

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 1 of 79

1- Upcoming Events

1- Today on GDILIVE.COM

2- End of Daylight Saving Time Means Increased Driving Danger

3- Pierce Kettering likes hands-on experience at Rutgear605

4- Milpa gardens can build soil health and communities

6- Applications open for Social Studies Standards Revision Commission

7- Plan ahead for 3G Phase Out in 2022

8- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

9- Weather Pages

12- Daily Devotional

13- 2021 Community Events

14- News from the Associated Press



Upcoming Events

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

Thursday on
GDILIVE.COM
No ticket required!

Region 1A
Groton Area vs.
Redfield
at Henry
Pregame at 6:45 p.m.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

© 2021 Groton Daily Independent

End of Daylight Saving Time Means Increased Driving Danger

Annual "Fall Back" means sun glare for the morning commute, darkness for the evening commute and potential for drowsy drivers.

SIOUX FALLS, SD – Nov. 4, 2021 – As we prepare to turn our clocks back an hour at 2 a.m. this Sunday, with the end of Daylight Saving Time, many may rejoice for the extra hour of sleep. However, AAA South Dakota is reminding drivers to prepare for potential challenges, such as changes in sleep patterns that may increase chances of drowsy driving, and shorter days that mean driving home in the dark.

Sleep-deprived drivers cause more than 6,400 deaths and 50,000 debilitating injuries on American roadways each year, according to the National Sleep Foundation (NSF).

"While many will enjoy an extra hour of sleep this weekend, few commuters and motorists realize the added dangers that can come as the result of a time change – especially when they are behind the wheel," said Shawn Steward, AAA South Dakota spokesman. "Although we gain an hour of sleep, our sleep patterns are disrupted. This can result in unsafe drowsy driving episodes."

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety 2020 Traffic Safety Culture Index data shows that most motorists (95 percent) identify drowsy driving as very or extremely dangerous. Yet, despite high rates of perceived danger and personal/social disapproval regarding drowsy driving, about 17 percent of drivers admit to having driven while being so tired that they had a hard time keeping their eyes open, at least once in the past 30 days. Previous research by the AAA Foundation estimates that drowsy driving is a factor in an average of 328,000 crashes annually, including 109,000 crashes that result in injuries and 6,400 fatal crashes.

"The end of Daylight Saving time this weekend will bring shorter days and longer nights," noted AAA South Dakota's Steward. "Night driving brings challenges, so we urge motorists to slow down, increase their following distance, use headlights to make yourself more visible, and be extra cautious on our roadways."

AAA South Dakota Tips for Drivers

Slow down.

Turn on your headlights to become more visible during early morning and evening hours.

Keep vehicle headlights and windows (inside and out) clean.

Do not use high beams when other cars or pedestrians are around.

Yield the right of way to pedestrians in crosswalks and do not pass vehicles stopped at crosswalks.

AAA Dakota Tips for Pedestrians and Bicyclists

Cross only at intersections. Look left, right and left again and only cross when it is clear. Do not jaywalk.

Cross at the corner - not in the middle of the street or between parked cars.

Avoid walking in traffic where there are no sidewalks or crosswalks. If you have to walk on a road that does not have sidewalks, walk facing traffic.

Evaluate the distance and speed of oncoming traffic before you step out into the street.

Wear bright colors or reflective clothing if you are walking or biking near traffic at night. Carry a flashlight when walking in the dark.

Avoid listening to music or make sure it is at a low volume so you can hear danger approaching.

Bicycle lights are a 'must have' item for safe night riding, especially during the winter months when it gets dark earlier.

Pierce Kettering likes hands-on experience at Rutgear605

by Dorene Nelson

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

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

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

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

All students must be at their chosen place of work during their Internship class. There are two separate sections of Internship classes this year. The student interns must contact the place they would like to work and have their own personal transportation.

Pierce Kettering, son of Kara and Kevin Pharis and Scott Kettering, is interning first semester at Rutgear 605. He has two sisters and two brothers.

"I participate in football and baseball," Kettering listed. "I also plan to go out for wrestling this year."

"I chose to work here for Justin Hanson and Jeremy Weber," he smiled, "because I know both of them and really enjoy working here with them."

"There are other places I could have selected, but I prefer hands-on work," Kettering admitted. "The work can be difficult and challenging, but I'm learning how to do it with fewer problems."

"The best part of this job is seeing the improvements as I learn more about the work of putting together towers for deer blinds," he explained. "One of the first towers we put together was leaning to one side, and that's not good!"

"The towers arrive here in pieces, with labels and directions on how to put it together," Kettering stated. "But just because it's labeled and has clear directions doesn't mean the tower will stand up straight!"

"Following high school graduation, I plan to attend Lake Area Technical College and major in Precision Agriculture," he said. "While in Watertown, I also intend to get instruction and training to get a private pilot's license."



Milpa gardens can build soil health and communities

By Stan Wise

South Dakota Soil Health Coalition

PIERRE, SD – Sometimes a little chaos provides an opportunity for growth.

That's certainly the case with a chaos garden, also called a milpa garden. It's a similar concept to the three sisters garden in which the three "sisters" of corn, beans and squash are planted together because each one benefits the growth of the others. The corn provides a tall stalk for the beans to climb, the beans fix nitrogen in the soil, and the large leaves of squash shade the ground, preserving moisture and suppressing weeds.

In a milpa garden, even more types of plants are included in the mix, and rather than being planted in neat rows, the vegetables are spread evenly across the garden. The result is a chaotic tangle of produce that offers more than just food.

This year, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks District Park Supervisor Ryan Persoon discovered that a milpa garden can help bring a community together. This spring, he was approached by Dan Forgey, South Dakota Soil Health Coalition Board member and longtime Cronin Farms agronomy manager, who had a bag of seed.

"He mentioned he had this bag of seed that, at the time, he described as a milpa garden and a community garden," Persoon said. "I didn't know anything about what this was. Community kind of stuck in my head."

Persoon runs the West Whitlock Recreation Area, which is next to a resort with summer residents, and he thought he could plant the garden in the park, and the people in the resort community could help grow the garden and then reap some of the rewards by taking some produce.

"At the time I didn't really know what was in this bag of seed," he said. "It was entertaining for us to plant this, see it grow, and see what would come to fruition and how it would impact our community. And I have to say it was quite the project. It was something I was very proud to be involved in."

The community became very involved in the garden. "The excitement of the unknown was what we enjoyed the most out of it," Persoon said. "It was thick. There was a lot of stuff to sort through. People enjoyed looking through it to find what they wanted, and that adds to the excitement of it."

Persoon said the garden contained several different types of squash, pumpkins, turnips, Swiss chard, and other produce. "I saw certain people putting their names on some squash because they didn't want them picked before they were ripe," he said. "It's a community, so everybody kind of shared in it, and it was really quite neat."



This chaos garden in the West Whitlock Recreation Area entertained local residents who enjoyed searching through the garden for the different types of produce they wanted. (Courtesy Photo)

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 5 of 79

In addition to bringing the community together, the garden benefitted pollinators and wildlife. "It was attractive for pollinators, for birds, and I have no doubt this winter when a lot of the brassicas and the squash, the pumpkins freeze down, the deer are going to be all over those squash and pumpkins," Persoon said.

Next year, he said, "we're definitely going to do something like this again if not pretty much exactly the same thing again."

A milpa garden also offers soil health benefits.

"All of the soil is pretty well covered, and there's something living on almost every square inch," SDSHC Soil Health Technician Baylee Lukonen said. "When they call this a chaos garden sometimes, that's exactly what it is. The plants are all working together."

Lukonen grew a milpa garden on her farm near Watertown this year. "It was really cool to see that certain plants that have vining tendencies would actually vine up the sunflowers or the taller millet," she said. "That's how they were getting their sunlight. It's just really cool to see all of it working together aboveground, and if it's working together aboveground, there's definitely a lot happening belowground that we can't see."

Lukonen also used her garden to interact with the community. She invited the local Boys and Girl Club to bring students out to her farm each week to learn about soil health and pollinators.

"We thought it was a great idea," Watertown Boys and Girls Club Prevention Coordinator Brad Drake said. "We're always looking for additional programs for the kids, particularly if there's an educational component."

"The Boys and Girls Club brought out a group of about 10-15 kids every Thursday for a good portion of the summer," Lukonen said. "We just taught them about different things in the soil, soil properties, and we also taught them about the milpa garden and how everything that is in the milpa garden can grow together without being separated and planted into rows, which is different than your traditional garden."

The students ranged in age from 8 to 12 years old.

"There was a real emphasis on soil health, of course, so they talked a lot about cover cropping," Drake said. "It wasn't always the same kids each week that went out, but some of them got to see the whole process from the planting, to learning why it was important, to how these various crops have benefitted the soil, and different nutrients they added or drew up and made available."

Lukonen said the only challenging aspect to a milpa garden is that it is difficult to harvest, but she had a suggestion on how to make it easier. "Next year I think we are going to create walkways," she said. "If we want the kids to help with the harvest, we're going to have to make walking paths throughout."

Gardeners who are interested in trying a milpa garden can contact the South Dakota Soil Health Coalition at sdsoilhealth@gmail.com or 605-280-4190.

Applications open for Social Studies Standards Revision Commission

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Education is seeking individuals to be part of the Social Studies Standards Revision Commission, which will work with the department to draft new state content standards for K-12 social studies.

Establishing the commission is the first step in restarting the review of South Dakota Social Studies Standards, as directed by Gov. Kristi Noem in October. The department will appoint commission members from a variety of disciplines and perspectives, including K-12 educators, subject-matter experts, and Native American representatives.

Individuals interested in serving on the commission can use this online form to apply. The application deadline is Nov. 14, 11:59 p.m. CST.

The public will have opportunities to review and provide feedback on the commission's work prior to the drafting of standards.

The commission's work will begin in December and continue through summer 2022.

Once drafted, the standards will be subject to an extensive public comment period. From fall 2022 through spring 2023, the Board of Education Standards, which is responsible for the adoption of standards, will provide multiple opportunities to weigh in on proposed standards. The board will hold public hearings at locations across the state as well as take public comment via an online tool, email, and traditional mail.

After the public comment period concludes and final standards are adopted, the department will host trainings for educators throughout the 2023-24 school year. Full implementation of the standards would begin in the 2024-25 school year.

Plan ahead for 3G Phase Out in 2022

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Public Utilities Commission wants South Dakotans to be aware that all major mobile carriers, including AT&T, Verizon and T-Mobile, plan to phase out their 3G networks in 2022. The decommissioning of 3G networks, which rely on older technology, is part of a larger plan that will allow providers to focus more of their resources on building out newer networks, like 5G, to meet consumer demands instead of maintaining an older one. As a result of this change, older phones that require 3G networks to operate will lose service.

“If you have an older mobile phone, you may need to upgrade your device before mobile carriers shut down their 3G network to avoid losing service. Once your carrier makes this change, older phones, including 3G mobile phones will be unable to use data services and make or receive calls and texts, including calls to 911,” explained PUC Chairman Chris Nelson. “Some older 4G mobile phones that don’t support faster technology may also be affected,” Nelson continued.

Specific deadlines for this transition vary by company. Sprint, which is owned by T-Mobile, has announced that it will shut down its 3G network by Jan. 1, 2022. AT&T will follow suit phasing out 3G by February 2022. Verizon will end 3G service by Dec. 31, 2022. T-Mobile also plans to phase out its 2G and 3G networks, but has not yet announced a deadline.

“It’s important to understand that the dates these major carriers have provided are deadlines for retiring their 3G networks. Some may begin retiring parts of their 3G networks sooner,” said PUC Vice Chairperson Kristie Fiegen. “Keep in mind that many other carriers, like Cricket Wireless, Straight Talk and several Lifeline mobile service providers, utilize AT&T, Verizon and T-Mobile networks for service, so their deadlines may impact your service even if your contract is with a different provider,” Fiegen stated.

Phasing out older networks isn’t a new concept for wireless carriers; similar transitions have happened before. Many wireless providers shut down 2G networks in favor of building out the 4G network we now use. Benefitting from past experience, many service providers have developed programs and resources to help customers through this process.

Some carriers provide lists on their websites of devices that won’t be supported after 3G networks are decommissioned. Some mobile service providers may be offering special deals on new devices for those in need of an upgrade. Other devices may only require a software update to enable advanced services.

“The best way to ensure you don’t lose connectivity as a result of these phase outs is to do your research and plan ahead. Contact your mobile provider or consult your provider’s website for more information about their 3G retirement plan and how it may affect your service,” recommended PUC Commissioner Gary Hanson. “Be sure to consider any medical devices, tablets, smart watches, vehicle SOS services, home security systems and other devices that use cellular connectivity as a back-up when a wired internet connection goes down and other connected products that may use 3G as well,” he said.

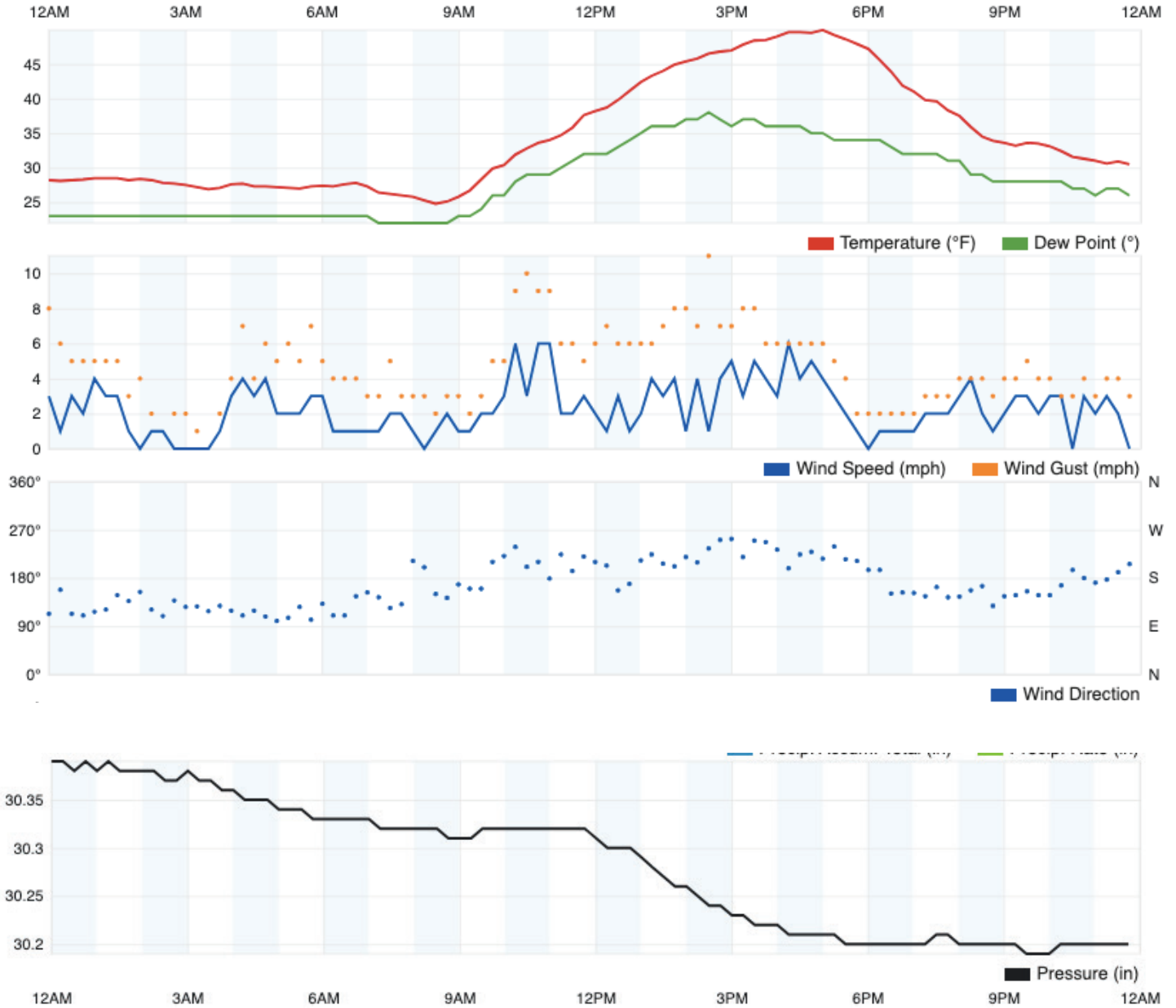
While additional programs like Lifeline and Tribal Lifeline and Link Up don’t cover the cost of new devices, they can assist eligible South Dakotans with the cost of phone or internet services. The Federal Communications Commission’s Emergency Broadband Benefit program may also provide a temporary discount of up to \$50 per month towards broadband service for eligible households during the COVID-19 pandemic. To find out more, visit the FCC’s website at <https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>.

For more information on the planned phase out of 3G cellular networks, see the FCC’s guide “Plan Ahead for Phase Out of 3G Cellular Networks and Service” at [fcc.gov/telephone](https://www.fcc.gov/telephone).

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 8 of 79

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 9 of 79

Today



Patchy Fog
then Sunny

High: 55 °F

Tonight



Partly Cloudy

Low: 37 °F

Friday



Decreasing
Clouds

High: 60 °F

Friday
Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 34 °F

Saturday



Sunny

High: 62 °F

Today & Friday
Highs: Low 50s to low 60s

A weather icon showing a sun partially obscured by a cloud.

Dry, with high temps 5-15 degrees above normal for early November. Breezy northwest winds across central SD on Friday.

The Weekend
Highs: Upper 50s to mid 60s

A weather icon showing a sun partially obscured by a cloud.

Dry, with high temps 10-20 degrees above normal for early November. A gradual cool-down takes place through the work-week.

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Updated: 11/4/2021 5:31 AM Central

Heads up for some fog across portions of east central South Dakota this morning. As for the rest of the day and through the weekend, above normal temperatures and mostly dry conditions are expected.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 10 of 79

Today in Weather History

November 4th, 1992: Significant snow blanketed much of the state except the southwest between November 1st and November 4th. The snow and slush caused numerous minor traffic accidents and further delayed the fall harvest in many areas. The highest snowfall amounts included over a foot in north-central and northeast South Dakota, and the northern Black Hills, generally 3 to 7 inches reported elsewhere. Some of the more significant storms total snowfall reports were 25.2 inches at Lead, 15 inches at Eureka, 14 inches near Summit, 13 inches near Victor, 12.6 inches at Roscoe, and 12 inches in Leola and 23 miles north of Highmore.

1935: Called the Yankee Hurricane, this Category 2 storm affected the Bahamas and South Florida. The storm remains the only tropical cyclone to hit Miami from the Northeast in November.

1959: A rare F0 tornado caused minor damage near Cape St. Elias Light Station on Kayak Island, Alaska.

1985: Heavy rains from the remnants of tropical storm Juan dropped 10 to 19 inches of rain on West Virginia and surrounding states, causing 62 deaths. A maximum rainfall amount of 19.77 inches was recorded near Montebello in the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia. The flood in West Virginia was considered the worst in the state's history.

1927 - A great Vermont flood occurred. Tropical rains deluged the Green Mountain area of Vermont causing the worst flood in the history of the state. Torrential rains, up to 15 inches in the higher elevations, sent streams on a rampage devastating the Winooski Valley. Flooding claimed 200 lives and caused 40 million dollars damage. The town of Vernon reported 84 deaths. Flooding left up to eight to ten feet of water in downtown Montpelier VT. (2nd-4th) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1985 - A super wet Gulf storm dumped upwards of fifteen inches of rain in the mountains of Virginia and West Virginia causing devastating damage and claiming forty lives. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1987 - Thirty-two cities in the eastern and south central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Highs of 74 degrees at Portland ME and 86 degrees at Fort Smith AR equalled November records. It was the fourth day of record warmth for Beckley WV, Memphis TN and Paducah KY. A cold front ushered much colder air into the north central U.S. Gale force winds lashed all five Great Lakes. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a fast moving cold front produced severe weather over the Tennessee Valley and the Central Gulf Coast States during the afternoon and evening hours, and into the next morning. Thunderstorms spawned nineteen tornadoes, including eleven in Mississippi. The last of the nineteen tornadoes killed a woman in her mobile home in Lee FL. A tornado in Culbert AL injured sixteen people, and caused two million dollars damage. Thunderstorms also produced baseball size hail in Alabama. Unseasonably hot air prevailed south of the cold front. McAllen TX was the hot spot in the nation with a high of 102 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Snow and high winds plagued parts of Colorado and Wyoming. Winds gusted to 71 mph near Wheatland WY, and reached 80 mph west of Fort Collins CO. Up to five inches of snow blanketed Yellowstone Park WY closing many roads. Snow also blanketed northern Minnesota, with seven inches reported at Baudette. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

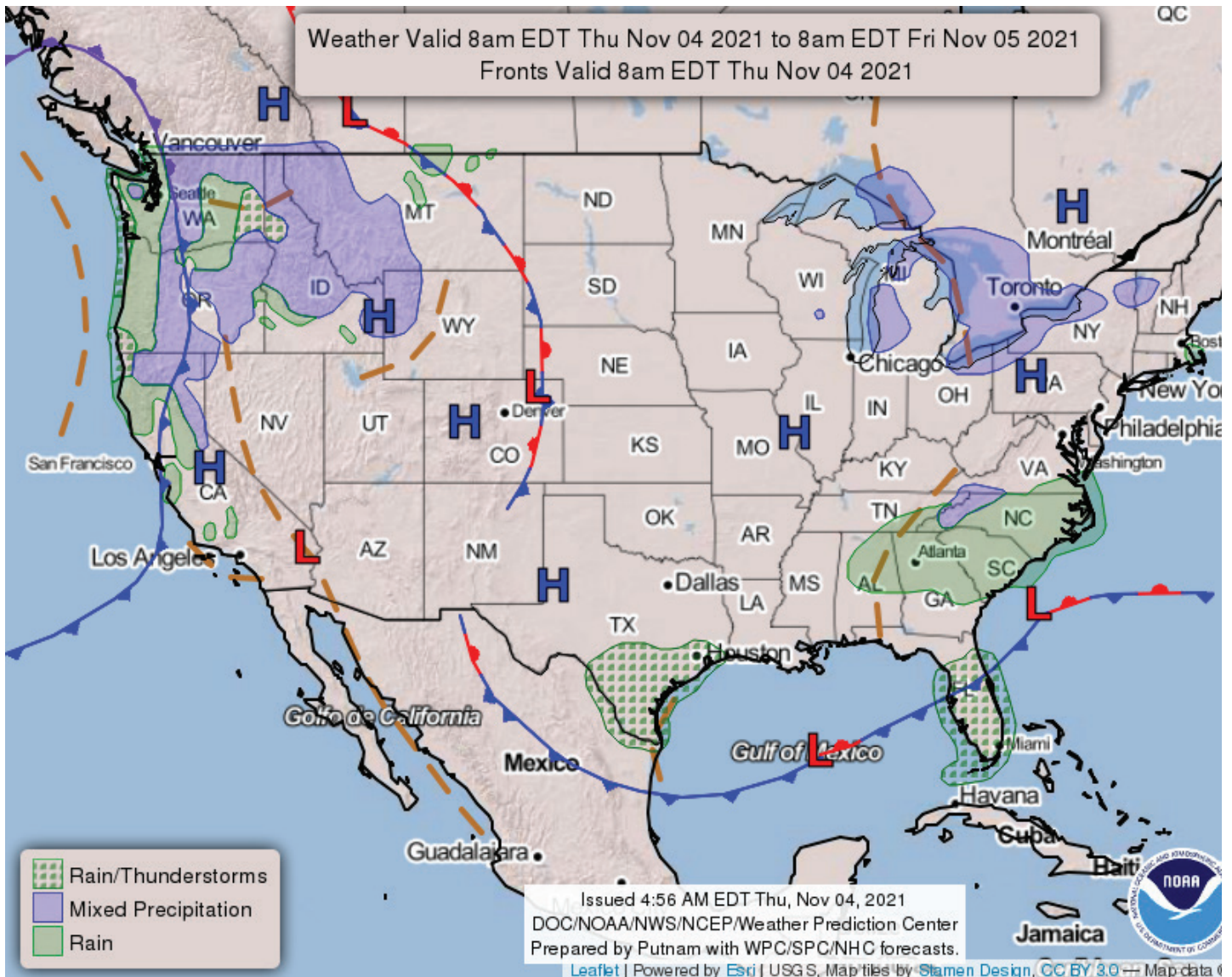
Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 11 of 79

Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 49.9 °F at 5:00 PM
Low Temp: 24.8 °F at 8:30 AM
Wind: 11 mph at 2:30 PM
Precip: 0.00

Record High: 78° in 2020
Record Low: -2° in 1991
Average High: 49°F
Average Low: 25°F
Average Precip in Nov.: 0.14
Precip to date in Nov.: 4.30
Average Precip to date: 20.61
Precip Year to Date: 19.72
Sunset Tonight: 6:16:48 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:16:31 AM



Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 12 of 79



IT ALL BELONGS TO GOD

Our Psalmist had a great way of looking at things. "There is the sea vast and spacious," he observed. Perhaps he was sitting on a beach looking beyond the rolling waves as they crashed on the shore one after another. Maybe he was on a hillside far removed from the water - yet thinking about its various contents and the ships that floated quietly above its depths.

But he also "saw" beneath the water and beyond their endless waves. He was aware that it was "teeming with creatures beyond number - living things both large and small. There the ships go to and fro, and the leviathan, which you formed to frolic there."

The sea - though "vast and spacious" - was not an end in itself. It contained all sizes and shapes of creatures that he could not see nor was able to count. They enjoyed "frolicking" - or playing in a part of His creation that He made just for them.

There also were ships that went "to and fro" that carried people and cargo to distant lands that he could not see. The ocean was not an end in itself, either. With all of its majesty and might and endless movement, it also has its place in God's creation.

Nothing in God's creation is an end in itself. "For all things," Paul said, "were created by Him and for Him." We can look anywhere and everywhere and whatever our eyes see has God's trademark on it. Everything is signed with His name, for His honor, His glory, for His plan and for His purpose. Especially us. What more can we do for Him?

Prayer: Lord, we are the "crown" of Your creation. Please help us realize how precious we are to You. We pray that we will do all that we can in Your name for You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: There is the sea vast and spacious teeming with creatures beyond number, living things both large and small. There the ships go to and fro, and the leviathan, which you formed to frolic there. Psalm 104:25-26

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 13 of 79

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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

03-09-17-18-27

(three, nine, seventeen, eighteen, twenty-seven)

Estimated jackpot: \$187,000

Lotto America

04-08-10-32-40, Star Ball: 9, ASB: 3

(four, eight, ten, thirty-two, forty; Star Ball: nine; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$3.76 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$36 million

Powerball

01-02-24-50-57, Powerball: 26, Power Play: 2

(one, two, twenty-four, fifty, fifty-seven; Powerball: twenty-six; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$132 million

Brookings man pleads guilty in 2019 death of toddler

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Brookings man has pleaded guilty to first-degree manslaughter for his role in the 2019 starvation death of a toddler.

Robert Price, Jr. entered the plea after reaching an agreement with prosecutors. Price and the child's aunt, Renae Fayant, were indicted by a grand jury in July 2019 on charges of second-degree murder, first-degree manslaughter and abuse or cruelty to a minor under age 7.

The state agreed to dismissal of the remaining charges against Price and is recommending 40 years in the South Dakota State Penitentiary, KSFY-TV reported.

Fyant was earlier sentenced to 75 years in prison for her role in the case.

Fyant admitted being the primary caregiver for the girl and did not dispute that the child had died because of malnourishment and dehydration, according to court documents.

Brookings County State's Attorney Dan Nelson issued the following statement:

"After today's guilty plea, we're finally able to bring closure to this case. Law enforcement and our office worked hard throughout the process to ensure justice was delivered on behalf of the victim and her family."

Nelson says it was clear that Fayant was primarily responsible for the victim. But, he said Price had knowledge of what was happening and refused to act. Nelson says the 40-year sentence recommendation is appropriate.

UK authorizes Merck antiviral pill, 1st shown to treat COVID

By MATTHEW PERRONE and MARIA CHENG Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain has granted a conditional authorization to Merck's coronavirus antiviral, the first pill shown to successfully treat COVID-19. It is the first country to OK the treatment, although it was not immediately clear how quickly the pill would be available.

The pill was licensed for adults 18 and older who have tested positive for COVID-19 and have at least one risk factor for developing severe disease, such as obesity or heart disease. The drug, known as molnupiravir, is intended to be taken twice a day for five days by people at home with mild to moderate COVID-19.

An antiviral pill that reduces symptoms and speeds recovery could prove groundbreaking, easing casel-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 15 of 79

oads on hospitals and helping to curb outbreaks in poorer countries with fragile health systems. It would also bolster the two-pronged approach to the pandemic: treatment, by way of medication, and prevention, primarily through vaccinations.

Molnupiravir is also pending review at regulators in the U.S., the European Union and elsewhere. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced last month it would convene a panel of independent experts to scrutinize the pill's safety and effectiveness in late November.

Initial supplies will be limited. Merck has said it can produce 10 million treatment courses through the end of the year, but much of that supply has already been purchased by governments worldwide.

In October, U.K. officials announced they secured 480,000 courses of molnupiravir and expected thousands of vulnerable Britons to have access to the treatment this winter via a national study.

"Today is a historic day for our country, as the UK is now the first country in the world to approve an antiviral that can be taken at home for COVID-19," said Britain's health secretary, Sajid Javid.

