

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Vender Fair

A vendor fair has been organized in Groton for March 26, 2022, at the Groton Community Center, from 10 am. – 3 p.m. A variety of crafters and vendors will be available. Proceeds from an auction table will be donated to Make-a-Wish Foundation.

## Silver Skates Annual Meeting

It's that time of year again -- time for the Annual Silver Skates meeting. After many years of service to this valuable community activity, several members will be leaving the board. We need your help if you want this activity to continue to flourish! Please consider attending the meeting and offering your service in some way this year. The meeting will be held this Sunday, March 13 at 1:00 p.m. at the warming house. Thank you for your willingness to do your part to keep this special Groton tradition alive!

- UpComing Events
- Sunday, March 13
- Daylight Savings Time - turn clocks forward 1 hour
- Monday, March 14
- School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 15
- Pep Rally for BB Team, 2:55 p.m., in the Arena
- City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Thursday, March 17
- State A Tournament in Rapid City: Groton Area vs. Flandreau at 1:45 p.m. MT (2:45 CT).
- Spring Break - No School
- Friday, March 18
- State A Tournament in Rapid City
- Spring Break - No School
- Saturday, March 19
- State A Tournament in Rapid City
- Mitchell Show Choir Competition
- Sunday, March 20
- 5 p.m.: Welcome Home Celebration in the Arena

**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.

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## United Methodist Church

Groton and Conde

### Sunday, March 13, 2022

Conde Worship 9:00 AM  
Confirmation Sunday 10:00 AM  
Groton Worship 11:00 AM  
Sunday School 11:10 AM

### Monday, March 14, 2022

Pastor Brandon Lent Study 7:00 PM  
PEO - outside group 7:30 PM

### Tuesday, March 15, 2022

Bible Study 10:00 AM  
Conde Ad Council 5:00 PM  
Pastor Brandon Lent Study in Conde 6:00 PM

### Wednesday, March 16, 2022

Community Coffee Hour 9:30 AM  
Groton Ad Council 7:00 PM

### Thursday, March 17, 2022

UMW 1:30 PM

### Sunday, March 20, 2022

Conde Worship 9:00 AM  
NO Sunday School  
Groton Worship 11:00 AM

## Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Groton

### Sunday, March 13

9 am Worship  
10:15 Sunday School  
10:15 Grace Alone Study  
7 pm Choir

### Monday, March 14

6:30am Bible Study

### Wednesday, March 16

6 pm Soup Supper (Host Sarah Circle)  
7 pm Lenten Service

### Thursday, March 17

9:30am Northern Plains Pastors meet @ Emmanuel  
1:30 pm WELCA

### Saturday, March 19

10 am Rosewood

### Sunday, March 20

9 am Worship/Comm  
No Sunday School  
10:15 Grace Alone Study  
3 pm Avantara (MMBS)  
7 pm Choir  
Newsletter deadline

## St. Elizabeth Ann Seton &

## St. Joseph Catholic

Groton and Turton

### Weekend Mass Schedule

Saturday 4:30pm Groton  
Sunday 8:30am Groton & 11:00am Turton

### Weekday

Tues 5:00pm Turton, W-F 8:30am Groton

### Confessions:

Sat. 3:45-4:15pm & Sun. 7:45am to 8:15am (G)  
Sun. 10:30-10:45am (T)

## St. John's Lutheran Church

Groton

### Sunday, March 13

8 a.m.: Bible Study  
9 a.m.: St. John's Worship with confirmation  
10 a.m.: Sunday School  
11 a.m.: Zion Lutheran Worship

### Wednesday, March 16

7:00 p.m.: Lenten Service

### Sunday, March 20

8 a.m.: Bible Study  
9 a.m.: St. John's Worship with communion  
10 a.m.: Sunday School  
11 a.m.: Zion Lutheran Worship with communion

To submit your monthly or  
weekly church calendar, email  
to  
[news@grotonsd.net](mailto:news@grotonsd.net)



## Groton Prismatic Sensations take first at Aberdeen Competition

The Groton Area Prismatic Sensations show choir group took first place at the Aberdeen competition held Saturday at Aberdeen Central. Groton Area competed in the small group division. This is the first time, in a long time, maybe even the first time ever, that the Groton team took first at Aberdeen. No one knows for sure, but from recent memory, it is a first. In the evening session, the Prismatic Sensations competed against the larger schools like Sioux Falls and Jefferson and placed fifth in that division. (Photos by Paul Kosel)

## Miss South Dakota O'Neill is the choreographer

Kaitlin O'Neill, Miss South Dakota and GHS graduate, was this year's choreographer for the Prismatic Sensations. O'Neill said, "I was in show choir all 4 years of high school and absolutely loved it! I always wanted to get involved again but timing never worked out. Last spring I reached out to Kayla if they were looking for a new choreographer and the stars seemed to be aligned as she brought me on! I am really excited to continue working with the Groton Show Choir and see how much we can grow!"



Front Row (L to R): Julianna Kosel, Trinity Smith  
Second Row: Mrs. Kayla Duncan (Director), Cadance Tullis, Shaylee Peterson, Savannah Bible, Camryn Kurtz, Abby Jensen, Natalia Warrington, Ashtyn Bahr, Cadence Feist, Kaitlin O'Neill (Choreographer)  
Third Row: Ashlyn Feser, Cambria Bonn, Kianna Sander, Jacob Tewksbury, Kolton Dockter, Sierra Ehresmann, Kamryn Fliehs  
Fourth Row: Emily Clark, Jeslyn Kosel, Emily Overacker, Rebecca Poor, Carter Barse, Ellie Weismantel, Axel Warrington, KayLynn Overacker, Gretchen Dinger, Anna Bisbee, Jacob Lewandowski. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Members of the Prismatic Sensations are Desiree Yeigh (pit band director), Emily Clark (Bass), Jacob Lewandowski (Drummer), Cadence Feist (Tenor Sax) and Tyler Beck (Guitar). (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Trinity Smith and Julianna Kosel collect the overall fifth place award. (Photo by Tina Kosel)

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**Carter Barse had a solo during the competition.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Julianna Kosel had the opening solo during the performance of the Prismatic Sensations at the Aberdeen Competition held Saturday.**

(Photo by Paul Kosel)



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## THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

*Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.*

ACTS 17:29 



*Pre-Columbian Mayan carving from Tikal, Mexico*

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## BIBLE TRIVIA by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Ezra in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. What color was the cord that Rahab hung out of her window?  
*White, Scarlet, Purple, Black*
3. From 1 Kings 17, who was called the "Tishbite"? *Elijah, Goliath, Job, Samson*
4. Who was the father of John the Baptist? *Uriah, Peter, Zechariah, Amaziah*
5. From Acts 14, where was Paul mistaken for Hermes? *Antioch, Perga, Gibeon, Lystra*
6. Who named all the animals on earth? *Adam, Eve, Noah, Moses*

ANSWERS: 1) Old; 2) Scarlet; 3) Elijah; 4) Zechariah; 5) Lystra; 6) Adam

*Comments? More Trivia? Gift ideas? Visit [www.TriviaGuy.com](http://www.TriviaGuy.com)*

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by Healthy Exchanges

### Baked Banana Pudding

- This easy-to-put-together dessert will please kids of all ages.
- 24 (2 1/2-inch) graham cracker squares  
3 cups (3 medium) sliced bananas  
2 (4-serving) packages sugar-free vanilla cook-and-serve pudding mix  
1 1/3 cups nonfat dry milk powder  
2 1/3 cups water  
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
6 egg whites  
1 cup Splenda Granulated
1. Heat oven to 325 F. Spray 8-by-12-inch baking dish with butter-flavored cooking spray. Evenly arrange 12 graham cracker squares in baking dish, then 1 1/2 cups banana slices over top.
  2. In large saucepan, combine pudding mixes, milk powder and water. Cook over medium heat until mixture thickens and starts to boil, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Stir in 1 teaspoon vanilla extract. Spoon half of hot mixture evenly over bananas. Arrange 10 graham cracker squares evenly over hot pudding and remaining 1 1/2 cups banana slices over top. Spoon remaining hot pudding over bananas.
  3. In large bowl, beat egg whites with an electric mixer on HIGH until soft peaks form. Add Splenda and remaining 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract. Continue beating on HIGH until stiff peaks form. Spread meringue evenly over top, sealing to edges. Crush remaining 2 graham cracker squares into fine crumbs; sprinkle evenly over meringue.
  4. Bake 25 minutes or until meringue is golden. Place baking dish on wire rack; let set for 30 minutes. Refrigerate at least 1 hour. Cut into 8 servings.

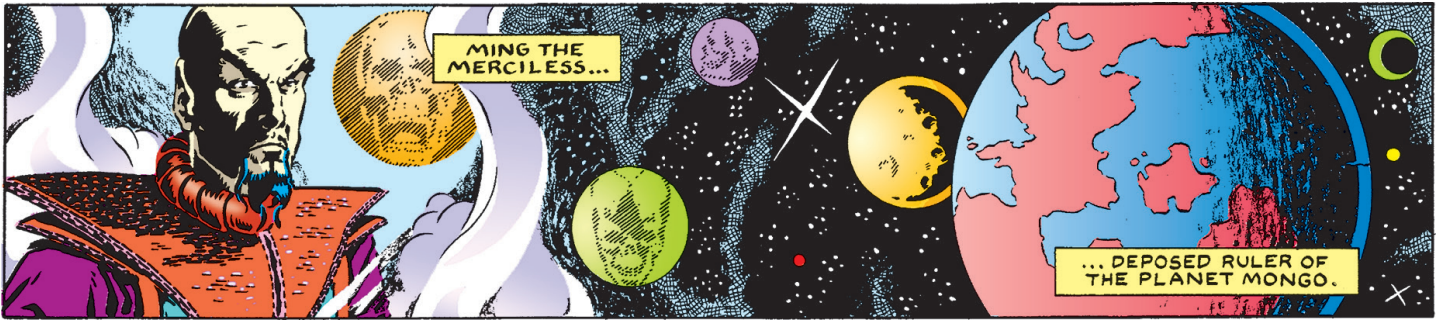
TIP: A self-seal sandwich bag works great for crushing graham crackers.

\* Each serving: 210 calories, 2g fat, 10g protein 38g carb., 289mg sodium, 161mg calcium, 2g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Starch/Carb., 1 Fruit, 1/2 Fat-Free Milk; Carb Choices: 2 1/2.

