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Upcoming Events

Tuesday, Nov. 2

Brookings Novice Debate

Volleyball Region 1A Tourney at Redfield. Redfield vs. Clark/Willow Lake at 6 p.m. followed by Groton Area vs. Sisseton.

NCRC Test at GHS, 8:30 a.m. to noon

Thursday, Nov. 4

Aberdeen Novice Online Debate

Volleyball Region 1A Tourney

Bowdle LDE

Friday-Saturday, Nov. 5-6

Golden Eagle Cup Debate & Oral Interp at Aberdeen Central

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

The Dallas Cowboy fans travel well and makeup about 20% of the fans at US Bank Stadium on Sunday Night Football. That makes the loss to the Cowboys much more painful as they leave with another excruciating loss late in the game.

Once again, the Vikings looked great on their opening drive. They get a jump-start in the game by scoring an impressive 75-yard drive culminating in a touchdown. The problem was they would go silent the rest of the way. In the end, Dallas prevails in a 20-16 defensive battle.

First Half:

The Vikings take the opening kick 75 yards, with Adam Thielen scoring on a 20-yard pass over the middle from Kirk Cousins. Dallas mounted a drive but missed a long field. Dallas comes back in the 2nd quarter to cut the lead 7-3 on a 38-yard field goal by Greg Zuerlein. The Vikings match that kick with Greg Joseph's 45-yard field goal with 1:49 left in the first half. Overall the first half was pretty quiet except for the 20% Cowboy fans that showed up for the game.

Second Half:

The 2nd started with a bang. On just the third play after the kickoff, the Cowboy's backup quarterback, Cooper Rush, hit Ced Wilson over the middle, and he outran the Viking defensive backs for a quick 73-yard touchdown. All of a sudden, the game is tied 10-10.

After the teams exchanged punts, the Vikings managed a seven-play drive ending in a 40-yard field goal. The Cowboys quickly respond with a 39-yard field goal to tie the game at 13.

The fourth quarter was quiet until the final 3 minutes. The Vikings, with the help of three personal foul penalties, managed to get the ball down inside the red zone and kick a 24-yard field goal to take the lead with 2:51 to go.

Now is when the heartbreak starts to happen. In shades of Antonio Freeman's catch on MNF against the Vikings, Amari Cooper catches a well-defended tip ball for a 33-yard catch to put the Cowboys in Viking territory. The Cowboys drive into the red zone, when on third down and 11, Ezekial Elliot, who is kept in check for most of the game, catches a short pass and busts two tackles to get a first down inside the 10. On the very next play, Rush tosses a fade to Cooper in the back left corner of the endzone. The Cowboys take a 20-16 lead. The Vikings manage to get to midfield, but time expires. The Vikings fall to 3-4 on the season.

Statistical Leaders:

Kirk Cousins 22 for 35, 184 yards, 1 TD pass

Dalvin Cook 18 carries for 178 yards rushing, 0 TD

Adam Thielen 6 catches for 78 yards, 1 TD

The highlights of the day:

Former Cowboy Xavier Woods had his best game as a Viking picking off a pass in the first half and causing a fumble on a sack in the second half.

The irony of the day:

CJ Ham, known for his blocking prowess as a fullback, caught more passes than Justin Jefferson on the night. It is not a recipe for success if the Vikings want to save this season from implosion.

Next game: at Baltimore Ravens

Righting the ship is not getting any easier for this Vikings team as they travel to Baltimore to face Lamar Jackson and the Ravens. The next three weeks will determine the fate of this team and possibly the tenure of Mike Zimmer as they play three of the best quarterbacks in the league.

When the Heart Can't Keep Up

A woman had been feeling short of breath for several weeks. Physical activities which had previously been easy for her were becoming a chore. In fact, simply laying down resulted in difficulty breathing. She had gained some weight and her legs were swollen.

This woman was a patient of mine, and she was in heart failure. This doesn't necessarily mean her heart was going to completely stop, but it was having trouble keeping up. For whatever reason, her heart struggled to pump, and fluid was building up in her body adding more strain. It was a vicious circle, and it was getting worse.

After listening to her story, I completed a physical examination, and ordered a few tests. Then, I talked to my patient about heart failure. We agreed she would take medication to help her heart pump better and fluid pills to help decrease the swelling.

Heart failure is often triggered by some type of damage affecting the heart's ability to pump. Heart damage might result from a sudden heart attack blocking blood flow in an artery of the heart. Sometimes damage occurs slowly, blocking blood flow due to the gradual buildup of cholesterol known as coronary artery disease. Other causes of heart failure may include faulty heart valves, an irregular heart rhythm, high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, or obesity.

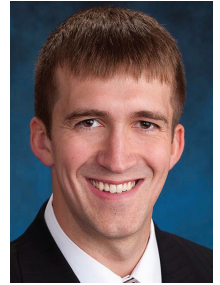
Myocarditis, or inflammation of the heart, can also lead to heart failure. Often temporary, myocarditis can be the result of a virus or other infections, drugs, chemicals, and other diseases.

Sometimes the reason for heart failure may be a lung problem. The heart pumps blood through the lungs and back to the heart, then out through the body. So, if the blood is not flowing through the lungs efficiently, the heart can have trouble. Thus, a blood clot in the lungs, smoking, vaping, cancer, infection, or other lung problems can also lead to heart failure.

I recently saw my patient again, and she feels great. She rarely experiences shortness of breath anymore. She faithfully takes the medications and keeps an eye on her weight and her diet, but other than that, she does not think much about it.

If you are experiencing increased shortness of breath with activity, swelling of the legs, an unusual increase in weight, increased fatigue, chest pain, or if you feel like your heart is beating too quickly or not in a regular manner, please see your doctor. Your heart works hard so you can keep up your activities. Please make sure you return the favor.

Andrew Ellsworth, 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 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.



Andrew Ellsworth, MD

The Life of Edwin Tomy Tietz



Prayer services for Edwin Tomy Tietz, Sr., 82, of Groton will be 7:00 p.m., November 4, 2021 at Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton. Pastor Brandon Dunham will officiate. Visitation will be held at the chapel from 5-7 p.m.

Edwin Tomy Tietz was born on January 10, 1939 in Missoula, Montana to William and Erma (Wentz) Tietz. He attended school in New Leipzig, North Dakota. Ed worked in construction and was part of the crew that built the Oahe Dam in Pierre. On May 5, 1976 he was united in marriage with Deborah Yde in Webster and the couple made their home in Groton. Ed worked many years farming in the Groton area.

Ed enjoyed tinkering with all types of small machinery. He could fix nearly anything and did so for many family members and friends. He liked the outdoors; feeding the birds, mowing around town and snowmobiling. Ed cherished time spent with his grandchildren.

Celebrating his life is his wife Debbie of Groton, his daughters, Melissa (Mark) White of Aberdeen, Alesha (Cory) Peterson of Aberdeen, son, Tom (Lindsey) Tietz of Groton and seven grandchildren: Shelby, Jaiden, Preston, Collin, Lane, McKenna and Trey.

Preceding him in death were his parents and two brothers, Walter and Elmer.

Honorary Urnbearers will be all of Edwin's Grandchildren.

Family requests casual dress for the service.

www.paetznick-garness.com

Flags at Half-Staff in Honor of Governor Frank Farrar

PIERRE, S.D. – Former South Dakota Governor Frank L. Farrar passed away peacefully at the age of ninety-two on October 31, 2021, in Rochester, Minnesota, surrounded by family. Governor Kristi Noem has ordered that flags be flown at half-staff statewide effective immediately in his honor. Flags will remain at half-staff until the day of Governor Farrar's interment, and those arrangements will be announced at a later time.

"Frank was an incredible leader for our state and a mentor to me over these past years, as well," said Governor Kristi Noem. "His heart for people and his enthusiasm for public service have been an inspiration.

"Frank stayed active up until the day he died, as evidenced by the statue of him running on the Trail of Governors," continued Governor Noem. "He even competed in triathlons and Ironman competitions into his eighties. We should all hope to be able to live as active, caring, and full a life as Frank."

Farrar was elected governor in 1968 at the age of 39 and served as the 24th Governor of South Dakota from 1969 to 1971. He also served as the state's 22nd Attorney General from 1963 to 1969. Prior to that, he served as Marshall County judge, Marshall County state's attorney, and as the only governor of South Dakota Boys State to later be elected governor.

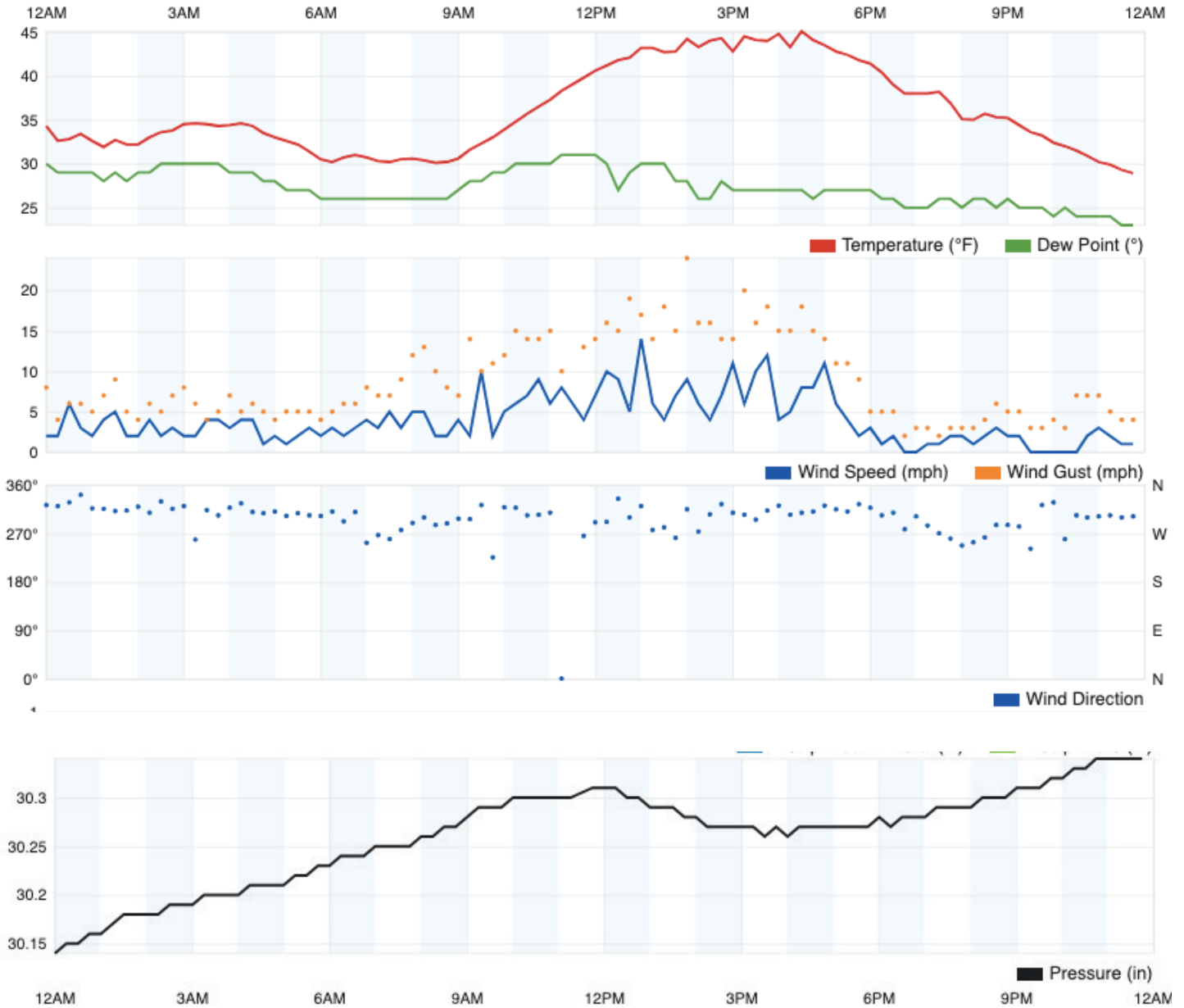
Farrar joined the South Dakota ROTC while attending college at USD before commissioning as a lieutenant and serving in the Korean War. He continued serving as a captain in the Army Reserves for 15 years. A detailed biography of Governor Farrar can be found [here](#).

It was six years ago to the day, on October 31, 2015, that his wife of sixty-two years, Former First Lady Patricia Farrar, passed away. Frank is survived by five children – Jeanne Farrar, Sally Farrar, Robert Farrar, Mary Turner (Randall Turner), and Anne Farrar (John Ingwalson) – as well as eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Increasing
Clouds

High: 42 °F

Tonight



Decreasing
Clouds

Low: 19 °F

Tuesday



Sunny

High: 41 °F

Tuesday
Night



Partly Cloudy

Low: 21 °F

Wednesday



Sunny

High: 44 °F



ISSUED: 3:05 AM - Monday,
November 01, 2021

Dry This Week

Chilly To Start ... Milder For Later This Week

Today



Highs:
40s

Tuesday



Highs:
40s

Wednesday



Highs:
40s

Thursday



Highs:
50s

Friday



Highs:
50s



National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
Aberdeen South Dakota

Looks like for the most part we will see dry conditions through the week, and potentially into next weekend, with a slow steady warming trend.

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Today in Weather History

November 1st, 1999: High winds of 30 to 50 mph with gusts to around 55 mph caused some tree and building damage throughout Big Stone and Traverse counties. On Highway 10 west of Browns Valley, the high winds blew a semi-tractor trailer full of 12,000 pounds of meat off the road and into a ditch. High winds from 30 to 50 mph, gusting to near 65 mph, also caused building and tree damage throughout central, north-central, and northeast South Dakota. In Eureka, the high winds blew down a large part of the ballpark fence. In Mellette, a 250-foot diameter grain bin under construction also received some damage from the winds.

November 1st, 2000: A rare and unusual tornado event occurred as five tornadoes hit south-central North Dakota, causing property damage and injuries. The majority of the damage and injuries occurred in the Bismarck area. Forty-two homes suffered minor to moderate damage. The tornadoes were rated F0 and F1, packing winds up to 90 mph. Another unusual phenomenon, these tornadoes traveled from east to west due to close proximity to a low-pressure system. Simultaneously, as these tornadoes were occurring, snow began to fall in the far western area of North Dakota. As a result, winter storm watches and warnings were posted across northwest and central North Dakota that afternoon. Before this, the last recorded tornado in the state was October 11th, 1979, in Sargent County in southeast North Dakota.

1755: A magnitude 8.7 earthquake devastated Lisbon, Portugal, on this day, killing as many as 50,000 people. The epicenter was located 120 miles west-southwest of Cape St. Vincent. In addition, many individuals who sought safety on the Tagus River were killed by an estimated 20-foot tall tsunami that struck 40 minutes after the earthquake.

1848: When Joseph Henry came to the Smithsonian, one of his priorities was to set up a meteorological program. In 1847, while outlining his plan for the new institution, Henry called for "a system of extended meteorological observations for solving American storms." On November 1st, 1848, Joseph Henry and Navy meteorologist James Espy wrote a letter urging anyone interested in becoming a weather observer to signify their willingness to do so. By 1849, he had budgeted \$1,000 for the Smithsonian meteorological project and established a network of some 150 volunteer weather observers. A decade later, the project had more than 600 volunteer observers, including people in Canada, Mexico, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Its cost in 1860 was \$4,400, or thirty percent of the Smithsonian's research and publication budget.

1861: A tropical storm raced across Florida, becoming a hurricane off the coast of South Carolina. The storm-battered a Union fleet of ships attacking the Carolina ports.

1870: United States Army Signal Corps observers at 24 sites around the country simultaneously made weather reports and transmitted them to Washington, where a national weather map would be drawn. These simultaneous reports also started the process of sending out weather reports by telegraph to metropolitan newspapers. This would be the beginning of our present-day National Weather Service.

1966 - Santa Anna winds fanned fires, and brought record November heat to parts of coastal California. November records included 86 degrees at San Francisco, 97 degrees at San Diego, and 101 degrees at the International airport in Los Angeles. Fires claimed the lives of at least sixteen firefighters. (The Weather Channel)

1968 - A tornado touched down west of Winslow, AZ, but did little damage in an uninhabited area. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Early morning thunderstorms in central Arizona produced hail an inch in diameter at Williams and Gila Bend, and drenched Payson with 1.86 inches of rain. Hannagan Meadows AZ, meanwhile, was blanketed with three inches of snow. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed across the Ohio Valley. Afternoon highs of 76 degrees at Beckley WV, 77 degrees at Bluefield WV, and 83 degrees at Lexington KY were records for the month of November. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Low pressure brought gales and locally heavy rain to the northeastern U.S. The rainfall total of 1.46 inches at Newark NJ was a record for the date. New York City was soaked with more than two inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2014: Up to 6 inches of snow fell in Gilbert, South Carolina.

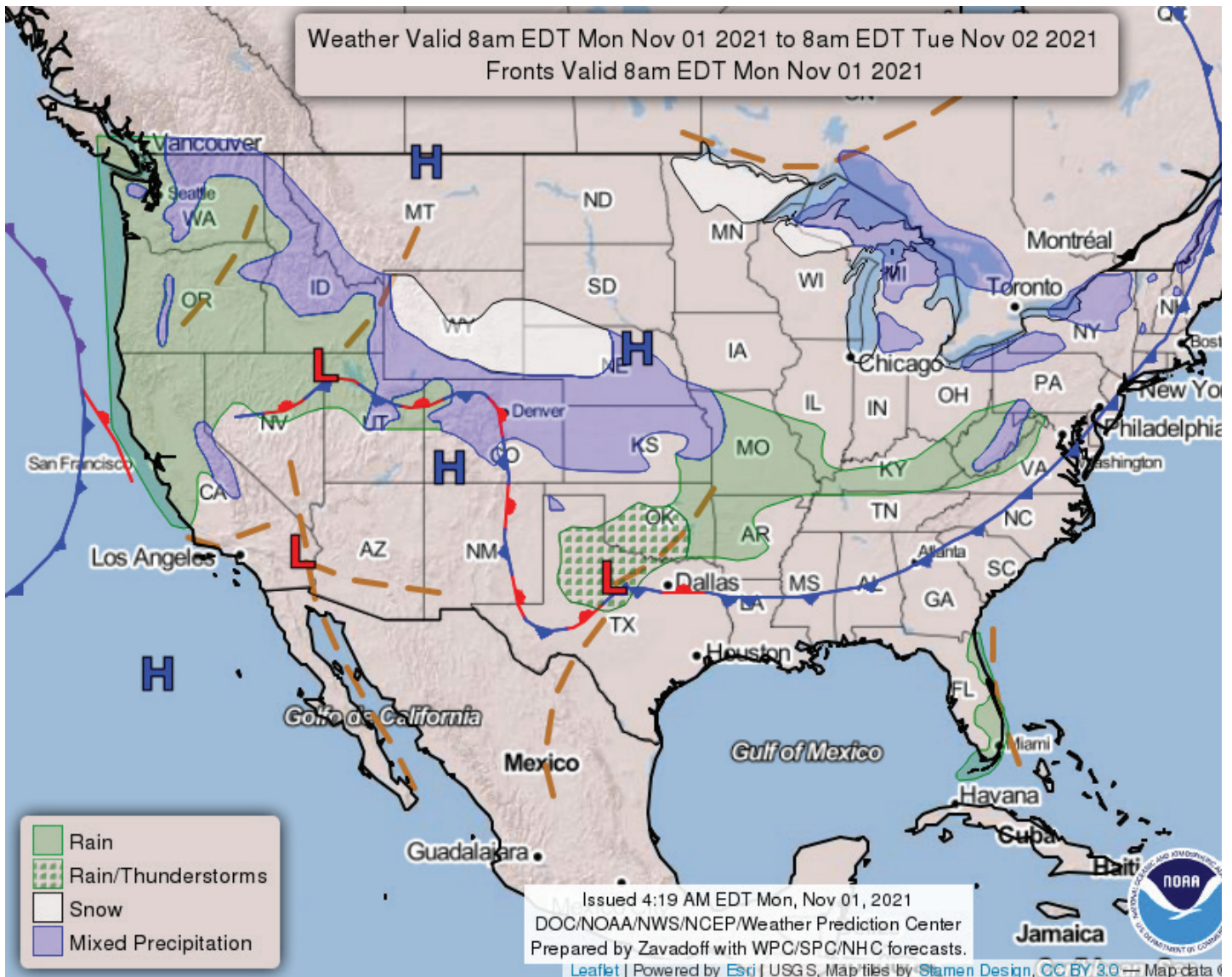
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 45 °F at 4:29 PM
Low Temp: 27 °F at 11:58 PM
Wind: 24 mph at 1:52 PM
Precip: 0.00

Record High: 75° in 1990
Record Low: -3° in 1935
Average High: 50°F
Average Low: 26°F
Average Precip in Nov.: 0.03
Precip to date in Nov.: 4.30
Average Precip to date: 20.50
Precip Year to Date: 19.72
Sunset Tonight: 6:20:58 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:12:21 AM



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THE WONDER OF WORK

Years ago, a "hobo" came to the back porch as my mother sat there "shelling peas." "Pardon me, Ma'am, but could you spare a meal to a starving traveler?"

Graciously, but firmly, my mother responded and said she would be happy to provide a meal, but he would have to do some yard work first. Politely, he declined. He was "too weak" to work before he had something to eat. He then walked away quietly and went next door.

God intended for man to work. As soon as He created man, He planted a garden in Eden and gave him a job to do: he was told to cultivate the garden. The Psalmist reminded us of the importance of work when he wrote, "Man goes out to his work, to his labor until evening."

Perhaps it is good to remember that in the days of His flesh, our Lord Jesus worked. He must have gone to His daily tasks with enthusiasm - not because it was easy or financially rewarding. He was using the skills His Father gave Him to do His will and honor Him through the work of His hands. On one occasion, early in His life, He said, "I always do the things that please Him." He did what was necessary yet never sinned.

How comforting it is to know that the Carpenter of Nazareth faced every situation that we face today or will face tomorrow. This fact assures us that He understands us completely. He faced the same trials and temptations that we face. However, He never gave in to any temptation or committed any sin so He could one day become our Savior.

Prayer: Thank You, Lord, for living a life that sets the example of how we should live. Please help us live a life where others can see You in us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Man goes out to his work, to his labor until evening. Psalm 104:23

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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

Can you dig it? Rare dinosaur fossil found in North Dakota

By JACK DURA The Bismarck Tribune

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Paleontologists have given the name “Beautiful Nightmare” to a rare dinosaur fossil thought to be the only partial skull of its species found in North Dakota.

“She is a beautiful example of her species, and she was a nightmare in her day to a lot of other critters,” said Fossil Excavators President Mike Kjelland, an assistant professor of biology at Mayville State University.

The specimen, which includes an upper jawbone and lower teeth, is thought to be a Nanotyrannus, closely related to Tyrannosaurus rex. Only five Nano partial skulls have been found in the world, though there is debate about whether the fossils are instead of juvenile T. rex, Kjelland said.

Researchers uncovered the Nano and myriad other fossils -- some rare and potentially new species -- on private land at a remote Badlands canyon Kjelland found two years ago near Bowman while looking for the fossil-rich Hell Creek Formation. The site comprises an ancient river channel and sandbar.

The fossils, which date to 66-69 million years ago, comprise a diverse array of creatures from the Late Cretaceous, including two notable Triceratops skulls that drew national attention, The Bismarck Tribune reported.

The site’s landscape at the time was similar to a delta floodplain with intermittent rivers, swamps, riparian forested areas and uplands, Kjelland said.

He and a colleague found the Nanotyrannus upper jawbone at the site earlier this year, after a storm last fall exposed bones at the site.

Researchers also have uncovered turtle and fish fossils, as well as plant fossils including seeds, leaves and a huge piece of petrified wood.

The site “gives us a glimpse in time, and a geographic glimpse of very near the end of the age of dinosaurs,” said Black Hills Institute of Geologic Research President Pete Larson, who received specimens from the site earlier this month.

“This site has lots of parts and from a wide variety of animals, so that this gives us a glimpse of the ecology both at that particular moment in time and then that geographic area,” Larson said.

Paleontologists can compare the site to similar ones to see differences in types of animal life, he said.

“The dinosaurs are a little bit different, and so we can see that even in this small area, the dinosaur diversity and dinosaur ecology tells us that the diversity over the world must have been much more diverse than just what this little tiny glimpse we see,” said Larson, who disputes a theory of dwindling dinosaur diversity in the Late Cretaceous.

Another remarkable finding is a massive Oviraptorid. The creature was a large, birdlike dinosaur, known as “the chicken from hell,” Kjelland and Larson said.

This specimen might have stood as tall as 7 feet at the hips. Researchers found arm, leg and foot bones. Kjelland said the bones could form the largest Oviraptorid in North America. More bones could confirm it as a new species, he said.

Ideally, fossils from the site would be leased to a nearby museum for display, he said. Paleontology nonprofit Fossil Excavators is holding onto the specimens for now.

The southwestern North Dakota dig site is “biodiversity soup” of the Cretaceous, according to University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute & Natural History Museum Preparator David Burnham, whom Kjelland consulted.

“These things are all quite significant, scientifically, especially when you get all of these things all together and you can get an idea of what the landscape looked like 66 million years ago,” Burnham said.

The rare fossils are “always a treat for a paleontologist,” he said.

“We know all about Triceratops and T. rex, but we know very little about giant raptors and Nanotyrannus, so that’s new information for us,” he said.

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Fossils from the site also are well preserved, up to "excruciating detail in the bones," Burnham said. "That will make it important for study, and just the fact that it's a lot of rare things that we don't usually get."

Kjelland said the site is about the area of a football field, with plenty to dig into next spring and summer. He hopes researchers find more pieces of the Nanotyrannus and Oviraptorid.

"We just touched the surface of this site," he said.

Dakota language and culture teacher honored for his work

By RANDY DOCKENDORF Yankton Press and Dakotan

NIOBRARA, Neb. (AP) — As he sits alone in his classroom, Redwing Thomas can feel the eyes of the Santee Sioux Nation upon him.

Thomas, a tribal member himself, teaches the Dakota language and culture for grades K-12 at the Isanti (formerly Santee) Community Schools. This year, he also teaches those subjects at the Santee campus of the Nebraska Indian Community College (NICC).

Along two walls of his classroom, portraits of tribal leaders represent the Santee Sioux history, from its original Minnesota homeland to the forced 1860s relocation of members to the current reservation in northeast Nebraska.

"These are our great ancestors," he said. "I recount that trail so people understand why we're here at Santee today. People have got to know it."

In honor of his work, Thomas was recently recognized as the 2021 recipient of Launch Leadership's Ron Joekel Award. Uncomfortable with the attention, he hadn't planned to attend the awards ceremony but changed his mind at the last minute.

At the awards program in Lincoln, he spoke of the efforts of the entire Santee school and community. In addition, he addressed the importance of embracing and celebrating cultural differences, the Yankton Press and Dakotan reported.

While Thomas wasn't seeking it, he had caught the attention of state officials. Lane Carr with the Nebraska Department of Education met Thomas during a visit. Carr also serves on the Launch Leadership board and nominated Thomas for the Ron Joekel Award.

The award recognizes an educator who elevates student voices and who creates leadership opportunities and advocates for them, according to Carr. In particular, Carr noted Thomas' use of hands-on experiences in the classroom.

Larry Baker, the school's secondary principal and athletic director, described Thomas as a "1% person" because of his unique talents as both an educator and individual. Thomas sees his work as a mission, not a job, and has traveled long distances to sing at funerals or lead traditional healing prayers, the principal said.

"There is urgency for Redwing. He is determined not to let the language and culture die," Baker said. "We have maybe three or four (residents) on our reservation who speak the language. We're lucky to have him here."