"We are working at pace across the government and with the NHS to set out plans to deploy molnupiravir to patients through a national study as soon as possible," he said in a statement, referring to the U.K.'s National Health Service. Doctors said the treatment would be particularly significant for people who do not respond well to vaccination.

Merck and its partner Ridgeback Biotherapeutic have requested clearance for the drug with regulators around the world to treat adults with mild-to-moderate COVID-19 who are at risk for severe disease or hospitalization. That's roughly the same group targeted for treatment with infused COVID-19 antibody drugs, the standard of care in many countries for patients who don't yet require hospitalization.

Merck announced preliminary results last month showing its drug cut hospitalizations and deaths by half among patients with early COVID-19 symptoms. The results have not yet been peer reviewed or published in a scientific journal.

The company also did not disclose details on molnupiravir's side effects, except to say that rates of those problems were similar between people who got the drug and those who received dummy pills.

The drug targets an enzyme the coronavirus uses to reproduce itself, inserting errors into its genetic code that slow its ability to spread and take over human cells. That genetic activity has led some independent experts to question whether the drug could potentially cause mutations leading to birth defects or tumors.

Britain's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency said molnupiravir's ability to interact with DNA and cause mutations had been studied "extensively" and that it was not found to pose a risk to humans.

"Studies in rats showed that (molnupiravir) may cause harmful effects to the unborn offspring, although this was at doses which were higher than those that will be given to humans, and these effects were not observed in other animals," the agency said in an email.

In company trials, both men and women were instructed to either use contraception or abstain from sex. Pregnant women were excluded from the study. Merck has stated that the drug is safe when used as directed.

Molnupiravir was initially studied as a potential flu therapy with funding from the U.S. government. Last year, researchers at Emory University decided to repurpose the drug as a potential COVID-19 treatment. They then licensed the drug to Ridgeback and its partner Merck.

Last week, Merck agreed to allow other drugmakers to make its COVID-19 pill, in a move aimed at helping millions of people in poorer countries get access. The Medicines Patent Pool, a United Nations-backed group, said Merck will not receive royalties under the agreement for as long as the World Health Organization deems COVID-19 to be a global emergency.

But the deal was criticized by some activists for excluding many middle-income countries capable of making millions of treatments, including Brazil and China.

Still, experts commended Merck for agreeing to widely share its formula and promising to help any companies who need technological help in making their drug — something no coronavirus vaccine producers have agreed to.

"Unlike the grotesquely unequal distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, the poorest countries will not have to

wait at the back of the queue for molnupiravir," said Dr. Mohga Kamal-Yanni, a senior health adviser to the People's Vaccine Alliance. Fewer than 1% of the world's COVID-19 vaccines have gone to poor countries and experts hope easier-to-dispense treatments will help them curb the pandemic.

Previously Merck announced licensing deals with several Indian makers of generic drugs to manufacture lower-cost versions of molnupiravir for developing countries.

The U.S. reportedly paid roughly \$700 per course of the drug for about 1.7 million treatments. Merck says it plans to use a tiered pricing strategy for developing countries. A review by Harvard University and King's College London estimated the drug costs about \$18 to make.

While other treatments have been cleared to treat COVID-19, including steroids and monoclonal antibodies, those are administered by injection or infusion and are mostly for hospitalized patients.

Matthew Perrone reported from Washington.

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

The AP Interview: Justice Dept. conducting cyber crackdown

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department is stepping up actions to combat ransomware and cybercrime through arrests and other actions, its No. 2 official told The Associated Press, as the Biden administration escalates its response to what it regards as an urgent economic and national security threat.

Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco said that "in the days and weeks to come, you're going to see more arrests," more seizures of ransom payments to hackers and additional law enforcement operations.

"If you come for us, we're going to come for you," Monaco said in an interview with the AP this week. She declined to offer specifics about who in particular might face prosecution.

The actions are intended to build off steps taken in recent months, including the recent extradition to the U.S. of a suspected Russian cybercriminal and the seizure in June of \$2.3 million in cryptocurrency paid to hackers. They come as the U.S. continues to endure what Monaco called a "steady drumbeat" of attacks despite President Joe Biden's admonitions last summer to Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin after a spate of lucrative attacks linked to Russia-based hacking gangs.

"We have not seen a material change in the landscape. Only time will tell as to what Russia may do on this front," Monaco said.

Another official, National Cyber Director Chris Inglis, painted a rosier picture, telling lawmakers Wednesday that the U.S. had seen a "discernible decrease" in attacks emanating from Russia but that it was too soon to say why.

But Monaco added: "We are not going to stop. We're going to continue to press forward to hold accountable those who seek to go after our industries, hold their data hostage and threaten economic security, national security and personal security."

Monaco is a longtime fixture in Washington law enforcement, having served as an adviser to Robert Mueller when he was FBI director and as head of the Justice Department's national security division. She was a White House official in 2014 when the Justice Department brought a first-of-its-kind indictment against Chinese government hackers.

Monaco's current position, with oversight of the FBI and other Justice Department components, has made her a key player in U.S. government efforts against ransomware. That fight has defied easy solutions given the sheer volume of high-dollar attacks and the ease with which hackers have penetrated private companies and government agencies alike. How much lasting impact the latest actions will have is also unclear.

Though not a new phenomenon, ransomware attacks — in which hackers lock up and encrypt data and demand often-exorbitant sums to release it to victims — have exploded in the last year with breaches affecting vital infrastructure and global corporations.

Colonial Pipeline, which supplies roughly half the fuel consumed on the East Coast, paid more than \$4

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 17 of 79

million after a May attack that led it to halt operations, though the Justice Department clawed the majority of it back by gaining access to the cryptocurrency wallet of the culprits, known as DarkSide. The public should expect to see more such seizures, Monaco said.

JBS, the world's largest meat processor, paid \$11 million in June following a hack by a Russian group known as REvil, which weeks later carried out what's believed to be the largest single ransomware attack on record — largely through firms that remotely manage IT infrastructure for multiple customers.

The splashy attacks elevated ransomware as an urgent national security priority while the administration scrambled to stem the onslaught.

Inside the Justice Department, officials in April formed a ransomware task force of prosecutors and agents, and they've directed U.S. attorney offices to report ransomware cases to Washington just as they would terrorism attacks.

It has also tried prosecutions, extraditing from South Korea last month an accused Russian hacker, Vladimir Dunaev, who prosecutors say participated in a cyber gang whose malicious software — "Trickbot" — infected millions of computers.

"You're going to see more actions like you saw last week in the days and weeks to come," Monaco said.

Still, holding foreign hackers accountable in the U.S. is notoriously difficult, and ransomware gangs are abundant. Even if recent attacks haven't generated the same publicity as the ones last spring, Monaco said there's been no discernible change in behavior by opportunistic hackers still targeting a range of industries with attacks that threaten to paralyze crucial business operations — or force multimillion-dollar payouts.

Monaco said she's sympathetic to the hard decisions companies must make, in part because she's had experience confronting criminals' monetary demands.

As homeland security and counterterrorism adviser in the Obama administration, she helped craft a policy on Americans held hostage overseas. The policy reiterated that ransom payments for hostages were discouraged and illegal, but also made clear that prosecutors didn't plan to prosecute families who made such payments.

"What it reflects, and frankly what the whole endeavor reflected, was a sense on Lisa's part that this was an area where you needed an extraordinary balance between policy and humanity," said Joshua Geltzer, the Biden administrator's deputy homeland security adviser who worked with Monaco in the Obama White House.

The U.S. government has publicly discouraged ransomware payments but Monaco — who during the Obama administration faced criticism from hostage families about the government's response to their plight — says the administration is trying to listen to and work with victimized companies.

Officials have shown no interest in prosecuting companies that pay ransom to hackers, though Monaco did announce last month that the department was prepared to sue federal contractors who fail to disclose that they've been hacked or who fail to meet cybersecurity standards.

"We have experienced where companies do not pay the attention they need to on this front," Monaco said.

Ransomware attacks have flourished even as the federal government grapples with more old-fashioned, albeit sophisticated, cyber espionage. The Justice Department was among the agencies hit hard by the SolarWinds breach, in which Russian government hackers exploited a supply chain vulnerability to gain access to the networks of federal departments and private companies.

The Justice Department has said more than two dozen U.S. attorneys' offices had at least one employee whose email account was compromised.

It was a reminder, she said, that no one is immune from a sophisticated breach.

"We need to practice what we preach and be doing the same type of vigilance on our cybersecurity that we are asking companies to do," she said.

Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>.

Countries pledge to phase out climate culprit coal

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 18 of 79

By FRANK JORDANS and SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

GLASGOW, Scotland (AP) — Several major coal-using nations have pledged for the first time to phase out their use of the heavily-polluting fossil fuel or to speed up existing plans to do so, while others announced commitments to end investment in new coal-fired power plants.

U.K. business secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said late Wednesday that the commitments made on the sidelines of the U.N. climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland, meant the “end of coal is in sight.” But critics noted the several major economies still have not set a date for ending their dependence on the fuel that is a major source of planet-warming emissions.

The British government said pledges of new or earlier deadlines for ending coal use came from countries including Poland, Ukraine, Vietnam and Chile. Further details about which countries were doing what were to be announced Thursday at the conference, known as COP26.

While Kwarteng called the agreements a “milestone moment in our global efforts to tackle climate change,” his counterpart in the opposition Labour Party’s said there were “glaring gaps” such as the lack of commitment from large emitters to stop increasing coal domestically.

Labour’s business spokesman Ed Miliband also noted that there were no new commitments on phasing out of oil and gas, the other major fossil fuels, he said.

Existing targets for curbing global warming require countries to stop burning coal, but many major economies including the United States, China, India and Japan have set no formal dates for ending its use.

Still, experts said the announcement and others made so far at the Oct. 31-Nov. 12 summit showed the growing momentum to ditch coal.

“Today’s commitments will help to shift whole continents on their journey to phase out coal,” said Dave Jones of the energy think tank Ember.

Poland is the second-biggest user of coal in Europe after Germany, which is set to phase it out as early as 2030. While the Polish government had previously agreed to end coal use by 2049, the new pledge would bring this deadline forward by at least a decade.

Ukraine, the third-biggest coal consumer in Europe, is also bringing forward its coal deadline, from 2050 to 2035.

“The progress on coal being shown at COP26 demonstrates that the conditions are ripe for a global coal exit,” said Leo Roberts, a senior researcher at the environmental think tank E3G.

“We now need to see the incoming massive scale-up in clean energy finance made available quickly to ensure all countries can confidently move from coal to clean,” he added.

But some environmental activists said the commitments didn’t go far enough.

“Emissions from oil and gas already far outstrip coal and are booming, while coal is already entering a terminal decline,” said Murray Worthy of the campaign group Global Witness. “This is a small step forwards when what was needed was a giant leap.”

The agreements on coal are not part of the formal negotiations at the U.N. talks in Glasgow. But British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, whose country is hosting the conference, had said he wanted to see deals on coal, cars, trees and cash.

Hui contributed from London.

Follow AP’s coverage of the climate conference at <http://apnews.com/hub/climate>.

Tennis, sex and politics combine in Chinese #MeToo scandal

By KEN MORITSUGU Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese authorities have squelched virtually all online discussion of sexual assault accusations apparently made by a Chinese professional tennis star against a former top government official, showing how sensitive the ruling Communist Party is to such charges.

In a lengthy social media post that disappeared quickly, Peng Shuai wrote that Zhang Gaoli, a former

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 19 of 79

vice premier and member of the party's all-powerful Politburo Standing Committee, had forced her to have sex despite repeated refusals following a round of tennis three years ago. Her post also said they had sex once seven years ago and she had feelings for him after that.

Peng is a former top-ranked doubles player, taking 23 tour-level doubles titles, including Grand Slams at Wimbledon in 2013 and the French Open in 2014.

The Associated Press could not verify the authenticity of her post, which was made late Tuesday night by her verified account on Weibo, a leading Chinese social media platform. The post was removed soon after, and a search on Weibo for Peng's account now turns up no results. Neither she nor Zhang could be reached for comment.

The accusation is the first against a prominent government official since the #MeToo movement took hold in China in 2018 before being largely tamped down by authorities the same year. Earlier accusations were confined to the media, advocacy groups and academia.

The Communist Party's response illustrates its determination to control public discourse and restrain social movements it can't be sure of controlling. While social media has become ubiquitous in China, it remains firmly under party control.

Screenshots of the post have circulated on Twitter, which is blocked in China, reinvigorating discussion on that platform about gender relations in China, where men dominate the top levels in politics and business.

In the post, Peng, 35, wrote that Zhang, now 75, and his wife arranged to play tennis in Beijing about three years ago and that he later brought her into a room at his home where the assault occurred.

"I was so frightened that afternoon, never thinking that this thing could happen," the post says.

Rumors and overseas reports about affairs between younger women and leading officials have long been staples of Chinese politics, starting with the founder of the People's Republic, Mao Zedong.

Cases brought against present and former officials under party leader and President Xi Jinping's decade-long anti-corruption campaign also frequently feature accusations of "lascivious lifestyles," along with bribery and abusing their positions.

Zhang retired in 2018 and has largely disappeared from public life, as is usual with former Chinese officials.

Peng hasn't played at the top tier since the Qatar Open in February 2020. In singles, she reached the semifinals of the 2014 U.S. Open and the Round of 16 at the subsequent Australian Open, but hasn't progressed beyond the third round at any major since Wimbledon in 2017.

The Communist Party has increasingly cracked down on civil society, including the #MeToo movement that has struggled to gain traction in the country.

Zhou Xiaoxuan, a former intern at Chinese state broadcaster CCTV, was shoved by bystanders in September as she went to court in a case against a well-known presenter.

Since then, the movement has been largely shut down by authorities as activists found their online posts censored and faced pressure from authorities when trying to hold protests.

Associated Press writer Huizhong Wu in Taipei, Taiwan, contributed to this report.

Stranger charged with abducting 4-year-old Australian girl

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Cleo Smith was back to her laughing, bubbly self as she played in the backyard of her Australian west coast family home on Thursday, hours before a 36-year-old stranger was charged with abducting the 4-year-old from a camping tent more than two weeks ago.

Police charged Terry Kelly, a local resident, with forcibly taking a child among other offenses, a police statement said.

Kelly appeared briefly in court in the town of Carnarvon where a magistrate refused to release him on bail.

Police visited Cleo's family in Carnarvon as they prepared to gather crucial eyewitness evidence involving Kelly, who is suspected of snatching her from a campground north of the town of 5,000 people on Oct. 16.

"I can only see her on the outside, but from that point of view, I'm amazed that she seems to be so

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 20 of 79

well-adjusted and happy, and it was really ... heartwarming to see that she's still bubbly and she's laughing," Detective Senior Sergeant Cameron Blaine said.

"I'm sure that it has had an impact, but just to see her behaving quite naturally like a 4-year-old girl should do and just enjoying being in the presence of her little sister and her family was good," Blaine added.

Blaine was part of a four-member police team that used a battering ram to smash into a locked house early Wednesday and rescue Cleo. The lights were on and she was alone playing with toys in a house less than a 10-minute drive from her own, police said.

"My name is Cleo," the smiling girl told the police officers who rescued her and asked her name as confirmation that they had found the right child.

Kelly was arrested in a nearby street at about the same time, police said.

Detective Superintendent Rod Wilde, who heads the police investigation, said specialist child interviewers had traveled to Carnarvon from the state capital Perth, 900 kilometers (560 miles) to the south.

"The main concern around that is Cleo's welfare," Wilde said of the interview.

"We have experienced people that will undertake that and it'll take as long as it takes. We'll sit down with the family and work out the appropriate time," Wilde added.

Police would not comment on whether Cleo was interviewed before Kelly was charged.

Media have reported Kelly raised suspicion among other residents when he was seen buying diapers and was known to have no children, but police have disclosed little information about what made the man a suspect.

"It wasn't a random tip or a clairvoyant or any of the sort of things that you might hear," Police Minister Paul Papalia said. "It was just a hard police grind."

Kelly was taken from police detention to a hospital late Wednesday and again on Thursday, with what media reported were self-inflicted injuries.

Asked about reports Kelly was injured after banging his head against a cell wall, Western Australia Police Deputy Commissioner Col Blanch only replied that there were "no serious injuries."

A police statement said Kelly's "medical matter does not relate to any police involvement with him."

Wilde said Kelly had since returned to the police station and was "speaking to officers."

Wednesday was the first full night Cleo spent at home with her mother, Ellie Smith, stepdad Jake Gliddon and her baby half-sister Isla Gliddon since the family's ordeal began.

As they slept, public buildings in Perth were illuminated with blue lights to celebrate the success of the police investigation. In Carnarvon, balloons were raised on buildings and signs were posted welcoming Cleo home.

Western Australia Premier Mark McGowan also visited the family on Thursday and commented on how "well-adjusted" the child and her parents seemed.

"She's bubbly, playing, friendly, sweet. She was eating an icy pole, she spilt it every way. She told me it was very, very sticky, which I believed, and she was just delightful," McGowan said.

McGowan said he gave her two teddy bears dressed in police uniforms, but she seemed unimpressed with his suggestion that she name them Cameron and Rod after the senior detectives leading her investigation.

Blaine, a homicide investigator, said he was uncertain whether Cleo recognized him from their first meeting when they met again on Thursday. He described his reaction to finding Cleo alive as "shock, followed by elation."

"We'd always hoped for that outcome, but were still not prepared for it," Blaine said.

Xanthe Mallett, a criminologist at Australia's Newcastle University, said finding a victim of stranger abduction alive after more than two weeks was rare.

"Sadly, they're normally killed quickly, usually during the first three hours," Mallett said.

The Carnarvon community's willingness to help police find Cleo was likely a key factor in the investigation's success, she said. Police had offered a 1 million Australian dollar (\$743,000) reward for information, but don't expect the money will be claimed.

"I always thought that this was going to be somebody with local connections because it was somebody

who knew that campsite, so the fact that she was so close to that campsite and so close to Cleo's home wasn't a surprise to me," Mallett said.

Police "engaged so well with that community and had them on board, they had the whole community's eyes on everyone, reporting anyone suspicious. I think that was really key in this investigation — just great, old-fashioned, boots-on-the-ground police work," Mallett added.

"Rust" film armorer says someone may have put bullet in gun

The Associated Press undefined

The woman in charge of weapons on the movie set where actor Alec Baldwin fatally shot cinematographer Halyna Hutchins said Wednesday night that she had inspected the gun Baldwin shot but doesn't know how a live bullet ended up inside.

"Who put those in there and why is the central question," Hannah Gutierrez Reed, the armorer for the movie "Rust" said in a statement issued by one of her lawyers, Jason Bowles of Albuquerque, New Mexico. "Hannah kept guns locked up, including throughout lunch on the day in question (Oct. 21), and she instructed her department to watch the cart containing the guns when she was pulled away for her other duties or on a lunch break."

The statement goes on to say that "Hannah did everything in her power to ensure a safe set. She inspected the rounds that she loaded into the firearms that day. She always inspected the rounds."

The statement adds that she inspected the rounds before handing the firearm to assistant director David Halls "by spinning the cylinder and showing him all of the rounds and then handing him the firearm."

"No one could have anticipated or thought that someone would introduce live rounds into this set," Gutierrez Reed's statement said.

The statement also noted that "she did firearms training for the actors as well as Mr. Baldwin, she fought for more training days and she regularly emphasized to never point a firearm at a person."

On Oct. 29, attorneys for Hannah Gutierrez Reed said she doesn't know where the live rounds found there came from and blamed producers for unsafe working conditions.

Santa Fe County Sheriff Adan Mendoza has said there was "some complacency" in how weapons were handled on the set of "Rust."

Investigators initially found 500 rounds of ammunition — a mix of blanks, dummy rounds and what appeared to be live rounds. Industry experts have said live rounds should never be on set.

Additional ammunition, a dozen revolvers and a rifle also were seized in the search of a white truck used for storing props including firearms, according to an inventory list filed Friday in court.

Analysis: After tough election, Biden dismisses danger signs

By AAMER MADHANI and COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The hazard lights are blinking for President Joe Biden after Democratic setbacks in this week's elections, but the president professes to see no reason for panic.

Just one year after he rode to the White House with a record 81 million votes, Biden saw Democratic stalwart Terry McAuliffe fall to first-time Republican candidate Glenn Youngkin in the governor's race in Virginia, a state that Biden had won by 10 percentage points. In New Jersey, incumbent Gov. Phil Murphy barely won in a state that Biden had won by 16 percentage points.

But with some on the left warning that Democrats face a five-alarm fire, Biden is making the case that the electorate's mood — and Democratic fortunes — will improve when he gets Congress to pass his domestic agenda.

"People need a little breathing room. They're overwhelmed. And what happened was I think we have to just produce results for them to change their standard of living and give them a little more breathing room," Biden said Wednesday.

The president parsed the election results after delivering remarks at the White House to showcase federal approval of COVID-19 shots for young children, pronouncing it "a day of relief and celebration" for families.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 22 of 79

But even as he argued that his administration was making progress in moving past the coronavirus pandemic and that his domestic spending plan is the balm to soothe an angry electorate, the president rejected the idea that the Democrats' poor showing at the polls was linked to intraparty delays in advancing a stalled \$1 trillion infrastructure bill and a 10-year, \$1.75 trillion package of social and environmental initiatives.

Instead, Biden said, even if the bills had passed ahead of Tuesday's election, it probably wouldn't have mattered much for McAuliffe, who drew more votes than any Democratic gubernatorial candidate in the commonwealth's history.

"I'm not sure that I would be able to have changed the number of very conservative folks who turned out in the red districts who were Trump voters," Biden said. "But maybe. Maybe."

Voter surveys tell a different story. Three-quarters of voters said drawn-out negotiations in Washington over Biden's governing agenda were an important factor in their vote. Those voters were more likely to back Youngkin, according to preliminary results from AP VoteCast, a survey of Virginia voters.

The president now sees his support diminished, with 47% of Virginia's voters approving of his job performance and 53% disapproving — a split similar to U.S. adults nationwide in recent AP-NORC polling.

Rep. Gerry Connolly, a Virginia Democrat, said the results in Virginia, where GOP candidates also won statewide races for lieutenant governor and attorney general, should be a wake-up call for Democrats — and Biden — ahead of 2022 midterm elections in which they are looking to protect razor-thin majorities in the House and Senate.

"I think the president's tanking approval rating really made it very difficult for the ticket to rise above that," Connolly said,

But in making the case that things aren't as bad as they seem, White House officials pointed to established historic patterns in the two states that suggested the races would be uphill climbs for Democrats no matter what.

Even as Virginia has trended Democratic in recent years the sitting president's party has lost the governor's race in 11 of 12 elections there. In New Jersey, Murphy's slim victory marked the first time an incumbent Democratic governor was reelected in 44 years.

Biden looked at the results and suggested no reset was necessary for his White House.

He spoke with certitude of the many factors grinding on Americans — the lingering pandemic, rising costs at the gas pump, uncertainty about the economy — as problems that would go away if he could just get his agenda passed.

"If I'm able to pass, sign into law my Build Back Better initiative, I'm in a position where you're going to see a lot of those things ameliorated quickly and swiftly," the president said.

While not exactly congruous, the moment harks back to 2010 when Democrats took what President Barack Obama called a "shellacking" in the midterm election. The party lost 63 seats in the House, while Republicans also netted six gubernatorial seats and flipped control of 20 state legislative chambers.

At the time, the economy was improving after the Great Recession. But for many Americans, it was not fast enough even though the Obama administration had pushed through more than \$800 billion in stimulus. Obama had also managed to get his signature health care legislation passed into law.

Still, for much of America the rebound wasn't enough. And Republicans seized on the linchpin of the legislation — the requirement that every American be insured or pay a fine — as government overreach.

Similarly, the pandemic-jarred economy continues to make progress after hitting bottom in the early days of the pandemic, and a relative sense of normalcy has returned even as the delta variant continues to claim hundreds of lives each day.

White House officials insist they are optimistic that the problems for Biden and Democrats will be short-lived, that political pain will recede as COVID-19 cases decline and kids get shots, and Democrats move closer to passing the infrastructure bill and the president's domestic agenda.

But if past is prologue, the burdens of the moment on the electorate could prove too heavy a lift even if Biden gets what he wants.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 23 of 79

"Historically speaking, passing big legislation does not lead to electoral success," said Kyle Kondik, an elections analyst at the University of Virginia Center for Politics. "Voters just often won't reward those things and sometimes they punish aggressive legislating."

EDITOR'S NOTE — Aamer Madhani has covered the White House for The Associated Press since 2019. Colleen Long has covered criminal justice and government for The Associated Press since 2006.

Associated Press writers Alexandra Jaffe and Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

Is it green, or forever toxic? Nuclear rift at climate talks

By ANGELA CHARLTON Associated Press

SOULAINES-DHUYS, France (AP) — Deep in a French forest of oaks, birches and pines, a steady stream of trucks carries a silent reminder of nuclear energy's often invisible cost: canisters of radioactive waste, heading into storage for the next 300 years.

As negotiators plot out how to fuel the world while also reducing carbon emissions at climate talks in Scotland, nuclear power is a central sticking point. Critics decry its mammoth price tag, the disproportionate damage caused by nuclear accidents, and radioactive leftovers that remain deadly for thousands of years.

But increasingly vocal and powerful proponents — some climate scientists and environmental experts among them — argue that nuclear power is the world's best hope of keeping climate change under control, noting that it emits so few planet-damaging emissions and is safer on average than nearly any other energy source. Nuclear accidents are scary but exceedingly rare — while pollution from coal and other fossil fuels causes death and illness every day, scientists say.

"The scale of what human civilization is trying to do over the next 30 years (to fight climate change) is staggering," said Matt Bowen, of Columbia University's Center for Global Energy Policy. "It will be much more daunting if we exclude new nuclear plants — or even more daunting if we decide to shut down nuclear plants all together."

Many governments are pushing to enshrine nuclear energy in climate plans being hashed out at the conference in Glasgow, known as COP26. The European Union, meanwhile, is debating whether to label nuclear energy as officially "green" — a decision that will steer billions of euros of investment for years to come. That has implications worldwide, as the EU policy could set a standard that other economies follow.

But what about all that waste? Reactors worldwide produce thousands of tons of highly radioactive detritus per year, on top of what has already been left by decades of harnessing the atom to electrify homes and factories around the world.

Germany is leading the pack of countries, mainly within the EU, standing firmly against labeling nuclear as "green." Meanwhile, the Biden administration supports nuclear power, China has a dozen reactors under construction — and even Japan is promoting nuclear energy again, 10 years after the disaster at its Fukushima power plant.

But nowhere in the world is as reliant on nuclear reactors as France, which is at the forefront of the pro-nuclear push at the European and global level. And it's among leading players in the nuclear waste industry, recycling or reprocessing material from around the world.

South of the World War I battlefields of Verdun, trucks bearing radioactivity warning stickers pull into a waste storage site near the village of Soulaines-Dhuys. They're repeatedly checked, wiped and scanned for leaks. Their cargo — compacted waste stuffed into concrete or steel cylinders — is stacked by robotic cranes in warehouses that are then filled with gravel and sealed with more concrete.

The agency that manages the waste, Andra, knows its scares people. "I cannot fight against people's fears. Our role is to guarantee the safety of people and the environment and the workers on the site," said spokesperson Thierry Pochot.

The storage units hold 90% of France's low- to medium-activity radioactive waste, including tools, clothing and other material linked to reactor operation and maintenance. The site is designed to last at least

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 24 of 79

300 years after the last shipment arrives, when the radioactivity of its contents is forecast to be no higher than levels found in nature.

For longer-life waste — mainly used nuclear fuel, which remains potentially deadly for tens of thousands of years — France is laying the groundwork for a permanent, deep-earth repository beneath corn and wheat fields outside the nearby stone-house hamlet of Bure.

Some 500 meters (yards) below the surface, workers carry out tests on the clay and granite, carve tunnels and seek to prove that the long-term storage plan is the safest solution for future generations. Similar sites are under development or study in other countries, too.

If the repository wins French regulatory approval, it would hold some 85,000 metric tons (94,000 tons) of the most radioactive waste produced “from the beginning of the nuclear era until the end of existing nuclear facilities,” said Audrey Guillemenet, geologist and spokesperson for the underground lab.

“We can’t leave this waste in storage sites on the surface,” where it is now, she said. “That is secure, but not sustainable.”

The 25 billion euro (\$29 billion) cost of the proposed repository is already built into budgeting by French utilities, Guillemenet said. But that’s just one piece of the staggering cost of building and operating nuclear plants, and one of the reasons that opposition abounds.

All around Bure, street signs are replaced with graffiti reading “Nuclear is Over,” and activists camp out at the town’s main intersection.

Greenpeace accuses the French nuclear industry of fobbing off waste on other countries and covering up problems at nuclear facilities, which industry officials deny. Activists staged a protest last week in the port of Dunkirk, as reprocessed uranium was being loaded onto a ship for St. Petersburg, demanding an end to nuclear energy and more research into solutions for existing waste.

“Nuclear waste ... needs to be dealt with,” Bowen said. But “with fossil fuels, the waste is pumped into our atmosphere, which is threatening us from the risks of climate change and public health impacts from air pollution.”

Some prominent scientists now embrace nuclear. They argue that over the past half-century, nuclear power stations have avoided the emission of an estimated 60 billion tons of carbon dioxide by providing energy that otherwise would have come from fossil fuels.

U.S. climate envoy John Kerry says he’s changed his early career opposition to nuclear because of the greater necessity to cut emissions.