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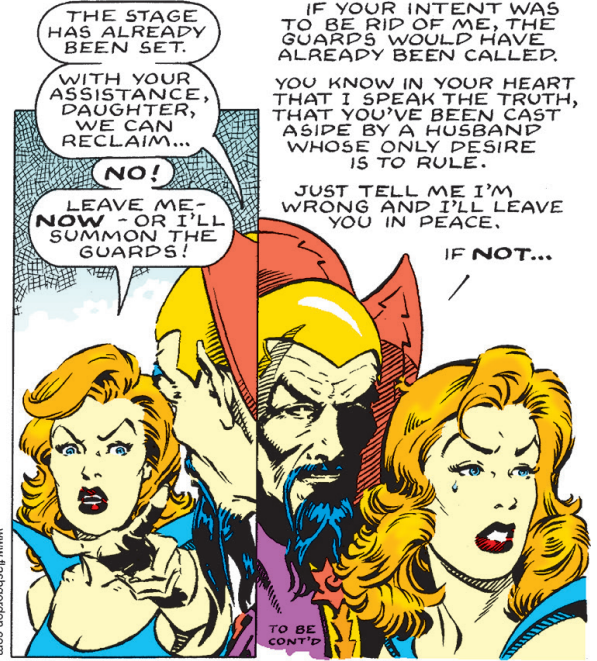
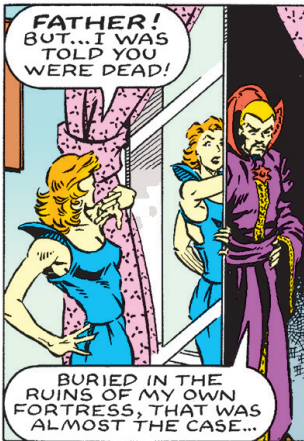
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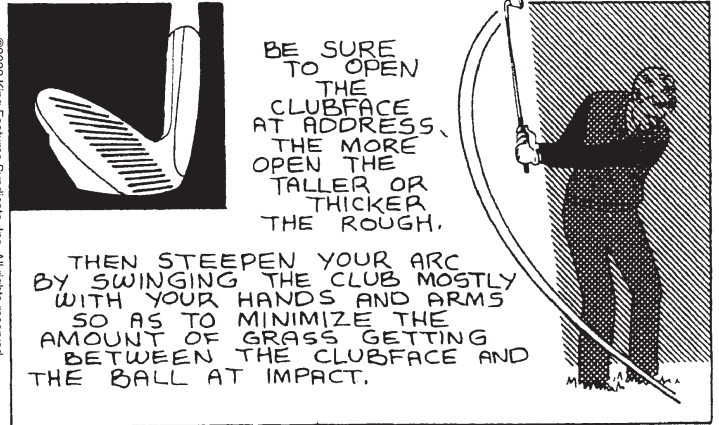
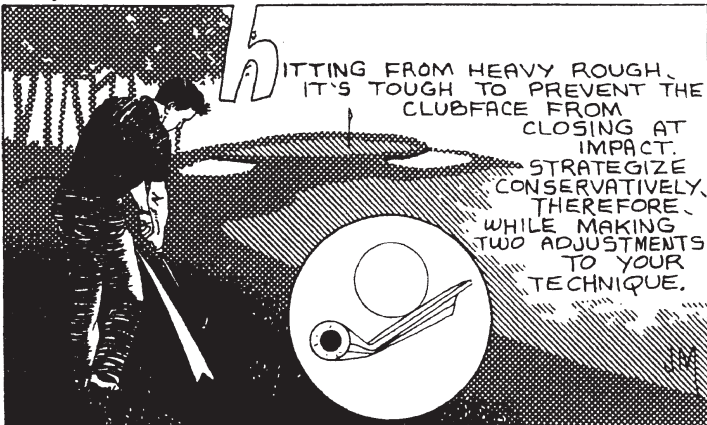


## FLASH GORDON

3-6  
By JIM KEEFE



## Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS





## Too Much Fruit Juice Can Worsen Diabetes



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DEAR DR. ROACH: I have a friend who recently learned she's prediabetic. She's also very obese. She has started juicing her fruits and vegetables in order to lose weight and get healthier. Isn't it just healthier to eat produce whole as opposed to making juice out of it? -- N.F.E.

ANSWER: Eating more vegetables and fewer simple sugars and processed starches is a good idea for nearly all people who want to eat healthier, and it may help people lose weight. Fruits also are an important part of diet, but for people with or at high risk for diabetes, I recommend no more than one or two fruits with meals, and that the fruits be whole. Fruit juice is absorbed much more rapidly into the blood, so excess fruit juice can actually precipitate diabetes or worsen diabetes control.

Juicing makes it easy to consume vegetables and fruits, but in addition to the problem with faster sugar absorption, taking food in liquid form usually isn't as satisfying. That's not true for everyone, but since reducing calories is essential for weight loss in nearly everybody, juicing may have the opposite effect, unfortunately, and I don't recommend it in general.

Of course, what doesn't work for one person may work great for someone else. If she is able to change her diet, reduce unhealthy choices and lose some weight, then juicing may be just right for her. I would still recommend against too much fruit juice, and to have fruits mixed in with vegetables, preferably taken with some protein and healthy fat.

Never forget that exercise is the other critical intervention for diabetes prevention or control.

\*\*\*

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am curious on your opinion of the benefits of CBD. I am a 73-year-old female with spinal stenosis that is pressing on a nerve. I also have pretty severe insomnia. I take 1,000 mg of hemp oil for severe back pain. I noticed that the CBD has helped me sleep mostly without drugs. A surprise effect of the hemp oil is my resting blood pressure has dropped. It used to range from 140-125/90 at doctors' offices. Now I measure 110-118/86. As for the back pain, it has reduced the degree of pain I experience. Not completely, but it's tolerable. I would be interested in a medical point of view. -- J.F.

ANSWER: Cannabidiol (CBD), one of the major pharmaceutical extracts from hemp (cannabis), has been recommended for many issues, but is still poorly studied. Medical cannabis, which contains the psychoactive THC in addition to the nonpsychoactive CBD, has been studied for chronic pain and has been shown to be better than placebo. THC alone has also been studied for pain, but I haven't found good studies on CBD alone for pain.

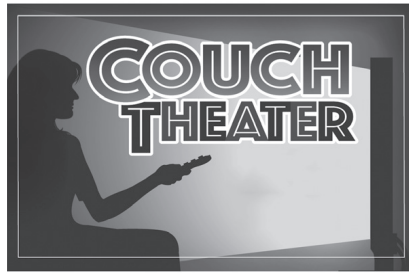
I might argue that you don't need a study, that you have tried it and it works. It is true that some or all of the benefit you experienced could be due to expecting to feel benefit (the placebo response), but if you are having no side effects, I can't argue with success.

I would note that chronic pain can cause sleep problems and raise blood pressure. Poor sleep itself can raise blood pressure. Thus, it's not shocking that a treatment that improved pain also helped sleep and blood pressure.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to [ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu](mailto:ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu).

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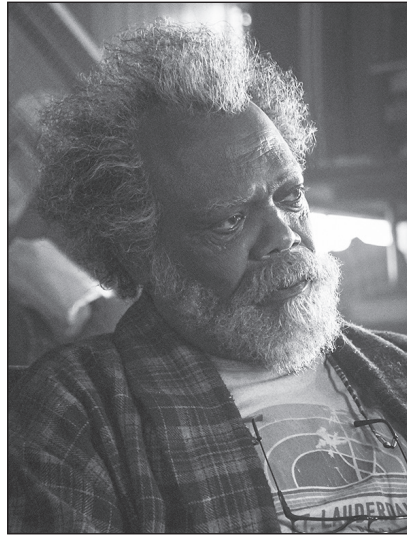


**The Adam Project** (PG-13) Ryan Reynolds, the master of witty one-liners, stars in yet another major blockbuster titled “The Adam Project,” newly streaming on Netflix. Reynolds portrays Adam Reed, a fighter pilot in 2050 with the power to travel through time. When Adam accidentally crash lands back in 2022, he must save the fate of the future by teaming up with a very unlikely partner — his 12-year-old self. A mixture of comedy, action and sci-fi (can’t forget a splash of romance!), “The Adam Project” serves as a perfect adventure for the entire family.

**Dune** (PG-13) After making its initial premiere in theaters and on HBO Max in October, “Dune” returns to the streaming platform for those ready to embark on a fantastical cinematic experience. In this two-and-a-half-hour film packed with a star-studded cast, “Dune” takes us on a journey to the desert planet of Arrakis with Paul Atreides (Timothée Chalamet), a young man with extraordinary physical and mental abilities hailing from the lush ocean planet of Caladan. Throughout his perilous journey, Paul, accompanied by his just-as-gifted mother, Jessica, experiences visions of the role he will take in a war between the planets of his universe. Directed by Denis Villeneuve, “Dune” is a sci-fi escape into worlds far away from our own and leaves audiences set for a few incredible sequels to come.

**The Last Days of Ptolemy Grey** (TV-MA) Samuel L. Jackson stars as Ptolemy Grey, a 93-year-old man diagnosed with dementia, who finds himself unable to remember his past and the secrets that lie within it. After hesitantly approaching a doctor who has a new treatment guaranteed to bring his

memory back, Ptolemy uncovers the hidden stories that have been deeply etched into his long-forgotten memories. Adapted from the novel by Walter Mosley, this drama miniseries premiering on Apple TV+ leaves viewers with a profound story of a man coming to terms with his past.



Courtesy of Netflix

## Samuel L. Jackson in “The Last Days of Ptolemy Grey”

**Upload** (TV-MA) In this Prime Video sci-fi comedy, humans can upload themselves into a virtual afterlife after they pass away to continue living their lives, with certain pros and cons of course. Season one centered around Nathan, who died prematurely and was begged to be “uploaded” by his controlling girlfriend, Ingrid. While taking on his new afterlife in Lakeview, Nathan found himself gaining feelings for his customer-service representative, Nora, as well as discovering the true reason behind his accidental death. The second season picks up right after Ingrid decides to upload herself into Lakeview to be with Nathan, and it continues to build on Nathan and Nora’s friendship, along with the daily shenanigans occurring in Lakeview. The show carries a light-hearted, warm tone that will surely make viewers fall in love.

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1. Name the singer who wrote and released "Give Me One Reason."

2. What was the full title of the James Brown song "Hot Pants"?

3. What was John Denver's first No. 1 hit?

4. Who released "Instant Karma! (We All Shine On)" and when?

5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "I still see her standing by the water, Standing there lookin' out to sea, And is she waiting there for me?"

## Answers

1. Tracy Chapman. She performed the song during a 1988 tour but didn't release it until 1995. The song netted her the Grammy for Best Rock Song in 1997

and is still her biggest U.S. hit.

2. "Hot Pants (She Got to Use What She Got to Get What She Wants)," released in 1971. Side A contained "Hot Pants" part 1, with parts 2 and 3 on side B.

3. "Sunshine on My Shoulders," originally on the "Poems, Prayers & Promises" album in 1971. As a single, it slowly climbed to the top of the charts in 1974.

4. John Lennon, in 1970.

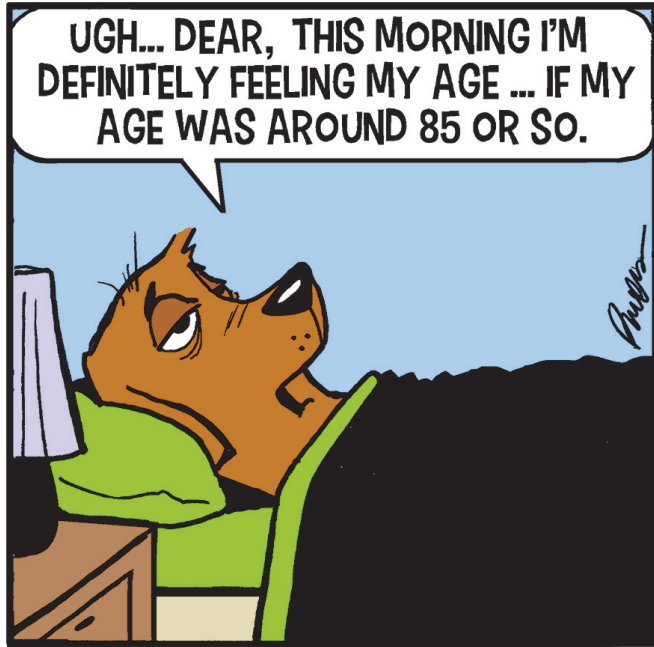
5. "Galveston," by Glen Campbell in 1969. Writer Jimmy Webb's original version was an anti-war song, while Campbell's revised chart-topping version was more upbeat and patriotic. Campbell wore a military outfit in the video.

