suspect under terrorism laws.

Dozens of mourners attended a special church service Sunday in memory of 69-year-old Conservative lawmaker David Amess, who was stabbed to death Friday in what police have described as a terrorist attack.

British authorities have not released the name of the suspect, but British media reported the suspect is Ali Harbi Ali, 25, believed to be a British citizen with Somali heritage.

The Sunday Times reported that his father, Harbi Ali Kullane, a former adviser to Somalia's prime minister, said British counter-terrorism police had visited him.

"I'm feeling very traumatized. It's not something that I expected or even dreamed of," he was quoted

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as saying.

Amess, a long-serving lawmaker, was stabbed multiple times during a regular meeting with his constituents at a church in Leigh-on-Sea, a town 40 miles (62 kilometers) east of London. The Metropolitan Police said early investigations suggested "a potential motivation linked to Islamist extremism," without giving details.

It is unclear what, if any, the suspect's connection to Amess was and why he targeted the lawmaker. The meeting with voters was public and open to all.

Police have been granted extra time to question the suspect, who was arrested on suspicion of murder but has not yet been charged. The BBC and others reported that the suspect was referred to a government program aimed at preventing people from supporting extremism some years ago, but said he was not a formal subject of interest for security services.

In a statement, the family of Amess said they were "absolutely broken" by the killing and urged people to be tolerant and "set aside hatred."

"As a family, we are trying to understand why this awful thing has occurred. Nobody should die in that way," the statement said. "We ask people to set aside their differences and show kindness and love to all. This is the only way forward. Set aside hatred and work towards togetherness."

In north London, police investigating the killing continued to search an apartment and another address, as officers stood guard outside.

Friday's killing renewed concern about the risks politicians run as they go about their work. The attack came five years after Labour lawmaker Jo Cox was killed by a far-right extremist in her constituency in West Yorkshire as she was on her way to a meeting with voters.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said Sunday that officials are reviewing security arrangements for lawmakers, and the measures being considered include police protection during regular meetings, known as "surgeries," between lawmakers and their constituents. Lawmakers could also be asked to share their whereabouts at all times with police, she said.

But Patel added that she did not believe that the killing of Amess should change the relationship between lawmakers and their voters.

"This should never, ever break that link between an elected representative and their democratic role, responsibility and duty to the people who elected them," she told Sky News on Sunday.

Lindsay Hoyle, Speaker of the House of Commons, said he was working closely with the Home Office and the police to identify ways to improve lawmakers' safety. But, like Patel, he said "we should not hide away."

"The very essence of being an MP (Member of Parliament) is to help and be seen by our constituents. They are the people who elected us to represent them, so surely making ourselves available to them is the cornerstone of our democracy?" Hoyle wrote in *The Observer* and *Mail* on Sunday newspapers.

Many in the seaside town of Leigh-on-Sea have laid flowers in tribute to Amess, a father of five who has served in parliament since 1983 and was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 2015. Floral wreaths and balloons piled up outside the police cordon near the church where Amess was stabbed.

The Council of Somali Organizations, which works with Somali communities across the U.K., condemned the killing, saying it was an "affront to all of our values and our democratic society itself."

The group's director, Kahiye Alim, said he believed that radicalization of young Somalis in Britain has not been a big concern. In recent years only a handful of people have gone from the U.K. to Somalia to join al-Shabab, an al-Qaida-linked extremist group, he said.

## Hope, conflicted morality as Newcastle fans welcome Saudis

By ROB HARRIS AP Global Soccer Writer

NEWCASTLE, England (AP) — Wearing a mock Arab headdress, Chris Greenslade, between swigs from a bottle of Newcastle Brown Ale, was proudly embracing his club's new status as one of the richest in world sports.

"We're Saudis," the 41-year-old Newcastle fan said. "We can afford anything."

The gloating and celebrations from fans were only before Sunday's match against Tottenham at St.

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James' Park, as the new era under Saudi ownership was heralded, before reality set in.

Callum Wilson put Newcastle ahead after only 107 seconds before the hosts collapsed to lose 3-2 and remain in the relegation zone. Much spending will be needed on players, along with a new manager as the crowd was demanding.

To receive the investment, Newcastle fans have to — reluctantly in many cases — accept their long-underachieving club becoming embroiled in a sporting moral maze of the ethics of ownership by a state. Embracing the riches of the Saudi sovereign wealth fund to remove a long-despised owner means an unwelcome attachment with the murkier side of a kingdom.

"You're going to get stuff like that along there," Greenslade says, pointing out a vehicle emblazoned with the name "Jamal Khashoggi" alongside an image of the journalist murdered in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul in 2018. There was also a photo of the Saudi crown prince implicated in the gruesome plot: Mohammed bin Salman.

"Is there any evidence?" Greenslade said. "Is it nailed on?"

U.S. intelligence services said they believe the killing of the U.S.-based Saudi journalist came at the orders of the crown prince who heads the Public Investment Fund now owning 80% of Newcastle. Planes owned by a PIF company are said to have been used by the Saudi assassination squad. Prince Mohammed denies wrongdoing.

As the van circled St. James' Park again, Adel Al-Shammari, a Saudi studying at university in Newcastle, was watching in bemusement.

"It's fake news," he said. "Believe me."

When the fate of Khashoggi, his body and the findings of investigators was raised, Al-Shammari was uneasy.

"I know the story. It's not like you think," he said. "It's a different story. It's hard to explain."