“People are beginning to understand the consequences of not going nuclear,” said Kerry Emanuel, professor of atmospheric science at MIT. Amid a “growing awareness of the rise of climate risks around the world, people are beginning to say, ‘that’s a bit more frightening than nuclear power plants.’”

Some activists want to end nuclear energy today, and others want to phase it out soon. But Emanuel noted examples of countries or states that shut nuclear plants before renewables were ready to take up the slack — and had to return to coal or other planet-choking energy sources.

The current energy crunch is giving nuclear advocates another argument. With oil and gas costs driving an energy price crisis across Europe and beyond, French President Emmanuel Macron has trumpeted “European renewables and, of course, European nuclear.”

The waste, meanwhile, isn’t going away.

To make radioactive garbage dumps less worrying to local residents, Andra organizes school visits; one site even hosts an escape game. Waste storage researchers are readying for all kinds of potential future threats — revolution, extreme weather, even the next Ice Age, Guillemenet said.

Whatever happens in Glasgow, “whether we decide to go on with the nuclear energy or not,” she said, “we will need to find a solution for the management of that nuclear waste” that humankind has already produced.

Associated Press writers Frank Jordans and Ellen Knickmeyer in Glasgow, Scotland, contributed.

Follow AP's climate coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/climate>.

Israel spared fifth snap election as lawmakers pass budget

By ILAN BEN ZION Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's parliament passed a national budget for the first time in three years early on Thursday, avoiding a November deadline that would have brought down the new government and triggered another election.

The marathon overnight voting on budget bills in the Knesset, Israel's parliament, was a major hurdle for the new government headed by Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, whose fractious coalition holds a narrow majority.

Failure to pass the budget by Nov. 14 would have brought down the government that was sworn into office in June and triggered a fifth election in barely three years, giving former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu an opportunity to return to power.

Bennett celebrated on Twitter, writing that "after years of chaos -- we formed a government, we overcame the delta variant, and now, thank God, we passed a budget for Israel."

The Knesset began voting on a series of budget bills, including hundreds of amendments, late on Wednesday. The assembly opened with Bennett and Netanyahu delivering speeches attacking one another.

Netanyahu's allies repeatedly heckled and interrupted Bennett. Unruly scenes continued. At one point, a lawmaker from Netanyahu's Likud party was escorted out after calling the parliament speaker a "floor rag," and an ultra-Orthodox lawmaker was removed after meowing like a cat.

As the opposition sought to drag the vote out into the early hours of the morning, coalition whip Idit Silman distributed candy to keep lawmakers alert.

Early Thursday morning, the Knesset voted 61-59 in favor of a 2021 budget bill, the first approved by parliament since 2018. Later in the day lawmakers will reconvene to vote on a budget for 2022.

On the opposite side of the aisle, Israel Katz, Israel's former finance minister under Netanyahu, blasted the "terrible budget of cutbacks and taxes" in an Army Radio interview.

The ruling coalition headed by Bennett includes eight parties from across the political spectrum and has a razor-thin margin of 61 seats in the 120-member assembly.

Eitan Ginzburg, a coalition lawmaker, told Army Radio that by passing the 2021 budget, "we avoided fifth elections, stabilized the political system and the economy as well."

Israel entered a prolonged political crisis after elections in April 2019, when a right-wing party that had been allied with Netanyahu refused to sit in a government with him. The next two years saw three successive deadlocked elections. A short-lived national unity government formed to combat the coronavirus pandemic collapsed last year after failing to pass a budget, triggering a fourth election.

After elections last March, an array of parties from across the political spectrum, many led by former allies-turned-rivals of Netanyahu, succeeded in forming a ruling coalition and ended his record 12 years in power.

The alliance includes ultranationalists, centrists and dovish left-wing parties, and even a small Islamist party that made history by becoming the first Arab party to sit in an Israeli government. But the coalition only holds 61 seats, and agrees on little beyond their opposition to Netanyahu and desire to avoid another round of elections.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu is on trial for fraud, breach of trust, and accepting bribes in three cases while serving as prime minister. Israeli law did not require him to resign from office while under indictment, and he refused to step down. He used his platform as prime minister to level scathing attacks on his political opponents, the media and law enforcement.

After the new government was sworn in, Netanyahu vowed in June to "topple this dangerous government and return to lead the country." Now that the budget has passed, that task is more difficult. For now, he remains in control of his own party and leader of the opposition.

Katz, a prominent member of Netanyahu's party, said Thursday that "I am convinced that when Netan-

yahu resigns on his own accord... I will be elected head of the Likud party," but said he was focusing on ousting Bennett from office, not Netanyahu.

Radicalization's path: In case studies, finding similarities

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH, KATHY GANNON and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

In the months before he was charged with storming the Capitol, Doug Jensen was sharing conspiracy theories he'd consumed online. But it hadn't always been that way, says his brother, who recalls how he once posted the sort of family and vacation photos familiar to nearly all social media users.

A world away, Wahab hadn't always spent his days immersed in jihadist teaching. The product of a wealthy Pakistani family and the youngest son of four, he was into cars and video games, had his own motorcycle, even studied in Japan.

No two ideologues are identical. No two groups are comprised of monolithic clones. No single light switch marks the shift to radicalism. The gulf between different kinds of extremists — in religious and political convictions, in desired world orders, in how deeply they embrace violence in the name of their cause — is as wide as it is obvious.

But to dwell only on the differences obscures the similarities, not only in how people absorb extremist ideology but also in how they feed off grievances and mobilize to action.

For any American who casts violent extremism as a foreign problem, the Jan. 6 Capitol siege held up an uncomfortable mirror that showed the same conditions for fantastical thinking and politically motivated violence as any society.

The Associated Press set out to examine the paths and mechanics of radicalization through case studies on two continents: a 20-year-old man rescued from a Taliban training camp on Afghanistan's border, and an Iowa man whose brother watched him fall sway to nonsensical conspiracy theories and ultimately play a visible role in the mob of Donald Trump loyalists that stormed the Capitol.

Two places, two men, two very different stories as seen by two close relatives. But strip away the ideologies for a moment, says John Horgan, a researcher of violent extremism. Instead, look at the the psychological processes, the pathways, the roots, the experiences.

"All of those things," Horgan says, "tend to look far more similar than they are different."

THE AMERICAN

America met Doug Jensen via a video that ricocheted across the Internet, turning an officer into a hero and laying bare the mob mentality inside the Capitol that day.

Jensen is the man in a dark stocking cap, a black "Trust the Plan" shirt over a hooded sweatshirt, front and center in a crowd of rioters chasing Eugene Goodman, a Capitol Police officer, up two flights of stairs. One prominent picture shows him standing feet from an officer, arms spread wide, mouth agape.

When it was all over, he'd tell the FBI that he was a "true believer" in QAnon, that he'd gone to Washington because Q and Trump had summoned "all patriots" and that he'd expected to see Vice President Mike Pence arrested. He'd say he pushed his way to the front of the crowd because he wanted "Q" to get the credit for what was about to happen.

He'd tell his brother the photos were staged, how the police had practically let him in through the front door (prosecutors say he climbed a wall and entered through a broken window) and that some officers even did selfies with the crowd.

William Routh of Clarksville, Arkansas, had an unsettled feeling about that day even before the riot and says he cautioned his younger brother. "I said, if you go down there and you're going to do a peaceful thing, then that's fine. But I said keep your head down and don't be doing something stupid."

In interviews with the AP days and months after his younger brother's arrest, Routh painted Jensen — a 42-year-old Des Moines father of three who'd worked as a union mason laborer — as a man who enjoyed a pleasant if unextraordinary American existence. He says he took his family to places like the Grand Canyon and Yellowstone National Park, attended his children's sporting events, worked to pay for a son's college education, made anodyne Facebook posts.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 27 of 79

"I have friends that I speak to constantly that have conspiracy theories," Routh said, "but this was a shock to me more than anything, because I would not have thought this from my brother Doug, because he's a very good, hardworking family man and he has good values."

Exactly who Jensen is, and how much knowledge he had of the world around him, depends on who's talking.

A Justice Department memo that argued for Jensen's detention cites a criminal history and his eagerness to drive more than 1,000 miles to "hear President Trump declare martial law," then to take it into his own hands when no proclamation happened. It notes that when the FBI questioned him, he said he'd gone to Washington because "Q," the movement's amorphous voice, had forecast that the "storm" had arrived.

His lawyer, Christopher Davis, countered in his own filing by essentially offering Jensen up as a dupe, a "victim of numerous conspiracy theories" and a committed family man whose initial devotion to QAnon "was its stated mission to eliminate pedophiles from society."

Six months after the insurrection, the argument resonated with a judge who agreed to release Jensen on house arrest as his case moved forward. The judge, Timothy Kelly, cited a video in which Jensen referred to the Capitol building as the White House and said he didn't believe Jensen could have planned an attack in advance "when he had no basic understanding of where he even was that day."

Yet less than two months after he was released, Jensen was ordered back to jail for violating the conditions of his freedom. Though barred from accessing a cellphone, he watched a symposium sponsored by MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell that offered up false theories that the presidential election's outcome was changed by Chinese hackers. A federal officer making the first unannounced visit to Jensen found him in his garage using an iPhone to watch news from Rumble, a streaming platform popular with conservatives.

Davis, who weeks earlier had asserted that his client "feels deceived, recognizing that he bought into a pack of lies," likened his client's behavior this time to an addiction. The judge was unmoved.

"It's now clear that he has not experienced a transformation and that he continues to seek out those conspiracy theories that led to his dangerous conduct on Jan. 6," Kelly said. "I don't see any reason to believe that he has had the wake-up call that he needs."

Precisely when and how Jensen came to absorb the conspiracies that led him to the Capitol is bewildering to Routh, who says he took Jensen under his wing during a challenging childhood that included stays in foster care and now feels compelled, as his oldest living relative, to speak on his behalf.

When Jensen was questioned by the FBI, according to an agent's testimony, he said for the last couple of years he'd return home from an eight-hour workday and consume information from QAnon. In the four months before the riot, the brothers communicated about QAnon as Jensen shared videos and other conspiracy-laden messages that he purported to find meaning in but that Routh found suspect.

It was a period rife with baseless theories, advanced on the Internet and mainstream television, that an election conducted legitimately was somehow stolen in favor of Democrat Joe Biden. "It was just out there. It is on the internet everywhere," Routh says.

Routh, who says he's a Republican who supported Trump, maintains his brother and others like him were frightened by the prospect of a Biden victory. Before Jan. 6, Routh says, "We have been being told for the last — what? — seven, eight months that if the Democrats get control, we're losing our country, OK? That scares a lot of people."

He says he understands the anxiety of Trump supporters who fear the country may get more radical on the left. He has friends in oil fields and the pipeline industry who don't know "if they're going to be able to feed their families again." As Routh criss-crossed the country as a truck driver, he says the idea Trump would lose re-election seemed unfathomable given that virtually everyone he met, everywhere he went, was pushing "Trump, Trump, Trump."

When Routh looks at the photos of Jensen and the group he was with Jan. 6, he doesn't see a determination to physically hurt anyone or vandalize the building. And despite the QAnon T-shirt, and despite the statement to the FBI that he was "all about a revolution," Routh insists his brother was more a follower than a leader. Jensen is not among those charged with conspiracy or with being part of a militia group, and though prosecutors say he had a pocket knife with him, his lawyer says it was from work and he

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 28 of 79

never took it out.

"He had a lot of influence from everybody else there," Routh said this summer as he awaited a judge's ruling on his brother's bond motion. "And he has always been the kind of kid that says, 'I can do that.'"

Two days after the riot, back home in Iowa, Jensen walked 6 miles (9.66 kilometers) to the Des Moines police department after seeing he was featured in videos of the chaos, an FBI agent would later testify. There, the FBI says, he made statements now at the center of the case, including admitting chasing Goodman up the stairs, that he yelled "Hit me. I'll take it" as the officer raised a baton to move him back and that he profanely bellowed for the arrests of government leaders.

Though prosecutors suggest he had the presence of mind to delete potentially incriminating social media accounts from his phone, he also seemed uncertain — confused, even — during his encounter with law enforcement. As officials questioned him, according to an FBI agent's testimony, he said words to the effect of, "Am I being duped?"

THE PAKISTANI

Wahab had it all. The youngest son of four from a wealthy Pakistani family, he spent his early years in the United Arab Emirates and for a time in Japan, studying. Wahab liked cars, had his own motorcycle and was crazy about video games.

His uncle, who rescued the 20-year-old from a Taliban training camp on Pakistan's border with Afghanistan earlier this year, asked that his full name not be used because in the northwest where the family lives, militants have deep-reaching tentacles. But more than that, he worries about his family's reputation because of its prominence. He agreed to be quoted using his middle name, Kamal.

The family has business interests scattered across the globe. Kamal is one of five brothers who runs the family-owned import/export conglomerate. Each brother in turn has groomed and primed their sons for the business. Wahab's older brothers are already running overseas branches of the family business.

Wahab's future was to be no different. He returned to Pakistan in his early teens from abroad. Being the youngest son in a society that prizes males, he was spoiled. His older brothers sent him "pocket money," his uncle said. Other than school, Wahab had few responsibilities.

His uncle blamed his slide to radicalization on the neighborhood teens Wahab hung out with in their northwest Pakistan hometown — not to mention video games and Internet sites.

Wahab's friends introduced him to dozens of sites, his uncle said. They told of Muslims being attacked, women raped, babies brutally killed. The gruesomeness was horrifying, though Kamal says there was no way to know what was true — or if any had been doctored. But for Wahab, the images were deeply disturbing.

"He felt like he hadn't known what was going on, that he had spent his life in darkness and he felt he should be involved. His friends insisted he should. They told him he was rich and should help our people," his uncle said.

To his uncle, Wahab seemed to become increasingly aggressive and fixated on violence with the seemingly endless hours he spent playing video games. One in particular, called PUBG, was all the rage with Wahab and his friends.

"All the boys loved it," Kamal said. "For hours they would play as a team against the computer."

On pubgmobile.com, the game is described as focusing "on visual quality, maps, shooting experience ... providing an all-rounded surreal Battle Royale experience to players. A hundred players will land on the battleground to begin an intense yet fun journey." Wahab's uncle said he'd be shouting instructions as he played, interacting with teammates.

Suddenly, earlier this year, Wahab disappeared. His parents, frantic, searched everywhere. Wahab wasn't the first in the family to flirt with extremism. His cousin Salman had joined the local Pakistani Taliban years before. But he was different: He'd never been interested in school and was sent to a religious school, or madrassa, for his education. The family had long given up on him.

Salman swore he hadn't seen Wahab and knew nothing of where he might be — or if he had even joined jihad.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 29 of 79

Suspicion then fell on Wahab's friends. Family members were certain they'd induced him to defend against attacks that Wahab and his friends were convinced were being waged against Muslims, simply because of their religion.

The family used its influence and money to press the fathers of Wahab's friends to find the 20-year-old. They finally located him at a Pakistani Taliban training camp, where Kamal said Wahab was being instructed in the use of small weapons.

Such camps are also often used to identify would-be suicide bombers and instruct them in the use of explosives, identification of soft targets and how to cause the greatest destruction. The Pakistan Taliban have carried out horrific attacks; in 2014, insurgents armed with automatic rifles attacked a public school, killing more than 150 people, most children, some as young as 5.

When Wahab's father discovered his son was at a training camp, he was furious, said his uncle.

"He told the people, 'Leave him there. I don't accept him as my son anymore.' But I took it on myself to bring him back," Kamal said. He said he didn't ask Wahab about the camp or why he wanted to go — or even such basics as how he got there.

"I didn't want him talking about any of it. I didn't want to know why he went because then I knew he would start to get excited again and he would start thinking about it all over again," Kamal said. "Instead, I took a firm face with him."

His uncle told Wahab he was getting another chance — his last.

"I told him, 'Now it is on me. I have taken the responsibility. You won't get another chance. If you do anything again then I will shoot you,'" his uncle said. In Pakistan's northwest, where tribal laws and customs often decide family disputes and feuds, the threat was most likely not an idle one.

Today, Wahab is back in the family business, but his uncle says he is closely watched. He isn't allowed to deal with the company finances and his circle of friends is monitored. "Right now we don't trust him. It will take us time," his uncle says.

Fearful that others among Wahab's siblings and cousins could be enticed to extremism, the family has imposed greater restrictions on young male relatives. Their independence has been restricted, Kamal says: "We are watching all the young boys now, and most nights they have to be home — unless they tell us where they are."

Moral outrage. A sense of injustice. A feeling that things can only be fixed through urgent, potentially violent action.

Those tend to motivate people who gravitate toward extremism, according to Horgan, who directs the Violent Extremism Research Group at Georgia State University. He says such action is often seen as necessary to ward off a perceived impending threat to one's way of life — and to secure a better future.

"Those similarities you will find repeated across the board, whether you're talking about extreme right-wing militias in Oklahoma or you're talking about a Taliban offshoot in northwest Pakistan," Horgan says.

The world views driving extremist groups may feel fantastical and outrageous to society at large. But the true believers who consume propaganda and align themselves with like-minded associates don't see it that way. To them, they possess inside knowledge that others simply don't see.

"There's a contradiction, because they are committed insiders but part of their insider status is defined by pitting themselves against an outsider whose very existence is said to threaten their own," Horgan says. "They pride themselves on being anti-authoritarian. Yet conformity is what binds them together."

Research shows that people who espouse conspiracy theories tend to do poorer on measures of critical thinking. They reduce complex world problems — the pandemic, for instance — to simplified and reassuring answers, says Ziv Cohen, a forensic psychiatrist and expert on extremist beliefs at Weill Cornell Medical College of Cornell University.

Rather than attributing a job loss to the effects of globalization, for instance, one might see it as the result of a conspiracy that someone in particular has engineered.

"It gives us answers," he says, "that are much more appealing emotionally than the real answer."

That's where the stories of Jensen and Wahab seem to intersect. Both were seeking something. Both found answers that were enticing, attractive — and distorted versions of reality.

"For reasons he does not even understand today, he became a 'true believer' and was convinced he (was) doing a noble service by becoming a digital soldier for 'Q,'" Davis, Jensen's lawyer, wrote in a June court filing. "Maybe it was mid-life crisis, the pandemic, or perhaps the message just seemed to elevate him from his ordinary life to an exalted status with an honorable goal."

But is that goal ever reached? Is comfort ever found? Oddly, and perhaps counterintuitively, research has shown that when extremists' conspiracy theories are reinforced, their anxiety levels rise rather than fall, Cohen says. He likens the comfort to a drug — one that requires increasingly more consumption to take effect. Which helps perpetuate the cycle.

Says Cohen: "People seem to not be able to get enough of a conspiracy theory, but they're never quite satisfied or really reassured."

Associated Press writer David Pitt in Des Moines contributed to this report.

Bees, sheep, crops: Solar developers tout multiple benefits

By JOHN FLESHER and TAMMY WEBBER Associated Press

MONTICELLO, Minnesota (AP) — Silflower was among native plants that blanketed the vast North American prairie until settlers developed farms and cities. Nowadays confined largely to roadsides and ditches, the long-stemmed cousin of the sunflower may be poised for a comeback, thanks to solar energy.

Researchers are growing silflower at nine solar installations in the Minneapolis area, testing its potential as an oilseed crop. The deep-rooted perennial also offers forage for livestock and desperately needed habitat for bees, butterflies and hummingbirds.

"We need a lot of plots spaced pretty far apart to measure silflower's effects on pollinators," said crop scientist Ebony Murrell of The Land Institute, a research nonprofit. "The solar industry is interested in restoring pollinator habitat. This seemed to be a good partnership."

Solar is a renewable energy source that can help wean the world off fossil fuels that produce greenhouse gases. But it also could benefit the environment and economy in ways not as well known.

As the industry grows, solar arrays will sprawl across millions of acres (hectares) — wasting farmland, critics say. But advocates see opportunities to diversify crop production and boost landowner income, while repairing ecological damage to ground plowed under or paved over.

"There's lots of spaces where solar could be integrated with really innovative uses of land," said Brendan O'Neill, a University of Michigan environmental scientist who's monitoring how planting at a new 1,752-panel facility in Cadillac, Michigan, stores carbon.

Elsewhere, solar installations host sheep that reduce need for mowing. And researchers are experimenting with crop growing beneath solar panels, while examining other potential upsides: preventing soil erosion, and conserving and cleansing water.

LABS STUDY MIXED USES

The U.S. Department of Energy is funding a quest for best uses of lands around solar farms. The project, called InSPIRE, involves the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, Argonne National Laboratory and other partners conducting research at 25 sites nationwide.

The U.S. has about 2,500 solar operations on the electric grid, most generating one to five megawatts, according to the Energy Information Administration. A five-megawatt facility needs around 40 acres (16 hectares). While some occupy former industrial sites, larger installations often take space once used for row crops.

Depending on how quickly the nation switches to renewable electricity, up to 10 million acres (4 million hectares) could be needed for solar by 2050 — more than the combined area of Massachusetts and New Jersey, an analysis by Argonne found.

Solar developers and researchers hope projects with multiple land uses will ease pushback from rural

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 31 of 79

residents who don't want farmland taken out of production or consider solar panels a blight.

"We need healthy agricultural communities, but we also need renewable energy," said Jordan Macknick, the renewable energy lab's lead analyst for InSPIRE.

BUZZ AND FUZZ

At Cascadilla Community Solar Farm in upstate New York, sheep munch grasses among solar panels while bees and butterflies collect pollen from native flowers.

Cornell University researcher Niko Kochendoerfer says initial data from her three-year study shows light grazing — about eight sheep per acre — produces abundant bees and wildflowers, while keeping plants from shading panels. Some rare bee species are turning up.

Farmers get \$300 to \$550 per acre yearly to graze sheep at solar sites, increasing farm income while sparing them the cost of renting or buying pasture, said Kochendoerfer, who owns about 400 sheep with her fiancé, Lewis Fox. Grazing is less expensive than traditional site management, she said.

Fox has sheep at solar sites from southern Pennsylvania to Vermont.

"Certain times of the year ... the sites will be like a butterfly house in a zoo — there's just butterflies everywhere," he said.

Sheep are feeding at solar installations in more than 20 states, said Lexie Hain, director of the American Solar Grazing Association and Fox's business partner. It's also happening in the United Kingdom, other parts of Europe, Uruguay and Australia.

VEGETABLES IN SOLAR SHADE

In Longmont, Colorado, Jack's Solar Farm offers another example of solar meeting agriculture. Instead of wheat and hay as before, the farm's 24 acres (about 10 hectares) host 3,276 panels, generating enough power for about 300 homes. Beneath them grow tomatoes, squash, kale and green beans.

Researchers are comparing vegetables grown under panels six or eight feet (about two to 2½ meters) off the ground with others in open sunlight. Results were mixed during the recently concluded initial season but shaded plants appeared to have a longer growing season.

"We don't have to leave the soils underneath our solar panels across our country denuded or just left to weeds," owner Byron Kominek said. "Elevating the panels a little bit more provides agricultural jobs as well as an opportunity to do more with the land."

"Agrivoltaics," or growing produce beneath panels, is especially promising in hot, arid regions, say experts who have planted cherry tomatoes and peppers beneath them at the University of Arizona's Biosphere 2 laboratory.

Those crops usually match or exceed ones in a traditional environment, according to the team's findings. With less direct sunlight, they lose less water to evaporation, reducing irrigation demand. And the plants keep panels cooler, boosting performance.

How widely such farming could happen remains to be seen, said Greg Barron-Gafford, a biogeography professor at Arizona. Large-scale agriculture requires mechanized planting and harvesting that might be difficult beneath panels.

"But the vast majority of farms across the country are small farms that are breaking even or losing money," Barron-Gafford said, adding that leasing land for solar energy while still growing food could generate profits.

POLLINATOR HABITAT

While commercial prospects for agrivoltaics are unknown, scientists say it's certain that solar grounds are ideal for native grasses and flowers that draw pollinators, many facing extinction.

A team led by Oregon State University researcher Maggie Graham reported this year that bees and other insects visit plants partly or totally shaded by panels. They also may pollinate crops in nearby fields, boosting yields.

Compared to farmland, solar sites planted with pollinator-friendly native vegetation would provide a three-fold increase in habitat quality for pollinators, a recent Argonne study concluded. Pollinator-friendly sites would have two-thirds more carbon storage potential, nearly one-fifth less water runoff and 95% less soil erosion than traditionally cultivated land, it said.

Some solar developers are resisting because plants for pollinators are more expensive than lawn used at

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 32 of 79

many sites. But over time that's offset by lower maintenance, said Reed Richerson, chief operating officer of U.S. Solar, a Minneapolis developer.

The popularity of saving bees and butterflies is attracting the likes of Walmart, which buys power from dozens of pollinator-friendly U.S. Solar installations.

More than a dozen states have standards or guidelines based on qualities such as ground cover density and diversity, and the amount of land involved.

"We wanted to avoid greenwashing — planting a little patch of clover and petunias and saying, 'There's my pollinator-friendly contribution,'" said Michael Noble, director of Minnesota-based Fresh Energy, which helped develop the standards.

Many more nature-based solar gardens are needed as global warming and species losses accelerate, said Rob Davis, spokesman for Connexus Energy.

Three years ago, he said, one of the Minneapolis co-op's solar projects risked rejection by a suburban planning commission until supporters brought up the pollinator benefits and their visual appeal.

"The technology of solar energy is unfamiliar and foreign," Davis said. "But everyone understands what a meadow is."

Tammy Webber reported from Fenton, Michigan. AP video journalist Brittany Peterson contributed from Longmont, Colorado. On Twitter, follow @JohnFlesher and @twebber02. Follow AP's climate coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/climate>.

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

Urgent efforts to calm Ethiopia as war reaches one-year mark

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Urgent new efforts to calm Ethiopia's escalating war are unfolding Thursday as a U.S. special envoy visits and the president of neighboring Kenya calls for an immediate cease-fire while the country marks a year of conflict.

The lack of dialogue "has been particularly disturbing," Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta said in a statement, as the war that has killed thousands of people and displaced millions since November 2020 threatens to engulf the capital, Addis Ababa. Rival Tigray forces seized key cities in recent days and linked up with another armed group, leading the government of Africa's second most populous country to declare a national state of emergency.

The spokesperson for Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Billene Seyoum, did not immediately respond Thursday when asked whether he would meet with U.S. special envoy Jeffrey Feltman, who this week insisted that "there are many, many ways to initiate discreet talks."

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday said he had spoken with Abiy "to offer my good offices to create the conditions for a dialogue so the fighting stops."

But so far, efforts for such discussions have failed. Last week a congressional aide told The Associated Press that "there have been talks of talks with officials, but when it gets to the Abiy level and the senior (Tigray forces) level, the demands are wide, and Abiy doesn't want to talk."

Instead, the prime minister has again called citizens to rise up and "bury" the Tigray forces who long dominated the national government before he came to power. On Wednesday, Facebook said it had removed a post by Abiy with that language, saying it violated policies against inciting violence. It was a rare action against a head of state or government.

Kenya's foreign ministry separately said that statements inciting ordinary citizens into the conflict "must be shunned." Kenya also has increased security along its borders amid fears of a wave of Ethiopians fleeing the war as one of the world's worst humanitarian crises spreads.

Tigray forces spokesman Getachew Reda in a tweet late Wednesday claimed they had "joined hands" with

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 33 of 79

another armed group, the Oromo Liberation Army, to seize the city of Kemisse even closer to the capital. "Joint operations will continue in the days and weeks ahead," he said. The claim could not immediately be verified.

All sides in the war have committed abuses, a joint U.N. human rights investigation announced Wednesday, while millions of people in the government-blockaded Tigray region are no longer able to receive humanitarian aid.

With the new state of emergency's sweeping powers of detention, ethnic Tigrayans in the capital told the AP they were hiding in their homes in fear as authorities carried out house-to-house searches and stopped people on the streets to check identity cards, which everyone must now carry.

"Our only hope now is the (Tigray forces)," said one young woman, Rahel, whose husband was detained on Tuesday while going to work as a merchant but has not been charged. "They might not save us, to be honest. I've already given up on my life, but if our families can be saved, I think that's enough."

Another Tigrayan in the capital, Yared, said his brother, a businessman, was detained on Monday, and when he went to the police station to visit him he saw dozens of other Tigrayans.

"It's crazy, my friends in Addis, non-Tigrayans, are calling me and telling me not to leave the house," Yared said, adding that police came to his house on Wednesday, the latest of several such visits since the war began.

"They go through your phone and if you have some material about the Tigray war that would be suggesting supporting the war, they would just detain you," he said. "The past four days have been the worst by far, the scope at which they're detaining people, it's just terrorizing. We don't feel safe in our homes anymore."

A public suicide in Iran spotlights anguish over economy

By NASSER KARIMI Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Ruhollah Parazideh, a wiry 38-year-old with a thick mustache and hair flecked with gray, was desperate for a job. The father of three in southern Iran walked into a local office of a foundation that helps war veterans and their families, pleading for assistance.

Local media reported that Parazideh told officials he would throw himself off their roof if they couldn't help. They tried to reason with him, promising a meager loan, but he left unsatisfied.

He soon returned to the gates of the building, poured gasoline over himself, and put a lit match to his neck. He died from his burns two days later, on Oct. 21.

Parazideh's suicide in the city of Yasuj shocked many in Iran, and not just because he was the son of Golmohammad Parazideh, a prominent provincial hero of the country's 1980-88 war with Iraq that left hundreds of thousands dead.

It put a spotlight on the rising public fury and frustration as Iran's economy sinks, unemployment soars and the price of food skyrockets.