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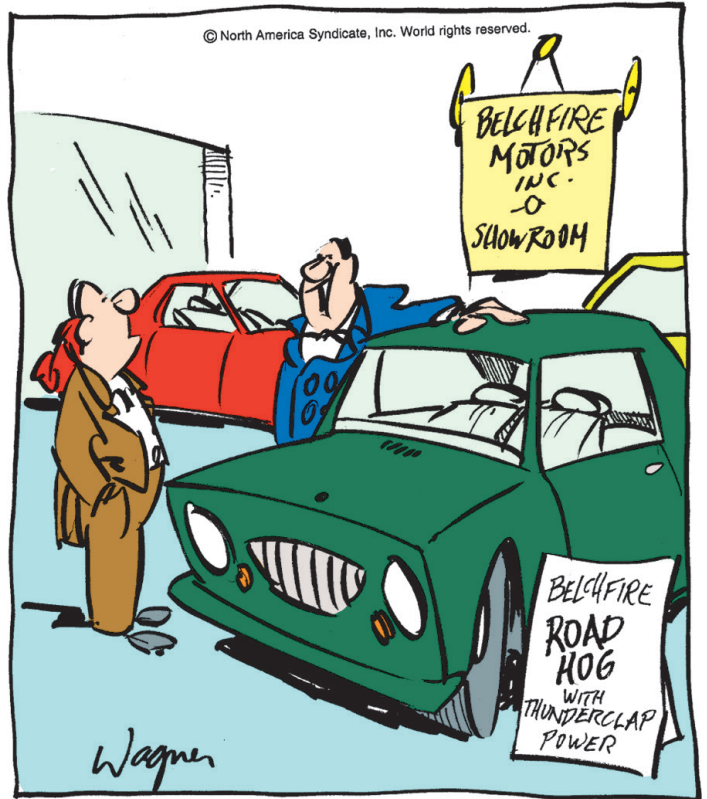
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Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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## GRIN and BEAR IT <sup>by Wagner</sup>



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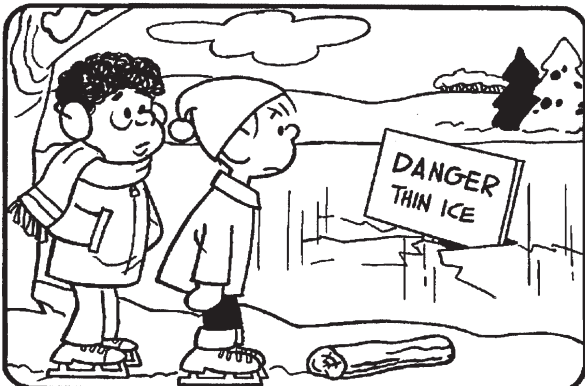
"It was named Car of the Year by Tow Truck Magazine!"

### HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Hockey stick is missing. 2. Tassel is shorter. 3. Arm is moved. 4. Tree is missing. 5. Sign is different. 6. Log is shorter.

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- Here's a great tip for freezing strawberries: Slip a berry into each section of an ice-cube tray, and then stack trays in the freezer. When frozen, transfer berries to a zipper-top bag and store in the freezer. They won't stick together, and you can just use what you need.

- "Vinegar (1/3 cup) works just as well as rinsing agents in your dishwasher. Simply add it to the wash with your regular dishwasher detergent. It can help with cloudy glassware." — *W.C. in Washington*

- "Another great use for a length of nylon stocking, or a knee-high, as we used to call them: Slip over your pet brush and poke the bristles through. Brush your cat or dog as normal. When you're done, you can pull the knee-high stocking right off and all the hair will be caught inside!" — *P.K. in Pennsylvania*

- If you have a pickle- or jelly-jar

lid that's stuck on, try using the handle end of a butter knife to tap a few indentations around the edges. This can sometimes loosen the seal, making it easier to remove the lid.

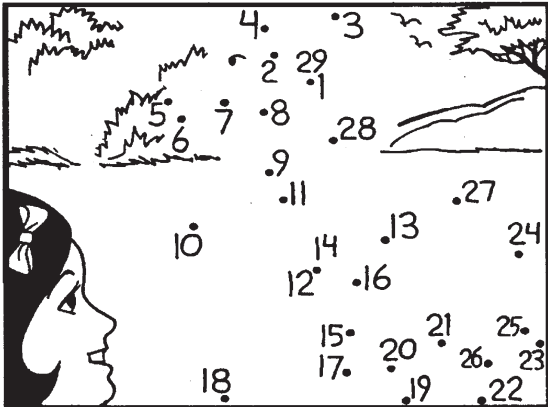
- "When you get to the bottom of a bag of chips or a box of crackers, there usually are a lot of crumbs. I save ours in a baggie, then add them to breadcrumbs to bread fish or chicken. They add a lot of flavor, and it's basically free! It's funny, because I see packages of flavored breadcrumbs at the grocery store, and they are pretty expensive." — *R.L. in Virginia*

- Fresh ginger can be frozen. Simply grate as needed. The flavor remains, and it will stay fresh much longer.

*Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.*

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**WHA DOT?** Hop to it before this subject gets away ... add lines to complete the picture. What can you draw?

## Junior Whirl

by Hal Kaufman

	1	2	3	4	5
1		I	T	C	H
2	I				
3	T				
4	C				
5	H				

### TO ITCH HIS OWN WORD SQUARE

FIVE five-letter words form a word square at left, with four letters (ITCH) of the first word in place.

You are asked to insert missing words in accord with definitions below:

- Advertiser's come-on.
- Toughen up to pain.
- Another word for "potato."
- Set of beliefs.
- Long-billed, long-necked, long-legged wader.

Keep in mind that word square words read alike both across and down.

Remember, only one letter is missing from first word.

1. Pitch. 2. Inure. 3. Tuber. 4. Credo. 5. Heron.

**SPRING AHEAD!** In the words of G.K. Chesterton, "Spring never is spring unless it — — —." Add the three missing words.

"...comes too soon"

**DICE-Y TRICK!** Display two dice. Place one atop the other, say a few magic words, lift the top die, and alakazam, the dice cling together as one. Here's how it's done:

Before producing the dice, wet your finger with your tongue. Apply moisture secretly to the bottom of the upper die.

When the dice are pressed together, moisture will cause them to adhere sufficiently to allow both to be raised at the same time.

Separate dice and put challenge to friends. By the way, keep dice away from young children, who may swallow them.



## TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Soak up the sun
- 5 Joke
- 8 Sports figure?
- 12 Penne — vodka
- 13 Playwright Levin
- 14 "Oops!"
- 15 Picnic spoiler
- 16 Vacuum's lack
- 17 Novelist Jaffe
- 18 Chinese food assortment
- 20 Some mixologists
- 22 Docs' org.
- 23 "Uh-huh"
- 24 Touse
- 27 "Locksley Hall" poet

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
18				19			20	21				
			22					23				
24	25	26			27	28	29				30	31
32					33					34		
35			36	37					38			
		39					40	41				
42	43				44		45			46	47	48
49					50	51			52			
53					54				55			
56					57				58			

- 32 Year in Mexico
- 33 Sock part
- 34 Stop — dime
- 35 Short recital piece
- 38 Uppity one
- 39 Spike's warning
- 40 Three, in Rome
- 42 JFK's vessel
- 45 Brother's son
- 49 Leveling wedge
- 50 Jurist Fortas
- 52 "I did it!"
- 53 Antitoxins

- 54 " — the sea-son ..."
- 55 Ireland
- 56 Tiny amounts
- 57 Six-pack muscles
- 58 Head, to Henri

### DOWN

- 1 Poet of yore
- 2 Jai —
- 3 Slender
- 4 Sunflower State
- 5 "Billions" actor Paul
- 6 "Exodus" hero

- 7 Attire
- 8 "Oklahoma!" carriage
- 9 Oscar-winning actress Emma
- 10 Top-of-the-line
- 11 Compared to
- 19 Hesitant sound
- 21 Objectivist Rand
- 24 More (Sp.)
- 25 Popular card game
- 26 Lark, for one
- 28 Very long time
- 29 Fastidious trait

- 30 Yoko of music
- 31 Collar
- 36 Scents
- 37 La-la lead-in
- 38 Music for seven
- 41 Concerning
- 42 "Hey!"
- 43 Ellington's "Take — Train"
- 44 "Toodle-oo!"
- 46 Aesopian also-ran
- 47 Tend texts
- 48 Fade away
- 51 Clothing protector

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## — King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

B	A	S	K		G	A	G		S	T	A	T
A	L	L	A		I	R	A		U	H	O	H
R	A	I	N		A	I	R		R	O	N	A
D	I	M	S	U	M		B	A	R	M	E	N
			A	M	A			Y	E	P		
M	U	S	S		T	E	N	N	Y	S	O	N
A	N	O			T	O	E		O	N	A	
S	O	N	A	T	I	N	A		S	N	O	B
		G	R	R			T	R	E			
P	T	B	O	A	T		N	E	P	H	E	W
S	H	I	M		A	B	E		T	A	D	A
S	E	R	A		T	I	S		E	R	I	N
T	A	D	S		A	B	S		T	E	T	E

## LAFF - A - DAY



"My foot's asleep."

## Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



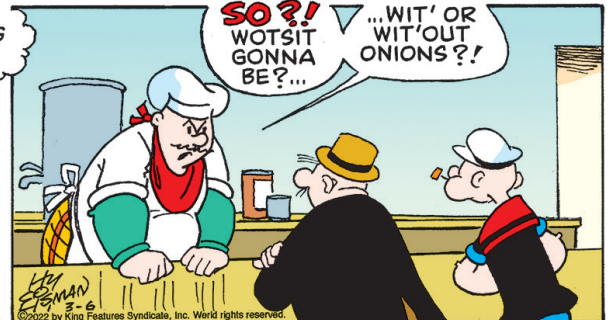
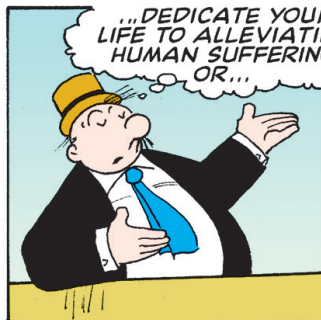
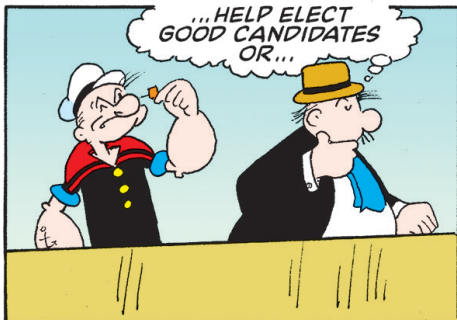
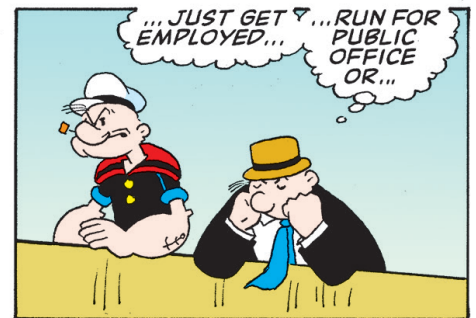
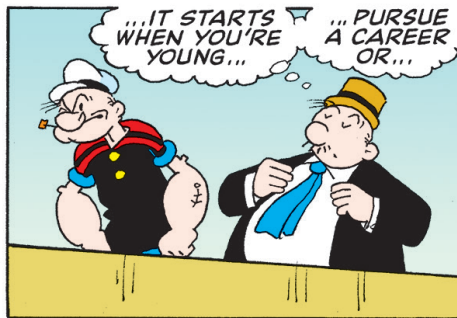
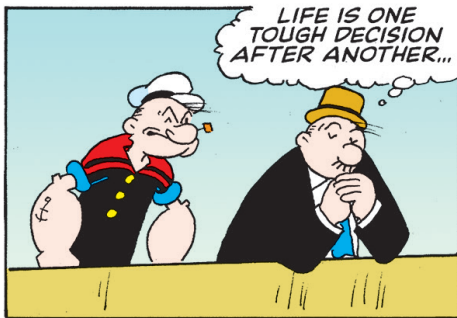
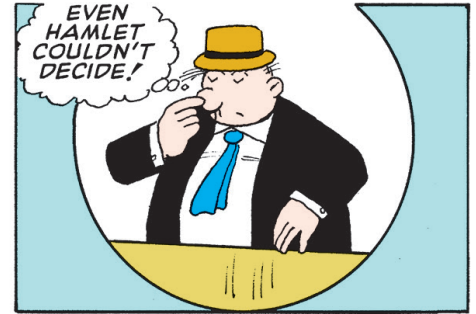
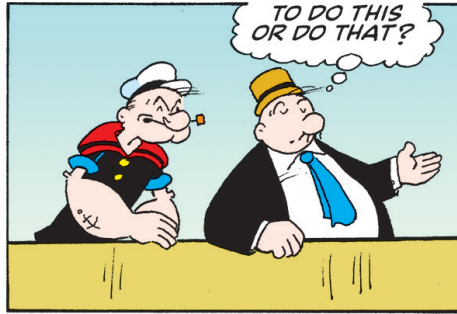
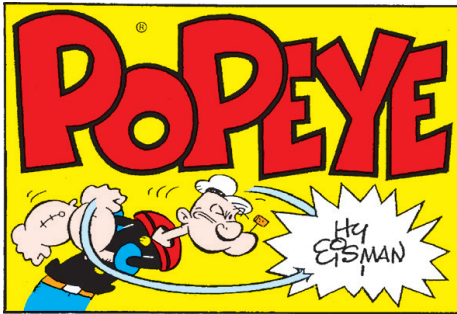
CLOWN COMPUTING