As one of Thomas' hands-on projects, students are filling a wall with their images of what makes up Indian Country.

"It is more than a place. It's its own world with its own functions, its own culture and its own protocol," Thomas said. "It's a world that's mostly misunderstood, but it's something that is a very beautiful place."

One project went far beyond his expectations when students produced a mini-documentary — reflecting their perspective — about the Santee Sioux history. They conducted all the research and production, even working weekends and holidays.

"I wanted them to be proud, and they showed it with this particular project," he said. "They're always told how bad it is with Santee, what's wrong with Santee. They get pushed down, and our kids are pushing back and pushing each other up. Everything is about going up and not down."

While painful, it's important for students to learn about the Santee Sioux forced relocation and other tribal struggles, Thomas said. "We're survivors, and we can take that survival instinct and push back and become the best we can," he said.

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Thomas teaches the Dakota language, which is offered as the cultural language rather than one of the European languages. He takes no credit, but he was pleased when the school district changed its name from "Santee" to the traditional "Isanti" name in recent years.

Not all of the history and culture is taught in the classroom.

Last July, a procession passed through the reservation carrying the remains of nine children who died from 1880-1910 at the government-run boarding school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. A procession escorted the children to their traditional burial ground on the Rosebud Sioux reservation in western South Dakota.

During the procession, the vehicles and escorts stopped briefly at the Ohiya Casino outside Santee and the Fort Randall Casino near Pickstown for prayer, honoring and remembrance. The Isanti school recently held a Day of Remembrance for the children who died in the boarding schools.

"It's very painful, but it's a very important part of the process to have our ancestors back. They are our grandmas and grandpas, our great-grandmas and great-grandpas," he said. "Yes, they were children at the time, but having them back now is so very important. It's closure, it's healing and it's strength all wrapped up in grief. It's a mix of emotions, and there is beauty in all of that."

The story about the boarding schools and the children's remains is just unfolding and has gained tremendous momentum, he said.

Thomas is making an impact on today's young tribal members, according to student Octavia Blue Bird.

"I believe he is a good teacher because of how involved he is with the class he teaches. He makes sure you understand it, and if you don't, he will tell it in another way," she said. "He is very one-to-one with you. He is very real, too. Thomas will tell it how it is, and he will also give his experiences."

Thomas holds a great gift of story telling, Blue Bird said.

"He knows how to keep everything interesting and intriguing. Along with how good of a teacher he is, he also has a big impact on us children," she said. "He inspires me with different things every day. He pushes us to do our best. He is the best because he wants the best. He advocates for the betterment of not only ourselves but everyone around us. He is very caring and just overall a great teacher."

Thomas admits he didn't plan to serve as a Native American cultural instructor. For that matter, he didn't even plan to remain on the Santee Sioux reservation.

After high school graduation, he attended Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas. College didn't work out, and he returned to Santee, finding himself unsatisfied with life.

"I knew I wanted more. By then, I was a young father, 18 years old with my first child. It was tough, and I couldn't have done it without my parents," he said. "I remember looking at (my son), he was just a baby. I wanted to get my life on track."

Thomas saw an advertisement for a language teacher for a program serving Native Americans. Intrigued, he applied and was selected from among 200 applicants. The five chosen for the work were sent to schools across Indian Country, conducting programs across the United States and Canada.

He began teaching in 2003, first at the nearby Marty Indian School in South Dakota for two years. He developed a passion for working with children and sharing the culture in which he was born and raised.

The Native American culture can be found in many ways, such as the regalia at powwows, Thomas said. "This isn't novelty dress up or some show we're putting on. This is our people and their culture and language that need to be celebrated," he said.

Native Americans hold an awareness of their culture, but they have been forbidden to practice it over the years and have been punished for it, Thomas said. He wants to bring back those practices for all generations.

"It's something that's been kept from us over time," he said. "It's the process of rebuilding, reclaiming and renewing interest."

The learning process isn't limited to Native Americans, Thomas said. He noted the controversy surrounding mascots and stereotypes.

However, Thomas also stresses to his students that the historical actions of one group toward another doesn't define today's individuals. Also, he reminds them that they can hold racist attitudes toward others.

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"I don't want our kids to hold a historical grudge," he said.

The students also need to realize they represent the Santee Sioux wherever they go, Thomas said.

"When you go to Yankton, show them the beauty of who you are, because it reflects on the whole tribe," he said. "You are there as an individual, but people watch your behavior and it reflects on all of us."

Thomas credited a team effort for recent successes at the school, but he does believe the students, staff and tribal members have responded positively to his classes. "I think, when the culture became a big part of it, you could see a flip. When the culture was set free, a big turnaround happened," he said.

At the Launch Leadership ceremony in Lincoln, Thomas said he noted that diversity brings strength to the nation. "I like to see us as a big jigsaw puzzle, where everyone is a special piece. When you put it all together, you form a beautiful picture."

However, Thomas realizes much work remains beyond his lifetime. "It took three or four generations to take it out of us, and it will take three or four generations to get it back."

As he reflects in his classroom, Thomas thinks about himself as the young man who once left the reservation in search of something else.

"I love Santee," he said. "I left, came back, left again and then returned. I'm here for good. I want to be here and it's where I belong."

Former South Dakota Republican Gov. Frank Farrar dies at 92

SOIUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Former South Dakota Gov. Frank Farrar, whose uncanny rise to politics as a young man quickly morphed into a career as a banker and philanthropist, died Sunday. He was 92.

Gov. Kristi Noem, who confirmed his death as while as officials from the South Dakota Hall of Fame, ordered flags to be flown at half-staff in memory of Farrar.

"Frank was an incredible leader for our state and a mentor to me over these past years, as well," Noem said. "His heart for people and his enthusiasm for public service have been an inspiration."

Known as the "boy wonder" who was the youngest person ever elected state attorney general, Farrar became the state's 24th governor in 1968. Farrar ran unopposed for the Republican nomination and easily won the general election.

But his political fame was short-lived. He had the distinction of being the last elected incumbent governor to lose reelection when, in 1970, he lost his bid for a second term to Democrat Dick Kneip, the Sioux Falls Argus Leader reported.

"It was the only election I lost in my life," he said in a 2014. interview "You usually beat yourself rather than get beat by someone else."

Born in Britton, South Dakota on April 2, 1929, Farrar served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War and retired from the Army Reserve as a captain. After earning his law degree from the University of South Dakota in 1953, Farrar worked as an agent for the Internal Revenue Service. He later became a judge in Marshall County and also served as a state's attorney.

In 1962, Farrar won the attorney general's race, taking office at the age of 33. Six years later he took over as governor amid the snowiest winter in South Dakota history, where some portions of the state saw more than 100 inches of snow. The federal government airlifted supplies into the state, including snow removal equipment, to help state crews open roads to beleaguered towns.

Farrar left politics and focused on banking and philanthropy. He was recognized was his work for many not-for-profit organizations including the March of Dimes, Boy Scouts and South Dakota Community Foundation. He was inducted into the South Dakota Hall of Fame in 2006.

"Frank Farrar's philanthropy has positively impacted many organizations, including the Hall of Fame," said Hall of Fame CEO Greta Chapman. "And, like many others, we will be forever grateful to Frank Farrar. We are honored to be able to preserve and share his legacy for future generations."

At 65, after being told he had terminal cancer, Farrar began competing in triathlons and Ironman competitions, which he credited for his longevity and to helping him beat cancer.

Farrar was preceded in death by his wife, Patricia, whom he married in 1953 while stationed at Fort

Benning, Georgia. She died in 2015. The two had five children.

More stories emerging about Native boarding school trauma

By DAN GUNDERSON Minnesota Public Radio News

WHITE EARTH NATION, Minn. (AP) — American Indian children from White Earth Nation and other reservations were sent to boarding schools across the country, starting in the late 1800s. The federal government used the schools to separate Native children from their families, culture and language, part of an effort to assimilate American Indians into white society.

There were at least 16 Indian boarding schools in Minnesota, most operated by religious orders. Many children were deeply traumatized by physical and sexual abuse, punished for speaking their language and stripped of their culture.

"There was a lot lost at that time — loss of culture, loss of identity," said Joe LaGarde, a White Earth tribal elder. "And that's all a part of how you take a person's land. You take away their identity. Once they lose that, it's a lot easier to deal with them."

But this story isn't just about a long ignored piece of American history.

Many in Indian Country believe the boarding school trauma that happened decades ago is still evident today in broken families, drug and alcohol abuse, and mental illness.

Earlier this year, Susan Rudolph, prioress of St. Benedict's Monastery in St. Joseph, Minnesota, acknowledged that connection when she sent a two-page letter to the White Earth Nation, apologizing for the religious order's role in the boarding school located there for decades.

Children, she wrote, were forcibly taken from their families and placed in mission boarding schools with an "intentional plan to root out" Native ways. "The ripple effect of that wound lingers in the memory, the culture, and the documented history of your people for all time."

A tribal official said it was one of the first direct apologies from a religious order to a tribal nation in the United States, Minnesota Public Radio News reported.

A government boarding school opened at White Earth in 1871. The Benedictine order opened a day school in 1878, and it became a boarding school in 1892. The boarding school closed in 1945, but the Benedictines continued to run a day school for local children until 1969.

The religious order also operated a school on the Red Lake Indian Reservation. The Sisters of St. Benedict and the monks of St. John's Abbey also ran industrial schools for Native students near their monasteries in St. Joseph and Collegeville, Minnesota, for about a dozen years in the late 1800s.

Joe LaGarde grew up on the White Earth Reservation where he serves on a boarding school advisory group and is founder and executive director of the nonprofit Niibi Center, which works on historical trauma and environmental issues.

LaGarde never attended the White Earth boarding school, but when he was 12 years old, he was sent to the day school run by the Sisters of St. Benedict.

"And I lasted two hours there," he recalled with a chuckle.

He says that first morning, after recess, he watched in shock as a nun slapped a fellow student.

"So I waited until that nun's back was to me, and she was working him over, and I took off," he said.

He recalls a sprint down the stairs and out the door with the nun in hot pursuit.

"She was fast, too. She was almost catching me, but I leaped over a little fence and I was gone," he said.

LaGarde never went back to the mission school, hiding in the woods until his parents agreed he could return to the public school.

Indigenous children had a variety of experiences at church run schools.

LaGarde said one of his sisters attended the White Earth boarding school and enjoyed the experience. Other siblings were sent to a school in South Dakota. They ran away and walked for days to return to White Earth.

Retired North Dakota State University professor Denise Lajimodiere documented the experiences of boarding school students in her book "Stringing Rosaries." She heard stories of physical and sexual abuse,

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and harsh suppression of Native language and culture.

Benedictine Sister Pat Kennedy said the acknowledgement and apology from the monastic order are only a beginning.

"You know, words in a sense are very cheap. It's easy to say I'm sorry, but it's more challenging for me to say, I will do this," said Kennedy, the monastery's heritage coordinator.

As a first step, the monastery opened its archive to researchers from White Earth seeking information about former students.

An oral history project is in the works to collect boarding school stories from White Earth residents. Many who carry those memories are elderly, and the project has been delayed by COVID-19 concerns.

The Benedictine sisters also want to sit with tribal members and listen to what Kennedy expects will be painful stories.

"It's like a confrontation. You're the offender, and I would like you to know how you offended me," she said. "And to acknowledge that, yes, cultural genocide happened, not only cultural genocide, but spiritual genocide too."

Still, the sisters are conflicted about the boarding school history.

Sister Carol Berg, a retired history professor at the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University, wrote her doctoral thesis 40 years ago on the White Earth boarding school, interviewing former teachers and students.

The nuns went to White Earth as cultural revolutionaries, their charge to overthrow Native culture, she wrote.

"I think they went up there feeling we have something great to share with these people, so let's share it," said Berg in a recent interview. "Their Catholic faith, the Catholic values and virtues, and the three Rs of education to prepare these students for their future life."

Berg said the result was a clash of cultures. But she struggles to reconcile the trauma experienced by Native students with what her research found to be a model school. She heard little about abuse in her interviews 40 years ago.

"I only found one instance of a whipping. I think it was one of the younger sisters (who) said she was horrified because when one of the runaways was brought back to the school, she was whipped," Berg recalled.

Recovering the boarding school memories at White Earth will be an important part of finding the truth — a first step in the process of truth and reconciliation the Benedictine order hopes will happen with the people of White Earth.

Joe LaGarde believes that for many former students, the boarding school trauma may be too difficult to talk about, and they might not trust the church with those stories.

"You're going to find a lot of them are going to say, let's just leave it alone. And that's why we're in the shape we're in. We left things alone too long," said LaGarde. "They swept everything under the rug all the time, and it was easier not to talk about things than it was to sit down and work things out."

Still, LaGarde doesn't want to force anyone to talk about trauma they experienced.

"It has to be done as much as possible, but you've got to be careful. You can't hurt people any more than they've been hurt," he said.

White Earth Historic Preservation Officer Jaime Arsenault favors a thoughtful and deliberate approach. The younger generation will be watching and learning, she said.

"My hope is that young people, as they watch this unfold, what they will see is that the adults in their life aren't going to run away from something that's hard, that they're going to face it in as respectful a way as possible and as healthy a way as possible, so that these kids coming up have a much better future," Arsenault said.

After recent news of unmarked graves found at Indigenous boarding schools in Canada, there's been a surge of interest in U.S. boarding schools.

The process of searching for unmarked graves has also started at White Earth, and so far none have been found. But Arsenault doesn't want that to be the focus. Finding any missing children is important,

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she said, but she's intent on making sure the community is not re-traumatized by this difficult history.

"It's never been about shock value, and we're not just focused on unmarked graves. It's everything that goes along with it. It's trying to look at how these experiences have influenced other aspects of people's lives," she said.

Arsenault thinks the truth and reconciliation process that's now just beginning might last for a generation, and how that process plays out, she said, is up to the people of White Earth.

Benedictine Sister Karen Rose agrees that the sisters must play a supporting role.

"We very much don't want to fall into that trap of being white people who come to tell the people of White Earth how to fix things," Rose said. "We simply want to work with them. And so I think we feel that we need to be guided by them."

The supporting role will include actions such as paying for the technology to search for graves, funded by the Native Nation Revitalization initiative, part of the McCarthy Center for Public Policy and Civic Engagement at the College of St. Benedict and St. Johns University.

Monks from St. Johns Abbey were also involved in the operation of the reservation schools and ran a school at the monastery, but the abbey has not issued an apology. A spokesperson said a task force is being created to review the historical role of the abbey.

The issue is also raising awareness and provoking action on the campuses of the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University.

St. Ben's senior Marissa Johnson grew up in Bloomington. She has family connections to the Red Lake Nation and is an enrolled member of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in Wisconsin.

She didn't know about the Benedictine role in Native boarding schools until she was exploring campus as a first-year student and happened across an old photo.

"Maybe 30 Indigenous boys all sitting in rows, and two white priests," she said.

She immediately recognized the photo as a Native school, and her response was visceral.

"I remember turning to my boyfriend, excuse my French, but I was like what the f--- is this," she said. "At first I was shocked. I couldn't say anything, and then the second wave over me was just like anger."

She's turned that anger to action, helping to form an Indigenous Student Association and pushing for more education on American Indian history, treaties and contemporary issues to be included in the college curriculum.

"I've had to tell (people) yes, we still are alive, we did not die off. I've had to have that conversation way too many times, and that conversation needs to stop," said Johnson.

"We are still living. We are still breathing. There is going to be future generations of Indigenous peoples," Johnson said. "So to include us in important conversations is vital, especially at St. Ben's, St. John's and within the student body."

Ted Gordon, a faculty member at the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University, is trying to make sure that happens.

Gordon helped start the conversation about opening the monastery archives to White Earth.

The work of Indigenous students has created change on both campuses, he said.

"From now on, all incoming students will hear about the boarding schools in their first year," Gordon said. "This is quickly going from a history that few in our community knew about to one that everyone knows and has discussed in class."

Gordon hopes those conversations will change how students understand challenges facing Native communities.

"The more people understand about this past, potentially the more of an open mind they'll have when it comes to some of the policy discussions that we're having today," he said.

At White Earth, there are also discussions taking place, often difficult and heart-wrenching conversations.

Since stories about graves found at Canadian boarding schools have been in the news recently, a few people have started sharing stories with Joe LaGarde.

Recently, someone told him a story about being a young boy at a boarding school and feeling responsible

for protecting his sister from sexual abuse.

"It's really a bad feeling that hurts you for a few days before you can kind of shake that off," said La-Garde, "But you can never really put it away completely, because that poor person had that carry that all their lives."

He hopes sharing that burden can help start the process of healing from trauma endured silently for a lifetime.

Smithfield plant workers say they're "fed up" with treatment

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Workers at a Sioux Falls pork processing plant that was overwhelmed by the COVID-19 pandemic said the company is no longer working in good faith.

A spokesman for the United Food and Commercial Workers local union said they are "fed up" with injustices at their facilities after being on the front lines of the coronavirus at the Smithfield plant for nearly two years.

Local union president B.J. Motley said in a Friday release that the company is speeding up lines of production, verbally abusing employees, and neglecting social distancing and sanitary measures.

"In consequence, we are seeing a record number of quits, injuries, grievances and overall unhappiness," Motley said. "Our workers are tired, and their families are being affected by the heartlessness of the situation."

Jim Monroe, vice president of corporate affair for Smithfield, said in a statement to the Argus Leader that it's the first time they have heard those concerns and they disagree with the "portrayal of conditions" at the facility.

The complaints come four months after the union agreed to a contract with Smithfield, which increased base pay, provided a bonus and offered options of one to three weeks of leaves of absence and 15-minute breaks for employees working 8-hour shifts.

At least 1,294 Smithfield workers contracted the coronavirus last year and four employees died from the virus in the spring of 2020, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

Heating up: World leaders take center stage at climate talks

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

GLASGOW, Scotland (AP) — It's time for more than 130 world leaders to feel the heat.

They will traipse to the podium Monday and Tuesday at crucial international climate talks in Scotland and talk about what their country is going to do about the threat of global warming. From U.S. President Joe Biden to Seychelles President Wavel John Charles Ramkalawan, they are expected to say how their nation will do its utmost, challenge colleagues to do more and generally turn up the rhetoric.

"Humanity has long since run down the clock on climate change," British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was expected to say during Monday's opening session, according to partial remarks released by his office late Sunday. "It's one minute to midnight and we need to act now."

The biggest names, including Biden, Johnson, India's Narendra Modi, France's Emmanuel Macron and Ibrahim Solih, president of hard hit Maldives, will take the stage Monday.

And then the leaders will leave.

The idea is that they will do the big political give-and-take, setting out broad outlines of agreement, and then have other government officials hammer out the nagging but crucial details. That's what worked to make the historic 2015 Paris climate deal a success, former U.N. Climate Secretary Christiana Figueres told The Associated Press.

"For heads of state, it is actually a much better use of their strategic thinking," Figueres said.

In Paris, the two signature goals — trying to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times and net zero carbon emissions by 2050 — were created by this leaders-first process, Figueres said. In the unsuccessful 2009 Copenhagen meeting the leaders swooped in at the end.

Thousands lined up in a chilly wind in the Scottish city of Glasgow on Monday to get through a bottleneck

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at the entrance to the venue. But what will be noticeable are a handful of major absences at the summit known as COP26.

Xi Jinping, president of top carbon-polluting nation China, won't be in Glasgow. Figueres said his absence isn't that big a deal — though Biden chided China over the weekend — because he isn't leaving the country during the pandemic and his climate envoy is a veteran negotiator.

More troublesome are several small nations from the Pacific islands that couldn't make it because of COVID-19 restrictions and logistics. That's a big problem because their voices relay urgency, Figueres said.

In addition, the heads of several major emerging economies beyond China are also skipping the summit, including those from Russia, Turkey, Mexico, Brazil and South Africa. That leaves India's Modi the only leader present from the so-called BRICS nations, which account for more than 40% of global emissions.

Kevin Conrad, a negotiator from Papua New Guinea who also chairs the Coalition for Rainforest Nations, said he's watching the big carbon-polluting nations. "I think it's really important for the United States and China to show leadership as the two largest emitters. If both of them can show it can be done, I think they give hope to the rest of the world," he said.

Scientists say the chances of meeting the goal to keep global temperatures from rising by more than 1.5 degrees Celsius this century are slowly slipping away. The world has already warmed by more than 1.1C and current projections based on planned emissions cuts over the next decade are for it to hit 2.7C by the year 2100.

The amount of energy unleashed by such warming would melt much of the planet's ice, raise global sea levels and greatly increase the likelihood and intensity of extreme weather, experts say.

But before the U.N. climate summit, the heads of the world's largest economies, at the close of their Group of 20 summit in Rome, offered vague climate pledges instead of commitments of firm action, saying they would seek carbon neutrality "by or around mid-century." The G-20 countries also agreed to end public financing for coal-fired power generation abroad, but set no target for phasing out coal domestically — a clear nod to China and India.

The G-20 countries represent more than three-quarters of the world's climate-damaging emissions and summit host Italy, and Britain, which is hosting the Glasgow conference, had been hoping for more ambitious targets coming out of Rome.

India, the world's third-biggest emitter, has yet to follow China, the U.S. and the European Union in setting a target for reaching "net zero" emissions. Negotiators are hoping Modi will announce such a goal in Glasgow.

The Biden administration has tried hard to temper expectations that two weeks of climate talks will produce major breakthroughs on cutting climate-damaging emissions.

Rather than a quick fix, "Glasgow is the beginning of this decade race, if you will," Biden's climate envoy, John Kerry, told reporters Sunday.

Associated Press writers Frank Jordans and Ellen Knickmeyer contributed to this report.

Follow AP's climate coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/climate>. Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter at @borenbears.

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Judge hopes to seat Kyle Rittenhouse jury within a day

By SCOTT BAUER and MICHAEL TARM Associated Press

KENOSHA, Wis. (AP) — The trial of Kyle Rittenhouse kicks off Monday with the challenging task of seating jurors who haven't already made up their minds about the man who shot three people, killing two,

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during a violent night of protests last year.

Rittenhouse was 17 when he made the short trip north from his home in Illinois, just across the Wisconsin border, during protests that broke out in August 2020 after a white police officer shot Jacob Blake, a Black man. Rittenhouse, now 18, faces life in prison if he's convicted of first-degree homicide, one of several charges against him.

Judge Bruce Schroeder, who has experience presiding over high-profile trials, told attorneys he thinks picking the 20-member jury pool from 150 prospective jurors can be accomplished in a day. The trial is expected to last two to three weeks.

The case has been polarizing, with Rittenhouse painted by his backers as a patriot exercising self-defense and Second Amendment gun rights. Others see him as a vigilante and police wannabe who never should have been armed in Kenosha in the first place. Rittenhouse is white, as were those he shot, but many are watching his trial as the latest referendum on race and the American legal system.

Rittenhouse fatally shot Joseph Rosenbaum, 36, with an AR-15-style semiautomatic rifle after Rosenbaum chased Rittenhouse across a parking lot and threw a plastic bag at him shortly before midnight on Aug. 25. Moments later, as Rittenhouse was running down a street, he shot and killed Anthony Huber, 26, a protester from Silver Lake, Wisconsin, and shot and wounded Gaije Grosskreutz, 27, a protester from West Allis, Wisconsin.

Bystander video captured Rosenbaum chasing Rittenhouse but not the actual shooting. Video showed Huber swinging a skateboard at Rittenhouse before he was shot. Grosskreutz had a gun in his hand as he stepped toward Rittenhouse and was shot.

Prosecutors and the defense will be sifting the jury pool in hopes of seating panelists friendly to their view of the case — or at least keeping off the jury anyone who's not.

William Hanrahan, who spent 19 years as a prosecutor and was a Wisconsin circuit judge for 13, said the attorneys will also be trying to influence potential jurors.

"What each side is going to do is attempt to prejudice the jury right out of the chute, to strategically plant seeds to subtly set forth their positions," Hanrahan said. "For a seasoned judge, it's going to be a challenge here because some lawyers are really good and able to slowly introduce their case in the form of questions to the potential jurors."

Attorneys for both sides urged the judge to send questionnaires to the people summoned as potential jurors to detect bias and speed the process. Schroeder, 75, the longest-serving circuit court judge in Wisconsin, denied the request.

The judge said he disliked questionnaires in general because he was afraid most people won't fill them out or that it would tip them off that they may be on the Rittenhouse case, increasing the chances they would discuss it with friends and family.

Schroeder said each side will be allowed to strike seven people to reach a total of 20 jurors. The judge hasn't specified how many of those would be alternates.

Hanrahan, who presided over hundreds of jury trials, said he rarely allowed questionnaires and he doesn't think their absence in this case will mean much. It's always difficult seating a jury in a high-profile case, particularly now with 24-hour news catering to one viewpoint or another, Hanrahan said.

Hanrahan said the process could be done in a day if the judge is aggressive in limiting questions attorneys can ask.

"As a judge I would be asking (potential jurors) to make that commitment to set aside what they believe the facts to be and set aside what they believe the law to be," Hanrahan said. "To essentially be a tabula rasa, a blank slate."

Rittenhouse faces two homicide counts, one of attempted homicide and two of recklessly endangering safety for firing his weapon near others. He's also charged with possession of a dangerous weapon by a person under 18.

___ Bauer reported from Madison, Wisconsin.

Find AP's full coverage on the trial of Kyle Rittenhouse at: <https://apnews.com/hub/kyle-rittenhouse>

Biden swings focus of climate effort from US to the world

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER, ZEKE MILLER and JOSH BOAK Associated Press

GLASGOW, Scotland (AP) — President Joe Biden was swinging the focus of his battle for fast, concerted action against global warming from the U.S. Congress to the world on Monday, scolding rival China on climate and appealing to other leaders at a U.N. summit to commit to the kind of big climate measures that he is still working to nail down at home.

Speaking to world leaders at the newly opened climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland, Biden planned to tote up his not-yet year-old administration's climate efforts and announce new climate initiatives, including billions of dollars in hoped-for legislation to help poorer communities abroad deal with climate damage already underway.

Wading back into hands-on diplomacy with allies overseas this week after the withdrawal of the Trump administration, Biden on the eve of his climate summit arrival touted "the power of America showing up." Air Force One touched down Monday morning in grey Glasgow for the summit, on the heels of separate Group of 20 talks in Rome over the weekend.

The Glasgow summit is often billed as essential to putting the landmark 2015 Paris climate accord into action.

But Biden and his administration face obstacles in prodding the United States and other nations to act fast enough on climate, abroad as at home. In the runup to the summit, the administration has tried hard to temper expectations that two weeks of talks involving more than 100 world leaders will produce major breakthroughs on cutting climate-damaging emissions.

Rather than a quick fix, "Glasgow is the beginning of this decade race, if you will," Biden's climate envoy, John Kerry, told reporters Sunday.

As the summit opens, the United States is still struggling to get some of the world's biggest climate polluters — China, Russia and India — to join the U.S. and its allies in stronger pledges to burn far less coal, gas and oil and to move to cleaner energy.

Kerry on Sunday defended the outcome of a summit of the Group of 20 leading economies that ended earlier that day in Rome. The G-20 meeting was supposed to create momentum for more climate progress in Glasgow, and leaders at the Italy summit did agree on a series of measures, including formalizing a pledge to cut off international subsidies for dirty-burning, coal-fired power plants.

Biden also lauded a separate U.S.-European Union steel agreement announced Sunday as a chance to curb imports of "dirty" Chinese steel forged by coal power. It's another step toward potentially using Western markets as leverage to persuade China, the world's top climate polluter, to ease up in its enthusiasm for coal power.