This corner of northeast England is the latest extension of the Saudi state's efforts to enhance its image through sports investments.

"Just visit Saudi Arabia, ask the people there," Al-Shammari said. "You will find the truth."

For now it is regular Saudis in England doing the talking, albeit not the new non-executive chairman of the club, Yasir Al-Rumayyan, who uses the title His Excellency and sits as governor on the PIF board dominated by Saudi ministers.

Abdulrahman Alshmasi traveled to Newcastle from the central English city of Birmingham where he is studying to watch the club he started supporting when the protracted buyout was completed less than two weeks ago.

"It's the richest club in the world now," he said. "Hopefully they'll become one of the best European teams."

That is the hope of local fans after 14 years of limited investment under the ownership of retail tycoon Mike Ashley, desperate not just for a first trophy since the 1955 FA Cup but just to be competitive on the field.

Matty Ward gave up his season ticket after being fed up with the lack of cash spent on the team and returned on Sunday after three years.

"It's just brilliant, I'm really happy," the 18-year-old Ward said, wearing an imitation of the red-and-white checkered headdress mimicking Saudis. "To have a bit of hope in your club, that's what football is about ... to be able to believe in your club again."

Fans like Ward may try not to get too deep into the Saudi controversies highlighted by activists like Amnesty International who tried to block the deal.

"Human rights is obviously a concern. If anything is proven then I expect it to be dealt with properly and thoroughly," Ward said. "But as long as there is clear separation between that and the club, I don't see the problem."

To approve the sale that stalled last year, the Premier League said it received "legally binding assurances that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will not control Newcastle United Football Club." The corporate

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ownership structure of PIF counters that, although the Premier League won't discuss that or why the guarantees are required.

Amanda Staveley, who brokered the deal and now owns 10% through an investment vehicle, has defended the new ownership and was at Sunday's game with Al-Rumayyan, who was introduced to the crowd to cheers.

One complicating factor for allowing the buyout was the Premier League pursuing legal means to shut down a television piracy operation linked to Saudi Arabia that was bootlegging footage from Qatari-owned beIN Sports. The thawing of the wider Gulf diplomatic dispute this year led to beIN being informed it was no longer banned in Saudi Arabia, removing an obstacle for the change of ownership.

How long it will be until footage of Newcastle celebrating a trophy will be beamed around the world remains unclear. The spending can't begin until the January transfer window to strengthen a team in next-to-last place with three points from eight games and a manager in Steve Bruce who fans chanted will be "sacked in the morning."

Fans like Greenslade, who had stopped coming to games a decade ago, hold out hope that better times are now coming, and the search is on for tickets that are hard to come by again. He says just coming to the stadium on a matchday is enough to start getting excited — "after 14 years of absolute dross" — about the prospect of exciting times ahead.

He is prepared for a slow rebuilding as the squad is reconstructed.

"It can take 10 years as long as it comes," he said. "What are (players) going to come for? Only the money at the moment."

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

## The Latest: Fauci dismayed by Texas' move to ban mandates

By The Associated Press undefined

WASHINGTON — Dr. Anthony Fauci is saying Sunday that it is "really unfortunate" that Gov. Greg Abbott has moved to ban vaccine mandates in the state of Texas.

The nation's leading infectious disease doctor, speaking on Fox News Sunday, said that the Republican governor's decision to block businesses from requiring inoculations would damage public health since vaccines are the "most effective means" to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Fauci was largely encouraged by the downward trend of coronavirus hospitalizations and deaths across the nation and suggested that vaccinated individuals could have a normal holiday season with others who have received the shot. But he said that those who have not been vaccinated should continue to avoid gatherings and should wear a mask.

He also suggested that those who received a shot of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine would likely have flexibility to get a booster from either Moderna or Pfizer. The FDA advisory panel ruled last week that anyone 18 and up who had the J&J shot was eligible to get a booster.

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### MORE ON THE PANDEMIC:

- Robert Durst hospitalized with COVID-19 after murder verdict
- US cities, police unions clash as vaccine mandates take effect
- Protests greet start of Italy requiring COVID passes at workplaces
- Officials set stage for national campaign to vaccinate younger US children
- FDA panel endorses booster shot for Johnson & Johnson vaccine

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

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### HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

Russia is reporting its largest daily number of new coronavirus infections, more than 70% up on the



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number a month ago as the country faces a sustained rise in cases.

The national coronavirus task force on Sunday said 34,303 new infections were recorded in the previous day, compared with the 20,174 reported Sept. 19.

The death toll of 999 was barely lower than the record 1,002 deaths reported on Saturday.

Russian authorities have tried to speed up the pace of vaccinations with lotteries, bonuses and other incentives, but widespread vaccine skepticism and conflicting signals from officials stymied the efforts. The government said this week that about 43 million Russians, or some 29% of the country's nearly 146 million people, are fully vaccinated.

Despite the mounting toll, the Kremlin has ruled out a new nationwide lockdown like the one early on in the pandemic that badly hurt the economy, eroding President Vladimir Putin's popularity. Instead, it has delegated the power to enforce coronavirus restrictions to regional authorities.

**COLOMBO, Sri Lanka** — Sri Lankan authorities are allowing the reopening of cinemas and restaurants and also permitting wedding receptions as a part of the easing of COVID-19 related restrictions.

Cinemas will be open from next week, but with only 25% occupancy. Restaurants will be allowed to cater to a maximum 50 customers at a time. Wedding receptions are also permitted, but with a maximum of 50 guests.