KOPERVAS



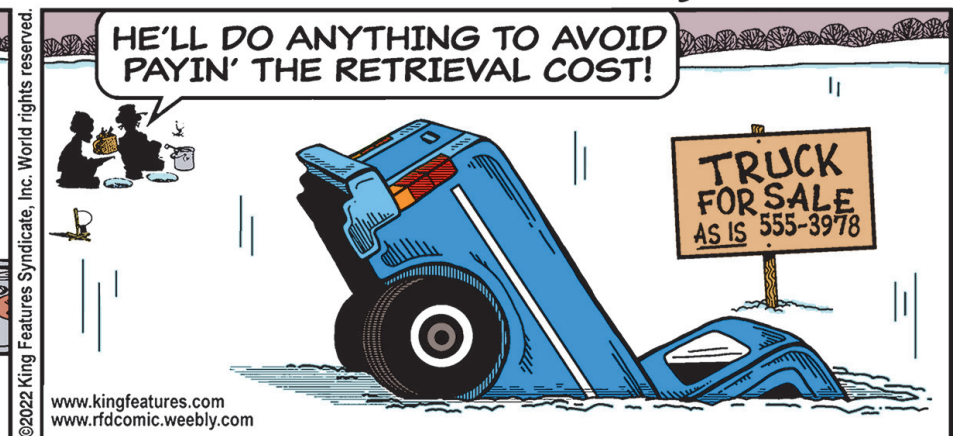
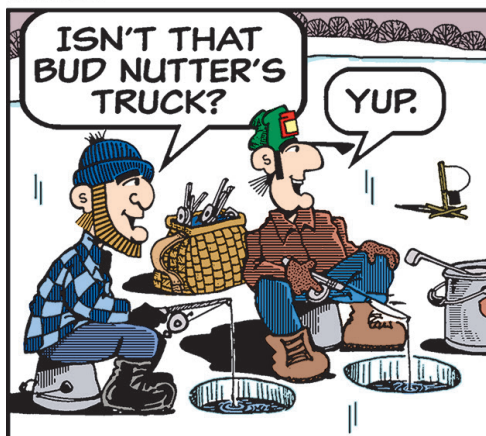
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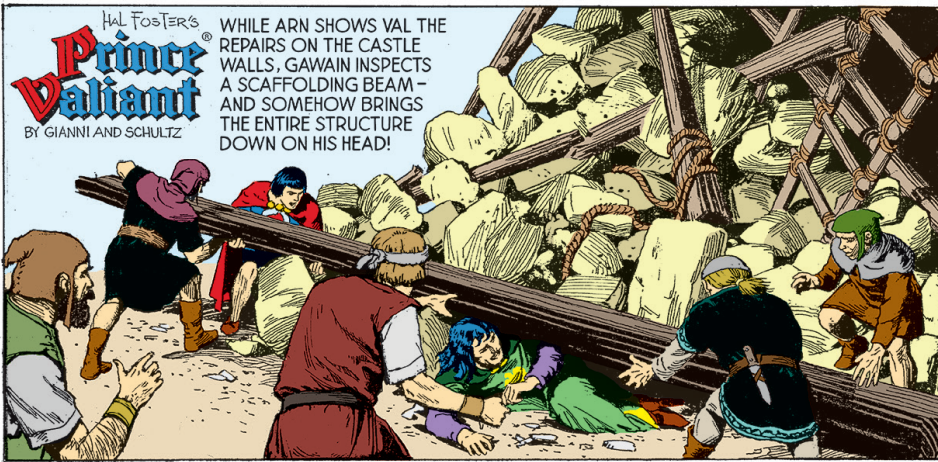
by Mike Marland



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FATE, IN THE SHAPE OF A PROTECTIVE HOLLOW, COMES TO THE ROGUSH KNIGHT'S AID. GAWAIN IS FOUND BRUISED AND FILTHY, BUT UNMANGLED.



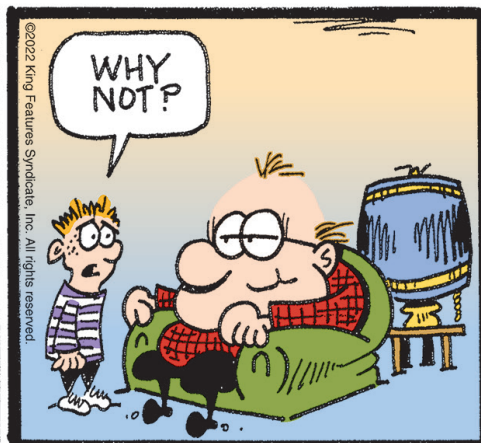
HE IS, HOWEVER, MIGHTILY VEXED "I SAW WHAT LOOKED LIKE BAD WOOD IN THE BEAMS - I BENT CLOSER, AND STRANGELY ENOUGH..."

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## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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PICKERING

## SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

### How Well Do You Know Your iPhone?

Did you know there is a flashlight on your iPhone? I just found mine. Courtesy of BoomerTECH Adventures online, I've not only learned that there is a flashlight, but how to access it.

BoomerTECH Adventures is a website aimed at seniors (although I don't know why it wouldn't appeal to anybody with an Apple device) who want to expand how they use their iPhone, iPad or Mac computer and learn about all the features.

Right on the home page of the website (as of this writing) is a free video about turning slides into digital images and a free video about how to change the email password on your iPad. In addition, there is a link to its blog covering a wide variety of Apple device-related topics.

Not all the videos are free, however. There are full courses, such as the Introduction to iPhone Basics (\$30), which includes four videos and a

course booklet.

There is Introduction to Zoom Basics, wherein you can learn how to have those video calls with your family (\$30). This one consists of eight videos that cover everything you need to know from setting it up to how to have appropriate lighting.

Maximizing Your iPad's Potential is a \$30 course that covers over a dozen areas and iPad topics, such as basic navigation, personalizing the look and making folders, communicating with messages and video, using the camera, editing photos and much more.

Mac computer owners aren't left out — there is an Introduction to Mac Basics (\$30) course.

BoomerTECH Adventures was started by a trio of educators, all of them seniors, which means they know we learn new things in different ways at different paces.

If you have an Apple iPhone and want to know how to do more than place a call check BoomerTECH Adventures

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1. Which team used the oval “G” logo first: the Georgia Bulldogs, the Grambling State Tigers or the Green Bay Packers?

2. In 1891, James Naismith created “basket ball” using wooden baskets designed to collect what fruit?

3. College football’s LA Bowl began in 2021 with what late-night TV talk-show host serving as title sponsor?

4. Name the ESPN sportscaster and columnist who authored the books “The Last Night of the Yankee Dynasty” and “How Lucky You Can Be: The Story of Coach Don Meyer.”

5. What member of the International Boxing Hall of Fame was known as “The Coal Miner’s Daughter” during her professional career from 1989-2012?

6. In 1994, what Cleveland Indians relief pitcher broke into the umpire’s room at Comiskey Park and stole an allegedly corked bat belonging to Indians outfielder Albert Belle?



7. Jud Heathcote was head coach of what college basketball team from 1976-95?

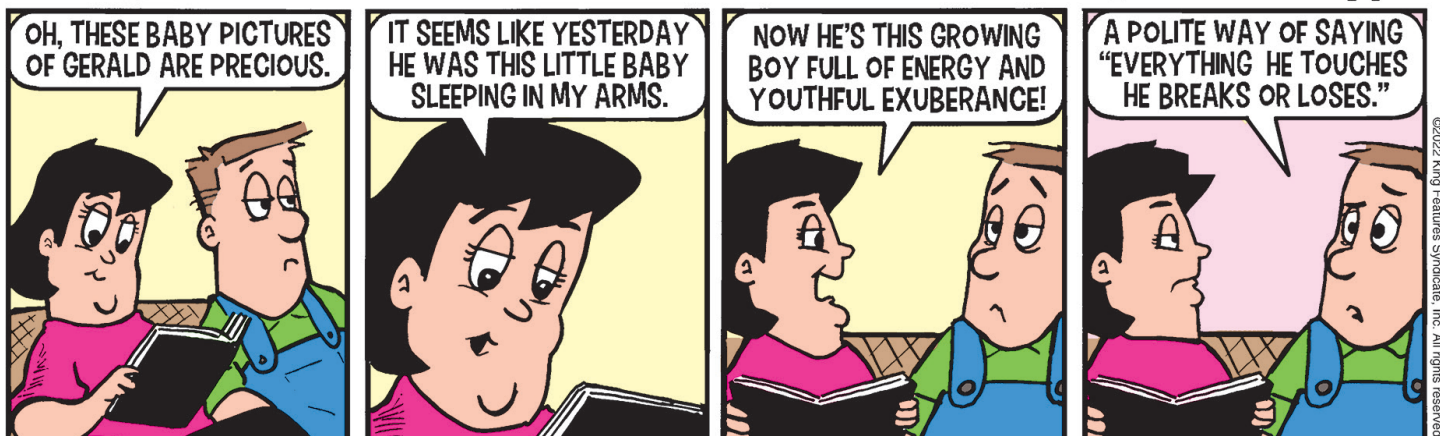
## Answers

1. The Green Bay Packers, in 1961.
2. Peaches.
3. Jimmy Kimmel.
4. Buster Olney.
5. Christy Martin.
6. Jason Grimsley.
7. The Michigan State Spartans.

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## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





## How to Help Pets Fleeing Ukraine Find Safe Haven

**DEAR PAW'S CORNER:** The tragic war in Ukraine weighs heavily on my mind, as I'm sure it does for many others. And I wonder every day if the people fleeing are able to take their pets. If so, how can I help both pets and their owners coming from Ukraine? — *Gerry A., Utica, New York*

**DEAR GERRY:** Animal welfare and humanitarian organizations are actively teaming up as I write this, working to find ways to provide food and shelter to the pets that Ukraine's refugees (now over 2 million and counting) brought with them on their perilous journey to the west.

Countries bordering Ukraine — Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovenia — have temporarily relaxed their restrictions on pets. But

many pets need care and foster homes because their owners had to leave them and return to Ukraine to join the fight.

While donations to major organizations like the Humane Society will help, you can make the most impact by donating directly to groups that are at the borders right now, setting up pet shelters and providing medical care to pets as they arrive. Unlike some large groups, which take a significant percentage of donations to cover administrative costs, donating directly to smaller organizations means that a much higher percentage of your dollars go directly to food, shelter and medical care (including vaccinations) for Ukraine's animals as they arrive at the borders.

A Euronews.green article profiles two groups that are on the ground right now. Go to the site and search for "Ukraine's Pet Refugees" to read about them. And the Belgian-based Eurogroup for Animals lists several more groups that are directly helping animals caught in this upheaval. Go to its website and search for "animal protection organisations-ukraine" to learn more.

To check out a registered charity before sending it money, visit [www.charitynavigator.org](http://www.charitynavigator.org) to search by name.

*Send your tips, comments or questions to [ask@pawscorner.com](mailto:ask@pawscorner.com).*

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## Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

milkshake is made up of around 45 chemicals.

\* "Jeopardy!" contestants stand on adjustable platforms so that they all appear to be the same height on camera.

\* On the last Sunday of November in Lopburi, Thailand, an annual Monkey Buffet Festival is held that provides food and drink to more than 2,000 local monkeys, as a thank you for drawing tourists to the town.

\* The role of U.S. first lady isn't reserved solely for the president's wife. Historically, some first ladies have included nieces, sisters or daughters-in-law of the sitting president.

\* The word "and" and the ampersand symbol (&) mean different things in movie credits. Two writers' names joined with an ampersand means they collaborated, while "and" means they worked on the script at different times.