But G-20 leaders offered more vague pledges than commitments of firm action, saying they would seek carbon neutrality "by or around mid-century."

Major polluters including China and Russia have made clear they had no immediate intention of following the U.S. and its European and Asian allies to zero out all fossil fuel pollution by 2050. Scientists say massive, fast cuts in fossil fuel pollution are essential to having any hope of keeping global warming at or below the limits set in the Paris climate accord.

The world currently is on track for a level of warming that would melt much of the planet's ice, raise global sea levels and greatly increase the likelihood and intensity of extreme weather, experts say.

Biden told reporters Sunday night he personally found the outcome of the Rome summit "disappointing," countering the positive assessments of his aides. And he put the blame on two rivals of the U.S.

"The disappointment relates to the fact that Russia, and ... not only Russia but China basically didn't show up in terms of any commitments to deal with climate changes," Biden said.

The Biden administration on Monday released its strategy for turning talk into reality in transforming the U.S. into an entirely clean energy nation by 2050. The long-term plan, filed in compliance with the Paris agreement, lays out a United States increasingly running on wind, solar and other clean energy, Americans

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zipping around in electric vehicles and on mass transit, state-of-the-art technology and wide open spaces carefully preserved to soak up carbon dioxide from the air.

The Biden administration has succeeded, over 10 months of diplomacy leading up to the Glasgow summit, in helping win significant new climate pledges from allies. That includes persuading many foreign governments to set more ambitious targets for emissions cuts, promoting a global pledge to cut emissions of a potent climate harm, methane, and the promise from leading economies to end funding for coal energy abroad.

European leaders make clear they are happy to see Biden and the U.S. back in the climate effort after his predecessor, Donald Trump, turned his back on the Paris accord and on allies in general. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen smiled at Biden throughout the announcement on Sunday's steel deal, calling him "dear Joe."

Neither Russian President Vladimir Putin nor Chinese President Xi Jinping is attending the Glasgow summit, although they are sending senior officials. Their refusals, and India's, to move substantially faster to cut their reliance on coal and petroleum threaten to frustrate hopes of reaching the target cuts set in the Paris climate accord.

China under Xi has firmed up commitments to cut emissions but at a slower pace than the U.S. has encouraged.

Traveling with Biden, U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan told reporters traveling with the president that climate change should not be viewed as a rivalry between the U.S. and China, as China, the world's second largest economy, could act on its own.

"They are a big country with a lot of resources and a lot of capabilities, and they are perfectly well capable of living up to their responsibilities," Sullivan said. "Nothing about the nature of the relationship between the U.S. and China, structurally or otherwise, impedes or stands in the way of them doing their part."

Biden comes to the international climate summit with the fate of his own climate package still uncertain in Congress. Objections from holdouts within Biden's own Democratic Party have compelled him to back away from one bill that would have prodded the United States' own move away from coal and natural gas and to cleaner energy for generating electricity.

Hundreds of billions of dollars of climate measures remain in Biden's package before Congress, however. "The largest investment in the history of the world" on climate, Biden told reporters Sunday. "And it's gonna pass."

While an opening ceremony in Glasgow on Sunday formally kicked off the climate talks, the more anticipated launch comes Monday, when Biden and other leaders gather to lay out their countries' efforts to curb emissions and deal with the mounting damage from climate change.

Biden will also participate in a climate event on "action and solidarity" Monday and meet on the sidelines of the summit with Indonesian President Joko Widodo.

Miller reported from Rome.

Supreme Court takes up Texas law banning most abortions

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court is taking up challenges to a Texas law that has virtually ended abortion in the nation's second-largest state after six weeks of pregnancy.

The justices are hearing arguments Monday in two cases over whether abortion providers or the Justice Department can mount federal court challenges to the law, which has an unusual enforcement scheme its defenders argue shields it from federal court review.

In neither case is the right to an abortion directly at issue, but the motivation for lawsuits filed by abortion providers and the Justice Department is that the Texas law conflicts with landmark Supreme Court rulings that prevent a state from banning abortion early in pregnancy.

The justices will hear a separate challenge to the decisions in *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v.*

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Casey in a case over Mississippi's ban on abortion after 15 weeks. Those arguments are set for Dec. 1. The Texas law has been in effect since September, except for a 48-hour period in early October when it was blocked by a lower court.

The high court jumped into the Texas cases less than two weeks ago, moving at extraordinary speed, but only after rejecting a plea to block the law by a 5-4 vote in early September.

Five conservative justices, including three who were appointed by President Donald Trump, were in the majority. Chief Justice John Roberts joined the court's three liberal justices in dissent.

The court offered no explanation for its decision to hear the cases so quickly.

The Texas ban, signed into law by Gov. Greg Abbott in May, prohibits abortion after cardiac activity is detected in a fetus, usually around six weeks and before some women know they are pregnant.

The law makes exceptions for medical emergencies but not for rape or incest.

At least 12 other states have enacted bans early in pregnancy, but all have been blocked from going into effect.

But rather than have state officials enforce it, the Texas law deputizes private citizens to sue anyone who performs or aids and abets an abortion. If they're successful, they are entitled to at least \$10,000. Women who obtain abortions can't be sued under the law.

The structure of the law threatens abortion providers with huge financial penalties if they violate it. Clinics throughout the state have stopped performing abortions once cardiac activity is found.

The result, both the providers and the Biden administration said, is that women who are financially able have traveled to other states and those without the means must either continue their pregnancies against their will or find other, potentially dangerous ways to end them.

The state and Jonathan Mitchell, an architect of the law, say in their briefs that the providers and the Justice Department lack the right to go into federal court and can't sue state judges and clerks who are not responsible for enforcing the abortion ban. They also contend that there is no effective way of blocking the law, in part because federal court can't force state judges to abstain from hearing the lawsuits the law authorizes.

'Nothing else here': Why it's so hard for world to quit coal

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL AP Science Writer

DHANBAD, India (AP) — Every day, Raju gets on his bicycle and unwillingly pedals the world a tiny bit closer to climate catastrophe.

Every day, he straps half a dozen sacks of coal pilfered from mines — up to 200 kilograms, or 440 pounds — to the reinforced metal frame of his bike. Driving mostly at night to avoid the police and the heat, he transports the coal 16 kilometers (10 miles) to traders who pay him \$2.

Thousands of others do the same.

This has been Raju's life since he arrived in Dhanbad, an eastern Indian city in Jharkhand state in 2016; annual floods in his home region have decimated traditional farm jobs. Coal is all he has.

This is what the United Nations climate change conference in Scotland, known as COP26, is up against.

Earth desperately needs people to stop burning coal, the biggest single source of greenhouse gases, to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change — including the intense flooding that has cost agricultural jobs in India. But people rely on coal. It is the world's biggest source of fuel for electric power and so many, desperate like Raju, depend on it for their very lives.

"The poor have nothing but sorrow ... but so many people, they've been saved by coal," Raju said.

Alok Sharma, the United Kingdom's president-designate of the conference, said in May that he hoped the conference would mark the moment where coal is left "in the past where it belongs."

While that may be possible for some developed nations, it is not so simple for developing countries.

They argue they should be allowed the "carbon space" to grow as developed nations have, by burning cheap fuels like coal, which is used in industrial processes such as steelmaking along with electric power generation. On average, the typical American uses 12 times more electricity than the typical Indian. There

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are over 27 million people in India who don't have electricity at all.

Power demand in India is expected to grow faster than anywhere in the world over the next two decades as the economy grows and ever more extreme heat increases demand for air conditioning that so much the rest of the world takes for granted.

Meeting that demand will not fall to people like Raju, but to Coal India, already the world's largest miner, which aims to increase production to over 1 billion tons a year by 2024.

D.D. Ramanandan, the secretary at the Centre of Indian Trade Unions in Ranchi said that conversations of moving beyond coal were only taking place in Paris, Glasgow or New Delhi. They had hardly begun in India's coal belt. "Coal has continued for 100 years. Workers believe it will continue to do so," he said.

The consequences will be felt both globally and locally. Unless the world drastically cuts greenhouse gas emissions the planet will suffer even more extreme heat waves, erratic rainfall and destructive storms in coming years, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

And a 2021 Indian government study found that Jharkhand state -- among the poorest in India and the state with the nation's largest coal reserves -- is also the most vulnerable Indian state to climate change.

But there are roughly 300,000 people working directly with government-owned coal mines, earning fixed salaries and benefits. And there are nearly 4 million people in India whose livelihoods are directly or indirectly linked to coal, said Sandeep Pai, who studies energy security and climate change at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

India's coal belt is dotted by industries that need the fuel, like steel and brick making. The Indian rail-ways, country's largest employers, earns half their revenue by transporting coal, allowing it to subsidize passenger travel.

"Coal is an ecosystem," Pai said.

For people like Naresh Chauhan, 50 and his wife Rina Devi, 45, India's economic slowdown resulting from the pandemic has intensified their dependence on coal.

The two have lived in a village at the edge of the Jharia coalfield in Dhanbad all their lives. Accidental fires, some of which have been blazing for decades, have charred the ground and left it spongy. Smoke hisses from cracks in the surface near their hut. Fatal sinkholes are common.

The couple earn \$3 a day selling four baskets of scavenged coal to traders.

Families who've lived amid coal mines for generations rarely own any land they can farm and have nowhere else to go. Naresh hopes that his son would learn to drive so that he, at least, could get away. But even that may not be enough. There's less work for the city's existing taxi drivers. Wedding parties, who in the past reserved cars to ferry guests, have shrunk. Fewer travelers come to the city than before.

"There is just coal, stone and fire. Nothing else here."

That could mean even harder times for the people in Dhanbad as the world eventually does turn away from coal. Pai says this is already happening as renewable energy gets cheaper and coal becomes less and less profitable.

India and other countries with coal-dependent regions have to diversify their economies and retrain workers, he said — both to protect the livelihoods of workers and to help speed the transition away from coal by offering new opportunities.

Otherwise, more will end up like Murti Devi. The 32-year-old single mother of four lost the job she had all her life when the mine she worked for closed four years ago. Nothing came of the resettlement plans promised by the coal company so she, like so many others, turned to scavenging coal. On good days, she'll make a dollar. On other days, she relies on neighbors for help.

"If there is coal, then we live. If there isn't any coal, then we don't live," she said.

AP journalists Shonal Ganguly and Altaf Qadri contributed to this report.

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Australia, Thailand reopen borders after lengthy lockdowns

By ROD McGUIRK and DAVID RISING Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Sydney's international airport came alive with tears, embraces and laughter on Monday as Australia opened its border for the first time in 20 months, with some arriving travelers removing mandatory masks to see the faces of loved ones they've been separated from for so long.

Australia and other countries in the Asia-Pacific have had some of the world's strictest COVID-19 pandemic lockdown measures and travel restrictions, but with vaccination rates rising and cases falling, many are now starting to cautiously reopen.

Some, like China and Japan, remain essentially sealed off to foreign visitors, but Thailand also started to substantially reopen Monday and many others have already started, or plan to follow suit.

Traveler Carly Boyd seized the opportunity presented by the new Australian regulations to jump on the first flight home from New York to surprise her parents, whom she hadn't seen in three years.

"Just being able to come home without having to go to quarantine is huge," she told reporters at Sydney's airport, where the country's unofficial anthem "I Still Call Australia Home" was playing.

"There's a lot of people on that flight who have loved ones who are about to die or have people who died this week, so for them to be able to get off the plane and go see them straight away is pretty amazing."

In Thailand, a country where tourism accounted for some 20% of the economy before the pandemic, the lockdown has caused massive job losses and hardship, and the government hopes the return of foreign visitors will provide a much-needed boost.

Still, only a few months removed from a surge fueled by the delta variant of the virus that saw deaths rise dramatically, many Thais remain worried that an influx of outsiders could trigger new outbreaks.

Bangkok taxi driver Issarapong Paingam lost his mother to COVID-19 during the recent surge, and said it would make more sense to him for the government to focus its attention fully on reopening domestically before introducing foreign travelers into the mix.

"The government has not yet told the public what they would do if an outbreak takes place again," the 34-year-old said. "I don't understand why they don't let people in the country live normally as a trial to see the trend (of COVID-19 cases) before welcoming tourists."

Thailand has allowed residents to travel during the pandemic, but mandated a strict two-week quarantine in specially designated hotels for people entering the country.

Foreign arrivals plummeted from 40 million in 2019 to 6.69 million in 2020 — almost all in the first three months before the pandemic restrictions were introduced — to fewer than 100,000 so far in 2021.

Monday's reopening builds on a pilot scheme launched in July on the resort island of Phuket, which allowed fully vaccinated travelers from selected countries to spend their quarantine moving around the island instead of in a hotel room.

Starting Monday, if travelers are fully vaccinated and from one of 63 countries and territories deemed "low risk" — which some cynical Thais have noted seem to be based more on spending power than coronavirus infections — they are exempt from quarantine. They need to spend one night at a designated hotel and can't check out until they have a negative COVID-19 test, but then are free to travel.

Travelers from countries not on the preferred list or those who are unvaccinated are still subject to various quarantine rules.

Restrictions are also being relaxed in the destination areas, including widespread reopening of businesses and other facilities such as department stores, spas, tattoo shops, schools and sporting events.

With the combination of strict screening of visitors and higher vaccination rates in Thailand, Supat Hasuwannakit, president of Thailand's Rural Doctor Society, said he is not concerned about foreign tourists sparking a new surge in cases.

But he said he does worry about the planned reopening of bars and clubs in December, noting that recent domestic outbreaks came after the government allowed people to gather for activities such as religious services and weddings.

"Once people start to gather, eat and drink, it has a high possibility to create a new outbreak," he said.

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"Most bars and nightclubs are indoors with bad airflow, so it is easy for COVID-19 to spread once they reopen."

Rules requiring masks and distancing remain in place, much like other countries in the region that have begun reopening.

In India, which saw a peak of 400,000 daily cases in April and May, officials have been warning that people need to continue following such restrictions to avoid causing "super spreader" events during the holiday season as the country gradually reopens.

India began granting tourist visas on Oct. 15 for fully vaccinated people arriving on charter flights, and will extend them to tourists on commercial flights starting Nov. 15.

Neighboring Sri Lanka has already started to allow fully vaccinated travelers without quarantines, and partially or non-vaccinated people with some restrictions. South Korea, which on Monday began to allow larger social gatherings and lifted operating-hour restrictions on restaurants, has a similar scheme.

Vietnam is still closed but plans to open the popular resort island of Phu Quoc to fully vaccinated vacationers by the end of the month, and neighboring Cambodia, which on Monday lifted restrictions on domestic travel, has a similar plan to open two seaside provinces to international travelers. Malaysia intends to open its northern resort island of Langkawi on Nov. 15 to fully vaccinated tourists.

Australia is betting that vaccination rates are now high enough to mitigate the danger of allowing international travel.

Initially only Australian permanent residents and citizens will be free to enter the country. Fully vaccinated foreigners traveling on skilled worker and student visas will be given priority over international tourists.

But the government expects Australia will welcome international tourists back to some degree before the year ends.

Already, Australia announced Monday that vaccinated tourists from Singapore — which has one of the highest vaccination rates in the world — will be welcome from Nov. 21 under a bilateral agreement.

The new freedoms also mean that fully vaccinated Australian permanent residents and citizens can leave the country for any reason without asking the government for an exemption from a travel ban that has trapped most at home since March 25, 2020.

Sydney was the first Australian airport to announce it would reopen Monday because New South Wales was the first state where 80% of the population aged 16 and older has been fully vaccinated. Melbourne and the national capital, Canberra, also opened on Monday after Victoria state and the Australian Capital Territory achieved the vaccination benchmark.

Even though Australians are now free to travel overseas, four Australian states and a territory are still maintaining pandemic restrictions on crossing state lines.

Australian Ethen Carter, who landed at Sydney's airport from Los Angeles on Monday, expressed his frustration at having to apply for permission to visit his dying mother in Western Australia state.

He pleaded through the media to Western Australia Premier Mark McGowan, who has said the state border will not open this year, to let him in.

"Mark, think of the people that are suffering, like, mentally to see their family. That's also a health issue," Carter said. "And we know we've got to protect people's lives, but you've got to bring families together again, you have to."

McGowan said his government would consider allowing Carter to enter the state if he applies for an exemption.

"These situations are very sad and very difficult and we've seen much of this over the course of the last two years," McGowan said.

___ Rising reported from Bangkok. Associated Press journalists Chalida Ekvitthayavechnukul and Tasanee Vejpongsa in Bangkok and Ashok Sharma in New Delhi contributed to this report.

COVID-19's global death toll tops 5 million in under 2 years

By CARLA K. JOHNSON AP Medical Writer

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The global death toll from COVID-19 topped 5 million on Monday, less than two years into a crisis that has not only devastated poor countries but also humbled wealthy ones with first-rate health care systems.

Together, the United States, the European Union, Britain and Brazil — all upper-middle- or high-income countries — account for one-eighth of the world's population but nearly half of all reported deaths. The U.S. alone has recorded over 740,000 lives lost, more than any other nation.

"This is a defining moment in our lifetime," said Dr. Albert Ko, an infectious disease specialist at the Yale School of Public Health. "What do we have to do to protect ourselves so we don't get to another 5 million?"

The death toll, as tallied by Johns Hopkins University, is about equal to the populations of Los Angeles and San Francisco combined. It rivals the number of people killed in battles among nations since 1950, according to estimates from the Peace Research Institute Oslo. Globally, COVID-19 is now the third leading cause of death, after heart disease and stroke.

The staggering figure is almost certainly an undercount because of limited testing and people dying at home without medical attention, especially in poor parts of the world, such as India.

Hot spots have shifted over the 22 months since the outbreak began, turning different places on the world map red. Now, the virus is pummeling Russia, Ukraine and other parts of Eastern Europe, especially where rumors, misinformation and distrust in government have hobbled vaccination efforts. In Ukraine, only 17% of the adult population is fully vaccinated; in Armenia, only 7%.

"What's uniquely different about this pandemic is it hit hardest the high-resource countries," said Dr. Wafaa El-Sadr, director of ICAP, a global health center at Columbia University. "That's the irony of COVID-19."

Wealthier nations with longer life expectancies have larger proportions of older people, cancer survivors and nursing home residents, all of whom are especially vulnerable to COVID-19, El-Sadr noted. Poorer countries tend to have larger shares of children, teens and young adults, who are less likely to fall seriously ill from the coronavirus.

India, despite its terrifying delta surge that peaked in early May, now has a much lower reported daily death rate than wealthier Russia, the U.S. or Britain, though there is uncertainty around its figures.

The seeming disconnect between wealth and health is a paradox that disease experts will be pondering for years. But the pattern that is seen on the grand scale, when nations are compared, is different when examined at closer range. Within each wealthy country, when deaths and infections are mapped, poorer neighborhoods are hit hardest.

In the U.S., for example, COVID-19 has taken an outsize toll on Black and Hispanic people, who are more likely than white people to live in poverty and have less access to health care.

"When we get out our microscopes, we see that within countries, the most vulnerable have suffered most," Ko said.

Wealth has also played a role in the global vaccination drive, with rich countries accused of locking up supplies. The U.S. and others are already dispensing booster shots at a time when millions across Africa haven't received a single dose, though the rich countries are also shipping hundreds of millions of shots to the rest of the world.

Africa remains the world's least vaccinated region, with just 5% of the population of 1.3 billion people fully covered.

"This devastating milestone reminds us that we are failing much of the world," U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres said in a written statement. "This is a global shame."

In Kampala, Uganda, Cissy Kagaba lost her 62-year-old mother on Christmas Day and her 76-year-old father days later.

"Christmas will never be the same for me," said Kagaba, an anti-corruption activist in the East African country that has been through multiple lockdowns against the virus and where a curfew remains in place.

The pandemic has united the globe in grief and pushed survivors to the breaking point.

"Who else is there now? The responsibility is on me. COVID has changed my life," said 32-year-old Reena Kesarwani, a mother of two boys, who was left to manage her late husband's modest hardware store in a village in India.

Her husband, Anand Babu Kesarwani, died at 38 during India's crushing coronavirus surge earlier this

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year. It overwhelmed one of the most chronically underfunded public health systems in the world and killed tens of thousands as hospitals ran out of oxygen and medicine.

In Bergamo, Italy, once the site of the West's first deadly wave, 51-year-old Fabrizio Fianza was deprived of a final farewell as his 86-year-old father lay dying in the hospital. He is still trying to come to terms with the loss more than a year later.

"For the last month, I never saw him," Fianza said during a visit to his father's grave. "It was the worst moment. But coming here every week, helps me."

Today, 92% of Bergamo's eligible population have had at least one shot, the highest vaccination rate in Italy. The chief of medicine at Pope John XXIII Hospital, Dr. Stefano Faggioli, said he believes that's a clear result of the city's collective trauma, when the wail of ambulances was constant.

In Lake City, Florida, LaTasha Graham, 38, still gets mail almost daily for her 17-year-old daughter, Jo'Keria, who died of COVID-19 in August, days before starting her senior year of high school. The teen, who was buried in her cap and gown, wanted to be a trauma surgeon.

"I know that she would have made it. I know that she would have been where she wanted to go," her mother said.

In Rio de Janeiro, Erika Machado scanned the list of names engraved on a long, undulating sculpture of oxidized steel that stands in Penitencia cemetery as an homage to some of Brazil's COVID-19 victims. Then she found him: Wagner Machado, her father.

"My dad was the love of my life, my best friend," said Machado, 40, a saleswoman who traveled from Sao Paulo to see her father's name. "He was everything to me."

AP journalists Rajesh Kumar Singh in Chhitpalgarh, India; Cara Anna in Nairobi, Kenya; Rodney Muhumuza in Kampala, Uganda; Kelli Kennedy in Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Colleen Barry in Bergamo, Italy; and Diane Jeantet in Rio de Janeiro contributed.

US prisons face staff shortages as officers quit amid COVID

By KERI BLAKINGER, JAMILES LARTEY, BETH SCHWARTZAPFEL and CHRISTIE THOMPSON of The Marshall Project and MICHAEL R. SISAK of The Associated Press

At a Georgia state House of Representatives hearing on prison conditions in September, a corrections officer called in to testify, interrupting his shift to tell lawmakers how dire conditions had become.

On a "good day," he told lawmakers, he had maybe six or seven officers to supervise roughly 1,200 people. He said he had recently been assigned to look after 400 prisoners by himself. There weren't enough nurses to provide medical care.

"All the officers ... absolutely despise working there," said the officer, who didn't give his name for fear of retaliation.

In Texas, Lance Lowry quit after 20 years as a corrections officer to become a long-haul trucker because he couldn't bear the job any longer. Watching friends and coworkers die from COVID-19, along with dwindling support from his superiors, wore on him.

"I would have liked to stay till I was 50," said Lowry, 48. "but the pandemic changed that."

Staff shortages have long been a challenge for prison agencies, given the low pay and grueling nature of the work. But the coronavirus pandemic — and its impact on the labor market — has pushed many corrections systems into crisis. Officers are retiring and quitting in droves, while officials struggle to recruit new employees. And some prisons whose prisoner populations dropped during the pandemic have seen their numbers rise again, exacerbating the problem.

This story is a collaboration between The Associated Press and The Marshall Project exploring the state of the U.S. prison system in the coronavirus pandemic. Tom Meagher of The Marshall Project and Michael Balsamo of The Associated Press also contributed reporting.

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There is no one thing pushing prison employees out in high numbers now. Some are leaving for new opportunities as more places are hiring. University of Michigan economist Betsey Stevenson pointed to the increased risk of COVID-19 for people working in prisons.

"When jobs become riskier, it becomes harder to attract workers," she wrote in an email. "By failing to protect prisoners from COVID, the criminal justice system not only created an unfair risk of severe illness and death for the incarcerated, but the increased COVID risk to employees has undoubtedly contributed to staffing shortages."

Unions representing prison officers in states including Massachusetts and California and at the federal level also claim vaccine mandates will drive out unvaccinated employees and exacerbate understaffing, though it's unclear how big of an impact those rules will have.

"There are dozens of reasons to leave and very few to stay," said Brian Dawe, national director of One Voice United, a nonprofit supporting corrections officers. "Understaffing, poor pay, poor benefits, horrendous working conditions. ... Officers and their families in many jurisdictions have had enough."

Employers from construction companies to restaurants are having difficulty hiring and keeping people. Nearly 3% of American workers, 4.3 million, quit their jobs in August, according to new data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

But the stakes are higher in prisons, where having fewer guards means significantly more dangerous conditions for incarcerated people. And for the officers left behind, worsening shortages have made an already difficult job unbearable, many say.

In Georgia, some prisons report up to 70% vacancy rates. In Nebraska, overtime hours have quadrupled since 2010, as fewer officers are forced to work longer hours. Florida has temporarily closed three prisons out of more than 140 facilities because of understaffing, and vacancy rates have nearly doubled there in the last year. And at federal prisons across the country, guards are picketing in front of their facilities over understaffing, while everyone from prison teachers to dentists is pulled in to cover security shifts.

In recent weeks, reporters from The Marshall Project and The Associated Press have spoken with workers, officials, attorneys and people incarcerated in more than a dozen prison systems to understand the consequences of the staffing shortfalls.

The federal Bureau of Prisons says about 93% of its front-line guard positions are filled, with little more than 1,000 vacancies, though workers in many prisons say they're feeling the pinch as others are conscripted to fill in for missing officers.

Asked last week in a U.S. Senate hearing about federal prison staffing, Attorney General Merrick Garland said, "I agree this is a serious problem at the Bureau of Prisons."

Garland told the Senate Judiciary Committee that Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco was working with the bureau to address staffing issues.

In Kansas, state Department of Corrections Secretary Jeff Zmuda testified before the legislature that the problems now are unlike any he's seen in his career. Kansas has more than 400 unfilled jobs for uniformed officers, a number he expects to grow in the coming months as workers are lured by other employers that pay better.

Quitting can have a snowball effect, said Doug Koebernick, inspector general of the Nebraska correctional system. "People leave, then that creates more overtime and stress and more vacancies," he said. "It's like this spiral." Many corrections officers said they were forced to work more overtime as fewer people showed up for shifts. In Texas, guards have worked as much as 16-hour days.

Inside prisons, growing shortages mean a rise in lockdowns. Restrictions that might have begun as a way to stop the spread of COVID-19 have continued because there aren't enough guards to supervise activities. Some incarcerated people say they can't take classes, participate in group therapy sessions or even work out in the recreation yard or take a shower. That can force those in general population into de facto solitary confinement, and those already in segregation into near-total lockdown.

"If we get rec once a week, that's a good week," said Anthony Haynes, who is on Texas' death row in a unit that is barely half-staffed. "We don't always get showers."

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A spokesman for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice did not respond to Haynes' claims but acknowledged that staffing is a challenge in Texas' prisons.

"Before COVID-19, staffing was frequently impacted by economic surges and competing employment opportunities," said spokesman Robert Hurst in an email. "The pandemic has exacerbated these issues. We also recognize that the job of the correctional officer is one of the most difficult in all of state government." He added that Texas has closed six of its more than 100 facilities in the last year due to staffing problems.

Kansas has cut job training and reduced supervision for people after they're released. Two-thirds of the men in Nebraska's prisons can't see visitors on the weekends — when most families are free to travel — because of understaffing.

The constant isolation takes a toll. "As of October, we have not had yard for two weeks," wrote one man at Illinois' Pontiac Correctional Center, where officials report 35% of corrections officer jobs are vacant. (His testimony was compiled by lawyers suing the state prison system over a dearth of mental health care.) "I feel very overwhelmed ... I can't talk about my problems to anyone. I pace back and forth and talk to myself because there's nothing else to do."

