

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 1 of 54

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Professional Management Services tree at City Hall](#)
- [3- Wage Memorial Library tree at City Hall](#)
- [4- Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller](#)
- [7- Sun Dogs Yesterday](#)
- [8- Weather Pages](#)
- [13- Daily Devotional](#)
- [14- 2021 Community Events](#)
- [15- Subscription Form](#)
- [16- News from the Associated Press](#)



## UpComing Events

### Thursday, Dec. 30

9:30 a.m.: Wrestling at Webster

### Friday, Dec. 31

Girls Basketball at Webster. C game at 11 a.m. followed by JV and then varsity

### Monday, Jan. 4

School resumes

Basketball Double Header at Warner. Girls JV at 4 p.m. followed by Boys JV, Girls Varsity and Boys Varsity.

5 p.m.: Junior High Wrestling Tournament at Groton.

### Thursday, Jan. 6

6 p.m.: Wrestling Tri-angular at Groton with Redfield and Webster

### Friday, Jan. 7

Penguin Classic Debate on-line

5 p.m.: Junior High Wrestling at Milbank

Girls Basketball hosts Sisseton with JV at 6 p.m. and varsity to follow

### Saturday, Jan. 8

Groton Robotics Tournament, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Penguin Classic Debate on-line

Girls Basketball Classic at Redfield

**Groton Daily Independent**  
**PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445**  
**Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460**

## **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

# Groton Daily Independent

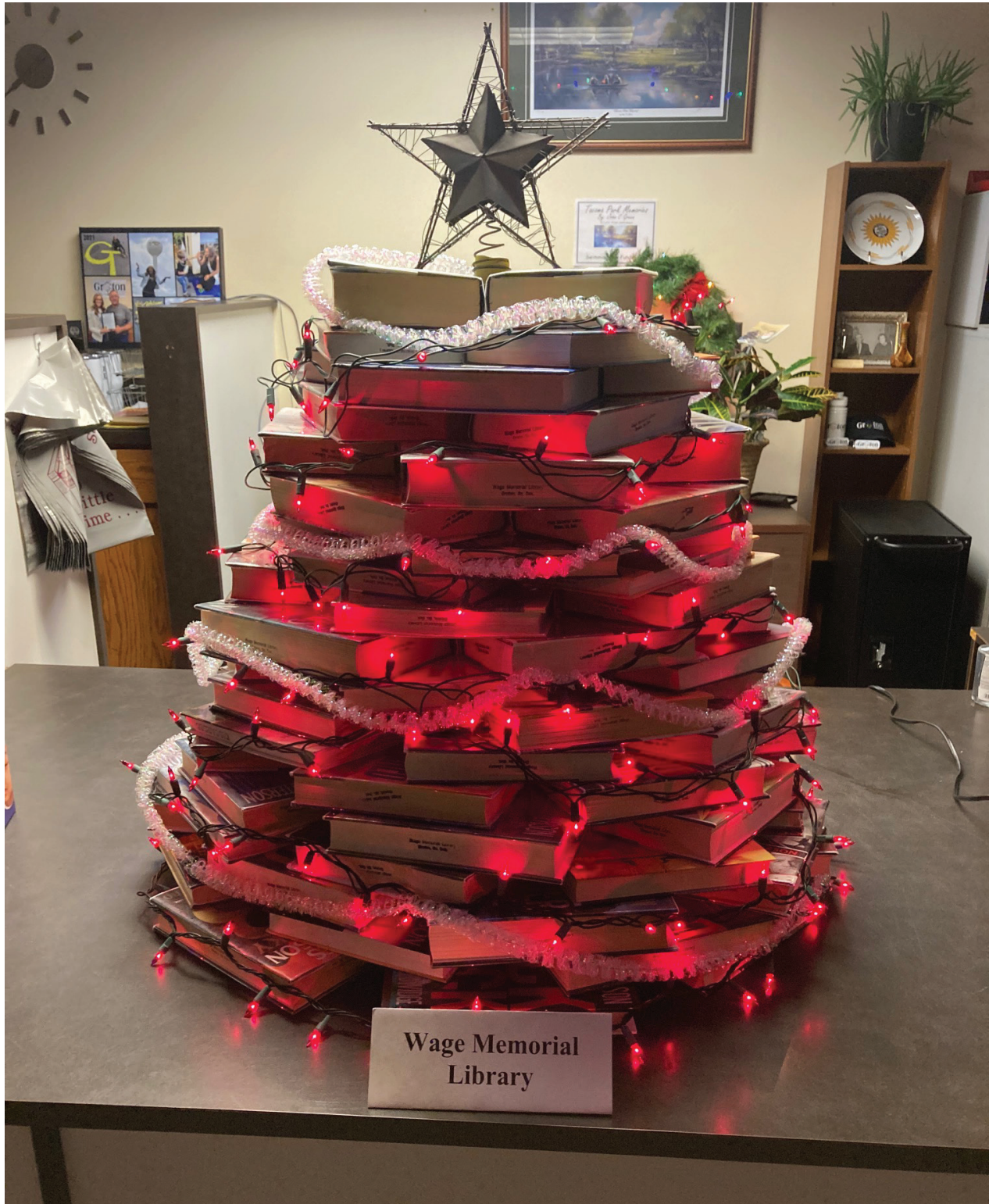
Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 2 of 54



**The new city hall has been adorned with many Christmas Trees decorated by area businesses. This one was decorated by Professional Management Services.**

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 3 of 54



**The new city hall has been adorned with many Christmas Trees decorated by area businesses. This one was decorated by Wage Memorial Library.**

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 4 of 54

#499 in a series

## Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

As of midday today, our seven-day new-case average is up to 214,499; we haven't been this high since mid-January. This represents a 15 percent increase in the three days since I last posted, which is pretty bad; the doubling time for this figure if nothing changes is 4.7 days. We are approaching our record for seven-day new-case average of 251,232, and like most of our records, it dates back to last January. What's more, we are still only 62 percent vaccinated, so there's plenty of room for growth in these numbers. We did manage to top 52 million cases on Christmas; we haven't added an additional million this fast since just about a year ago in December, 2020, and January, 2021. A lot of what we're seeing now harks back to last winter's horrific surge. Here's the history:

April 28, 2020 – 1 million – 98 days  
June 11 – 2 million – 44 days  
July 8 – 3 million – 27 days  
July 23 – 4 million – 15 days  
August 9 – 5 million – 17 days  
August 31 – 6 million – 22 days  
September 24 – 7 million – 24 days  
October 15 – 8 million – 21 days  
October 29 – 9 million – 14 days  
November 8 – 10 million – 10 days  
November 15 – 11 million – 7 days  
November 21 – 12 million – 6 days  
November 27 – 13 million – 6 days  
December 3 – 14 million – 6 days  
December 7 – 15 million – 4 days  
December 12 – 16 million – 5 days  
December 17 – 17 million – 5 days  
December 21 – 18 million – 4 days  
December 26 – 19 million – 5 days  
December 31 – 20 million – 5 days  
January 5 – 21 million – 5 days  
January 9 – 22 million – 4 days  
January 13 – 23 million – 4 days  
January 18 – 24 million – 5 days  
January 23 – 25 million – 5 days  
January 30 – 26 million – 7 days  
February 7 – 27 million – 8 days  
February 19 – 28 million – 12 days  
March 7 – 29 million – 16 days  
March 24 – 30 million – 17 days  
April 8 – 31 million – 15 days  
April 24 – 32 million – 16 days  
May 18 – 33 million – 23 days  
July 16 – 34 million – 59 days  
July 31 – 35 million – 15 days  
August 11 – 36 million – 11 days  
August 17 – 37 million – 6 days  
August 23 – 38 million – 6 days  
August 30 – 39 million – 7 days

September 5 – 40 million – 6 days  
September 12 – 41 million – 7 days  
September 18 – 42 million – 6 days  
September 27 – 43 million – 9 days  
October 6 – 44 million – 9 days  
October 18 – 45 million – 12 days  
November 1 – 46 million – 14 days  
November 13 – 47 million – 12 days  
November 24 – 48 million – 11 days  
December 4 – 49 million – 10 days  
December 13 – 50 million – 9 days  
December 20 – 51 million – 7 days  
December 25 – 52 million – 5 days

We are reporting record-setting case numbers in some states and regions with new cases higher than at any point during this pandemic, including last winter. Among these are Hawaii, Illinois, Ohio, New Hampshire, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Delaware, Florida, and Puerto Rico. We have just two of the 56 states and territories I'm tracking that are not in either the "unchecked spread" or "escalating" categories, and just nine are listed as escalating. The rest—45 states and territories—show unchecked spread.

While pediatric case numbers are still relatively small, we are seeing an increase. In New York City, there was a four-fold increase in hospital admissions of children for Covid-19 over three weeks. About half were not eligible for vaccination. The same phenomenon is being reported in other states too—by nearly 28 percent in that same time period; this trend is particularly notable in the Northeast and the Midwest.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 5 of 54

The good news is that hospitalizations are still not catching up to the new-case surge. We have high and increasing numbers of hospitalizations, 71,301 at midday; but this increase is not commensurate with the numbers of new cases. It seems likely that some of this shortfall is because there is some level of immunity in the population and some of it because the Omicron variant may be a bit less severe than the Delta variant; but if you have no immunity at all or only immunity from an old infection, you probably don't want to relax too much just yet. Dr. Robert Wachter, chair of the Department of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, told NPR today, there are plenty of sources walking around. He explained, "If you're in a room with 30 or 40, there's almost a certainty, about a 90% chance that one of them has COVID. So that's a little scary." If you're taking precautions, you may well get infected, and if you're not there's a high probability you're going to get infected. If you do, you stand a chance of being very sick. After all, we are still losing over 1300 people every day to this virus.

Deaths numbers are creeping up more slowly than cases. We're at a seven-day average of 1328, which is only marginally higher than where we were last time we talked. This is the highest it's been in a couple of months, so we're seeing increases—in the past month by 38 percent—so still substantial. And loss of life is permanent, so this is a number we need to see decrease to near-zero before we can rest satisfied that we've solved this.

I read a paper from a research team dispersed around the country and sponsored by Gilead, the maker of the drug, which looked at the effectiveness of remdesivir, sold as Veklury, in infected and unvaccinated people at high risk for severe disease. This was a randomized, double-blind, controlled study. Only two of 279 people in the treatment group were hospitalized for Covid-19 whereas 15 of 283 who received placebo were hospitalized. The risk for hospitalization or death was 87 percent lower in the treatment group, and 36 percent of the treatment group reported improvement in symptoms while only 20 percent of the placebo group did. Interestingly, the drug did not reduce viral loads, but it did improve the clinical picture for these patients.

This drug is a nucleoside analog, that is, it mimics needed building blocks for the production of new RNA needed for the virus to replicate in host cells. When these analogs are incorporated into the new viral RNA, it renders the nucleic acid nonfunctional so that the new viruses are inactive. This has the effect of shutting down viral replication, and a virus that can't reproduce isn't much of a threat. Remdesivir is given as an infusion on three consecutive days and is fully FDA approved now for use in hospitalized adults. This means it can be ordered off-label by a physician, that is, in ways and for people not included in the FDA authorization, so with these new data, physicians may choose to order it for people earlier in the infection before hospitalization is required. It's more of a hassle to administer than a pill, but I believe the supply for this drug is better than for Paxlovid and Molnupiravir, those antiviral pills approved right before Christmas. This should make it a good tool to have in our toolbox.

A very long time ago, we talked about a virus's reproduction number, expressed as R followed by a number; at this stage in the pandemic, we're using Re (for effective reproduction number) followed by a number. The number reflects the average number of people to whom each infected person is transmitting the virus. For Delta,  $Re=1$ , which means each infected person is passing the virus on to one other person. That keeps the pandemic going at a fairly stable level, neither getting much worse nor much better. Omicron, on the other hand has  $Re=3$ , which is pretty scary, and is going to require far more stringent precautions if you wish to avoid becoming infected or at least decrease the size of the exposure. Wachter, in the same NPR interview cited above, explained, "It's very contagious. And the kind of encounter that you could have had with prior versions of the virus that would have left you uninfected, there's now a good chance you will get infected from it." We think it may require fewer virus particles to establish an infection. Worse, once it gets into your respiratory tract, preliminary data from Hong Kong shows that the variant multiplies 70 times faster than Delta and reaches higher levels in tissue than Delta does 48 hours

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 6 of 54

after infection. That's going to make the patient a more efficient spreader, so this one's nothing to mess with. The smart money's on not inhaling this damned thing in the first place.

If you're one of the folks still (or again) wearing a mask when you're out in public, please note that a whole lot of experts are strongly recommending you upgrade your protection. Cloth masks are no longer considered effective enough against this super-transmissible Omicron variant; Linsey Marr, a Virginia Tech expert on airborne transmission, told NPR, "Cloth masks are not going to cut it with omicron." She said cloth masks can be a decent filter, but that's not going to be good enough "with something as highly transmissible as omicron." The consensus is that you need at least a medical-grade mask; that's because the material from which they're made has an electrostatic charge which is far more efficient at trapping airborne particles that might contain virus. Surgical masks are not as effective as N95 respirators because they don't fit so closely to the face, leaving gaps through which particles can get inside the mask, but they are far better than cloth for filtering particles. One solution if you don't have or want to wear an N95 is to place a cloth mask over the surgical one; since cloth masks tend to better conform to the curves of your face, they add the advantages of a good fit to the filtering properties of the better mask. You can also find KN95 respirators. These filter as effectively as N95s, but about 60 percent of those on the market are counterfeits, so there is no assurance they meet the standards for this class of mask. The CDC provides on its website advice for spotting a counterfeit (<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/usernotices/counterfeitResp.html>), a list of National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)-approved N95s ([https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/disp\\_part/N95list1.html](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/disp_part/N95list1.html)), and a list of trusted sources for them ([https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/disp\\_part/respsource3surgicaln95.html](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/disp_part/respsource3surgicaln95.html)). These websites will provide you with up-to-date information as you make decisions about masking.

Current recommendations are that you wear a mask whenever you're indoors in public places with others and when using public transit, also when indoors with small groups unless everyone is vaccinated-and-boosted and/or tested, particularly if anyone present is at high risk for severe disease. If you're looking for effective masks for children, Aaron Collins, an engineer with a background in aerosol science, has been testing masks and posted a spreadsheet at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i06OAItoOwIUaMjElr8mhh0Rw-it6WL-ODIQMZUOQxE/edit#gid=0>.

The CDC has modified its guidelines for people who are infected with SARS-CoV-2. They are "shortening the recommended time for isolation from 10 days for people with COVID-19 to 5 days, if asymptomatic, followed by 5 days of wearing a mask when around others." They've made the change because data are indicating the majority of transmission occurs early in the course of the infection, between "1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after." So as long as you do not develop symptoms and wear a mask throughout, your isolation period will be shorter.

The guidelines have also been modified for people who have been exposed. For unvaccinated people and those more than six months out from their second mRNA vaccine dose or two months out from their single Janssen/Johnson & Johnson dose and not boosted, quarantine is recommended for five days followed by five more days of "strict mask use" or, if quarantine is not feasible, wearing a high-quality, well-fitting mask for 10 days after exposure. They add that "best practice would also include a test for SARS-CoV-2 at day 5 after exposure. If symptoms occur, individuals should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19." The entire text of the update can be viewed at [https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html?fbclid=IwAR02mC55DpDnuQBnU\\_cbP5K3TUPqcsWFDyIcNuQd9PoUFFu0jios\\_EnPGT8](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html?fbclid=IwAR02mC55DpDnuQBnU_cbP5K3TUPqcsWFDyIcNuQd9PoUFFu0jios_EnPGT8).

And that's it for this post-Christmas Update. I hope you had a wonderful holiday and that you take extra precautions in the upcoming weeks. We're in for a rough patch, so it will be extremely important that you do so for a while yet. Stay safe, and we'll talk once more before year's end.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 7 of 54

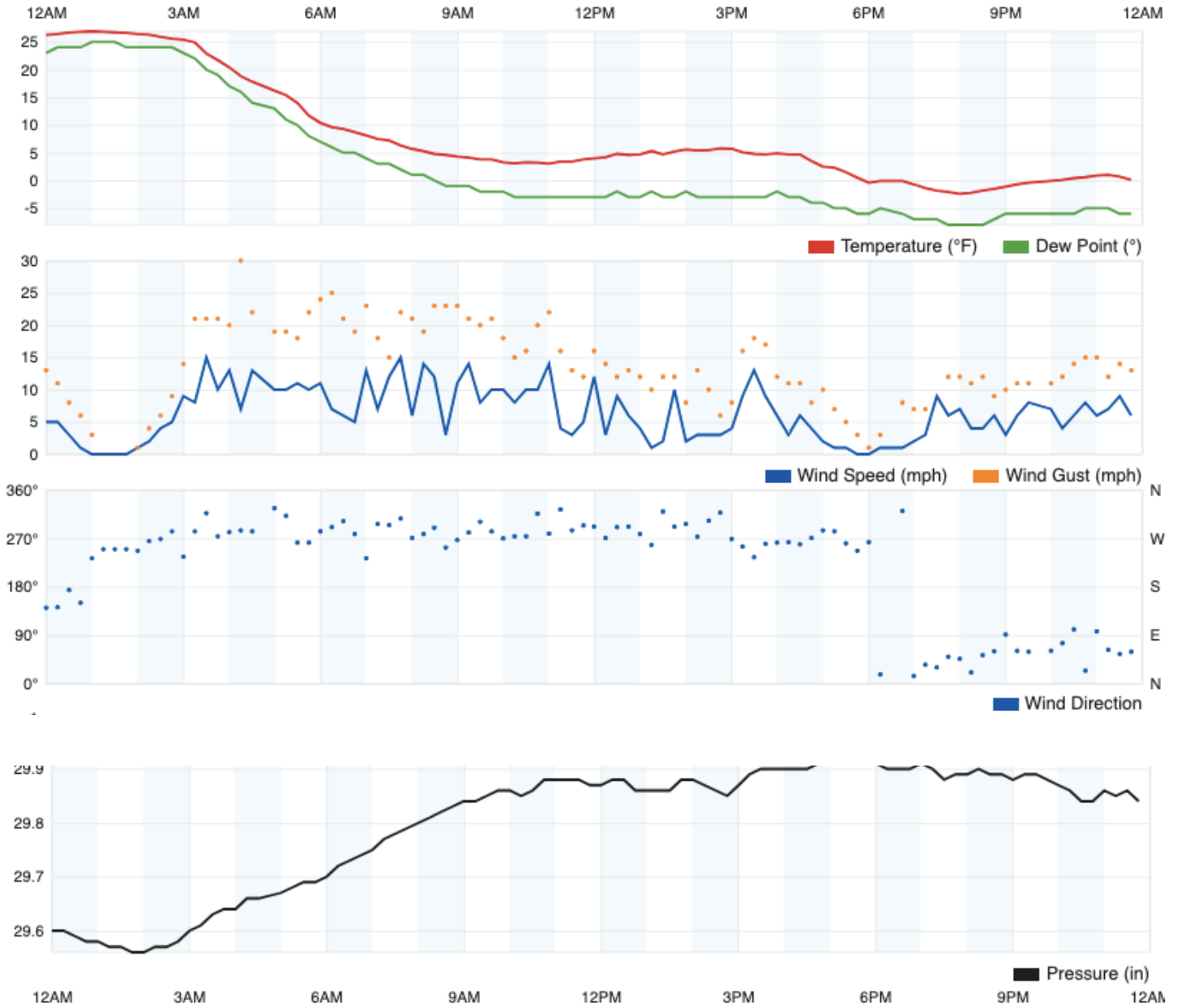


**The Sun Dogs were out in full force yesterday as the temperature begins to plummet in the area.** (Photo by Bruce Babcock)