\* Researchers have discovered that the *Fritillaria delavayi* plant, which has been used in Chinese traditional medicine for 2,000 years, has evolved camouflage in heavily harvested areas.

\* In 1355, a dispute between two students from Oxford University and a local tavern owner over the quality of its wine grew so heated that it resulted in a three-day-long riot, which left 63 students and 30 locals dead.

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day: "Every small positive change we make in ourselves repays us in confidence in the future." -- Alice Walker

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\* In 2006, an Athens court ordered the worship of the 12 gods of ancient Greece -- including Zeus, Hera, Hermes, Athena and others -- to be unbanned.

\* Vikings fed their wounded soldiers a strong onion soup to help gauge the depth of a stomach wound. After a few minutes, they would smell the wound and if they could smell the onion soup, they knew the wound was too deep and the soldier could not be saved.

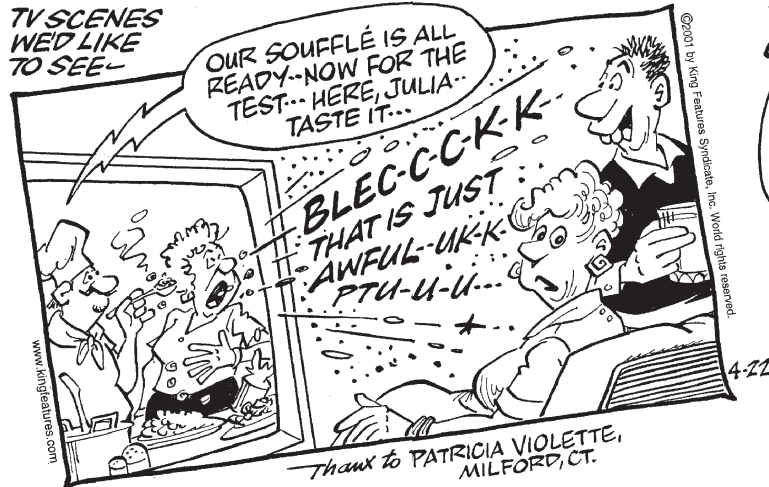
\* The "artificial strawberry flavor" in a McDonald's

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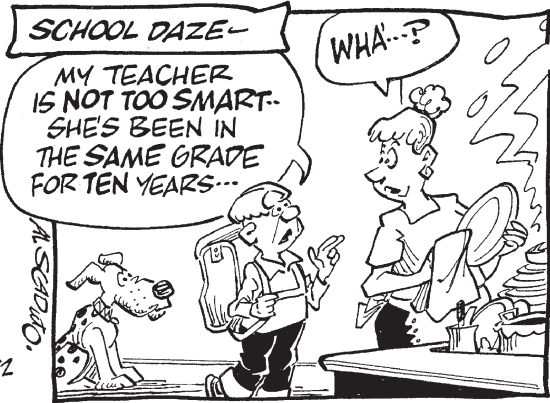
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## THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

TV SCENES  
WE'D LIKE  
TO SEE-



## BY AL SCADUTO



Thank to JOY PARTAIN, HOUSTON, TEXAS

## HOUSEHOLD MATH-



## The true shamrock of Ireland

Two separate surveys were done in Ireland, one in 1893 and one in 1988. Both asked for examples of what people throughout the country considered to be the "true" shamrock, which were then identified botanically. The results of both surveys were very similar: *Trifolium dubium* (lesser clover, shown at right) was the top selection, followed closely by *Trifolium repens* (white clover). - Brenda Weaver

Source: wikipedia.org, www.claddaghdesign.com



## VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

### VA Proposes Changes to Disability Ratings

If you have a Department of Veterans Affairs-rated disability, heads up. They're proposing changes to the schedule for disabilities for auditory, respiratory and mental disorders.

If you receive compensation for one of those service-connected conditions, your rating won't change. The reason for changing the schedule, they say, is to "incorporate modern medical data and terminology" so veterans can receive more accurate and consistent decisions. Ratings will be based on "the most current medical knowledge" for the condition.

Some of the proposed changes are:

— Looking at tinnitus as a symptom of an underlying disease instead of a stand-alone disability.

— Modernizing the rating criteria for sleep apnea and how it impacts earning capacity.

— Evaluating mental-health conditions in terms of interpersonal relationships, life activities, self-care and cognition. It's proposed that the criteria include a 10% minimum and won't require "total occupational and social impairment" to reach 100%.

— No current ratings will change, they say. If they're finalized, veterans can apply for increased compensation. There won't be any reduction in compensation unless there's an improvement in the disability.

If you want to read more, see the Federal Register where the document has to be open for comment for 60 days. Go to [www.federalregister.gov](http://www.federalregister.gov) and search for "FR Doc. 2022-02049" for two of the disorders, and "FR Doc. 2022-02051" for the third one. Be sure to look through the public comments. A vast majority have to do with sleep apnea and its daily life impact, including earnings.

What concerns me at first glance is that there's a lot of removing subparagraphs, combining other disability aspects, renaming headings, adding section notes and reorganizing the various sections. How, one wonders, are the ratings personnel supposed to do a realistic evaluation of impairment? Even ratings clerks who have a lot of experience are going to be starting all over again in learning the system.

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CONGRESSMAN  
**DUSTY JOHNSON**  
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



## Fighting for our Veterans

Last week, I was informed by Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 23 Director Robert McDivitt and the Biden Administration of recommended in-patient service closures that follow a multi-year nationwide review of (Veterans Affairs) VA services.

The recent recommendations call for the following:

### SIOUX FALLS Recommendations

- Reduce ER capacity to an urgent care
- Continue expansion of outpatient services
- Add 30 nursing home beds
- Close the Wagner Community-Based Outpatient

### BLACK HILLS Recommendation

- Invest in the Rapid City market with a new VA Medical Center and Community Living Center
- Relocate psycho-social rehab from Hot Springs to Rapid City
- Existing Hot Springs and Fort Meade campuses would be limited to out-patient care.
- Close all in-patient services at Hot Springs and Fort Meade and re-locate to Rapid City.

Over the past week, I conducted a Facebook and email survey asking people if they support the recommended closures. The results are an overwhelming no – that’s no surprise. More than 94% of South Dakotans that responded to the poll voted to KEEP the VA services as they are now and not reduce in-patient services like the recommendation calls for.

I want you to know I do not support the recommended closures and service reductions.

This is not the first time the VA in Hot Springs has been recommended to close or reduce services. In 2017, the VA signed a Record of Decision to vastly reduce services at the facility. However, that decision was rescinded by then-VA Secretary Robert Wilkie in March 2020. Nearly two years ago to the day, I appeared with then-VA Secretary Robert Wilkie when he came to the Hot Springs VA to announce the VA would remain open and there would be no reduction in services for veterans.

South Dakota has been fighting to keep the VA services for over ten years. Our veterans deserve better than policies and recommendations that create uncertainty every couple of years. In South Dakota, promises mean something. This is a betrayal to the Hot Springs, Wagner, and Fort Meade communities and their veterans. If the commission is going to move forward with reducing services, they should face the people of Hot Springs, Wagner, Fort Meade, and Sioux Falls and explain why they believe these services should be scaled back.

The Hot Springs VA has served veterans for more than 100 years. Since opening its doors, the name on the door has changed, the government branch has changed, and the leadership has changed, but service to veterans has remained constant. I will continue to work with the rest of the South Dakota delegation and the community to save our VAs. Our veterans deserve high-quality, accessible health care.

South Dakota Governor

**Kristi Noem**



**South Dakota:** *Under God, the People Rule*

## South Dakota: The State for Business

During my first State of the State address, I announced I wanted South Dakota to lead the nation, raising the bar in everything we do. We immediately got to work on that, earning big wins like Constitutional Carry and the Second Century Initiative to grow pheasant and wildlife habitat. Now, South Dakota will raise the bar in economic development.

Earlier this month, Site Selection magazine released the rankings for its 2021 Governor's Cup. Site Selection presents this award to the states with the most business development projects in a calendar year.

The result from those rankings sends a clear message: South Dakota competes with some of the largest states in the nation for big business projects. Our state ranked second overall for per-capita projects, with Kansas narrowly claiming the Cup.

But that is not the big news.

From 2019 to 2021, our ranking jumped from 37th to 2nd in projects per capita. The 2021 criteria focused on projects with an investment of \$1 million or more. The total investment in South Dakota — just counting eligible Site Selection projects — amounted to an astounding \$1.2 billion, adding 2.8 million square feet of production space and an expected increase of 2,600 jobs around the state.

Some of those projects have North Sioux City's metro area and Sioux Falls claiming the number 1 and 2 spots in Site Selection's metropolitan-area rankings, respectively, for per-capita projects.

Our "Open for Business" message has captured the attention of big companies around the country and driven this phenomenal growth. The Site Selection data understates the total tangible business growth in South Dakota—my Office of Economic Development in 2021 facilitated \$1.7 billion in total investment, for an overall increase of 3,700 jobs around the state.

The path I chose for South Dakota during the pandemic attracted businesses to our state. But we also are a business-friendly, low-tax, affordable state to start and own a business. We have worked for years to develop a business climate that is welcoming to innovators and industry leaders.

We brought in the Aesir Technology battery manufacturing facility in Rapid City, which Site Selection

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highlighted in their 2021 analysis. This project will add 400 skilled jobs for producing the batteries that service data centers and 5G cell phone networks.

Amazon's new fulfillment center in Sioux Falls adds 3 million square feet of factory floor, welcoming 1,000 new full-time jobs this year. CJ Foods, which specializes in producing Asian food, will build a state-of-the-art facility – the largest of its kind – in Sioux Falls. The project is estimated to be \$500 million in construction for a new 700,000 square-foot building with 600 new jobs by 2025.

But companies did not only invest in our big cities. We saw new developments in Canton, Belle Fourche, and other smaller communities around the state.

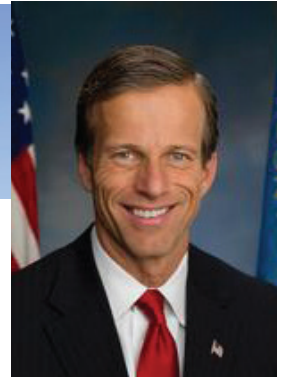
We have come a long way in the last three years. From our business development growth to expanding high-speed internet statewide, we have ushered in a new era of innovation. And we show no signs of slowing down.

Just this week, the legislature overwhelmingly approved my recommendation to fund a \$30 million investment in the cyber research program at Dakota State University. This investment will help double the number of students who will graduate with the skills to land six-figure jobs out of college.

South Dakota: the state for business today, tomorrow, and into the future.

###

**John Thune**  
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



## The Free World Must Stand With Ukraine

As the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine continues to escalate, you may have seen the wrenching picture of a Ukrainian family killed by Russian shelling – a mom and her two innocent children, struck down as they attempted to flee along a main evacuation route – an evacuation route that Russia intentionally attacked. Or you may have seen the pictures of the devastation after a maternity hospital fell victim to a Russian airstrike. These pictures and videos are heartbreaking, and the people of Ukraine are in my thoughts and prayers. I know they're in yours, too.

The scenes in Ukraine are unreal. They are scenes that we thought had finally been left behind in the dust of European history, and in two short weeks, Vladimir Putin has wrought an unimaginable amount of devastation. The damage he has done will take years, if not decades, to rebuild. More than 2 million people have fled their homes and their communities, making this the worst refugee crisis in Europe since World War II. These have been dark days for Ukraine, but the devastation has been met with remarkable determination.

This is Ukrainians' fight, and they are not shrinking from it. The Washington Post recently reported that more than 66,000 Ukrainians who were outside the country have returned to answer President Zelensky's call to arms. That's 66,000 Ukrainians who could have sat in safety outside Ukraine who have returned to help defend their country. Outnumbered as they are, the Ukrainian people are standing fast, and they are slowing down and, in many places, holding off the Russians. Soldiers and civilians alike have taken up arms to defend their nation, and it's clear that the spirit of Ukraine, now roused, will not be extinguished.