Mental health care is dwindling, prisoners and lawyers argue, as people in prison grow more desperate. In Illinois, canceled one-on-one therapy means what little counseling is available happens briefly through a cell door, in full earshot of the rest of the tier, said attorney Alan Mills of the Uptown People's Law Center, which has sued the state corrections department over inadequate mental and physical health care, due in large part to a lack of qualified staff.

A spokeswoman for the Illinois Department of Corrections said that Pontiac continues to provide out-of-cell programming and one-on-one counseling. "While staffing challenges have had an impact on scheduling, the department is committed to delivering the highest quality mental and medical health care as possible," said Lindsey Hess in an email.

Officials from corrections departments in Georgia and Washington, where the governor halted the transfer of people from county jails to prisons for two weeks due to staffing changes, did not respond to requests for comment.

Dr. Homer Venters, a former chief medical officer for the jail system in New York City, inspects conditions in prisons around the country for court cases. Understaffing will lead to an increase in preventable prison deaths, he said, as the quality of care reaches new lows.

"Things are much worse behind bars now than they have been for a long time," Venters said. "There are so many staff that have left. That means that basic clinical services, like getting to scheduled appointments, just isn't happening the way it was even five years ago."

Violence is also on the rise in some prisons. The Southern Center for Human Rights recently sued the Georgia Department of Corrections over lockdowns and dangerous conditions: There were 48 suspected homicides in the state's prisons between January 2020 and August 2021 and 38 suicides. (In 2017, in comparison, there were eight homicides.) Hundreds of people incarcerated at three state prisons rioted last summer, after being locked in their cells for weeks and monitored by as few as six guards at a time.

In July, the state had a 56% annual turnover rate for corrections officers, and 40% of those jobs were vacant, according to department documents. The U.S. Justice Department announced an investigation into the corrections department in September, citing understaffing as a primary concern.

Meanwhile, corrections departments say they are trying harder than ever to recruit new staff. They've boosted social media posts and in-person job fairs. In Indiana, they raised the starting pay for corrections officers a dollar to to \$19 an hour. Others are giving perks like hiring bonuses, better pay at critical units, earlier pay raises or, in Kansas, extra time off for current employees who refer new hires.

But some hurriedly hired cadets might not last long.

Brandon Robert Graham started training at the Walla Walla State Penitentiary in Washington in August 2020 and within two weeks was on the tier. "They were in such a hiring crisis that I was a 'rapid hire,'" he said. At first, he was excited about the salary and "great benefits" compared with other jobs in the area.

But as more entry-level jobs opened up, he started looking elsewhere.

"I was on night shift. I never got to see my fiancée," he said. "I did so much overtime that I thought I was getting sick from the stress."

He left in July to look for a new job.

In Afghan hospital, unpaid doctors and rigid Taliban clash

By SAMYA KULLAB and BRAM JANSSEN Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The Taliban-appointed supervisor of a small district hospital outside the Afghan capital has big plans for the place — to the dismay of the doctors who work there.

Mohammed Javid Ahmadi, 22, was asked by his superiors, fresh off the fields of battle from a war that has spanned most of his life, what kind of jobs he could do. On offer were positions in an array of ministries and institutions now under the Taliban's power following their August takeover and the collapse of the former government.

It was Ahmadi's dream to be a doctor; poverty had kept him from gaining admission to medical school, he said. He chose the health sector. Soon after, the Mirbacha Kot district hospital just outside of Kabul became his responsibility.

"If someone with more experience can take this position it would be better, but unfortunately if someone (like that) gets this position, after some time you'll see that he might be a thief or corrupt," he said, highlighting a perennial problem of the former government.

It's a job Ahmadi takes very seriously, but he and the other health workers in the 20-bed hospital rarely see eye-to-eye. Doctors are demanding overdue salary payments amid critical shortages of medicine, fuel and food. Ahmadi's first priority is to build a mosque inside the hospital quarters, segregate staff by gender and encourage them to pray. The rest will follow according to the will of God, he tells them.

The drama in Mirbacha Kot is playing out across Afghanistan's health sector since the Taliban takeover. With power changing hands overnight, health workers have had to contend with a difficult adjustment. The host of problems that preceded the Taliban's rise were exacerbated.

The U.S. froze Afghan assets in American accounts shortly after the takeover, in line with international sanctions, crippling Afghanistan's banking sector. International monetary organizations that once funded 75% of state expenditures paused disbursements, precipitating an economic crisis in the aid-dependent nation.

Health is acutely affected. World Bank allocations funded 2,330 out of Afghanistan's 3,800 medical facilities, including the salaries of health workers, said the Taliban's Deputy Health Minister Abdulbari Umer.

Wages had been unpaid for months before the government collapsed.

"This is the biggest challenge for us. When we came here there was no money left," said Umer. "There is no salary for staff, no food, no fuel for ambulances and other machines. There is no medicine for hospitals; we tried to find some from Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, but it's not enough."

In Mirbacha Kot, doctors have not been paid in five months.

Disheartened staff continue to attend to up to 400 patients a day, who come from the neighboring six districts. Some have general complaints or a heart condition. Others bring sick babies.

"What can we do? If we don't want to come here there's no other job for us. If there was another job, nobody can pay us. It's better to stay here," said Dr. Gul Nazar.

Every morning, Ahmadi makes his rounds. His small frame, topped by a black turban, is a sharp contrast to the sea of white coats that routinely rush in and out of the facility to tend to patients.

The first order of the day is the registration book. Ahmadi wants every doctor to sign in and out. It's a formality most health workers are too busy to remember, but neglecting it is enough to inspire Ahmadi's ire.

Second, the mosque.

Workers come to the hospital to take measurements for the project and Ahmadi gives them orders.

"We are Muslims, and we have 32 staff members, and for them, we need a mosque," he said.

There are many benefits, he added. Relatives can stay with sick patients overnight, sleeping in the

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mosque, as the hospital lacks extra beds especially during the winter months. "And this is what is needed the most," he said.

Dr. Najla Quami looked on, bewildered.

She, too, has not been paid in months and routinely complains of medicine shortages in the maternity ward. They have no pain medication for expectant mothers. The pharmacy is stocked only with analgesic and some antibiotics. Is this the time for a mosque, she asked.

But Ahmadi said it was the responsibility of non-governmental organizations to resume their aid programs to finance these shortages. The money for the mosque will come from local donations.

His arrival ushered in other sweeping changes.

Men and women were told to stay in separate wards. Female doctors are forbidden to go to the emergency room. Ahmadi ordered them to wear a head covering and focus on female patients.

"We can't go to the other side of the hospital," said Dr. Elaha Ibrahimi, 27. "Woman is woman, man is man, he told us."

Due to shortages, doctors advise patients to find medications elsewhere and return. Ibrahimi said Ahmadi often scrutinizes her prescriptions.

"He isn't a doctor, we don't know why he is here, we ask ourselves this all the time," he said.

But Ahmadi is quick to allege deeply entrenched corruption in the hospital under the former hospital administrator, his predecessor from the former government.

He said he was aghast to uncover an entire warehouse full of medical equipment, furniture and other stolen goods to be sold in the market for personal profit. He could not offer proof that this was the intention of the previous administrator.

He sees his job to meticulously ensure that never happens again, echoing the Taliban's broader aims for the nation.

Doctors are routinely lambasted by angry patients, most of whom can't afford to pay for the life-saving medicines. "All of them fight with us," Ibrahimi said.

Staff working the night shift say there is no food. The power shuts off for hours in the day with generator fuel quickly running out.

Quami holds a mobile phone for light as she makes her way to check on malnourished babies.

"Every doctor here is in a deep depression," she said.

Ahmadi, by contrast, said his dreams were finally coming true.

Working in the hospital has afforded something life growing up poor never could: A medical education.

He claims that in the past two months he has learned how to administer injections and prescribe basic pharmaceuticals. He said that's part of the reason why he scrutinizes Ibrahimi's prescriptions.

"I know the names of the medicines needed for different conditions," he said proudly. Recently, after a car accident, he was on the scene to provide an injection of painkillers, he added.

Ahmadi still dreams of being a doctor, and, like the health workers he supervises, hopes the money comes through somehow.

Ugandan kids lose hope in long school closure amid pandemic

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA Associated Press

BUSIA, Uganda (AP) — Dressed in his school uniform, Mathias Okwako jumped into the mud and started his daily search for gold, a commodity that may be closer to his grasp than another precious asset: an education.

His rural school in Uganda sits idle just across the road from the swamp where he and scores of children now work as informal miners. Weeds grow in some classrooms, where window frames have been looted for firewood. Another school nearby is renting out rooms to tenants.

Uganda's schools have been fully or partially shut for more than 77 weeks because of the coronavirus pandemic, the longest disruption anywhere in the world, according to figures from the U.N. cultural agency.

And unlike many parts of the globe, where lessons moved online, most public schools, which serve the

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vast majority of children in this East African country, were unable to offer virtual schooling.

In the void left, some students got married. Some are dealing with unwanted pregnancies. Others, like 17-year-old Okwako, found jobs.

The pandemic has manufactured "outcasts," a lost generation of learners now "in a battle of how to fit in," said Moses Mangeni, an official with the local government in Busia, where Okwako lives.

Efforts to control the spread of COVID-19 have disrupted the lives of children in every corner of the globe, squeezing their parents, complicating their care, and often removing their safety nets. Perhaps most crucially, it has thrown their schooling into chaos.

The result is the "biggest global education emergency of our time," according to the aid group Save the Children, which last month identified 48 countries, including Uganda, whose school systems are at extreme or high risk of collapse. Most are in sub-Saharan Africa, a region long marked by high dropout rates and a shortage of qualified teachers.

Some other parts of the world that saw protracted closures also struggled to teach students. Mexico, where internet connectivity is low in many places, opted for educational programming via television. Ultimately, the pandemic was devastating for children in Mexico, which saw millions leave school as well as increases in child homicides, teen pregnancies and domestic violence.

In Iraq, remote learning was similarly "limited and unequal," according to the World Bank.

Some wealthier countries fared better. In Kuwait, because most public schools weren't equipped to go online when the virus first struck, all schooling was suspended for seven months in 2020. But then the oil-rich Gulf Arab sheikhdom poured \$212 million into an e-learning platform, and all schools went online. The rollout is considered a success.

But in Uganda there is no success to speak of.

The country first shut down its schools in March 2020, shortly after the first coronavirus case was confirmed on the African continent. Some classes were reopened to students in February, but a total lockdown was imposed again in June as the country faced its first major surge. It is now the only country in Africa where schools remain closed — though President Yoweri Museveni announced last week that they would reopen in January.

That comes as virus cases have tapered off in recent months, with the country now recording an average of 70 new infections each day and a couple of deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University. So far, Uganda has fully vaccinated about 700,000 of its 44 million people.

First lady Janet Museveni, who is the country's education minister, has rejected criticism that the government isn't doing enough to teach kids. In a speech in October, she asked "why our children cannot be safe at home. What happened to the family?"

The problem, some Ugandans say, is that the government hasn't found a successful way to keep up learning during lockdown. A suggested national program to broadcast lessons via free radio sets didn't materialize, and in rural areas many children don't have learning materials of any kind.

As elsewhere, schools typically also provide a refuge to vulnerable children: They may be fed there or receive their routine childhood vaccinations or have access to other services not easily available at home.

But in Uganda's poorest homes, children are now often left to their own devices, without the private tutoring or Zoom lessons that wealthy families can afford.

In Busia, even before the pandemic, the sight of kids peddling goods in the streets wasn't uncommon. Things have only become worse.

Many children who spoke to The Associated Press expressed hopelessness amid the protracted lockdown.

Okwako, who said he was wearing his school uniform while searching for gold because he had nothing else to put on, sought work out of boredom but regrets that the tiring days leave him little energy to study on his own.

"No time (for) reading books," he said. "If you try to open a book, you just go asleep, and sleep up to tomorrow."

At the informal gold mine, students toil alongside adults, including some of their teachers, under the

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scorching sun. Witnesses said the risks and frustrations of the precarious work have led to fistfights, and some children have broken limbs while digging.

A typical day can bring in just over \$2, enough for a child to buy a pair of used shoes. Okwako is proud of the two pigs he bought with his earnings. Other children said they use the money help to look after their families, regularly buying salt or soap.

"We come here to make money," said 16-year-old Annet Aita, whose job is to wash the sandy soil in which gold dust is trapped, using highly toxic mercury.

But work also provides a refuge from other dangers that stalk those not in school. Aita said she felt more fortunate than some friends who "got pregnancies at home."

Teacher Francis Adungosi said he now works at the mine "from Monday to Monday" and warned that he will need a "refresher course" before going back to the classroom.

As for his students, "they are traumatized. Remember they are having a lot of challenges. Some of them are pregnant. Some have already got married. Handling those children is going to be so tasking."

That's for those who go back. Many say they won't.

Some of the children now say, "we don't recall what we read, so why should we go back?" said Gilbert Mugalanzi, of the group Somero Uganda, which carried out a survey in November to assess how the pandemic was affecting schoolchildren in parts of Busia.

At Okwako's Mawero Primary School, teacher Emmy Odillo said he expects a small fraction of the 400 students to return next year.

Others have similarly low expectations.

Bosco Masaba, the director of studies at Busia Central Primary School, the private school nearby that has been converted into rentals, said he regularly sees some students in the streets selling tomatoes or eggs. He heard that some girls became domestic workers across the border in Kenya.

"Some, they have lost hope completely," Masaba said.

Christopher Sherman in Mexico City, Zeina Karam in Beirut, and Isabel DeBre in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, contributed to this report.

Correa, Astros rally past Braves 9-5, cut WS deficit to 3-2

By BEN WALKER AP Baseball Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Just in time, Carlos Correa and the Houston Astros broke out the bats.

Because if they had waited any longer, this World Series would've been over.

Staggered by Adam Duvall's grand slam in the first inning, Correa and Alex Bregman ended their slumps in a hurry. They kept swinging, too, refusing to let their season slip away and rallying past the Atlanta Braves 9-5 early Monday to cut their Series deficit to 3-2.

The Braves might not admit it was a deflating defeat; 66-year-old manager Brian Snitker is too steady and savvy for that. But by any measure in the Analytics Age, this had to sting.

"I'm just glad we get to go back to Houston. That was our goal today," Astros skipper Dusty Baker said.

Correa came through with three hits after getting moved up to third in the lineup for Game 5 while Bregman was dropped to seventh. Martín Maldonado found three different ways to drive in runs and pinch-hitter Marwin Gonzalez blooped a two-out, two-run single in the fifth for a 7-5 lead.

A matchup of bullpens turned into the first high-scoring game of this Fall Classic, and the highest-scoring team in the majors this year won it.

Couldn't hold down the Astros forever, a parade of Braves pitchers found out as the clock passed midnight and the calendar flipped to November.

"We've got a clubhouse full of bad dudes in there. And our lineup is very deep," Correa said.

Correa gained attention earlier this postseason for marking big hits by pointing at his wrist, where a watch might be. His time, he said.

The star shortstop doubled and singled twice, driving in two runs. His RBI single in the eighth padded the lead and as Jose Altuve got congrats in the dugout after scoring, the Fox TV mics picked up someone

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on the bench yelling "It's time!"

A night earlier, the Astros went 0 for 8 with runners in scoring position in a 3-2 loss. That left Correa at 2 for 14 overall in the series and Bregman worse at 1 for 14.

"Before the game we talked and we said, 'We're not gonna give up,'" Correa said. "We're gonna go out there fighting."

Atlanta had been 7-0 at home in the postseason, and a boisterous crowd inside Truist Park and packed plaza outside came early hoping to celebrate its first championship since 1995.

"If we win the World Series, it doesn't matter where it is," Snitker said. "I'd have loved to have done it in front of our fans. Hopefully, we can do it the next couple of days."

Duvall's slam sent a dozen Braves careening from the dugout, a full-out frenzy of hollering, twirling and dancing.

"We celebrated it. We got excited, and that's what you do when you hit home runs — but it's a long game. That happened in the bottom of the first. It's a nine-inning game, and they didn't quit," Duvall said.

Indeed, any victory party was premature — even after Freddie Freeman's long homer put Atlanta ahead 5-4.

Instead, the Astros hushed those fans and the Braves, pulling off a big comeback to stay afloat.

Now, the Astros need an even bigger one to win it all.

Game 6 is Tuesday night in Houston.

No team has clinched a World Series at home since the 2013 Red Sox. For Altuve and the Astros to do it, they must win twice at Minute Maid Park — the last club to overcome a 3-1 Series deficit was the Cubs against Cleveland in 2016.

Only once has a team facing elimination in the World Series produced a bigger rally. That was a five-run surge by the Angels in Game 6 of 2002 — against a Giants team managed by Baker.

Down 4-0 after Duvall tagged Framber Valdez, the Astros began to chip away against surprise starter Tucker Davidson.

The rookie wasn't even on the postseason roster a week ago. Relaxing at a hotel in the Atlanta suburbs, chowing down a takeout salad from The Cheesecake Factory, he saw Game 1 starter Charlie Morton get hurt and joined the Braves the next day in Houston.

It made for a cute story, but Houston wasn't buying.

Bregman got things going with an RBI double that ended the Astros' rut with runners in scoring position and Maldonado — 4 for 41 in the postseason at that point — followed with a sacrifice fly that pulled them to 4-2.

An error by shortstop Dansby Swanson helped Houston tie it in the third. Altuve reached on the misplay and Michael Brantley walked, ending Davidson's day. Correa greeted reliever Jesse Chavez with an RBI double, and a run-scoring grounder by Yuli Gurriel made it 4-all.

Freeman untied it moments later, connecting for a 460-foot home run that matched the longest of his career.

But having finally gotten loose at the plate, the Astros weren't going quietly on this night.

Singles by Correa and Gurriel and a two-out intentional walk to Bregman loaded the bases in the fifth. Lefty reliever A.J. Minter lost Maldonado for a walk that tied it, and Gonzalez singled for the lead.

Maldonado added an RBI single in the seventh and Correa extended the lead the next inning.

José Urquidy worked a scoreless inning in relief for his second win of the Series, becoming the first pitcher to earn one as a starter and reliever in the same Fall Classic since Randy Johnson for Arizona in 2001.

Phil Maton tossed two shutout innings and Kendall Graveman did the same to close it out.

Minter took the loss.

ROAD TRIP

Houston became the first team to win Game 5 on the road when trailing 3-1 in the World Series since the 1992 Braves in Toronto.

IN A PINCH

Astros right-hander Zack Greinke got the first pinch-hit by an American League pitcher in World Series

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history, lining a single in the fourth. He also got a hit when he started Game 4.

The previous hit by a pinch-hitting pitcher in the Series came way back in 1923 by Jack Bentley of the New York Giants. Bentley had two of them against the Yankees in that matchup after batting .427 during the regular season.

UP NEXT

Braves: LHP Max Fried is fully rested and ready for Game 6. He was hit hard in Game 2, his second consecutive shaky start after an excellent season.

Astros: Baker said Houston would likely go with rookie Luis Garcia on three days' rest.

More AP MLB: <https://apnews.com/hub/MLB> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

McAuliffe, Youngkin campaigning at frenetic pace in Virginia

By SARAH RANKIN Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Democrat Terry McAuliffe and Republican Glenn Youngkin are set for a final day of campaigning at a frenetic pace ahead of Tuesday's finale in the competitive and closely watched race for governor.

Both candidates are expected to crisscross the commonwealth Monday, each with stops in Roanoke, Virginia Beach, the Richmond area and northern Virginia.

The last-minute push comes after a busy weekend that saw Youngkin tour southwest Virginia and McAuliffe make stops in suburban Richmond and northern Virginia, each trying to fire up his party's base to drive up turnout for an election that will be scrutinized as a bellwether ahead of next year's midterms.

McAuliffe, who served as governor from 2014 to 2018, and Democrats are scrambling to stave off disaster after public polling has shifted in Youngkin's direction in recent weeks. Republicans are optimistic about their chances in the commonwealth, where they haven't won a statewide race since 2009.

After campaigning across northern Virginia on Saturday, Youngkin departed for the far southwest tip of the state, a Republican stronghold. Stops along his bus tour included a prayer breakfast, a worship service, a barbecue at the home of a powerful state lawmaker, a meet-and-greet in the state's farthest-flung corner and an evening get-out-the-vote rally in Abingdon.

At the rally, Youngkin predicted Republicans would sweep all three statewide races and take back control of the House of Delegates, where all 100 seats are on the ballot.

"This is a moment for us to make a statement that big government control is going to lose and liberty and freedom in Virginia are going to win," he said, as the crowd erupted in cheers.

McAuliffe, who preceded Democrat Ralph Northam as governor in the only state that doesn't allow its executive to serve consecutive terms, spent Saturday the state's southeastern corner before making stops Sunday in suburban Richmond and northern Virginia.

In the backyard of a home in a well-to-do pocket of Henrico County, McAuliffe told an energetic crowd of supporters that "the stakes are huge" as he touted his record from his first term.

"I've done this job before. I was the most pro-business pro-progressive. I made this state open and welcoming, created a lot of jobs. We do not want to go back," he said.

McAuliffe has brought in a series of high-profile surrogates including President Joe Biden, former President Barack Obama and celebrity musicians Pharrell Williams and Dave Matthews in the final stretch. Youngkin, meanwhile, has eschewed virtually all public campaign visits from well-known party allies who would typically flock to a hot race.

That includes former President Donald Trump, who is holding a telerally for Youngkin on Monday. Youngkin has said he will not be participating. Youngkin more fully embraced Trump during the Republican nominating contest, but since becoming the nominee, he has walked a fine line as he tries to court moderate voters in a state that Trump lost by 10 percentage points to Biden in 2020.

Saturday marked the final day for early voting in Virginia, which has been dramatically expanded during the past two years of unified Democratic control of state government.

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Legislation passed in 2020 eliminated the need to provide one of a certain number of limited excuses in order to vote absentee. Now any qualified voter can cast a ballot starting 45 days before the election.

Over 1.1 million out of the state's approximately 5.9 million registered voters cast a ballot early this year, according to state data published by the nonpartisan Virginia Public Access Project. That's down sharply from the 2.8 million early votes in last year's presidential election but marks a dramatic increase compared with the mere 195,634 early votes during the last gubernatorial cycle, before the voting reforms were instituted.

McAuliffe spokeswoman Christina Freundlich said the campaign expects many Democrats to revert to their pre-pandemic voting habits this year, favoring in-person voting on Election Day.

Still, at the Henrico rally, McAuliffe claimed Democrats had a "big lead on the early vote."

Voters don't register by party in Virginia, so the partisan split of the early vote wasn't immediately clear. But McAuliffe's campaign pointed to what they considered "strong" numbers in blue-leaning localities in northern Virginia as a sign momentum was on their side.

Republicans, despite generally opposing the Democrats' election reforms, have also encouraged their supporters to vote early this year.

In southwest Virginia, where Youngkin spent Sunday, the rate of early voting was well below the state as a whole, according to a VPAP analysis.

Strong turnout there on Election Day could help boost Youngkin as he looks to overcome the structural advantage of northern Virginia's blue tilt.

On Tuesday, polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Key events in Wisconsin surrounding Rittenhouse shootings

KENOSHA, Wis. (AP) — A timeline of key events before and after Kyle Rittenhouse shot three people during a night of unrest in Kenosha, Wisconsin, last year:

Aug. 23, 2020 — An officer responding to a reported domestic disturbance shoots Jacob Blake, a Black man, in the back as Blake was leaning into his vehicle. Bystander video captures the shooting, which left Blake partly paralyzed. Neighbors march to the Kenosha County Public Safety Building, where they face officers in riot gear.

Aug. 24 — Police fire tear gas at hundreds of protesters who defied a curfew, threw bottles and shot fireworks at the courthouse. Crowds destroy dozens of buildings and set more than 30 fires. Gov. Tony Evers calls in the National Guard. The man who shot cellphone video of Blake's shooting says he saw Blake scuffling with officers and officers shouting "Drop the knife!" but that said he didn't see a knife in Blake's hands.

Aug. 25 — Blake's lawyer says Blake is paralyzed from the waist down. Blake's family calls for calm. Calls go out on social media, including on a page run by the "Kenosha Guard," for people to "take up arms" and help defend the city from "thugs." Demonstrations are held for a third night, with gunshots heard and people seen carrying long guns and other weapons. Shortly before midnight, two people — Joseph Rosenbaum, 36, and Anthony Huber, 26 — are shot dead and a third, Gaige Grosskreutz, 26, is wounded.

Aug. 26 — Authorities say they are seeking a possible vigilante seen on cellphone video opening fire with a rifle. Police in Illinois announce the arrest of 17-year-old Kyle Rittenhouse, of Antioch, which is about 15 miles (24 kilometers) from Kenosha.

Aug. 27 — Rittenhouse is charged with multiple counts, including homicide and attempted homicide.

Aug. 31 — At a news conference the day before he visited Kenosha, President Donald Trump is asked if he condemned Rittenhouse's actions. He says: "You saw the same tape as I saw. And he was trying to get away from them, I guess; it looks like. And he fell, and then they very violently attacked him. And it was something that we're looking at right now and it's under investigation. But I guess he was in very big trouble. He would have been — I — he probably would have been killed."

Sept. 1 — Trump visits Kenosha and blames "domestic terror" for the violence. He makes no mention of Blake's shooting by police and calls the violent protests "anti-American."

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Sept. 3 — Joe Biden, the Democrat running against Trump, visits Kenosha. He meets with Blake's family members, speaks with Blake by phone and leads a community discussion.

Sept. 24 — In a TV appearance and social media posts, Rittenhouse's attorneys say his client acted in self-defense but was also a courageous defender of liberty and a patriot who exercised his right to bear arms amid rioting. They claim Rittenhouse is being sacrificed by politicians who want to strip citizens of the right to defend their communities.

Sept. 25 — At a hearing in Illinois, Rittenhouse's attorneys ask for more time to fight his extradition to Wisconsin. They later say in documents that sending Rittenhouse to Wisconsin would "turn him over to the mob."

Oct. 30 — Rittenhouse is extradited.

Nov. 2 — A Wisconsin court sets Rittenhouse's bail at \$2 million. Conservative groups have been raising funds for Rittenhouse, who easily amasses enough for bail.

Nov. 20 — Rittenhouse posts bail and is released. Hours later, one of his attorneys tweets a picture of Rittenhouse with actor Ricky Schroder, who the attorney says donated to Rittenhouse.

Jan. 5, 2021 — A Wisconsin prosecutor declines to charge Kenosha Officer Rusten Sheskey, who is white, in Blake's shooting, ruling that Blake had a knife and the officer had a reasonable self-defense claim. Subdued protests follow.

Feb. 3 — Prosecutors ask for a new arrest warrant after Rittenhouse failed to tell the court of an address change. Rittenhouse's attorney says death threats drove his client into an "undisclosed Safe House." Judge Bruce Schroeder later denies the request.

Nov. 1 — Jury selection begins in Rittenhouse's trial.

Find AP's full coverage of the trial of Kyle Rittenhouse at: <https://apnews.com/hub/kyle-rittenhouse>

Man with knife injures 17 people on Tokyo train, starts fire

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — A man dressed in a Joker costume and brandishing a knife stabbed at least one passenger on a Tokyo commuter train before starting a fire, injuring passengers and sending people scrambling to escape and jumping from windows, police and witnesses said.

The Tokyo Fire Department said 17 passengers were injured, including three seriously. Not all of them were stabbed and most of the other injuries were not serious, the fire department said.

The attacker, whom police identified as 24-year-old Kyota Hattori, was arrested on the spot after Sunday's attack and was being investigated on suspicion of attempted murder, the Tokyo metropolitan police department said Monday.

The attacker, riding an express train headed to Tokyo's Shinjuku station, abruptly took out a knife and stabbed a seated passenger — a man in his 70s — in the right chest, police said. Injury details of other 16 passengers are still being investigated, police said.