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 8 of 54




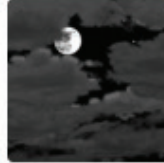

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



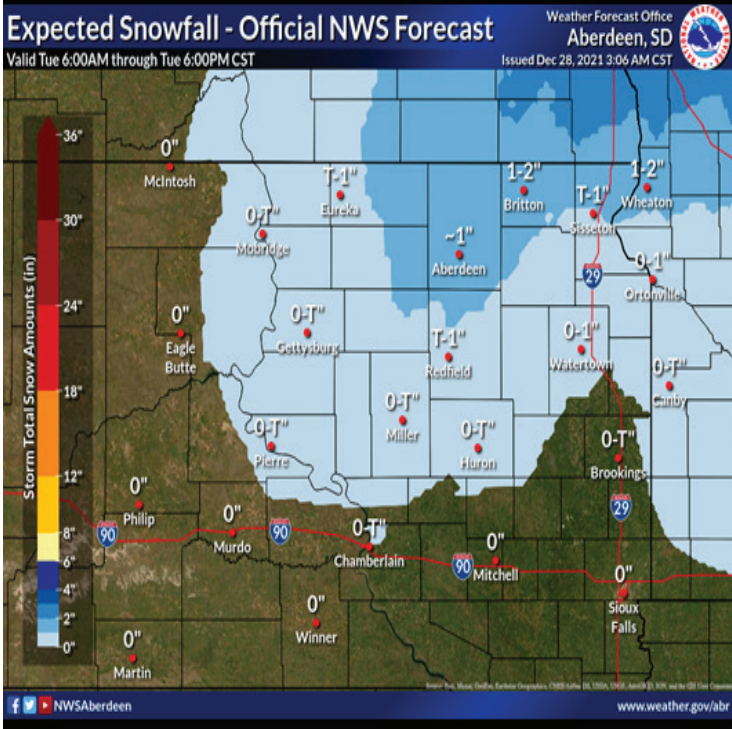


# Groton Daily Independent

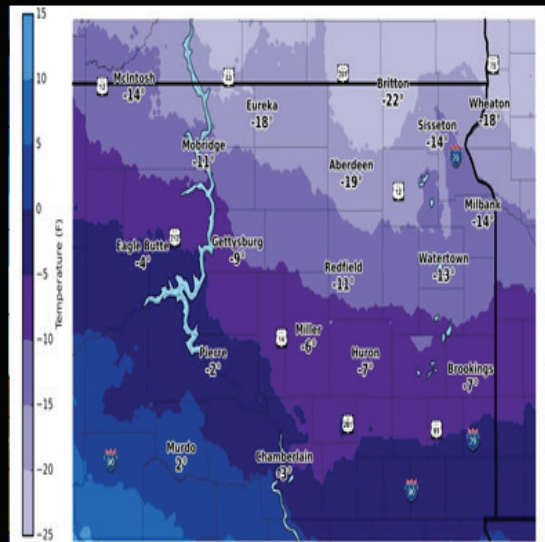
Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 9 of 54

Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday
 80% → 50%				
Snow then Chance Snow	Partly Cloudy	Cold	Mostly Cloudy	Chance Snow then Partly Sunny
High: 3 °F	Low: -19 °F	High: 3 °F	Low: -10 °F	High: 2 °F

## Light Snow Today



## Low Temperatures Tonight



Light snow can be expected across much of the region today, but accumulations will generally be under two inches. Much colder air will move into the region tonight, with some of the coldest temperatures of the season expected. The cold air will remain through the rest of the week into this weekend.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 10 of 54



## Bitterly Cold Week Ahead



An extended period of unseasonably cold air with bitterly to dangerously cold wind chills expected

### High Temperature Forecast

	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Eagle Butte	3	8	5	3	0
Mobridge	2	6	4	3	0
Gettysburg	4	8	7	5	0
Pierre	13	19	15	13	8
Eureka	0	1	0	1	-5
Miller	11	11	12	6	2
Aberdeen	5	2	2	0	-3
Redfield	9	7	9	4	-1
Sisseton	7	0	4	-1	-5
Watertown	15	6	10	5	-4
Milbank	10	1	8	0	-4
Wheaton	8	-4	3	-3	-7

### Low Temperature Forecast

	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Eagle Butte	-9	-9	-9	-12	-15
Mobridge	-15	-15	-12	-14	-15
Gettysburg	-10	-10	-9	-14	-14
Pierre	-2	-2	-2	-7	-7
Eureka	-19	-19	-14	-19	-20
Miller	-7	-7	-7	-11	-16
Aberdeen	-17	-17	-14	-16	-20
Redfield	-12	-12	-9	-12	-20
Sisseton	-14	-14	-12	-14	-18
Watertown	-11	-11	-6	-13	-17
Milbank	-13	-13	-12	-14	-20
Wheaton	-18	-18	-16	-16	-23

### Min Wind Chill Forecast

	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Eagle Butte	-28	-24	-24	-30	-33
Mobridge	-22	-22	-19	-28	-30
Gettysburg	-24	-23	-24	-28	-33
Pierre	-15	-12	-12	-20	-26
Eureka	-31	-31	-26	-34	-39
Miller	-19	-19	-19	-28	-32
Aberdeen	-26	-27	-23	-30	-35
Redfield	-21	-23	-20	-29	-32
Sisseton	-24	-29	-23	-31	-35
Watertown	-23	-20	-14	-25	-31
Milbank	-22	-25	-20	-28	-35
Wheaton	-27	-34	-23	-32	-36

NWS Aberdeen, SD  
Updated: 12/27/2021 2:57 PM CST

Dress in layers, Cover exposed skin, Limit outdoor time,  
Don't forget about pets, Check vehicle safety kit



Unseasonably cold air will remain in place across the region through the next several days, with bitterly to dangerously cold wind chills possible each night/morning, especially across north central and northeastern SD (frostbite on exposed skin possible in 30 minutes or less). Bundle up!



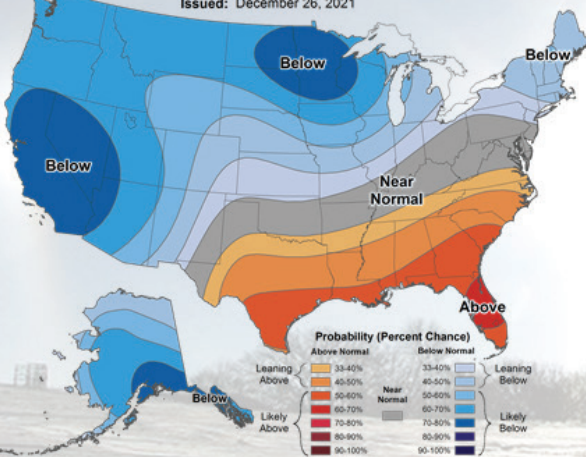
## Cold Persists into January

Predominantly below normal temperatures are outlooked across the Northern Plains for *at least* the next 2 weeks



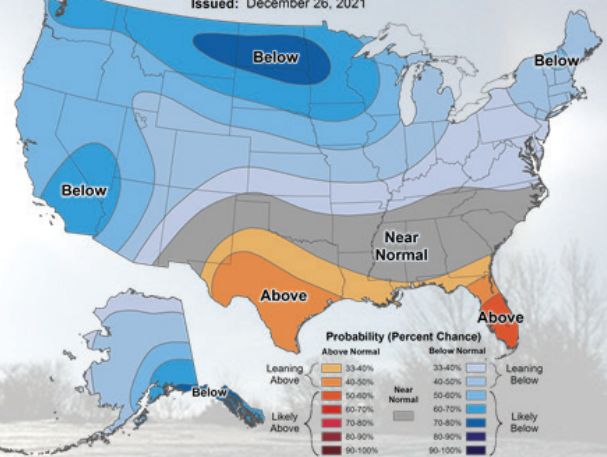
### 6-10 Day Temperature Outlook

Valid: January 1 - 5, 2022  
Issued: December 26, 2021



### 8-14 Day Temperature Outlook

Valid: January 3 - 9, 2022  
Issued: December 26, 2021



NWS Aberdeen, SD  
Updated: 12/27/2021 3:01 PM CST

Dress in layers, Cover exposed skin, Limit outdoor time,  
Don't forget about pets, Check vehicle safety kit



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 11 of 54

## Today in Weather History

December 28, 2000: Northwest winds of 35 to 50 mph, gusting to around 65 mph, occurred across central and north central South Dakota in the morning. The high winds resulted in blizzard conditions at some locations just east of the Missouri River. Further east, in northeast South Dakota, northwest winds of 30 to 50 mph combined with newly fallen snow to generate blizzard conditions from the morning into the early afternoon hours. Travel was terrible in many places, and many motorists found themselves in ditches. There were also several non-injury accidents.

December 28, 1879: Tay Bridge is the main-line railway across the Tay River in Scotland, between the city of Dundee and the suburb of Wormit in Fife. During the evening hours of December 28, 1879, winds were said to blow at right angles to the bridge. Witnesses said the storm was as severe as they had seen in 20 to 30 years. The winds at Glasgow and Aberdeen were measured at 71 mph. Winds were estimated to be 80 mph in Dundee. A passenger train departed at 7:13 pm was said to disappear three minutes later. The train was found at the bottom of the river, along with the high rafters and much of the ironwork of their supporting piers. There were no survivors. The Court of Inquiry report concluded that "The fall of the bridge was occasioned by the insufficiency of the cross bracing and its fastenings to sustain the force of the gale."

1839 - The third storm in two weeks hit the northeastern U.S. It brought two more feet of snow to Hartford, CT, and Worcester, MA. Whole gales swept the coast causing many wrecks. (David Ludlum)

1897 - The temperature at Dayville, OR, hit 81 degrees to establish a state record for December. (The Weather Channel)

1924 - Iowa experienced its coldest December morning of record. Morning lows averaged 25 degrees below zero for the 104 weather stations across the state.

1955 - Anchorage, AK, was buried under 17.7 inches of snow in 24 hours, a record for that location. (28th-29th) (The Weather Channel)

1958 - Albuquerque, NM, received 14.2 inches of snow to establish a 24 hour record. (28th-29th) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A winter storm produced heavy snow in the Upper Mississippi Valley and the Upper Great Lakes Region. Up to twenty inches of snow buried southern Minnesota, and 20 to 40 mph northwesterly winds produced snow drifts six feet high, and reduced visibilities to near zero at times in blowing snow. There were a thousand traffic accidents in Michigan during the storm, resulting in thirty-five injuries. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Strong winds behind a cold front claimed three lives in eastern Pennsylvania, and injured a dozen others in eastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey and Maryland. Winds gusted to 87 mph at Hammonton NJ and in the Washington D.C. area. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Squalls continued to bring snow to the Great Lakes Region, with heavy snow reported near Lake Superior and Lake Ontario. Syracuse NY received 8.5 inches of snow to push the total for the month past their previous December record of 57 inches. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2003 - A severe snow storm hit northern California and southern Oregon. As much as 2 feet of snow fell along Interstate 5 closing a 150-mile stretch of the interstate, stranding hundreds of travelers. Winds from the storm caused power outages to more than 200,000 customers in California and Oregon. One man died of a heart attack after helping other drivers. (CNN)

2004 - Los Angeles (downtown) broke a daily rainfall record for the month of December (5.55 inches). This was the third wettest calendar day in Los Angeles since records began in 1877.

2005 - An outbreak of severe thunderstorms across portions of the southeast United States on the 28th produced hail, high winds and a few tornadoes. The states of Georgia and Tennessee were the most affected. (NCDC)

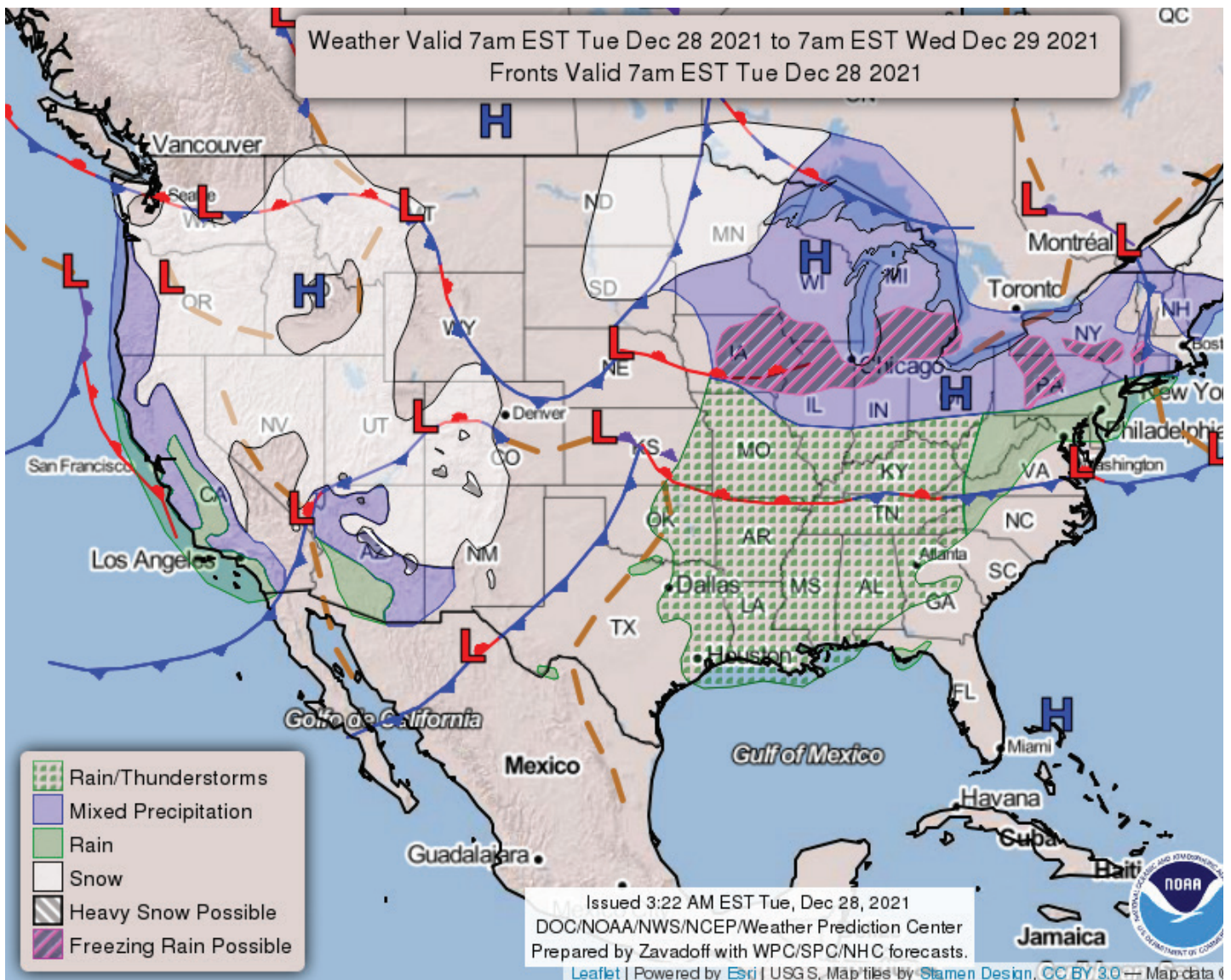
# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 12 of 54

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp: 26.9 °F at 1:00 AM**  
**Low Temp: -2.4 °F at 8:00 PM**  
**Wind: 30 mph at 4:15 AM**  
**Precip: 0.00**

**Record High: 57° in 1898**  
**Record Low: -24° in 1924**  
**Average High: 25°F**  
**Average Low: 4°F**  
**Average Precip in Dec.: 0.54**  
**Precip to date in Dec.: 0.47**  
**Average Precip to date: 21.75**  
**Precip Year to Date: 20.03**  
**Sunset Tonight: 4:58:17 PM**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:10:13 AM**



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 13 of 54



## WHY PARENTING MATTERS

There is limited information in Scripture that describes the home life of Jesus. Every now and then we get a glimpse of something. But there can be little doubt that God and His teachings were at the center of everything.

We read that "Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." No doubt His knowledge of and reverence for the Law and Prophets shaped His life and His reverence and relationship with His Heavenly Father and others.

Luke's Gospel tells us about a family trip to the temple. On the way home, they noticed that He was not with them. When they returned to the temple they found Him listening to and answering questions of the learned teachers. At the tender age of twelve Jesus demonstrated to others the deep understanding of God's Word that obviously came from His parents.

Mary and Joseph realized that they were obligated to God for the welfare and wellbeing of His one and only Son. While He was waiting to begin His public ministry He listened to their teachings and followed their examples of godly living.

Parents can never overlook or underestimate the influence and impact they have on their children. Parents must follow the example of Joseph and Mary in raising their children.

Prayer: We pray, Father, that parents will realize the important gift of a child and the trust You place in them to raise them to know, love, trust, obey and serve You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Luke 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 14 of 54

## 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)  
11/11/2021 Veteran's Day Program at the GHS Arena  
11/21/2021 Groton Area Snow Queen Contest  
11/25/2021 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)  
11/30/2021 James Valley Telecommunications Holiday Open House 10am-4pm  
12/04/2021 Olive Grove Tour of Homes  
12/11/2021 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-Noon

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 15 of 54

## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

### Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

- Black & White ..... \$41.54/year
- Colored ..... \$74.55/year
- Colored ..... \$42.60/6 months
- E-Weekly\* ..... \$21.30/year

\* The E-Weekly is a PDF file emailed to you each week. It does not grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to [paperpaul@grotonsd.net](mailto:paperpaul@grotonsd.net)

## Groton Daily Independent

[www.397news.com](http://www.397news.com)

### Subscription Form

This option will grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

- 1 Month ..... \$15.98
- 3 Months ..... \$21.30
- 6 Months ..... \$26.63
- 9 Months ..... \$31.95
- 12 Months ..... \$42.60

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

The following will be used for your log-in information.

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Password \_\_\_\_\_

Pay with Paypal. Type the following into your browser window:

[paypal.me/paperpaul](https://paypal.me/paperpaul)



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 16 of 54

## News from the Associated Press

### SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$201 million

Powerball

36-38-45-62-64, Powerball: 19, Power Play: 2

(thirty-six, thirty-eight, forty-five, sixty-two, sixty-four; Powerball: nineteen; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$416 million

### Monday's Scores

The Associated Press

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL=

Gar-Field, Va. 42, Mt. Vernon 37

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS=

Kindred, N.D. vs. Groton Area, ccd.

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

### Noem's check on abortion meds stuck in legislative committee

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem is pushing new rules for medicine-induced abortions that would be among the most restrictive in the country, but a legislative committee on Monday withheld its approval until it can get more information on the proposal.

The state Department of Health's proposed rule would add further requirements for women to get abortion pills, including requiring them to visit a doctor a third time and be within their first nine weeks of pregnancy. Only Texas has an earlier ban on abortion medication, according to the Guttmacher Institute, a research organization that supports abortion rights. South Dakota's rules proposal has been decried by abortion-rights advocates as unconstitutional and an overreach of the governor's executive power.

The Republican governor initiated the rules change through an executive order, arguing that restrictions on abortion pills are necessary for the safety of women. As the Supreme Court has reexamined *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 decision that established a nationwide right to an abortion, it has spurred a flurry of state-by-state skirmishes over abortion access. Noem has made it clear she wants abortion eventually outlawed.

Her executive order came amid the Food and Drug Administration permanently eliminating a long-standing requirement that women pick up abortion medication in person. In South Dakota, roughly one-third of abortions have been performed with drugs in recent years.

"Medication abortion is incredibly safe and effective," Dr. Sarah Traxler, the chief medical officer of Planned Parenthood North Central States, wrote in a letter to the Department of Health.

She added that the FDA has acknowledged complications are "extremely rare," but that the proposed rule makes it more likely that patients wouldn't be able to return to Planned Parenthood's clinic — the state's lone abortion clinic — to take the second drug.

That would hurt the Department of Health's goal of "protecting the health and safety of South Dakotans," Traxler argued, as well as create an unconstitutional violation of the right to an abortion.

However, Lynne Valenti, a deputy secretary for the Department of Health, called medication-induced abortions "a potentially dangerous procedure that is ending the life of an unborn child."



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 17 of 54

State law already requires women seeking abortion pills to meet with a doctor twice, go through at least a three-day waiting period before receiving any of the drugs, and receive a written statement that it might be possible to stop the abortion before taking the second drug — an assertion that medical experts say is dubious. The Department of Health's proposed rule would require a third doctor's visit where a woman would be monitored as she takes the second drug.