His death occurred outside the local office of the Foundation for Martyrs and War-Disabled People, a wealthy and powerful government agency that helps the families of those killed and wounded in Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution and subsequent wars.

"I was shocked when I heard the news," said Mina Ahmadi, a student at Beheshti University north of Tehran. "I thought that the families of (war) victims enjoyed generous support from the government."

Iran valorizes its war dead from the conflict with Iraq, known in Tehran as the "Sacred Defense," and the foundation plays a big role in that. After the revolution installed the clerically run system, the foundation began providing pensions, loans, housing, education and even some high-ranking government jobs.

Following Parazideh's suicide, the foundation fired two of its top provincial officials and demanded the dismissal of the governor's veteran affairs adviser as well as a social worker, lambasting their failure to send the distressed man to a medical facility or others for help, local media reported.

The fallout reached the highest levels of government. Ayatollah Sharfeddin Malakhosseini, an adviser to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, called the case a warning that officials should "get rid of unem-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 34 of 79

ployment, poverty and the disruption of social ties.”

In 2014, parliament launched an investigation into one of the main banks affiliated with the foundation for allegedly embezzling \$5 million. Its findings were never revealed.

The foundation is known to funnel financial support to Islamic militant organizations in the region, from Hezbollah in Lebanon to Hamas in Gaza, leading the U.S. to sanction it in 2007 for supporting terrorism. Parazideh’s suicide was one of several in recent years that appear driven by economic hardships.

Self-immolations killed at least two other veterans and injured the wife of a disabled veteran outside branches of the foundation in Tehran, Kermanshah and Qom in recent years.

As the coronavirus pandemic wreaked economic havoc, suicides in Iran increased by over 4%, according to a government study cited by the reformist daily Etemad.

For many in the Middle East, the act of self-immolation — the protest used by a fruit vendor named Mohammed Bouazizi in Tunisia that became a catalyst for the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings — evokes broader discontent with economic woes and the lack of opportunity.

“I don’t know where we are headed because of poverty,” said Reza Hashemi, a literature teacher at a Tehran high school.

In 2018, then-President Donald Trump withdrew America from Tehran’s landmark nuclear agreement with world powers and brought back sanctions on Iran, pummeling an oil-dependent economy already hobbled by inefficiencies. The pandemic has aggravated the economic despair. About 1 million Iranians have lost their jobs, and unemployment has climbed over 10% — a rate that is nearly twice as big among youths.

Capital flight has soared to \$30 billion, chasing away foreign investors.

Negotiations to revive the atomic accord stalled in the five months since hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi took office, allowing Tehran to press ahead with its nuclear program. On Wednesday, the European Union announced that talks between world powers and Iran on reviving the deal would resume Nov. 29 in Vienna. The announcement stoked modest hopes that the Biden administration can resuscitate the accord.

“It’s impossible to hide people’s discontent with the economy,” said Mohammad Qassim Osmani, an official at the Audit Organization Services, a government watchdog. “The structure of the country is faulty and sick. We need an economic revolution.”

Iran’s currency, the rial, has shriveled to less than 50% of its value since 2018. Wages haven’t grown to make up the loss, and the Labor Ministry reported that over a third of the population lives in extreme poverty.

“About 40 million people in the country need immediate and instant help,” said lawmaker Hamid Reza Hajbabaei, the head of the parliamentary budget committee, in a televised debate last week — referring to nearly half the population.

The deepening poverty goes beyond just numbers, becoming a visible part of daily life. On Tehran’s streets, more people are seen searching through garbage for something able to be sold. Children sell trinkets and tissues. Panhandlers beg for change at most intersections — a rare sight a decade ago.

Petty theft has surged, testing the already-tough justice system. Last week, a Tehran court sentenced a 45-year-old father of three to 10 months in prison and 40 lashes for pocketing a few packs of peanuts.

Gen. Ali Reza Lotfi, Tehran’s chief police detective, blamed the economy for the spike in crime, noting that over half of all detainees last year were first-time offenders.

It has fallen to Raisi to handle the economic pressures. He frequently repeats campaign promises to create 1 million jobs through construction and tourism projects.

But many low-wage workers, bearing the brunt of Iran’s crisis, have no hope.

Last month, in another case that drew huge attention, a 32-year-old teacher facing crushing debt hanged himself in the southern city of Guerash after a bank rejecting his request for a \$200 loan.

Associated Press writer Isabel DeBre in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, contributed to this report.

Indians celebrate festival of light amid COVID-19 fears

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 35 of 79

By KRUTIKA PATHI Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Indians across the country began celebrating Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, on Thursday amid concerns over the coronavirus pandemic and rising air pollution.

Diwali is typically celebrated by socializing and exchanging gifts with family and friends. Many light oil lamps or candles to symbolize a victory of light over darkness, and fireworks are set off as part of the celebrations.

Last year, celebrations in India were upended by a renewed spike in COVID-19 infections, but festivities this year seem to be back. Even though the government has asked people to avoid large gatherings, markets have been buzzing ahead of Diwali, with eager crowds buying flowers, lanterns and candles.

As dusk fell on Wednesday, over 900,000 earthen lamps were lit and kept burning for 45 minutes in the northern city of Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh state, retaining the Guinness World Record it set last year. As part of the Diwali celebrations, the city last year lit 606,569 oil lamps.

The lamps were lit at Ram ki Pauri, at the banks of Saryu River, a stunning spectacle for thousands of visitors who thronged its shores while ignoring coronavirus social distancing norms. A laser and fireworks show followed, illuminating the city's lanes and river banks. Thousands of city residents also lit lamps at their houses and temples.

The festival is being celebrated at a time when India's pandemic crisis has largely subsided.

On Thursday, the country recorded over 12,000 new coronavirus cases and 461 deaths, a far cry from earlier this year when India buckled under a few hundred thousand new infections every day. Overall, it has recorded more than 35 million infections and over 459,000 deaths, according to the Health Ministry. These figures, as elsewhere, are likely undercounts.

Even states where infections were swelling a few weeks ago, such as Kerala along the tropical Malabar Coast, have seen a sustained decline. India also celebrated administering its billionth COVID-19 vaccine dose last month, further boosting confidence that life is returning to normal.

Still, experts have warned that the festival season could bring a renewed spike in infections if COVID-19 health measures aren't enforced.

There are also worries over air pollution, which typically shrouds northern India under a toxic grey smog at this time as temperatures dip and winter settles in.

On Diwali night, people also lit up the sky with firecrackers — their smoke causing pollution that takes days to clear.

While there is no nationwide ban on bursting firecrackers, a number of states have imposed restrictions to stem the pollution, with some allowing their residents to light green crackers for a certain number of hours. Green crackers produce lesser emissions than normal firecrackers. In the past, similar bans have often been flouted.

Associated Press writer Biswajeet Banerjee in Lucknow, India, contributed to this report.

All eyes on vulnerable House Democrats after election losses

By WILL WEISSERT and STEVE PEOPLES Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — For many House Democrats, 2021 is looking a lot like 2009, a year when a Republican elected governor in Virginia foreshadowed a dreadful blowout in the next year's midterm elections.

Republican Glenn Youngkin's surge to victory in Virginia delivered the first blow, and then New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy was nearly defeated by a little known Republican, two results that led to one conclusion: Democrats are in grave danger of losing control of Congress.

"Is this '09 all over again? This is exactly what happened in '09 and it did portend a catastrophe in 2010," said Democratic Rep. Gerry Connolly. He represents a safely Democratic northern Virginia district outside Washington, but recalled Republicans winning his state's governor's race a year after President Barack Obama captured the White House and a year before a tea party-led GOP wave took control of the House.

House Democrats in swing districts are likely the party's first line of defense against such an outcome,

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 36 of 79

and they are the most vulnerable incumbents.

Mostly moderates, they helped deliver party control of the chamber in 2018 and keep it by a threadbare margin last year. Now, though, they are starting to closely resemble the same former Republican members many defeated four years ago.

Their president, Joe Biden, is not popular, and their control of Congress has been seen by voters as divisive and not productive. Keeping their seats also may mean defying historical trends dictating that the party that wins the White House loses ground in Congress during the next election — traditional political headwinds that are now almost certainly intensified for Democrats by Tuesday's election results.

Biden's approval ratings started falling with the chaotic U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and have sunk lower amid an economy still marred by the coronavirus pandemic, inflation and a White House legislative agenda largely bogged down in Congress.

Biden traveled to Virginia but was unable to buoy Democratic gubernatorial candidate Terry McAuliffe — he previously held the post from 2014 to 2018 — by attempting to tie Youngkin to former President Donald Trump.

"What worked when President Trump was on the ballot or in office clearly has a diminishing effect when he is not," said former Rep. Scott Taylor, a Virginia Republican who represented one of the nation's most competitive districts. "This is true of anyone. Republicans tying opponents to President Obama didn't really last beyond his terms."

Youngkin avoided campaigning with Trump or embracing a national GOP increasingly dominated by Trumpism. Jack Ciattarelli, the former Republican state Assembly member who nearly unseated Murphy in New Jersey, largely did the same.

Virginia Democrats, meanwhile, lost ground in the suburbs, where moderate voters who punished the GOP during the Trump administration came back to the party enough to sway the race.

Taylor lost his seat — it encompassed the city of Norfolk and the world's largest naval base — to moderate Virginia Democratic Rep. Elaine Luria in 2018, then was defeated in a rematch last year. He noted that Youngkin's promises to ensure parents have more say on school COVID-19 safety protocols, and what their children are being taught, resonated with suburban voters.

"We lost support from the key demographic of educated women in suburbia," Taylor said. "They care about education more than most. And they have seen their children, over the past couple years, at home, on the computer, falling behind, even regressing in some cases."

Democratic strategists were nonetheless hopeful that Trump would help change the political environment by becoming a more active presence in key elections ahead of a potential 2024 presidential run. Candidates locked in competitive GOP Senate primaries from Arizona to North Carolina to Pennsylvania have been fighting each other for Trump's support — meaning they can't follow the leads of Youngkin or Ciattarelli.

"The dynamic that happened last night will not be the dynamic that exists next November," David Bergstein, a spokesman for the Senate Democrats' campaign arm, said Wednesday. "In each of the Senate races right now, Trump is playing a starring role."

Frontline House Democrats, meanwhile, have for months promoted legislation they see as most appealing to swing voters. That includes insisting the Democratically controlled Congress tackle a bipartisan public works bill at the same time it is working to advance a massive spending plan backed by the party's more progressive wing.

Intraparty squabbles over both proposals helped ensure that neither was approved before Tuesday's election. Rep. Colin Allred, D-Texas, said Wednesday that "what we saw last night was a very strong anti-incumbent message."

"That, to me, is something that's also about feeling like the government's not working," said Allred, whose Dallas district has been targeted as a potential pickup opportunity by the National Republican Congressional Committee. "We have to show that we can govern."

Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., was even more blunt: "I hope my colleagues absorb this notion that, when you're the majority, to be a Democrat should stand for doer, not delay, dithering, do nothing, division."

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 37 of 79

Part of that division is between more moderate Democrats like Luria and the more activist progressive wing of her party. On Tuesday, progressives had limited success.

Michelle Wu became the first woman and person of color elected Boston mayor. But the left saw the defeat of a ballot initiative that would have remade policing in Minneapolis — the killing of George Floyd there last year touched off demonstrations against police brutality and institutional racism that swept the country.

In Buffalo, New York, four-term Mayor Byron Brown declared victory over democratic socialist India Walton, even though The Associated Press has not called that race.

Still, those results could help strengthen the position of moderates in swing House districts, who can declare themselves a bulwark of sorts. They can promise to keep Democrats' legislative priorities grounded in proposals that have a chance of actually being approved — rather than more ambitious goals championed by their progressive colleagues.

"This is not a moment for blaming," said moderate Rep. Stephanie Murphy, D-Fla. "This is a moment for action. And it is a moment to try and get something done for the American people."

The Democrats now have a year to pass legislation they see as most likely to resonate with voters. Even that is no guarantee it will improve their electoral chances in 2022.

"Voters don't go into the voting polls and say, 'I'm voting against you because you didn't get that bill passed,'" Connolly said. "Maybe a voter does. But not voters collectively."

Associated Press writer Alexandra Jaffe in McLean, Virginia, contributed to this report.

More issues, less Trump: GOP sees model after Virginia win

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Since the day he rode down a golden escalator and announced his candidacy for president, Republicans have struggled with how to deal with Donald Trump.

But after Glenn Youngkin's stunning victory in the Virginia governor's race — a state President Joe Biden won last year by 10 percentage points — and a strong GOP showing in deep-blue New Jersey's, party leaders believe they have a model that can deliver them big wins in next year's midterm elections.

By tapping into culture war fights over issues like school curricula, the GOP can energize Trump's loyal base. But party leaders believe this week's results demonstrate they can also win back suburbanites who abandoned the GOP during the Trump era by talking about local issues like taxes and keeping the former president at arm's length.

"Clearly Youngkin's win was a boost to Republicans and gives us momentum going into next year," said Asa Hutchinson, the Republican governor of Arkansas, who has not ruled out a run for president in 2024. That, combined with the surprisingly competitive race for governor in New Jersey, "showed that a Republican in this environment, talking about state issues, talking about education, talking about the future, can even win suburban votes and can win the middle."

As the full extent of Tuesday's voting became clear, the National Republican Congressional Committee, which is focused on retaking control of the House, named 13 more Democratic seats it hoped to flip. The National Republican Senatorial Committee, meanwhile, noted next year's map is weighted heavily toward swing states like Pennsylvania, Arizona and Georgia, which Biden won by far slimmer margins than he won Virginia and New Jersey.

Other states where Democrats have eyed Senate seats, such as North Carolina and Florida, were carried by Trump in 2020.

"It completely changes the dynamics of the map," NRSC spokesman Chris Hartline said.

The results emboldened some Trump critics like Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, a Republican who swept his own blue state and has long stressed the party's need to win back the swing voters and moderates whom Trump alienated.

"That's the way we're going to win," Hogan said. "It's a great road map. You can't double down on failure," he said, arguing that voters "want to hear what you'll do for them, not for Trump."

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 38 of 79

Of course, it remains unclear heading into the midterms whether Republicans will nominate the kind of candidates with the same appeal as Youngkin.

Many GOP primary contests, from Ohio to North Carolina, have been dominated by contenders who have tried to out-Trump one another, including parroting his lies about a stolen election. And the former president has been wading into races, aiming to crown candidates who have faced serious allegations as he has tried to exact revenge on those who crossed him by voting in favor of his impeachment or opposing his efforts to overturn the 2020 election.

One example is Sean Parnell, who is running for the Senate in Pennsylvania with Trump's backing. Parnell's estranged wife this week testified under oath that she had endured years of rage and abuse from him, including being choked until she had to bite him, a newspaper reported. Parnell had emphatically denied her claims.

And while Jack Ciattarelli, the Republican candidate for governor in New Jersey who lost a close vote, made a clear break with Trump, Youngkin did not. Instead, the Virginia Republican deftly handled the former president, persuading him to steer clear of the state, while nonetheless maintaining his support.

Trump endorsed Youngkin and praised him in the race's final stretch, but his involvement in the campaign was limited, including holding a "tele-rally" on election eve in which he spoke for less than 10 minutes. Trump's allies nonetheless made clear to his supporters that there was minimal daylight between the two men when it came to the issues.

John Fredericks, who served as Trump's campaign chair in the state in 2016 and 2020, hosted Trump on his radio show, and former Trump strategist Steve Bannon appeared at a rally to signal Youngkin's MAGA bona fides. One GOP strategist noted how Trump had developed a system of code words — like "America first" — that candidates like Youngkin could pick up as a means of signaling to Trump's base that he was speaking their language.

Democratic candidate Terry McAuliffe, meanwhile, flooded the airwaves with ads portraying Youngkin as a Trump acolyte, reminding Republicans that he was one of them.

"Thank you, Terry McAuliffe, for spending the money to help me get out our vote in massive numbers," Fredericks said. "He got our vote out. We didn't have to."

Beyond Trump, Youngkin tapped into an issue set that appealed both to rural voters in deeply Republican swaths of southwestern Virginia as well as those in the suburbs who agreed with Trump on the economy and other kitchen table issues but were turned off by his tone. He presented himself in chipper campaign ads as a genial, suburban dad in a sweater vest who could appeal to parents.

In particular, he seized on frustrations of parents, many of whom grew incensed over their children's schools' refusal to resume in-person classes during the pandemic, and subsequent mask mandates and attendance policies.

But as he promised to increase teacher pay and school budgets, Youngkin also didn't shy away from the culture war issues that Trump heralded in an effort to portray Democrats as out of the mainstream.

Youngkin sounded the alarm over transgender rights and critical race theory, an academic framework that centers on the idea that racism is systemic in the nation's institutions and that they function to maintain the dominance of white people. In recent months, it has become a catch-all political buzzword for any teaching in schools about race and American history. Indeed, he went so far as to release an ad featuring a mother expressing outrage that her child had been assigned to read "Beloved," the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Toni Morrison.

Fredericks credited Trump for Youngkin's victory, insisting the Republican wouldn't have won without Trump's base.

"Glenn Youngkin did nothing but embrace our core policies and voters from Day One. So he did nothing to alienate us," he said. "He put together a very simple coalition: Trump voters and angry parents."

Trump predictably agreed.

"Without that movement, that race wouldn't have even been close," he said on Fredericks' radio show Wednesday.

Detective: Rittenhouse shouted 'Friendly!' to pursuer

By TAMMY WEBBER, MICHAEL TARM and AMY FORLITI Associated Press

KENOSHA, Wis. (AP) — Kyle Rittenhouse shouted "Friendly! Friendly! Friendly!" as he was being chased by a man he eventually shot to death during street protests against racial injustice, a police detective testified — in a confrontation the defense portrayed as "the classic ambush."

Video took center stage Wednesday in the Illinois man's trial in the shootings of three men — two fatally — after Rittenhouse traveled to Kenosha in August 2020 with a medical kit and a rifle in what he says was an effort to safeguard property from damaging riots.

Jurors peered at infrared video made by an FBI surveillance plane from almost 9,000 feet above the spot where Rittenhouse shot 36-year-old Joseph Rosenbaum. With colored circles superimposed on the video identifying the movements of the two men far below, Kenosha Police Detective Martin Howard agreed with defense attorney Mark Richards that Rittenhouse had repeatedly shouted "Friendly!" as he was being chased — and that Rosenbaum appeared to be gaining ground on Rittenhouse.

Richards also described how Rosenbaum had come out from behind a car to meet Rittenhouse before the shooting, saying to the detective: "Correct me if I'm wrong, but this looks like the classic ambush."

After prosecutors objected, Richards said: "Mr. Rosenbaum is in hiding as my client arrives, correct?"

"It appears so, yes," Howard responded.

Testimony was to continue Thursday.

Rittenhouse, now 18, could get life in prison if convicted in the politically polarizing case that has stirred furious debate over self-defense, vigilantism, the right to bear arms and the racial unrest that erupted around the U.S. after the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and other cases like it.

The young man traveled to Kenosha from his home in Illinois after violent protests broke out over the shooting of a Black man, Jacob Blake, by a white Kenosha police officer. Rittenhouse said he went there to protect property after two nights in which rioters set fires and ransacked businesses.

Prosecutors have portrayed him as the instigator of the bloodshed, while his lawyer argued that he acted in self-defense after Rosenbaum tried to grab his gun and others in the crowd kicked him in the face and hit him in the head with a skateboard.

In one video, footage shows a man — Rosenbaum — chasing Rittenhouse and throwing a plastic bag at him just before the man was gunned down. Someone is heard yelling "F--- you!," followed by the sounds of the four shots Rittenhouse fired, though the shooting itself is not clearly seen on camera.

"Oh, he shot him! He shot him, man. He shot him. He shot him, man. He laid him out," the person making the video can be heard saying.

Footage shown to the jury also depicted Rosenbaum lying on the ground as frantic bystanders surrounded him to help. He had a wound to his head, and a bystander placed a shirt on it to apply pressure.

In the courtroom, Rittenhouse — seated in the jurors' line of sight — kept his eyes fixed on a desktop screen and showed no emotion as video depicted him walking down a street with his rifle and shooting at protesters, people scattering and screaming.

Many of the videos played in court were found by police on social media sites, where lots of footage was streamed live or promptly posted after the bloodshed, and many of the scenes were familiar to those following the case.

Howard, the detective, detailed injuries Rittenhouse suffered that night, all seemingly minor: A half-inch scratch above his eyebrow, a small cut inside his lower lip, a 2-inch scratch below his collarbone, a 2-inch scratch on his forearm, a scratch on his back and two bumps the size of pennies on his head.

Prosecutor Thomas Binger drove home the point that Rosenbaum was apparently unarmed, asking Howard if any of the videos shown in court indicated Rosenbaum had a weapon of any kind. Howard replied no.

"No gun?" Binger asked.

"I can only see a plastic bag he's carrying," Howard said.

"So no gun?" Binger asked.

"No," replied Howard, who repeated the answer when Binger also asked him whether Rosenbaum car-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 40 of 79

ried a knife, bat or club.

Richards drove against that on cross-examination, asking Howard what can happen if a weapon is taken from someone.

"It can be used against them as a deadly and dangerous weapon, correct?" Richards asked.

"Correct," Howard replied.

Jurors set their notepads aside and kept their eyes glued to the courtroom monitors at various points in the videos, most capturing the chaos of the violence and some showing graphic images of Rosenbaum after he was shot.

Moments after shooting the 36-year-old Rosenbaum, Rittenhouse shot and killed Anthony Huber, 26, a protester from Silver Lake, Wisconsin, who was seen on bystander video hitting Rittenhouse with a skateboard.

Rittenhouse then wounded Gaije Grosskreutz, 27, a protester from West Allis, Wisconsin, who had a gun in his hand as he stepped toward Rittenhouse.

Forliti reported from Minneapolis; Webber reported from Fenton, Michigan. Associated Press writer Scott Bauer contributed from Madison, Wisconsin.

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

Murphy ekes out win in NJ, GOP's Youngkin upsets in Virginia

By WILL WEISSERT and SARAH RANKIN Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy of New Jersey narrowly won reelection in his reliably blue state while a Republican political newcomer delivered a stunning upset in the Virginia governor's race, sending a warning Wednesday to Democrats that their grip on power in Washington may be in peril.

In Virginia, Glenn Youngkin became the first Republican to win statewide office in a dozen years, tapping into culture war fights over schools and race to unite former President Donald Trump's most fervent supporters with enough suburban voters to notch a victory.

Meanwhile, Murphy barely eked out a victory against GOP challenger Jack Ciattarelli, who mounted a surprisingly strong campaign on issues including taxes and opposition to pandemic mask and vaccination mandates.

The two states' results were particularly alarming to Democrats because of where they happened. President Joe Biden carried Virginia by 10 points last year. He took New Jersey by more than 15. Given the scale of those victories, neither state was seen as especially competitive when this year's campaigns began.

But the first major elections of Biden's presidency suggested growing discontent among voters. They also underscored that, with Trump out of office, Democrats can't center their messages on opposition to him. The results ultimately pointed to a potentially painful year ahead for Democrats as they try to maintain thin majorities in Congress.

And they put a new focus on congressional Democrats' inability so far to pass Biden's massive domestic policy legislation, though it's unclear whether the defeat will be enough to jolt his party into action.

Speaking from the White House on Wednesday afternoon, Biden said Democrats need to "produce for the American people."

Murphy, in a brief victory speech Wednesday night, alluded to his narrow margin of victory by saying he would "listen to all of New Jersey," but still emphasized Democratic goals like expanding voting rights, raising taxes on the wealthy and defending abortion rights.

Republicans celebrated their strong showing, with Youngkin telling a cheering crowd of supporters that "this is the spirit of Virginia coming together like never before." The GOP's strength extended to down-ballot contests, including the lieutenant governor's race, which Winsome Sears won, becoming the first woman of color to win Virginia statewide office.

McAuliffe formally conceded in a statement Wednesday morning that congratulated Youngkin.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 41 of 79

"Losing is never easy," he said. "We put ourselves out there and left it all on the field."

A political neophyte, Youngkin was able to take advantage of apparent apathy among core Democratic voters fatigued by years of elections that were seen as must-wins, as well as growing frustrations with Biden and the economy. He successfully portrayed McAuliffe, a former Virginia governor, Democratic National Committee chairman and close friend of Bill and Hillary Clinton, as part of an elite class of politicians. He also seized on a late-stage stumble by McAuliffe, who during a debate suggested parents should have a minimal role in shaping school curriculums.

Perhaps most significantly, Youngkin prevailed in a task that has stumped scores of Republicans before him: attracting Trump's base while also appealing to suburban voters who were repelled by the former president's divisive behavior.

During the campaign, Youngkin stated his support for "election integrity," a nod at Trump's lie that the 2020 presidential election was stolen, while also focusing on education and business-friendly policies. He never campaigned in person with Trump, successfully challenging McAuliffe's effort to cast him as a clone of the former president.

That approach could provide a model for Republicans competing in future races that feature significant numbers of Democratic or independent voters.

Elsewhere Tuesday, some of the nation's largest cities held mayoral contests. Democratic former police captain Eric Adams won in New York, and Boston voters elected City Councilor Michelle Wu as its first female and Asian American mayor. Cincinnati is getting its first Asian American mayor, Aftab Pureval.

Minneapolis voters rejected a ballot initiative that sought to overhaul policing in their city, where George Floyd was killed by a white police officer on Memorial Day 2020, sparking the largest wave of protests against racial injustice in generations. The initiative would have replaced the police force with a Department of Public Safety charged with undertaking "a comprehensive public health" approach to policing.

But no other contest in this off-year election season received the level of national attention — and money — as the governor's race in Virginia, a state with broad swaths of college-educated suburban voters who are increasingly influential in swaying control of Congress and the White House.

A former co-CEO at the Carlyle Group with a lanky, 6'6" build that once made him a reserve forward on Rice University's basketball team, Youngkin poured vast amounts of his personal fortune into a campaign that spent more than \$59 million. Favoring fleece vests, Youngkin sought to cut the image of a genial suburban dad.

Youngkin ran confidently on a conservative platform. He opposed a major clean energy mandate the state passed two years ago and objected to abortion in most circumstances.

He also opposed mask and vaccine mandates, and he promised to expand Virginia's limited charter schools and ban critical race theory, an academic framework that centers on the idea that racism is systemic in the nation's institutions and that they function to maintain the dominance of white people. In recent months, it has become a catch-all political buzzword for any teaching in schools about race and American history.

McAuliffe tried to energize the Democratic base by highlighting abortion, denouncing a new Texas law that largely banned the procedure and warning that Youngkin would seek to implement similar restrictions.

Youngkin didn't discuss abortion much publicly, and a liberal activist caught him on tape saying the issue couldn't help him during the campaign. He said an election win would allow the party to "start going on offense" on the issue.

While McAuliffe pulled on the star power of a host of national Democrats, including former President Barack Obama and ex-Georgia governor candidate Stacey Abrams, Youngkin largely campaigned on his own, focusing on issues he said were important to Virginians.

Polls showed the race tightening after McAuliffe said during a late September debate that he didn't think "parents should be telling schools what they should teach." That prompted Youngkin to run hundreds of TV ads on the statement and to focus on his own pledges to make school curricula less "un-American" and to overhaul policies on transgender students and school bathrooms.

The race took an especially bitter turn last week, when Youngkin ran an ad featuring a mother and GOP

activist who eight years ago led an effort to ban "Beloved," the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Black Nobel laureate Toni Morrison, from classrooms.

McAuliffe accused Youngkin of uncorking a "racist dog whistle," but Youngkin said Virginia parents knew what was really at stake — and so did families across the country. That was a nod to how tapping into parental activism could work for the GOP next year and in future election cycles.

"America is watching Virginia," Youngkin said as part of his closing argument.

Associated Press writers Ben Finley in Norfolk, Virginia, Hank Kurz in Richmond, Alexandra Jaffe in McLean and Jill Colvin in New York contributed to this report.

Derek Carr: Henry Ruggs III needs to be loved right now

By W.G. RAMIREZ Associated Press

HENDERSON, Nev. (AP) — Derek Carr said Henry Ruggs III needs to be loved right now and needs to know he has people in his corner.

"And if no one else will do it, I'll do it," the Las Vegas quarterback said Wednesday.

Raiders interim coach Rich Bisaccia said it's important to keep the focus on the fact 23-year-old Tina O. Tintor was killed Tuesday morning in a fiery crash caused by Ruggs, the 22-year-old receiver who was cut by the team Tuesday night.

"We want to express our sincere condolences to the victim's family," Bisaccia said from a prepared statement. "We're deeply saddened for everyone affected. Especially the victim's family."

Prosecutors said Ruggs was driving at 156 mph with a blood-alcohol content twice Nevada's legal limit before his Chevrolet Corvette slammed into the rear of Tintor's vehicle that burned, killing her.

"We love Henry Ruggs, and want him to know that," Bisaccia added. "It's a terrible lapse in judgment, of the most horrific kind. It's something that he will have to live with the rest of his life. The gravity of the situation is not lost on anyone here and we understand and respect the loss of life."

Ruggs and passenger Kiara Je'nai Kilgo-Washington were injured.

Las Vegas didn't wait for courts to act and announced Ruggs' release in a one-sentence statement Tuesday night. After struggling through his rookie season, the former Alabama star had emerged as one of Carr's favorite targets, hauling in 24 passes for a team-high 469 yards and two touchdowns.