Police said he told authorities that he wanted to kill people and get the death penalty. Nippon Television said he also said that he used an earlier train stabbing case as an example.

Witnesses told police that the attacker was wearing a bright outfit — a green shirt, a blue suit and a purple coat — like the Joker villain in Batman comics or someone going to a Halloween event, according to media reports.

A video posted by a witness on social media showed the suspect seated, with his leg crossed and smoking in one of the train cars, presumably after the attack.

Tokyo police officials said the attack happened inside the Keio train near the Kokuryo station.

Television footage showed a number of firefighters, police officials and paramedics rescuing the passengers, many of whom escaped through train windows. In one video, passengers were running from another car that was in flames.

NHK said the suspect, after stabbing passengers, poured a liquid resembling oil from a plastic bottle

and set fire, which partially burned seats.

Shunsuke Kimura, who filmed the video, told NHK that he saw passengers desperately running and while he was trying to figure out what happened, he heard an explosive noise and saw smoke wafting. He also jumped from a window but fell on the platform and hurt his shoulder.

"Train doors were closed and we had no idea what was happening, and we jumped from the windows," Kimura said. "It was horrifying."

The attack was the second involving a knife on a Tokyo train in three months.

In August, the day before the Tokyo Olympics closing ceremony, a 36-year-old man stabbed 10 passengers on a commuter train in Tokyo in a random burst of violence. The suspect later told police that he wanted to attack women who looked happy.

While shooting deaths are rare in Japan, the country has had a series of high-profile knife killings in recent years.

In 2019, a man carrying two knives attacked a group of schoolgirls waiting at a bus stop just outside Tokyo, killing two people and injuring 17 before killing himself. In 2018, a man killed a passenger and injuring two others in a knife attack on a bullet train. In 2016, a former employee at a home for the disabled killed 19 people and injured more than 20.

Happy Halloween: Gaming platform Roblox is back online

The Associated Press undefined

The popular gaming site Roblox went back online Sunday after being down for most of the weekend.

The online platform crashed Friday. In a statement, the company tweeted Sunday evening that "Roblox is back online everywhere! Thank you for your continued patience as we get back to normal."

The company tweeted several updates on its progress to restore service. Roblox said the outage was "not related to any specific experiences or partnerships on the platform." This was apparently meant to quash rumors that the trouble was caused by a free burrito giveaway at a digital Chipotle on the Roblox platform.

On the platform, players can create their own games and play with other users. It became wildly popular after the coronavirus pandemic closed schools and kept children indoors looking for something to do.

According to numbers compiled by the social media consulting firm Backlinko, Roblox has more than 43 million active users a day (up from 14 million in 2016), 40 million games and 9.5 million developers.

White House press secretary Psaki says she has COVID-19

By AAMER MADHANI and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Sunday she has contracted COVID-19 and is experiencing mild symptoms.

Psaki, 42, said she was last in contact with President Joe Biden on Tuesday, when she met him in the White House, where they were more than 6 feet apart and wearing masks. Biden, who is tested frequently, last tested negative on Saturday, according to the White House.

Psaki did not accompany Biden on his trip abroad to Rome this weekend for the Group of 20 summit and Glasgow, Scotland, on Monday for a U.N. climate summit.

Psaki had planned to travel with the president but scrapped the trip just as he was set to depart for Europe after learning that members of her household had tested positive for COVID-19.

"Since then, I have quarantined and tested negative (via PCR) for COVID on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday," Psaki said in a statement. "However, today, I tested positive for COVID."

Psaki, who is fully vaccinated, said she is only exhibiting mild symptoms.

"While I have not had close contact in person with the President or senior members of the White House staff since Wednesday — and tested negative for four days after that last contact — I am disclosing today's positive test out of an abundance of transparency," Psaki said.

White House staff and others traveling with the president have been undergoing daily tests for COVID-19

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since before departing Washington and are all fully vaccinated. Many officials have also received booster shots, due to the close-quarters environment and frequent travel associated with their work.

Biden got his COVID-19 booster on Sept 27, shortly after federal regulators approved the third dose for many Americans.

Biden has been accompanied on the trip by principal deputy press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre. Psaki said she would return to work in person at the conclusion of a 10-day quarantine and following a negative rapid test.

Deere workers would get immediate 10% raises under new offer

MOLINE, Ill. (AP) — Union workers at Deere & Co. would get wage increases of 10% in the first year and 5% each in the third and fifth years under a tentative contract reached between the farm-equipment maker and the United Auto Workers union.

The workers would get 3% lump sums in the second, fourth and sixth years of the deal. They would also get a ratification bonus of \$8,500 and no changes in the cost of their health insurance, according to a summary of the agreement posted Sunday on the union website.

The company and the UAW reached a tentative agreement Saturday that would cover more than 10,000 workers at 12 Deere locations in Iowa, Illinois and Kansas. However, a strike that began Oct. 14 will continue while workers review the terms of the deal ahead of a ratification vote.

Union members previously rejected a proposed contract that included immediate 5% raises for some workers and 6% for others, and 3% raises in 2023 and 2025.

The Moline, Illinois-based company reported \$4.7 billion in net income for the first nine months of its fiscal year, more than double the \$2 billion of the same period a year earlier.

A labor shortage affecting many industries also gave workers more leverage to demand better pay and benefits.

American Airlines cancels hundreds of weekend flights

By DAVID KOENIG AP Airlines Writer

DALLAS (AP) — American Airlines canceled hundreds of flights Sunday for a third straight day as it struggled with staffing shortages and upended weekend plans for tens of thousands of travelers.

By late afternoon Sunday, American had canceled more than 900 flights — one-third of its schedule for the day — after scrapping nearly 900 flights over the previous two days, according to tracking service FlightAware.

A spokeswoman for American said the airline expects considerable improvement starting Monday, although there will be “some residual impact from the weekend.” By Sunday afternoon, American had already canceled more than 100 Monday flights, according to FlightAware.

American’s troubles began Thursday and Friday, when high winds at times shut down its busiest hub, Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, and prevented the airline from using all runways there. That made it difficult for American to get crews in position for upcoming flights, and caused disruptions. The number of canceled and delayed flights grew larger in number and geographic sweep throughout the weekend.

“To make sure we are taking care of our customers and providing scheduling certainty for our crews, we have adjusted our operation for the last few days this month by proactively canceling some flights,” David Seymour, the airline’s chief operating officer, said in a note to employees on Saturday.

About two-thirds of Sunday’s cancellations were due to a lack of flight attendants in the right places, with almost all the remaining cancellations due to a shortage of pilots, according to internal figures seen by The Associated Press.

The nature of the debacle — starting with bad weather in part of the country before spinning out of control — was similar to disruptions at Southwest Airlines in early October. Together, the twin failures raised ominous questions about whether major airlines are prepared for the busy upcoming holiday travel period.

American says it will be.

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Seymour said that nearly 1,800 flight attendants will begin returning to their jobs starting Monday and at least 600 new hires will be on board by the end of the year. He said the airline is also hiring pilots and reservations agents in time for the holidays.

Airlines were barred from laying off workers during the pandemic as a condition of billions in federal pandemic relief — American temporarily furloughed 19,000 workers when the money lapsed last year, but reversed the furloughs when aid was restored. That, however, didn't stop the airlines from persuading thousands of employees to accept cash incentives and quit voluntarily. American, Southwest and others are now hiring employees to replace some of those who left in 2020.

American's labor unions have warned for months that the airline was scheduling more flights than its pared-down work force can handle, leaving employees spread too thinly when bad weather snarls air travel.

Dennis Tager, an American Airlines pilot and spokesman for the Allied Pilots Association, said the union had not seen such a high level of cancellations after storms had passed.

"Since the spring we have been warning of these post-weather management failures to recover, and it's just getting worse," he said. "We continue to be very concerned about the uncertainty surrounding the upcoming winter holiday travel season."

American planned about 2,600 flights Sunday, not counting regional affiliates that fly as American Eagle. That number is scheduled to jump to more than 3,000 flights on eight days around Thanksgiving and early December, according to aviation-data firm Cirium.

Earlier in October, Southwest canceled well over 2,000 flights after disruptions started with weather problems in Florida and were compounded by staffing shortages. Southwest's chief operating officer said the airline was pursuing "a very aggressive hiring plan" but was "still not where we want to be with staffing," especially pilots.

David Koenig can be reached at www.twitter.com/airlinewriter

Biden winds up G-20 summit with dings at Russia, China

By ZEKE MILLER and JOSH BOAK Associated Press

ROME (AP) — President Joe Biden wrapped up his time at the Group of 20 summit on Sunday trying to convince Americans and the wider world that he's got things under control — and taking Russia, China and Saudi Arabia to task for not doing enough to deal with the existential threat of climate change.

Biden's overall take on his efforts: On climate change, he's got \$900 billion planned for renewable energy, and Congress will vote this coming week. On supply chains, he has plans to make the ports run better and tamp down inflation. For workers, he's building an economy with pay raises. On diplomacy, world leaders trust him.

But he also acknowledged what he can't yet achieve: bringing Russia, China and Saudi Arabia to the table with the broader international community to limit carbon emissions and move to renewable energy.

In a news conference Sunday, the U.S. president spelled out his belief that all politics is personal and that what progress was achieved at the Rome summit came from direct interactions with other leaders.

"They know me. I know them," Biden said of his fellow G-20 leaders. "We get things done together."

"We've made significant progress and more has to be done," Biden added. "But it's going to require us to continue to focus on what Russia's not doing, what China's not doing, what Saudi Arabia's not doing."

For all the challenges confronting him, the president attempted to stay optimistic. As Biden departed the news conference, he offered a thumbs up when asked if West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin and Arizona Sen. Kyrsten Sinema — key Democratic votes — were on board with his \$1.75 trillion spending package for families, health care and renewable energy. The president also shrugged off his recent decline in the polls, saying that numbers go up and down.

As for the potential significance of Biden's thumbs-up on congressional negotiations, White House deputy press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre, said, "As the President said during the press conference, he is confident we are going to get this done and the thumbs up was simply a visual restatement of that."

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But the policy issues also seemed to fade for Biden when asked about his time Friday with Pope Francis. The president became deeply emotional, his hands appearing to fiddle with the mask he wore as a precaution because of COVID-19. He spoke of how the pope comforted the Biden family in a Philadelphia airport hangar after the death of his son, Beau, in 2015.

"When I won, (Pope Francis) called me to tell me how much he appreciated the fact that I would focus on the poor. focus on the needs of people who are in trouble," Biden said. "He is everything I learned about Catholicism from the time I was a kid going from grade school to high school."

The president did leave the G-20 with commitments by his fellow leaders on a global minimum tax that would make it harder for large companies to avoid taxes by assigning their profits to countries with low tax rates. He announced new funding to improve ports and shipping, in addition to a conference next year on supply chains. He patched up differences with the European Union on tariffs and differences with France on the sale of a nuclear-powered submarines to Australia.

The president met Sunday with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whose office said the meeting was held in a "positive atmosphere" despite tensions over human rights and Turkey's purchase of a Russian missile system, among other issues.

Biden heads Monday to the U.N. climate summit in Scotland, where he'll once again face questions about whether the world's wealthiest are doing enough to stop the warming of the Earth by moving away from fossil fuels. The president on Sunday dismissed the contradiction that he's fighting for climate change while also asking oil-rich countries to increase their production in order to lower gasoline prices for U.S. commuters.

"The idea that we're not going to need gasoline for automobiles is just not realistic," Biden said. "It has a profound impact on working-class families, just to get back and forth to work. So I don't see anything inconsistent with that."

Mexico celebrates Day of the Dead after pandemic closures

By MARCO UGARTE and LISSETTE ROMERO Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico returned Sunday to mass commemorations of the Day of the Dead, after traditional visits to graveyards were prohibited last year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

But the one-year hiatus showed how the tradition itself refuses to die: Most families still celebrated with home altars to deceased loved ones, and some snuck into cemeteries anyway.

Gerardo Tapia Guadarrama on Sunday joined many others at the cemetery as he visited the grave of his father Juan Ignacio Tapia, who died in May 2020 of a thrombosis.

Even though cemeteries in Mexico were closed to visitors last year to avoid spreading the virus, so strong is the tradition that his son still slipped into the cemetery in the eastern Mexico City suburb of Valle de Chalco to visit him.

'Lat year it was prohibited, but we found a way," Tapia Guadarrama said slyly. Much of graveyard has low walls that can be jumped.

"To live is to remember," he said. "What they (the dead) most want want is a visit from those they were close to in life."

The holiday begins Oct. 31, remembering those who died in accidents; it continues Nov. 1 to mark those died in childhood, and then those who died as adults on Nov. 2.

Observances include entire families cleaning and decorating graves, which are covered with orange marigolds. At both cemeteries and at home altars, relatives light candles, put out offerings of the favorite foods and beverages of their deceased relatives.

There was a special altar in downtown Mexico City dedicated to those who died of COVID-19. Relatives were allowed into a fenced-off plaza and offered equipment to print out photos of their loved ones, which they could then pin, along with handwritten, messages on a black wall.

It was a quiet, solemn remembrance in a country where coronavirus deaths touched almost all extended families.

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Mexico has over 288,000 test-confirmed deaths, but probable coronavirus mortalities as listed on death certificates suggest a toll closer to 440,000, by some counts the fourth-highest in the world.

For a country where people usually die surrounded by relatives, COVID-19 was particularly cruel, as loved ones were taken off alone in plastic tents, to die alone in isolation.

"The only thing I could say to him was, 'Do everything the doctors tell you,'" Gina Olvera said of her father, who died of coronavirus. "That was the last thing I was able to say to him." Olvera said she told her father, as she taped his photo to the memorial, "Well, you didn't make it, but you are here with us."

One woman wept as she pinned up a photo of a female relative. Another, Dulce Moreno, was calm but sad as she pinned up a photo of her uncle and her grandfather, Pedro Acosta Nuñez, both of whom died of complications of COVID-19.

"The house feels empty now without him (the grandfather), we feel lost," Moreno said.

For most, it was a joyful return, above all, to public activities like public altars and the Hollywood-style Day of the Dead parade that Mexico City adopted to mimic a fictitious march in the 2015 James Bond movie "Spectre."

"These days are not sad here; they are a way to remember our dead with great happiness," said Otilia Ochoa, a homemaker who came along with dozens of others to take pictures of the flower-decked offerings near the coronavirus memorial. "What is good is to recover this liberty, this contact we had lost" during the pandemic, Ochoa said.

Tens of thousands of Mexico City — almost all wearing masks, despite the city's relatively high vaccination rate — gathered along the city's main boulevard Sunday to watch the parade of dancing skeletons, dancers and floats.

There were few references to coronavirus in the parade, but there was a whole section of skeleton-dressed actors representing Mexico City's street traders and vendors.

"We are here to celebrate life!" Mexico City Tourism Secretary Paola Felix Diaz said in kicking off the parade.

More risky group activities like Halloween-style costume parties and trick-or-treating have still not recovered from the pandemic. But children took the opportunity to dress up in Mexico-style Day of the Dead costumes as skull-like Catrinas, or as red-clad guards from the Netflix series "Squid Game."

But Mexico has long had a different attitude toward death, more social, more accepting than in many parts of the world. Wakes and funerals here are often elaborate, days-long events gathering entire neighborhoods and extended families for eating, praying and remembering.

G-20 make mild pledges on climate neutrality, coal financing

By NICOLE WINFIELD, DAVID MCHUGH and KARL RITTER Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Leaders of the world's biggest economies agreed Sunday to stop funding coal-fired power plants in poor countries and made a vague commitment to seek carbon neutrality "by or around mid-century" as they wrapped up a Rome summit before the much larger United Nations climate conference in Glasgow, Scotland.

While Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi and French President Emmanuel Macron described the Group of 20 summit as a success, the outcome disappointed climate activists, the chief of the U.N. and Britain's leader. The U.K. is hosting the two-week Glasgow conference and had looked for more ambitious targets to come out of Rome.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson called the G-20's commitments mere "drops in a rapidly warming ocean." U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres agreed the outcome was not enough.

"While I welcome the #G20's recommitment to global solutions, I leave Rome with my hopes unfulfilled — but at least they are not buried," Guterres tweeted. "Onwards to #COP26 in Glasgow."

The G-20 countries represent more than three-quarters of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, and Britain had hoped for a "G-20 bounce" going into the Glasgow COP26 meeting. Environmentalists and scientists have described the U.N. conference as the world's "last best hope" for nailing down commit-

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ments to limit the global rise in temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above the pre-industrial average.

The summit laid bare the divisions that still exist between Western countries that polluted the planet the most historically but are now seeing emissions decline and the emerging economies led by China whose emissions are rising as their economies grow.

Britain pushed for a commitment to achieve climate neutrality or net-zero emissions, meaning a balance between greenhouse gases added to and removed from the atmosphere, by 2050.

The United States and the European Union have set 2050 as their own deadline for reaching net-zero emissions, while China, Russia and Saudi Arabia are aiming for 2060. The leaders of those three countries didn't come to Rome for the summit.

In the end, the G-20 leaders arrived at a compromise to achieve climate neutrality "by or around mid-century," not a set year.

Before leaving Rome, U.S. President Joe Biden called it "disappointing" that G-20 members Russia and China "basically didn't show up" with commitments to address the scourge of climate change ahead of the U.N. climate conference.

Russian leader Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping are not expected to attend the conference in Glasgow, although they are sending senior officials to the international COP26 talks.

"The disappointment relates to the fact that Russia...and China basically didn't show up in terms of any commitments to deal with climate change. And there's a reason why people should be disappointed," Biden said, adding: "I found it disappointing myself."

Biden comments came in response to a reporter's question about the modest pledges made during the G-20 summit.

"We made commitments here from across the board in terms of what we're going to bring to (COP26)," the president said. "As that old trade saying goes, the proof of the pudding will be in the eating."

Earlier in the day, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov pushed back at the West's target date.

"Why do you believe 2050 is some magic figure?" Lavrov asked at a news conference. "If it is an ambition of the European Union, it is the right of other countries also to have ambitions....No one has proven to us or anybody else that 2050 is something everyone must subscribe to."

Italy's Draghi said the declaration went further on climate than any G-20 statement before it. He noted that it referred to keeping the 1.5-degree global warming target within reach, something that science shows will be hard to accomplish unless the world dramatically cuts emissions from fossil fuels.

"We changed the goalposts," Draghi told reporters.

Canadian Premier Justin Trudeau said that G-20 leaders were able to get together was in itself a success given the coronavirus pandemic.

"The fact that we have well laid out the table and know where the sharp edges are, and know what work we we're going to have to do at COP... is a very positive step," Trudeau said.

The future of coal, a key source of greenhouse gas emissions, also proved one of the most difficult issues on which to find consensus for the G-20.

At the Rome summit, leaders agreed to "put an end to the provision of international public finance for new unabated coal power generation abroad by the end of 2021." That refers to financial support for building coal plants abroad.

Western countries have been moving away from such financing and major Asian economies are following suit: Chinese President Xi Jinping announced at the U.N. General Assembly last month that Beijing would stop funding such projects, and Japan and South Korea made similar commitments earlier in the year.

China has not set an end date for building coal plants at home, however. Coal is still China's main source of power generation, and both China and India have resisted proposals for a G-20 declaration on phasing out domestic coal consumption.

The failure of the G-20 to set a target for phasing out domestic coal use was a disappointment to Britain. But Johnson's spokesperson, Max Blain, said the G-20 communique "was never meant to be the main lever in order to secure commitments on climate change," noting those would be hammered out at the

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Glasgow summit.

John Kirton, director of the G-20 Research Group at the University of Toronto, said the leaders "took only baby steps" in the agreement and did almost nothing new.

He pointed to the agreement to "recall and reaffirm" their overdue commitment to provide \$100 billion in assistance to poorer countries and to "stress the importance of meeting that goal fully as soon as possible" instead of stating that they were ready to stump up the full amount.

The agreement to end international coal financing "is the one thing that's specific and real. That one counts," Kirton said.

Youth climate activists Greta Thunberg and Vanessa Nakate issued an open letter to the media as the G-20 was wrapping up, stressing three fundamental aspects of the climate crisis that often are downplayed: that time is running out, that any solution must provide justice to the people most affected, and that the biggest polluters often hide behind incomplete statistics about their true emissions.

"The climate crisis is only going to become more urgent. We can still avoid the worst consequences, we can still turn this around. But not if we continue like today," they wrote, just weeks after Thunberg shamed global leaders for their "blah blah blah" rhetoric during a youth climate summit in Milan.

Greenpeace Executive Director Jennifer Morgan said the G-20 failed to provide the leadership the world needed. "I think it was a betrayal to young people around the world," she told The Associated Press on Sunday.

Aside from climate issues, the leaders signed off on a landmark agreement for countries to enact a global minimum corporate tax of 15%. The global minimum is aimed at deterring multinational companies from dodging taxes by shifting profits to countries with ultra-low rates where they may do little actual business.

The leaders also said they would continue work on a French initiative for wealthier countries to re-channel \$100 billion in financial support to needier countries in Africa in the form of special drawing rights - a foreign exchange tool used to help finance imports allocated by the International Monetary Fund and also received by advanced countries.

The leaders said they were "working on actionable options" to do that and set the \$100 billion figure as a "total global ambition" short of an absolute commitment. Some \$45 billion has already been reallocated by individual countries on a voluntary basis.

The commitment reflects concern that the post-pandemic recovery is diverging, with wealthy countries rebounding faster due to extensive vaccinations and stimulus spending.

Associated Press writers Jill Lawless and Sylvie Corbet contributed to this report. Aamer Madhani contributed from Washington.

New framework bolsters Biden's hand as climate summit begins

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden heads to a United Nations climate conference Monday energized by a new legislative framework that, if enacted, would be the largest action ever taken by the United States to address climate change.

The \$555 billion plan for climate spending is the centerpiece of a sweeping domestic policy package Biden and congressional Democrats presented Thursday, hours before the president traveled to Europe for another summit ahead of the climate meeting in Glasgow, Scotland.

Biden called the plan "the most significant investment to deal with the climate crisis that ever happened, beyond any other advanced nation in the world."

While far from certain to pass in a closely divided Congress, the new framework reassured nervous Democrats and environmental leaders that a president who has made climate action a key focus of his administration will not arrive in Glasgow empty-handed.

The plan did not give Biden everything he wanted, but supporters still believe that, if enacted, it would set the United States on a path to meet Biden's goal to cut carbon pollution in half by 2030.

"It's a real signal to the world that the U.S. is back and demonstrating leadership on climate change,"

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said Tiernan Sittenfeld, senior vice president of the League of Conservation Voters.

Biden's plan includes more than \$300 billion in tax incentives for renewable energy such as wind and solar power, as well as investments to boost nuclear power, sharply increase the number of electric vehicles and spur production of batteries and other advanced materials.

The plan also would spend at least \$100 billion to address extreme weather such as wildfires, hurricanes and droughts, address "legacy pollution" in hard-hit areas and establish a Civilian Climate Corps, a New Deal-style program to create thousands of jobs building trails, restoring streams and helping prevent catastrophic wildfires.

Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm on Sunday called the level of investment in clean energy "amazing" and said it demonstrated the importance of "having America lead in this as we go into" the climate summit.

But a proposal to reward power companies that move from fossil fuels to clean energy and penalize those that do not was dropped following opposition from coal-state Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va. And the fate of a proposed fee on methane leaks during oil and gas production also was uncertain, though liberal Democrats were hopeful it will be included.

A recent analysis by the Rhodium Group, an independent research firm, found that passage of a bipartisan infrastructure bill and the larger climate and domestic policy package, combined with regulations by key federal agencies and state actions, could cut U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 45% to 51% below 2005 levels in 2030.

"We actually do think the U.S. can still put the target within reach, but it's going to require a lot of sustained follow-up action by the executive branch and states after Congress is done to get the rest of the way there," said John Larsen, an energy systems expert and co-author of the study.

He called Biden's goal, set at a virtual climate meeting at the White House in April, "ambitious" but said it's "better to aim high and push as hard as you can when the science is telling you that's literally what's required."

The climate target is a key requirement of the 2015 Paris climate agreement, which Biden rejoined on his first day in office. It's also an important marker as Biden moves toward his ultimate goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Biden also has announced a plan to double financial aid to poorer nations to \$11.4 billion by 2024 so those countries can switch to cleaner energy and cope with global warming's worsening impact. The plan puts rich nations close to their long-promised but unrealized goal of \$100 billion a year in climate help for developing nations.

Biden is "leaning into climate more than any previous president, and it looks like he is prepared to continue to make this a top priority for his entire first term, which would be the first time an American president has done something like that," said Larsen, who worked in the Energy Department under President Barack Obama. He cited Biden's moves to rejoin the Paris agreement, kill the Keystone XL oil pipeline and pause oil and gas leasing on federal land, among other actions.

Even without signed legislation, Biden's framework shows U.S. leadership on climate, experts said. The U.S. can now tell China and other major polluters: "We set an ambitious goal. We've taken the first meaningful steps toward meeting that goal. What are you going to do?" Larsen said.

Still, there is pressure on Biden and Congress to pass the infrastructure bill and the larger domestic policy package during the two-week climate summit or soon after.

"I do think that if the U.S. is not able, before the end of (the climate summit), to demonstrate that it has some policies in place, there's no way around it, the credibility will take a blow," said Nat Keohane, president of the independent Center for Climate and Energy Solutions.

While failure to adopt legislation would not be fatal if Congress passes a bill later in November or December, the clock is ticking, Keohane said. "This is the moment to get as much as can be achieved through Congress now," he said, "because everything else is going to need to be done by regulation" that could be undone by a future Republican president.

Even as he moves to curb carbon emissions, Biden is feeling pressure from Republicans who unanimously oppose his climate and energy proposals and blame him for a sharp increase in energy prices, including

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a \$1-per gallon increase in gasoline prices since January.

"Because of Joe Biden's radical anti-energy agenda, people in every corner of this country are paying higher prices for energy," hurting struggling families, older adults and those on a fixed income, said Wyoming Sen. John Barrasso, the top Republican on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

Energy prices have surged in recent months as the economy reopens following COVID-19 shutdowns. Crude oil prices have climbed more than 60% this year amid strong demand and snarled supply chains, prompting Biden to pressure Saudi Arabia and other exporters to ramp up oil production following cuts during the pandemic.

National security adviser Jake Sullivan said there was no contradiction between Biden's climate goals and the request for more imported oil.

"This is not a light switch. We're not flipping off all use of fossil fuels in our economy overnight," Sullivan told reporters as he headed to Europe with the president. "We still have need for those fossil fuels during the transition period to make sure that our economy is working, jobs are being created, working families have their homes heated at night and so forth."

Officials "have to at once pay attention to energy supply today and work towards a net-zero future," he said.

Granholtz, appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press," said Biden is considering releasing some oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to bring prices down, but has not made a final decision.

"Let me just say ... that these rising fuel prices in fossil fuels tell us why we've got to double down on diversifying our fuel supply to go for clean," she said.

The Latest: Macron says Australia's Morrison lied to him

The Latest on the Group of 20 summit in Rome:

ROME — French President Emmanuel Macron said Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison lied to him while he was secretly negotiating a submarine deal with the United States and Britain.

Answering a reporter's question about whether he thinks Morrison lied to him, Macron replied, "I don't think, I know" he lied.

Australia last month canceled a multi-billion dollar contract to buy diesel-electric French submarines and instead decided to acquire U.S. nuclear-powered submarines. The decision was part of an Indo-Pacific pact between Australia, Britain and the U.S.

The pact, known as AUKUS, infuriated France, which recalled its ambassadors to the U.S and Australia over the lost deal.