Banks can accommodate only five clients at a time while gymnasiums can have a maximum of 10.

The government's move to ease restrictions comes amid a sharp decline in COVID-19 cases and deaths over the past few weeks.

However, the government still continues with the ban on public gatherings while restrictions are imposed on public transport and trains are still halted.

**WELLINGTON, New Zealand** — New Zealand health care workers administered a record number of vaccine jabs Saturday as the nation held a festival aimed at getting more people inoculated against the coronavirus.

Musicians, sports stars and celebrities pitched in for the "Vaxathon" event, which was broadcast on television and online for eight hours straight. By late afternoon, more than 120,000 people had gotten shots, eclipsing the daily record of 93,000 set in August.

A throwback to TV fundraising "telethon" events that were popular from the 1970s through the 1990s, it comes as New Zealand faces its biggest threat since the pandemic began, with an outbreak of the delta variant spreading through the largest city of Auckland and beyond.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, who chatted with motorists at a drive-through vaccination center in Wellington, initially set a target of 100,000 jabs for the day but upped that to 150,000 after the first target was met.

She also set a target of 25,000 shots for Indigenous Maori, whose vaccination numbers have been lagging and who have been hit hard by the latest outbreak.

## Cities seek to loosen rules on spending federal pandemic aid

By DAVID A. LIEB Associated Press

At the Loma Verde Recreation Center south of San Diego, demolition work is underway on a \$24 million project that will rebuild the facility from the ground up, complete with a new pool. An hour's drive to the north, the iconic bridge to the Oceanside pier is deteriorating because the city lacks the money for a roughly \$25 million rehabilitation.

A reason one project is moving ahead and the other isn't revolves around the American Rescue Plan — the sweeping COVID-19 relief law championed by President Joe Biden and congressional Democrats that is pumping billions of dollars to states and local governments.

Under rules developed by the U.S. Treasury Department, some governments have more flexibility than others to spend their share of the money as they want. That's why the new swimming pool is a go, and

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the rehabbed pier — at least for now — is a no.

Similar disparities among cities across the country have prompted a pushback from local officials, who want Treasury to loosen its rules before the program progresses much further.

“Otherwise, they are penalizing cities for the pandemic, not providing them relief,” said Wade Kapszukiewicz, the mayor of Toledo, Ohio.

At issue is \$350 billion for states, counties and cities that was part of the massive COVID-19 relief bill Biden signed in March. The money is intended to help shore up their finances, pay the ongoing costs of fighting the virus and invest in longer-term projects that could strengthen communities for years to come. The funding was made available by the Treasury beginning in May — though states and cities have been slow to start spending it.

The Treasury’s guidelines give governments leeway to choose from more than 60 subcategories for spending the money, including COVID-19 vaccinations, premium pay for certain workers, housing aid, grants to businesses and improvements to water, sewer and internet infrastructure.

But one particular category stands out for its flexibility. Governments that lost revenue can use their federal aid for almost any services, up to the amount of their losses. That means they can spend the money on roads, a recreation center or a pier, which might not otherwise be eligible.

Treasury spokesperson Liz Bourgeois said the plan gives governments “the resources and flexibility they need to avoid cuts, hire or retain workers, provide essential services, and come out of the pandemic stronger.” Democratic congressional leaders also have praised the Treasury’s flexible guidance.

But some local officials think the Treasury’s formula for calculating lost revenue is too restrictive. It rolls most revenue sources together instead of calculating losses on a fund-by-fund basis, which would let governments claim losses in dedicated funds such as gas taxes for roads even if other revenue grew. Local governments also want to exclude recently enacted tax hikes from the calculation, which they contend masks the depth of their losses during the pandemic.

In Toledo, voters last November approved a temporary one-quarter percent income tax increase that is projected to raise \$19 million annually for roads. As a result, that revenue will offset other losses under the Treasury’s calculation, meaning the city won’t have the flexibility to use relief money to replace old police vehicles, Kapszukiewicz said.

“It now falsely looks like our economy has recovered more than it has, when in reality, it merely reflects the revenue produced by putting an extra burden on ourselves,” the mayor said. “It’s absurd.”

In California, more than 250 cities and counties enacted voter-approved tax increases since 2018 — most coming during or after the 2018-19 fiscal year that forms the basis for calculating revenue loss, according to an analysis conducted for The Associated Press by government finance consultant Michael Coleman.

The southern San Diego suburb of Chula Vista, which did not enact new taxes, calculated revenue losses of more than \$32 million under the Treasury’s guidelines — covering over half its \$57.5 million allotment under the American Rescue Plan. Among other things, the city is directing \$12.2 million for culvert repairs at two intersections to alleviate flooding and \$8 million to add new aquatic facilities to a planned renovation of the Loma Verde Recreation Center. Had the city not been able to tap the revenue-loss category for federal funding, those projects could have been pushed off indefinitely, said Chula Vista city engineer William Valle.

By doing it all at once “it’s open to the community -- boom, everybody’s happy,” Valle said.

In Oceanside, however, officials have less latitude over their federal aid. Voters there approved a one-half cent sales tax that took effect in April 2019, reducing its revenue loss under the Treasury formula from \$22 million to \$12 million and limiting its spending flexibility. Further complicating matters, the city spent nearly \$2.6 million from its reserves — which otherwise could have gone toward infrastructure — to provide meals, homeless services and business grants during the pandemic. But the Treasury’s rules prohibit the federal aid from being used to replenish reserves.