But, no matter the resolve of the Ukrainian people, Ukraine cannot hold out alone. Without military, intelligence, and humanitarian support from other free nations, Ukraine may fall. We can't sit by and let that happen. While I believe the Biden administration was too slow to send aid to Ukraine and sanction Putin in the lead-up to Russia's attack, significant military resources are now flowing to Ukraine from the United States and NATO partners, and Ukraine is imposing a heavy cost on its invaders.

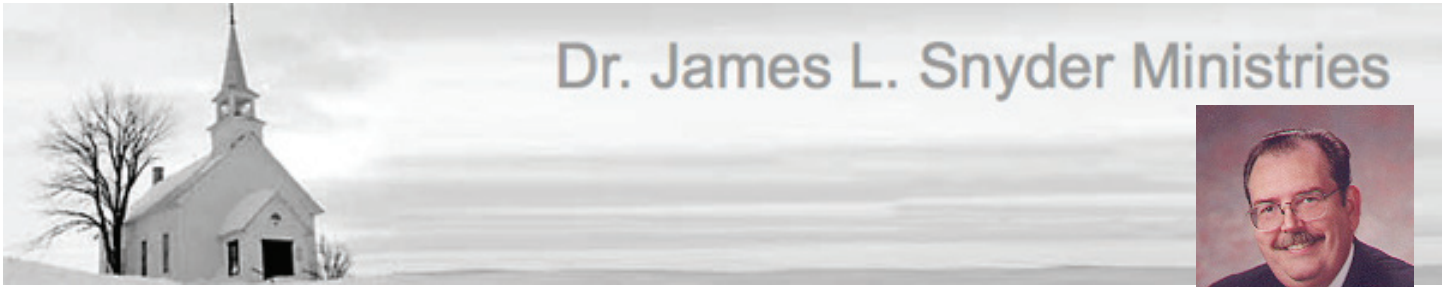
The United States did the right thing by banning American imports of Russian energy. Every dollar we send to Russia is a dollar that it can use to prosecute its war in Ukraine. Now we need to focus on developing our energy resources here at home – all of them, both conventional and alternative – to ensure that our nation never again has to depend on countries like Russia for essential energy supplies.

I recently heard directly from President Zelensky on a Zoom call, and he made a powerful appeal for help from the West.

We need to do everything we can to keep Ukraine in this fight – including helping to pave the way for Ukraine to get the air defense resources it needs.

After all that Ukraine has managed to do, it would be a tragedy to see the country lose its fight because the United States and other NATO countries could not agree on how to get the Ukrainians the defensive equipment they need. And, while we should be cautious about what Putin may choose to do as his losses grow and his off-ramps dwindle, the United States and NATO cannot allow Moscow to dictate our actions. To do would not only be to surrender Ukraine, but to give the green light to despotic governments the world over, from China to Iran.

Ukrainians are fighting to be a free people in a free country, and I think their fight is very close to the hearts of the American people. We must do whatever we can to support them.



Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



## Laughter Is Not for Sissies

Since birth, I have been infected with a Laughter-Virus. I'm not sure which side of the family it came from, or it could've come from both sides. But the least little thing will make me laugh. Sometimes I have a hard time stopping laughing. I have yet to find a mask big enough to cover my face while I'm laughing.

If I am infectious with my laughter, so be it. It is one thing I can give to the people around me.

I have been a laughter connoisseur for a very long time. The least little thing will make me break out in laughter. Sometimes at the most inappropriate time and place. But, what can I do? Laughter is laughter.

I have enjoyed my years of laughter and expect many more to come.

Although I believe laughter to be very good and healthy, I must confess that sometimes my laughter has gotten me into trouble, especially with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

Not long ago, she came into the living room with a worried look on her face and asked me, "Do you know where my glasses are?"

I immediately began to laugh because I assumed this was a joke. The reason I assumed it was because her glasses were on the top of her head.

She looked at me, "Why are you laughing? Do you know where my glasses are? This is a serious question."

It's moments like this that are very difficult for me to stop laughing. I had to suppress my laughter because I did not know exactly what she was getting at. Wives always have a way of tricking their husbands into doing something. Believe me, I have been tricked quite a few times throughout the years of our marital bliss.

She turned around quickly and walked away, muttering something to the effect of, "Why is he laughing at me?"

A few minutes later, she came back wearing her glasses and said rather firmly, "Why didn't you tell me my glasses were on the top of my head?"

With a smothered smile, I looked at her and said, "I thought you were just trying to trick me."

Looking back at me, she smiled one of those suspicious smiles, turned around, and walked out.

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I couldn't help but smile, which eventually turned into laughter.

But as everybody knows, what goes around comes around.

Last Thursday was a long day, and I finally got home, walked into the living room, my wife looked at me very strangely and said, "You did not have a jelly donut anytime today, did you?"

With a hearty laugh, I responded by saying, "Of course not. You know I don't eat donuts during the day?" And I laughed most heartily.

"You sure about that?" She said on the edge of laughing.

I laughed and shook my head, and started to walk away.

"Well then," she said rather slowly, "it looks like your shirt had a donut without you knowing it."

I stopped in my tracks, looked down at my shirt, and there it was. A drop of jelly from a donut. According to the evidence, I must've had a donut that day.

I tried to laugh it off, but in a very stern voice, she said, "That is not funny. Stop your laughing."

Laughing does have a way of getting you into trouble; at least, that has been my experience throughout the years. But on the other side, laughter has good aspects to it.

When I'm down in the dumps, so to speak, a good laugh helps to lift me above my discouragement. It's hard to find a good laugh sometimes, but it's well worth the investigation when I do.

Whenever I'm out at a store somewhere, and I see someone that looks sad and down, I always try to do something to make them laugh. It doesn't always work, but when it does work, everyone is laughing.

Not many people have much to laugh about these days. If it weren't for politicians, some people wouldn't have anything to laugh at.

Many a time, my wife and I will be sitting in the living room watching a little TV and much of that time is filled with laughter. Not so much what's on the TV, but our response to what's on TV.

Most of the time we watch TV while eating supper. Almost nightly, the advertisements had to do with some cure for diarrhea during that time. So why do I want to hear about diarrhea while eating supper? It sort of quenches my appetite at the time.

That in itself has caused us to laugh many a time. We can either laugh at it or get upset. More often than not, both of us choose the laughter element. Nothing lifts us better than laughter, no matter what we laugh at.

Thinking about how important laughter was in my life, I was reminded of the Bible verse. David said, "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them" (Psalm 126:2).

That verse sums up the important aspect of my life. Because of the great things God has done for me that has become the platform for healthy laughter in my life. Looking at my life from God's perspective, there are many things that would induce laughter.

## EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: Any ideas on how to talk to my kids about climate change?

-- J. Rowe, Alea, HI

As our understanding of the human-caused effects on our environment deepens, we find ourselves changing our habits, but we also carry the responsibility of preparing the next generation. A National Public Radio (NPR) poll shows that 84 percent of parents think children should learn about climate change while only 45 percent of parents report having a conversation with their kids on the topic. Breaking the silence around climate change is a key step in developing intergenerational solutions.

Clinical psychologists like Wendy Greenspun caution that parents take a “developmentally sensitive” approach when preparing for climate change conversations. David Sobel, an environmental educator at Antioch University agrees, recommending that children younger than six years old spend time outdoors to foster a close relationship with the natural world. Additionally, Sobel suggests that teaching good habits at a young age is also great place to start. A 2015 study from Brown University shows that routines and habits are formed by age nine, so lessons like turning off the lights to save energy and recycling to reduce plastic pollution will stick with children who learn to do so early on in life.

Addressing tougher climate topics should wait until kids are nine years old, according to Sobel. Keeping in mind that your child may have already heard about climate change, gauging how much they know can be a jumping off point. To introduce the science, Robin Gurwitch, a professor and psychologist at Duke University, suggests using the “blanket analogy,” which explains that the Earth is protected by a layer, like a blanket, that keeps it at the right temperature. Climate change, caused by gases that people put into the air by using lots of energy, adds more blankets around the earth, making it too hot. If questions arise that you are unable to answer, take the opportunity to learn together and keep the conversation going.

The climate crisis is a difficult topic. While maintaining open communication, it is also crucial to avoid damaging the mental health of yourself or your children. Susie Burke, senior psychologist at the Australian Psychological Society, suggests three big-picture responses to cope with climate anxiety. First, emotion-focused coping, which can include anything as simple as spending time with loved ones and taking a break. Next is problem-focused coping which is to “...try to mitigate the actual problem that is causing the stress.” The third is meaning-focused coping, thinking about “how to frame the problem so that we can continue to hope and not collapse into cynicism....”

While interpreting climate change for children involves teaching about seemingly unending challenges, it is important to emphasize the solutions. Children should know that there are scientists all over the world working hard to solve the problem and that regular citizens can help in meaningful ways. Suggest ways to be a part of the solution with small actions that you do together as a family, like a meatless Monday tradition or participation in the Turn It Off Campaign that encourages not idling your car when it is parked. These help make your children part of the solution as they learn about the problem.



**Psychologists emphasize the importance of focusing on solutions when talking with kids about climate change.**

Credit: Pavel Danilyuk, Pexels.

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## South Dakota COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

51

Active Cases

3,016  
-738

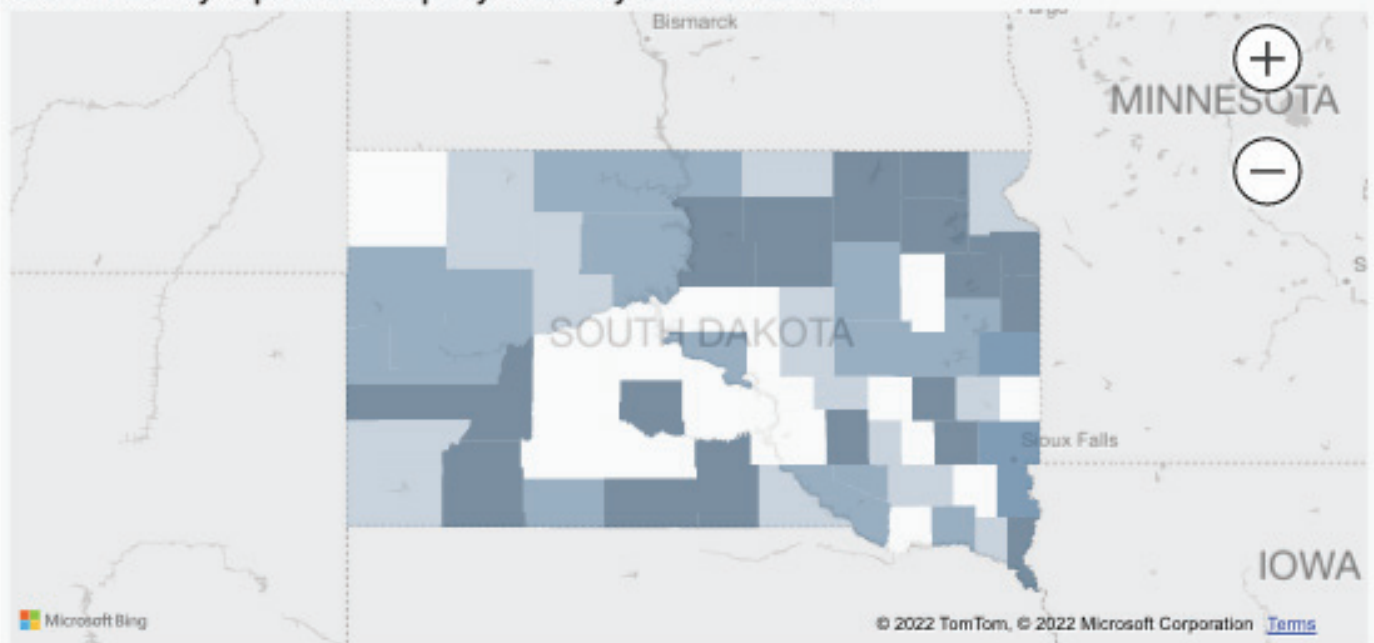
Recovered Cases

230,733

Currently Hospitalized

88

### Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange boxes.