Macron and Morrison talked on Thursday for the first time since Australia canceled the French submarine contract. They were both in Rome for the Group of 20 nations summit but did not hold a bilateral meeting.

ROME — French President Emmanuel Macron called the Group of 20 summit in Rome "a success" that delivered results, especially on climate change issues, "despite many division" between nations.

Macron said the two-day summit provided an opportunity "to revive convergence" among the world's largest economies ahead of the much larger United Nations climate conference in Glasgow, Scotland that got underway as the G-20 meeting ended on Sunday.

The French leader acknowledged that more efforts are needed to reach the goal set in the 2015 Paris climate accord of holding the global average increase in temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) over pre-industrial times.

"Now, all the work will focus on getting additional efforts from China, from other emerging countries, from Russia, in order to keep going in the right direction," Macron said.

"Indeed, we must get the G-20 economies to do more on the coal energy in their country's energy mix. That's the next step," he added. "We didn't reach it here...That was not realistic."

ROME — U.S. first lady Jill Biden toured Rome's Borghese Gallery before she says arrivederci to the Eternal City.

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Biden made an unscheduled stop Sunday at the gallery, which has an exhibit of works by British artist Damien Hirst. The museum remained open while she was led on a tour, and some tourists walked around exclaiming "first lady" after realizing who she was.

Biden left after about 40 minutes. Earlier in the day, she and other spouses of world leaders attending the Group of 20 nations summit said their goodbyes over lunch at the Capitoline Museums.

On Monday, the first lady is scheduled to visit a U.S. Defense Department school in Naples, Italy, before she returns to Washington.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is giving a mixed verdict on the climate change agreements reached at the Group of 20 summit, saying he hopes for more ambitious commitments to be made at the United Nations climate conference in Glasgow.

G-20 leaders agreed during their two-day meeting in Rome on ending financing for new overseas coal plants but did not set a specific year for achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. The Group of Seven rich democracies have set 2050 for achieving that goal, while G-20 members China, Russia and Saudi Arabia have set 2060.

"I leave Rome with my hopes unfulfilled, but at least they are not buried," Guterres tweeted. "Onwards to #COP26 in Glasgow to keep the goal of 1.5 degrees alive and to implement promises on finance and adaptation for people & planet."

Guterres told the G-20 that "greater ambition" in reducing greenhouse gas emissions was needed to put the world on a path to hold the global average temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) by the end of the century.

The G-20 acknowledged that impacts are "much lower" with 1.5 degrees Celsius but also reiterated the looser goals of the 2015 Paris climate accords, which calls for keeping the increase "well under" 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 F) while "pursuing efforts" to achieve the 1.5 degree limit.

The difference might seem slight, but the U.N.'s scientific committee has underlined that the disruption from climate effects such as rising seas and extreme weather are much less at 1.5 degrees Celsius than at 2 degrees Celsius.

ROME — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson says the key to making a breakthrough on climate change is money for developing nations to green their economies.

He said Group of 20 leaders meeting in Rome had "inched forward" on curbing global warming, but the goal of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) was in danger of slipping out of reach.

"What's the thing that's going to unlock this? Well the big solvent in so many negotiations is money," Johnson told reporters in Rome before flying to a U.N. climate conference the U.K. is hosting in Glasgow, Scotland.

The British leader said that eliminating coal power was a key to curbing emissions and that the G-20 leaders did not commit as a group to stop using coal domestically.

"What needs to happen is that the countries that really depend on coal(.)...they are going to need help, and they are going to need specific packages...in which we in the richer countries help them" with investment and technology."

The G-20 leaders also agreed to work to reach net-zero carbon emissions "by or around mid-century," language vaguer than the firm commitment to 2050 made by the Group of Seven wealthy industrialized nations.

Johnson said just 12 of the G-20 have pledged to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. China, Saudi Arabia and Russia have set 2060 as their goal for reaching carbon neutrality, and India has not set a target date.

Net zero is the level of emissions than can be absorbed by forests, oceans and abatement measures. "If Glasgow fails, then the whole thing fails," Johnson said.

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ROME — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson says the promises made in the landmark Paris climate accord are starting to sound “frankly hollow” six years later.

Johnson struck a grim note Sunday at the end of a Group of 20 summit in Rome, where leaders’ commitments to curb climate change, he said, were “drops in a rapidly warming ocean.”

“If we don’t act now, the Paris agreement will be looked at in the future not as the moment humanity opened its eyes to the problem, but the moment we flinched and turned away,” the British leader said.

The 2015 Paris accords seek to keep the rise “well below” 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) and to “pursue efforts” to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit).

Britain had hoped for a “G-20 bounce” going into the U.N. climate change conference that started Sunday in Glasgow, Scotland. But Johnson said the group of large economies needed to go much further.

ROME — Premier Mario Draghi says Italy will triple its commitment to climate financing for poor countries to \$1.4 billion a year over the next five years.

Draghi made the announcement at the end of the G-20 summit in Rome.

The money is Italy’s contribution to the \$100 billion annually that rich countries collectively have promised but not yet delivered to help vulnerable developing nations transition to low-carbon energy sources and to adapt to the effects of climate change.

According to the final summit communique, the G-20 reaffirmed past commitments to mobilize \$100 billion annually to help poorer countries cope with climate change, and committed to scaling up financing for helping them adapt.

A U.N. report issued last week estimated that it would be several more years before rich nations made good on the commitment.

ROME — Leaders of the world’s biggest economies have agreed to end public financing for coal-fired power generation abroad, but set no target for phasing out coal domestically as they wrapped up a two-day summit that laid the groundwork for the U.N. climate conference in Glasgow, Scotland.

According to their final meeting communique, Group of 20 leaders also made a compromise commitment Sunday to reach carbon neutrality “by or around mid-century.”

The Group of 20 countries represent more than three-quarters of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions. Summit host Italy had been looking for solid targets on how to reduce emissions while helping poor countries deal with the impact of rising temperatures.

Without those targets, momentum could be lost for the larger annual talks that officially opened Sunday in Glasgow and where countries from around the globe will be represented, including poor ones most vulnerable to rising seas, desertification and other effects.

According to the communique, the G-20 reaffirmed past commitments by rich countries to mobilize \$100 billion annually to help poorer countries cope with climate change, and committed to scaling up financing for helping them adapt.

ROME — U.S. President Joe Biden says a new U.S. and European Union trade agreement will crack down on “dirty steel” that produces carbon emissions and also patch up a trans-Atlantic rift over Trump-era steel and aluminum tariffs.

Biden and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said at a joint appearance during the Group of 20 summit that the agreement represented a renewed partnership on economic and environmental matters. The deal would address the excess capacity that can distort the steel market and create a framework for reducing the carbon-intensity of steel and aluminum production that contributes to the warming of the earth.

Biden said that “dirty steel” made in China would be restricted from accessing the American and European markets, though all like-minded economies could participate in the agreement.

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"By harnessing our diplomatic and economic power, we can reject the false idea that we can't grow our economy and support American workers while tackling the climate crisis," the president said.

Von der Leyen kept smiling at Biden and calling him "dear Joe" as they discussed the deal, an apparent sign that the U.S. president had made progress in repairing relations with Europe after the partnership suffered during the Trump years.

The agreement was first announced Saturday in Rome by U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan, U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai and U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo. They said the Article 232 tariffs, as they are known, would not be removed entirely but that some quantity of European steel and aluminum will be allowed to enter the U.S. tariff-free.

In return for Europe dropping its retaliatory tariffs, the U.S. would also ensure "that all steel entering the U.S. via Europe is produced entirely in Europe," Raimondo said.

ROME — French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson have met privately to try to resolve an escalating dispute over fishing in the English Channel, but the two countries appeared farther apart afterward and gave starkly differing versions of the meeting's outcome.

The post-Brexit spat over the granting of licenses to fish in Britain's coastal waters threatens to escalate within days into a damaging French blockade of British boats.

After the 30-minute meeting between Macron and Johnson on the fringes of a Group of 20 summit in Rome, a French top official said both leaders agreed Sunday there was a need to talk to each other "in a situation of important tensions." He said measures need to be taken "as soon as possible" to get to a de-escalation.

Britain, however, denied the leaders had agreed to take steps to de-escalate the spat, saying it was entirely up to France to calm the waters.

The U.K. government said in a statement that during the meeting, Johnson "reiterated his deep concern" over France's rhetoric and "expressed his hope that the French government would de-escalate."

Britain's exit from the economic rules of the 27-nation bloc at the start of this year means the U.K. now controls who fishes in its waters. Britain says it has granted 98% of applications from EU vessels, and now the dispute comes down to just a few dozen French boats with insufficient paperwork.

France claims some vessels have been denied permits to fish in waters where they have long sailed. French Minister for European Affairs Clement Beaune on Sunday accused Britain of "targeting" France in a "political choice" and said Britain had breached the Brexit deal agreed by both sides.

ROME — President Joe Biden has told Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan that their countries must better manage disagreements after the partnership between NATO allies was tested by Turkey's threat to no longer recognize the U.S. envoy and its purchase of a Russian missile defense system.

Biden and Erdogan met for nearly an hour of closed-door talks while the two leaders were in Rome for the Group of 20 summit. Turkey's role as a NATO ally has come under sharp scrutiny in recent weeks.

During Sunday's meeting, Biden reaffirmed Turkey's importance as a NATO ally as well as its defense partnership with the U.S., but raised with Erdogan concerns Turkey's possession of the Russian S-400 missile system, the White House said in a statement afterward.

The Turkish president has said he's open to buying a second Russian missile system even though Turkey was kicked out of a U.S. program to buy F-35 combat planes and defense officials were sanctioned after it bought the Russian-made S-400 system. The U.S. strongly objects to the use of Russian systems within the NATO alliance and says it poses a threat to the F-35s.

Erdogan's office said in a statement that the meeting with Biden was held in a "positive atmosphere" in which the leaders expressed the "joint will to further strengthen and improve Turkey-U.S. relations and agreed to establish a common mechanism accordingly."

The statement also said there was "satisfaction with the mutual steps taken on climate change."

ROME — Prince Charles has urged world leaders to heed the "despairing voices" of young people who

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will bear the brunt of climate change.

The heir to the British throne said a United Nations climate summit that opens Sunday in Glasgow, Scotland, "literally is the last-chance saloon" for the Earth.

Charles told Group of 20 leaders meeting in Rome that they have an "overwhelming responsibility to generations yet unborn."

"It is impossible not to hear the despairing voices of young people who see you as the stewards of the planet, holding the viability of their future in your hands," he said.

Charles, a longtime champion of environmentalism, said he was "at last sensing a change in attitudes and the build-up of positive momentum" on climate change. He said governments must play a leading role, but that the private sector "holds the ultimate key to the solutions we seek."

On Monday, Charles is due to welcome leaders to COP26 in Glasgow. His 95-year-old mother Queen Elizabeth II was due to attend but has been advised to rest by her doctors.

ROME — Leaders of the world's biggest economies are taking in the sights in the Eternal City, visiting Rome's Trevi Fountain before getting back to work hammering out a final statement on climate change.

As the water gurgled behind them, the Group of 20 leaders each tossed a coin into the enormous Baroque-style fountain that has been the backdrop of many a film, most famously Fellini's "La Dolce Vita."

Legend has it that if you throw a coin into the fountain, you'll return to Rome. Not all members of the G-20 participated in the Sunday coin toss; notably absent was U.S. President Joe Biden.

The fountain, which draws its source from Rome's ancient aqueducts, went through various phases of design before its current version was inaugurated in the mid-1700s. It depicts Neptune, the god of the sea, taming the waters. Built into a wall of the Palazzo Poli behind it, the fountain draws its name from its location at the confluence of three streets, or "tre vie," in Rome's historic center.

The coins are regularly scooped out of the travertine basin of the fountain and given to charity.

'Last, best hope:' Leaders launch crucial UN climate summit

By FRANK JORDANS and ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

GLASGOW, Scotland (AP) — A crucial U.N. climate summit opened Sunday amid papal appeals for prayers and activists' demands for action, kicking off two weeks of intense diplomatic negotiations by almost 200 countries aimed at slowing intensifying global warming and adapting to the climate damage already underway.

As U.N. officials gaveled the climate summit to its formal opening in Glasgow, the heads of the world's leading economies at the close of their own separate talks in Italy made pledges including stopping international financing of dirty-burning coal-fired power plants by next year. But much of the agreement was vague and not the major push some had been hoping for to give momentum to the climate summit.

Government leaders face two choices in Glasgow, Patricia Espinosa, head of the U.N. climate office, declared at the summit's opening: They can sharply cut greenhouse gas emissions and help communities and countries survive what is becoming a hotter, harsher world, Espinosa said. "Or we accept that humanity faces a bleak future on this planet."

"It is for these reasons and more that we must make progress here in Glasgow," Espinosa said. "We must make it a success."

India Logan-Riley, an Indigenous climate activist from New Zealand, had a more blunt message for negotiators and world leaders at the summit's opening ceremony.

"Get in line, or get out of the way," Logan-Riley said.

But G-20 leaders offered more vague pledges than commitments of firm action, saying they would seek carbon neutrality "by or around mid-century." They also agreed to end public financing for coal-fired power generation abroad, but set no target for phasing out coal domestically — a clear nod to China and India.

The G-20 countries represent more than three-quarters of the world's climate-damaging emissions and G-20 host Italy and Britain, which is hosting the Glasgow conference, had looked for more ambitious tar-

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gets coming out of Rome.

But major polluters including China and Russia had already made clear they had no immediate intention of following U.S. and European pledges to zero out all fossil-fuel pollution by 2050. Russia said on Sunday that it was sticking to its target of 2060.

Speaking to reporters before leaving Rome, U.S. President Joe Biden called it "disappointing" that G-20 members Russia and China "basically didn't show up" with commitments to address the scourge of climate change ahead of the U.N. climate summit.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson struck a grim tone, saying G-20 leaders "inched forward" on curbing global warming, but the goal of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) -- struck in a landmark deal at the end of the 2015 Paris climate accord -- was in danger of slipping out of reach.

"If Glasgow fails then the whole thing fails," Johnson told reporters in Rome. Before leaving Rome, U.S.

Some observers said the G-20 pledges were far from enough.

"This weak statement from the G-20 is what happens when developing countries who are bearing the full force of the climate crisis are shut out of the room," said Mohamed Adow, director of Power Shift Africa. "The world's biggest economies comprehensively failed to put climate change on the top of the agenda ahead of COP26 in Glasgow."

While the opening ceremony in Glasgow formally kicked off the talks, known as COP26, the more anticipated launch comes Monday, when leaders from around the world will gather to lay out their countries' efforts to curb emissions from burning coal, gas and oil and deal with the mounting damage from climate change.

The leaders of two of the top climate-polluting nations - China and Russia — were not expected to attend the summit, though seniors officials from those countries planned to participate. Biden, whose country is the world's biggest climate polluter after China, the summit comes at a time when division within his own Democratic party is forcing him to scale back ambitious climate efforts.

At the Vatican Sunday, Pope Francis urged the crowds gathered in St. Peter's Square: "Let us pray so that the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor" is heard by summit participants.

Negotiators will push nations to ratchet up their efforts to keep global temperatures from rising by more than 1.5 degrees Celsius this century compared with pre-industrial times.

The climate summit remains "our last, best hope to keep 1.5 in reach," said Alok Sharma, the British government minister chairing climate talks.

Scientists say the chances of meeting that goal are slowly slipping away. The world has already warmed by more than 1.1C and current projections based on planned emissions cuts over the next decade are for it to hit 2.7C by the year 2100.

The amount of energy unleashed by such planetary warming would melt much of the planet's ice, raise global sea levels and greatly increase the likelihood and intensity of extreme weather, experts say.

U.S. climate envoy John Kerry warned last week of the dramatic impacts that exceeding the 2015 Paris accord's goal will have on nature and people, but expressed optimism that the world is heading in the right direction.

Sharma noted that China, the world's biggest emitter of greenhouse gases, had just raised its climate targets somewhat.

"But of course we expected more," Sharma told the BBC earlier Sunday.

India, the world's third biggest emitter, has yet to follow China, the U.S. and the European Union in setting a target for reaching 'net zero' emissions. Negotiators are hoping India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi will announce such a goal in Glasgow.

Some of the issues being discussed during the talks have been on the agenda for decades, including how rich countries can help poor nations tackle emissions and adapt to a hotter world. The slow pace of action has angered many environmental campaigners, who are expected to stage loud and creative protests during the summit.

Jill Lawless in Rome, Ellen Knickmeyer and Seth Borenstein in Glasgow and Silvia Hui in London contrib-

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uted to this report.

Follow AP's coverage of the U.N. climate talks at: <http://apnews.com/hub/climate>

AP Top 25: Michigan St up to 5; Wake in top 10 for 1st time

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Football Writer

Michigan State moved up to No. 5 in The Associated Press college football poll and Wake Forest became a top-10 team on Sunday for the first time in school history.

Georgia is a unanimous No. 1 for the fourth straight week in the AP Top 25 presented by Regions Bank. The rest of the top four was unchanged from last week, with Cincinnati at No. 2, Alabama at No. 3 and Oklahoma at No. 4.

Star running back Kenneth Walker and the Spartans jumped three spots by beating Michigan in the weekend's biggest game. The last time Michigan State broke into the top five was 2015 when the Spartans made the College Football Playoff.

The first CFP selection committee rankings of the season will be released Tuesday night.

In the AP poll, Ohio State slipped a spot to No. 6 despite holding off Penn State and Oregon was No. 7. No. 8 Notre Dame, Michigan and Wake Forest rounded out the top 10.

POLL POINTS

The Demon Deacons have their best ranking in program history, topping the No. 11 they reached in 1947. Wake Forest had been the only team in a Power Five conference that had never been ranked in the top 10.

The Demon Deacons reached another first on Saturday, improving to 8-0 with a victory against Duke.

IN

— No. 20 Houston is ranked for the first time under coach Dana Holgorsen after handing SMU its first loss of the season. The last time the Cougars were in the Top 25 was 2018.

Houston is the 45th different team to appear in the Top 25 this season.

— No. 24 Louisiana-Lafayette is back in the Top 25 after being in the preseason poll and falling out after losing its opening game.

— No. 25 Fresno State also returned to the rankings after handing San Diego State its first defeat in a crucial Mountain West game.

OUT

— Pittsburgh dropped from No. 17 to out after losing at home to Miami.

— Iowa State is out again after losing at West Virginia. The Cyclones jumped back into the rankings last week, but it turned out to be a brief stay.

— San Diego State fell out after a four-week run.

CONFERENCE CALL

Two Power Five leagues, the Atlantic Coast Conference and Pac-12, have just one ranked team while two from the Group of Five, the American Athletic Conference (three) and Sun Belt (two), have multiple teams ranked.

SEC — 6 (Nos. 1, 3, 12, 13, 15, 18).

Big Ten — 5 (Nos. 5, 6, 9, 19, 22).

Big 12 — 3 (Nos. 4, 11, 14).

American — 3 (Nos. 2, 20, 23).

Sun Belt — 2 (Nos. 21, 24).

Mountain West — 1 (No. 25).

ACC — 1 (No. 10).

C-USA — 1 (No. 16).

Pac-12 — 1 (No. 7).

Independents — 2 (Nos. 8, 17).

RANKED vs. RANKED

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No. 12 Auburn at No. 13 Texas A&M. Third time the Tigers and Aggies have met while both are ranked since A&M joined the SEC in 2011.

This story has been corrected to show that Alabama is No. 3 and Oklahoma is No. 4, not the other way around.

Follow Ralph D. Russo at <https://twitter.com/ralphDrussoAP> and listen at <http://www.appodcasts.com>

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

Plan to replace Minneapolis PD worries many Black residents

By MOHAMED IBRAHIM and AMY FORLITI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Marques Armstrong had just got out of the shower one morning this fall when he heard gunshots that seemed to come from his Minneapolis backyard. After ducking, he ran upstairs to check on his wife and daughter, then looked out to see a car speed away.

It was a depressingly routine occurrence on the city's predominantly Black north side that reaffirmed Armstrong's staunch opposition to a proposal on Tuesday's ballot to replace the city's police department — and a required minimum number of officers — with a new Department of Public Safety.

"Everybody says we want the police to be held accountable and we want fair policing. No one has said we need to get rid of the police," said Armstrong, a Black activist who owns a mental health practice and a clothing store. "There needs to be a huge overhaul from the ground up, but we need some form of community safety because over here shots are ringing out day and night."

The ballot proposal that goes to voters Tuesday has roots in the abolish-the-police movement that erupted after George Floyd was killed by a Minneapolis police officer last year. It has drawn strong support from younger Black activists who were mobilized by Floyd's death, as well as from some Black and white residents across this liberal city.

Many people of color who live in the city's highest-crime areas say they fear a steep drop in the number of police officers will leave them more vulnerable amid a dramatic spike in violent crime.

The debate over racial justice in policing that erupted after Floyd's death has brought national attention to Tuesday's vote, as well as a river of out-of-state money seeking to influence an outcome that might shape change elsewhere, too.

The campaign has been bitter. Opponents have attacked the ballot question as vague, with no concrete plan for what comes after passage. Supporters say opponents are overblowing fears about a falloff in police presence — and the prospect that the city's popular Black police chief, Medaria Arradondo, will quit if the initiative passes. Mayor Jacob Frey, who opposes the ballot question, is facing a tough reelection fight, with his two top opponents urging their supporters to leave him off their ballots in the city's ranked-choice voting system.

Arradondo, the city's first Black chief, recently urged voters to reject the proposal after previously saying that an element that would give City Council members more oversight of policing would be "wholly unbearable." He has sidestepped questions about whether he would remain if it passes.

Raeisha Williams, an activist with Guns Down Love Up, said she believes the plan's supporters are mainly white residents who haven't experienced police misconduct or the violence that Black residents are seeing on the north side. Her brother, Tyrone, died in a shooting there in 2018.

"It's like our voices are not heard — they are hijacking a movement yet again and making it their own," said Williams, who is Black.

JaNaé Bates, one of the young, Black activists leading the movement to pass the ballot proposal, said her group worked hard to take all voices into account. Bates said more than 1,400 of the roughly 20,000 signatures on the petitions to get the measure on the ballot came from north side residents.

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Bates said their effort to inform people about what the initiative would do involved knocking on the doors of north Minneapolis homes to hear the voices of those most affected by public safety issues.

"We've been extremely intentional because the residents of these neighborhoods are tired of accepting the status quo, both around police brutality and community violence," Bates said.

Steve Fletcher, a white City Council member who supports replacing the police department, said there's both support and opposition to the plan from all areas of the city.

"I think a lot of people are just recognizing that we cannot be the city that killed George Floyd and didn't grow or change," he said.

The ballot question calls for a new Department of Public Safety to take "a comprehensive public health approach to the delivery of functions" that would be determined by the mayor and City Council. Fletcher and other supporters argue it's a chance to reimagine what public safety can be and how money gets spent. A frequent example from supporters is funding programs that don't send armed officers to call on people in crisis.

"Nobody is proposing to reduce our investment in public safety," Fletcher said. "We are proposing to change the way that we make those investments, and ultimately I think in the end, investing more in public safety than we ever have."

The change is being proposed as violent crime in the city is spiking. There have been roughly 80 homicides in Minneapolis so far this year – 35 on the north side, according to online police department crime data. Three victims were children, including one who was shot while jumping on a trampoline at a birthday party. The city could near the record 97 homicides of 1995, when it drew the nickname "Murderapolis."

That trend is compounded by the fact the city is down about 300 officers from its authorized force of 888, partly due to officers claiming post-traumatic stress disorder after Floyd's death and the unrest in the city that followed.

Jerome Rankine, a Black resident in the Kingfield neighborhood on the city's more affluent southwest side, strongly backs the amendment. Rankine, who also sits on his neighborhood association board, says dropping the city's requirement for a minimum number of officers would open the way to innovative ideas to change policing.

"Unfortunately, the way that our city charter is set up, we lack the power to turn those ideas into reality," he said. "I'm voting yes because a yes vote is a vote for taking the barrier to change out of the equation and taking these imaginative ideas of how our policing system can be better."

Rankine's board last week endorsed a vote in support of the public safety question. He said his own neighborhood is divided on the question, and that's fine: "There are no monoliths that cut cleanly across lines, there's no opinion that cuts cleanly across lines of race," he said.

"If we are in a movement against police brutality then I feel like all should be welcome in that movement," he said. "We have seen Minneapolis police take lives over the last several years and they've taken the lives of all races and backgrounds, so I feel like there should be no barriers to entry when it comes to being part of the movement."

Bishop Divar Kemp of New Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church, back on the city's north side, said the ballot question comes up every day at his church. He said the police department needs to be changed, but the current proposal is dangerous.

"We need the police -- there's no other way I can say that," he said.

Mohamed Ibrahim is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

US, EU say deal on steel tariffs will help on climate change

By ZEKE MILLER and JOSH BOAK Associated Press

ROME (AP) — President Joe Biden said Sunday a new U.S. and European Union trade agreement would crack down on "dirty steel" that produces carbon emissions that are blamed for climate change and also

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patch up a trans-Atlantic rift over Trump-era steel and aluminum tariffs.

Biden and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said at a joint appearance during the Group of 20 summit that the agreement represented a renewed partnership on economic and environmental matters. The deal resolving the trade dispute would address the excess capacity that can distort the steel market and create a framework for reducing the carbon-intensity of steel and aluminum production that contributes to the warming of the earth.

The U.S. president said "dirty steel" made in China would be restricted from accessing their markets, though all like-minded economies could participate in the agreement.

"By harnessing our diplomatic and economic power, we can reject the false idea that we can't grow our economy and support American workers while tackling the climate crisis," Biden said, who has been pushing the U.S. to aggressively address the threat posed by climate change. Biden is also scheduled to attend a major U.N. climate conference this week in Glasgow, Scotland.

Von der Leyen kept smiling at Biden and calling him "dear Joe" as they discussed the deal, an apparent sign that the U.S. president had made progress in repairing relations with Europe after the partnership suffered during the Trump years.

"It will be a major step forward in achieving climate neutrality and it will ensure a level playing field," she said, adding that the agreement was part of a renewed, forward-looking agenda with the U.S.

The agreement was first announced Saturday in Rome by U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan, U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai and U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo. They said the Article 232 tariffs, as they are known, would not be removed entirely but that some quantity of European steel and aluminum will be allowed to enter the U.S. tariff-free.

In return for Europe dropping its retaliatory tariffs, the U.S. would also ensure "that all steel entering the U.S. via Europe is produced entirely in Europe," Raimondo said.

The easing of the tariffs is a key step in unwinding one of Donald Trump's legacies as president as Biden has tried to reset U.S. relations with Europe.

The Trump administration had placed taxes on EU steel and aluminum in 2018, claiming the foreign products made by American allies were a threat to U.S. national security.

Europeans and other allies were outraged by Trump's use of the Article 232 section of U.S. trade law to justify the tariffs, leading many to impose counter-tariffs on U.S.-made motorcycles, bourbon, peanut butter and jeans and hundreds of other items.

The back-and-forth hurt European producers and raised steel costs for American companies. The tariffs also did not achieve Trump's stated goal of creating jobs at steel mills. The Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that jobs in the manufacturing of primary metals did rise slightly, to as much as 389,100 in 2019. But mills shed workers during the pandemic, and employment in the sector is roughly half of what it was in 1990.

The European Union took steps in May to improve relations. On some retaliatory tariffs, the EU temporarily suspended planned increases. This meant that American whiskey faced a 25% tax in Europe, instead of a planned 50% tax. The two sides faced a December deadline to avoid the higher tax rate.

The summit's host, Italian Premier Mario Draghi, in a statement Saturday night expressed "great satisfaction" for the tariff accord. The decision "confirms the further reinforcement underway of the already close trans-Atlantic relations and the progressive overcoming of the protectionism of the last years," he said.