"Until we can make abortion completely illegal in this state, we better do what we can do to make sure that pregnant mothers are at least protected," said Republican Rep. Jon Hansen as the Legislature's Rules Review Committee debated approving the proposal.

But the proposal failed to clear the committee Monday after lawmakers became deadlocked on a three-to-three vote. Two Democrats voted against the proposed rule changes, arguing that passing them through executive rules, rather than legislative debate, set a bad precedent. They were joined by Republican Sen. Timothy Johns, who said he opposed approval because it was not clear whether requiring a third visit was really necessary for an abortion-seeker's safety.

With the committee deadlocked and unwilling to send the Department of Health's proposal back to the agency for revisions, the proposed rule was stuck in committee. That brought up the possibility of the Department of Health skipping to the next step in codifying rules — filing them with the Secretary of State — without the legislative committee's approval.

But lawmakers both opposed and in favor of the rule said they wished to avoid seeing rules taking effect without the Legislature's approval. Instead, they decided to take another look at the proposed rule next month and have requested the Department of Health to show whether it is necessary for a woman to take the second round of abortion medication at a clinic.

## South Dakota reserves jump 42% thanks to COVID relief funds

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's reserves increased 42% in one year thanks to an influx of federal COVID-19 relief dollars, according to a new report.

South Dakota Public Broadcasting reported Thursday that the state's 2021 comprehensive financial report shows the state took in \$62 million more than expected in revenue and spent \$29.2 million less than budgeted.

Total reserves grew from \$215.9 million in 2020 to \$307.1 million last year. Revenue increased from \$4.5 billion to \$6.1 billion. The report says the biggest factor was \$1.2 billion in pandemic-related grants the state received from the federal government. A growing economy and the construction industry also contributed to increased revenue.

State spending also increased, from \$4.3 billion to \$5.6 billion. Most of the increase can be attributed to spending COVID-19 relief funds, the report found.

Gov. Kristi Noem said the state needs to be cautious about spending in the face of rising inflation. She has proposed keeping at least 14% of the state budget in reserves.

The report also noted nearly 30% of the budget funded human and social services; about 23% went to pandemic response; about 20% went to education; and almost 13% went to transportation.

Spending by tourists increased dramatically, rising 31% from October 2020 to October 2021. The number of hotel bookings and airport arrivals grew 33% and 77% respectively.

## Lindsey Vonn: I'm here to help for mental health, ski advice

By LINDSEY VONN For The Associated Press

EDITOR'S NOTE: Lindsey Vonn is the most successful female ski racer of all time with 82 career World Cup victories. She also won the downhill at the Vancouver Olympics in 2010 and has two other Olympic medals. "Rise: My Story," her new memoir, will be published in January. Having retired from racing in 2019, Vonn is offering her thoughts on some of the current themes in sports in an occasional diary as told to AP Sports Writer Andrew Dampf.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 18 of 54

With the Winter Olympics less than six weeks away, I'm starting to get excited about ski racing again. You're probably asking, "Shouldn't you always be excited about ski racing?" Well, it's not that straightforward.

When I retired almost three years ago, it wasn't because I was ready to stop racing. It was because my body gave out. My surgically repaired knees couldn't handle the strains of hurling myself down the mountain at 80 mph. For about a year after I retired, I couldn't watch skiing — it was too depressing.

It was difficult to get my mind around retirement. Obviously, I always knew that would happen — every athlete has an end point. But for someone who is always in that "grind" mindset it's not an easy thing to just shut off. So, I tried to set myself up in a way in which I would always have work as soon as I retired from skiing.

After retirement, I took a week for myself and then starting booking events and going to work. I was busier than ever. But just because I had work set up doesn't mean that the transition was easy. It was hard. It was a new routine that wasn't dictated by or around skiing.

From mental trials to physical trials, I had always used skiing as my outlet: No matter what was going on, I could retreat to the mountain. That was my happy place, a sort of meditation, and an escape.

Which is why it was difficult when skiing was no longer there when I retired. I had to find a different way to mentally sort through things. I didn't have the outlet of skiing anymore. I didn't have a "next race" or "next season" to make my comeback. I had to create new goals, with different tangibles and different timelines. It took me a while to find my place.

Now, I love that I can provide support and feedback for those going through any type of comeback — both mentally and physically. And, I've found a way to connect with skiing (and skiers) on another level.

Before and during last season's world championships in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy, I went over video with Breezy Johnson and tried to help her out in any way I could. I think Breezy has the mental side of it pretty much dialed in. But I know that she knows that I'm always there if she needs me. Same with the other girls on the U.S. team. I've also developed a great relationship with Bella Wright. She's very inquisitive and eager to learn and I love her energy.

Then there's Sofia Goggia, the Italian who is the reigning Olympic champion in downhill. Like me, Sofia has battled back from a ton of injuries in her career. But when she's healthy, there's nobody faster. She's gone through a lot in her life, and I've helped her through quite a bit of it the last couple years. She's a very tough competitor and I think we have a lot of similarities in the way we approach things.

I want to encourage current and next generation skiers to reach out for help when you need it.

I learned how to deal with a lot of these things on my own. I internalized everything and kept it bottled up. When I was a teenager, mental health wasn't a thing by far, and there was definitely — and still is — a stigma to it. Back then it was like, "Suck it up and bear it." There are so many resources nowadays and good people willing to help. Reach out. I wish I had. There is no reason to feel alone in your struggles.

These days, my biggest challenge is multi-tasking and balancing all my different post-racing commitments. I'm a limited partner and a general partner on two different venture capital funds. I'm an advisor to a few companies. I still represent Under Armour, Rolex and Land Rover. And I'm designing my own ski wear.

So I have a lot going on but there's not as much pressure on me from outside now; it's more pressure that I put on myself. Actually, it's just like when I was racing: The most pressure ever put on me was from myself.

Luckily, I know now that I'm not alone.

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

## Hard-hit by COVID, Israel's ultra-Orthodox slow to get shots

By TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

BNEI BRAK, Israel (AP) — Yossi Levy has repeatedly booked and canceled his coronavirus vaccine appointment. The 45-year-old ultra-Orthodox Jew recovered from the virus earlier this year, as have his eight children and wife. But a combination of lethargy and procrastination has prevented him from following

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 19 of 54

through and getting inoculated.

"It isn't something pressing. I'm not opposed to it. It's just laziness," he said.

Levy is among the hundreds of thousands of ultra-Orthodox Jews who have yet to receive their COVID-19 shots. The group has some of the lowest vaccination rates in the country despite being hit hard by the pandemic.

Facing the new coronavirus variant omicron, officials are now scrambling to ramp up vaccination rates in a population that has so far been slow to roll up their sleeves.

"We are going on the offensive with the issue of vaccinations," said Avraham Rubinstein, the mayor of Bnei Brak, the country's largest ultra-Orthodox city.

It has been one year since COVID-19 vaccines became available, yet vaccine reluctance persists even as deaths mount and the highly contagious omicron variant spreads around the globe. An unconventional cadre of people has stepped up to promote vaccination with efforts that traditionally have been the realm of public health officials.

Israeli officials have appealed to the community's prominent rabbis, who serve as arbiters on all matters, to promote vaccination. They are deploying mobile clinics. And they are beating back a wave of lies about the vaccine that has washed over parts of the community.

The vaccination rate is low in part because half of the ultra-Orthodox population is under 16 and only recently made eligible for vaccination. Also, many ultra-Orthodox were already infected or believe they were and don't think they need the vaccine.

The outreach effort has had mixed success. Officials hope to raise the vaccination rate with a new mobile-clinic campaign at religious schools and a media blitz stepping up pressure on parents to vaccinate children.

Israel was one of the first countries to vaccinate its population late last year and the first to give booster shots. But the campaign has lagged in recent weeks and hundreds of thousands of people remain unvaccinated or without a booster as the specter of an omicron surge looms.

While vaccination rates for the second dose among the general population hover around 63% and the booster at 45%, in the ultra-Orthodox community the number is around half of that. The community's immunity shoots up somewhat when the 300,000 or so of those who are known to have recovered are included, but Israel's Health Ministry recommends those who were infected to get at least one shot if six months have elapsed since the infection.

The low vaccination rate stands in stark contrast to the heavy price the community paid during the pandemic. The ultra-Orthodox were hit hard from the start, with the community's 1.2 million people often leading the country's morbidity rates and losing hundreds to the disease. The ultra-Orthodox make up 13% of Israel's 9.3 million population.

There are societal reasons for the quick community spread. The ultra-Orthodox tend to live in poor, crowded neighborhoods, with large families in small apartments, where sickness can quickly spread. Synagogues, the centerpiece of social life, bring men together to pray and socialize in small spaces.

The particular way of life of the ultra-Orthodox, also known as Haredim, has made driving up vaccination rates a unique challenge for health officials.

The cloistered community has long been separate from mainstream Israeli life, with children studying scripture but very little math and English. The community typically shuns the internet, doesn't watch secular TV and tends to live separately from non-religious Israelis. It is suspicious of secular state authorities and many of the trappings of modernity.

"For Haredim, there is a double fear: fear of the state and fear of science. There is no basic trust in these entities," said Gilad Malach, who heads the ultra-Orthodox program at the Israel Democracy Institute, a Jerusalem think tank. He said that skepticism has allowed unfounded claims about the vaccines to spread in the community.

Avi Blumenthal, an adviser to the Health Ministry on the ultra-Orthodox, said vaccine information is disseminated to the ultra-Orthodox public through its local media as well as in biweekly messages posted on community notice boards, known as "pashkevils." He says these means reach the overwhelming majority

of Haredim.

The ultra-Orthodox follow a strict interpretation of Judaism and rely on rabbis to guide them in many life decisions. While some rabbis have actively encouraged vaccination, others have taken a less aggressive approach and their followers have been less enthusiastic about getting inoculated.

Blumenthal, who himself is ultra-Orthodox, said the Health Ministry recently held a conference at the country's largest hospital, inviting prominent rabbis to converse with doctors about the importance of the vaccine. The head of the government's coronavirus advisory panel has repeatedly met with important religious figures, urging them to spread the word on vaccines.

"We go by the Jewish sages," said Dvora Ber, 27, a Bnei Brak resident and mother of four who is vaccinated. "What they tell us, we do."

## Undertakers, rabbis join global fight promoting COVID shots

By LINDSEY TANNER AP Medical Writer

In Germany, Lutheran pastors are offering COVID-19 shots inside churches. In Israel's science-skeptical ultra-Orthodox community, trusted rabbis are trying to change minds. And in South Africa, undertakers are taking to the streets to spread the word.

The funeral directors' message: "We're burying too many people."

A year after the COVID-19 vaccine became available, traditional public health campaigns promoting vaccination are often going unheeded. So an unconventional cadre of people has joined the effort.

They are opening sanctuaries and going door to door and village to village, touting the benefits of the vaccines and sometimes offering shots on the spot.

As the outbreak drags on into a third year, with the global death toll at 5.4 million, vaccine promoters are up against fear, mistrust, complacency, inconvenience and people who simply have bigger worries than COVID-19.

On a December day, a convoy of hearses with sirens wailing drove up to a shopping mall in Johannesburg's sprawling Soweto township.

"Vaccinate, vaccinate!" Vuyo Mabindisi of Vuyo's Funeral Services said as he handed out pamphlets on how to avoid COVID-19. "We don't want to see you coming to our offices."

Several people responded with curiosity and questions, while others carried on with their shopping.

With a population of 60 million, South Africa has reported 3 million-plus COVID-19 cases, including over 90,000 deaths. Those are the highest figures in Africa. Only about 40% of South Africa's adult population is fully vaccinated, and that is one of the best levels on the continent. After a fitful start, there is ample vaccine.

Thabo Teffo, a 32-year-old bank employee, was among those seeking shots recently at a Soweto church.

Teffo said he had been skeptical but came under pressure from his parents and two vaccinated sisters, and also had a recent health scare that turned out not to be COVID-19.

"That encouraged me to go ahead and get vaccinated for my peace of mind and to protect my family," he said.

Rupali Limaye, a behavioral scientist who studies global vaccine hesitancy at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, said community-level efforts may resonate more than impersonal mass media campaigns.

German pastor Christoph Herbst believes giving COVID-19 shots in surroundings that feel more familiar than medical settings may help. That's why he and several other Lutheran pastors in the Saxony region contacted an aid group to offer shots inside their churches, despite sometimes violent anti-vaccination protests in recent weeks. Some pastors have been criticized and even threatened.

"We believe that we have a responsibility that goes beyond ourselves," said Herbst, of St. Petri church in the eastern city of Chemnitz. "We're not doctors and we're not professionals. But we have the space and we have volunteers who can organize something like this."

Herbst opened St. Petri's wrought-iron doors on a recent vaccination day and sighed with relief when

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 21 of 54

he saw the long line of people waiting in the cold.

Retirees Hannelore Hilbert and her husband came to get booster shots in time for the holidays.

"Last year's Christmas was really sad. We were all alone," said the 70-year-old Hilbert, who looked forward to celebrating with at least some of her five grandchildren in person — not on Skype, like last year.

The Western-made vaccines have proved extraordinarily safe and remarkably effective overall at preventing COVID-19 deaths and hospitalizations, and experts say that seems to be holding true even amid the spread of the highly contagious omicron variant. Health authorities warn that low vaccination rates are giving the virus more opportunities to mutate into new variants.

Saxony has Germany's lowest vaccination rate and high COVID-19 numbers.

Herbst said many naysayers are concerned about possible side effects, feel they are overly pressured by authorities, or resent any measures supported by the government. Some feel discriminated against as East Germans, because not all their hopes have been fulfilled 30 years after communism's collapse.

"It's important that there's a space where we listen to each other without immediately lapsing into condemnation," Herbst said.

Chicago community activist Caesar Thompson uses that same approach as he knocks on doors in struggling Black neighborhoods hit hard by the virus.

Thompson, 44, is a "vaccine ambassador" enlisted by city health authorities. He said the idea is not to strong-arm or cajole. Instead, he said, he offers information, answers questions and lets people know he can sign them up to receive shots in their homes or nearby.

Thompson has a salesman's gift of gab, and he has used it at churches, train stations, parks, flea markets — almost anywhere people gather.

Thompson said it helps that he's "just a guy on the street." "You might even know me if you live in my neighborhood," he said.

In communities he targets, the coronavirus is often not the most pressing concern, Thompson said. For people in crime-ridden neighborhoods who lack jobs or health insurance and are struggling to feed their families, "COVID is down the list for them," he said.

In conservative Wyoming, the vaccine can be a hard sell. Commissioners in Campbell County voted against using federal dollars for an education campaign about the vaccines, worrying that it would smack of a mandate. The county's vaccination rate is about 27%.

Gabby Watson, 23, of Gillette, said she has no intention of getting vaccinated "because I'm really healthy and take care of myself. I'm just not a high risk for COVID. I just don't see the reasoning for me to get the vaccine."

She said the U.S. government is pushing COVID-19 vaccines too hard.

"They're pushing more people away and creating more of this thought bubble of, 'What the hell are you trying to do with my body? What are you trying to do with my freedom?'" Watson said. "And that's not a good direction to go into either."

Suspicion of secular authorities is rampant in Israel's community of ultra-Orthodox Jews. They shun many trappings of modern life, follow a strict interpretation of Judaism and rely on rabbis to guide many life decisions. While some rabbis have encouraged vaccination, others have taken a less aggressive approach.

The ultra-Orthodox have some of Israel's lowest vaccination rates and have been hit hard by the pandemic.

Now, facing omicron, Israeli officials "are going on the offensive," said Avraham Rubinstein, the mayor of Bnei Brak, the country's largest ultra-Orthodox city. They are deploying mobile vaccination clinics and enlisting prominent rabbis in the community.

Yossi Levy, a 45-year-old ultra-Orthodox Jew, recovered from the virus earlier this year, as have his eight children and wife. He has repeatedly booked and canceled COVID-19 vaccine appointments.

"It isn't something pressing. I'm not opposed to it. It's just laziness," Levy said.

While Israel's vaccination rates for the second dose among the general population hover around 63% and the booster at 45%, in the ultra-Orthodox community the numbers are around half of that.

The ultra-Orthodox — 13% of Israel's population — tend to live in crowded neighborhoods, with large families in small apartments, where sickness can spread quickly. Synagogues, the centerpiece of social

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 22 of 54

life, bring men together in small spaces. Also, half of that population is under 16 and only recently became eligible for vaccination.

Gilad Malach, who heads the ultra-Orthodox program at a Jerusalem think tank, said there is a "double fear: fear of the state and fear of science. There is no basic trust in these entities."

In India, complacency is contributing to a low rate of second shots among the population of 1.4 billion: 40% are fully vaccinated and around 19% have received just one shot.

The country has recorded nearly 35 million cases and over 450,000 deaths.

In Uttar Pradesh, India's most populated state, Rohit Kanojia received his first shot in August but didn't get the second one.

"I forgot," the 23-year-old said, adding that people are no longer afraid of COVID-19. People roam around without masks and no one maintains social distance, he said. "Life is almost normal."

Jeet Bahadur, a 45-year-old cook, got his second shot months late at a Sikh temple in New Delhi. For him, like many others in India who are trying to eke out a living in a crippled economy, the virus just wasn't very high on his list of priorities.

---

Associated Press writers Andrew Meldrum in Johannesburg; Mead Gruver in Fort Collins, Colorado; Kirsten Grieshaber in Chemnitz, Germany; Anupam Nath in Guwahati, India; Krutika Pathi, Rishi Lekhi and Aniruddha Ghosal in New Delhi; Biswajeet Banerjee in Lucknow, India; and Tia Goldenberg in Bnei Brak, Israel, contributed to this report.

## In eastern Germany, pastors push for shots despite protests

By KIRSTEN GRIESHABER Associated Press

CHEMNITZ, Germany (AP) — The pastor opened the wrought-iron doors of St. Petri Church in the German city of Chemnitz and sighed with relief when he saw the long line of people waiting in the cold for shots against the coronavirus.

Together with the parish council, the Rev. Christoph Herbst had invited in a relief organization and volunteer doctors to conduct a Sunday vaccination clinic at the Lutheran church. The act of community outreach, the pastor knew, might not go over well in a part of Germany prone to vaccine resistance, including sometimes violent protests.

"I was very insecure about how people would react to our offer," Herbst said as he welcomed the waiting crowd into his neo-Gothic house of prayer. "In our region, there are very different and very polarized views about the coronavirus measures in general, about how to fight the pandemic, and especially about the vaccinations."

Saxony state, where Chemnitz and the city of Dresden are located, has the lowest vaccination rate among Germany's 16 federal states, and one of the highest numbers of COVID-19 cases. Only 60.1% of residents were fully vaccinated by Christmas, compared to the nationwide average of 70.8%. At some points in the pandemic, local hospitals had to transfer patients out of state because all the intensive care beds were full.

Lutheran pastors across Saxony have used their sermons to promote vaccines as the most efficient way to prevent severe illness and to end the pandemic. Like Herbst, many opened their churches for clinics this month, hoping that offering jabs in a familiar environment and without advance registration might persuade some holdouts.

"We believe that we have a responsibility that goes beyond ourselves, and that we should do something for society with the resources we have," Herbst explained. "We're not doctors and we're not professionals. But we have the space and we have volunteers who can organize something like this."

Chemnitz, a city of about 247,000 residents, was known as Karl-Marx-Stadt when it and the rest of Saxony were part of the former communist East Germany. Many of the local vaccine refusers cite concerns of possible side effects, but also feeling overwhelmed by what they see as too much pressure from authorities or general opposition to any measures endorsed by the government, according to Herbst.

Among those who patiently sat in a pew waiting to roll up their sleeves at Herbst's church were Hannelore

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 23 of 54

and Bernd Hilbert, a retired couple from the nearby village of Amtsberg. They came to get booster shots because some of their five grandchildren are too young to be vaccinated, and the Hilberts hoped to see them for Christmas.