Oceanside officials would like to be able to direct more of their federal money toward fixing the seismically unsafe 1920s-era bridge that leads to its pier.

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"It's imperative that the pier be maintained and restored so that it continues to attract visitors," said Rick Wright, CEO of MainStreet Oceanside, the downtown business association. He added: "I don't think it's immediately noticeable to people that it's in grave need of restoration, but if you look close enough, you can see where there's cracks and pieces that have fallen out already."

Other cities also have written to the Treasury asking it to loosen its revenue-loss rule and give them greater say over the money. It's a reasonable request, but the dispute highlights that local governments are receiving "dramatically more money" than needed, said Marc Goldwein, senior vice president of the nonprofit Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget.

Treasury officials said they are considering the comments but have given no indication of whether they will change the rule, nor when the final version will be released.

In the meantime, Des Moines, Iowa, is holding off on making spending decisions for the \$47 million it received. The city wants clarification on whether it can count \$34 million of losses not currently allowed under the Treasury rule, which would give it far more flexibility, said deputy finance director Joe Brandstatter.

In Lincoln, Nebraska, plans for a new parking garage have been delayed because of the Treasury's revenue-loss rule. Parking revenue plunged during the pandemic, said mayoral aide Kate Bolz, but the city can't make up for it all because a new sales tax earmarked for streets reduced its 2020 revenue loss from \$13.5 million to \$2.4 million under the Treasury's formula.

Flagstaff, Arizona, also has put plans for a downtown parking garage on hold because of the Treasury rule and may have to delay replacing its aging snow plows, street sweepers and trucks. New revenue from a combination of dedicated taxes and storm-water fees offset the city's loss under the Treasury's formula, taking away its flexibility for the federal aid.

"The intent of what Congress wanted to do is to help support cities who had these big dollar losses to continue providing the services," said city treasurer Rick Tadder. But the Treasury's rule "is restrictive on how cities can demonstrate the true impact on our revenues during this pandemic."

## Louisiana gators thrive, so farmers' return quota may drop

By JANET McCONNAUGHEY Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Once-endangered alligators are thriving in the wild, so Louisiana authorities are proposing a deep cut in the percentage that farmers must return to marshes where their eggs were laid.

"Over the past 50 years, alligator nest surveys have increased from an estimate of less than 10,000 in the 1970s and 1980s to well over 60,000 nests in recent years," the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission said in a notice published Wednesday. "This increase in nesting has produced a population that can now be sustained with a much lower farm return rate."

The commission is taking comments until Jan. 4 on a proposal to cut that rate from 10% to 5%.

The big armored reptiles don't breed well in captivity, so farmers are allowed to collect eggs from nests as long as they return a percentage to the same area as youngsters big enough to foil predators other than people and much bigger alligators.

Alligator hides are made into luxury leather for products including watchbands, boots and purses. The meat is used in sausages; companies also sell roasts, steaks, ribs, nuggets, jerky and even whole skinned alligators. Forelegs are marketed as "alligator wings."

About 1.2 million have been returned since alligator farming was approved in 1986, Jeb Linscombe, head of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' alligator program, said Thursday.

The return percentage was first set at 17%, based on estimates that about 83% die in the egg or before they're 4 feet (1.2 meters) long. A wild-hatched gator that size would be about 4 years old, but readily available food lets farmed alligators grow much faster.

Raccoons, other predators and floods destroy about one-third of all nests. The black and yellow hatchlings are about 8.5 inches (22 centimeters) long and weigh only 2 ounces (57 grams). That makes them easy prey for bigger gators, wading birds, otters and fish even though mother alligators stay with their babies for about a year.

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Uncontrolled hunting nearly wiped out American alligators before Louisiana barred all hunting in 1962. Alligator mississippiensis was among the first species federally listed as endangered in 1967, after Congress passed the precursor to the Endangered Species Act.

"The primary reason the species recovered is .. elimination of the black market," Linscombe said.

Louisiana allowed small, highly regulated hunts in 1972 and 1973, opening a statewide season in 1981. Two years later, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ruled that the species had recovered over most of its range, and it was "de-listed" entirely in 1987.

Since 1972, more than 1.1 million wild alligators have been killed, over 11 million alligator eggs have been collected, and nearly 7.3 million farm raised alligators have been sold, according to the state management program's 2019-2020 annual report.

Surveyors who flew over coastal marshes during the summer of 2019 estimated the number of alligator nests at a record, nearly 68,000. This year's estimate was a few thousand below that, Linscombe said.

A change in weather patterns is one reason for the big numbers, he said. There are far fewer nests during droughts, when the water is low — and there were regular droughts over the first 40 years of state nest surveys. But there haven't been any droughts over the past decade.

Hunters took 23,828 alligators during the wild season in 2019. It was the second straight increase "but harvest remains depressed due to an oversupply of crocodilian skins worldwide," the report said.

Harvest numbers this year and last have been depressed by Hurricanes Ida, Laura and Delta, and by COVID-19 restrictions, Linscombe said.

Farmers' return rate has been reduced several times over the years.

Current regulations require farmers to return 10% of hatchlings within two years — with a sliding scale based on average lengths of 36 to 60 inches (0.9 to 1.5 meters). Higher average lengths bring the percentage down.

Nearly 387,000 eggs were collected in 2017. resulting in about 39,000 farm-raised alligators two years later that were measured, tail-notched, tagged and released. Their sex was also determined, since biologists want at least half to be females.