The announcement also was welcomed by Chris Swonger, president and CEO of Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, after what he called "three very difficult years of sagging American whiskey exports."

"Lifting this tariff burden on American whiskeys not only boosts U.S. distillers and farmers, it also supports the recovery of EU restaurants, bars and distilleries hit hard by the pandemic," Swonger said.

Are Arab Americans people of color? Mayor vote raises issue

By STEVE LeBLANC Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Are Arab Americans people of color?

The question has been bubbling beneath the surface of Boston's historic mayor's race, where one of

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the two candidates, Annissa Essaibi George, has found herself challenged on the campaign trail about her decision to identify as one.

On Tuesday, Essaibi George faces off against fellow Boston City Councilor and Democrat Michelle Wu, a daughter of Taiwanese immigrants. Whoever wins will be the first woman and first person of color elected to the city's top political office.

Essaibi George, who describes herself as Polish-Arab American, acknowledges she hasn't always identified as a person of color — in part because Arab Americans don't fit neatly into the boxes Americans are typically asked to check off on official forms, including on the U.S. Census.

"We have found ourselves in this weird position where there isn't a place for us to identify as Arab," Essaibi George said in a recent interview on GBH News. "It's unfortunate that Arabs don't have that proverbial box to check and it is important for the Arab community to be counted, to be seen, to be heard and to be recognized."

She has identified as a person of color during her years in elected office, Essaibi George said.

Essaibi George has frequently talked about the obstacles faced by her father, a Muslim immigrant from Tunisia, and the challenges he believed she would also face as his daughter. Her mother, a Catholic, immigrated from Poland.

In a city like Boston with its long history of electing white men, particularly of Irish and Italian descent, a girl with an Arab name could never be successful in politics, her father warned, with no chance of becoming mayor.

But the 47-year-old Essaibi George, a lifelong Boston resident and former public school teacher, went on to win an at-large seat on the Boston City Council in 2015 and came in second in a September preliminary election, setting up the head-to-head match with Wu, who won the preliminary.

Although she identifies as a person of color, Essaibi George acknowledges her physical presence — including a heavy Boston accent — allows her a certain amount of privilege as "a woman who can maneuver in different rooms in different spaces."

She has also said that while her father's family came from North Africa, she doesn't consider herself African American, a term meant to refer to Black people.

The question of whether Arab Americans should identify as people of color extends to the Arab American community itself.

Nuha E. Muntasser, who describes herself as an Muslim Arab American or Muslim Libyan American, said she cringes whenever she has to check the box for "white" instead of being given the option of identifying as North African or Middle Eastern.

"I do not identify as white and it's frustrating when I have to identify as that," she said.

The choice is all the more discouraging because many Arab Americans don't share the same experience as white Americans, she said. That sense of otherness can be even more pronounced among Arab or Muslim American women who wear the hijab, she said.

"People like me, we have to prove our Americanness," said the 26-year-old, who lives in Sudbury, 45 miles west of Boston, and serves on the town's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee.

Muntasser also hesitates to call herself a person of color. "Because I understand the difference of what Black women experience in this country, I am not comfortable with saying I am a person of color," she said.

The lack of a box to check for Arab Americans can also limit economic opportunities, said former Cambridge City Councilor Nadeem Mazen, an Arab American and an American Muslim.

That's particularly relevant when dealing with possible business contracts, especially with the federal government.

"When you're a minority- or veteran- or women-owned business, that's important," Mazen said. "People make a lot of assumptions about which boxes you can check."

Mazen, who lives in Cambridge, said he doesn't look like a Black person but also isn't seen as white, occupying what he described as a kind of moving window.

"I don't go around saying I'm a person of color or not a person of color, but I know someone like me faces a lot more discrimination than your average upper class white Cambridge resident," Mazen said.

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A pivotal moment in the trajectory of the lives of many Arab Americans came with the Sept. 11 attacks, with many still feeling singled out and under suspicion 20 years later.

A poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research conducted ahead of this year's 9/11 anniversary found that 53% of Americans have unfavorable views toward Islam, compared with 42% who have favorable ones.

Mohammed Missouri, 38, executive director of Massachusetts-based Jetpac, a nonprofit seeking to build political power among American Muslims, said earlier generations of Arab Americans tended to focus on assimilation rather than leaning into their identity.

"With younger people in the Arab American community, you're seeing people whose goal is to build actual power and not just power for themselves but for the community at large," said Missouri, an Arab American. "Younger Arab Americans are very proud of their heritage and see that as integral to their identity as Americans."

Missouri also said that while he's forced to check "white" on Census forms — defined as "all individuals who identify with one or more nationalities or ethnic groups originating in Europe, the Middle East or North Africa" — he doesn't consider himself white.

Whether Arab Americans fall into the broader category as persons of color is still a matter of debate within the community he said, adding that some "white-passing Arab Americans" prefer to identify as white.

"It's going to be a fluid conversation we're going to keep having," he said.

The city's previous elected mayor — Democrat Marty Walsh — stepped down to become U.S. Secretary of Labor under President Joe Biden.

Walsh was replaced on an acting basis by Kim Janey, sworn in March 24 as Boston's first female and first Black mayor.

Brazil experiments with body cams to reduce deaths by police

By MAURICIO SAVARESE and DIANE JEANTET Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — For years, Carlos Minc, a Rio de Janeiro state lawmaker, pushed to make body cameras mandatory in all law enforcement agencies. And for years, his proposal languished in Rio's legislature.

Then came the city's deadliest police operation. On May 6, hundreds of police with armored vehicles stormed the working-class Jacarezinho neighborhood at dawn, ostensibly to capture suspected criminals. Instead, they left behind 28 corpses, all of them local residents.

Even in a city used to violent policing, the episode was stunning. Minc says the bloodshed helped muster support to pass the bill just days later.

The state has accepted tender for 22,000 cameras, though it's not yet clear when officers in Rio will start to use them.

But Brazil's most populous state, Sao Paulo, has already begun experimenting with body cams. Early, limited data has offered some hints that they might reduce violence by police, despite mixed findings in other countries that have used them.

Minc, though, is convinced: "If the law for cameras on uniforms had already come into effect, we wouldn't have had the Jacarezinho massacre," he told The Associated Press.

For years, Brazilian state authorities have considered making law officers wear body cameras, sometimes trying small-scale initiatives, and they are closely watching the recent broad implementation in Sao Paulo.

Brazil as a whole has a long history of police violence. Last year, more than 6,400 people died at the hands of police officers on and off duty, according to the Brazilian Forum of Public Safety, an independent organization that tracks national crime statistics. That's more than 17 per day, and the most since the group started monitoring in 2013.

But many Brazilians are more worried about crime itself: Law and order played a central role in the last presidential election, when victorious candidate Jair Bolsonaro pledged to give cops carte blanche to use lethal force.

The governors-elect of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo made similar overtures; the former famously said

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police will shoot criminals "in their little heads."

Still, the adoption of body cameras is "an indication that there is a greater openness to talk about the problem of police violence," said David Marques, a project coordinator at the Forum of Public Safety.

In June, 3,000 Sao Paulo state police officers began using body cameras in 18 of its 120 battalions. Melina Risso, a program director at the Rio-based security think tank Igarape Institute, said some of the battalions chosen have long histories of violence.

Internal police data obtained by The Associated Press show those 18 battalions were involved in 10 deaths over the following four months, down from 73 in the same period of 2020. The biggest drop was in an elite squad that conducts raids on suspects. Its officers were involved in four deaths from June to September, down from 23 in 2020.

The brief timeframe makes it hard to draw conclusions, particularly since overall police-involved deaths fell in the state, though much less sharply.

The program aims to ramp up to 10,000 cameras for Sao Paulo's 80,000-strong force by June.

Col. Robson Cabanas, a military police officer who coordinates the program, said the goal isn't only to reduce police brutality or burnish the force's image; he also hopes the cameras will produce evidence.

"Think of domestic violence, a crime that is hard to prove. Policemen at the scene will see the child crying, the house turned upside down, sometimes they will still see an angry husband. All of that could go to court as evidence," Cabanas said at police headquarters. "A drunk person accusing an officer of being violent will be checked against the images. And we will discipline those who make mistakes."

In a recent body cam video Sao Paulo police posted to their official YouTube account, a man arrested after a nighttime chase admits he robbed someone and fired several shots toward pursuing officers.

Sao Paulo's experiment has drawn expressions of interest from other forces in Latin America's largest nation, including those from Rio and Brasilia.

But as in the U.S., the program has caused some unease among rank-and-file officers, many of whom are worried about the effect of non-stop recordings.

A Sao Paulo officer with 20 years experience told the AP that some police held back from approaching suspects, fearing videos could make them look bad. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to journalists.

Studies in the U.S., Denmark and other countries have produced mixed findings on whether they reduce officers' use of force. Public security experts in Brazil have also expressed skepticism that technology alone can remedy police violence.

Rafael Alcadipani, a public security specialist at the Getulio Vargas Foundation, said other reforms have helped reduce police killings, including rigorous internal investigations, use of tasers rather than guns and punishment of violent officers.

"In Sao Paulo, police began a complex process, on several fronts, seeking to reduce lethality in raids. For example, every time a policeman kills a person, that operation is reviewed and the commanders have to respond in a council," Alcadipani said.

A change in mentality must also occur, experts say.

In Brazil, "there is this idea that public safety is a confrontation, a war, not a social right for everyone," said Felipe Angeli, a public security expert at the Sao Paulo-based prevention group Sou da Paz.

Angeli noted that the emblem of an elite Rio police force is a skull with an embedded dagger and crossed pistols. The armored vehicles employed for raids are called "big skulls."

Silvia Ramos, coordinator of the Network of Security Observatories, expressed doubt the cameras will reduce police killings. Her network is comprised of watchdog groups in seven states, including Sao Paulo and Rio.

"In Jacarezinho," Ramos said, "police removed the bodies from the places where they died, the authorities gave full support to the raid and ordered a (five)-year seal on the investigations.

"The cameras, by magic, wouldn't have produced a change in the officers' attitudes."

___ Jeantet reported from Rio de Janeiro. Associated Press writer Marcelo Silva de Sousa contributed from Rio.

With no sign of eruption's end, ash blankets La Palma island

By EMILIO MORENATTI and ARITZ PARRA Associated Press

LOS LLANOS DE ARIDANE, Canary Islands (AP) — A volcano on the Spanish island of La Palma that has been erupting for six weeks spewed greater quantities of ash from its main mouth Sunday, a day after producing its strongest earthquake to date.

Lava flows descending toward the Atlantic Ocean from a volcanic ridge have covered 970 hectares (2,400 acres) of land since the eruption began on Sept. 19, data from the European Union's satellite monitoring service, showed. On the way down the slope, the molten rock has destroyed more than 2,000 buildings and forced the evacuation of over 7,000 people.

But authorities in the Canary Islands, of which La Palma is part, have reported no injuries caused by contact with lava or from inhaling the toxic gases that often accompany the volcanic activity.

Experts said that predicting when the eruption will end is difficult because lava, ash and gases emerging to the surface are a reflection of complex geological activity happening deep down the earth and far from the reach of currently available technology.

The Canary Islands, in particular, "are closely connected to thermal anomalies that go all the way to the core of the earth," said Cornell University geochemist Esteban Gazel, who has been collecting samples from the Cumbre Vieja volcano.

"It's like a patient. You can monitor how it evolves, but saying exactly when it will die is extremely difficult," Gazel said. "It's a process that is connected to so many other dimensions of the inside of the planet."

Signs monitored by scientists —soil deformation, sulfur dioxide emissions and seismic activity— remained robust in Cumbre Vieja. The Spanish Geographic Institute, or IGN, said that a magnitude 5 quake in the early hours of Saturday was not just felt on La Palma, but also in La Gomera, a neighboring island on the western end of the Canary Islands archipelago.

IGN said the ash column towering above the volcano reached an altitude of 4.5 kilometers (15,000 feet) on Sunday before heavier wind scattered it. Many nearby towns and a telescope base further north that sits on a mountain at 2,400 meters above sea level (7,800 feet) were covered in a thick layer of ash.

The eruption has also turned the island into a tourist attraction, especially as many Spaniards prepared to mark All Saints Day, a Catholic festivity that honors the dead, on Monday.

Local authorities said some 10,000 visitors were expected over the long weekend and 90% of the accommodations on La Palma were fully booked. A shuttle bus service for tourists wanting a glimpse of the volcano was established to keep private cars off the main roads so emergency services could work undisturbed.

Parra reported from Madrid.

Miami mayor seeks 2nd term as he raises national profile

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON The Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Miami Mayor Francis Suarez is hoping to easily secure a second term Tuesday, with his reelection campaign showing he can raise millions as he seeks to elevate his profile at a national level.

Suarez, 44, gained name recognition for launching an effort to lure technology investors to the city at the beginning of the year, meeting with PayPal founder Peter Thiel, tech magnate Marcelo Claure and engaging on Twitter with Tesla CEO Elon Musk, among other well-known entrepreneurs.

Analysts say Suarez was astute to seize a moment when some investors were looking to move to South Florida for tax reasons and looser COVID-19 restrictions during the pandemic. The mayor has been more than willing to assist. In December, when someone tweeted about moving Silicon Valley to Miami, Suarez replied, "How can I help?"

The effect his tech push has had on migration and job creation is still unclear as census numbers do not yet include data for 2021.

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But private equity firm Blackstone announced last fall that it would create a new office in downtown Miami to expand tech capabilities. Japan's Softbank Group — an early investor in Alibaba — is also looking to grow its presence in the city, and has invested \$250 million in Miami startups. And venture capital firm Founders Fund has already set up shop in the trendy neighborhood of Wynwood.

Miami hosted a Bitcoin conference earlier this year, and started accepting funds generated through a cryptocurrency named MiamiCoin. Its contributions so far total about \$17 million, but the money has not been spent.

Former Twitter Chief Operating Officer Adam Bain on Wednesday tweeted that he traveled to Miami for a meeting and to check out the "startup scene."

"What I thought was hype is actually real," he wrote. "People in Miami exude an overwhelming sense of optimism right now. It's electric! Optimism is a foundation of real technological progress."

The Miami mayoral race is nonpartisan, but if Suarez's ambitions materialize, he could soon transition to partisan contests.

Although he's registered as a Republican, he was critical of former President Donald Trump and pushed back against Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' COVID-19 actions, including the governor's decision to prevent local communities from instituting mask mandates. Suarez has said he hopes the party picks more people "that unify us, not divide us."

Suarez is also not ruling out White House aspirations. He says the pandemic and social media elevated the roles and profile of "national mayors," making them stronger contenders for the presidency. Next year, Suarez will become president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, giving him a bigger platform.

In April, Suarez met with former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, who called him a "rock star mayor" in one of the episodes of his YouTube vlog series "Cafecito Talks." Haley served as U.N. ambassador under Trump, and has contemplated running for president, creating speculation Suarez could be part of her ticket.

"He is viewed as different with all the talk about business, tech and Bitcoin," said Dario Moreno, a political science professor at Florida International University. "It makes it attractive to young people."

Suarez is a real estate attorney and son of Miami's first Cuban-born mayor. When he launched his first mayoral bid back in 2013, he said he wanted to improve the reputation of the Miami government, which has long been mocked as dysfunctional.

But just like his predecessors, the mayor has struggled to shake off that image. Earlier this year he tapped Houston's police chief to lead the Miami police department and called him the "Tom Brady" and "Michael Jordan" of chiefs. Chief Art Acevedo's tenure was short after he was fired due to clashes with politicians and the police union that aired publicly in long commission meetings.

"Sometimes things don't work out," Suarez said of the firing. "Part of leadership is also accepting that and turning the page."

Back in 2017, when the previous mayor left office due to term limits, Suarez won with 86% of the votes. He is hoping for a similar outcome this time.

This year, he has four challengers who have not held office. They include Max Martínez, who ran a digital marketing company; Marie Exantus, who has worked in marketing and at a call center and Frank Pichel, a former police officer turned private investigator who was arrested Oct. 1 on charges he impersonated law enforcement.

A fourth candidate had only raised \$150, and another challenger was disqualified for living outside the city limits.

Suarez and his political action committee have raised more than \$5 million, compared to \$28,000 raised by his contenders combined.

The mayor says they will probably end with \$5 million unspent that he can use for the future.

"We'll see where it goes," he said.

Decades later, a new look at Black Panthers and their legacy

By AARON MORRISON Associated Press

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OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — It once would have been unthinkable for a city to erect a monument to Huey P. Newton.

The Black Panther Party co-founder was feared and hated by many Americans, and party members were dismissed as racist, gun-toting militants — Black avengers who believed violence was as American as cherry pie.

But the unthinkable has happened — in Oakland, the city of the party's founding 55 years ago. In an unrelenting deluge on an October Sunday, Newton's widow Fredrika and sculptor Dana King unveiled a bronze bust of Newton.

It is true that aside from Oakland, where the Panthers were born and Newton was murdered, there are few places where such a bust would be welcome; there is probably no other place in the world that could place his statue at an intersection of Dr. Huey P. Newton Way and Mandela Parkway, named for the late South African revolutionary Nelson Mandela.

And it would be wrong to suggest that the Panthers are enjoying a resurgence, or even a moment; the party disbanded almost 40 years ago.

But it is also true that in 2021, some activists and historians are taking another look at the legacy of the Panthers through a less-freighted lens. The Panthers, they say, were a harbinger of today's identity politics, helped shape progressivism, and have served as grandfathers and grandmothers to the Black Lives Matter movement.

"You have the detractors who only see (the Panthers) as a militia, and then you have the folks who are actually happy for that because the times required it," said Robyn Spencer, an associate professor of history at Lehman College in New York City.

She said the Panthers and many of their contemporaries set out an agenda with a clarity that is rare even today.

"We have to have a critical perspective on what these organizations did," she said. "It's not that we have to defend them because they were attacked so viciously by the state. This moment that we're in now requires us to be clear politically, to try and cut through the weeds, and to not be nostalgic."

Much of the party's story has often been overshadowed by its association with violence. The Black Panther Party has been seen as an organization that sought war with police, a group doomed by infighting, infiltration and corruption among its leaders.

Yet over its 15 years of operation, the party and its politics were a training ground and an inspiration for a generation of Black, Latino, Asian, Native American and white people who hold public office or public platforms today. Some of the party's biggest accomplishments, like its community service programs, helped transform public education and health care.

Fredrika Newton, who co-founded the Dr. Huey P. Newton Foundation in Oakland, is among those who want to retell the Panthers story for a new generation. She said the bronze bust is just a start of a larger effort to see the Black Power movement take its place in history with other, less confrontational actors of the civil rights movement. Among her goals: recognition of Panther sites by the U.S. National Park Service.

"You're hearing more about the Black Panther Party, and Huey's contributions to (Black) liberation as a thought leader, than you've ever heard before," she said. "There's a hunger for it. We're just on the precipice."

After meeting at a community college in Oakland, Newton and Bobby Seale founded the Black Panther Party for Self Defense in October 1966. Newton was the party's minister for defense and Seale was the party chairman.

Together, they wrote the party's Ten Point Program, laying out the party's beliefs. Among their demands: Freedom to determine the destiny of the Black community, economic empowerment through full employment and wealth redistribution, an educational system inclusive of the Black experience, and an end to brutality and fatal encounters between Black people and police.

The party became famous in its early years for its uniform: men and women in matching black berets

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and black leather jackets, sometimes accessorized by long-barrel shotguns. And there were the Panther formations, marches and patrols, meant as a show of discipline and strength.

Police departments took Panthers' anti-police rhetoric and name calling as more than just bravado. As recently as 2016, when pop icon Beyoncé and her backup dancers performed in the Super Bowl halftime show near San Francisco dressed in black leather get-ups and berets as a clear tribute to the Panthers, some law enforcement groups took offense.

A lesser-known fact was that a majority of the party's membership, as well as its leadership outside of the central organizing committee in Oakland, were Black women. The party struggled with sexism and misogyny, although less so as it grew across the country. Some of its most famous alumni include Elaine Brown, Kathleen Cleaver, Angela Davis and Erika Huggins. Perhaps not coincidentally, women are the most prominent leaders of the Black Lives Matter movement.

In interviews, former Panther members acknowledged that the party's very name drove perceptions that it only operated by force and intimidation. The party eventually dropped "for Self Defense" from its name. But those words also meant nutrition, health care and political education for the Black community, said Huggins, who was the first woman to lead a chapter of the Panther Party.

"There was a conversation about the posture, that we didn't have to be paramilitary to let people know we were in defense of our community," Huggins said. She ran the party-sponsored Oakland Community School for children from 1973 to 1981.

"We stopped wearing what you call the iconic uniform after about three years," she said. "People said to us, 'Why are you making yourself separate from us? You're just like us.'"

Largely due to its "Survival Programs," the party was embraced in nearly 70 communities across the U.S. and abroad where it had chapters, opened offices, provided free health care clinics to residents and free breakfast programs for schoolchildren, and published Black Panther newspapers. Also among its 65 programs were pioneering sickle cell disease testing research, free food and clothing distribution, transportation service for families visiting incarcerated loved ones, and the escorts for seniors who needed assistance getting to a supermarket or a pharmacy.

Katherine Campbell, who first volunteered with the Panther newspaper and the free breakfast program in San Francisco as a teenager, said the party's activities didn't merit its targeting by law enforcement.

"We were supposed to have been a threat to the government," said Campbell, who eventually became a party member. "Can you imagine that feeding some children is a threat to the government? But it took off. Little did we know, we were going to make history."

She and others said press and other media organizations played a role in demonizing the party, at times unquestioningly accepting police narratives or the FBI's opinion that the party presented "the greatest threat to the internal security of the United States."

Panthers were aggressively surveilled by the FBI, and the agency's infamous and illegal COINTELPRO effort included infiltration and intimidation of Panthers groups across the country. It sowed paranoia, distrust and violence within the party. Whenever the FBI shared intel with police departments, members say, it preceded the assault, torture, arrest, imprisonment and deaths of Panthers across the country.

"Because the Panthers sought to be the antidote to (police) violence, they were often challenged to violence," said former Black Panther Party attorney Fred Hiestand.

The narrative continues in places like the Officer Down Memorial Page, a website dedicated to honoring law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty.

Among those memorialized is John Frey, an Oakland police officer who died of gunshot wounds in 1967 after pulling Newton over. Newton denied shooting Frey but was convicted of voluntary manslaughter in 1968. The case spurred a "Free Huey" campaign, contributing to a surge of interest in the party globally. Newton's conviction was overturned two years later.

"The Black Panthers is a racist, radical group that professed the murders of law enforcement officers," reads the memorial entry for Frey, which also includes claims Panthers were responsible for the deaths of at least 15 officers and the wounding of dozens nationwide.

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While Newton was imprisoned, more than two dozen Panthers died in violent encounters with police, including Bobby Hutton, the 16-year-old remembered as the party's first recruit in Oakland, and Fred Hampton, leader of the party's Illinois chapter in Chicago.

Seale, who continues to promote the party legacy today, had himself been imprisoned in 1968 over his involvement in protests at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

The party fell into disarray.

After his release, Newton sought to rehabilitate the Panthers' image by urging members to focus on the survival programs. He still advocated the rights of the Black community to defend itself from police, but no longer argued that party members should openly carry guns as a check on brutality.

The party officially folded in 1982 after years of police surveillance, dwindling national membership, violent infighting, allegations of embezzlement and scandals in which Newton was implicated.

In its wake, the party left a lot of enemies, but admirers as well.

"They were honorable, they were upright," said Peter Coyote, the American actor and founder of the Diggers, a San Francisco improv troupe that worked with Panthers early on, printing the party's newspaper and providing food for the breakfast program.

"They were human beings, of course, they messed up here and there," Coyote said. "But to me, they were heroes."

The old Panthers flew in from Chicago, Milwaukee, New Orleans, New York, Seattle, for a dinner in downtown Oakland the night before Newton's bust was unveiled, and shared stories about the old days.

"I don't call myself a former Panther," said Charlotte O'Neal of the Kansas City Panthers. "Once a Panther, always a Panther. It's in our blood. As we used to say, 'We're gonna bop 'til we drop.'"

In many ways, they say, we now live in the Black Panthers' world. They tilled the ground and made it fertile for activism against police brutality, mass incarceration, generational poverty and racial wealth gaps. For better or worse, they helped launch the America we see today, broken up into tribes by sex and race and creed.

Sure, the Panthers were radical for their time, but their positions are less so today, when social activism based on race or ethnicity, religious faith, queer and transgender identity and political ideology is common. And while armed self-defense is still considered extreme, that has not stopped some whites on the far-right from embracing the concept.

The Panthers also pushed society to deal with Black people as they are, not as racists see them. It was a clear contrast to the "respectability politics" of the nonviolent civil rights movement. Taking inspiration from Malcolm X's "by any means necessary" mantra, the Panthers didn't ask politely for their freedoms.

That has carried over to the Black Lives Matter movement. Protesters adopted tactical confrontation with law enforcement and elected leaders in response to the deaths of Black boys, men and women at the hands of police and vigilantes: Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Philando Castile, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd.

Phillip Agnew, a Florida-based activist and early organizer in the Black Lives Matter movement, said the Panthers are "still a model to draw from." He co-founded Black Men Build, a national group focused on the empowerment and political education of Black men. The group's platform was written as "our version of the Ten Point Program," Agnew said.

The ripples of the Panthers are all around us, but there have been few concrete efforts to mark their place in history. Does the Newton bust portend a change?

Ron Sundergill, a senior regional director in the National Parks Conservation Association's Oakland office, said the larger Black Power movement is not currently represented in any monuments or historic sites included in the National Park System.

The association, which researches and conducts reconnaissance on historic sites, recently worked with the Dr. Huey P. Newton Foundation to scope out a series of buildings and locations in Oakland that are significant to the Panther Party's story. Those locations include the former St. Augustine's Episcopal Church,

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the site of the first free breakfast program, and a storefront that briefly served as the Panther Party's first office before it outgrew the space.

"It's way past time," Sundergill said. "The National Parks Service should be covering this story, in my view. It is a really important history for not only the United States but the world."

It probably will not be easy. In 2017, the Fraternal Order of Police caught wind of nearly \$100,000 in funding for the project on the Black Power group. The police union sent a letter to the Trump administration expressing "outrage and shock" that the park service would pay to honor a group associated with the 1973 killing of a San Francisco park ranger.

A park service spokesperson has said the agency withdrew the funding after "an additional review."

If a national Panthers monument wins approval of the park service, Sundergill said, it would require a final sign off from President Joe Biden, which could be two years away.

Rep. Barbara Lee, a Democrat congresswoman who is pushing for the national monument, believes the effort will succeed. As a younger woman, she volunteered with the Panthers' survival programs and its political campaigns in Oakland.

"We're going to keep at it, through any obstacle, any barrier that comes before us," Lee said.

"I think for the Black Panther Party, its time has come once again. We all have to run our lap of this race. It's a marathon."

News researcher Rhonda Shafner contributed.

Morrison, a native of Oakland, is a member of the AP's Race and Ethnicity team. Follow him on Twitter: <https://www.twitter.com/aaronlmorrison>.

People, homes vanish due to 2020 census' new privacy method

By MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

The three-bedroom colonial-style house where Jessica Stephenson has lived in Milwaukee for the last six years bustles with activity on any given weekday, filled with the chattering of children in the day care center she runs out of her home.

The U.S. Census Bureau says no one lives there.

"They should come and see it for themselves," Stephenson said.

From her majority-Black neighborhood in Wisconsin to a community of Hasidic Jews in New York's Catskill Mountains to a park outside Tampa, Florida, a method used by the Census Bureau for the first time to protect confidentiality in the 2020 census has made people and occupied homes vanish — at least on paper — when they actually exist in the real world.