"My emotions have been on a roller coaster so to speak this year," Carr said. "My heart goes out so much. I'll try to say it with a straight face because I've already been emotional about every bit of this. But to the family, to all the families involved, no one ever wants to see this, whether it's a football player or not, you never want to see something like this happen. It broke my wife and I's heart, honestly."

The crash came three weeks after Jon Gruden resigned as coach over emails he sent before being hired by the team in 2018.

Coming off a bye week, the Raiders are preparing to play Sunday at the New York Giants.

"Football is secondary to something like this happens, we are talking about lives, a lot of different lives in a lot of different situations," Carr said. "For us, from a football aspect, our mindset is we're going to be ready to play. That's for sure."

More AP NFL coverage: <https://apnews.com/hub/NFL> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

Globe bounces back to nearly 2019 carbon pollution levels

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

GLASGOW, Scotland (AP) — The dramatic drop in carbon dioxide emissions from the pandemic lockdown has pretty much disappeared in a puff of coal-fired smoke, much of it from China, a new scientific study found.

A group of scientists who track heat-trapping gases that cause climate change said the first nine months of this year put emissions a tad under 2019 levels. They estimate that in 2021 the world will have spewed

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 43 of 79

36.4 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide, compared to 36.7 billion metric tons two years ago.

At the height of the pandemic last year, emissions were down to 34.8 billion metric tons, so this year's jump is 4.9%, according to updated calculations by Global Carbon Project.

While most countries went back to pre-pandemic trends, China's pollution increase was mostly responsible for worldwide figures bouncing back to 2019 levels rather than dropping significantly below them, said study co-author Corinne LeQuere, a climate scientist at the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom.

With 2020's dramatically clean air in cities from India to Italy, some people may have hoped the world was on the right track in reducing carbon pollution, but scientists said that wasn't the case.

"It's not the pandemic that will make us turn the corner," LeQuere said in an interview at the climate talks in Glasgow, where she and colleagues are presenting their results. "It's the decisions that are being taken this week and next week. That's what's going to make us turn the corner. The pandemic is not changing the nature of our economy."

If the world is going to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times, it has only 11 years left at current emission levels before it is too late, the paper said. The world has warmed 1.1 degrees Celsius (2 degrees Fahrenheit) since the late 1800s.

"What the carbon emissions numbers show is that emissions (correcting for the drop and recovery from COVID19) have basically flattened now. That's the good news," said Pennsylvania State University climate scientist Michael Mann, who wasn't part of the report. "The bad news is that's not enough. We need to start bringing (emissions) down."

Emissions in China were 7% higher in 2021 when compared to 2019, the study said. By comparison, India's emissions were only 3% higher. In contrast, the United States, the European Union and the rest of the world polluted less this year than in 2019.

LeQuere said China's jump was mostly from burning coal and natural gas and was part of a massive economic stimulus to recover from the lockdown. In addition, she said, China's lockdown ended far earlier than the rest of the world, so the country had longer to recover economically and pump more carbon into the air.

The "green recovery" that many nations have talked about in their stimulus packages take longer to show up in emission reductions because rebounding economies first use the energy mix they already had, LeQuere said.

The figures are based on data from governments on power use, travel, industrial output and other factors. Emissions this year averaged 115 metric tons of carbon dioxide going into the air every second.

Breakthrough Institute climate director Zeke Hausfather, who wasn't part of the study, predicts that "there is a good chance that 2022 will set a new record for global CO2 emissions from fossil fuels."

For more AP climate coverage: <https://apnews.com/hub/climate>.

Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter: @ borenbears.

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

International Criminal Court to probe abuses in Venezuela

By JORGE RUEDA and JOSHUA GOODMAN Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — The International Criminal Court is opening a formal investigation into allegations of torture and extrajudicial killings committed by Venezuelan security forces under President Nicolás Maduro's rule, the first time a country in Latin America is facing scrutiny for possible crimes against humanity from the court.

The opening of the probe was announced Wednesday by ICC Chief Prosecutor Karim Khan at the end of a three-day trip to Caracas.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 44 of 79

Standing alongside Maduro, Khan said he was aware of the political “fault lines” and “geopolitical divisions” that exist in Venezuela. But he said his job was to uphold the principles of legality and the rule of law, not settle scores.

“I ask everybody now, as we move forward to this new stage, to give my office the space to do its work,” he said. “I will take a dim view of any efforts to politicize the independent work of my office.”

While Khan didn’t outline the scope of the ICC’s investigation, it follows a lengthy preliminary probe started in February 2018 — later backed by Canada and five Latin American governments opposed to Maduro — that focused on allegations of excessive force, arbitrary detention and torture by security forces during a crackdown on antigovernment protests in 2017.

Human rights groups and the U.S.-backed opposition immediately celebrated the decision. Since its creation two decades ago, the ICC has mostly focused on atrocities committed in Africa.

“This is a turning point,” said Jose Miguel Vivanco, the Americas director for Human Rights Watch. “Not only does it provide hope to the many victims of Maduro’s government but it also is a reality check that Maduro himself could be held accountable for crimes committed by his security forces and others with total impunity in the name of the Bolivarian revolution.”

It could be years before any criminal charges are presented as part of the ICC’s investigation.

Maduro said he disagreed with Khan’s criteria in choosing to open the probe. But he expressed optimism that a three-page “letter of understanding” he signed with the prosecutor that would allow Venezuelan authorities to carry out their own proceedings in search of justice, something allowed under the Rome statute that created the ICC.

“I guarantee that in this new phase we will leave the noise to the side and get down to work so that, together, the truth can be found,” said Maduro.

Maduro’s government last year also asked the ICC to investigate the U.S. — which is not among the ICC’s 123 member states — for its policy of economic sanctions focused on removing Maduro. Venezuela considers the U.S. sanctions tantamount to “unlawful coercive measures” that have spelled poverty for millions of Venezuelans.

Khan’s predecessor, Fatou Bensouda, had indicated there was a reasonable basis to conclude that crimes against humanity had been committed in Venezuela, echoing the findings of the U.N.’s own human rights council last year. But she left the decision to open any probe to her successor Khan, a British lawyer who took the reins of the ICC earlier this year.

—
Goodman reported from Miami

One Black juror, 11 whites to hear trial over Arbery slaying

By RUSS BYNUM Associated Press

BRUNSWICK, Ga. (AP) — A judge ruled Wednesday that he’ll seat one Black juror and 11 whites to decide the trial of the men who chased and killed Ahmaud Arbery, despite prosecutors’ objections that several Black potential jurors were cut because of their race.

Superior Court Judge Timothy Walmsley acknowledged that “intentional discrimination” by attorneys for the three white defendants charged in the death of the Black man appeared to have shaped jury selection. But he said Georgia law limited his authority to intervene.

Race is a central issue in the case involving the death of Arbery. Greg McMichael and his adult son, Travis McMichael, armed themselves and pursued Arbery in a pickup truck on Feb. 23, 2020, after they spotted the 25-year-old man running in their neighborhood in coastal Georgia. A neighbor, William “Roddie” Bryan, joined the chase in his own truck and took cellphone video of Travis McMichael shooting Arbery three times with a shotgun.

A long, sometimes heated debate over the racial makeup of the final jury erupted in court Wednesday afternoon as lawyers wrapped up a jury selection process lasting more than two weeks.

Arbery’s death became part of the broader reckoning on racial injustice in the criminal legal system

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 45 of 79

after a string of fatal encounters between Black people and police — George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Rayshard Brooks, among others.

No one was charged in Arbery's death until more than two months afterward, when the video of the shooting leaked online. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation took over the case from local police and soon arrested all three men on charges of murder and other crimes.

Minutes after the attorneys had finished narrowing a panel of 48 to a final jury of 12 on Wednesday, prosecutor Linda Dunikoski noted only a single Black juror made the panel.

She argued that defense lawyers had struck eight Black potential jurors because of their race. The U.S. Supreme Court has held that it is unconstitutional for attorneys during jury selection to strike potential jurors solely based on race or ethnicity.

Laura Hogue, an attorney for Greg McMichael, insisted those jury panelists were cut for other reasons — namely for expressing strong opinions about the case when questioned individually by attorneys.

"I can give you a race-neutral reason for any one of these," Hogue said.

She noted one such juror had written on her juror questionnaire that Arbery was shot "due to his color" and had told attorneys she felt the defendants were guilty.

Superior Court Judge Timothy Walmsley denied prosecutors' request to reinstate those eight Black potential jurors, though he said: "This court has found there appears to be intentional discrimination in the panel."

The judge said his ability to change the jury's racial makeup was limited because defense attorneys were able to give nonracial reasons for their decisions to strike the potential Black jurors.

"They have been able to explain to the court why besides race those individuals were struck from the panel," Walmsley said.

The judge said the jury, along with four alternates, will be seated and sworn in Friday, when opening statements in the trial are expected. He did not give the races of the alternate jurors.

Arbery's mother, Wanda Cooper-Jones, told reporters outside the courthouse she found it "devastating" that only one Black juror will be seated. Still, she said of the final jury: "I'm very confident that they'll make the right decision after seeing all the evidence."

Her attorney, S. Lee Merritt, said he still believes the trial will end in a conviction, though defense lawyers had "created a jury that was more favorable for their defendants, an almost entirely white jury."

Dunikoski noted that many prospective jurors questioned in open court expressed strong opinions about the case, but all who remained in the pool from which the 12 jurors emerged said they could be impartial and base a verdict solely on the trial evidence.

In Glynn County, where Arbery was killed and the trial is being held, Black people account for nearly 27% of the population of 85,000, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The judge said 25% of the pool from which the final jury was chosen was Black.

Defense attorneys say the McMichaels and Bryan committed no crimes. They say Arbery had been recorded by security cameras inside a nearby house and they suspected him of stealing. Greg McMichael told police his son opened fire in self-defense after Arbery attacked with his fists and grappled for Travis McMichael's shotgun.

Investigators have said Arbery was unarmed and there's no evidence he had stolen anything.

The slaying dominated news coverage and social media feeds in Glynn County, about 70 miles (110 kilometers) south of Savannah. That caused court officials to take extraordinary steps in hopes of seating an impartial jury.

They mailed 1,000 jury duty notices, and nearly 200 people were questioned by the judge and attorneys at the courthouse during jury selection.

Biden says Virginia race wasn't blowback against him

By COLLEEN LONG and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden said Wednesday the Democrats' setbacks in Tuesday's elec-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 46 of 79

tions underscore that the party needs to “produce for the American people,” but he pushed back against the notion that the off-year election results were a repudiation of his presidency.

Biden suggested that his inability to get Congress to pass a \$1 trillion infrastructure deal and a \$1.75 trillion package of social and climate programs ahead of the voting didn’t make a difference.

In Virginia’s governor’s race Democrat Terry McAuliffe lost to first-time Republican candidate Glenn Youngkin in a state that Biden won by 10 percentage points a year ago.

“I think we should have passed it before Election Day,” Biden said. “But I’m not sure that I would have been able to change” people’s minds in Republican-leaning areas either way.

He added that, “people are upset and uncertain about a lot of things” including the pandemic, the job market and the price of a gallon of gasoline.

Biden made the comments to reporters after delivering remarks to highlight what he said was a “great day” in the fight against coronavirus pandemic as children 5 to 11 became eligible to begin receiving the preventive vaccine.

It was a spot of good news for Biden who returned to Washington early Wednesday from Europe to the news that McAuliffe was narrowly defeated by Youngkin, a first time candidate and former executive with the private equity firm Carlyle Group. And Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy barely eked out a victory in an unexpectedly close race for reelection in New Jersey, a state Biden won by 16 percentage points.

White House officials noted that while Virginia has trended Democratic in recent years the sitting president’s party has lost the governor’s race in 11 of 12 elections there.

Before leaving Glasgow on Tuesday, Biden made the case that “the off year is always unpredictable” and that he had seen no evidence that whether “my agenda passed or not is going to have any real impact on winning or losing” the two governor’s races.

Biden’s polling has fallen in recent weeks, something he blames on coronavirus fatigue among the American public. At the same time, rising prices and supply issues are impacting American households and the political mood.

But the president said those drags could be in the rearview mirror long before midterm elections a year from now if Democrats come together on his agenda.

“If I’m able to pass, sign into law, my Build Back Better initiative, I’m in a position where you’re going to see a lot of those things ameliorated quickly and swiftly,” Biden said.

EXPLAINER: Rittenhouse plane part of widespread surveillance

By TODD RICHMOND Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Prosecutors working to convict Kyle Rittenhouse in the shootings of three people during a protest against police brutality in Wisconsin have introduced as evidence surveillance video taken from an FBI airplane circling thousands of feet above the chaos.

Rittenhouse killed Joseph Rosenbaum and Anthony Huber and wounded Gaige Grosskreutz during the demonstration in Kenosha in August 2020. His trial began Monday. Rittenhouse argues that he fired in self-defense after the men attacked him; prosecutors say he inserted himself into a volatile situation and that video from the plane will show he chased Rosenbaum.

Here’s a look at government efforts to track people’s activities from the air:

HAS THE GOVERNMENT USED PLANES TO MONITOR PAST PROTESTS?

Yes. Aerial surveillance of protests is actually very common. According to an August 2020 Air Force inspector general report, the National Guard used surveillance planes to watch over demonstrations in Washington, D.C., Minnesota, Arizona and California after George Floyd’s death in Minneapolis that May.

The FBI used aircraft to monitor protests in Ferguson, Missouri, following the 2014 police shooting of Michael Brown and in Baltimore to track protests following Freddie Gray’s death in police custody in 2015. Democrat Barack Obama was president during both of those events. Law enforcement also used aerial surveillance to monitor a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017 that turned deadly. Republican Donald Trump was president at that time.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 47 of 79

An Associated Press investigation in 2015 found that the FBI had built a fleet of at least 50 surveillance planes that flew more than 100 flights over 11 states during a one-month span in the spring of that year under the Obama administration. The AP traced the planes to at least 13 fake companies designed to obscure the identity of the aircraft and the pilots.

The AP review also found that the Drug Enforcement Administration had at least 92 surveillance aircraft as of 2011 under Obama. The U.S. Marshals Service also has operated its own aerial surveillance program.

Ashley Gorski, an American Civil Liberties Union attorney who specializes in surveillance issues, said government agencies clearly flew more aerial surveillance missions during Black Lives Matter protests last year, when Trump was president.

"The result here was particularly aggressive," she said. "It does seem the response was unusual and unprecedented."

WHAT KIND OF TECHNOLOGY DO THE PLANES USE?

Pilots can shoot video of the scenes below them using standard cameras, infrared sensors that pick up body heat and light sensors with enough resolution to show building features, basic vehicle features and movements such as people walking or riding bicycles. The planes also can carry technology that mimics cellphone towers, enabling agencies to track people's cellphones even if they're not making a call or in public. Much of the technology was developed for use by the U.S. military in Iraq as part of a project dubbed Gorgon Stare after the mythical Greek monster that could turn men to stone with a glance.

Even if the video images are blurry, agencies can still use them in combination with other data to discover people's identities.

IS THIS LEGAL?

Generally, yes. Aerial surveillance of people in public places is legal and is no different than a video camera mounted on a light pole, said William McGeeveren, a University of Minnesota law professor who specializes in data privacy and free speech. Government agencies do not need a warrant to conduct such surveillance, he said.

However, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2018 that extended surveillance of an individual over a large area is illegal. And the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in June that the Baltimore Police Department's six-month trial aerial surveillance program was unconstitutional because the planes' wide-angle cameras put virtually all city residents under surveillance for 12 hours a day. The ruling came after Black activists sued the city.

Government agencies can impose limitations on their own programs as well. The Air Force report found that the National Guard never got the required authorization from the secretary of defense or the secretary of the Army to launch aerial surveillance of the Floyd protests. A spokesman for the FBI's Milwaukee field office, which is responsible for Kenosha, didn't immediately respond to a message seeking comment. The FBI's national press office also didn't reply to an email.

IF AERIAL SURVEILLANCE IS LEGAL, WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Such surveillance can help police respond in real time to demonstrations that turn violent and identify and arrest bad actors after the fact, protecting public safety.

But civil rights advocates fear that such surveillance leads to government agencies tracking people's every move, making people afraid to leave their homes or be seen associating with others at political functions and amounting to violations of constitutional freedom of speech and association guarantees. The mere presence of government aircraft can intimidate those on the ground; two military helicopters buzzed protesters at a Floyd protest in Washington last summer, blasting protesters with high-speed wind from their rotors.

And the programs' very existence can erode trust in the government, especially among Black leaders. One of the Black plaintiffs in the Baltimore case, for example, argued that she routinely visits murder scenes and was afraid that the surveillance program would result in police gathering specific information about her.

WHAT SORT OF IMPACT COULD THE AERIAL VIDEO HAVE ON RITTENHOUSE?

It's too early to tell. Prosecutors contend that the video will show Rittenhouse chased Rosenbaum before

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 48 of 79

the situation reversed itself and Rosenbaum chased Rittenhouse — possibly chipping away at Rittenhouse's self-defense claims. Portions of the infrared video prosecutors played in court on Tuesday — shot from nearly 9,000 feet — showed dozens of small, fuzzy and indistinct images of people standing or moving along the streets and sidewalks.

But on Wednesday, with superimposed images identifying the two men, a Kenosha police detective testified under questioning from defense attorney Mark Richards that it appeared at one point that Rosenbaum had been "hiding" as Rittenhouse arrived at that location. Richards called the confrontation "the classic ambush" — words that were struck after the prosecution objected, but were heard by the jury.

Associated Press reporter Michael Tarm in Kenosha and Gary Fields in Washington contributed to this report.

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

Rattled Democrats reckon with bruising results in VA, NJ

By ALAN FRAM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A bruising loss and an unexpectedly close call in two statewide elections sent Democrats scrambling for answers and calling for new strategies Wednesday, as they worked to unstick a stalled legislative agenda that has exposed deep divisions ahead of critical midterm elections.

Barely a year from snatching unfettered control of the White House and Congress, Democrats were abruptly facing an ominous new political reality thanks to two Republican political newcomers. Glenn Youngkin edged Democratic former Gov. Terry McAuliffe in the governor's race in Democratic-leaning Virginia, while Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy of deep-blue New Jersey eked out reelection against Jack Ciattarelli.

Both states are filled with suburban voters whose loathing of President Donald Trump prompted them to flee the GOP in significant numbers in 2018 and 2020, fueling big Democratic wins. But Tuesday's results showed those gains were fleeting, as Republicans kept their distance from the unpopular former president and instead harnessed culture war grievances to rally the party's base voters.

It was a forbidding signal for Democrats gripping paper-thin congressional majorities and facing midterm elections in which the party holding the White House historically loses droves of seats, particularly in the House.

Many in the party said the voting underscored that, with people facing stresses like the still-untamed pandemic, inflation and high gasoline prices, Democrats controlling government need to produce results voters can feel.

"People want us to get things done," President Joe Biden told reporters at the White House.

Biden said he was pushing Democrats to end their monthslong gridlock over the two pillars of his domestic agenda — a 10-year, \$1.75 trillion package of social and environment initiatives and a \$1 trillion collection of roadway and other infrastructure projects. House progressives have blocked the infrastructure measure, which passed the Senate in August with bipartisan support, in an attempt to force party moderates to back the larger measure.

"People need a little breathing room. They're overwhelmed," added Biden, whose slouching approval rating was viewed as a drag on McAuliffe and Murphy. "I think we have to just produce results to change their standard of living and give them a little bit more breathing room."

Other Democrats echoed that theme, asserting that once the huge bills are enacted voters would feel the benefits in time to reward them next November.

"We're not broken, we're just not finished," said Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, D-N.Y., who heads the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, House Democrats' political arm.

Democrats, whose progressives and moderates have battled for months over the party's two headline measures, were of different minds about how the legislation could have the most effective political impact.

Biden said he thought the House should have approved the infrastructure measure before Election Day,

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 49 of 79

but questioned whether that would have dampened the large turnout of ardently conservative voters. Biden didn't make that timing explicitly clear last week when he met privately with House Democrats and urged them to back his priorities, lawmakers who attended that meeting have said.

"I would hope this clarifies everybody's thinking about how important it is to get these bills behind us," Rep. Gerald Connolly, D-Va., said of Tuesday's voting. "The time for kvetching is over."

Three-quarters of Virginia voters said the negotiations over Biden's agenda were an important factor in their vote. Those voters were more likely to back Youngkin, according to AP VoteCast, a survey of the state's voters.

"Had we passed the infrastructure bill last week, it would have given us some fuel for the narrative in the closing days of the campaign that I think would have helped," Connolly said.

Yet other Democrats said the \$1.75 trillion measure would have had more voter appeal if its size hadn't been halved under pressure from moderates and if some proposals, such as widely expanded Medicare benefits, hadn't been jettisoned.

"No," said progressive Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Calif., asked if his party's most left-leaning lawmakers were to blame for slowing progress. Rather than swift passage of the compromises on the table, progressives have pushed to protect liberal priorities in the bill.

"I think the reality is that the progressives are talking about delivering for the working class," Khanna said.

Eager to shore up Biden's agenda in Congress, House Democrats said they would add paid family leave provisions to the massive social and climate programs measure. Requiring paid leave has been a key priority for progressives but had been lopped out after moderate Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., complained about its costs.

Manchin reiterated his objections Wednesday, calling it "very much of a challenge." Democrats' need for every one of their votes in the 50-50 Senate, forced by solid GOP opposition, has given Manchin outsize leverage in shaping the legislation.

Democrats' stalled agenda wasn't their only headache. Youngkin's campaign deftly showed that Trump isn't the only Republican who can juice GOP turnout — and he did so without repelling suburban voters. His alliance with conservative parent groups organized to oppose anti-racism curriculum and transgender policies appeared effective, and was likely to become part of the Republican playbook next year.

The National Republican Congressional Committee, the House GOP's campaign organization, signaled its optimism Wednesday by adding 13 Democratic-held House seats to the 57 it was already targeting for 2022.

"In a cycle like this, no Democrat is safe," said NRCC Chairman Rep. Tom Emmer, R-Minn.

Democratic campaign tacticians said that the New Jersey and Virginia results, while bad for the party, were not as bad as the 2009 elections that preceded the devastating 2010 midterms. They said the party's political problems were fixable and expressed hope that Trump would help alienate swing voters by becoming more active in key elections ahead of a potential 2024 presidential run.

"When the bell rings on Labor Day 2022, the political environment is going to look different, the economic environment is going to look different, the COVID environment is going to look different," said Biden pollster John Anzalone.

Associated Press writers Farnoush Amiri, Kevin Freking, Aamer Madhani and Steve Peoples contributed to this report.

Fed pulls back economic aid in face of rising uncertainties

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Reporter

WASHINGTON (AP) — If you find the current economy a bit confusing, don't worry: So does the nation's top economic official, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell.

At a highly anticipated news conference Wednesday, Powell said the Fed was sticking by its bedrock economic forecast: COVID-19 will eventually fade, which, in turn, will enable supply chain bottlenecks to unsnarl. More people will return to the workforce, the economy will strengthen and inflation pressures

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 50 of 79

will ease.

And yet the nation's leading economic figure acknowledged that it isn't at all clear when or even whether things will play out the way he and other Fed officials hope. And so far, they haven't. The Fed won't likely gain a clear view of inflation and the job market, Powell suggested, until COVID-19 and its economic consequences — reduced travel, diminished spending, supply and labor shortages — further ease.

"We hope to achieve significantly greater clarity about where this economy's going and what the characteristics of the post pandemic economy are over the first half of next year," he said.

It's a view Powell has maintained even as inflation has jumped to a three-decade high, imposing a burden on households that are paying more for food, rent, heating oil and other necessities. In his remarks Wednesday after the Fed ended its latest policy meeting, Powell acknowledged the hardships that higher prices have inflicted on many families.

"People who are living paycheck to paycheck or seeing higher grocery costs, higher gasoline costs ... we understand completely what they're going through," he said.

In the meantime, the Fed said, it will begin to try to counter those inflation pressures by reducing its \$120 billion in monthly bond purchases by \$15 billion a month, starting this month. Those purchases, launched last summer, have been intended to hold down long-term interest rates to spur borrowing and spending. With the economy recovering, they aren't needed, Powell suggested.

The Fed could alter the pace of its tapering, it said in a statement. It might, for example, accelerate the reductions, if inflation worsened. But if it sticks with that pace, the bond buys would end by June. That would allow the Fed to possibly raise its benchmark short-term rate, which affects a broad range of consumer and business loans and is now pegged at zero, as soon as that month.

Some economists and investors expect the Fed to do just that. Raising rates in June would be much earlier than was expected as recently as this summer, when Fed policymakers forecast that they wouldn't do so until late 2023.

At his news conference, though, Powell downplayed the likelihood of a rate hike anytime soon. He said unemployment is still too high, with 5 million fewer people working than before the pandemic. That observation suggested that Powell will want to keep rates low until unemployment drops as close as possible to its pre-pandemic level of 3.5%.

Yet in another sign of the economy's numerous uncertainties, he also acknowledged that hiring hasn't been as strong lately as he had hoped. With schools back in session last month, and a \$300-a-week federal jobless benefit having expired, Powell and most economists expected that many more people would start taking jobs in September. Instead, hiring that month fizzled.

"I think there's room for a whole lot of humility here," the Fed chair said. "We're learning now, we have to be humble about what we know about this economy."

"It's difficult enough to just forecast the economy in normal times," he continued. "When you're talking about global supply chains in turmoil, it's a whole different thing. And you're talking about a pandemic that's holding people out of the labor force for reasons that we ... don't have a lot of experience with. So it's very, very difficult to forecast and not easy to set policy."

Powell said the Fed wouldn't hesitate to raise rates if inflation accelerated, or if consumers and businesses began to expect higher prices, which can become a self-fulfilling trend. If companies, for example, expect higher costs, they will raise their own prices in response.

"For now, (the risk) appears to be skewed toward higher inflation," he said. "We need to be in a position to act in case in case it becomes necessary to do so or appropriate to do so."

Still, Eric Winograd, an economist at asset manager Alliance Bernstein, said Powell's comments seemed to suggest that he sees problematic inflation as "hypothetical rather than a realized event."

"The Fed clearly does not think that inflation is likely to stay at or near current levels, nor does it think that the labor market is back to full employment," Winograd added. "Until they become convinced either that inflation is durably too high, that inflation expectations have become unanchored or that the economy is at full employment, they do not intend to raise interest rates."

Powell did say that high prices could last into late next summer. But he stuck by the Fed's view that they'll likely decline after that. He also said that the large wage increases many Americans have received

in recent months aren't fueling inflation further. Wages and salaries soared in the July-September period from a year earlier by the most in at least 20 years.

The central bank is shifting from a prolonged effort to boost the economy and encourage hiring to one that is also focused on addressing inflation. The Fed now faces the delicate task of winding down its ultra-low-rate policies, which it hopes will slow inflation, without doing it so rapidly as to weaken the job market or even cause another recession.

The economy has recovered from the pandemic recession, although growth and hiring stumbled in the July-September quarter, partly because a surge in delta cases discouraged many people from traveling, shopping and eating out. Many economists say they're hopeful that with vaccinations increasing and the delta wave fading, job growth rebounded in October from September's weak pace. The October jobs report will be released Friday.

The Fed's meeting occurred as Powell's future as Fed chair remains uncertain. President Joe Biden has yet to announce whether he will re-nominate Powell for another four-year term. Powell's current term expires in early February, but previous presidents have usually announced such decisions in the late summer or early fall.

AP Source: Giants C Buster Posey will announce retirement

By JANIE McCAULEY AP Baseball Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — San Francisco Giants catcher Buster Posey plans to announce his retirement on Thursday, according to a person with direct knowledge of the decision.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Wednesday because Posey had yet to make his formal announcement.

The Giants said last month that they would exercise Posey's \$22 million club option for the 2022 season as long as the veteran catcher wanted to keep playing after a stellar year.

Posey hinted during the playoffs he might be done — the seven-time All-Star ready to embrace more family time with four young children at home.

"I'm definitely just going to take some time with my wife, talk with her, be able to be full-time dad of four kids for the first time in a while," Posey said. "Yeah, just kind of take it slow and see how things progress."

The 34-year-old Posey opted out of the coronavirus-shortened 2020 campaign to care for prematurely born adopted twin girls. He and wife, Kristen, also have twins Lee and Addison, who just turned 10.

Posey, whose contract includes a \$3 million buyout, helped lead the Giants to a franchise-record 107 wins and their first NL West title since 2012 by playing regularly down the stretch as he demonstrated his health and durability during his 12th major league season.

He batted .304 with 18 homers and 56 RBIs, showing his surgically repaired right hip had finally regained full strength three years post-op.

The 2010 NL Rookie of the Year, Posey came back from a devastating, season-ending leg injury in 2011 to win NL MVP the following year.

He tore three ligaments in his left ankle and broke a bone in his lower leg when he was run over by the Marlins' Scott Cousins on May 25, 2011. Posey responded by winning the 2012 batting crown and MVP honors while leading the Giants to a second World Series championship in a three-year span. In all, he won World Series titles in 2010, '12 and '14.

He advocated for rules to better protect against home-plate collisions to avoid injuries for both catchers and baserunners alike.

"I try to keep myself out of the conversation as much as I can because I know people are going to connect me to it regardless," Posey said in January 2014. "I'm just kind of sitting back and letting the higher powers hammer it out. I have my thoughts but I'll keep them to myself."

Posey was selected by the Giants fifth overall in the first round of the 2008 draft out of Florida State, where in May 2008 he played all nine fielding positions in the same game.

"Buster Posey hangs 'em up. What an incredible career for a lifelong Giant," former Oakland Athletics

left-hander Dallas Braden wrote on Twitter. "The statue is already being built."
The Athletic first reported Posey's pending retirement.