About 450,000 eggs were collected this summer, Linscombe said.

The effects of a change from 10% to 5% may not show up for 10, 15, even 20 years, he said.

"The key to everything is to monitor it and make sure the action you took is going to have the result you thought it would," he said.

## Heavy rains, landslides leave 18 dead in south India

The Associated Press undefined

NEW DELHI (AP) — At least 18 people have died a day after torrential rains swept through villages and flooded roads in the southern Indian state of Kerala.

Officials said rescuers recovered the bodies in two of the worst-hit districts, Kottayam and Idukki, where the heavy downpours triggered massive landslides, according to the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency.

The National Disaster Response Force and the Indian Army deployed teams to help with rescue efforts as several are still feared to be missing.

On Saturday, when the heavy rains began, television reports showed people wading through chest-deep waters to rescue passengers from a bus that was nearly submerged by the torrents flooding the roads.

The state chief minister, Pinarayi Vijayan, urged residents on Sunday to exercise extreme caution even though the intense rainfall has since subsided. Over a 100 relief camps have been set up, he added.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he spoke to the chief minister and added that authorities were working to rescue those affected. "I pray for everyone's safety and well-being," he said in a tweet.

In 2018, Kerala suffered catastrophic floods when heavy downpours amid the monsoon season killed 223 people and drove hundreds of thousands from their homes.

## In quiet debut, Alzheimer's drug finds questions, skepticism

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By TOM MURPHY AP Health Writer

The first new Alzheimer's treatment in more than 20 years was hailed as a breakthrough when regulators approved it more than four months ago, but its rollout has been slowed by questions about its price and how well it works.

Several major medical centers remain undecided on whether to use Biogen's Aduhelm, which is recommended for early stages of the disease. Big names like the Cleveland Clinic and Mass General Brigham in Boston say they'll pass on it for now.

One neurology practice has even banned the company's sales reps from its offices, citing concerns about the drug and its price, which can climb past \$50,000 annually.

Many doctors say they need to learn more about how Aduhelm works and what will be covered before they decide whether to offer it. That might take several months to sort out. Even then, questions may linger.

"The drug won't be for everybody, even with access," said Salim Syed, an analyst who covers Biogen for Mizuho Securities USA.

Syed estimates that only around one-tenth of the people diagnosed with early-stage Alzheimer's may wind up taking Aduhelm chronically, especially if regulators approve similar treatments from Biogen's competitors.

Biogen, which reports third-quarter financial results Wednesday, is not saying how many people have received the drug since it was approved on June 7. A company executive said last month that Biogen was aware of about 50 sites infusing Aduhelm, far fewer than the 900 the company had said it expected to be ready shortly after regulators approved the drug.

Aduhelm is the first in a line of new drugs that promise to do what no other Alzheimer's treatment has managed: slow the progress of the fatal brain-destroying disease instead of just managing its symptoms.

"It's like a breath of fresh air," said Dr. Stephen Salloway, a Rhode Island neurologist and Biogen consultant who is prescribing the drug. People with Alzheimer's "know what's coming, and they want to do whatever they can to stay in the milder stage."

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved Aduhelm despite objections from its own independent advisers, several of whom resigned. The agency later said the drug was appropriate for patients with mild symptoms or early-stage Alzheimer's.

Aduhelm clears brain plaque thought to play a role in Alzheimer's disease, and regulators made the call based on study results showing the drug seemed likely to benefit patients.

Biogen, which developed Aduhelm with Japan's Eisai Co., had halted two studies on the drug due to disappointing results. It later said further analysis showed the treatment was effective at higher doses.

The FDA is requiring Biogen to conduct a follow-up study.

The research Biogen submitted so far doesn't give doctors as much insight as they would normally have into a drug, said Dr. Brendan Kelley, a neurologist at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas. Its experts are still reviewing Aduhelm.

"Biogen went to the FDA with preliminary data, so it makes it really challenging to know how to navigate," he said. More complete research would give doctors a better idea for how the drug will work in a broader patient population, Kelley said.

Cost is another concern.

Biogen's pricing for Aduhelm is "irresponsible and unconscionable," according to signs posted on office doors for The Neurology Center, a Washington, D.C.-area practice. The signs also refer to Aduhelm as a medication "of dubious effectiveness" and tell Biogen sales reps they are no longer welcomed in the center's offices.

"As physicians we feel compelled to speak out and protest BIOGEN's actions," one of the signs reads.

Neurology Center CEO Wendy Van Fossen said the signs went up in July, but she declined to elaborate on why they were posted.

A Biogen spokeswoman said in an email that it was disappointing that some centers are denying access to the drug.

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As for Aduhelm's effectiveness, company data shows that plaque removal "is reasonably likely to predict a clinical benefit," said Biogen Chief Medical Officer Dr. Maha Radhakrishnan. She said regulators reviewed data from more than 3,000 patients, counting two late-stage studies and earlier research.

Doctors also are worried about whether patients taking Aduhelm will be able to get the regular brain scans needed to monitor their progress on the drug.

Issues with care access weren't explored in the clinical research, which also involved patients who were generally younger and healthier than those in the broader population, noted Dr. Zaldy Tan, director of the Cedars-Sinai memory and aging program.

The Los Angeles health system is still evaluating Aduhelm. Its committee of experts is considering things like which doctors will prescribe the drug and how to ensure patients are monitored for problems like dizziness or headaches develop. Bleeding in the brain is another potential side effect.