It's not a magic trick but rather a new statistical method the bureau is using called differential privacy, which involves the intentional addition of errors to data to obscure the identity of any given participant.

Bureau officials say it's necessary to protect privacy in a time of increasingly sophisticated data mining, as technological innovations magnify the threat of people being "re-identified" through the use of powerful computers to match census information with other public databases. By law, census answers are supposed to be confidential.

But some city officials and demographers think it veers too far from reality — and could cause errors in the data used for drawing political districts and distributing federal funds.

At least one analysis suggests that differential privacy could penalize minority communities by undercounting areas that are racially and ethnically mixed. Harvard University researchers found that the method made it more difficult to create political districts of equal population and could result in fewer majority-minority districts.

The Census Bureau, for its part, argues that the data is every bit as good as in past censuses and that the low-level inaccuracies don't present a large-scale problem.

What's certain is that the method can produce weird, contradictory and false results at the smallest

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geographic levels, such as neighborhood blocks.

For example, the official 2020 census results say 54 people live in Stephenson's census block in midtown Milwaukee, but also that there are no occupied homes. In reality almost two dozen houses occupy the car-lined streets, some dating back more than a century. Forty-eight of the residents living in the block are Black, according to the census, though it's difficult to know for sure, given the whimsy of differential privacy.

In another case, the census lists no people living in the Flatwoods Conservation Park outside Tampa, even though it says there is a home occupied by people. According to Hillsborough County spokesman Todd Pratt, two county employees live there while maintaining security for the park.

And in an enclave of Hasidic Jews located in Kiamesha Lake, New York, 81 people are recorded as residents, but the census officially says there are no occupied homes. Sullivan County property records show almost a dozen homes whose residents have ties to the Vizhnitzer Hasidic community.

The unreliable data has created headaches for city managers and planners of small communities who worry that it may not be valid for decision-making. Eric Guthrie, a senior demographer at the Minnesota State Demographic Center, said he has been contacted by a half-dozen city managers from around the state who were concerned about potential impacts to state and federal funding.

"I explain to them there's not a method for correcting it, that it's not an error in the traditional sense," Guthrie said. "The bug is there by design."

The scale of the changes become clearer when viewed through a broader lens. For Florida, the nation's third most populous state with more than 21 million residents, the 2020 census listed 15,000 neighborhood blocks as having a total of 200,000 residents but no occupied homes. On the flip side, 1,200 of the state's 484,000 blocks were listed as having occupied homes but no population, according to Rich Doty, geographic information system coordinator and research demographer at the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research.

"We expected these anomalies, as we were warned about this by the Census Bureau and other states," Doty said. "We just didn't expect this many."

Ahead of the release of census data used for drawing congressional and legislative districts in August, acting Census Bureau director Ron Jarmin warned that its application could produce some "fuzzy" figures at the neighborhood block level and urged data users to combine blocks to get accurate results. But the bureau also says that despite the implementation of differential privacy, the quality of the 2020 data isn't any worse than previous censuses based on measurements of data quality.

That claim is hard to evaluate since the raw data without the application of differential privacy is not being made public, said Stefan Rayer, a University of Florida demographer.

"We have to take their word for it," Rayer said.

Using test data, the Harvard researchers found that differential privacy was more likely to undercount mixed-race and mixed-partisan precincts, "yielding unpredictable racial and partisan biases," because it prioritizes the accuracy of the population count for the largest racial group in a given area.

"Our findings underscore the difficulty of balancing accuracy and respondent privacy in the Census," they said in a report.

The Census Bureau disagrees, and so far the courts have found no reason to stop it.

Differential privacy was unsuccessfully challenged by the state of Alabama earlier this year. In a declaration for that lawsuit, the Census Bureau's chief scientist, John Abowd, called the data "extremely accurate" and said the use of differential privacy showed no bias regarding racial or ethnic minorities.

"Redistricters can remain confident in the accuracy of the population counts and demographic characteristics of the voting districts they draw, despite the noise in the individual building blocks," Abowd said.

Not everyone believes the technique is the right way to protect confidentiality.

Two University of Minnesota researchers wrote in a recent paper that a Census Bureau experiment failed to show genuine threats to confidentiality and that any risks of re-identification were similar to random guessing of households' characteristics.

One of them, demographer Steven Ruggles, said during a presentation this month that the Census Bureau's fear of re-identification and the resulting justification for using differential privacy could undermine confidence in the census data.

"It should not justify the degradation of the statistical infrastructure of our country," Ruggles said. "The whole thing is likely to backfire."

Follow Mike Schneider on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/MikeSchneiderAP>

Potential jurors see racism behind Ahmaud Arbery's slaying

By RUSS BYNUM Associated Press

BRUNSWICK, Ga. (AP) — People questioned during jury selection about the killing of Ahmaud Arbery have said he was "racially profiled" by the white men who chased and shot him, singled out "due to his color" and targeted for being "a Black person who was thought to have been stealing things."

The statements came in response to blunt questions about race from prosecutors and defense attorneys who are trying to seat an impartial jury for the trial over Arbery's death in the coastal Georgia city of Brunswick. The inquiries elicited some pointed responses.

"The whole case is about racism," one woman, identified only as potential juror No. 199, said Thursday in the courtroom. She said the three men charged with murder "hunted him down and killed him like an animal."

Another prospective juror, No. 72, told the attorneys: "If it was a white guy running through the neighborhood, I don't think he would have been targeted as a suspect."

The comments could signal trouble for defense attorneys, who have often argued for the dismissal of potential jurors who see Arbery as a victim of racial prejudice. Several of them, including No. 199 and No. 72, have been deemed qualified by Superior Court Judge Timothy Walmsley to remain in the pool from which a final jury will be chosen.

"It could be devastating for the defense," said Michael Schiavone, a Savannah criminal defense attorney who isn't involved in the case. "I would be very skeptical that they could be fair after they told me their opinion."

Under Georgia law, potential jurors are not automatically disqualified for showing up with preconceived opinions about a case, as long as they pledge to set those opinions aside and remain fair and impartial while hearing the trial evidence. Walmsley has repeatedly cited that standard.

Greg McMichael and his adult son, Travis McMichael, armed themselves and pursued Arbery in a pickup truck after spotting the 25-year-old man running in their neighborhood on Feb. 23, 2020. A neighbor, William "Roddie" Bryan, joined the chase and recorded cellphone video of Travis McMichael shooting Arbery three times with a shotgun.

Defense attorneys say the McMichaels and Bryan had reason to suspect Arbery was committing crimes in the neighborhood after he was recorded by security cameras inside a home under construction. They say Travis McMichael fired his shotgun in self-defense when Arbery attacked him with his fists.

No one was arrested or charged in the killing for more than two months, until the video leaked online and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation took over the case from local police.

"If I'm honest, if it was completely reversed, and if the three men were Black and the victim were white, they would be arrested immediately," another potential juror, No. 571, told attorneys during questioning Wednesday. The judge also found her qualified to remain in the jury pool.

If defense attorneys conclude that the jury pool is shaping up to be biased against them, they could ask the judge to halt jury selection and move the trial. Otherwise, before a final jury is seated, lawyers on both sides will have a limited number of strikes that let them cut potential jurors they may feel are unfavorable.

If any of the defendants are convicted, it's possible that the judge's reluctance to dismiss jurors who expressed strong opinions could be used as grounds for an appeal, said Jeffrey Abramson, a law professor at the University of Texas and author of the 1994 book "We, the Jury."

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"It could come back to bite you," said Abramson, though he added that the judge was "doing the best job he can so far in a tremendously difficult and delicate situation."

A federal appeals court last year threw out the death sentence of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev in the Boston Marathon bombing after concluding that the trial judge failed to adequately screen jurors for potential biases. That decision is now before the U.S. Supreme Court, which has yet to rule.

The men on trial for Arbery's death in Glynn County Superior Court are charged with murder, aggravated assault, false imprisonment and attempted false imprisonment — crimes that do not require any evidence of racist motivation. In a separate case scheduled for trial next year, they face federal hate crime charges in U.S. District Court.

Still, many see the state murder case as part of a national reckoning on how the criminal justice system treats Black victims, much like the April conviction of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin in the killing of George Floyd.

One potential juror, No. 475, told attorneys it "seemed like when it rains it pours over the last year," referring to the national outcry over racial injustice. He said he felt the deaths of Black people such as Arbery and Floyd had "all been lumped together."

"I think it's made our town look negative, for sure," said the man, who blamed the defendants for singling out "a Black guy in a white neighborhood."

The court has not provided the race of individual jury pool members, and they have not been asked about their backgrounds in open court. Few potential jurors have stated their race while being questioned.

Those the judge has found qualified to serve on the jury all said they could keep an open mind if they are among the 12 jurors and four alternates seated on the panel. Others have been dismissed after the judge concluded that they held fixed opinions about the case.

One woman struck from jury service, No. 164, told attorneys the way Arbery was chased and shot was "almost like a lynching."

Another who was dismissed, No. 485, said: "The one thing they were sure of was that he was Black, and he was running."

Supreme Court to hear case on New York's gun permit law

By JESSICA GRESKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court is preparing to hear a gun rights case that could lead to more guns on the streets of New York and Los Angeles and threaten restrictions on guns in subways, airports, bars, churches, schools and other places where people gather.

The case the justices will hear Wednesday comes as gun violence has surged, and it could dramatically increase the number of people eligible to carry firearms as they go about their daily lives. The case centers on New York's restrictive gun permit law and whether challengers to the law have a right to carry a firearm in public for self-defense.

Gun control groups say if a high court ruling requires states to drop restrictions, the result will be more violence. Gun rights groups, meanwhile, say the risk of a confrontation is precisely why they have a right to be armed for self-defense.

Gun rights advocates hope that the court with a 6-3 conservative majority is poised to side with them. They want the court to say the New York law is too restrictive, as are similar laws in other states. Gun control advocates acknowledge the court's composition has them concerned about the outcome.

"The stakes really could not be higher," said Jonathan Lowy, chief counsel at the gun control group Brady.

The court last issued major gun rights decisions in 2008 and 2010. Those decisions established a nationwide right to keep a gun at home for self-defense. The question for the court now is whether there's a similar Second Amendment right to carry a firearm in public.

The question isn't an issue in most of the country, where gun owners have little difficulty legally carrying their weapons when they go out. But about half a dozen states, including populous California and several Eastern states, restrict the carrying of guns to those who can demonstrate a particular need for doing so.

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The justices could decide whether those laws, “may issue” laws, can stand.

The fact that the high court is hearing a gun rights case at all is a change after years in which it routinely turned them away. One gun case the justices did agree to hear ended anticlimactically in 2020 when the justices threw out the case.

But following the death of liberal Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg last year and her replacement by conservative Justice Amy Coney Barrett, the court agreed to wade into the gun debate again.

Eric Tirschwell, the legal director at Everytown for Gun Safety, said there’s “reason to be concerned” for groups like his that “a type of law that the court was not interested in or willing to review in the past, they now are.”

The New York law the court is reviewing has been in place since 1913 and says that to carry a concealed handgun in public for self-defense, a person applying for a license has to demonstrate “proper cause,” an actual need to carry the weapon. When local officials issue a gun license, it’s either unrestricted — allowing the person to carry a gun anywhere not otherwise prohibited by law — or restricted, allowing the person to carry a gun in certain circumstances. That could include carrying a gun for hunting or target shooting, when traveling for work or when in backcountry areas.

The New York State Rifle & Pistol Association and two private citizens challenging the law have told the Supreme Court that it “makes it effectively impossible for an ordinary, law-abiding citizen to obtain a license to carry a handgun for self-defense.”

Lawyers for the group say the text of the Second Amendment, along with history and tradition, supports their argument that there’s a right to carry a gun outside the home. The group also says that New York’s law has discriminatory origins, that it was originally intended to give officials wide latitude to keep guns out of the hands of newly arrived immigrants from Europe, particularly Italians.

New York, for its part, denies that and says that the Second Amendment allows states to restrict the carrying of guns in public. It, too, points to history, tradition and the text of the Second Amendment. The state says its restrictions promote public safety, pointing to research that says that places that restrict the public carry of guns have lower rates of gun-related homicides and other violent crimes. New York says its law isn’t a flat ban on carrying guns but a more moderate restriction.

Tom King, president of the New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, said in an interview that part of the problem with New York’s law is that the chances a person will get an unrestricted permit depend on whether he or she is in a rural or more urban area of the state.

Both gun rights and gun control advocates say that it’s unclear how broadly the court might be willing to rule and that they will be closely watching arguments for clues, particularly from the court’s three newest members.

The three appointees of former President Donald Trump — Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Barrett — are conservatives but were not on the court when the justices last issued major gun rights rulings. Their actions so far have given gun rights advocates reasons to be hopeful, however.

In 2011, as an appeals court judge, Kavanaugh argued in a dissent that the District of Columbia’s ban on semi-automatic rifles and its gun registration requirement were unconstitutional. Last year, he urged the court to take up another guns case soon, saying he was concerned that lower courts were not following Supreme Court precedent.

Gorsuch, for his part, would have decided the 2020 gun case his colleagues threw out. And Barrett, as an appeals court judge, wrote in a dissent that a conviction for a nonviolent felony shouldn’t automatically disqualify someone from owning a gun; she said her colleagues were treating the Second Amendment as a “second-class right.”

Gun control groups hope, however, that conservatives might still vote to uphold New York’s law. A group of prominent conservatives, including former federal appeals court judge J. Michael Luttig, has urged the court to do so in a brief to the court. And earlier this year, in a 7-4 decision, judges on the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected a challenge to Hawaii’s permit regulations. Conservative judge Jay Bybee wrote that a “review of more than 700 years of English and American legal history reveals a strong theme: government has the power to regulate arms in the public square.”

The court's three liberal justices are widely expected to side with New York.

Depending on what the justices ultimately say, other states' laws could also be affected. The Biden administration, which is urging the justices to uphold New York's law, says California, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Rhode Island all have similar laws. Connecticut and Delaware also have "may issue" laws, though they are somewhat different.

Paid leave's demise tough on backers in Manchin's home state

By JAY REEVES Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — Jessi Garman, the mother of 3-year-old twin girls, has been searching for a job while also trying to have a third child with her husband, who's in the military. Optimistic that Congress finally would approve paid family medical leave, she thought the time seemed right.

But that was before opposition by Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia torpedoed the proposal. Both having another baby and getting full-time work doesn't seem feasible now, and Garman's hopefulness has turned into anger.

"It almost feels personal because Joe Manchin is my senator," said Garman, of Milton.

Supporters of a decades-old proposal to let workers take time off for medical needs including childbirth, surgeries and end-of-life care are dealing with another disappointment in Manchin's home of West Virginia, a poor state with one of the nation's oldest populations.

State activists are still working on Manchin — a pro-leave group planned to rent an airplane and fly a banner over one of his political fundraisers at a resort this weekend, said Kayla Young, a member of the state House of Delegates who also is helping with an advocacy group, Paid Leave Works for West Virginia. They hope some version of paid leave may still be included in President Joe Biden's social spending package.

"It's disheartening, but I don't think it's over yet," said Young.

Sarah Clemente hopes Young is right, since paid leave would have made things easier with all three of her children. Instead, she said, she had to take off a total of two years and return to work just a week after the birth of her youngest — Penelope, now 6 — whom she and husband Ryan adopted from a relative who couldn't care for her.

"We followed the textbook on what you're supposed to do to be responsible, successful adults. And while we are there now, there was a lot of suffering and heartbreak," said Clemente, a 40-year-old health care manager. "And it's still hard."

Biden initially proposed 12 weeks of paid leave for new parents, people caring for loved ones or people recovering from an illness, but it wasn't included in a \$1.7 trillion framework released by the White House on Thursday after Manchin's opposition became clear. Manchin, whose support is crucial because of the slim Democratic edge in the Senate, said he wanted to avoid turning the United States into "an entitlement society."

Democrats continue lobbying the senator, but he hasn't shown signs of budging despite proposals to trim leave from 12 weeks to four or to restrict it to just new parents. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York said she has spoken extensively with Manchin and he asked good questions, but he wasn't focused on specifics of the proposal and had concerns about its cost.

In Manchin's home county in northern West Virginia, Amber Gabor allowed that some time off would have come in handy when one of her kids — ages 2, 7 and 9, with another one expected in a couple of weeks — had to stay home for two weeks after a coronavirus case at his school. But 12 weeks of paid leave sounded excessive to her.

"I don't see why you would need all that at one time, unless it was a maternity type of leave. But most (work) places offer that anyway," said Gabor, who works from home doing customer service for a power company.

In the rural town of Spencer, dental receptionist Samantha Camp is one of those who say they will continue to get by without a paid leave option just as they always have — with difficulty.

Camp will keep paying about \$50 monthly for the disability insurance she buys as a hedge against hav-

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ing to miss work because of a bone problem that resulted in hip replacement surgery last year. After the operation, she felt she had no choice but to return earlier than doctors recommended to her job at a small law firm where she worked at the time.

"It was very worrisome being with no income," said Camp, 34. "The doctors wanted to put me off for about six weeks. I just knew I couldn't do that financially. I was actually off only two and a half weeks."

Chris Hedges, a partner in the law firm, said it gave Camp all the vacation time it could scrape together and having government-funded leave would have made things so much better.

"For small businesses to be able to afford paid leave is just about impossible," Hedges said. "The paid leave that would have come about through Biden's bill would have helped. It would have helped us retain employees."

On Charleston's west side, which is home to many working class and poor people, Brittanie Hairston said paid leave would have eased her worries about what would happen if one of her sons, ages 6 and 10, were to get sick with COVID-19 or something else.

"I can't go back to work until they're clear," she said.

And Mildred Tompkins, who works with a health and education nonprofit in the state capital, said her own two daughters, who are in their 20s and working in relatively low-paid health care jobs, would have benefited from paid leave.

"For people that are just regular, right at the poverty line and working," she said, "it would make a difference."

Associated Press writers John Raby in Fairmont, W.Va., and Mary Clare Jalonick in Washington contributed to this report.

An "eraser button"? Focused ideas could help bridle Big Tech

By MARCY GORDON AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Break up Big Tech? How about shrinking the tech companies' shield against liability in cases where the content they push to users causes harm? Or creating a new regulator to strictly oversee the industry?

Those ideas have captured official attention in the U.S., Europe, U.K. and Australia as controversy has enveloped Facebook — which on Thursday renamed itself Meta — Google, Amazon and other giants. Revelations of deep-seated problems surfaced by former Facebook product manager Frances Haugen, buttressed by a trove of internal company documents, have lent momentum to legislative and regulatory efforts.

But while regulators are still considering major moves such as breaking up some companies or limiting their acquisitions, the most realistic changes may be more tangible and less grandly ambitious. And also the kind of thing people might actually see popping up in their social feeds.

So lawmakers are getting creative as they introduce a slew of bills intended to take Big Tech down a peg. One bill proposes an "eraser button" that would let parents instantly delete all personal information collected from their children or teens. Another proposal bans specific features for kids under 16, such as video auto-play, push alerts, "like" buttons and follower counts. Also being floated is a prohibition against collecting personal data from anyone aged 13 to 15 without their consent. And a new digital "bill of rights" for minors that would similarly limit gathering of personal data from teens.

For online users of all ages, personal data is paramount. It's at the heart of the social platforms' lucrative business model: harvesting data from their users and using it to sell personalized ads intended to pinpoint specific consumer groups. Data is the financial lifeblood for a social network giant valued at \$1 trillion like Facebook. Er, Meta. Advertising sales drive nearly all its revenue, which reached about \$86 billion last year.

That means the proposed legislation targeting personal data collected from young people could hit the bottom line of the social media companies. On Tuesday, executives of YouTube, TikTok and Snapchat offered endorsements in principle during a congressional hearing on child safety, but wouldn't commit to support

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already proposed legislation. Instead, they offered boilerplate Washington lobbyist-speak, saying they look forward to working with Congress on the matter. Translation: They want to influence the proposals.

Sens. Edward Markey, D-Mass., and Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., proposed the two bills that address protection of kids online. They say they're hearing more and more stories of teens overdosing on opioids obtained online or who died by suicide when their depression or self-hatred was magnified by social media.

Among all of Haugen's numerous condemnations of Facebook, her disclosure of internal company research showing that use of the Instagram photo-sharing app appeared to harm some teens appears to have resonated most with the public.

When it comes to kids, Republican and Democratic lawmakers — hopelessly divided over perceived political bias and hate speech in social media — are in solid agreement that something must be done, and quickly. "One thing that unites Democrats and Republicans is 'Won't someone please think of the children,'" said Gautam Hans, a technology lawyer and free-speech expert and professor at Vanderbilt University. "It's very sellable on a bipartisan basis."

In the U.K., efforts toward tougher rules to protect social media users, especially younger ones, are farther along. Members of the U.K. Parliament asked Haugen for guidance on how to improve the British online safety legislation. She appeared in London before a parliamentary committee on Monday, warning members that time is running out to regulate social media companies that use artificial intelligence to push "engaging" content to users.

European Union privacy and competition regulators have been far more aggressive than their U.S. counterparts in bridling the tech giants. They have levied multibillion-dollar fines on some of the companies and adopted sweeping new rules in recent years. The U.K. established a new regulator for Facebook and Google this spring.

U.S. regulators only kicked into gear in 2019, when the Federal Trade Commission fined Facebook \$5 billion, and YouTube \$170 million in separate cases for alleged privacy violations. Late last year, the U.S. Justice Department and a number of states filed landmark antitrust suits against Google over market dominance in online search. The FTC and several states brought a parallel antitrust action against Facebook accusing it of abusing its market power to crush smaller competitors.

Beyond the child protection measures, U.S. legislators from both parties have floated a vast number of proposals designed to crack down on social media; target anti-competitive practices by Big Tech companies, possibly ordering breakups; and to get at the algorithms the tech platforms deploy to determine what shows up on users' feeds.

All these proposals face a heavy lift toward final enactment.

The Justice Against Malicious Algorithms Act, for instance, was introduced by senior House Democrats roughly a week after Haugen testified as to how social media algorithms push extreme content to users and inflame anger to boost user "engagement." The bill would hold social media companies responsible by removing their shield against liability, known as Section 230, for tailored recommendations to users deemed to cause harm.

Some experts who support stricter regulation of social media say the legislation could have unintended consequences. It doesn't make clear enough which specific algorithmic behaviors would lead to loss of the liability protection, they suggest, making it hard to see how it would work in practice and leading to wide disagreement over what it might actually do.

For instance, Paul Barrett, who teaches a seminar in law, economics and journalism at New York University, calls the bill "very sweeping" in ways its authors may not understand, and suggests it could shred the liability shield almost entirely. But Jared Schroeder, a First Amendment scholar at Southern Methodist University, said that while "there's a noble purpose" behind the bill, constitutional free-speech guarantees would likely stymie any attempt to sue social-media platforms.

A spokesperson for Meta, which owns the Facebook service, declined to comment Friday on legislative proposals. In a statement, the company said it has long advocated for updated regulations, but provided no specifics.

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Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg — make that, Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg — has suggested changes that would only give internet platforms legal protection if they can prove that their systems for identifying illegal content are up to snuff. That requirement, however, might be more difficult for smaller tech companies and startups to meet, leading critics to charge that it would ultimately work in Facebook's favor.

Follow Marcy Gordon at <https://www.twitter.com/mgordonap>

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, Nov. 1, the 305th day of 2021. There are 60 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 1, 1765, the Stamp Act, passed by the British Parliament, went into effect, prompting stiff resistance from American colonists.

On this date:

In 1478, the Spanish Inquisition was established.

In 1861, during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln named Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan General-in-Chief of the Union armies, succeeding Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott.

In 1936, in a speech in Milan, Italy, Benito Mussolini described the alliance between his country and Nazi Germany as an "axis" running between Rome and Berlin.

In 1949, an Eastern Airlines DC-4 collided in midair with a Lockheed P-38 fighter plane near Washington National Airport, killing all 55 people aboard the DC-4 and seriously injuring the pilot of the P-38.

In 1950, two Puerto Rican nationalists tried to force their way into Blair House in Washington, D.C., in a failed attempt to assassinate President Harry S. Truman. (One of the pair was killed, along with a White House police officer.)

In 1952, the United States exploded the first hydrogen bomb, code-named "Ivy Mike," at Enewetak (en-ih-WEE'tahk) Atoll in the Marshall Islands.

In 1973, following the "Saturday Night Massacre," Acting Attorney General Robert H. Bork appointed Leon Jaworski to be the new Watergate special prosecutor, succeeding Archibald Cox.

In 1989, East Germany reopened its border with Czechoslovakia, prompting tens of thousands of refugees to flee to the West.

In 1991, Clarence Thomas took his place as the newest justice on the Supreme Court.

In 1995, Bosnia peace talks opened in Dayton, Ohio, with the leaders of Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia present.

In 2003, Democratic presidential candidate Howard Dean stirred controversy within his party by telling the Des Moines (duh-MOYN') Register he wanted to be "the candidate for guys with Confederate flags in their pickup trucks." (The former Vermont governor explained that he intended to encourage the return of Southern voters who had abandoned the Democrats for decades but were disaffected with the Republicans.)

In 2015, the Kansas City Royals won their first World Series crown since 1985, beating the New York Mets 7-2 in Game 5, which lasted 12 innings, ending after midnight.

Ten years ago: Europe's days-old plan to solve its crippling debt crisis and restore faith in the global economy was thrown into chaos by Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou's stunning decision to call a referendum on the country's latest rescue package. (Papandreou dropped the referendum plan two days later.) Dorothy Rodham, 92, mother of Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and former President Bill Clinton's mother-in-law, died in Washington.

Five years ago: Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon fired the commander of the peacekeeping force in South Sudan after an independent investigation sharply criticized the military response to deadly attacks in July on a U.N. compound housing 27,000 displaced people. Most of an African-American church in Greenville, Mississippi, was destroyed by an arson fire; the building was spray-painted with the words "Vote Trump." (A member of the church later pleaded guilty to arson and was sentenced to 10 years in prison.) The

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Chicago Cubs forced a deciding Game 7 in the World Series as they defeated the Cleveland Indians 9-3.

One year ago: Two days before Election Day, the Texas Supreme Court denied a Republican-led petition to toss nearly 127,000 ballots cast at drive-thru voting places in the Houston area. (A federal judge also rejected that effort the following day.)

Today's Birthdays: World Golf Hall of Famer Gary Player is 86. Country singer Bill Anderson is 84. Actor Barbara Bosson is 82. Actor Robert Foxworth is 80. Country singer-humorist Kinky Friedman is 77. Actor Jeannie Berlin is 72. Music producer David Foster is 72. Actor Belita Moreno is 72. Country singer-songwriter-producer Keith Stegall is 67. Country singer Lyle Lovett is 64. Actor Rachel Ticotin is 63. Apple CEO Tim Cook is 61. Actor Helene Udy is 60. Pop singer-musician Mags Furuholmen (a-ha) 59. Rock singer Anthony Kiedis (Red Hot Chili Peppers) is 59. Rock musician Rick Allen (Def Leppard) is 58. Country singer "Big Kenny" Alphin (Big and Rich) is 58. Singer Sophie B. Hawkins is 57. Rapper Willie D (Geto Boys) is 55. Country musician Dale Wallace (Emerson Drive) is 52. Actor Toni Collette is 49. Actor-talk show host Jenny McCarthy is 49. Actor David Berman is 48. Actor Aishwarya Rai (ash-WAHR'-ee-ah reye) is 48. Rock singer Bo Diddley is 46. Actor Matt Jones is 40. Actor Natalia Tena is 37. Actor Penn Badgley is 35. Actor Max Burkholder is 24. Actor-musician Alex Wolff is 24.