"Last year's Christmas was really sad. We were all alone," Hannelore Hilbert, 70. said.

"We're grateful for the church to offer these shots," added her 72-year-old husband, who said they had waited unsuccessfully for shots at a hospital a few days earlier.

The vast majority of the church's vaccine recipients on a recent Sunday turned out to have more in common with the booster-seeking couple than the skeptical or frightened community members Saxony's pastors are trying to reach.

Of the 251 vaccines administered during St. Petri's daylong clinic, 18 went to individuals receiving their first dose. None of them wanted to speak with The Associated Press about why they'd changed their minds and decided to get shots almost one year into Germany's mass immunization campaign.

A loud minority in Germany has opposed any kind of anti-virus measures since the start of the pandemic. The resistance grew angrier and more aggressive in recent weeks after the national parliament this month passed a vaccine mandate for some professions and most of the country's regions resumed some form of restrictions in response to the latest wave of infections.

With mass demonstrations banned in several parts of the country due to the pandemic, vaccine opponents have gathered for protest "walks" - unauthorized marches organized quickly via social media. Around 30 protesters showed up with torches outside the home of Saxony state Health Minister Petra Koepping one night, shouting slurs until police arrived.

The protests swelled in recent days, sometimes drawing thousands of people. Police detained several participants for attacking officers and journalists. Some Lutheran pastors received criticism and personal threats for their efforts to encourage vaccination.

Herbst said he thinks the majority of Saxons back the country's immunization campaign and that far-right groups intent on undermining democracy have coopted anti-vaccine sentiment, fueling an already present sense among residents of Germany's east of feeling left behind 30 years after the country's reunification.

When parishioners confront him with their opposition to vaccines, the pastor says he tries to listen instead of judge.

"And I listen to things that are sometimes difficult to hear," he said. "I also listen to things that I think belong in the realm of conspiracy theories. I don't confirm those. But it's important that there's a space where we listen to each other without immediately lapsing into condemnation."

However, the pastor wonders if at this point all the arguments for and against vaccination have been exchanged and the decision of whether or not to get immunized no longer should be left as a matter of personal choice.

"There are people who say what is needed now is a democratically legitimized decision by parliament on a general vaccine mandate," Herbst said. "That would be a decision that does not work on moral pressure, but rather on the basis of a set of rules that applies to everyone."

## **Tutu: a man of empathy, moral ardor, and some silly jokes**

By CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA Associated Press

One Christmas Day in the 1980s, Desmond Tutu led a packed church service in Soweto, the Black Johannesburg township and fulcrum of protest against white racist rule in South Africa. An American family — mine — found standing room at the back.

We were among the few white people in the congregation and, as we shook hands with Tutu on the steps upon leaving, he made a joke. Something like: "So, it really is a white Christmas."

Evoking the Irving Berlin song "White Christmas," famously crooned by Bing Crosby, in tense, dusty Soweto was quintessential Tutu. He couldn't resist a pun about race in an inflamed country suffering the agonies of apartheid, the system of white minority domination that was extinguished in 1994.

(Actually, every once in a very long while, it has snowed in Johannesburg, but certainly not at Christmas

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 24 of 54

time, which falls in the Southern Hemisphere's summer).

When Tutu died Sunday at age 90, he was remembered as a Nobel laureate, a spiritual compass, a champion of the anti-apartheid struggle who turned to other global causes after Nelson Mandela, another moral heavyweight, became South Africa's first Black president. Barack Obama praised Tutu for fighting injustice wherever he saw it.

But the former U.S. president also recalled the activist's "impish sense of humor." And it is that Desmond Tutu — the funny, kind, gracious man behind the icon — whom I and so many others recall.

To see Tutu up close was to bask in his rollercoaster laughter, to revel as his eyes would widen theatrically, to luxuriate in his pristinely enunciated remarks, and to come away infused with the man's joy and warmth. If he had a chance to dance, usually in church, he was on his feet — with the help of a cane in later years, as he grew more frail.

He seemed to embody the best of what it is to be human, at a granular level. The small generousities, the willingness to listen, the empathy, lightening the mood with ... let's face it, some pretty silly jokes.

He kept that up through grim times in South Africa, showing anger and frustration too at dehumanizing state policies, the violence of white-controlled security forces and the killing within Black communities as apartheid, a scourge that he described as "evil," played out bitterly.

Not everyone was a fan. His moral ardor ran up against realpolitik. His notion of the "rainbow nation," an idealized vision of racial tolerance, is at odds with the social and economic imbalances of South Africa today.

But he always reached out, always looked for and found the humanity in people. In advance of a small service at St. George's Cathedral in 2015, participants were asked to send photos of themselves; I watched as Tutu went around the congregation, asking each person to say a little about themselves.

I was a boy on that Christmas Day when Tutu riffed on Bing Crosby, and my father was reporting for The Associated Press in South Africa. In 1989, my parents moved to Stockholm. A few months before they departed, a postcard arrived with Tutu's scrawl on the back.

"Go well. Thanks for your splendid service," he wrote. "Will miss you. Will certainly try to see you in Sweden. God bless you."

In time, I became a journalist and also worked for the AP in South Africa, sometimes covering Tutu's post-apartheid commentary on corruption and other challenges, as well as his hospitalizations for the prostate cancer that afflicted him for nearly a quarter century.

I would recall the one time he visited our Johannesburg home for dinner. He didn't stay long. He was charming, easygoing.

Afterwards, he sent us another postcard. On the front was an elephant; on the back was something that could be taken both as a bread-and-butter note and as an unintended valedictory from a remarkable man who, even at age 90, left the world too soon.

"Just an inadequate note to thank you very much for your kind hospitality," he wrote. "I enjoyed myself and was sorry to have to leave early. God bless you."

It was signed, simply, "Desmond."

---

Torchia reported from South Africa for the AP from 2013 to 2019. He is currently based in Mexico City.

## Waddle shines, Dolphins beat Saints 20-3 to win 7th straight

By BRETT MARTEL AP Sports Writer

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A Dolphins defense that intercepted Saints rookie Ian Book twice and sacked him eight times was probably enough to push Miami's winning streak to seven games.

Miami also got a big lift from rookie sensation Jaylen Waddle to outclass New Orleans on both sides of the ball.

Waddle caught 10 passes for 92 yards and touchdown in his return from the COVID-19 list, and the Dolphins beat the short-handed Saints 20-3 on Monday night, becoming the first NFL team to win seven



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 25 of 54

straight after losing seven in a row.

"This team stuck together, really the entire year," said third-year Miami coach Brian Flores, who improved to 19-7 in games played after October. "Obviously, we dealt with a lot of adversity early in the year. It revealed a lot — revealed the character of the guys in our locker room.

"Our guys kept fighting, they kept sticking together, they worked hard," Flores added.

Nik Needham intercepted Book and returned the ball 28 yards for a touchdown to help Miami become one of four 8-7 teams — along with Baltimore, the Los Angeles Chargers and Las Vegas — in contention for one of the final playoff spots in the AFC.

Book started for the Saints (7-8) because of a COVID-19 outbreak that took 16 players off the active roster, including starting QB Taysom Hill and veteran backup Trevor Siemian.

"Rookie quarterback — we mixed up some looks on him," Needham said. "Had him a little confused out there and I think that played a big part."

With the Saints' offensive line missing three starters, including both tackles, Book completed 12 of 20 passes for 135 yards.

"Just keeping him upright tonight was a challenge," Saints coach Sean Payton said. "The first interception was a throw he'll want back, but that's a tough position for him to be in."

The Saints' defense helped keep the game within reach until Waddle scored on a 1-yard shovel pass from Tua Tagovailoa to make it 17-3 with 5:10 left in the third quarter.

Tagovailoa, who entered the game with an NFL best 69.9% completion rate, connected on 19 of 26 passes (73.1%) for 198 yards and the short TD. He also was intercepted by Marshon Lattimore.

## THE WADDLE EFFECT

Waddle missed Miami's previous game because of a positive COVID-19 test. He has 96 catches this season, eclipsing New Orleans' Michael Thomas for the second-most receptions by a rookie, and leaving him five short of Anquan Boldin's rookie record of 101 catches in 2003.

Waddle said "it'll obviously be pretty cool" if he breaks the record.

"The NFL is a special league, so anything in this league, to have a record is always big," he said.

## BOOK'S OPENING

Book got a roar of encouragement from the crowd when he first took the field and Saints fans were cheering again two plays later when he completed his first career pass. Then they let out a collective gasp on his second pass — Needham's pick-6.

Needham said a "max blitz" helped set up his first interception for a score at any level of football.

"We knew the ball had to come out quick so I was just staring at the quarterback and right when he said, 'Hut,' he was looking at the slot," Needham recalled. "I think the ball got tipped and it landed right in my hands."

Book's next two series also lasted three plays each and ended on sacks. New Orleans didn't get a first down until the second quarter. That drive lasted five plays.

The Saints finally moved the ball on their fifth series, needing just four plays to pick up three first downs. A roughing-the-passer penalty on a 12-yard completion to Alvin Kamara moved New Orleans to the Miami 23, setting up Brett Maher's field goal to make it 10-3.

"Personally I got a lot to get better at," Book said. "There's things in my mind already that I want back but it felt good to be out there."

Cam Jordan's second sack of the game in the final minute of the second quarter forced Miami to try a 59-yard field goal, which Jason Sanders missed, keeping the Saints' deficit at one touchdown at halftime.

## SUPERLATIVES

The Dolphins' eight sacks tied a team record for a game. They became the first team in the Super Bowl era to have that many sacks, score a defensive TD and hold an opponent under 200 total yards while allowing no TDs or third-down conversions. The Saints went 0 for 12 on third down.

## INJURIES/COVID-19

Dolphins: Miami went into the game missing seven players because of COVID-19.

Saints: In addition to having 16 players removed from the active roster by positive COVID-19 tests, New

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 26 of 54

Orleans scratched starting left tackle Terron Armstead, who was not yet ready to return from a knee injury that also kept him out the previous week. Reserve right tackle Caleb Benenoch was treated on the field for an injury in the fourth quarter. Receiver Tre'Quan Smith left the game with a chest injury.

UP NEXT

Dolphins: Visit Tennessee on Sunday before closing out the regular season at home against AFC East rival New England.

Saints: Host NFC South foe Carolina on Sunday before traveling to Atlanta to end the regular season.

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/hub/nfl> and <https://apnews.com/hub/pro-32> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](https://twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## Biden signs \$768.2 billion defense spending bill into law

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden signed the National Defense Authorization Act into law, authorizing \$768.2 billion in military spending, including a 2.7% pay raise for service members, for 2022.

The NDAA authorizes a 5% increase in military spending, and is the product of intense negotiations between Democrats and Republicans over issues ranging from reforms of the military justice system to COVID-19 vaccine requirements for soldiers.

"The Act provides vital benefits and enhances access to justice for military personnel and their families, and includes critical authorities to support our country's national defense," Biden said Monday in a statement.

The \$768.2 billion price tag marks \$25 billion more than Biden initially requested from Congress, a prior proposal that was rejected by members of both parties out of concerns it would undermine U.S. efforts to keep pace militarily with China and Russia.

The new bill passed earlier this month with bipartisan support, with Democrats and Republicans touting wins in the final package.

Democrats applauded provisions in the bill overhauling how the military justice system handles sexual assault and other related crimes, effectively taking prosecutorial jurisdiction over such crimes out of the hands of military commanders.

Republicans, meanwhile, touted success in blocking an effort to add women to the draft, as well as the inclusion of a provision that bars dishonorable discharges for service members who refuse the COVID-19 vaccine.

The bill includes \$7.1 billion for the Pacific Deterrence Initiative and a statement of congressional support for the defense of Taiwan, measures intended to counteract China's influence in the region.

It also includes \$300 million for the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, a show of support in the face of Russian aggression, as well as \$4 billion for the European Defense Initiative.

In his statement, the president also outlined a number of provisions his administration opposes over what he characterized as "constitutional concerns or questions of construction."

Those planks include provisions that restrict the use of funds to transfer or release individuals detained at the Guantanamo Bay detention center, which the Biden administration is moving to close. Biden's statement said the provisions "unduly impair" the executive branch's ability to decide when and where to prosecute detainees and where to send them when they're released, and could constrain U.S. negotiations with foreign countries over the transfer of detainees in a way that could undermine national security.

The law also has provisions barring goods produced by forced Uyghur labor in China from entering the U.S., and it begins to lay out plans for the new Global War on Terror Memorial, which would be the latest addition to the National Mall.

## Evangelicals a rising force inside Argentine prisons

By GERMAN DE LOS SANTOS and RODRIGO ABD Associated Press

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 27 of 54

ROSARIO, Argentina (AP) — The loud noise from the opening of an iron door marks Jorge Anguilante's exit from the Pinero prison every Saturday. He heads home for 24 hours to minister at a small evangelical church he started in a garage in Argentina's most violent city.

Before he walks through the door, guards remove handcuffs from "Tachuela" — Spanish for "Tack," as he was known in the criminal world. In silence, they stare at the hit-man-turned-pastor who greets them with a single word: "Blessings."

The burly, 6-foot-1 (1.85-meter) man whose tattoos are remnants of another time in his life — back when he says he used to kill -- must return by 8 a.m. to a prison cellblock known by inmates as "the church."

His story, of a convicted murderer embracing an evangelical faith behind bars, is common in the lock-ups of Argentina's Santa Fe province and its capital city of Rosario. Many here began peddling drugs as teenagers and got stuck in a spiral of violence that led some to their graves and others to overcrowded prisons divided between two forces: drug lords and preachers.

Over the past 20 years, Argentine prison authorities have encouraged, to one extent or another, the creation of units effectively run by evangelical inmates — sometimes granting them a few extra special privileges, such as more time in fresh air.

The cellblocks are much like those in the rest of the prison — clean and painted in pastel colors, light blue or green. They have kitchens, televisions and audio equipment — here used for prayer services.

But they are safer and calmer than the regular units.

Violating rules against fighting, smoking, using alcohol or drugs can get an inmate kicked back into the normal prison.

"We bring peace to the prisons. There was never a riot inside the evangelical cellblocks. And that is better for the authorities," said the Rev. David Sensini of Rosario's Redil de Cristo church.

Access is controlled both by prison officials and by cellblock leaders who function much like pastors — and who are wary of attempts by gangs to infiltrate.

"It has happened many times that an inmate asks to go to the evangelical pavilion to try to take it over. We need to keep permanent control over who enters", said Eric Gallardo, one of the leaders at the Pinero prison.

---

Rosario is best known as a major agricultural port, the birthplace of revolutionary leader Ernesto "Che" Guevara and a talent factory for soccer players, including Lionel Messi. But the city of some 1.3 million people also has high levels of poverty and crime. Violence between gangs who seek to control turf and drug markets has helped fill its prisons.

"Eighty percent of the crimes in Rosario are carried out by young hit men who provide services to drug gangs, whose bosses are imprisoned and maintain control of the criminal business from jails," said Matías Edery, a prosecutor in the Organized Crime Unit in Santa Fe province.

Anguilante says that his life as a contract killer is behind him; God's word, he says, turned him into "a new man."

In 2014, he was sentenced to 12 years in prison for killing 24-year-old Jesús Trigo, whom he shot in the face. Anguilante says that face haunts him at night, and he tries to chase the memory away by praying in his small prison cell.

---

About 40% of Santa Fe province's roughly 6,900 inmates live in evangelical cellblocks, said Walter Gálvez, Santa Fe's undersecretary of penitentiary affairs, who is also Pentecostal.

As in other Latin American countries, the spread of evangelical faith in Argentina took root especially in the "most vulnerable sectors, including inmates," said Verónica Giménez, a researcher at the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research of Argentina.

In Pope Francis' home country, the Roman Catholic Church is still the dominant religion. But a survey by the council found that the percentage of Argentine Catholics fell from 76.5% to 62.9% between 2008 and 2019 while the share of evangelicals grew from 9% to 15.3%.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 28 of 54

"This increase in the faithful took place even more in prisons," Gálvez said.

Jimenez, the researcher, said that is echoed in other parts of Latin America, such as in Brazil, where the huge Universal Church of the Kingdom of God has 14,000 people working with prisoners.

The growth is remarkable in a country where Catholics had a near-monopoly on prison chapels until a few decades ago.

"There are still Catholic chapels inside prisons but their priests are almost without any work to do," said Leonardo Andre, head of the prison in Coronda, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) north of Rosario.

Catholic priest Fabian Belay, who runs the Pastoral of Drug Dependence, said that priests are indeed active, but use "different methods" than the cellblock strategy.

"We disagree with the invention of religious cellblocks because they create ghettos inside prisons," he said. "We bet on integration and not a religious segregation."

Deacon Raul Valenti, who has been working in the Catholic pastoral for three decades, said, "The evangelicals do their work in the religious cellblocks, while we do them in the other ones, the ones that are called hell."

He insisted they are not in conflict: "We just have different views. We share, a lot of times, religious activities inside the prison."

The Puerta del Cielo ("Heaven's Door") and Redil de Cristo ("Christ's Sheepfold") congregations are among those that exert strong influence in Santa Fe's prisons. They began to evangelize inmates in the late 1980s and today have more than 120 pastors working inside prisons.

During a recent service at the Redil de Cristo church in Rosario, the Rev. David Sensini asked those who had been imprisoned to identify themselves. About a third in the room raised their hands. They then closed their eyes and lowered their head in prayer.

Víctor Pereyra, who was wearing a black suit and tie, served time at the Pinero prison. Today, he owns a produce shop and also works maintenance jobs.

"I don't want to go back (to prison). Today I have a family to look after," he said.

Pop-style hymns blared from loudspeakers while three TV cameras recorded the ceremony for other worshippers watching at home via a YouTube channel.

"No one else is going to jail. Not your children, not your grandchildren," the pastor shouted to the crowd. "Change is possible!"

Those who refuse to change are soon ousted from the evangelical cellblocks, said Rubén Muñoz, a 54-year-old pastor at Puerta del Cielo who served two years in prison for robbery.

While there are allegations of unrepentant drug bosses bribing their way into the cellblocks, Eduardo Ravello, the congregation's lead pastor, denied that.

But he acknowledged that several members of the Los Monos gang have lived in those units and said some who come are looking for protection rather than a desire to follow their faith. "We work with everyone," he said, adding that he also lives under constant threat.

"Drug traffickers want to take over the evangelical units because for them it's a business," he said. "From here crimes can be ordered and drugs sold."

Each evangelical unit at Pinero is run by 10 prisoners who have about 15 assistants for the 190 inmates. "They're in charge of controlling everything and keeping the peace," Gallardo said.

"We don't use knives, but the Bible to take over a cellblock," said Pentecostal pastor Sergio Prada. Prisoners who want to be allowed in, he said, must comply with rules of conduct, including praying three times a day, giving up all addictions and fighting.

As he led a recent meeting for 90 prisoners at an evangelical unit in Pinero, Prada told them to put their old criminal lives behind.

"That old man has to die!" he shouted, referring to their previous identities.

As he heard these words, Anguilante closed his eyes and cried. He later would say that he already "bur-

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 29 of 54

ied" his old self, the one who murdered and who has been imprisoned for seven years.

"Not everyone can, but you have to try," he said.

At Penal Unit No. 1 in Coronda, the day in the evangelical units begins and ends with prayer.

One of those praying is Juan Roberto Chávez, who was imprisoned for 16 years in various jails in Argentina and served the last eight years in Coronda. "I hated the world," he said. "I wanted to destroy it." He recalled that he lived mostly confined in punishment cells.

"The kids who would arrive would turn into monsters" in prison, Chávez said. He tried and failed to escape. Desperate, he stitched his mouth shut and went on hunger strike.

"Then I got tuberculosis. I was dying," he said. "I hit rock bottom and I had a revelation."

On a recent day, Chávez embraced 37-year-old José Pedro Muñoz, who expected to be released on parole after serving an 18-year-sentence.

"Now, you have to be stronger than ever," Chávez told him.

Muñoz was nervous; the wait for release seems endless. He was a hit man for the Los Monos gang and his body is a testament to Rosario's drug war. Scars from two shotgun blasts mark his chest. Another from a 9mm bullet crosses his abdomen.