"Safety and access are real issues that need to be prioritized," Tan said.

Aduhelm also requires a deeper level of coordination among doctors than other Alzheimer's treatments, noted Radhakrishnan.

Prescribing doctors have to work with neurologists, radiologists and nurse practitioners to diagnose patients, confirm the presence of plaque in the brain, get them started on the treatment and then monitor them.

"All of this is work in progress," Radhakrishnan said.

Uncertainty about insurance coverage is another holdup.

Some insurers have decided not to cover the drug. Others, including the major Medicare Advantage insurer Humana, haven't made a decision yet but are reviewing claims case by case in the meantime.

The federal Medicare program is expected to make a national coverage determination by next spring that will lay out how it handles the drug.

Biogen executives said recently they think most sites that will offer the drug are waiting for clarity on reimbursement, including that Medicare decision.

Medicare's determination looms large for the Cedars-Sinai experts. Tan said they know they should reach a decision before the Medicare decision prompts more patient inquiries.

He said doctors also realize they aren't just evaluating Aduhelm: They're also thinking about how to handle similar treatments that could get FDA approval.

"We want to make sure we get it right," Tan said.

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The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## Volunteers in the sky watch over migrant rescues by sea

By RENATA BRITO Associated Press

ABOARD THE SEABIRD (AP) — As dozens of African migrants traversed the Mediterranean Sea on a flimsy white rubber boat, a small aircraft circling 1,000 feet above closely monitored their attempt to reach Europe.

The twin-engine Seabird, owned by the German non-governmental organization Sea-Watch, is tasked with documenting human rights violations committed against migrants at sea and relaying distress cases to nearby ships and authorities who have increasingly ignored their pleas.

On this cloudy October afternoon, an approaching thunderstorm heightened the dangers for the overcrowded boat. Nearly 23,000 people have died or gone missing in the Mediterranean trying to reach Europe since 2014, according to the United Nations' migration agency.

"Nour 2, Nour 2, this is aircraft Seabird, aircraft Seabird," the aircraft's tactical coordinator, Eike Bretschneider, communicated via radio with the only vessel nearby. The captain of the Nour 2, agreed to change course and check up on the flimsy boat. But after seeing the boat had a Libyan flag, the people refused its assistance, the captain reported back on the crackling radio.

"They say they only have 20 liters of fuel left," the captain, who did not identify himself by name, told

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the Seabird. "They want to continue on their journey."

The small boat's destination was the Italian island of Lampedusa, where tourists sitting in outdoor cafés sipped on Aperol Spritz, oblivious to what was unfolding 60 nautical miles (111 kilometers/68 miles) south of them on the Mediterranean Sea.

Bretschneider, a 30-year-old social worker, made some quick calculations and concluded the migrants must have departed Libya approximately 20 hours ago and still had some 15 hours ahead of them before they reached Lampedusa. That was if their boat did not fall apart or capsize along the way.

Despite the risks, many migrants and refugees say they'd rather die trying to cross to Europe than be returned to Libya where, upon disembarkation, they are placed in detention centers and often subjected to relentless abuse.

Bretschneider sent the rubber boat's coordinates to the air liaison officer sitting in Berlin, who then relayed the position (inside the Maltese Search and Rescue zone) to both Malta and Italy. Unsurprisingly to them, they received no response.

Running low on fuel, the Seabird had to leave the scene.

"We can only hope the people will reach the shore at some moment or will get rescued by a European coast guard vessel," Bretschneider told AP as they made their way back.

The activists have grown used to having their distress calls go unanswered.

For years human rights groups and international law experts have denounced that European countries are increasingly ignoring their international obligations to rescue migrants at sea. Instead, they've outsourced rescues to the Libyan Coast Guard, which has a track record of reckless interceptions as well as ties to human traffickers and militias.

"I'm sorry, we don't speak with NGOs," a man answering the phone of the Maltese Rescue and Coordination Center told a member of Sea-Watch inquiring about a boat in distress this past June. In a separate call to the Rescue and Coordination Center in Rome, another Sea-Watch member was told: "We have no information to report to you."

Maltese and Italian authorities did not respond to questions sent by AP.

Trying to get in touch with the Libyan rescue and coordination center is an even greater challenge. On the rare occasion that someone does pick up, the person on the other side of the line often doesn't speak English.

More than 49,000 migrants have reached Italian shores so far this year according to the Italian Ministry of Interior, nearly double the number of people who crossed in the same time period last year.

Although it is illegal for European vessels to take rescued migrants back to Libya themselves, information shared by the EU's surveillance drones and planes have allowed the Libyan Coast Guard to considerably increase its ability to stop migrants from reaching Europe. So far this year, it has intercepted roughly half of those who have attempted to leave, returning more than 26,000 men, women and children to Libya.

Sea-Watch has relied on millions of euros from individual donations over several years to expand its air monitoring capabilities as well. It now has two small aircraft that, with a birds-eye view, can find boats in distress much faster than ships can.

Taking off from Lampedusa, which is closer to North Africa than Italy, the planes can reach a distress case relatively quickly if its position is known. But when there are no exact coordinates, they must fly a search pattern, sometimes for hours, and scan the sea with the help of binoculars.

Even when flying low, finding a tiny boat in the vast Mediterranean can strain the most experienced eyes. The three- to four-person crew of volunteers reports every little dot on the horizon that could potentially be people in distress.