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

Beckham's time with Browns in doubt after video firestorm

By TOM WITHERS AP Sports Writer

BEREA, Ohio (AP) — Odell Beckham Jr.'s father is upset with Browns quarterback Baker Mayfield for not throwing the ball to his wide-open son.

Well, OBJ's all alone again.

Beckham was excused from practice on Wednesday by the Browns, who are now deciding whether to cut ties with the polarizing wide receiver or see if he and Mayfield can move forward together.

The latest firestorm involving Beckham came Tuesday when Odell Beckham Sr. shared a video on social media — hours before the trade deadline — highlighting times when Mayfield didn't throw the ball to the three-time Pro Bowler.

Following Wednesday's practice, Mayfield said he was surprised — not hurt — by the video, which has caused a rift with the team and could lead to the receiver's release.

And while the Browns may have already decided Beckham's fate, Mayfield hasn't ruled out a reconciliation.

"I thought we had a very open line of communication going into it, so we'll see," Mayfield said when asked if his relationship with Beckham can be fixed. "I was more surprised than anything (by the video) — as everybody was. We'll see going forward.

"There's always room for improvement in any relationship, so we'll see."

Mayfield was asked if he could forgive Beckham.

"Yeah," he said. "I think any sort of conversation could go a long way."

While it appears Beckham's release is inevitable, the Browns are weighing other options in the short term, including sitting him for the rest of the season much as Houston is doing with quarterback Deshaun Watson.

Mayfield has not spoken with Beckham, but seemed willing to patch things up.

"I'm prepared to do whatever, and if he's back, then we'll work through it and do whatever it takes," he said. "I can put my ego and pride to the side to win, because that's all I care about is winning.

"But if not, then we'll roll with the guys we have out there. And those guys will know that I completely trust them. And they'll know that I'm always here for them. And that's the leader and that's the type of quarterback I am."

Mayfield said he didn't take the video too personally, and can appreciate the elder Beckham looking out for his son.

"Obviously, naturally, he wants his son to succeed," Mayfield said. "I can't blame him for that. I want Odell to succeed. That's where we were at, and at least I thought."

Before practice, coach Kevin Stefanski said Browns general manager Andrew Berry was in talks with Beckham's representatives about his future. Stefanski gave blanket answers to questions ranging from whether Beckham would be waived or given another chance.

Like Mayfield, Stefanski has not talked to Beckham, another sign of a major divide between the Browns and a controversial player with a history of being a distraction.

It's likely the Browns (4-4) are preparing to move on without the 28-year-old, who is under contract for two more seasons but is not guaranteed any money after 2021.

The timing is hardly ideal for the Browns, who are in last place in the AFC North and visit the Cincinnati Bengals (5-3) this week.

On Tuesday, Odell Beckham Sr. shared an 11-minute video on Instagram titled: "Odell Beckham is Always Open for the Cleveland Browns in 2021" with a montage of plays showing Beckham uncovered and not targeted.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 53 of 79

Mayfield conceded there have been times when he could have done a better job of getting the ball to Beckham.

However, he disputed the notion he was intentionally ignoring Beckham.

"That's," Mayfield said before a long pause. "Deliberately not throwing the ball to an extremely talented player that I did a lot of work with, that's an opinionated statement. I'll say that."

Their lack of a connection has been an ongoing issue since Beckham arrived in a blockbuster 2019 trade from the New York Giants.

Compounding their lack of chemistry, Mayfield played better and led the Browns to the playoffs in 2020 — ending a nearly two-decade drought — after Beckham suffered a season-ending knee injury.

Despite their on-field issues, Mayfield and Beckham have always insisted they get along well. They spent time together during the offseason in Texas, and vacationed together in Montana shortly before the season started.

Mayfield was asked how the relationship got to this fragile point.

"I can't exactly give you the full answer as to why," he said. "But I'm here now and I've got to be the leader for these guys and we'll see where the situation goes. I've got to do my job, lead. This is a bump in the road of adversity and have to handle it and roll with the punches."

Mayfield only threw two passes toward Beckham in Sunday's 15-10 loss to the Pittsburgh Steelers. He had just one catch for 6 yards, and his other target was a high incompleteness in the fourth quarter.

Since returning from a torn anterior cruciate ligament, Beckham has 17 catches for 232 yards and no touchdowns this season. He's also been playing with a sprained right shoulder that he hurt against Arizona on Oct. 17.

More AP NFL coverage: <https://apnews.com/hub/nfl> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

Inside Biden's border plans: How optimism turned to chaos

By ELLIOT SPAGAT and VALERIE GONZALEZ Associated Press and AIM Media Texas

McALLEN, Texas (AP) — For about four months before President Joe Biden took office, advisers engaged in intense internal debate about how quickly they should undo his predecessor's hardline border policies.

The answer, almost always, was that Donald Trump's mark couldn't be erased soon enough.

Immigration advocates on the transition team defiantly shot down a detailed memo circulated among top aides that called for turning back some migrants who cross illegally by making them seek protection in other countries. They pushed back against estimates of soaring migration flows if Trump's policies were dismantled.

In the end, Biden recognized predictions that more migrants might come to the border, but he was firm that policies instituted by Trump were cruel and inhumane and had to be jettisoned.

Biden took office on Jan. 20. Almost immediately, numbers of migrants exceeded expectations. Plans outlined in a December document to fully resume asylum processing at land crossings were soon overtaken by events.

Children traveling alone shattered previous highs in March, making up most of the more than 4,500 people housed in temporary tents that were designed for 250 under COVID-19 standards. The Border Patrol encountered migrants in South Texas more often than ever in June and July, dashing expectations for a common summer slowdown.

In September, about 15,000 mostly Haitian refugees were camped under a bridge in the small border town of Del Rio, Texas. The chaotic scene stretched on for days as migrants waded back and forth across a river for supplies and families slept in squalor. Images of agents on horseback corralling refugees went viral.

The administration began a massive expulsion of Haitians while allowing thousands to remain in the U.S. Its uneven response after months of rising arrivals sparked sharp criticism from both the right and left, illustrating the consequences of scrapping Trump's policies without a new asylum system in place.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 54 of 79

Some key developments could not have been predicted by any administration, and predating Biden was a major structural problem of immigration courts taking nearly four years on average to decide cases of immigrants not in custody.

But a close review of the last year — based on internal documents obtained by The Associated Press and AIM Media Texas and dozens of interviews with current and former U.S. and Mexican officials, migrants, shelter managers, advocates and others — shows how an administration stacked with seasoned immigration advocates was unprepared for the huge increase in people seeking refuge at the border. Many interviewed for this reconstruction spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized or comfortable discussing private deliberations.

When presented with specifics of the reconstruction, the White House defended its record.

"After four years of the Trump administration's chaos, cruelty and misplaced priorities, the work to build a fair, orderly and humane immigration system will take time and won't happen overnight," said spokesman Vedant Patel. "In a short period of time, the Biden administration continues to make considerable progress delivering on its plan."

BROKEN ASYLUM SYSTEM

While the Biden administration would work to undo policies put in place during and after a 2019 spike in arrivals at the border, it inherited an asylum system that has been broken for years. It sorely tested Biden's immediate predecessors.

In the summer of 2014, large numbers of unaccompanied children from Central America's Northern Triangle countries — Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras — showed up along the Texas border in the Rio Grande Valley, a profound demographic shift from predominantly Mexican men that created what then-President Barack Obama called a "humanitarian crisis" and left a deep impression on more enforcement-minded aides who went on to serve in the Biden administration. Spikes have since occurred periodically.

Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras accounted for about two of every three border arrests and people who came in families made up more than half in the government's 2019 fiscal year, both all-time highs. In a throwback to earlier times, encounters with single adults soared during Trump's final year in office after the launch of Title 42 authority, which allowed migrants to be expelled without a chance to seek asylum on the basis of coronavirus. They also faced no legal consequences, encouraging repeat attempts.

Against that daunting backdrop, Biden took office surrounded by immigration experts steeped with advocacy backgrounds. Esther Olavarria, an immigration attorney who worked for former Sen. Ted Kennedy and the Obama administration but spent much of her career as a Miami-based organizer, took a top spot on the White House Domestic Policy Council with Tyler Moran, who was then executive director of The Immigration Hub, a group of pro-immigration strategists.

Influential, more enforcement-minded voices included David Shahoulian, who resigned last month for personal reasons as assistant Homeland Security secretary for border security and immigration, and Roberta Jacobson, a former U.S. ambassador to Mexico and career diplomat in Latin America who agreed to serve 100 days on the National Security Council as coordinator for the Southwest border.

"REMAIN IN MEXICO" WINDS DOWN

Despite concerns, Biden was adamant about his campaign promise to start reversing Trump's border policies by ending "Remain in Mexico," known officially as "Migrant Protection Protocols," under which about 70,000 asylum-seekers were made to wait outside the country for hearings in U.S. immigration court.

Crossings fell sharply after Trump expanded the policy in 2019, but migrants were forced to wait in dangerous and unfamiliar Mexican border cities where finding steady work was difficult and finding attorneys was nearly impossible. Human Rights First, an advocacy group, documented 1,544 examples of violent assaults, including murder, rape, torture and kidnapping.

During the transition, advocates pushed for the policy's immediate reversal, but consensus emerged for a more gradual winding down.

The complicated logistics of allowing up to 26,000 asylum-seekers with active cases to return to the United States and remain free while their cases wound through the courts was a high priority in the ad-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 55 of 79

ministration's first weeks.

All records were on paper, with few working phone numbers or addresses listed, posing a challenge on how to get the word out. U.S. authorities, working closely with United Nations organizations, worried about a rush to the border exacerbating public health and security concerns — and at the same time, sending a message to asylum-seekers who had returned to Central America to make the dangerous journey back north.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights' website for asylum-seekers with active cases went live Feb. 12 and was overwhelmed with technical glitches. Multiple dropdown boxes created confusion and led to a site redesign.

Despite the early hiccups, more than 11,000 asylum-seekers had returned to the United States by June 1, when Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas officially declared the policy was over after a review found it yielded only "mixed effectiveness" on border security. Others whose asylum cases were dismissed or denied under Trump were allowed in starting in late June.

As border crossings soared beyond expectations, Amy Pope joined the White House staff in March after having advised Biden on immigration during the campaign and working closely with him in 2014 when he was tasked by Obama with the unaccompanied children on the Texas border. Her mandate was to bridge internal rifts between advocacy- and more enforcement-minded aides while her nomination to the second-highest position at the International Organization for Migration awaited approval from other member nations at the U.N. agency.

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Some White House and Homeland Security officials were frustrated by how woefully unprepared the Department of Health and Human Services was to handle unaccompanied children. As required by law, it was supposed to take custody within 72 hours and then place them in a home, usually with a parent or close relative.

Participants in early interdepartmental meetings said Health and Human Services officials raised few warnings. On Feb. 7, U.S. Customs and Border Protection opened a large complex of white tents in the Rio Grande Valley, cramming more than 500 children into spaces designed for 32 under COVID-19 guidelines. Thick plastic curtains replaced chain-link fences used as barriers in the Obama and Trump administrations, but massive overcrowding was the same or worse.

"If (Health and Human Services) were able to take these kids off our hands, then it would be better for everybody," Oscar Escamilla, acting executive officer of the Border Patrol's Rio Grande Valley sector, said during a media tour of the Donna, Texas, facility on March 30. At the time, unaccompanied children were being held an average of 61 hours over the 72-hour limit and as long as 20 days. "We're forced into the (child detention) business because we can't turn them over to anybody."

Health and Human Services belatedly sprang into action, aided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. It opened about a dozen emergency holding centers within about a month to process unaccompanied children, renting space at a San Antonio concert venue and at military bases and convention centers in Dallas, San Diego and Long Beach, California.

By late April, the department had more than 22,000 children in its custody, but even more arrived as others were released to family in the United States during asylum proceedings. July broke March's record number of unaccompanied children.

On March 19, the Border Patrol for the first time ever began releasing families with notices to report to an immigration office within 60 days, instead of releasing them with more time-consuming notices to appear in immigration court. With processing taking up about 40% of Border Patrol resources, the agency concluded it had no choice. Troy Miller, the acting CBP commissioner, said in congressional testimony that the change "cuts the paperwork in half."

As of Sept. 10, CBP had released 107,817 people without formal notices to appear in court, according to an internal document. Of those, 29,863, or 28%, did not report to ICE by their deadlines.

SUMMER INCREASE IN CROSSINGS

Once in office, Biden attended weekly meetings to discuss the border. However, the high-level gather-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 56 of 79

ings became less frequent as COVID-19 travel restrictions eased and arrivals of unaccompanied children fell after March. Any sense of relief evaporated when the Border Patrol's daily reports showed dramatic increases in migration flows in late June, bucking a pattern of declines during the summer heat.

The Border Patrol's Rio Grande Valley sector stopped more than 20,000 migrants for the first week ever from July 18-24, smashing previous highs. Four of its five busiest weeks on record were in late June and July, the other one coming in March.

Brian Hastings, who heads the sector, wrote senior Border Patrol officials on July 26 that Catholic Charities of Rio Grande Valley was full and could no longer provide temporary shelter to migrants, which forced the agency to release thousands at a McAllen, Texas, bus station. He also said Health and Human Services was prioritizing children who would be easiest to place in homes over those who had been in Border Patrol custody the longest, specifically older teens and pregnant girls.

"I know that you are overwhelmed there, but we need to get (unaccompanied children) moving," the Border Patrol's deputy chief of operations wrote the same day. "This issue is reaching the top level of this Administration again. Just want to make sure we are full court press on (unaccompanied children). (I get it ... along with everything else.)"

MEXICO SURPRISE

The Biden administration underestimated migration flows, but Mexico popped a surprise that severely undermined Title 42, which had been the most significant victory for enforcement-minded aides who fought during the transition to temporarily maintain it. Advocacy groups have repeatedly called to end the public health measure, which was invoked on grounds of preventing the coronavirus from spreading.

On Jan. 23, U.S. authorities were taken aback when Mexican officials in the state of Tamaulipas said they would no longer accept Central American families expelled from the United States.

Mexican officials in other border states continued taking expelled families, but Tamaulipas borders most of South Texas, the busiest corridor for illegal crossings by far. It resulted in crossings being even more concentrated in South Texas. The Border Patrol's Rio Grande Valley and Del Rio sectors accounted for more than half of all migrant encounters in August, compared with less than one-third a year earlier.

There was "great frustration and irritation" with Mexico at the administration's highest levels, according to one person with direct knowledge of discussions with high-ranking officials. Border Patrol officials who work with Mexican authorities on more routine operational issues also pressed for change in long, daily conversations. U.S. authorities had trouble getting on the phone with Tamaulipas Gov. Francisco Garcia Cabeza de Vaca.

Mexican diplomats were sympathetic but said the change was linked to a child welfare law that took effect in January. The law prohibited its immigration agency from detaining children and required state officials to determine in each case what was in a child's best interest.

U.S. officials asked Mexico to delay implementation and consider adding more shelters for child migrants to meet its detention ban. When their pleas went unheeded, U.S. officials concluded Garcia Cabeza de Vaca was trying to stymie President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, a political rival.

Hastings, a career Border Patrol official, contacted other sector chiefs about sending families to them. On a Sunday in early March, he secured twice-daily flights to El Paso, Texas, for families to be expelled to the adjoining Mexican city of Ciudad Juarez. But that number was cut back within days because Mexican authorities there said they could take only 100 people a day. Once-daily charter flights continued from the Rio Grande Valley to El Paso and to San Diego, where families were sent across the border to Tijuana, Mexico.

Tamaulipas authorities quickly relented by agreeing to accept families with children 7 years or older, but the impact was limited. In July, only 12% of the more than 83,000 family encounters on the border resulted in expulsion under Title 42 authority.

TOUGH TALK BUT INCREASED ARRIVALS

On Jan. 29, a federal appeals court authorized immediate expulsion of unaccompanied children under Title 42. As a father and grandfather, Biden couldn't go forward with it, unable to bear sending minors to dangerous Mexican border cities without their parents, even while recognizing the vast majority were 15

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 57 of 79

to 17 years old.

Mexico's reluctance to take families and Biden's exemption of unaccompanied children largely turned Title 42 into a tool for removing single adults.

The Rio Grande Valley, a citrus-growing delta of 1.3 million people, came alive each night with inflatable rafts carrying families across the meandering river.

Smugglers lifted families into knee-deep water — some spanning three generations and with infants and toddlers — careful not to step on U.S. soil where Border Patrol agents could arrest them. Agents watched rafts go back and forth between patches of sand on gnarly riverbanks, then escorted passengers to vans that carried them to an international bridge in Hidalgo, Texas, to await processing.

If there were no agents, migrants walked under cool, moonlit skies on dirt paths amid thick brush with scorpions and snakes, looking to surrender.

Biden and senior officials talked tough — “Do not come,” Vice President Kamala Harris warned on a June visit to Guatemala, repeating herself for emphasis — but migrants who kept coming spoke of the change in presidential administrations and stories from friends and relatives who were quickly released in the United States.

Jenny Clemente, a 29-year-old Salvadoran mother, said she left home Aug. 1 after seeing TV reports showing lots of families entering the United States. Maria Serrano, a 40-year-old Salvadoran mother departed her hometown with a 10-year-old daughter on July 18 after she was told Biden would let families cross with minors. Another mother from El Salvador, who preferred not to share her name for safety reasons, packed up and left a week later with her 12-year-old daughter after hearing a neighbor was allowed into the U.S. with her child.

All of them would end up expelled to Mexico by Aug. 21, struggling to determine their next steps.

ENFORCEMENT INCREASED

By midsummer, the pendulum swung to enforcement as patience wore thin in the president's inner circle. The White House regularly consulted with pro-immigration groups, but relations deteriorated to the point that advocates abruptly ended an off-the-record call with Olavarria on a Saturday morning in October.

In August, the U.S. began flying Central Americans deep into Mexico to hand them off to Mexican authorities who, in turn, deported them to Guatemala. U.S. authorities initially decided on 24 such flights a month, but Witness at the Border, an advocacy group that tracks flights, tallied 36 in August and 44 in September.

The administration then faced the arrival of nearly 15,000 migrants, mostly Haitians in Texas. Mexico refuses to take back anyone who is not from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras or El Salvador, giving rise to growing numbers from other countries. Ecuadorians surpassed El Salvadorans as the fourth-largest nationality arriving at the border in July.

Mayorkas said the Haitians' arrivals was unusually swift, but people with direct knowledge say Colombia provided intelligence that large numbers were moving on to Panama on their way to the U.S. border. One U.S. official said the Border Patrol's acting chief in Del Rio, Robert Garcia, asked headquarters for reinforcements 2½ weeks before the Haitian crowd peaked on Sept. 18.

The U.S. has flown about 8,000 Haitian migrants back to Haiti since Sept. 19, one of its swiftest, large-scale expulsions of refugees or migrants in decades. The mass expulsions, along with treatment of some migrants at the border, led to sharp criticism of the Biden administration, even from fellow Democrats.

WHAT BORDER REFORM?

Immigration doesn't command the attention with Biden that it did with Trump, and there is no parallel to Stephen Miller, Trump's powerful aide whose relentless focus on immigration prompted him to call career officials several times a day for updates. Pope, a close Biden confidante, left in July for her post at the U.N. migration agency in Geneva.

A December 2020 internal document estimated the authorities could process 3,000 asylum-seekers a month at land crossings with Mexico and 12,000 a month within 180 days. It never happened.

The administration has taken modest steps, such as establishing a “rocket docket” for asylum-seeking families at the border and restoring an Obama-era program for unaccompanied children to apply in Cen-

tral America to join their parents in the U.S. instead of making the perilous journey to the border. Its most ambitious proposal — adapted from the Migration Policy Institute think tank — is to assign asylum officers to the border to more quickly decide cases than immigration judges. Seemingly technical, it may have impact.

Despite that proposal, which wasn't published until August, the administration has yet to release detailed plans of the "humane" asylum system that Biden promised during his campaign.

This report is a collaboration between The Associated Press and AIM Media Texas, publisher of The Monitor in McAllen, Texas, and other newspapers. Spagat, a San Diego correspondent, is the AP's U.S. immigration beat team leader. Gonzalez is an investigative reporter for The Monitor.

Prosecutors show Rittenhouse trial jurors video of shootings

By TAMMY WEBBER, MICHAEL TARM and AMY FORLITI Associated Press

KENOSHA, Wis. (AP) — The jury at Kyle Rittenhouse's murder trial over a string of shootings on the streets of Kenosha watched one of the central pieces of video evidence Wednesday — footage of a man chasing Rittenhouse and throwing a plastic bag at him just before the man was gunned down.

Someone is heard yelling "F--- you!" followed by the sounds of the four shots Rittenhouse fired, killing Joseph Rosenbaum, though the shooting itself is not clearly seen on camera. Rosenbaum was the first of three men Rittenhouse shot that night, two of them fatally.

"Oh, he shot him! He shot him, man. He shot him. He shot him, man. He laid him out," the person making the video can be heard saying.

Footage shown to the jury also depicted Rosenbaum lying on the ground as frantic bystanders surrounded him to help. He had a wound to his head, and a bystander placed a shirt on it to apply pressure.

The scenes were part of a wealth of video played in court that captured the chaos and the repeated sound of gunfire on the night the 17-year-old aspiring police officer fired an assault-style rifle during a tumultuous demonstration against police brutality in the summer of 2020.

In the courtroom, Rittenhouse — seated in the jurors' line of sight — kept his eyes fixed on a desktop screen and showed no emotion as video depicted him walking down a street with his rifle and shooting at protesters, people scattering and screaming.

Many of the videos played in court were found by police on social media sites, where lots of footage was streamed live or promptly posted after the bloodshed, and many of the scenes were familiar to those following the case.

Rittenhouse, now 18, could get life in prison if convicted in the politically polarizing case that has stirred furious debate over self-defense, vigilantism, the right to bear arms, and the racial unrest that erupted around the U.S. after the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and other cases like it.

The young man traveled to Kenosha from his home in Illinois after violent protests broke out over the shooting of a Black man, Jacob Blake, by a white Kenosha police officer. Rittenhouse said he went there to protect property after two nights in which rioters set fires and ransacked businesses.

Prosecutors have portrayed him as the instigator of the bloodshed, while his lawyer argued that he acted in self-defense after Rosenbaum tried to grab his gun and others in the crowd kicked him in the face and hit him in the head with a skateboard.

A Kenosha detective who took the stand detailed injuries Rittenhouse suffered that night, all seemingly minor: a half-inch scratch above his eyebrow, a small cut inside his lower lip, a 2-inch scratch below his collarbone, a 2-inch scratch on his forearm, a scratch on his back and two bumps the size of pennies on his head.

Prosecutor Thomas Binger drove home the point that Rosenbaum was apparently unarmed, asking Kenosha Detective Martin Howard if any of the videos shown in court indicated Rosenbaum had a weapon of any kind. Howard replied no.

"No gun?" Binger asked.

"I can only see a plastic bag he's carrying," Howard said.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 59 of 79

"So no gun? Binger asked.

"No," replied Howard, who repeated the answer when Binger also asked him whether Rosenbaum carried a knife, bat or club.

But on cross-examination, Rittenhouse attorney Mark Richards asked Howard what can happen if a weapon is taken from someone.

"It can be used against them as a deadly and dangerous weapon, correct?" Richards asked.

"Correct," Howard replied.

Richards also said that Rittenhouse shouted, "Friendly! Friendly! Friendly!" as he was being chased by Rosenbaum. Howard agreed, and said it looked as if Rosenbaum was gaining ground on Rittenhouse.

The defense attorney, describing how Rosenbaum came out from behind a car to meet Rittenhouse before the shooting, said to the detective: "Correct me if I'm wrong, but this looks like the classic ambush."

After prosecutors objected, Richards said: "Mr. Rosenbaum is in hiding as my client arrives, correct?"

"It appears so, yes," Howard answered.

Other video played for the jury showed Rittenhouse saying before the shootings that he was there to protect property and provide medical care to anyone who was hurt.

An interviewer mentioned non-lethal weapons and Rittenhouse responded: "We don't have non-lethal." The man filming the video then asked if Rittenhouse was "full-on" ready to defend the property and he replied, "Yes, we are."

Yet another video captured the sound of a single gunshot, which authorities said was fired into the air by someone in the crowd other than Rittenhouse. The defense has said that that shot made Rittenhouse think he was under attack.

Jurors set their notepads aside and kept their eyes glued to the courtroom monitors as video showed people carrying one of the wounded as some screamed for medical help.

Earlier, jurors seemed to take extensive notes when testimony turned to the level of violence at the Kenosha protests, which included protesters throwing firebombs and rocks on the night of the shooting.

Moments after shooting the 36-year-old Rosenbaum, Rittenhouse shot and killed Anthony Huber, 26, a protester from Silver Lake, Wisconsin, who was seen on bystander video hitting Rittenhouse with a skateboard.

Rittenhouse then wounded Gaige Grosskreutz, 27, a protester from West Allis, Wisconsin, who had a gun in his hand as he stepped toward Rittenhouse.

Forliti reported from Minneapolis; Webber reported from Fenton, Michigan. Associated Press writer Scott Bauer contributed from Madison, Wisconsin.

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

Roll up your sleeves: Kids' turn arrives for COVID-19 shots

By LINDSEY TANNER AP Medical Writer

Hugs with friends. Birthday parties indoors. Pillow fights. Schoolchildren who got their first COVID-19 shots Wednesday said these are the pleasures they look forward to as the U.S. enters a major new phase in fighting the pandemic.

Health officials hailed shots for kids ages 5 to 11 as a major breakthrough after more than 18 months of illness, hospitalizations, deaths and disrupted education.

Kid-sized doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine cleared two final hurdles Tuesday — a recommendation from CDC advisers, followed by a green light from Dr. Rochelle Walensky, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

At a Decatur, Georgia, pediatrician's office, 10-year-old Mackenzie Olson took off her black leather jacket and rolled up her sleeve as her mother looked on.

"I see my friends but not the way I want to. I want to hug them, play games with them that we don't

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 60 of 79

normally get to," and have a pillow fight with her best friend, Mackenzie said after getting her shot at the Children's Medical Group site.

With the federal government promising enough vaccine to protect the nation's 28 million kids in this age group, pediatricians' offices and hospitals began inoculating children. Schools, pharmacies and other locations plan to follow suit in the days ahead.

The atmosphere surrounding the launch of shots for elementary-age students was festive in many locations. California vaccine sites welcomed children with inflatable animals and handed out coloring books and prizes. Vehicles lined up before dawn at an Atlanta site.

Many pediatricians' offices expected strong interest in the shots at least initially, but health officials are worried about demand tapering off. Almost two-thirds of parents recently polled by the Kaiser Family Foundation said they would wait or not seek out vaccines for their kids.

Brian Giglio, 40, of Alexandria, Virginia, brought his 8-year-old son, Carter, in for vaccination at Children's National Hospital in Washington, where kids with underlying conditions got first dibs. Carter has Type 1 diabetes that puts him at risk for complications if he were to become infected.

Giglio said the vaccine was "like a hallway pass for us to begin living life again." And Carter said he can't wait to leave masks behind once he's fully vaccinated, so he can smell the things he used to be able to smell without it.

"I'm ready to trash it," he said, though the CDC still recommends masks in schools and indoor public spaces where virus activity is high, even for the fully vaccinated.

Cate Zeigler-Amon, 10, was first in line Wednesday for a drive-through vaccination at Viral Solutions in Atlanta. The girl enthusiastically bounced around the car before the shot, which she broadcast live on her computer during morning announcements at her elementary school.

Afterward, Cate said she was looking forward to hugging her friends and celebrating her birthday indoors next month "instead of having a freezing cold outside birthday party."

Hartford Hospital in Connecticut vaccinated seven youngsters Tuesday night, minutes after the CDC's director gave the OK, and three more early Wednesday. As they got their shots, one girl squeezed her eyes shut and a boy barely flinched, and other waiting kids applauded.

The vaccine — one-third the dose given to older children and adults and administered with kid-sized needles — requires two doses three weeks apart, plus two more weeks for full protection. That means children who get vaccinated before Thanksgiving will be covered by Christmas.

"The timing before winter holidays is very fortunate," said Dr. Jennifer Shu, whose Children's Medical Group office in Decatur, Georgia, began vaccinating first thing Wednesday. "This age group will be able to spend holidays with friends and family more safely than they have been able to since the start of the pandemic."

Thousands of pediatricians pre-ordered doses, and Pfizer began shipments soon after the Food and Drug Administration's decision Friday to authorize emergency use. Pfizer said it expects to make 19,000 shipments totaling about 11 million doses in the coming days, and millions more will be available to order on a weekly basis.

Authorities said they expect a smooth rollout, unlike the chaos that plagued the national one for adults nearly a year ago.

Asked about parents having trouble finding vaccine appointments, White House coronavirus coordinator Jeff Zients said the vaccines.gov website will be updated by Friday for parents to search for locations near them. He said the kid vaccination campaign will be at full speed next week as Pfizer continues to ship millions more doses to locations around the country.

More than 6,000 vaccination clinics are being planned at schools around the country before the winter holiday break, he said.

Walgreens planned to start kids' vaccinations Saturday and said parents could sign up online or by calling 1-800-Walgreens. CVS was also accepting appointments online and by phone at select pharmacies starting Sunday.