"I set fire to bunkers (armored places where cocaine is sold) with people inside. We did it to drive out the (rival) drug dealers," he said.

But soon came bad news. A guard arrived and told him that he would remain in prison because other charges had been filed against him.

A few minutes later, he joined other prisoners in prayer.

Associated Press religion coverage receives support from the Lilly Endowment through The Conversation U.S. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

## US officials recommend shorter COVID isolation, quarantine

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. health officials on Monday cut isolation restrictions for asymptomatic Americans who catch the coronavirus from 10 to five days, and similarly shortened the time that close contacts need to quarantine.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention officials said the guidance is in keeping with growing evidence that people with the coronavirus are most infectious in the two days before and three days after symptoms develop.

The decision also was driven by a recent surge in COVID-19 cases, propelled by the omicron variant.

Early research suggests omicron may cause milder illnesses than earlier versions of the coronavirus. But the sheer number of people becoming infected — and therefore having to isolate or quarantine — threatens to crush the ability of hospitals, airlines and other businesses to stay open, experts say.

CDC Director Rochelle Walensky said the country is about to see a lot of omicron cases.

"Not all of those cases are going to be severe. In fact many are going to be asymptomatic," she told The Associated Press on Monday. "We want to make sure there is a mechanism by which we can safely continue to keep society functioning while following the science."

Last week, the agency loosened rules that previously called on health care workers to stay out of work for 10 days if they test positive. The new recommendations said workers could go back to work after seven days if they test negative and don't have symptoms. And the agency said isolation time could be cut to five days, or even fewer, if there are severe staffing shortages.

Now, the CDC is changing the isolation and quarantine guidance for the general public to be even less stringent.

The change is aimed at people who are not experiencing symptoms. People with symptoms during isolation, or who develop symptoms during quarantine, are encouraged to stay home.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 30 of 54

The CDC's isolation and quarantine guidance has confused the public, and the new recommendations are "happening at a time when more people are testing positive for the first time and looking for guidance," said Lindsay Wiley, an American University public health law expert.

Nevertheless, the guidance continues to be complex.

## ISOLATION

The isolation rules are for people who are infected. They are the same for people who are unvaccinated, partly vaccinated, fully vaccinated or boosted.

They say:

—The clock starts the day you test positive.

—An infected person should go into isolation for five days, instead of the previously recommended 10.

—At the end of five days, if you have no symptoms, you can return to normal activities but must wear a mask everywhere — even at home around others — for at least five more days.

—If you still have symptoms after isolating for five days, stay home until you feel better and then start your five days of wearing a mask at all times.

## QUARANTINE

The quarantine rules are for people who were in close contact with an infected person but not infected themselves.

For quarantine, the clock starts the day someone is alerted they may have been exposed to the virus.

Previously, the CDC said people who were not fully vaccinated and who came in close contact with an infected person should stay home for at least 10 days.

Now the agency is saying only people who got booster shots can skip quarantine if they wear masks in all settings for at least 10 days.

That's a change. Previously, people who were fully vaccinated — which the CDC has defined as having two doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine — could be exempt from quarantine.

Now, people who got their initial shots but not boosters are in the same situation as those who are partly vaccinated or are not vaccinated at all: They can stop quarantine after five days if they wear masks in all settings for five days afterward.

## FIVE DAYS

Suspending both isolation and quarantine after five days is not without risk.

A lot of people get tested when they first feel symptoms, but many Americans get tested for other reasons, like to see if they can visit family or for work. That means a positive test result may not reveal exactly when a person was infected or give a clear picture of when they are most contagious, experts say.

When people get infected, the risk of spread drops substantially after five days, but it does not disappear for everyone, said Dr. Aaron Glatt, a New York physician who is a spokesman for the Infectious Diseases Society of America.

"If you decrease it to five days, you're still going to have a small but significant number of people who are contagious," he said.

That's why wearing masks is a critical part of the CDC guidance, Walensky said.

## VARYING RECOMMENDATIONS

The new CDC guidance is not a mandate; it's a recommendation to employers and state and local officials. Last week, New York state said it would expand on the CDC's guidance for health care workers to include employees who have other critical jobs that are facing a severe staffing shortage.

It's possible other states will seek to shorten their isolation and quarantine policies, and CDC is trying to get out ahead of the shift. "It would be helpful to have uniform CDC guidance" that others could draw from, rather than a mishmash of policies, Walensky said.

Given the timing with surging case counts, the update "is going to be perceived as coming in response to pressure from business interests," Wiley said. But some experts have been calling for the change for months, because shorter isolation and quarantine periods appeared to be sufficient to slow the spread,

she said.

The move by CDC follows a decision last week by U.K. officials to reduce the self-isolation period for vaccinated people who test positive for COVID-19.

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

## Immigrants welcome Afghan refugees, inspired by own journeys

By JANIE HAR Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — Tram Pham tears up recalling how tough life was at first in the U.S. But she also remembers the joy she felt as a 22-year-old refugee from Vietnam when a nurse spoke to her in her native language and guided her through a medical screening required of new arrivals.

Nearly three decades later, Pham hopes to pay that comfort forward as a registered nurse at the same San Jose, California, clinic that treated her family. The TB and Refugee Clinic at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center is screening people from Afghanistan who began seeking asylum in the U.S. after American troops withdrew from the country in August.

Pham can't speak Farsi or Pashto. But she can soothe patients stressed out over the job they can't find or the rent that's due. The other day, she held the hand of an older Afghan woman as she cried out her fears.

"I can see patients from all over the world come in. I see, you know, Vietnamese patients. I see a lot of refugee patients," she said. "I see myself."

The TB and Refugee Clinic joins a vast network of charities and government organizations tasked with carrying out President Joe Biden's plan to relocate nearly 100,000 people from Afghanistan by September 2022. Nearly 48,000 Afghans have already moved off U.S. military bases and settled in new communities, the U.S. Department of State said in an email, including more than 4,000 in California.

The operation has been hampered by the need to scale up quickly after steep cutbacks to refugee programs under President Donald Trump. But the community response has been overwhelming and enthusiastic, said Krish O'Mara Vignarajah, president of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, one of nine national resettlement agencies.

"We know that resettlement isn't a weekslong or monthslong process. Success requires years of effort. And so that's where it's really important to have strong community ties," Vignarajah said.

The nonprofit, which operates in at least two dozen states, has resettled roughly 6,000 newly arrived Afghans since summer, including 1,400 in northern Virginia, 350 in Texas, 275 in Washington and Oregon and 25 in Fargo, North Dakota.

The state of Oklahoma has received about half of the 1,800 people it was told to expect, said Carly Akard, spokeswoman for Catholic Charities of Oklahoma City. Akard said that in their rush to escape, many of the refugees arrived without identification.

"They fled and didn't have anything," she said.

In San Jose, the clinic is scrambling to hire more people and reallocate staff for the more than 800 people expected in the county through September. Not only is the number a large increase from the 100 people the clinic assessed in all of the last fiscal year, it is uncertain when they will arrive, said health center manager Nelda David.

But David said that won't stop the staff of roughly three dozen from rolling out the welcome mat at the clinic, founded four decades ago specifically to assist Southeast Asians after the Vietnam War. Most of the nurses, assistants and other staff are immigrants or former refugees themselves, and understand the shock of starting over in a new country.

Medical interpreter Jahannaz Afshar welcomes Farsi speakers at the front door even before they check in for their first visit. In a windowless office, she explains what to expect over at least four visits as part of a comprehensive health assessment, which includes updating immunizations and checking for infectious diseases. A medical exam is required of all refugees.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 32 of 54

But Afshar, who moved from Iran in 2004, also explains cultural differences, such as the American preference for personal space and chitchat. She'll tell newcomers how to take the bus or use the public library, and reassure them that in the U.S., people help without expectation of getting anything in return.

Most staff members are bilingual, and come from a number of countries, including China, Myanmar, Sierra Leone and Mexico, said Mylene Madrid, who coordinates the refugee health assessment program. But staff can help even without speaking the same language.

An Afghan woman was tense and nervous when she arrived the other day for her first medical exam. By the end of the hourslong visit, however, she was cracking jokes and sharing photos with public health assistant Nikie Phung, who had fled Vietnam decades earlier with her family.

Another new arrival from Afghanistan dropped by the clinic complaining of chest pains but was so anxious she couldn't elaborate on her symptoms. Pham, the nurse, asked if she could hold her hand. They sat as the woman sobbed, then finally spoke of the stress of having her entire family living in a cramped hotel room.

By then, her pains had receded. Pham noticed that the woman's daughter and son-in-law were upbeat and more comfortable speaking English. She pulled the daughter aside.

"Would you please spend time with your mom?" she asked her. "Talk to her more."

Staff members have gone out of their way to connect patients to jobs, furnish empty apartments and tap the broader community for rent and other relief. They've stocked diapers for babies and handed out gift baskets at Thanksgiving. During a routine visit, a patient mentioned he needed car repairs for work. Within weeks, the clinic had raised \$2,000 to give him.

"Your heart is different," says Jaspinder Mann, an assistant nurse manager originally from India, of immigrants' desire to help.

Afshar says she can't imagine what refugees are going through. The former apparel designer and her husband were not fleeing strife and shootings when they chose to leave Iran. And yet, she too struggled at first.

"And this is one of the things that I always share," she said. "That even though it's going to be hard, later you're going to be happy because ... you're going to learn so much and you're going to grow so much."

At the clinic, she hops on the phone to arrange an eye exam for Mohammad Attaie, 50, a radio technician who fled the capital of Afghanistan, Kabul, this summer with his wife, Deena, a journalist, and their daughter. Sana, 10, adores her new school in San Jose but the couple worry about finding work when they can't speak the language.

Still, seeing people like Afshar and Pham gives them confidence.

"They are successful. They're working here. Their language skills are good. I am hoping that in less than a year I can stand on my feet," Deena Attaie said, speaking in Farsi.

## North Dakota man convicted in grisly deaths faces sentencing

By JAMES MacPHERSON Associated Press

MANDAN, N.D. (AP) — A man scheduled for sentencing Tuesday in the stabbing and shooting deaths of four people at a North Dakota property management firm is facing life in prison without parole.

A jury in August found Chad Isaak guilty in the grisly deaths of RJR Maintenance and Management co-owner Robert Fakler, 52; and employees Adam Fuehrer, 42; Bill Cobb, 50; and his wife, Lois Cobb, 45.

The four were shot and stabbed April 1, 2019, in the RJR building in Mandan, a city of about 20,000 people across the Missouri River from Bismarck. Investigators said the victims suffered more than 100 stab wounds.

Isaak was also found guilty of burglary, unlawful entry into a vehicle, and a misdemeanor count of unauthorized use of a vehicle.

The sentencing hearing in front of South Central District Judge David Reich is expected to include impact statements from family members of the victims.

Isaak, a chiropractor and Navy veteran, lived at a Washburn property managed by RJR, but a motive for



the slayings was never established. Washburn is located about 40 miles (64.37 kilometers) north of Mandan.

It was one of the most heinous crimes in North Dakota history, defense attorney Bruce Quick acknowledged in his opening statement. But he maintained during the nearly three-week trial that investigators didn't seriously consider other possible suspects, including people who have either been evicted or sued by RJR, as well as a long list of disgruntled RJR employees who were fired.

The defense also maintained police failed to check out the ex-husband of a woman who allegedly had an affair with Fakler.

Prosecutors showed security camera footage from numerous businesses that authorities said tracked Isaak's white pickup from Mandan to Washburn on the day of the slayings, along with footage from a week earlier that they said indicated the killer planned out the attack.

Forensic experts testified that fibers on the clothing of the slain workers matched fibers taken from Isaak's clothing, and that DNA evidence found in Isaak's pickup truck was linked to Fakler and possibly Lois Cobb.

## LA police video shows officer shooting that killed bystander

By STEFANIE DAZIO and CHRISTOPHER WEBER Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Video released Monday showed Los Angeles police firing at a man suspected of assaulting customers last week at a clothing store, a shooting that also killed a 14-year-old girl hiding in a dressing room who was struck by a bullet that went through a wall.

The Los Angeles Police Department posted an edited video package online that included 911 calls, radio transmissions, body camera footage and surveillance video from the Thursday shooting at a Burlington store crowded with holiday shoppers. The department's policy is to release video from critical incidents, such as police shootings, within 45 days.

Surveillance video showed the suspect attacking two women, including one who fell to the floor before he dragged her by her feet through the store's aisles as she tried to crawl away.

Multiple people including store employees called police to report a man striking customers with a bike lock at the store in the North Hollywood area of the San Fernando Valley. One caller told a 911 dispatcher that the man had a gun. No firearm — only the bike lock — was recovered at the scene.

The early surveillance footage showed a man in a tank top and shorts carrying a bicycle up the store's escalator to the second floor, where he wandered around, seemingly disoriented, clutching a cable-style bike lock. At times he stood motionless, staring into the distance.

The footage later showed the man on the down escalator attacking a woman, who managed to escape his grip and run out of the store.

The man then left the store for a minute and a half, police said. After he returned, according to the video, he repeatedly beat a woman with a bike lock while she cowered on the floor. As she tried to escape, he dragged her through the aisle toward the dressing rooms.

In bodycam video, armed officers entered the store and approached the suspect. The victim was seen on the blood-stained floor and the suspect was on the other side of the aisle. At least one officer opened fire, striking the man.

The 24-year-old suspect, Daniel Elena Lopez, died at the scene. Also killed was Valentina Orellana-Peralta, 14, who was hiding with her mother inside a dressing room.

"At this preliminary phase of the investigation, it is believed that the victim was struck by one of the rounds fired by an officer at the suspect," police Capt. Stacy Spell said in the posted video. Police believe the bullet skipped off the floor and struck the dressing room wall.

The investigation is just beginning and it could take up to a year or more to complete, Spell said. The California Department of Justice is also investigating.

"We at the LAPD would like to express our most heartfelt condolences and profound regret for the loss of this innocent victim, Valentina Orellana-Peralta. There are no words that can describe the depth of the sorrow we feel at this tragic outcome," Spell said in the video.

The girl's parents will appear with civil rights attorney Ben Crump at a news conference outside Los

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 34 of 54

Angeles police headquarters on Tuesday.

LAPD officers have shot people 38 people — 18 of them fatally, including the shooting Sunday of a man with a knife — in 2021, according to the Los Angeles Times.

Those figures mark a dramatic rise in cases where officers shot or killed people in either of the last two years — 27 people were shot and 7 of them killed by LA police in all of 2020. In 2019, officers shot 26 people, killing 12.

Mourners left flowers and a votive candle outside the store on Christmas in a memorial for Orellana-Peralta.

The Times reported that Elena Lopez's previous criminal history includes convictions for car theft, carrying a loaded gun in public and carrying a gun as a felon. He was transferred to the Los Angeles County jail to the custody of the state prison system but a spokeswoman for the corrections department would not release his commitment history to the newspaper because of the LAPD investigation.

The woman who was assaulted had moderate to serious injuries, including wounds to her head, arms and face. She has not been named publicly.

The shooting recalled a July 21, 2018, confrontation in which LAPD officers accidentally shot and killed a woman at a Trader Joe's market. Officers got into a gunfight with a man who authorities say shot his grandmother and girlfriend before leading police on a chase that ended when he crashed his car outside the market.

Police shot and killed Melyda Corado, 27, the assistant store manager, as she ran toward the store's entrance after hearing the car crash.

The suspect, Gene Evin Atkins, took employees and shoppers hostage for three hours before surrendering, authorities said.

Atkins has pleaded not guilty to the killing.

Prosecutors found two police officers acted lawfully when they returned Atkins' gunfire.

## Holmes jury ends fourth inconclusive day of deliberations

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE AP Technology Writer

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — The jury weighing fraud charges against former Theranos CEO Elizabeth Holmes conducted a fourth day of deliberations Monday without reaching a verdict. Holmes is facing 11 criminal charges alleging that she duped investors and patients by hailing her company's blood-testing technology as a medical breakthrough when in fact it was prone to wild errors.

The eight men and four women on the jury have been meeting in a San Jose, California, federal courthouse after absorbing reams of evidence during a high-profile trial that has captivated Silicon Valley.

Last week, the jurors sent out two notes to U.S. District Judge Edward Davila -- one making a swiftly rejected request to take their instructions home with them for further study and another that allowed them a replay of a 2013 recording of Holmes discussing Theranos' dealings with prospective investors.

The jury completed Monday's session without providing any clues as to how far along it is in its deliberations. Jurors are scheduled to resume their discussion Tuesday morning.

The case has attracted worldwide attention. At its core is the rise and fall of Holmes, who started Theranos as a 19-year-old college dropout and then went on to break through Silicon Valley's male-dominated culture with her bold claims and fundraising savvy. She became a billionaire on paper before it all evaporated amid allegations she was more of a charlatan than an entrepreneur.

Holmes, now 37, spent seven days on the witness stand acknowledging she made some mistakes and decisions she regretted while staunchly maintaining that she never stopped believing Theranos was on the verge of revolutionizing health care.

Holmes spent years promising Theranos would be able to scan for hundreds of diseases and other health problems with just a few drops of blood taken with a finger prick instead of relying on vials of blood drawn from a vein.

It was such a compelling concept that Theranos raised more than \$900 million and struck partnerships with major retailers Walgreens and Safeway. Holmes herself became the subject of cover stories on busi-

ness magazines.

But unknown to most people outside Theranos, the company's blood-testing technology was flawed, often producing inaccurate results that could have endangered the lives of patients.

After the flaws were exposed in 2015 and 2016, Theranos eventually collapsed and the Justice Department filed a criminal case in 2018 that charged Holmes with 11 felony counts of fraud and conspiracy.

If convicted, Holmes could face up to 20 years in federal prison.

## Omicron, storms disrupt air travel for 4th consecutive day

By TALI ARBEL AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Flight cancellations that disrupted holiday travel, stretched into Monday as airlines called off more than 1,000 U.S. flights because crews were sick with COVID-19 during one of the year's busiest travel periods, and storm fronts added to the havoc.

Flight delays and cancellations tied to staffing shortages have been common this year. Airlines encouraged workers to quit in 2020, when air travel collapsed, and carriers have struggled to make up ground this year, when air travel rebounded faster than almost anyone had expected. The arrival of the omicron variant only exacerbated the problem.

"During the pandemic, we have seen experienced airline personnel leave the industry and not return across the globe," said John Grant, senior analyst at travel industry research firm OAG. "Filling those skill gaps was already a challenge in the recovery before the latest variant."

But airlines' staffing levels are "irrelevant" when omicron is thrown into the mix, said Atmosphere Research Group travel industry analyst Henry Harteveltdt. "We can't blame the issues we're seeing now on airlines not having enough employees to work. What we're seeing happen is the employees who were available to work have come down with COVID."

Since Friday, airlines have canceled more than 4,000 flights to, from or inside the U.S., according to FlightAware, which tracks flight cancellations.

Delta, United, JetBlue and American have blamed the coronavirus for staffing problems in the past several days. European and Australian airlines also canceled holiday-season flights because of infected staff, but weather and other factors played a role as well.

Winter weather in the Pacific Northwest led to nearly 250 flight cancellations to or from Seattle on Sunday, according to Alaska Airlines, which expected more than 100 flight cancellations Monday. But the airline said sick crews were no longer a factor.

United said it canceled 115 flights Monday, out of more than 4,000 scheduled, due to crews with COVID-19. Delta expected to cancel more than 200 flights out of its schedule of over 4,100, after scrapping more than 370 on Sunday, citing the effect of COVID-19 on crews and winter weather in Minneapolis, Seattle and Salt Lake City.

SkyWest, a regional airline based in Utah, said it had more cancellations than normal during the weekend and on Monday after bad weather affected several of its hubs and many crew members were out with COVID-19.

Industry analysts said new guidance from U.S. health officials could help airlines better navigate the impact of omicron on staffing levels. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Monday cut in half the recommended length of time a person should isolate after getting COVID-19 to five days.

Airlines had called on the Biden administration to shorten the quarantine period to alleviate staffing issues caused by omicron, although the union for flight attendants pushed back, saying the isolation period should remain 10 days.