"Target at 10 o'clock," the Seabird's photographer sitting in the back alerted on a recent flight.

The pilot veered left to inspect it.

"Fishing boat, disregard," Bretschneider, the tactical coordinator, replied.

In rough seas, breaking waves can play tricks and for brief moments resemble wobbly boats in the distance. Frequently, the "targets" turn out to be nothing at all, and the Seabird returns to land hours later without any new information.

But finding boats in distress is only the first challenge. Getting them rescued is just as difficult, if not

harder.

With the absence of state rescue vessels and NGO ships getting increasingly blocked from leaving port, Sea-Watch often relies on the good will of merchant vessels navigating the area. But many are also reluctant to get involved after several commercial ships found themselves stuck at sea for days as they waited for Italy's or Malta's permission to disembark rescued migrants. Others have taken them back to Libya in violation of maritime and refugee conventions.

This week, a court in Naples convicted the captain of an Italian commercial ship for returning 101 migrants to Libya in 2018.

Without any state authority, the Seabird can only remind captains of their duty to rescue persons in distress. In this way, Bretschneider recently got an Italian supply vessel to save 65 people from a drifting migrant boat, just moments before the Libyan Coast Guard arrived.

On another mission a few days later, the Seabird returned from its flight without knowing what would happen to the people they had seen on the white rubber boat.

Bretschneider checked his phone at dinner that night, hoping for good news. On the other side of the Mediterranean, 17 bodies had washed up in western Libya, apparently from a different boat.

The next day the Seabird took off to look for the white rubber boat again, in vain. On their way back, they got a message from land.

The white rubber boat had reached waters near Lampedusa and was picked up by the Italian Coast Guard. The people had made it.

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Follow all AP stories on global migration at <https://apnews.com/hub/migration>.

## **Gambian Toufah Jallow tells of surviving rape by dictator**

By CARLEY PETESCH Associated Press

DAKAR, Senegal (AP) — Toufah Jallow's name resonates deeply in Gambia as one of the few women who has taken a public stand against sexual assault in the small West African state.

She gained fame at the age of 18 when she won a university scholarship in a national talent competition for young women. But in 2015 she fled Gambia, fearing for her life, after dictator Yahya Jammeh allegedly drugged and raped her, angry that she had turned down his marriage proposal.

She lived quietly in Canada, worried that Jammeh would persecute family members in Gambia. After Jammeh fell from power she later found the strength to go public with her story, despite Gambia's culture of silence over sexual assault, she told The Associated Press.

The nation was riveted when she held a press conference to share her account via social media and in a human rights report in June 2019. She also testified months later to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Now, Jallow is telling her story in detail in a newly released memoir: "Toufah: The Woman Who Inspired an African #MeToo Movement."

"In June 2015, Yahya Jammeh, then the president of The Gambia, raped me. He has never been charged. Never convicted ... He thought he would get away with it, tried to erase me. I thought I would never speak of it, that I would remain invisible. We were both wrong, because I am here, shining like the sunrise of the melanated coast," she writes. "I am Toufah Jallow. This is my story."

In the book, co-written with journalist Kim Pattaway, Jallow describes her journey from the daughter and granddaughter of women who in their own way pushed against the country's patriarchy to the evening of her alleged rape and her tense escape and the resulting traumas and challenges.

Jallow said she wants to be a role model for others who have experienced sexual assault and to help them deal with it.

"I wanted to make my life as relatable to young girls as possible so (they see) that what I did is achievable (and) is not seen as a miracle," she said. "It takes an ordinary girl who grew up in a village somewhere in The Gambia with a mother and with 20 siblings in a polygamous home."



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Coming from a humble background, Jallow was swept into a high-profile role because of her scholarship, attending many public events with then-president Jammeh. After receiving gifts from Jammeh, who was already married, and rejecting his proposal to become one of his wives, Jallow was lured to the president's private quarters, where she says he drugged and raped her.

Jammeh hasn't reacted, but his party has denied everything.

Jallow didn't tell a soul in Gambia, fearing the worst for herself and her family. She knew there were hundreds of people who had been arrested for daring to question Jammeh.

Terrified, Jallow fled Gambia. She hid her identity by wearing a niqab (head-to-toe veil) so that state agents wouldn't recognize her. She went to Senegal and with the help of trusted allies made it to Canada where she now lives.

For years, no one in Gambia knew what had happened to Jallow. She lived as a refugee in Canada, working odd jobs to support her classes.

"For the longest time ... I would always shove it aside," she said of her trauma. But seeing statistics for sexual assault with so few being held accountable bothered her. "I have never felt more invisible," she said of that period.

Speaking about sex and sexuality, "it's just not done," in Gambia, she said. There is not even a word for rape in her native Fula language, she explained to AP. Instead people use phrases like "Somebody fell on me."

Jammeh lost elections and fled the country in 2017. Gambia then opened a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate the reports of abuses and killings during his 22-year rule.

When Jallow came forward in 2019 about her assault, it unleashed a movement. More than 50,000 people were glued to social media when she first spoke. Women then marched holding banners saying "#IAmToufah" and there was an outpouring of others' stories of rape.

Jallow speaking out was a "wind of change" in Gambia, said Marion Volkmann-Brandau, a women's rights activist who helped guide Jallow and led the human rights investigation into sexual assault in Gambia that saw her come forward.

"There was this moment of support ... women coming out generally about rape and having a story to share showed they weren't invisible anymore," she said. "Gambians realized too how widespread the issue was."