Despite the initial enthusiasm, not everyone is rushing out to get shots.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 61 of 79

Hannah Hause, a Colorado mother of four children ages 2, 5, 7 and 8, is herself vaccinated, but wants to see how the child vaccines play out and are studied in the larger childhood population.

"It's not studied long-term. It just makes me nervous," she said. "As long as I can wait, I will wait."

At a White House briefing Wednesday, Walensky said authorities thoroughly reviewed all available data on the vaccine's safety, efficacy and the immune response it generates before recommending shots for kids.

Dr. Ada Stewart, a Black family physician in Columbia, South Carolina, and past president of the American Academy of Family Physicians, said she's seen the toll the virus has taken on younger children — not just in family illness and death but with school disruptions, slipping grades and mental strain.

School closures throughout the pandemic have disproportionately burdened children of color, widening academic gaps and worsening mental health, according to data presented Tuesday to CDC advisers. It showed more than 2,000 COVID-related school closures in just the first two months of the current school year.

A Pfizer study of 2,268 children found the vaccine was almost 91% effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19 infections. The FDA examined 3,100 vaccinated kids in concluding the shots are safe.

Some skeptics have questioned the need for kids to get vaccinated since they are less likely than adults to develop severe COVID-19. But with the delta variant, they get infected and transmit "just as readily as adults do," Dr. Anthony Fauci said at a recent White House briefing.

Infected kids have also contributed to the U.S. toll — almost 46 million infections and more than 740,000 deaths.

Since the pandemic began, at least 94 children ages 5 to 11 have died from COVID-19, more than 8,300 have been hospitalized and over 5,000 have developed a serious inflammatory condition linked to the coronavirus. Black and Latino youngsters and those with chronic conditions are among the hardest hit.

Kye'vontay Jordan, 7, who is Black, has diabetes and got his shot at Children's National Hospital in Washington. The vaccine gave his dad peace of mind.

"Now I can sleep not worrying about him going to school," said Brian Jordan. "Being exposed to the coronavirus could really affect him and mess him up."

Associated Press writers Patty Nieberg in Denver, Angie Wang in Washington, Lauran Neergaard in Alexandria, Virginia, and Kate Brumback and Ron Harris in Atlanta contributed to this report.

Follow AP Medical Writer Lindsey Tanner at <https://twitter.com/LindseyTanner>.

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

Frey wins 2nd term as Minneapolis mayor after bitter race

By STEVE KARNOWSKI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey was reelected to a second term, surviving a bitter challenge in a race that focused on calls for changes to policing and racial justice, elections officials announced Wednesday.

Seventeen candidates ran in the race, including many who took issue with the way Frey has handled changes to the police department since one of its officers killed George Floyd last year. Frey, a Democrat, risked his political future and drew the ire of the city's most liberal voices by opposing a ballot question asking voters to eliminate the police department.

Voters soundly defeated that ballot question on Tuesday but left Frey guessing until Wednesday about his own fate. Frey had 43% of the vote after the first count Tuesday night, which was more than double the support of his closest challengers but short of the more than 50% needed to win outright under the city's ranked-choice voting system.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 62 of 79

Frey told reporters he won by assembling a diverse coalition with support from across the city, and that the “backbone” of his support came from the heavily Black north side and from the Somali and Latino communities. He said he plans to roll out details in the coming weeks of a vision for public safety and police accountability.

“This is a moment of transformation in our city if we can actually come together, recognizing the magnitude of this particular moment,” Frey said. “And the moment is bright. The bright lights of the national press and the world have been shining down on Minneapolis now for, gosh, about a year and a half. And what we are seeing right now is that Minneapolis is shining back even brighter. We are well poised for the progress that we need to see.”

Frey was announced the winner after city officials allocated voters’ second- and third-place choices when their first choices were eliminated. The city said Frey won with 49.1%, or 70,669 votes, to runner-up Kate Knuth’s 38.2%, or 55,007 votes.

Only a handful of candidates were thought to be serious threats to Frey, with two — Knuth and Sheila Nezhad — teaming up on a strategy that urged voters to leave Frey off their ballots entirely. The pair had the backing of U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar.

Frey, a Democrat in a liberal-dominated city, faced sharp pressure from competitors on his left flank. Seventeen candidates had entered the race for mayor, including many who took issue with the way Frey has handled changes to the police department since George Floyd was killed by a Minneapolis officer last year. Frey positioned himself as an opponent of an effort to eliminate the police department and of the most vocal liberals who were seeking a symbolic victory in Floyd’s city.

Voters soundly defeated the proposal to replace the department, with about 56% opposed. Four council members who backed elimination were ousted by challengers, including one who lost to a fellow supporter of the charter amendment. However, two candidates who backed the proposed overhaul won open seats.

Knuth, 40, is a former state representative and environmental justice activist. Nezhad, 33, is a community organizer who worked as a policy analyst for one of the leading groups out to eliminate the police department. Both women also supported rent control, another proposal on Tuesday’s ballot, in contrast to Frey’s general opposition.

Under the ranked-choice system, candidates with no chance to win after the first round of counting are eliminated. A voter who backed such an unsuccessful candidate would then have his or her second choice tabulated, presuming that candidate remained in the race. The process is repeated until a candidate is declared the winner.

Frey late Tuesday called it “a really good night” but stopped short of claiming victory. By remaining in office, he stands to benefit from voters’ approval of another ballot question Tuesday — one that moves the city to a strong-mayor form of government. Critics have long said the city’s weak-mayor system sometimes meant confusion over who has clear authority over city departments and staff.

Frey was the face of Minneapolis during some of its darkest days, including Floyd’s May 2020 death and the rioting that marred ensuing protests and led to the burning of a police precinct after Frey ordered officers to abandon it. Floyd’s death sparked the most widespread unrest in the U.S. since the Rodney King riots.

During the worst of the Minneapolis unrest, conservatives accused Frey of failing to stem the riots and crack down on soaring crime and gun violence. Meanwhile, the left criticized him for not doing enough to overhaul the police department.

Frey, a lawyer by training and a Virginia transplant, first won a City Council seat in 2013. He ascended to the mayor’s office in 2017 by ousting incumbent Betsy Hodges in a race also roiled by police accountability issues, including the 2015 shooting of Jamar Clark, a Black man, in a struggle with white officers and the 2017 shooting of Justine Ruszczyk Damond, a white woman, by a Black officer.

Senate Dems push new voting bill, and again hit GOP wall

By BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — If at first you don’t succeed, make Republicans vote again.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 63 of 79

That's the strategy Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer appears to be pursuing as the New York Democrat forced another test vote Wednesday on legislation to overhaul the nation's election laws. For the fourth time since June, Republicans blocked it.

Democrats entered the year with unified, albeit narrow, control of Washington, and a desire to counteract a wave of restrictive new voting laws in Republican-led states, many of which were inspired by Donald Trump's false claims of a stolen 2020 election.

But their initial optimism has given way to a grinding series of doomed votes that are meant to highlight Republican opposition, but have done little to advance a cause that is a top priority for the party ahead of the 2022 midterm elections.

The Senate voted against debating voting legislation Wednesday, with Republicans this time filibustering an update to the landmark Voting Rights Act, a pillar of civil rights legislation from the 1960s. GOP senators oppose the Democratic voting bills as a "power grab."

"This is a low, low point in the history of this body," Schumer said after the failed vote, later adding, "The Senate is better than this."

The stalemate is forcing a reckoning among Senate Democrats about whether to make changes to the filibuster rule, which requires 60 votes for legislation to advance. That could allow them to muscle legislation through, but would almost certainly come back to bite them if and when Republicans take back control of the chamber.

Earlier Wednesday, Schumer met with a group of centrist Democrats, including Sens. Jon Tester of Montana, Angus King of Maine and Tim Kaine of Virginia, for a "family discussion" about steps that could be taken to maneuver around Republicans. That's according to a senior aide who requested anonymity to discuss private deliberations.

But it's also a move opposed by moderate Sens. Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona and Joe Manchin of West Virginia. Without their support, Democrats won't have the votes needed to make a change.

Time is ticking down. Redistricting of congressional districts (a once-in-a-decade process Democrats want to overhaul to make less partisan) is already underway. And the Senate poised to split town next week for a home-state work period.

"Senate Democrats should stay in town and focus on the last act in this battle," said Fred Wertheimer, who leads the good government group Democracy 21.

The latest measure blocked by Republicans Wednesday is different from an earlier voting bill from Democrats that would have touched on every aspect of the electoral process. It has a narrower focus and would restore the Justice Department's ability to police voting laws in states with a history of discrimination.

The measure drew the support of one Republican, Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski, after Democrats agreed to make changes that she sought. But all other Republicans opposed opening debate on the bill.

"Every time that Washington Democrats make a few changes around the margins and come back for more bites at the same apple, we know exactly what they are trying to do," said Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, who slammed the vote as "political theatre" on a trumped-up a "go-nowhere bill."

Murkowski, too, said she still had underlying issues with the bill as written, while criticizing Schumer's decision to force repeated "show votes."

"Let's give ourselves the space to work across the aisle," she said Wednesday. "Our goal should be to avoid a partisan bill, not to take failing votes over and over."

The Democrats' John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, named for the late Georgia congressman who made the issue a defining one of his career, would restore voting rights protections that have been dismantled by the Supreme Court. Under the proposal, the Justice Department would again police new changes to voting laws in states that have racked up a series of "violations," drawing them into a mandatory review process known as "preclearance."

The practice was first put in place under the Voting Rights Act of 1965. But it was struck down by a conservative majority on the Supreme Court in 2013, which ruled the formula for determining which states needed their laws reviewed was outdated and unfairly punitive. The court did, however, say that Congress could come up with a new formula. The bill does just that.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 64 of 79

A second ruling from the high court in July made it more difficult to challenge voting restrictions in court under another section of the law.

The law's "preclearance" provisions had been reauthorized by Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support five times since it was first passed decades ago. But after the Supreme Court's 2013 ruling, Republican support for the measure cratered.

Though the GOP has shown no indication that its opposition will waver, there are signs that some of the voting changes Democrats seek aren't as electorally advantageous for the party as some hope.

Republican Glenn Youngkin's victory in Virginia's Tuesday gubernatorial election offers the latest test case.

Democrats took control of all parts of Virginia's government in 2019 and steadily started liberalizing the state's voting laws. They made mail voting accessible to all and required a 45-day window for early voting, among the longest in the country. This year they passed a voting rights act that made it easier to sue for blocking ballot access.

But those changes didn't hurt Youngkin, who comfortably beat Democrat Terry McAuliffe, a popular former governor seeking a valedictory term.

That's still unlikely to change Republicans' calculus.

"Are we all reading the tea leaves from Virginia? Yes, absolutely," Murkowski said. "Will it be something colleagues look too? It's just one example."

Democratic frustration is growing, meanwhile leading to increasingly vocal calls to change the filibuster.

"We can't even debate basic bills," said Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar, a Democrat. "The next step is to work on ideas to restore the Senate."

Facebook removes Ethiopian PM's post for inciting violence

By CARA ANNA and AMANDA SEITZ Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Facebook says it has removed a post by Ethiopia's prime minister that urged citizens to rise up and "bury" the rival Tigray forces who now threaten the capital as the country's war reaches the one-year mark.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's post on Sunday violated the platform's policies against inciting and supporting violence, spokeswoman Emily Cain for Facebook's parent company, Meta, told The Associated Press. It was taken down on Tuesday morning, she said.

"The obligation to die for Ethiopia belongs to all of us," Abiy said in the now-deleted post that called on citizens to mobilize "by holding any weapon or capacity."

Abiy is still regularly posting on the platform, where he has 3.5 million followers. The United States and others have warned Ethiopia about "dehumanizing rhetoric" after the prime minister in comments in July described the Tigray forces as "cancer" and "weeds."

Facebook has removed posts from world leaders before, although in rare circumstances. Earlier this year, the company deleted a video from U.S. President Donald Trump in which he peddled false claims about election fraud following a deadly skirmish at the U.S. Capitol. Facebook said at the time the video contributed to "the risk of ongoing violence." Just last week, the tech platform yanked a live broadcast from Brazil President Jair Bolsonaro because he made false claims about the COVID-19 vaccines.

Spokeswoman Cain did not say how Facebook was made aware of the Ethiopia post, which the Nobel Peace Prize-winning prime minister made as Tigray forces took control of key cities over the weekend that put them in position to move down a major highway toward the capital, Addis Ababa.

Alarmed, Abiy's government this week declared a national state of emergency with sweeping powers of detention and military conscription. The prime minister repeated his call to "bury" the Tigray forces in public comments on Wednesday as he and other officials marked one year of war.

Meanwhile, Ethiopia's highly polarized social media this week saw a number of high-profile posts targeting ethnic Tigrayans and even suggesting they be placed in concentration camps.

Thousands of people have been killed in the war between Ethiopian and allied forces and the Tigray ones who long dominated the national government before Abiy took office. The United Nations human

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 65 of 79

rights chief said Wednesday they had received reports of thousands of ethnic Tigrayans being rounded up for detention in recent months.

Former Facebook product manager-turned-whistleblower Frances Haugen last month singled out Ethiopia as an example of what she called the platform's "destructive impact" on society. "My fear is that without action, divisive and extremist behaviors we see today are only the beginning," she told the Senate consumer protection subcommittee. "What we saw in Myanmar and are seeing in Ethiopia are only the opening chapters of a story so terrifying, no one wants to read the end of it."

Meta spokeswoman Cain declined to say how many staffers they have on the ground in Ethiopia or dedicated to detecting violent speech in Ethiopia on its platform, but she said the company has the capability to review posts in Somali, Amharic, Oromo, and Tigrinya. She also said it has a team that includes people from Ethiopia or who have spent time in the country.

But Berhan Taye, a researcher in digital rights based in neighboring Kenya who tracks social media on Ethiopia and regularly escalates questionable posts to the Facebook platform, told the AP last week the platform wasn't moderating in the Tigrinya language, the language of Tigrayans, as recently as April.

Overall in Ethiopia, "if you report (posts) on the platform, it's very highly likely to get no reply at all," she said. "From the amount we escalate, and the number of replies we get, that tells you their internal system is really limited."

Seitz reported from Columbus, Ohio.

S African Damon Galgut wins Booker Prize for 'The Promise'

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — South African writer Damon Galgut won the prestigious Booker Prize for fiction on Wednesday with "The Promise," a novel about one white family's reckoning with South Africa's racist history.

Galgut had been British bookmakers' runaway favorite to win the 50,000-pound (\$69,000) prize with his story of a troubled Afrikaner family and its broken promise to a Black employee — a tale that reflects bigger themes in South Africa's transition from apartheid.

Galgut took the prize on his third time as a finalist, for a book the judges called a "tour de force." He was previously shortlisted for "The Good Doctor" in 2003 and "In a Strange Room" in 2010, but lost both times.

Despite his status as favorite, Galgut said he was "stunned" to win.

Galgut said he was accepting the prize "on behalf of all the stories told and untold, the writers heard and unheard, from the remarkable continent that I'm part of." He noted that this year's Nobel literature laureate, Zanzibar-born writer Abdulrazak Gurnah, was also African.

"Please keep listening to us — more to come," Galgut added.

His novel paints a troubling picture of modern-day South Africa, though Galgut said he did not set out to be negative.

"I didn't plan for the overall trajectory of the book to be a downward one," he said — though that's how it turned out.

"I think the portrait it paints of modern South Africa is not a happy one," he said. "I had no agenda in describing it that way, but things are not great with us right now. You could read that as a warning or a portrait, I don't know, but South Africa has seen better days."

Historian Maya Jasanoff, who chaired the judging panel, said "The Promise" was a profound, forceful and succinct book that "combines an extraordinary story, rich themes -- the history of the last 40 years in South Africa -- in an incredibly well-wrought package."

Galgut's ninth novel traces members of the Swart family — the word is Afrikaans for black — haunted by an unkept promise to give their Black maid, Salome, her own house. The book is structured around a series of funerals over several decades; Galgut has said he wanted to make readers fill in the narrative gaps themselves.

He is the third South African novelist to win the Booker Prize, after Nadine Gordimer in 1974 and J.M.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 66 of 79

Coetzee, who won twice, in 1983 and 1999.

"The Promise" was selected over five other novels, including three by U.S. writers: Richard Powers' "Bewilderment," the story of an astrobiologist trying to care for his neurodivergent son; Patricia Lockwood's social media-steeped novel "No One is Talking About This" and Maggie Shipstead's aviator saga "Great Circle."

The other finalists were Sri Lankan author Anuk Arudpragasam's aftermath-of-war story "A Passage North" and British/Somali writer Nadifa Mohamed's "The Fortune Men," about a Somali man falsely accused of murder in 1950s Wales.

Jasanoff said many of the shortlisted novels, including Galgut's, reflected on the relationship between past and present.

"This is a book that's very much about inheritance and legacy," she said of the winner. "It's about change over a period of decades. And I think it's a book that invites reflection over the decades and invites and repays rereading."

Founded in 1969, the Booker Prize has a reputation for transforming writers' careers and was originally open to British, Irish and Commonwealth writers. Eligibility was expanded in 2014 to all novels in English published in the U.K.

The judging panel winnowed their list from 158 novels submitted by publishers. Only one British writer, Mohamed, made the final six, a fact has renewed debate in the U.K. about whether the prize is becoming U.S.-dominated.

Last year there also was only one British writer on a U.S.-dominated list of finalists, Scotland's Douglas Stuart. He won the prize for "Shuggie Bain," a gritty and lyrical novel about a boy coming of age in hard-scrabble 1980s Glasgow.

For a second year, the coronavirus pandemic has scuttled the prize's usual black-tie dinner ceremony at London's medieval Guildhall. The winner was announced in a ceremony broadcast live on BBC radio and television.

High court seems ready to strike down New York gun law

By JESSICA GRESKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Wednesday seemed ready to strike down a restrictive New York gun permitting law, but the justices also seemed worried about issuing a broad ruling that could threaten gun restrictions on subways, bars, stadiums and other gathering places.

The court was hearing arguments in its biggest guns case in more than a decade, a dispute over whether New York's law violates the Second Amendment right to "keep and bear arms." The law's defenders have said striking it down would lead to more guns on the streets of cities including New York and Los Angeles.

Supreme Court decisions in 2008 and 2010 established a nationwide right to keep a gun at home for self-defense. The question the court is now confronting is about the right to carry a gun outside the home.

During two hours of arguments conservative members of the court, where they have a 6-3 majority, suggested New York's law and perhaps others like it in half a dozen other states go too far. Why, Chief Justice John Roberts asked, does a person seeking a license to carry a gun in public for self defense have to show a special need to do so.

"The idea that you need a license to exercise the right, I think, is unusual in the context of the Bill of Rights," he said.

But Roberts was also among the justices who pressed a lawyer for the law's challengers on the places where guns might be prohibited. Could a football stadium or a college campus be off limits, he asked. Could a state say "you cannot carry your gun at any place where alcohol is served?"

Paul Clement, arguing on behalf of New York residents who want an unrestricted right to carry concealed weapons in public, replied that while restrictions on carrying a weapon at government buildings and schools are likely fine, as the court suggested in 2008, bars "might be a tougher case for the government."

Justice Amy Coney Barrett told Clement that there's a history of states outlawing guns in "sensitive

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 67 of 79

places." "Can't we just say Times Square on New Year's Eve is a sensitive place...people are on top of each other...so we're making a judgment, it's a sensitive place."

Clement acknowledged that might be fine. In response to other questions, he said restrictions on guns in the New York City subway system and Yankee Stadium might also be okay.

Justice Brett Kavanaugh suggested that difficult questions about where exactly guns can be prohibited might be left for another day. "We don't have to answer all the sensitive places questions in this case, some of which will be challenging no doubt, is that accurate?" he asked Clement, who agreed.

In most of the country 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. The justices could decide whether those laws, known as "may issue" laws, can stand.

New York's law 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.

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 that could be affected by the court's decision. Those states make up about a quarter of the U.S. population. Arguing for the federal government, Brian H. Fletcher called New York's law "consistent with the Second Amendment because it is firmly grounded in our nation's history and tradition of gun regulations."

The court's liberal justices seemed willing to allow the state law to remain in place. Justice Elena Kagan called it "completely intuitive" that different states would have different gun laws, and that it is harder to get a license to carry a gun for self-defense in New York City than in a more rural area of the state. And Justice Sonia Sotomayor said that in her view, looking at the history and tradition of the Second Amendment, "states get a lot of deference" on restrictions.

Justice Stephen Breyer asked what kind of license the law's challengers were asking for. Is the license "supposed to say you can carry a concealed gun around the streets or the town or outside just for fun? I mean, they are dangerous, guns," he said.

But the court's conservatives suggested New York's requirements are unduly restrictive.

Justice Samuel Alito asked whether New York's law would allow a person to get a license to carry a gun if they get off work late and have to travel through a high crime area to get to a subway or bus. New York Solicitor General Barbara D. Underwood, arguing for the state, said no; that person has no specific need for a weapon that's different from the general public.

"But how is that consistent with the core right to self-defense, which is protected by the Second Amendment?" Alito asked. He said there are many people with illegal guns "walking around the streets" in New York while "the ordinary, hard-working, law-abiding people I mentioned, no they can't be armed?"

Underwood said that there's no right "to be armed for all possible confrontations in all places." She also said that allowing New York only to limit the carrying of guns in sensitive places would be inadequate.

"In principle it has an attractive quality to it, but in implementation I think it would be unsuccessful," she said.

The arguments at the high court come as gun violence has surged. New York has told the justices that if they side with the law's challengers it would have "devastating consequences for public safety." 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. Clement, arguing for the law's challengers, said the nation's founders envisioned people making their own decisions about carrying a firearm outside the home for self-defense.

"In 43 states, people are able to do that," he said, adding "it doesn't mean that those 43 states have any more problems with violent crimes" than the states like New York.

Watchdog finds no misconduct in mistaken Afghan airstrike

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 68 of 79

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — An independent Pentagon review has concluded that the U.S. drone strike that killed innocent Kabul civilians and children in the final days of the Afghanistan war was not caused by misconduct or negligence, and it doesn't recommend any disciplinary action.

The review, done by Air Force Lt. Gen. Sami Said, found there were breakdowns in communication and in the process of identifying and confirming the target of the bombing. Said concluded that the mistaken strike happened despite prudent measures to prevent civilian deaths.

"I found that given the information they had and the analysis that they did — I understand they reached the wrong conclusion, but ... was it reasonable to conclude what they concluded based on what they had? It was not unreasonable. It just turned out to be incorrect," Said said. He is the inspector general of the Air Force and is considered independent as he had no direct connection to Afghanistan operations.

His review said the drone strike must be considered in the context of the moment, as U.S. forces under stress were being flooded by information about threats to troops and civilians at the Kabul airport, just days after a deadly suicide bombing. Thousands of Afghans were swarming the airport, trying to get out of the country following the Taliban takeover.

Said found that better communication between those making the strike decision and other support personnel might have raised more doubts about the bombing, but in the end may not have prevented it.

Said was asked to investigate the Aug. 29 drone strike on a white Toyota Corolla sedan, which killed Zemerai Ahmadi and nine family members, including seven children. Ahmadi, 37, was a longtime employee of an American humanitarian organization.

The intelligence about the car and its potential threat came just days after an Islamic State suicide bomber killed 13 U.S. troops and 169 Afghans at a Kabul airport gate. The U.S. was working to evacuate thousands of Americans, Afghans and other allies in the wake of the collapse of the country's government.

Said concluded that U.S. forces genuinely believed that the car they were following was an imminent threat and that they needed to strike it before it got closer to the airport.

"They all have a genuine belief based on the information they had and the interpretation, that that was a threat to U.S. forces, an imminent threat to U.S. forces," he told reporters during a Pentagon briefing. "That's a mistake. It's a regrettable mistake. It's an honest mistake. I understand the consequences, but it's not criminal conduct, random conduct, negligence."

He said repeated reviews of the video from that day showed that two minutes before the strike was launched, there was evidence that a child was in the strike zone.

Said, who said he watched the video himself, said troops in the strike cell did not see the child.

"I'm just saying it is 100% not obvious," he said. "You have to be like, no kidding, looking for it. But when you're looking for it, certainly after the fact, if you ask me, was there evidence of the presence? Yes, there was."

Steven Kwon, president of Nutrition and Education International, which employed Ahmadi, said he was deeply disappointed in the review.

"According to the Inspector General, there was a mistake but no one acted wrongly, and I'm left wondering, how can that be?" Kwon said in a statement. "Clearly, good military intentions are not enough when the outcome is 10 precious Afghan civilian lives lost and reputations ruined."

The report, which has been endorsed by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, made several recommendations that have been passed on to commanders at U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations Command. The review recommends that more be done to prevent what military officials call "confirmation bias" — the idea that troops making the strike decision were too quick to conclude that what they were seeing aligned with the intelligence and confirmed their conclusion to bomb what turned out to be the wrong car.

Specifically, the review said the military should have personnel present with a strike team, and their job should be to actively question such conclusions. The report says using a so-called "red-team" in such self-defense strikes that are being done quickly might help avoid errors.

Said also recommended that the military improve its procedures to ensure that children and other in-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 69 of 79

nocent civilians are not present before launching a time-sensitive strike.

Those changes, he said, could “go a long way to greatly mitigate the risk of this happening again” in these types of rapidly moving, self-defense strikes.

For days after the strike, Pentagon officials asserted that it had been conducted correctly, despite mounting reports that multiple civilians and children had died and growing doubts that the car contained explosives. Said’s review concluded that officials made their initial assessments too quickly and did not do enough analysis.

While Said’s report does not find individual fault or recommend discipline, he said commanders may decide to take administrative actions once they review his report. He said commanders may look at the report and determine that there was “subpar performance” and decide to decredential, retrain or fire personnel.

“You should not perceive the fact that I didn’t call any individual out with accountability that it does not mean that the chain of command won’t,” he said.

The U.S. is working to pay financial reparations to the family, and potentially get them out of Afghanistan, but nothing has been finalized.

A second defense official said Austin has asked that Gen. Frank McKenzie, head of U.S. Central Command, and Gen. Richard Clarke, head of U.S. Special Operations Command, come back to him with recommendations for changes to address the gaps.

Said’s review mirrors many of the findings outlined by McKenzie several weeks after the investigation.

The Central Command review found that U.S. forces tracked the car for about eight hours and launched the strike in an “earnest belief” — based on a standard of “reasonable certainty” — that it posed an imminent threat to American troops at Kabul airport. The car was believed to have been carrying explosives in its trunk.

The airstrike was the last in a U.S. war that ended just days later, as the final American troops flew out of Kabul airport, leaving the Taliban in power.

UN report says Ethiopia’s war marked by ‘extreme brutality’

By JAMEY KEATEN and CARA ANNA Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — All sides in Ethiopia’s yearlong war in the Tigray region have committed abuses marked by “extreme brutality” that could amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, the U.N. human rights chief said Wednesday, noting “the big numbers of violations” are linked to Ethiopian forces and those from neighboring Eritrea.

The conflict that has killed thousands began in November 2020 after a political falling-out between the Tigray forces that long dominated the national government and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed’s current government. Ethnic Tigrayans across the country have reported being targeted with arbitrary detentions, while civilians in Tigray have described gang rapes, human-caused famine and mass expulsions.

The investigation, a rare collaboration by the U.N. human rights office with the government-created Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, was hampered by authorities’ intimidation and restrictions, and didn’t visit some of the war’s worst-affected locations.

The U.N. told The Associated Press the collaboration was necessary for its team to gain access to a troubled region that Ethiopian authorities have largely prevented journalists, rights groups and other observers from entering.

The report was released a day before the first anniversary of the start of the war and as Africa’s second most populous country enters a new state of emergency, with rival Tigray forces threatening the capital, Addis Ababa.

The joint investigation covers events up until late June when the Tigray forces regained much of their region, but it failed to visit some of the deadliest sites of the war, including the city of Axum, because of security and other obstacles. Notably, the report said, obstacles included the Ethiopian government’s failure to release satellite phones procured for the investigation — crucial tools as phone and internet service are cut off in Tigray.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 70 of 79

In western Tigray, claimed by forces from the neighboring Amhara region, "it was apparent that the Tigrayans had left most of the areas, as it was difficult to find Tigrayans to interview," the report said.

The investigation breaks little new ground and confirms in general the abuses described by witnesses throughout the war. But it gives little sense of scale, saying only that the more than 1,300 rapes reported to authorities are likely far fewer than the real number.

Despite the report's shortcomings, Abiy's office said in a statement that it "clearly established the claim of genocide as false and utterly lacking of any factual basis." Ethiopian Human Rights Commission chief Daniel Bekele said the investigation didn't identify violations amounting to genocide.

Michelle Bachelet, the U.N. high commissioner for human rights, acknowledged the investigators didn't turn up enough evidence to characterize "disturbing suggestions of ethnically motivated violence" as signs of possible genocide, but did say such allegations warranted further investigation.

The prime minister's statement noted "serious reservations" about the report but claimed it laid "sinister allegations to rest." And it acknowledged the need to "redouble our efforts" to hold perpetrators accountable. A high-level task force will be formed, it said.

Among the investigation's findings: Several Ethiopian military camps were used to torture captured Tigray forces or civilians suspected of supporting them. Others were detained in "secret locations" and military camps across the country, with detentions arbitrary in many cases. Tigray forces detained some ethnic Amhara civilians in western Tigray in the early days of the war on suspicion of supporting the military, and in some cases tortured them.

"The Tigray conflict has been marked by extreme brutality. The gravity and seriousness of the violations and abuses we have documented underscore the need to hold perpetrators accountable," Bachelet said. Reports of abuses such as summary executions in Tigray continue, she said.