More information on U.S COVID-19 Community levels can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>

Total Confirmed and Probable Cases

236,602

PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 7 Days

5.9%

3/3/2022 - 3/9/2022

Total Tests

2,113,740

Ever Hospitalized

10,637

Deaths Among Cases

2,853

% Progress (January Goal: 44233 Tests)

423%

% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)

169%

% Progress (March Goal: 44233 Tests)

39%



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## Brown County COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

6

Active Cases

199  
-19

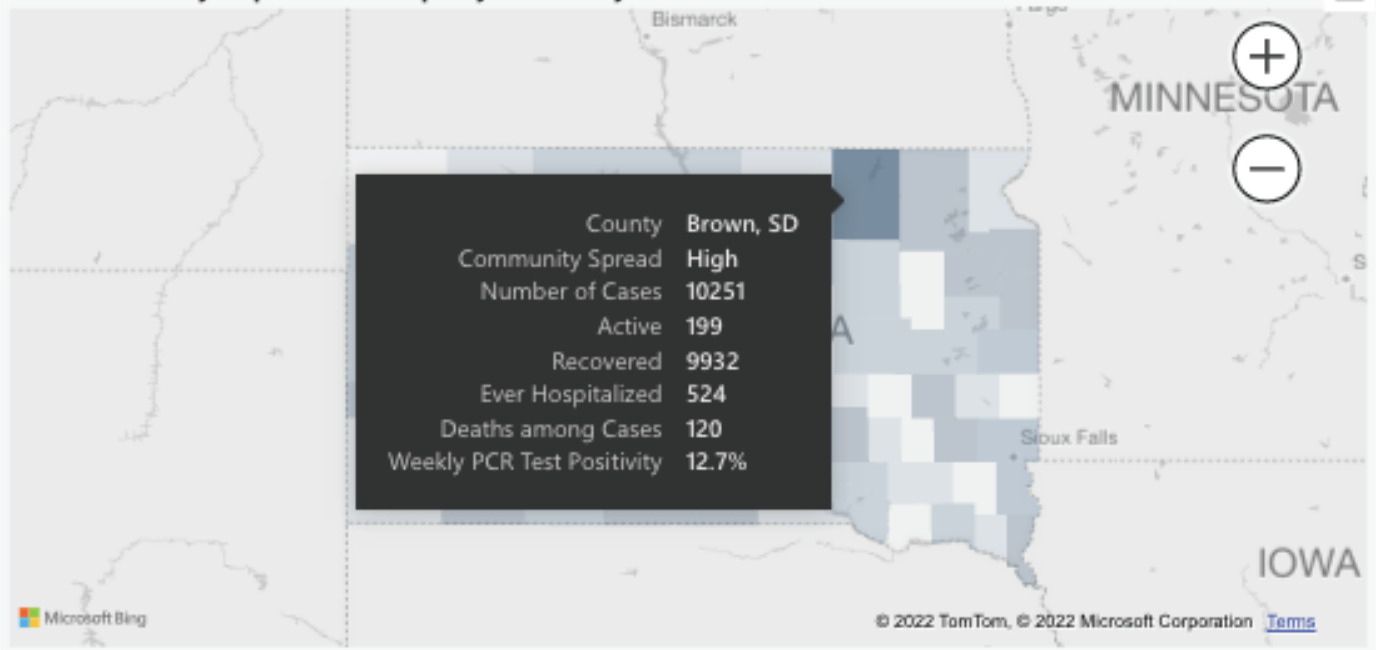
Recovered Cases

9,932

Currently Hospitalized

88

### Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread ● Low ● Moderate ● Substantial ● High

Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange boxes.

More information on U.S COVID-19 Community levels can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>

Total Confirmed and Probable Cases

10,251

PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 7 Days

15.3%

3/3/2022 - 3/9/2022

Total Tests

101,721

Ever Hospitalized

524

Deaths Among Cases

120

% Progress (January Goal: 44233 Tests)

423%

% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)

169%

% Progress (March Goal: 44233 Tests)

39%

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Day County COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

0

Active Cases

26  
-6

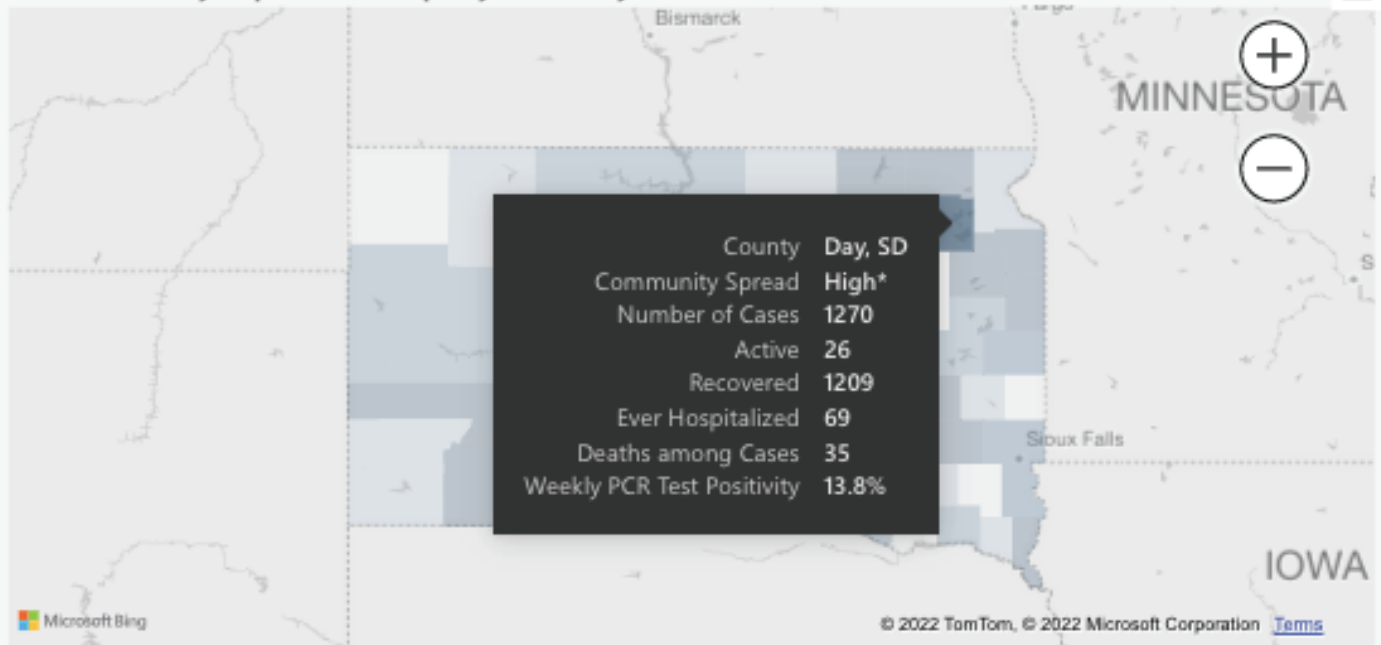
Recovered Cases

1,209

Currently Hospitalized

88

### Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread ● Low ● Moderate ● Substantial ● High

Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange boxes.

More information on U.S COVID-19 Community levels can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>

Total Confirmed and Probable Cases

1,270

PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 7 Days

24.0%

3/3/2022 - 3/9/2022

Total Tests

16,611

Ever Hospitalized

69

Deaths Among Cases

35

% Progress (January Goal: 44233 Tests)

423%

% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)

169%

% Progress (March Goal: 44233 Tests)

39%

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## COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Currently Hospitalized	<b>-39</b>	88
Deaths Among Cases	<b>+26</b>	2853
Active Cases		3016
Ever Hospitalized		10637
Recovered Cases		230733
Total Cases		236602

## SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths Among Cases
Female	125071	1296
Male	111531	1557

## VARIANT CASES OF COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

COVID-19 Variant	# of Cases
Delta (B.1.617.2 & AY lineages)	1669
Omicron (B.1.1.529 & BA lineages)	719
Alpha (B.1.1.7)	176
Gamma (P.1)	4
Beta (B.1.351)	2

## AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range with Years	# of Cases	# of Deaths Among Cases
0-9 years	15840	2
10-19 years	28717	2
20-29 years	41525	14
30-39 years	40217	50
40-49 years	33201	84
50-59 years	30407	216
60-69 years	25064	460
70-79 years	13105	671
80+ years	8526	1354

## RACE/ETHNICITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Race/Ethnicity	# of Cases	% of Cases
Asian / Pacific Islander	3263	1%
Black	5819	2%
Hispanic	10189	4%
Native American	30116	13%
Other	1976	1%
Unknown	4422	2%
White	180817	76%

## Groton Area COVID-19 Report

Groton Area School District

Active COVID-19 Cases

Updated March 10, 2022; 11:21 AM

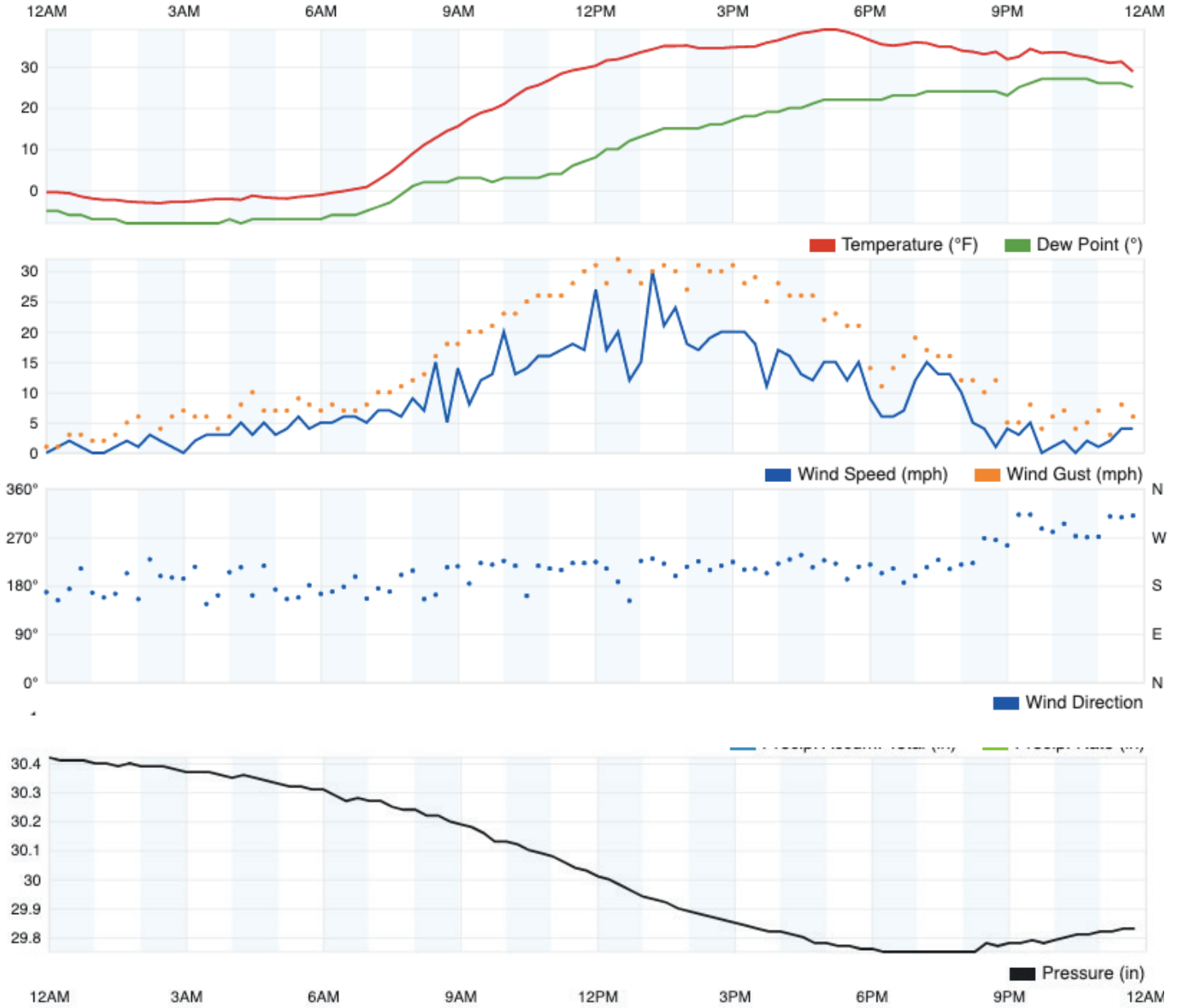
Same number as last week

J	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	1	1	S	T
K	G										0	1	2	t	o
														a	t
														f	a
														f	i
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Change	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	+1	0