That hope, however, has unfortunately dwindled, Volkmann-Brandau said, as the legal system must be reformed in order to take sexual assault seriously.

But the groundwork has been laid and Jallow has started the Toufah Foundation, set up to help support of survivors of sexual assault in Gambia. Her goal is to have Gambia's first fully functioning women's shelter.

Her name is now used to discuss rape in communities once unable to talk about it.

She travels to Gambia often, while studying in Canada to be a counselor for women and children victims, and is also working on a documentary that follows survivors of sexual violence.

And if Jammeh returns to Gambia, Jallow says she will fly there to confront him.

"I feel like I am too visible to be invisible anymore," she said. "I have faced the worst fear ... I have survived him physically."

## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Monday, Oct. 18, the 291st day of 2021. There are 74 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 18, 1962, James D. Watson, Francis Crick and Maurice Wilkins were honored with the Nobel Prize for Medicine and Physiology for determining the double-helix molecular structure of DNA.

On this date:

In 1767, the Mason-Dixon line, the boundary between colonial Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware, was set as astronomers Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon completed their survey.

In 1867, the United States took formal possession of Alaska from Russia.

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In 1892, the first long-distance telephone line between New York and Chicago was officially opened (it could only handle one call at a time).

In 1898, the American flag was raised in Puerto Rico shortly before Spain formally relinquished control of the island to the U.S.

In 1961, the movie musical "West Side Story," starring Natalie Wood and Richard Beymer, premiered in New York, the film's setting.

In 1968, the U.S. Olympic Committee suspended Tommie Smith and John Carlos for giving a "Black power" salute as a protest during a victory ceremony in Mexico City.

In 1969, the federal government banned artificial sweeteners known as cyclamates (SY'-kluh-maytz) because of evidence they caused cancer in laboratory rats.

In 1972, Congress passed the Clean Water Act, overriding President Richard Nixon's veto.

In 1977, West German commandos stormed a hijacked Lufthansa jetliner on the ground in Mogadishu, Somalia, freeing all 86 hostages and killing three of the four hijackers.

In 1997, a monument honoring American servicewomen, past and present, was dedicated at Arlington National Cemetery.

In 2001, CBS News announced that an employee in anchorman Dan Rather's office had tested positive for skin anthrax. Four disciples of Osama bin Laden were sentenced in New York to life without parole for their roles in the deadly 1998 bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa.

In 2010, four men snared in an FBI sting were convicted of plotting to blow up New York City synagogues and shoot down military planes with the help of a paid informant who'd convinced them he was a terror operative. (James Cromitie, David Williams, Onta Williams and Laguerre Payen were each sentenced to 25 years in prison.)

Ten years ago: Fifty wild animals were released by the owner of a Zanesville, Ohio, farm, Terry Thompson, who then took his own life; authorities killed 48 of the creatures, while the remaining two were presumed eaten by other animals. Republican presidential candidates laced into each other in a debate in Las Vegas; Mitt Romney emerged as still the person to beat, even as he was called out on the issues of illegal immigration, health care and jobs. Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit (gee-LAHD' shah-LEET') emerged from five years in captivity as Hamas militants handed him over to Egyptian mediators in an exchange for 1,000 Palestinian prisoners.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama hosted his final state dinner as he welcomed Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife, Agnese Landini, to the White House.

One year ago: Leftist Luis Arce easily won Bolivia's presidential election, avoiding the need for a runoff; the win was a vindication for the Movement Toward Socialism party of ousted President Evo Morales, who was barred from running. Twitter blocked a post from Scott Atlas, an adviser to President Donald Trump, who suggested that masks do not work to stop the spread of the coronavirus; Twitter said he violated a policy against sharing false or misleading information about COVID-19 that could lead to harm. A tiebreaking home run by Cody Bellinger in the seventh inning led the Los Angeles Dodgers to a 4-3 win over the Atlanta Braves in Game 7 of the National League Championship Series, sending the Dodgers to the World Series against the Tampa Bay Rays, which the Dodgers would win.

Today's Birthdays: College and Pro Football Hall of Famer Mike Ditka is 82. Singer-musician Russ Giguere is 78. Actor Joe Morton is 74. Actor Pam Dawber is 71. Author Terry McMillan is 70. Writer-producer Chuck Lorre is 69. Gospel singer Vickie Winans is 68. Director-screenwriter David Twohy (TOO'-ee) is 66. International Tennis Hall of Famer Martina Navratilova is 65. Actor Jon Lindstrom is 64. International Hall of Fame boxer Thomas Hearns is 63. Actor Jean-Claude Van Damme is 61. Jazz musician Wynton Marsalis is 60. Actor Vincent Spano is 59. Rock musician Tim Cross is 55. Singer Nonchalant is 54. Former tennis player Michael Stich (shteek) is 53. Actor Joy Bryant is 47. Rock musician Peter Svensson (The Cardigans) is 47. Actor Wesley Jonathan is 43. R&B singer-actor Ne-Yo is 42. Country singer Josh Gracin is 41. Olympic gold medal skier Lindsey Vonn is 37. Jazz singer-musician Esperanza Spalding is 37. Actor-model Freida Pinto is 37. Actor Zac Efron is 34. Actor Joy Lauren is 32. U.S. Olympic and WNBA basketball star Brittney Griner is 31. TV personality Bristol Palin is 31. Actor Tyler Posey is 30. Actor Toby Regbo is 30.