And yet the report gives little sign that Eritrean soldiers were responsible for many of the atrocities, as witnesses have alleged. Until March, Abiy denied they were even in the country.

Bachelet told reporters that while the report doesn't explicitly mention Ethiopian and Eritrean forces were responsible for the majority of the violations, "I would say that the big numbers of violations of human rights are linked to the Ethiopian and Eritrean defense forces." She denied the probe came under government pressure.

Ethiopia's government imposed a blockade on Tigray since the Tigray forces regained control in June, cutting off almost all access for commercial goods and humanitarian aid. That followed large-scale looting and destruction of food and crops that "has had a severe socioeconomic impact on the civilian population," the report says. In addition, some camps for displaced people didn't receive food rations for months.

The investigation, however, "could not confirm deliberate or willful denial of humanitarian assistance to the civilian population in Tigray or the use of starvation as a weapon of war." It called for further investigation.

In a separate statement on events since the investigation, Bachelet expressed deep concern over the state of emergency Ethiopia's government imposed Tuesday with "sweeping powers" of detention and military conscription.

She also said her office has received reports of a "highly organized system" of detaining thousands of Tigrayans in western Tigray in recent months that now encompasses "the general civilian population."

The Tigray forces since June have moved into the neighboring Amhara and Afar regions, and Bachelet noted an increasing number of allegations of abuses committed by them, including rapes.

The joint investigation, based on more than 260 interviews with victims and witnesses, said it had received no response from Eritrea's government or Amhara regional officials. Eritrea's information minister tweeted Wednesday that Eritrea rejects the report's credibility.

The Tigray external affairs office in a statement called the participation of the EHRC "an affront to the notion of impartiality" and said the report was "fraught with problems." The report acknowledged that the presence of EHRC staffers at times inhibited interviews.

The investigation said Ethiopia's government should "consider" setting up a court to ensure accountability, and expressed concern that "investigations conducted by Ethiopian national institutions do not match the

scope and breadth of the violations it has identified.”

“We don’t have enough transparency,” Bachelet said.

Anna reported from Nairobi, Kenya.

Pentagon: Chinese nuke force growing faster than predicted

By ROBERT BURNS AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — China is expanding its nuclear force much faster than U.S. officials predicted just a year ago, highlighting a broad and accelerating buildup of military muscle designed to enable Beijing to match or surpass U.S. global power by mid-century, according to a Pentagon report released Wednesday.

The number of Chinese nuclear warheads could increase to 700 within six years, the report said, and may top 1,000 by 2030. The report did not say how many weapons China has today, but a year ago the Pentagon said the number was in the “low 200s” and was likely to double by the end of this decade.

The United States, by comparison, has 3,750 nuclear weapons and has no plans to increase. As recently as 2003 the U.S. total was about 10,000. The Biden administration is undertaking a comprehensive review of its nuclear policy and has not said how that might be influenced by its China concerns.

The report does not suggest open conflict with China but it fits an emerging U.S. narrative of a People’s Liberation Army, as China calls its military, intent on challenging the United States in all domains of warfare — air, land, sea, space and cyberspace. Against that backdrop, U.S. defense officials have said they are increasingly wary of China’s intentions with regard to the status of Taiwan.

“The PLA’s evolving capabilities and concepts continue to strengthen (China’s) ability to ‘fight and win wars’ against a ‘strong enemy’ — a likely euphemism for the United States,” the report said, adding that it makes China more capable of coercing Taiwan, the self-ruled island that China claims as its territory.

Wednesday’s report is the latest reminder to Congress, already leery of Beijing’s military ambitions, that the Pentagon’s frequent promises to focus more intently on countering China have moved only incrementally beyond the talking stage. The Biden administration is expected to take a new step by following through on its announcement in September of plans to increase the U.S. military presence in Australia, in addition to a controversial decision to help Australia acquire nuclear-powered submarines.

China’s military modernization is proceeding on a wide front, but its nuclear advances are especially notable.

The Chinese may already have established what is known as a nuclear triad — the combination of land-, sea-, and air-based missiles that the United States and Russia have had for decades — the report said. To its existing land- and sea-based nuclear forces China is adding an air-launched ballistic missile.

The Pentagon report was based on information collected through December 2020 and so does not reflect or even mention Gen. Mark Milley’s expression of concern last month about Chinese hypersonic weapon tests last summer that he said came as a troublesome surprise. Wednesday’s report only referred to the widely known fact that China had fielded the DF-17 medium-range ballistic missile, equipped with a hypersonic glide vehicle designed to evade American missile defenses.

In remarks shortly before the report’s release Wednesday, Milley told the Aspen Security Forum that the hypersonic missile test and other Chinese advances are evidence of what is at stake for the world.

“We are witnessing one of the largest shifts in global and geostrategic power that the world has witnessed,” he said.

Milley also said his personal assessment is that China is unlikely in the next six to 24 months to use military force against Taiwan in order to fulfill the communist leadership’s public pledge to ultimately bring the island under Beijing’s control.

The Pentagon report said China is pursuing a network of overseas bases and logistics hubs that “could interfere with” U.S. military operations and could support Chinese military operations against the United States. President Xi Jinping has said China plans to become a global military power by 2049.

The Pentagon’s wide-ranging assessment of China’s military strategy and force development is the latest

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 72 of 79

in an annual series of reports to Congress and in some respects was more detailed than previous versions. For example, it questioned China's compliance with international biological and chemical weapons agreements, citing studies conducted at military medical institutions that discussed identifying, testing and characterizing groups of "potent toxins" that have civilian as well as military uses.

The basis of the Pentagon's prediction that China will vastly increase its nuclear arsenal is not spelled out in Wednesday's report. A senior defense official who briefed reporters in advance of the report's public release, and thus spoke on condition of anonymity, said the forecast reflects several known developments, such as China's addition of a nuclear bomber capability, as well as public statements in Chinese official media that have made reference to China needing 1,000 nuclear weapons.

The report also asserted that China has begun construction of at least three new missile fields that "cumulatively contain hundreds" of underground silos from which ICBMs could be launched.

The report provided no details on the new missile fields, but private nuclear analysts have reported that satellite imagery shows what appear to be vast new missile silo fields under construction in north-central China. In an update published Tuesday, analysts Matt Korda and Hans Kristensen of the Federation of American Scientists said they have seen continued construction progress and have discovered "unique facilities that appear intended to support missile operations once the silo fields become operational."

One of those facilities, they said, is a complex in the mountains surrounded by what appear to be four tunnels into underground facilities. The tunnels are under construction and there are large amounts of excavated soil dumped nearby. This facility's function is unknown but "could potentially involve missile and/or warhead storage and management," the analysts said.

Other structures under construction may be technical service facilities and launch control centers, they said.

WHO authorizes Indian-made COVID vaccine, months into use

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL and MARIA CHENG Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — The World Health Organization granted an emergency use license Wednesday to a coronavirus vaccine developed in India, offering reassurance for a shot the country's regulators allowed long before advanced safety and efficacy testing was completed.

The U.N. health agency said in a statement that it had authorized Covaxin, made by India's Bharat Biotech. The action makes Covaxin the eighth COVID-19 vaccine to receive WHO's green light.

"This emergency use listing expands the availability of vaccines, the most effective medical tools we have to end the pandemic," said Dr. Mariângela Simão, WHO's assistant director-general for access to medicines.

Covaxin was developed by Bharat Biotech in partnership with the Indian Council of Medical Research, the government's apex research body. The vaccine is made using a killed coronavirus to prompt an immune response and is given in two doses.

WHO said the vaccine was found to be about 78% effective in preventing severe COVID-19 and was "extremely suitable" for poor countries due to its much easier storage requirements.

An expert group convened by WHO said there was insufficient data about the vaccine's safety and efficacy in pregnant women; studies are being planned to address those questions.

India's drug regulator authorized Covaxin in January, months before extensive testing in people had been completed, prompting concern from health experts that the shot was given the nod prematurely.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi took the first shot of the two-dose vaccine in March. By mid-October, over 110 million jabs of the vaccine had been administered, making Covaxin the second-most used COVID-19 shot in India after AstraZeneca's.

Despite India's repeated endorsement of its homegrown vaccine, Bharat Biotech has faced problems scaling up production. In July, India's Health Ministry said the company was making 25 million doses of the vaccine on average each month and expected to increase monthly production to 58 million doses.

The company says it's aiming to reach an annual capacity of 1 billion doses by the end of 2021, or over 80 million shots each month, but has not responded to questions about its current capacity.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 73 of 79

Bharat Biotech said several other countries, including Brazil, Philippines, Iran and Mexico, also had authorized its COVID-19 vaccine. Before India paused exports, shots made by Bharat Biotech were sent to Myanmar, Paraguay and Zimbabwe as grants, and to Mauritius and Iran as a part of commercial deals, data from India's Foreign Ministry shows.

The federal prosecutor's office in Brazil is investigating possible irregularities in the Health Ministry's contract to buy 20 million doses of Covaxin.

To date, the World Health Organization has granted emergency approval to the vaccines made by Astra-Zeneca and its partner, the Serum Institute of India, Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna Inc., Johnson & Johnson, and the Chinese pharmaceuticals Sinopharm and Sinovac.

Vaccines OK'd by WHO can be used as part of the U.N.-backed COVAX effort to distribute COVID-19 vaccines and to share doses with poorer countries. The initiative is in desperate need of more vaccines after failing to meet its targets and dramatically reducing the number of doses expected to be delivered by the end of the year.

Anna Marriott, health policy manager for Oxfam, said WHO's authorization of India's Covaxin should "silence those who have claimed that the experience and expertise to develop and manufacture life-saving medicines and vaccines do not exist in developing countries."

She called on Bharat Biotech to freely share its vaccine recipe and know-how so more manufacturers globally could produce it. Fewer than 1% of the world's coronavirus vaccines have gone to poor countries.

"Today's vaccine apartheid between rich and poor countries has been created by the monopolies of companies like Pfizer and Moderna who have consistently put obscene profits before saving lives, and we urge Bharat Biotech not to follow in their footsteps," Marriott said in a statement.

WHO's emergency use license for Covaxin should also mean that millions of Indians immunized with the shot will be allowed to travel internationally by countries that recognize vaccines authorized by WHO, including Britain, European Union members and Canada.

Cheng reported from London.

Investors bet big on climate fight but motives questioned

By FRANK JORDANS and DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

GLASGOW, Scotland (AP) — Governments and big investors announced fresh plans Wednesday to pour trillions of dollars into curbing global warming, reflecting the financial world's growing embrace of efforts to fight climate change as both a business necessity and opportunity.

But some social justice activists called for scrutiny of investors' motives, warning that the same financial institutions that profited from funding fossil fuel firms were now being presented as green champions.

There is a growing consensus that the private sector must be involved if the world is to avoid catastrophic global warming. Speaking at the U.N. climate summit in the Scottish city of Glasgow, Britain's Treasury chief Rishi Sunak said that while countries such as his are stumping up more cash to fund the shift to low carbon economies around the world, "public investment alone isn't enough."

He praised a pledge Wednesday by a group of over 450 major financial institutions to align their investments with the 2015 Paris climate accord — which calls for reducing carbon dioxide emissions and other efforts to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels.

"This is a historic wall of capital for the net-zero transition around the world," Sunak said at the conference known as COP26.

The Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero — launched this year by former Bank of England chief Mark Carney — promised to follow scientific guidelines for cutting carbon emissions to "net zero" by 2050.

That goal — which means limiting greenhouse gas emissions to the amount that can be absorbed again through natural or artificial ways — is increasingly being embraced by companies and governments around the world.

Experts say fossil fuel use has to drop drastically over the coming decade to cap warming at 1.5C,

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 74 of 79

meaning investors would likely have to dramatically cut back money going to oil, gas and coal producers.

"It is huge that financial institutions managing \$130 trillion in assets are now leading the charge to a net-zero future," said Helen Mountford, a senior climate expert at the World Resources Institute think tank.

She said that mobilizing massive public and private finance will be key to tackling global warming.

To that end, Sunak said U.K. financial institutions and publicly traded companies will be required to publish plans detailing how green their investments and their own businesses are — in order to ensure they're actually contributing to reductions in global warming.

As home to the City of London, one of the world's major financial centers, the U.K. "has a responsibility to lead the way" in financing efforts to fight global warming, said Sunak, potentially becoming "the world's first net-zero aligned financial center."

But James Thornton, founder of the environmental law charity ClientEarth, questioned how effective the U.K. effort would be.

"The U.K. market is still hooked on fossil fuels," he said, calling for a task force to ensure companies don't "greenwash" their activities — that is, using high-profile announcements of so-called green initiatives to mask other "dirty" activities. Experts also caution there are various ways to calculate net zero — and deciding on one standard definition is one of the big challenges going forward.

Some campaigners were distrustful of the motives of big investors in general.

"Many of the financial institutions meeting today have made a killing from the climate and ecological crisis, and we should be deeply suspicious of any attempt to spin them as the heroes," said Dorothy Guerrero, head of policy at the nongovernmental group Global Justice Now. "Governments must regulate the process and lead the transition, instead of just handing it over to the corporations."

But Alok Sharma, the British official chairing the talks in Glasgow, insisted the shift was genuine.

"What we have seen over the last few years is a big move in the private sector and the financial services sector to go green," he said, adding that this was not the case when he became a financial advisor in the 1990s. "I do believe it is now mainstream."

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen noted one of the reasons that may be the case: She described combatting climate change as both a huge financial challenge, with a price tag of \$100 trillion, but also "the greatest economic opportunity of our time."

"Many renewables are now cheaper than carbon-based fuel alternatives and have lower long-term operating costs," she said. "In many cases, it's simply cost effective to go green."

U.S. President Joe Biden issued an executive order earlier this year aimed at requiring companies to disclose climate-related financial risks.

Investing with an eye on the environment has been one of the biggest trends reshaping the financial industry for years, graduating from niche to a major force.

Around the world, \$35.3 trillion was invested in sustainable funds at the start of 2020, according to the most recent data from the Global Sustainable Investment Alliance. That accounted for nearly \$36 of every \$100 invested under professional management, and it includes everything from funds that directly finance environmentally friendly projects to funds that simply refuse to buy shares of the most-polluting companies.

While that's still the minority of all investments, it's been growing faster than other areas of the market. Four years earlier, sustainable investments accounted for less than \$28 of every \$100.

But an analysis of the holdings of 130 climate-themed funds this summer by London-based think tank InfluenceMap found more than half weren't as green as they purported to be. Some that were classified as "fossil fuel restricted" owned shares of oil refiners and distributors, for example.

Alina Averchenkova, an expert on climate change policy at the London School of Economics, said the announcements by investors and governments were an important step in the right direction — but independent audits would be required going forward.

She also noted the growing urgent need for rich nations to fund climate-related projects in parts of the world that can't afford the measures themselves.

"We need finance to help developing countries to adapt to the impacts of climate change, for example,

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 75 of 79

to adapt to increased flooding to extreme weather events such as hurricanes," she said.

Poorer countries were angered last month by news that wealthy nations had failed to meet a previous commitment to provide them with \$100 billion in climate finance each year by 2020.

That target is now expected to be met in 2023.

Kirka reported from London. Business writer Stan Choe in New York contributed to this report.

Follow AP's climate coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/climate>.

Foes of death penalty offer spiritual support at executions

By DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — After Sister Barbara Battista, a Roman Catholic nun staunchly opposed to the death penalty, agreed to accompany a condemned man at his execution in federal prison, she wondered doubtfully, "Am I just part of this whole killing machine?"

"The answer is 'No,'" she decided, proceeding with her mission to the death chamber in Terre Haute, Indiana, where in August 2020 Battista said a silent prayer while witnessing the lethal injection of Keith Dwayne Nelson, convicted of kidnapping, sexually assaulting and killing a 10-year-old girl.

"No matter how heinous the act, no matter how much I'm opposed to it, that person deserves to have someone who is there simply because they care," she said.

Battista's name is now on a friend-of-the-court brief submitted to the U.S. Supreme Court by the American Civil Liberties Union. Along with other spiritual advisers and former corrections officials, Battista argues against a Texas policy that prohibits a Southern Baptist pastor from praying aloud and laying hands on a condemned man, John Ramirez, as he is executed.

Ramirez, sentenced to death for the 2004 murder of a convenience store clerk, was scheduled to be executed Sept. 8, but the Supreme Court ordered a delay to consider claims that restrictions on the pastor's role would violate his religious liberties. Oral arguments are scheduled for next Tuesday.

The ACLU has a long history of opposing the death penalty and also says that condemned prisoners, even at the moment of execution, have religious rights.

"If the state is going to engage in this practice, it should make every effort to honor the dignity and religious liberties of those it plans to kill," said Daniel Mach, director of the ACLU Program on Freedom of Religion and Belief

Intriguingly, the ACLU's position in the Ramirez case is echoed by some conservative religious groups which support the death penalty and are often at odds with the ACLU on other issues, for example in cases where religious conservatives believe they have a right to discriminate against LGBTQ people.

The Southern Baptist Convention has an official position supporting "the fair and equitable use of capital punishment." Last month the SBC joined six other faith-based groups in a friend-of-the-court brief making the same argument as the ACLU — that Ramirez's pastor, Dana Moore, should be able to lay hands on him and pray aloud during the execution.

"Religious freedom doesn't end as you approach the moment of death," said Brent Leatherwood, acting president of the SBC's public policy arm. "The state has yet to make a compelling reason for why Pastor Moore cannot minister to Mr. Ramirez in these final moments."

Texas allows spiritual advisers into the execution chamber but bars them from praying audibly or being by the condemned inmate's side. In its arguments to the Supreme Court, Texas said granting Ramirez's request would be a step toward enabling federal courts to "micromanage" details of execution protocol.

In some cases, states still employing capital punishment have made adjustments to comply with court orders regarding spiritual advisers.

In February, for example, the Supreme Court blocked Alabama from executing Willie Smith III — convicted of the 1991 abduction and murder of a 22-year-old woman — unless it allowed his personal pastor to be present in the execution chamber. Alabama complied; Smith was executed Oct. 21 with the pastor,

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 76 of 79

Robert Wiley, by his side.

Efforts to provide condemned prisoners with spiritual comfort at their executions have been ecumenical.

In 2019, the Supreme Court blocked Texas from executing a Buddhist prisoner unless he was allowed to have a Buddhist priest at his side. The same year, the high court allowed Alabama to execute a Muslim inmate, Domineque Ray, even though his spiritual adviser was not allowed to be present; the court said Ray was too late in making his request.

In the past year, Yusuf Nur, a Muslim professor of business who teaches at Indiana University Kokomo, was the spiritual adviser at two federal executions of Muslim inmates. He was present — and permitted to say a traditional Islamic prayer aloud — for the executions of Orlando Hall in November 2020 and Dustin Higgs in January 2021.

“When I first got recruited to talk to a young guy who accepted Islam in prison, I went to see him,” Nur told The Associated Press. “My feeling was that if this person wants somebody to talk to, and the U.S. government is planning to execute him, I’d do whatever I can to contribute so they’re spiritually strong.”

Nur, who opposes capital punishment, said he was moved by the atmosphere in the death chamber for Hall’s execution, given that the others present were “people who came to execute him.”

“To have a friendly face makes a difference to the person being executed,” Nur said. “I’m glad I did it even though it was traumatic to witness a human being killed right in front of your eyes. I would do it again.”

Nur has shared his convictions with Battista, whose order — the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods — is based just 10 miles from the federal prison complex in Terre Haute. All four lethal injections she and Nur attended were part of the federal government’s unprecedented run of 13 executions in six months at the end of the Trump administration.

Currently, Battista, 64, is deeply engaged in anti-racism activities, but she was often on the front line in vigils outside the prison protesting recent federal executions. She’s grateful to have had the opportunity to accompany Nelson and a second condemned man, William Emmett LeCroy, at their executions last year.

“Yes, I had some doubts. ... but I know that through my prayer, my interaction with these men, I was there for them,” she said. “That person deserves to have somebody with them who is the face of love.”

In LeCroy’s case, Battista said he asked her to pray for him, and she informed the executioner that she would be doing so — aloud.

The prayer was the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. Its closing passage includes the words “Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless ... look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent.”

Associated Press religion coverage receives support from the Lilly Endowment through The Conversation U.S. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

Italy-Croatia fight over Prosecco name gets ready to pop

By COLLEEN BARRY AP Business Writer

PROSECCO, Italy (AP) — On tiny pockets of terraced terrain overlooking a bay shared by Italy, Slovenia and Croatia, Milos Skabar is reviving a centuries-old winemaking tradition known as Prosekar, which shares roots with its better-known bubbly cousin, Prosecco.

But this humble fizzy blend, virtually unknown beyond the Italian port city of Trieste where it’s made on a strip of land between the Adriatic Sea and Slovenia, is caught up in a dispute that’s about to pop: The makers of Italy’s hugely popular sparkling wine Prosecco are fighting to prevent Croatian winemakers from using the name Prosek for their sweet dessert wine.

The handful of Prosekar makers hope to use their ties to Prosecco’s birthplace, just above Trieste, to gain greater recognition for their wine but worry their name is at risk, too.

“Prosekar wine is the original, because it was born 300 years before Prosecco,” said Skabar, surveying his vineyard with a port view, the hills of Slovenia a dark green line in the distance. “So, it is the father of Prosekar, Prosecco, Prosek and all the rest.”

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 77 of 79

At stake in the battle is not only the sanctity of Prosecco, the world's top-selling wine, but also the European Union's system of geographical designations created to guarantee the distinctiveness and quality of artisanal food, wine and spirits, defenders say. That market is worth nearly 75 billion euros (\$87 billion) annually — half of it in wines, according to a 2020 study by the European Commission, the EU's executive branch.

The Italian government has pledged to defend Prosecco's name, and other makers of protected products with distinct geographic roots, from Italy's Parmigiano Reggiano cheese to France's Champagne, are mobilizing as the European Commission prepares to deliberate on Croatia's petition to label its niche wine with the traditional Prosek name.

"The problem for us is not that these producers, who make a very small number of bottles, enter our market. But it is the confusion it could generate among consumers," said Luca Giavi, general director of the Prosecco DOC consortium, which promotes Prosecco and assures the quality of wines under the EU's "denomination of controlled origin" designation.

Prosecco has annual sales of 2.4 billion euros (\$2.8 billion), most of it exported. "Everyone perceives the situation as a threat to our success," producer Stefano Zanette said, with worldwide buyers possibly not able to distinguish between the similar names.

Croatia argues that the Prosek name and tradition is centuries old, predating Prosecco's protections in the EU system, and that its place as a dessert wine makes it distinct from Prosecco.

"Consumers will not be confused by this," Ladislav Ilcic, a Croatian member of the European Parliament, said in a recent debate. "Prosek should legitimately receive the protected denomination of origin, and producers should have full access to markets."

The Brussels-based European Federation of Origin Wines is preparing a brief to support Italy. It believes the European Commission's decision to hear the case has defied its own battle to get other nations and trading blocs to recognize the EU's system of geographic designations.

The dispute, which will be decided in the coming months, is likely to turn on Prosecco's origin story, emanating from the bilingual Italian village of Prosecco near the Slovenian border above Trieste, where winemaking once flourished.

It is here, say the ethnic Slovene Italians who make Prosekar, that the grape known as Glera — the basis of both Prosecco and Prosekar — originated.

But besides common etymological roots, Prosekar, Prosecco and Prosek have little in common.

Prosecco, made predominantly from the Glera grape, is produced by three consortia spanning nine Italian provinces in alpine foothills that curve along the Adriatic Sea. They put out more than 550 million bottles a year.

Prosek is a sweet wine made in Dalmatia with dried native Croatian grapes, none of them Glera, and may be red or white.

Prosekar, on the other hand, is an equal blend of Glera and two other grapes, made by fewer than a dozen micro-producers. In decades past, Prosekar was mainly produced at home and shared among friends, family and neighbors, often served from ad-hoc taverns in private houses.

Prosecco makers moved to protect their coveted geographical indication 12 years ago, after seeing winemakers in northeast Italy lose the right to use the label Tocai in a European decision that protected wines produced in Hungary's Tokaji region. In Italy, Tocai was simply the name of the grape variety, with no geographic ties. The decision gutted the makers of Friuli Tocai, who struggled to find a market with a new name: Friulano.

Both the Italian and Croatian regions tussling over the Prosecco name shared a history of Venetian and then Austro-Hungarian control, spanning the period when Prosecco migrated northwest, into present-day Italy, and south, along Croatia's Dalmatian coast.

Prosecco defenders say the name Prosek has never been uniformly applied and came to mean even a generic form of dessert wine.

Written documents link the village of Prosecco to wine as early as the 1600s and 1700s, when wines were called "of Prosecco" to indicate their village of origin, wine historian Stefano Cosma said. "By the

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 78 of 79

1800s, it was already a sparkling wine," he said.

In present-day Prosecco, Prosekar winemakers hope that because the EU has included the village itself in the geographic territory for the protected wine, they might have a shot at expanding their market for Prosekar, which they say was first made in 1548.

But because their wine has not earned the EU designation, Prosekar producers are banned as much as Prosek makers from using their name. They so far haven't been challenged as long as they don't sell beyond Trieste, said Andrej Bole, a sixth-generation Prosekar producer.

"We are outlaws," Bole said. But "for now, we are tolerated."

They are working with the Prosecco consortium to help their wine earn the coveted origin insignia, which is awarded with each vintage. The question of legally using the Prosekar name won't be decided until that hurdle is cleared, the head of the consortium said.

"We have to look at the European norms," Giavi said. "But there is that option, which we don't mind."

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Nov. 4, the 308th day of 2021. There are 57 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 4, 1979, the Iran hostage crisis began as militants stormed the United States Embassy in Tehran, seizing its occupants; for some of them, it was the start of 444 days of captivity.

On this date:

In 1842, Abraham Lincoln married Mary Todd in Springfield, Illinois.

In 1862, inventor Richard J. Gatling received a U.S. patent for his rapid-fire Gatling gun.

In 1922, the entrance to King Tutankhamen's tomb was discovered in Egypt.

In 1942, during World War II, Axis forces retreated from El Alamein in North Africa in a major victory for British forces commanded by Lt. Gen. Bernard Montgomery.

In 1955, Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Cy Young died in Newcomerstown, Ohio, at age 88.

In 1956, Soviet troops moved in to crush the Hungarian Revolution.

In 1980, Republican Ronald Reagan won the White House as he defeated President Jimmy Carter by a strong margin.

In 1985, to the shock and dismay of U.S. officials, Soviet defector Vitaly Yurchenko announced he was returning to the Soviet Union, charging he had been kidnapped by the CIA.

In 1991, Ronald Reagan opened his presidential library in Simi Valley, California; attending were President George H.W. Bush and former Presidents Jimmy Carter, Gerald R. Ford and Richard Nixon — the first-ever gathering of five past and present U.S. chief executives.

In 1995, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by a right-wing Israeli minutes after attending a festive peace rally.

In 2008, Democrat Barack Obama was elected the first Black president of the United States, defeating Republican John McCain. California voters approved Proposition 8, a constitutional amendment outlawing same-sex marriage, overturning a state Supreme Court decision that gave gay couples the right to wed just months earlier.

In 2014, riding a powerful wave of voter discontent, resurgent Republicans captured control of the Senate and tightened their grip on the House.

Ten years ago: A Syrian peace plan brokered just days earlier by the Arab League unraveled as security forces opened fire on thousands of protesters, killing at least 15. "60 Minutes" commentator Andy Rooney, 92, died in New York a month after his farewell segment on the show.

Five years ago: A federal jury found that Rolling Stone magazine, its publisher and a reporter had defamed a University of Virginia administrator in a debunked 2014 story about a gang rape at a fraternity house. (The magazine and the administrator, Nicole Eramo, later reached a confidential settlement.) A

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Nov. 04, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 120 ~ 79 of 79

jury convicted two former aides to New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie of causing traffic jams near the George Washington Bridge for political revenge against a Democratic mayor. (A unanimous Supreme Court tossed out the convictions in 2020.)

One year ago: A day after the presidential election, victories in Michigan and Wisconsin left Joe Biden one battleground state short of winning the White House. President Donald Trump falsely claimed victory in several key states and called the election process "a major fraud on our nation"; Trump called for outstanding ballots not to be counted, and vowed to have the Supreme Court weigh in on the election. The Trump campaign said it was filing suit in Michigan, Pennsylvania and Georgia to demand better access for campaign observers to locations where ballots were being processed and counted, and to raise absentee ballot concerns. The United States set another record for daily confirmed coronavirus cases as several states posted all-time highs.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Loretta Swit is 84. R&B singer Harry Elston (Friends of Distinction) is 83. Blues singer Delbert McClinton is 81. Former first lady Laura Bush is 75. Actor Ivonne Coll is 74. Rock singer-musician Chris Difford (Squeeze) is 67. Country singer Kim Forester (The Forester Sisters) is 61. Actor-comedian Kathy Griffin is 61. Actor Ralph Macchio is 60. "Survivor" host Jeff Probst is 60. Saxophonist Tim Burton is 58. Actor Matthew McConaughey is 52. Rapper-producer Sean "Puffy" Combs is 52. TV personality Bethenny Frankel is 51. Actor Anthony Ruivivar is 51. Soul/jazz singer Gregory Porter is 50. R&B singer Shawn Rivera (Az Yet) is 50. Celebrity chef Curtis Stone is 46. Actor Heather Tom is 46. R&B/gospel singer George Huff is 41. Actor Emme Rylan is 41. Actor Chris Greene (Film: "Loving") is 39.