"I definitely think that should help," Raymond James analyst Savanthi Syth said of the CDC's new guidance — especially if bad weather subsides.

Delta said it was working to implement the new guidance, which would allow the airline more flexibility to schedule employees.

Representatives for the flight attendants union, other airlines and the industry's trade group did not

immediately respond or declined to comment on the CDC change.

Cancellations have snarled holidays that were already complicated this year with the rise of the omicron variant and escalating COVID-19 cases, which caused some to change their plans at the last minute.

But many other people kept their plans.

Transportation Security Administration data shows that the number of passengers screened at TSA checkpoints so far during the holiday season went up significantly from last year — on some days double the number of fliers or even more. But the number is generally still short of 2019 levels.

The TSA has predicted that the Monday after New Year's will be one of the busiest days of the holiday season. The CDC's new guidelines could help airlines better navigate the New Year's weekend rush as staffers who got infected are able to come back to work, Harteveltdt said.

The U.S. government has issued new rules relating to COVID-19 and travel in recent months, requiring foreigners coming to the U.S. to be vaccinated. It also now requires a negative COVID-19 test for both U.S. citizens and foreigners within a day of flying into the country.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious disease expert, said Monday that the nation should also seriously consider a vaccination mandate for domestic travel as another way to push people to get vaccinated.

The administration has at times considered a domestic vaccination requirement, or one requiring either vaccination or proof of negative test. Such a requirement could face legal challenges.

---

Associated Press writers Mike Stobbe in New York and Zeke Miller in Washington contributed to this report.

## **Again, crews find apparent time capsule at Lee statue site**

By SARAH RANKIN Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Crews wrapping up the removal of a giant pedestal that once held a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee in Richmond found what appeared to be a second and long-sought-after time capsule, Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam said Monday.

The governor tweeted photos of a box being removed from the site and said conservators were studying the artifact.

"They found it! This is likely the time capsule everyone was looking for," he tweeted.

The box was expected to be opened Tuesday afternoon. It wasn't immediately clear what kind of condition any contents might be in.

The development marked the latest turn in a months-long search for the capsule, which contemporaneous news accounts indicate was placed during a cornerstone-laying ceremony in 1887 attended by thousands of people. News accounts described its dozens of donated artifacts, including Confederate memorabilia. Based on historical records, some have also speculated the capsule might contain a rare photo of deceased President Abraham Lincoln.

Earlier this month, crews dismantling the pedestal found a time capsule embedded in a granite block that some initially thought might have been the one placed in 1887. But after state conservators spent hours last week gingerly prying the box open, they didn't find the expected trove of objects related to the Confederacy. Instead, conservators pulled out a few waterlogged books, a silver coin and an envelope with some papers.

The prevailing theory last week was that the lead box was left by a person — or persons — who oversaw the monument's construction.

The search for the 1887 time capsule resumed Monday.

Devon Henry, the contractor whose company was overseeing the removal, said the box was found inside a granite enclosure basically at ground level, surrounded by fill and other construction material. Workers pulled off the top of the granite enclosure to find the box, which appeared to be made of copper, sitting in water, Henry said.

The box was then covered in bubble wrap and transported by vehicle from the site for further study, he said.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 37 of 54

The governor's office said in a news release that the box, which matches the size of the capsule listed in historical records, had been X-rayed. The resulting images showed it appeared to include books, coins, buttons and perhaps a type of Civil War-era ammunition, the news release said.

It was scheduled to be opened Tuesday afternoon at a state lab.

The Lee statue, which depicted the general atop a horse, was erected on the soaring pedestal in 1890 in the former capital of the Confederacy. Its removal in September came more than a year after Northam ordered it in the wake of protests that erupted after the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

The statue was one of five enormous Confederate tributes along Monument Avenue, and the only one that belonged to the state. The four city-owned statues were taken down in 2020, but the Lee statue's removal was blocked by two lawsuits until a ruling from the Supreme Court of Virginia in September cleared the way for it to be dismantled.

Crews searched for the time capsule then, digging and removing some massive stones, but were unable to locate it.

Henry said it was found Monday in the northeast corner of the pedestal, about 4 feet (1.2 meters) below the area initially searched.

Northam's administration initially planned to leave the pedestal in place but announced in early December that contractors would remove the behemoth, now covered in graffiti, and transfer the grassy traffic circle it inhabited to the city of Richmond. The administration has said it will be stored until "next steps" have been determined.

Finalizing the removal work at the site will likely take another week, Henry said.

## Flu is making a comeback in US after an unusual year off

By CARLA K. JOHNSON AP Medical Writer

The U.S. flu season has arrived on schedule after taking a year off, with flu hospitalizations rising and two child deaths reported.

Last year's flu season was the lowest on record, likely because COVID-19 measures — school closures, distancing, masks and canceled travel — prevented the spread of influenza, or because the coronavirus somehow pushed aside other viruses.

"This is setting itself up to be more of a normal flu season," said Lynnette Brammer, who tracks flu-like illnesses for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The childhood deaths, Brammer said, are "unfortunately what we would expect when flu activity picks up. It's a sad reminder of how severe flu can be."

During last year's unusually light flu season, one child died. In contrast, 199 children died from flu two years ago, and 144 the year before that.

In the newest data, the most intense flu activity was in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C., and the number of states with high flu activity rose from three to seven. In CDC figures released Monday, states with high flu activity are New Mexico, Kansas, Indiana, New Jersey, Tennessee, Georgia and North Dakota.

The type of virus circulating this year tends to cause the largest amount of severe disease, especially in the elderly and the very young, Brammer said.

Last year's break from the flu made it more challenging to plan for this year's flu vaccine. So far, it looks like what's circulating is in a slightly different subgroup from what the vaccine targets, but it's "really too early to know" whether that will blunt the vaccine's effectiveness, Brammer said.

"We'll have to see what the impact of these little changes" will be, Brammer said. "Flu vaccine is your best way to protect yourself against flu."

There are early signs that fewer people are getting flu shots compared with last year. With hospitals already stretched by COVID-19, it's more important than ever to get a flu shot and take other precautions, Brammer said.

"Cover your cough. Wash your hands. Stay home if you're sick," Brammer said. "If you do get flu, there are antivirals you can talk to your doctor about that can prevent severe illness and help you stay out of

the hospital.”

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

## **Jury signals verdict not near at Ghislaine Maxwell trial**

By TOM HAYS Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The jury considering the fate of Ghislaine Maxwell at her sex trafficking trial finished a third full day of deliberations Monday with no sign that a verdict is near and no clear signal either that there is dissension in their ranks.

Jurors in Manhattan federal court asked for multi-colored sticky notes and a white board, along with transcripts of some trial testimony, the definition of “enticement” and a question on the law. Judge Alison J. Nathan referred them to her legal instructions that she read to them just before they began deliberations a week ago.

The judge also requested that they deliberate an extra hour beginning Tuesday, unless that created a hardship.

The British socialite is charged with recruiting and grooming teenagers as young as 14 to be sexually assaulted by financier Jeffrey Epstein. Maxwell’s lawyers say she was a U.S. government scapegoat after Epstein killed himself in 2019 in a Manhattan federal jail cell while awaiting a sex trafficking trial.

Maxwell, who was behind bars for her 60th birthday Saturday, was described as a central component to Epstein’s plans by four women who testified they were sexually abused as teenagers by Epstein with help from Maxwell when she was his girlfriend and afterward.

Maxwell’s lawyers said the memories of her accusers were corrupted by the passage of time and the influence of lawyers steering them toward multimillion-dollar payouts from a fund set up to compensate Epstein victims.

The jury, which deliberated two full days last week, already has asked to review the testimony of the four women, along with former Epstein housekeeper Juan Patricio Alessi. They have given little hint of their overall progress on six charges, including a sex trafficking count that carries a potential penalty of up to 40 years in prison.

On Monday, jurors asked for the transcript of testimony by “Matt,” the pseudonym of a television actor who testified that he is the ex-boyfriend of “Jane,” the pseudonym of an actor who is one of the four accusers who testified against Maxwell. The judge had ruled that some witnesses in the trial could testify with only first names or pseudonyms to protect their privacy.

Matt, who lived with Jane from 2007 to 2014, testified that Jane initially described Epstein as a godfather who helped her family pay bills after her father’s illness and death depleted their finances. She was 14 when she met Epstein.

He said she eventually told him that the help Epstein provided “wasn’t free,” but did not provide any details about what happened.

When he was asked what her demeanor was like when he asked Jane questions about her encounters with Epstein, he testified that she was “ashamed, embarrassed, horrified.”

Matt said she also told him that she felt more comfortable in her encounters with Epstein because there was a woman around. Matt said he contacted Jane after Maxwell’s July 2020 arrest and asked her if Maxwell was the woman she had referenced as making her feel more comfortable in her dealings with Epstein.

He testified that she confirmed Maxwell was the woman.

## **US Catholic clergy shortage eased by recruits from Africa**

By KWASI GYAMFI ASIYEDU Associated Press

WEDOWEE, Alabama (AP) — The Rev. Athanasius Chidi Abanulo — using skills honed in his African homeland to minister effectively in rural Alabama— determines just how long he can stretch out his Sunday

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 39 of 54

homilies based on who is sitting in the pews.

Seven minutes is the sweet spot for the mostly white and retired parishioners who attend the English-language Mass at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in the small town of Wedowee. "If you go beyond that, you lose the attention of the people," he said.

For the Spanish-language Mass an hour later, the Nigerian-born priest — one of numerous African clergy serving in the U.S. -- knows he can quadruple his teaching time. "The more you preach, the better for them," he said.

As he moves from one American post to the next, Abanulo has learned how to tailor his ministry to the culture of the communities he is serving while infusing some of the spirit of his homeland into the universal rhythms of the Mass.

"Nigerian people are relaxed when they come to church," Abanulo said. "They love to sing, they love to dance. The liturgy can last for two hours. They don't worry about that."

During his 18 years in the U.S., Abanulo has filled various chaplain and pastor roles across the country, epitomizing an ongoing trend in the American Catholic church. As fewer American-born men and women enter seminaries and convents, U.S. dioceses and Catholic institutions have turned to international recruitment to fill their vacancies.

The Diocese of Birmingham, where Abanulo leads two parishes, has widened its search for clergy to places with burgeoning religious vocations like Nigeria and Cameroon, said Birmingham Bishop Steven Raica. Priests from Africa were also vital in the Michigan diocese where Raica previously served.

"They have been an enormous help to us to be able to provide the breadth and scope of ministry that we have available to us," he said.

Africa is the Catholic church's fastest-growing region. There, the seminaries are "fairly full," said the Rev. Thomas Gaunt, director of Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, which conducts research about the Catholic church.

It's different in the U.S. where the Catholic church faces significant hurdles in recruiting home-grown clergy following decades of declining church attendance and the damaging effects of widespread clergy sex abuse scandals.

Catholic women and married men remain barred from the priesthood; arguments that lifting those bans would ease the priest shortage have not gained traction with the faith's top leadership.

"What we have is a much smaller number beginning in the 1970s entering seminaries or to convents across the country," Gaunt said. "Those who entered back in the '50s and '60s are now elderly and so the numbers are determined much more by mortality."

From 1970 to 2020, the number of priests in the U.S. dropped by 60%, according to data from the Georgetown center. This has left more than 3,500 parishes without a resident pastor.

Abanulo oversees two parishes in rural Alabama. His typical Sunday starts with an English-language Mass at Holy Family Catholic Church in Lanett, about 125 miles (200 kilometers) from Birmingham along the Alabama-Georgia state line. After that, he is driven an hour north to Wedowee, where he celebrates one Mass in English, another in Spanish.

"He just breaks out in song and a lot of his lectures, he ties in his boyhood, and I just love hearing those stories," said Amber Moosman, a first-grade teacher who has been a parishioner at Holy Family since 1988.

For Moosman, Abanulo's preaching style is very different from the priests she's witnessed previously. "There was no all of a sudden, the priest sings, nothing like that...It was very quiet, very ceremonial, very strict," she said. "It's a lot different now."

Abanulo was ordained in Nigeria in 1990 and came to the U.S. in 2003 after a stint in Chad. His first U.S. role was as an associate pastor in the diocese of Oakland, California, where his ministry focused on the fast-growing Nigerian Catholic community. Since then, he has been a hospital chaplain and pastor in Nashville, Tennessee, and a chaplain at the University of Alabama.

Amid the U.S. clergy shortage, religious sisters have experienced the sharpest declines, dropping 75% since 1970, according to the Georgetown center.

When Maria Sheri Rukwishuro was told she was being sent from the Sisters of the Infant Jesus order in

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 40 of 54

Zimbabwe to West Virginia to work as a missionary nun, she asked her mother superior, "Where is West Virginia?"

She was scared, worrying about the unknowns.

"What kind of people am I going to? I'm just a Black nun coming to a white country," Rukwishuro told The Associated Press from Clarksburg, West Virginia, where she has been teaching religious education to public and Catholic school students since arriving in 2004.

Rukwishuro vividly remembers that at her introduction, a little girl walked to her and "rubbed her finger on my fingers all the way, then she looked at her finger and she smiled but my heart sank...She thought I was dirty." Despite that, Rukwishuro says most people have been very welcoming. She's now a U.S. citizen and says, "It feels like home."

One of her first culture shocks was an overnight snowfall. "I really screamed. I thought it was the end of the world," she said. "Now I love it. I do my meditations to that."

During their integration into American life, it is commonplace for newly arrived clergy to face culture shocks.

For Sister Christiana Onyewuche of Nigeria, a hospital chaplain in Boston administering last rites for the dying, it was cremation. She recalled thinking, "Like really? ...How can they burn somebody? I can't even imagine."

She came to the U.S. 18 years ago and previously served as the president of African Conference of Catholic Clergy and Religious, a support group for African missionaries serving in the U.S.

Onyewuche said African clergy can face communication challenges with the Americans they serve. To address this, many dioceses have offered training to soften accents, she said. Abanulo, who went through the training in Oakland, says it helped him slow down his speech and improve his pronunciations.

Abanulo, who moved to Alabama in 2020, admits he was initially apprehensive about his latest posting, which meant exchanging a comfortable role as university chaplain for two rural parishes.

"People were telling me 'Father, don't go there. The people there are rednecks,'" he said.

But after a year, and a warm reception, he says he now tells his friends, "There are no rednecks here. All I see are Jesus necks."

---

Associated Press religion coverage receives support from the Lilly Endowment through The Conversation U.S. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

## Officials: Nearly 25% of Navy warship crew has COVID-19

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — About two dozen sailors on a U.S. Navy warship — or roughly 25% of the crew — have now tested positive for COVID-19, keeping the ship sidelined in port at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay in Cuba Monday, according to U.S. defense officials.

The USS Milwaukee has a crew of a bit more than 100, and it was forced to pause its deployment late last week because of the coronavirus outbreak. The defense officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details of the outbreak, said the number of infected sailors is staying relatively constant at this point.

The USS Milwaukee, a smaller, stealthier combat ship, is the first Navy ship this year to have to interrupt its deployment at sea.

It began its deployment from Naval Station Mayport in Jacksonville, Florida, on Dec. 14, and had stopped for a scheduled port visit. The ship was heading into the U.S. Southern Command region.

Another warship, meanwhile, had to postpone its movement out to sea earlier this month due to a separate outbreak. Navy Cmdr. Sean Robertson, spokesman for 3rd Fleet, said the USS Halsey, a destroyer, delayed its homeport move from Pearl Harbor, in Hawaii, to San Diego because a significant number of the crew became infected with COVID-19. The ship was finally able to leave Hawaii on Sunday. The move is not a deployment, but a transfer to a new home station for the crew.

A Navy official said roughly one-third of the Halsey crew tested positive for the virus, and most had only



mild symptoms or none at all. A destroyer has about 300 crew members. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to provide details on the crew impact.

Robertson said the crew was nearly 100% vaccinated and no one was taken to the hospital. Vaccine booster shots were made available for the crew. Robertson also said some of the samples have been tested and all were the omicron variant.

The Navy said in a statement Friday that the USS Milwaukee's crew was "100% immunized" and that all of those who tested positive for COVID-19 were being isolated on the ship away from other crew members.

The U.S. officials said Monday that the Navy believes the total vaccination of the crew is the key factor in controlling the outbreak.

According to the Navy's statement, "a portion" of those infected are having mild symptoms, and the specific variant is not yet known. COVID-19 cases have surged across the country as a result of the highly contagious omicron variant.

Other Navy ships were sidelined during the early months of the virus outbreak last year.

The first major military outbreak of the virus happened early last year on a Navy warship, the USS Theodore Roosevelt, an aircraft carrier that was operating in the Pacific. The Roosevelt was sidelined in Guam for nearly two months, and more than 1,000 of the 4,800 crew members tested positive. One sailor died, and the entire crew went through weeks of quarantine in a rotation that kept enough sailors on the ship to keep it safe and running.

According to the latest data released by the Navy, more than 98% of all active-duty sailors have been fully vaccinated.

## Omicron spreads global gloom over New Year's celebrations

By RAF CASERT Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — As omicron spreads ever more gloom around the globe ahead of New Year's Eve, governments are moving at different speeds to contain the scourge, with some reimposing restrictions immediately and others hesitating to spoil the party again.

In Britain, where the highly contagious variant of the coronavirus has sent caseloads soaring to record highs, Health Secretary Sajid Javid said Monday no further restrictions will be introduced in England before the new year. New daily infections in England are hovering around 100,000, and hospital admissions were up more than 70% on Christmas from a week earlier.

"When we get into the new year, of course, we will see then if we do need to take any further measures, but nothing more until then, at least," Javid said.

Elsewhere in the United Kingdom, though, nightclubs have been ordered closed and limits on gatherings imposed in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, leaving the country divided in its approach to the crisis.

The Netherlands, meanwhile, has already shut down all nonessential stores, restaurants and bars and extended the school holidays in what largely amounts to a new lockdown. In Belgium, new measures went into effect Monday and over the weekend: Shopping in large groups was banned, and movie theaters and concert halls closed in the middle of the holiday season.

In France, Prime Minister Jean Castex announced a set of restrictions set to kick in next week, after New Year's. Among them: Big events will be limited to 2,000 people indoors and 5,000 outdoors; eating and drinking will be banned in theaters, at sports venues and on public transportation; and working from home will be mandatory at least three days a week for employees whose jobs make it possible.

Also, a bill will be voted on in France next month to create a vaccine pass that will allow only inoculated people to enter public places, including restaurants, bars and movie theaters.

The measures come after France recorded more than 100,000 COVID-19 infections in a single day for the first time in the pandemic.

In the U.S., the Biden administration has strongly emphasized the importance of vaccinations, boosters and rapid testing, while New York City's sweeping mandate requiring nearly all businesses, big and small, to bar unvaccinated employees from the workplace took effect Monday. It was announced three weeks

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 42 of 54

ago, soon after omicron gained a foothold in the U.S.

The top U.S. infectious-disease expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, warned that with omicron, "it's going to get worse before it gets better," and he said authorities should seriously consider requiring that domestic airline passengers be vaccinated.

"When you make vaccination a requirement, that's another incentive to get more people vaccinated," Fauci told MSNBC.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Monday cut isolation restrictions for people who have the virus, saying it's in line with the science of when people are most infectious and could also help industries continue to function as cases surge.

"We want to make sure there is a mechanism by which we can safely continue to keep society functioning while following the science," CDC Director Rochelle Walensky told The Associated Press.

Omicron has forced thousands of flight cancellations and delays around the globe because of staffing shortages linked to the virus, scrambling travelers' holiday plans.

FlightAware, a flight-tracking website, counted more than 2,700 cancellations worldwide by Monday evening in Europe — about 1,100 of them within, into or out of the U.S.

Despite the variant's extraordinary ability to infect people, early indications are that it might cause milder illness than previous versions. That uncertainty is keeping governments guessing and resulting in widely varying strategies for beating back the surge.

In Greece, authorities announced additional restrictions — also effective after New Year's — after recording its highest-ever one-day total of new infections, nearly 9,300.

Health Minister Thanos Plevris said that starting Jan. 3, high-protection or double masks will be mandatory at supermarkets and on public transportation; entertainment venues will close at midnight, and capacity will be cut to 10% at soccer stadiums, among other measures.

Other parts of Europe have likewise hesitated to slap more restrictions on their citizens.

In Poland, a nation of 38 million where the daily death toll now often tops 500, now-closed nightclubs will be allowed to reopen on New Year's Eve, with the government unwilling to go against the will of the many voters opposed to restrictions and mandatory vaccinations.

And despite the highest death toll from COVID-19 in Europe, Russia will ring in the new year with little if any restrictions. Many precautions will be lifted during the holiday period that runs for 10 days starting New Year's Eve. Russia also will not impose any additional travel curbs.

The official Rosstat statistical agency estimated that between April 2020 and October 2021, Russia had 537,000 virus-related deaths.

In Belgium, the move to close theaters and arts centers came in for especially heavy criticism.

"We need it also for our mental health. It is the only way for people to live experiences, to tell stories. It is of paramount importance for us to be open in these complicated and complex times," said Michael De Kok, artistic director of the Flemish Royal Theatre.

Some movie theaters stayed open in an act of civil disobedience.

A major staple of British holiday celebrations, the stream of English Premier League soccer games, is also under threat. The league has called off 15 games over the past 2 1/2 weeks, and more could follow.

---

Associated Press writers Zeke Miller in Washington; Colleen Barry in Milan, Italy; Sylvia Hui in London; Sylvie Corbet in Paris, Molly Quell in The Hague, Netherlands; Geir Moulson in Berlin; Jari Tanner in Tallinn, Estonia; Uliana Pavlova in Moscow; and Vanessa Gera in Warsaw contributed to this report.

## **Fauci: US should consider vaccine mandate for US air travel**

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious disease expert, said Monday the nation should consider a vaccination mandate for domestic air travel, signaling a potential embrace of an idea the Biden administration has previously eschewed, as COVID-19 cases spike.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 43 of 54

Fauci, President Joe Biden's chief science adviser on the pandemic response, said such a mandate might drive up the nation's lagging vaccination rate as well as confer stronger protection on flights, for which federal regulations require all those age 2 and older to wear a mask.

"When you make vaccination a requirement, that's another incentive to get more people vaccinated," Fauci told MSNBC. "If you want to do that with domestic flights, I think that's something that seriously should be considered."

The Biden administration has thus far balked at imposing a vaccination requirement for domestic air travel. Two officials said Biden's science advisers have yet to make a formal recommendation for such a requirement to the president.

The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations, said a vaccine mandate on planes could trigger a host of logistical and legal concerns.

The U.S. currently mandates that most foreign nationals traveling to the U.S. be fully vaccinated against the coronavirus, though citizens and permanent residents only need to show proof of a negative test taken within a day of boarding.

Federal rules don't require people travelling by air within the U.S. to show a negative test. Hawaii requires travelers to test or show proof of vaccination to avoid a mandatory quarantine.

Biden did not respond to questions on whether he was considering implementing a domestic air travel vaccination requirement, but he told reporters the subject was discussed on a call with the nation's governors Monday morning.

"They asked Dr. Fauci some more questions about everything from whether or not he thought he was going to move to test at home — I mean, on air flights and that kind of thing," Biden said of the call before departing the White House for his home in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware.

During the virtual meeting with governors, Biden pledged the full support of the federal government to states facing surges in COVID-19 cases from the more-transmissible omicron variant and a run on at-home tests that dominated headlines over the holiday season.

"My message is: If you need something, say something, and we're going to have your back any way we can," Biden said. He acknowledged long lines and chaotic scenes as Americans sought out testing amid the case surge and as they looked to safely gather with family and friends over the holiday.

"Seeing how tough it was for some folks to get a test this weekend shows that we have more work to do," he said. He referenced his administration's plan to make 500 million rapid tests available to Americans beginning next month through an as-yet-to-be-developed website.

Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, the National Governors Association chairman, raised concerns Biden's plan could get in the way of state efforts to boost supply of tests.

"That dries up the supply chain for what we might offer as governors," he said, saying the lack of supply "has become a real challenge."

Biden assured Hutchinson that the federal effort won't interfere with state actions. "This gets solved at the state level," he said.

A White House official said the new tests would come from new manufacturing capacity and wouldn't interfere with existing supply chains.

Earlier this year the White House explored a domestic vaccination requirement for flights, or one requiring either vaccination or proof of negative test. But officials have not been eager to mandate vaccination for domestic air travel because they expected it to face immediate legal challenges, mitigating its potential effectiveness as a tool to drive up vaccinations.

Pressed last week on why Biden had not mandated vaccinations for domestic air travel, White House press secretary Jen Psaki told MSNBC that "we know that masking can be, is, very effective on airplanes."

"We also know that putting in place that additional restriction might delay flights, might have additional implications," she added. "We would do it, though, if the health impact was overwhelming. So we rely always on the advice of our health and medical experts. That isn't a step at this point that they had determined we need to take."

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 44 of 54

Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show more than 241 million Americans, about 77% of the eligible population age 5 and over, have received at least one shot of a COVID-19 vaccine. Officials believe, though, that there is some overcount in the figures due to record-keeping errors in the administration of booster shots.

Since the summer, the Biden administration has embraced various vaccination requirements as a way to get unvaccinated Americans to roll up their sleeves. It has instituted requirements that federal workers, federal contractors and those who work in health care get their shots, and that employers with 100 or more employees institute vaccination-or-testing requirements for their workers.

Those vaccination requirements have been mired in legal wrangling, with the Supreme Court set to hear arguments Jan. 7 in cases seeking to overturn them.

Associated Press writer Darlene Superville in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, contributed.

## Aaron, Elder overcame hate to achieve records, milestones

By BERNIE WILSON AP Sports Writer

Henry Aaron made history with one swing of his bat. A year later and on the other side of Georgia, Lee Elder made history with one swing of his driver.

They both overcame racist threats to reach milestones that will always be part of sports lore. "Hammerin' Hank" supplanted Babe Ruth at the top of baseball's all-time home run list and Elder became the first Black golfer to play in the Masters.

Their deaths in 2021 were mourned beyond the sports world and were reminders of the hate, hardships and obstacles they endured with dignity on their way to breaking records and barriers.

The sports world also lost four-time Indianapolis 500 winner Al Unser, high-flying NBA superstar Elgin Baylor, fiery former Los Angeles Dodgers manager Tommy Lasorda, folksy college football coach Bobby Bowden and controversial Kentucky Derby winner Medina Spirit.

Aaron will always be remembered for hitting his 715th home run on April 8, 1974, at Atlanta Stadium to break Ruth's record of 714. Aaron finished his Hall of Fame career with 755 homers, a record that was eclipsed by Barry Bonds in 2007. Some baseball fans consider Aaron the true home run king because of allegations that Bonds used performance-enhancing drugs.

Aaron received extensive hate mail as he closed in on Ruth's cherished record, much of it because he was Black. Although he handled the threats with stoic dignity, Aaron kept the hateful letters and never forgot the abuse he faced.

"If I was white, all America would be proud of me," Aaron said almost a year before he passed Ruth. "But I am Black."

Aaron died in January and the Braves honored him all season, including painting his No. 44 on the center field grass at Truist Stadium for the World Series, which they won in six games over the Houston Astros.

One year after Aaron's historic swing in Atlanta, Elder took a historic swing with his driver at Augusta National when he became the first Black golfer to play in the Masters, helping to open doors for Tiger Woods and others.

The Masters had been an all-white tournament until Elder received an invitation in 1975 after winning the Monsanto Open the previous year. He missed the cut at his first Masters but became a groundbreaking figure in a sport that had never been known for racial tolerance. Twenty-two years later, Woods became the first Black golfer to don a green jacket.

Elder developed his game during segregated times while caddying and hustling for rounds in his native Texas. He reportedly received death threats at the 1975 Masters that shook him so badly he rented two houses in Augusta so no one would be quite sure where he was staying for the week.

At this year's Masters, Elder was invited to hit a ceremonial opening tee shot alongside greats Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player. Elder was not well enough to take a swing but he stood briefly and held up his driver while acknowledging the cheers of the gallery.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 45 of 54

The football world recalled how Sam "Bam" Cunningham, an All-American fullback at Southern California, helped open doors for Black athletes in the South. A member of USC's all-Black backfield, Cunningham was so dominating in his college debut in the Trojans' rout at Alabama in 1970 that it influenced Crimson Tide coach Bear Bryant to widely recruit more Black players and accelerate the integration of the sport in the South. Cunningham went on to a successful NFL career with the New England Patriots.

Al Unser was the third member of one of America's most-accomplished racing families to die in 2021, following his older brother Bobby, a three-time Indy champion, and Bobby Unser Jr. Known as "Big Al" after his son also became a racing star, Unser was one of four drivers who won the Indy 500 a record four times, with victories in 1970, 1971, 1978 and 1987. Unser was the only driver in history to have a brother and a son also win at Indy. Bobby Unser won at Indy in 1968, 1975 and 1981.

Lasorda was the fiery Hall of Fame manager who spent a total of 71 seasons in the Dodgers organization, in Brooklyn and Los Angeles, as a player, coach and then manager for 21 years. He led Los Angeles to World Series titles in 1981 and 1988, and was fond of saying, "I bleed Dodger blue." At 93, he had been the oldest living Hall of Famer.

Baseball lost three notable former players, Hall of Famer Don Sutton, Ray Fosse and J.R. Richard. Sutton won 324 games with five teams. Fosse was the strong-armed catcher whose career was upended when he was bowled over by Pete Rose at the 1970 All-Star Game and later was a beloved broadcaster with the Oakland Athletics. Richard was an intimidating right-hander for the Houston Astros in the late 1970s before suffering a stroke during the 1980 season that ended his big league career.

At 100, Eddie Robinson had been the oldest living former major league player. His more than six decades in professional baseball included being general manager for Atlanta and Texas. Baltimore fans mourned the loss of Joe Altobelli, who managed the Orioles to the 1983 World Series title.

Baylor was remembered for bringing a trailblazing aerial style to the NBA and was the Lakers' first superstar in Los Angeles. Although he never won a championship, his silky smooth jumper and fluid athleticism carried him to 11 All-Star games and the Hall of Fame and helped revolutionize the game with a style that set the tone for modern players. He teamed with Jerry West in one of the most potent tandems in hoops history.

West once called Baylor "one of the most spectacular shooters the world has ever seen." The Lakers honored him with a statue outside Staples Center in 2018. He also spent 22½ years as GM of the Los Angeles Clippers.

The NBA also remembered Paul Westphal, a Hall of Fame player who won a championship with the Boston Celtics in 1974 and later coached in the league and in college, and Mark Eaton, who used his 7-foot-4 frame to block shots and win two Defensive Player of the Year awards. Bob "Slick" Leonard was remembered for his outstanding playing career in college and the pros, and his coaching accomplishments.

Bowden was the beloved, folksy Hall of Fame coach who took Florida State from an afterthought to one of the most prolific college football programs in history. Bowden had 377 wins during 40 years as a major college coach and his teams won a dozen Atlantic Coast Conference titles, and national championships in 1993 and 1999. The Seminoles finished the season ranked in the top five of The Associated Press college football poll an unmatched 14 straight seasons (1987-2000).

Alabama coach Nick Saban called Bowden "probably the greatest ambassador of all time ... He wasn't always just about him; he was always about helping other people."

Outspoken former Temple basketball coach John Chaney left a legacy of 741 career victories and fighting against NCAA policies he said discriminated against Black athletes.

The boxing world mourned the deaths of former heavyweight champion Leon Spinks and Marvelous Marvin Hagler, one of the greatest middleweights in history. Spinks, who had an easygoing personality and a big grin that often showed off his missing front teeth, won an Olympic gold medal and then shocked the boxing world by beating Muhammad Ali to win the heavyweight title in only his eighth pro fight in 1978. Spinks lost the rematch seven months later before 72,000 fans at the New Orleans Superdome and a national television audience estimated at 90 million people. Spinks fought for the title only once after that,

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 46 of 54

when he was stopped in the third round in 1981 by Larry Holmes. He finished with a record of 26-17-3.

Hagler fought on boxing's biggest stages against its biggest names, as he, Sugar Ray Leonard, Thomas Hearns and Roberto Duran dominated the middleweight classes during a golden time for boxing in the 1980s. Quiet with a brooding public persona, Hagler finished 62-3-2 with 52 knockouts.

Medina Spirit suffered a heart attack and died after completing a workout at Santa Anita in suburban Los Angeles on Dec. 7. The 3-year-old colt's Kentucky Derby victory in May came under scrutiny because of a positive test for betamethasone, a legal medication that is not allowed on race day.

The hockey world mourned the loss of Hall of Famers Tony Esposito, the goalie who helped popularize the butterfly style, and Rod Gilbert. Also gone were Walter Gretzky, who built a backyard rink that helped turn his son, Wayne, into the Great One, and Mark Pavelich, a member of the "Miracle on Ice" team.

Jacques Rogge, a former Olympic sailor and orthopedic surgeon, was remembered for a bringing stability to the International Olympic Committee in his 12 years as president and for pursuing a hard line against doping.

The Pro Football Hall of Fame mourned the loss of three of its members, Sam Huff, Curly Culp and Floyd Little. Marty Schottenheimer was remembered for coaching 200 NFL victories with his brand of smash-mouth football. Former NFL stars Demaryius Thomas, Vincent Jackson and Darrius Johnson were gone way too soon. Also gone were two-time Super Bowl winning defensive back Mike Davis of the Raiders and Ted Thompson, the Green Bay Packers GM who drafted Aaron Rodgers when they already had Brett Favre on the roster and won a Super Bowl.

Other notable sports figures who died in 2021 were Gerd Müller, who scored the winning goal for West Germany in the 1975 World Cup final against Holland; Tony Trabert, who won three of tennis' four major singles titles in 1955 and five overall; former Olympic swimmer Clara Lamore Walker; and track star Milkha Singh of India.

## Young South Africans learn of Tutu's activism for equality

By MOGOMOTSI MAGOME and ANDREW MELDRUM Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Archbishop Desmond Tutu's legacy is reverberating among young South Africans, many of whom were not born when the clergyman battled apartheid and sought full rights for the nation's Black majority.

Tutu, who died Sunday at the age of 90, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 for those efforts.

Even though they did not know much about him, some young South Africans told The Associated Press on Monday that they understood his role as one of the most prominent figures to help their country become a democracy.

Zinhle Gamede, 16, said she found out about Tutu's passing on social media and has learned more about him over the past day.

"At first I only knew that he was an archbishop. I really did not know much else," Gamede said.

She said Tutu's death had inspired her to learn more about South Africa's history, especially the struggle against white minority rule.

"I think that people who fought for our freedom are great people. We are in a better place because of them. Today I am living my life freely, unlike in the olden days where there was no freedom," she said.

Following the end of apartheid in 1994, when South Africa became a democracy, Tutu chaired the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that documented atrocities during apartheid and sought to promote national reconciliation. Tutu also became one of the world's most prominent religious leaders to champion LGBTQ rights.

"As a gay person, it is rare to hear people from the church speaking openly about gay issues, but I found out about him through gay activists who sometimes use his quotes during campaigns," said Lesley Morake, 25. "That is how I knew about him, and that is what I will remember about him."

Tshepo Nkatlo, 32, said he is focusing on the positive things he hears about Tutu, instead of some negative sentiments he saw on social media.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 47 of 54

"One of the things I picked up on Facebook and Twitter was that some people were criticizing him for the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) because there are still many issues regarding the TRC," Nkatlo said, referring to some who say Tutu should have been tougher on whites who perpetrated abuses under apartheid and should have ordered that they be prosecuted.

South Africa is holding a week of mourning for Tutu. Bells rang at midday Monday from St. George's Anglican Cathedral in Cape Town to honor him. The bells at "the people's cathedral," where Tutu worked to unite South Africans of all races against apartheid, will toll for 10 minutes at noon for five days to mark Tutu's life.

"We ask all who hear the bells to pause their busy schedules for a moment in tribute" to Tutu, the current archbishop of Cape Town, Thabo Makgoba, said. Anglican churches across South Africa will also ring their bells at noon this week, and the Angelus prayer will be recited.

Several services in South Africa were being planned to honor Tutu's life, as tributes came in from around the world.

Tutu's coffin will be displayed Friday at the cathedral in Cape Town to allow the public to file past the casket, "which will reflect the simplicity with which he asked to be buried," Makgoba said in a statement. On Friday night Tutu's body will "lie alone in the cathedral which he loved."

A requiem Mass will be held Saturday and, according to Tutu's wishes, he will be cremated and his ashes placed in the cathedral's mausoleum, church officials said Monday.

In addition, an ecumenical and interfaith service will be held for Tutu on Thursday in South Africa's capital, Pretoria.

South Africans are laying flowers at the cathedral, in front of Tutu's home in Cape Town's Milnerton area, and in front of his former home in Soweto.

President Cyril Ramaphosa visited Tutu's home Monday in Cape Town where he paid his respects to Tutu's widow, Leah.

"He knew in his soul that good would triumph over evil, that justice would prevail over iniquity, and that reconciliation would prevail over revenge and recrimination. He knew that apartheid would end, that democracy would come," Ramaphosa said Sunday night in a nationally broadcast address.

"He knew that our people would be free. By the same measure, he was convinced, even to the end of his life, that poverty, hunger and misery can be defeated; that all people can live together in peace, security and comfort," said Ramaphosa who added that South Africa's flags will be flown at half-staff this week.

"May we follow in his footsteps," Ramaphosa said. "May we, too, be worthy inheritors of the mantle of service, of selflessness, of courage, and of principled solidarity with the poor and marginalized."

## Shiffrin is latest elite skier to test positive for COVID-19

By The Associated Press undefined

Two-time Olympic champion Mikaela Shiffrin is the latest elite skier to test positive for COVID-19 with the Beijing Games less than six weeks away.

"I wanted to let you all know that I'm doing well, but unfortunately I had a positive COVID test," the American wrote on her social media accounts Monday. "I'm following protocol and isolating."

Shiffrin said she will miss World Cup giant slalom and slalom races scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively, in Lienz, Austria, adding, "I'll see you in the new year."

The Beijing Olympics open Feb. 4.

Missing the races in Lienz is a big hit to Shiffrin's chances of regaining the overall World Cup title. She leads Italy's Sofia Goggia by 115 points in the standings but needs to maintain a high level of points in the technical disciplines of giant slalom and slalom since Goggia has been virtually unbeatable in the speed events of downhill and super-G.

Shiffrin's positive test comes at a particularly bad time for her with six consecutive technical races scheduled.

Other top skiers who have missed races recently after testing positive for COVID-19 include former

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 48 of 54

overall champion Lara Gut-Behrami, Austrian world champion Katharina Liensberger and Alice Robinson of New Zealand.

Maryna Gąsienica-Daniel, the Polish skier who finished sixth in two giant slaloms in Courchevel, France, last week, also announced a positive test on Monday. She said on Instagram that she is "isolated at home," and she, too, will miss the races in Lienz. Gąsienica-Daniel adds that she is "sad" but otherwise "feeling good."

Liensberger and Robinson, who both had to sit out Courchevel, are back on the starting list for Tuesday's race in Lienz. Gut-Behrami remains out after her positive case was announced 10 days ago.

Also, chief race director Peter Gerdol is among two women's World Cup officials with the International Ski Federation (FIS) who tested positive after the races in Courchevel. Gerdol is being replaced by FIS race director Markus Mayr for the event in Lienz, where no spectators will be allowed.

Shiffrin's Olympic record includes two golds — in slalom at the 2014 Sochi Games and giant slalom at the 2018 Pyeongchang Games — plus a silver in combined in 2018.

Shiffrin finished first and second in the last two races she competed in — the two giant slaloms in Courchevel.

The next women's World Cup race after Lienz is a slalom in Zagreb, Croatia, on Jan. 4.

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

## Edward O. Wilson, biologist known as 'ant man,' dead at 92

BOSTON (AP) — Edward O. Wilson, the pioneering Harvard biologist who advanced the provocative theory that human behavior such as war and altruism has a genetic basis and warned against the decline of ecosystems, has died. He was 92.

Wilson was "called 'Darwin's natural heir,' and was known affectionately as 'the ant man' for his pioneering work as an entomologist," according to an announcement posted Monday on the E.O. Wilson Biodiversity Foundation's website. He died on Dec. 26 in Burlington, Massachusetts.

"It would be hard to understate Ed's scientific achievements, but his impact extends to every facet of society. He was a true visionary with a unique ability to inspire and galvanize. He articulated, perhaps better than anyone, what it means to be human," David J. Prend, chairman of the board of E.O. Wilson Biodiversity Foundation, said in a statement.

The professor and two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning author first gained widespread attention for his 1975 book, "Sociobiology: The New Synthesis," in which he spelled out the evidence suggesting a link between human behavior and genetics. The work created a storm of controversy among activists and fellow academics who equated sociobiology's groundbreaking theories with sexism, racism and Nazism.

More recently, Wilson has championed the importance of preserving diverse species and ecosystems. "The diversity of life on Earth is far greater than even most biologists recognize," he said in 1993.

Less than 10% of the Earth's species have scientific names, he said, making it "a still mostly unexplored planet."

In 1979, "On Human Nature" — the third volume in a series including "The Insect Societies" and "Sociobiology" — earned Wilson his first Pulitzer Prize. His second Pulitzer came in 1991 with "The Ants," which Wilson co-wrote with Harvard colleague Bert Holldobler.

Among his other honors was the 1990 Crafoord Prize in biosciences from the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, the highest scientific award in the field. Time magazine named him one of America's 25 most influential people in 1996.

Wilson's sociobiology theories transformed the field of biology and reignited the nature vs. nurture debate among scientists. Based on data about many species, Wilson argued that social behaviors from warfare to altruism had a genetic basis, an idea that contradicted the prevailing view that cultural and environmental factors determined human behavior.

Critics argued that such a theory bolstered social injustice, including discrimination against women,



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 49 of 54

by saying that the inequality is written in human genes. Fifteen Boston-area scholars joined in a letter denouncing it, and in one case protesters dumped a pitcher of ice water on Wilson's head while he was speaking at a scientific meeting in 1978.

He didn't think genes determine all human behavior, but "in rough terms ... maybe 10 percent" of it. He said later that the intensity of the reaction frightened him and for a time he gave up giving public lectures. "I thought my career was going up in flames," he said.

His 2006 book, "The Creation," argued that the fields of science and religion, "the most powerful social forces on Earth," should work together for protection of nature.

The following year, he joined with more than two dozen other leaders in religion and science in signing a statement calling for urgent changes in values, lifestyles and public policies to avert disastrous climate change. Among the religious leaders taking part were the Rev. Rich Cizik, public policy director for the National Association of Evangelicals.

The launching point for Wilson's studies was a creature that had fascinated him since his teens — the ant.

Showing an Associated Press reporter a dramatic microscopic view of an ant specimen in 1993, he commented, "I call it looking in the face of creation. You're looking at something that may be a million years old, and nobody's seen it before."

His and Holldobler's book "The Ants" featured detailed photographs of ants crawling through their daily lives, copulating, regurgitating food, and stinging to death other insects. It meticulously detailed the ants' every move.

He noted that the study of ants offered insights into the state of the environment, because the welfare and diversity of ant populations might be useful as an indicator of subtle destructive changes in a seemingly normal area.

Wilson was born in 1929 in Birmingham, Alabama. As an only child whose parents divorced when he was 7, Wilson found comfort in nature, which he called his "companion of choice."

He also had to deal with the loss of sight in one eye in a fishing accident and, in his teens, a partial hearing loss.

The Boy Scouts provided Wilson an opportunity to further his enthusiasm for nature, and by the age of 15, Wilson had risen to the rank of Eagle Scout.

He graduated from the University of Alabama in 1949. He received his Ph.D. in biology from Harvard in 1955 and became an assistant professor there in 1956. Wilson's field research included stops in Australia, New Guinea and Sri Lanka, in addition to his ongoing work at home.

While living in Mobile, Alabama, Wilson is credited with becoming the first person to identify invasive fire ants that had arrived from South America on ships. Later, as a student at the University of Alabama, he detailed that the ants were spreading rapidly across the South.

"I believe I was the first to find that ant in the U.S., certainly the first to study it in any detail," Wilson told American Entomologist in 2014.

He sat on the boards of directors of several environmental organizations, including The Nature Conservancy. He was honored for his conservation efforts with the Gold Medal of the Worldwide Fund for Nature in 1990 and the Audubon Medal of the National Audubon Society in 1995.

Wilson is survived by his daughter, Catherine. He was predeceased by his wife, Irene.

## For celebrations, English fizz is on the rise

By LOUISE DIXON Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — English sparkling wine has been gaining prestige in recent years, with some experts comparing it to Champagne in taste and quality.

Globally, the sector is still relatively small: IWSR Drinks Market Analysis reports that sparkling wine produced in the U.K. represents about 0.2% of total global sparkling wine volume. But sales are growing: U.K.-produced sparkling wine volume rose by almost 11% from 2015-2020, the report said.

"Maybe 10 years ago, there were only two or three wines which might have been known outside of

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 50 of 54

the U.K. or certainly recognized by wine critics as well," says Jonathan White, spokesman for British wine producer Gusbourne. Today, "there's a collective of maybe 10 to 20 producers that are making really excellent wines."

Gusbourne planted their first vines in Appledore, Kent, in 2004. They released their debut Brut and Blanc de Blanc sparkling wines in 2010, and say demand has been growing ever since.

"There's been a splurge of interest from overseas in recent years as wine media and critics have started to talk more fondly and more positively about the wines from England," White says.

Known as the "Garden of England," Kent has long been home to fruit-growing in the U.K., so it's natural the area has become one of the country's most successful wine-growing regions.

The pandemic gave local producers a boost in 2020 because travelers who couldn't visit wineries abroad "started to realize that they could actually visit a winery at home," says Anne McHale, a certified master of wine in London.

Talking from The Bloomsbury Hotel, where she has curated one of the largest English sparkling wine menus in the U.K., McHale says English sparkling made its name in 1998 when Nyetimber won best sparkling wine in the world at the International Wine and Spirits Competition.

"It was judged blind against a whole load of Champagnes and other sparkling wines by top industry judges, so people began to become aware that in this country we can actually make good quality wine," she says.

Part of English sparkling wine's attraction, she says, is its close resemblance to Champagne. It uses the same three grapes — Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Meunier — and the same production method, the "traditional method."

"This means the wine undergoes a second fermentation in bottle. The bubbles get trapped, and then the wine has the opportunity to spend some time aging on the yeast, which gives it that lovely, biscuity brioche character," McHale says.

She adds that the soils where English vines are planted around the South Downs in South-eastern England contain a lot of chalk that is nearly identical to France's Champagne region.

For all their similarities, there are also factors that give English sparkling wine a unique flavor.

"We're quite a bit further north than Champagne. It's cooler. And as a result, you get a higher level of acidity in the grapes, which then translates into more of a sort of mouth-watering bite of crispness and freshness in the wine," says McHale.

White agrees. "Champagnes tend to have that sort of lovely, toasty richness that comes from maybe a slightly warmer climate, and wines which are maybe slightly more generous in that fruit kind of offering. English wines have a much more sort of steely, citrus backbone to them."

Jon Pollard, chief vineyard manager at Gusbourne, says Britain's longer growing season also affects the flavor.

"We've got this ability to have a slow ripening season, partly because of the slightly lower temperatures in this country and the lower sunlight levels. But that really allows the flavor profiles within the fruit to build up," he says.

Pollard adds that Kent is perfectly located high off the coastline, providing a free-flowing breeze to keep the crop clean and fresh. "The enemy of fruit really is moisture and humidity and warm temperatures, which proliferate fungal diseases," he says.

At the same time, England's temperamental climate can prove a challenge.

Pollard says it's taken years of trial and error to create the perfect growing conditions.

"You do start to know where the problems will occur," he says. "So we know where we might start to see a little bit of disease creep in and we know where we will have issues with frost and things like that. So every year that goes on, we just get to learn more and more about the science and what we can expect from it."

Some Champagne houses are now investing in English vineyards.

"We always sort of had the impression that the French think they make the best wine in the world and

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 51 of 54

that the English can't make wine, so it is quite satisfying in a way to see the French coming over and planting vines," McHale says.

The temperate British climate was a draw for French champagne house Tattinger, which bought farmland in Kent in collaboration with U.K. winemaker Hatch Mansfield to create Domaine Evremond. Having planted their first vines in 2017, their wines will be released onto the market in the 2020s.

"During the growing season of the wine, the average temperatures in the south of England are approximately the same as what they would have been several decades ago in Champagne," McHale says. "So, you know, the Champagne producers are seeing the potential of the land in the south of England."

## Delta: Flight to Shanghai turned back because of COVID rules

BEIJING (AP) — Delta Air Lines said Monday that new pandemic-related cleaning requirements at a Shanghai airport were behind the turning back of a recent flight from Seattle in midair, a move that had prompted a protest from the Chinese Consulate in San Francisco.

An emailed statement said the new mandates at Shanghai Pudong International Airport "require significantly extended ground time and are not operationally viable for Delta."

It wasn't clear what the rules are and what prompted the change, but it comes as China tightens its already strict COVID-19 travel restrictions in the face of a growing outbreak in the city of Xi'an and ahead of the Winter Olympics in Beijing in six weeks.

Xi'an, which is about 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) southwest of Beijing, reported more than 300 new cases over the weekend, a sharp rise from previous days. The city of 13 million people has been locked down, with only one person per household allowed out every two days to shop for necessities.

The Delta flight that turned back to Seattle last week left passengers with expired COVID-19 test results and U.S. visas, according to Chinese media reports.

Two Taiwan-based airlines, China Airlines and EVA Air, have both cut down on the number of flights heading to Shanghai Pudong International Airport in recent days, citing new disinfection procedures that will take longer to complete, according to Taiwan's semi-official Central News Agency.

EVA is suspending flights from two cities to Shanghai until Feb. 3. China Airlines is suspending flights from one city to Shanghai until the end of January, and reducing the number of flights on another route.

The consulate in San Francisco did not name Delta but said in a short statement Sunday that many flights from the U.S. to China had been delayed or canceled in recent days including a flight that turned back more than halfway to its destination.

The consulate "had made a stern representation to the airline," the statement said.

## Racial reckoning turns focus to roadside historical markers

By MARK SCOLFORO Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Pennsylvania had been installing historical markers for more than a century when the racist violence in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017 brought a fresh round of questions from the public about just whose stories were being told on the state's roadsides — and the language used to tell them.

The increased scrutiny helped prompt a review of all 2,500 markers by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, a process that has focused on factual errors, inadequate historical context, and racist or otherwise inappropriate references.

So far, the state has removed two markers, revised two and ordered new text for two others.

Across the country, historical markers have in some places become another front in the national reckoning over slavery, segregation and racial violence that has also brought down Civil War statues and changed or reconsidered the names of institutions, roads and geographical features.

The idea that "who is honored, what is remembered, what is memorialized tells a story about a society that can't be reflected in other ways" is behind an effort by the Montgomery, Alabama-based Equal Justice Initiative that has installed dozens of markers, mostly in the South, to remember racial terror lynchings.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 52 of 54

Historical markers educate the public and therefore can help fight systemic racism, said Diane Turner, curator of the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection at Temple University in Philadelphia, one of the country's largest repositories of Black history literature and related material.

"By being able to tell everybody's story, it's good for the society as a whole. It's not to take away from anybody else," Turner said. "Let's have these stories, because the more truth we have, the better it is."

At the request of Bryn Mawr College's president, Kimberly Wright Cassidy, the Pennsylvania history agency removed a marker from the edge of campus that noted President Woodrow Wilson had briefly taught there. Cassidy's letter to the commission cited Wilson's dismissive comments about the intellectual capabilities of women and his racist policy of federal workforce segregation.

The commission has ordered changes to a marker at the suburban Philadelphia birthplace of Continental Army Maj. Gen. "Mad" Anthony Wayne because it referred to him as an "Indian fighter." It also is developing a replacement to a marker that has been removed from the grounds of the National Aviary in Pittsburgh, on the site of a 19th-century prison, that noted Confederate cavalry were held there after their capture in Ohio during the Civil War.

State government took down a marker in Pittsburgh's Point State Park that noted the location where British Gen. John Forbes had a 1758 military victory that the marker claimed "established Anglo-Saxon supremacy in the United States."

The commission also revised markers in central Pennsylvania's Fulton County related to the movement of Confederate Army troops after the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863 and related to an 1864 Confederate cavalry raid on Chambersburg that left much of the town a smoldering ruin.

One marker had previously described the last Confederates to camp on Pennsylvania soil — the state has since added language about their defeat by Union troops. The other marker, about two Confederates killed in a skirmish, was revised with detail about their raid and how Union soldiers from New York killed them and took 32 prisoners.

The changes have generated some political pushback, including from a Republican state representative, an appointee on the Historical and Museum Commission, who wrote in October about his objections to the initiative.

"My fear is that the commission is becoming less of a true historical arbiter and more of a miniaturized version of George Orwell's Ministry of Truth that has government officers alter history to fit the convenient narrative of those in charge," state Rep. Parke Wentling wrote.

In a report to the commission, a contractor recounted that an elected Fulton County commissioner harassed his team when they removed the old markers last year.

And this month, a senior state House Republican press aide, Steve Miskin, responded to a news account about the Fulton County markers with a tweet asking, "Is Pennsylvania planning to remove 'The Confederacy' from textbooks? Censor TV shows and movies mentioning 'The Confederacy?'"

Disputes about how historical markers should be worded — or whether they should exist at all — have divided communities in other states in recent years, including in Memphis, Tennessee; Sherman, Texas; and Colfax, Louisiana.

In Pennsylvania, the commission examined all of the 2,500 markers it controls with a focus on how African American and Native American lives and stories are portrayed and adopted a new policy on how markers are established. About a year ago it identified 131 existing markers that may require changes, including a subgroup of 18 that required immediate attention.

"The language could be sexist, it could be racist, it could be all those different things," said Jacqueline Wiggins, a retired educator from Philadelphia on the state historical commission's Marker Review Panel. "There's work to be done."

New markers getting approved are increasingly telling the stories of previously underrepresented people and groups.

The commission is offering financial support for the markers if their subjects concern women, Hispanics, Latinos and Asian Americans, or if they are about Black and LGBTQ history outside Philadelphia. Financial support is also being provided to underrepresented regions. Last year, the agency subsidized markers on petroglyphs in Clarion County, a camp where Muhammed Ali trained in Schuylkill County and the site of

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 53 of 54

a boycott that stopped a school segregation effort in Chester County.

New markers approved in March include the first substantial workforce of Chinese immigrants in the state at a cutlery factory, the cofounder of one of the country's first Black fraternities, and three Ephrata women who are among the nation's first documented female composers.

Native American-related markers generally frame the Indigenous people in terms of the Europeans who displaced them, such as a Juniana County marker about "a stockade built about 1755 to protect settlers from Indian marauder."

"There is a lot of tap-dancing over who initiated which battle or skirmish," said historian Ira Beckerman, who recently produced a study focused on Pennsylvania markers that relate to Black and Native American history. "If the settlers started it, it was a battle and therefore worthy. If the Native Americans responded in kind, it was a massacre, savagery, etc."

Beckerman concluded that as a whole, the state's 348 Native American historical markers "tell a pretty accurate and compelling story of racism and white nationalism."

Associated Press News Researcher Rhonda Shafner contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to say the Equal Justice Initiative is based in Montgomery, not Birmingham.

## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Dec. 28, the 362nd day of 2021. There are three days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 28, 2014, the war in Afghanistan, fought for 13 bloody years and still raging, came to a formal end with a quiet flag-lowering ceremony in Kabul that marked the transition of the fighting from U.S.-led combat troops to the country's own security forces.

On this date:

In 1612, Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei observed the planet Neptune, but mistook it for a star. (Neptune wasn't officially discovered until 1846 by Johann Gottfried Galle.)

In 1832, John C. Calhoun became the first vice president of the United States to resign, stepping down because of differences with President Andrew Jackson.

In 1895, the Lumiere brothers, Auguste and Louis, held the first public showing of their movies in Paris.

In 1908, a major earthquake followed by a tsunami devastated the Italian city of Messina, killing at least 70,000 people.

In 1945, Congress officially recognized the Pledge of Allegiance.

In 1972, Kim Il Sung, the premier of North Korea, was named the country's president under a new constitution.

In 1973, the Endangered Species Act was signed into law by President Richard Nixon.

In 1975, the "Hail Mary pass" entered the football lexicon as Dallas quarterback Roger Staubach tossed the ball to Drew Pearson for an improbable 50-yard touchdown with 24 seconds left to help the Cowboys come back to edge the Minnesota Vikings 17-14.

In 1981, Elizabeth Jordan Carr, the first American "test-tube" baby, was born in Norfolk, Virginia.

In 1991, nine people died in a crush of people trying to get into a rap celebrity basketball game at City College in New York.

In 2007, Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto was laid to rest as the country's army tried to quell a frenzy of rioting in the wake of her assassination.

In 2015, a grand jury in Cleveland declined to indict a white rookie police officer in the killing of 12-year-old Tamir Rice, a Black youngster who was shot while playing with what turned out to be a pellet gun.

Ten years ago: North Korea's new leader, Kim Jong Un, escorted his father's hearse in an elaborate state

# Groton Daily Independent

**Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 174 ~ 54 of 54**

funeral, bowing somberly and saluting in front of tens of thousands of citizens who wailed and stamped their feet in grief for Kim Jong Il. Turkish warplanes mistakenly killed 35 smugglers and other villagers in an operation targeting Kurdish rebels in Iraq. Kaye Stevens, a singer and actor who performed with the Rat Pack and was a frequent guest on Johnny Carson's "The Tonight Show," died in The Villages, Florida, at age 79.

Five years ago: Film star Debbie Reynolds, who lit up the screen in "Singin' in the Rain" and other Hollywood classics, died at age 84 a day after losing her daughter, Carrie Fisher, who was 60. Former world No. 1 Ana Ivanovic (ee-VAH'-noh-vich) said she was retiring from tennis after a series of injuries meant she could no longer play at the highest level.

One year ago: Residents and staff members at a Seattle-area nursing home that had the first deadly COVID-19 outbreak in the United States began receiving vaccines. A Chinese court sentenced a former lawyer who had reported on the early stage of the coronavirus outbreak to four years in prison on charges of "picking fights and provoking trouble." A white Columbus, Ohio, police officer, Adam Coy, was fired after bodycam footage showed him fatally shooting Andre Hill – a Black man who was holding a cellphone – and failing to administer first aid for several minutes. (Coy is scheduled to face trial for murder in 2022.) "Full House" actor Lori Loughlin was released from prison after spending two months behind bars for paying a half million dollars in bribes to get her two daughters into college.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Nichelle Nichols is 89. Actor Dame Maggie Smith is 87. Former Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., is 75. Rock singer-musician Edgar Winter is 75. Actor Denzel Washington is 67. TV personality Gayle King is 67. Actor Chad McQueen is 61. Country singer-musician Marty Roe (Diamond Rio) is 61. Actor Malcolm Gets is 58. Actor Mauricio Mendoza is 52. Actor Elaine Hendrix is 51. Political commentator Ana Navarro is 50. Talk show host Seth Meyers is 48. Actor Brendan Hines is 45. Actor Joe Manganiello is 45. Actor Vanessa Ferlito is 44. R&B singer John Legend is 43. Rapper-musician-producer Terrace Martin is 43. Actor Andre Holland is 42. Actor Sienna Miller is 40. Actor Beau Garrett (TV: "The Good Doctor") is 39. Actor Thomas Dekker is 34. Actor Mackenzie Rosman is 32. Pop singer David Archuleta is 31. Actor Mary-Charles Jones (TV: "Kevin Can Wait") is 20. Actor Miles Brown is 17.