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



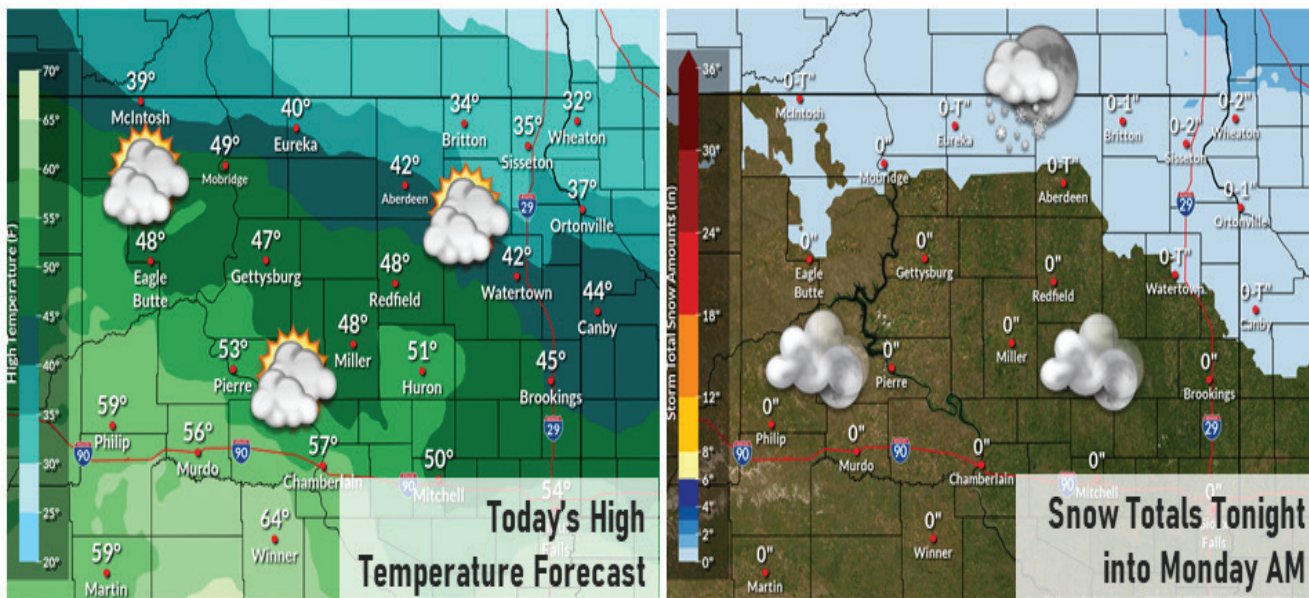
# Broton Daily Independent

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Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
				
Increasing Clouds	Cloudy then Chance Snow	Slight Chance Wintry Mix	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 40 °F	Low: 24 °F	High: 38 °F	Low: 26 °F	High: 55 °F

## Mild Today, Chance of Snow Tonight

Clouds will be on the increase today with easterly winds by the afternoon, ahead of an area of low pressure. Snow develops tonight near the SD/ND border, and shifts east into Monday morning. While generally light with a trace to an inch of accumulation most likely, locally heavier amounts are possible if a band of snow develops. This event may end with some freezing drizzle Monday morning across portions of northeastern SD and west central MN as well.



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

Updated: 3/13/2022 5:01 AM Central

Clouds will be on the increase today with easterly winds by the afternoon, ahead of an area of low pressure. Snow develops tonight near the SD/ND border, and shifts east into Monday morning. While generally light with a trace to an inch of accumulation most likely, locally heavier amounts are possible if a band of snow develops. This event may end with some freezing drizzle Monday morning across portions of northeastern SD and west central MN as well.

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## Today in Weather History

March 13, 1971: During an evening thunderstorm in Moody County, South Dakota, lightning destroyed a transformer plant in Coleman. Damages were estimated at \$250,000.

March 13, 1997: A winter storm began with widespread freezing drizzle, creating icy roadways and walkways, before changing over to snow. Before the snow was over, 2 to 8 inches had fallen on an already expansive and deep snowpack. The winds accelerated to 20 to 40 mph, resulting in widespread blowing and drifting snow. Visibilities were reduced to near zero at times, making travel treacherous. Many roads again became blocked by snowdrifts, and several were closed. Many area schools were still closed, adding to an already substantial total of days missed for the winter season. Some people were stranded and had to wait out the storm. Some airport flights were canceled. The icy roads and low visibilities resulted in several vehicle mishaps as well. There was a rollover accident west of Mobridge and an overturned van 7 miles west of Webster. On Interstate-29, there were several rollover accidents, including vehicles sliding off of the road. Some snowfall amounts included, 4 inches at Timber Lake, Mobridge, Eureka, Leola, Britton, and Clark, 5 inches at Leola, 6 inches at Waubay and Summit, and 8 inches at Pollock.

1907 - A storm produced a record 5.22 inches of rain in 24 hours at Cincinnati, OH. (12th-13th) (The Weather Channel)

1951 - The state of Iowa experienced a record snowstorm. The storm buried Iowa City under 27 inches of snow. (David Ludlum)

1953: An F4 tornado cut an 18-mile path through Haskell and Knox counties in Texas. 17 people were killed, and an eight-block area of Knox City was leveled.

1977 - Baltimore, MD, received an inch of rain in eight minutes. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1987 - A winter storm produced heavy snow in the Sierra Nevada Range of California, and the Lake Tahoe area of Nevada. Mount Rose NV received 18 inches of new snow. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Unseasonably cold weather prevailed from the Plateau Region to the Appalachians. Chadron NE, recently buried 33 inches of snow, was the cold spot in the nation with a low of 19 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Residents of the southern U.S. viewed a once in a life-time display of the Northern Lights. Unseasonably warm weather continued in the southwestern U.S. The record high of 88 degrees at Tucson AZ was their seventh in a row. In southwest Texas, the temperature at Sanderson soared from 46 degrees at 8 AM to 90 degrees at 11 AM. (The National Weather Summary)

1990: Thunderstorms produced severe weather from northwest Texas to Wisconsin, Iowa, and Nebraska during the day and into the night. Severe thunderstorms spawned 59 tornadoes, including twenty-six strong or violent tornadoes, and there were about two hundred reports of large hail or damaging winds. There were forty-eight tornadoes in Kansas, Nebraska, and Iowa, and some of the tornadoes in those three states were the strongest of record for so early in the season, and for so far northwest in the United States. The most powerful tornado of the day was one that tore through the central Kansas community of Hesston. The F5 tornado killed two persons, injured sixty others, and caused 22 million dollars damage along its 67-mile path. The tornado had a lifespan of two hours. Another tornado tracked 124 miles across southeastern Nebraska, injuring eight persons and causing more than five million dollars damage during its three-hour lifespan.

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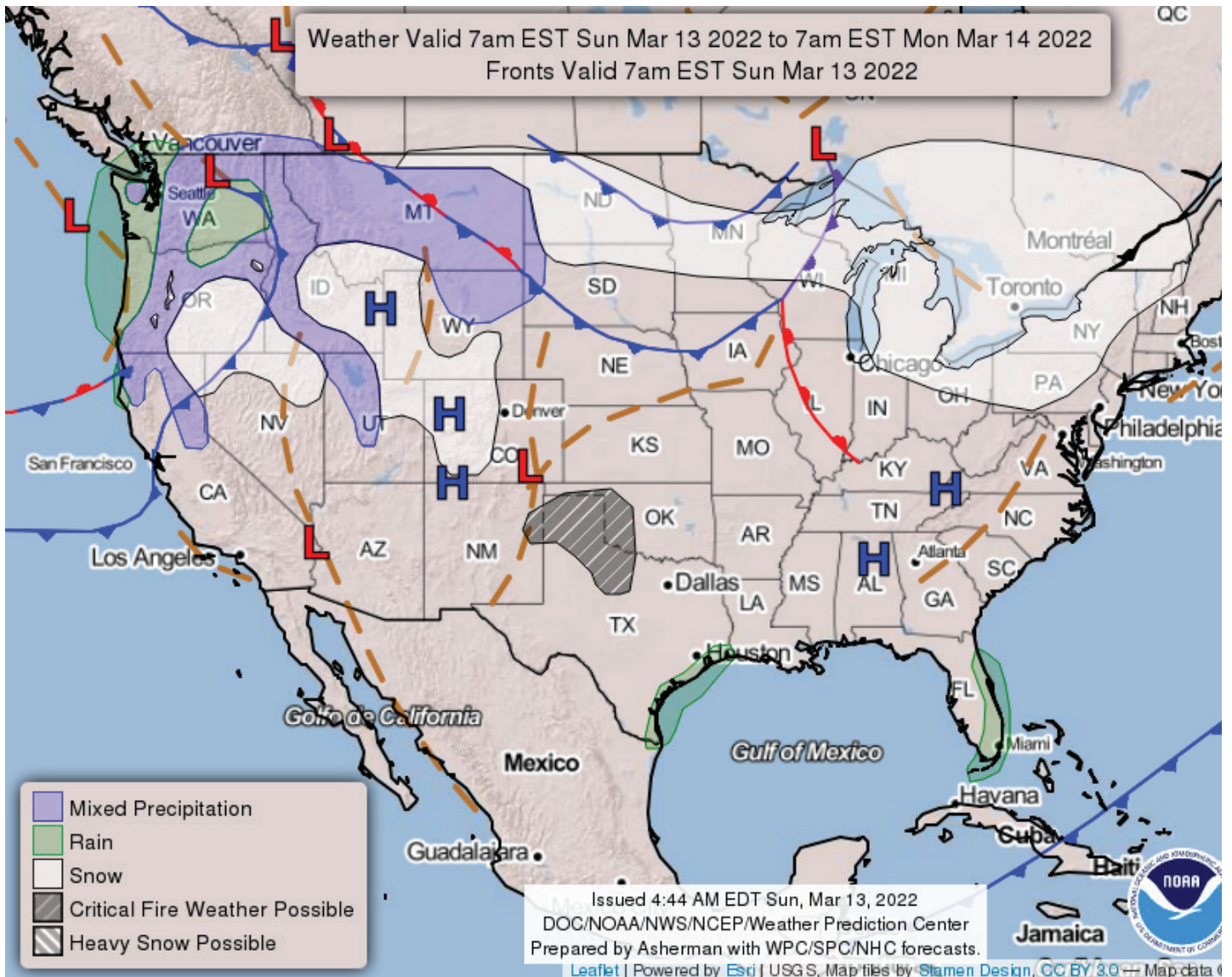
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 39 °F at 4:59 PM**  
**Low Temp: -3 °F at 2:21 AM**  
**Wind: 32 mph at 12:23 PM**  
**Precip: 0.00**

Day length: 11 hours, 50 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 71 in 2012  
Record Low: -28 in 1896  
Average High: 40°F  
Average Low: 18°F  
Average Precip in Mar.: 0.32  
Precip to date in Mar.: 0.00  
Average Precip to date: 1.49  
Precip Year to Date: 0.97  
Sunset Tonight: 7:37:02 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:44:38 AM



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## CONSTANT COMPLIANCE

"I give up!" he shouted as loudly as he could.

Turning from my computer to the door of my office, I saw a student who had been struggling to live a godly life. He was faithful in reading and studying his Bible, had a solid prayer life, and did well in his classes. I was puzzled by his comment.

"What are you giving up?" I asked.

"Well, I was reading Psalm 119:3 and I just gave up. That verse is beyond the reach of everyone. I can't imagine who he is referring to – 'They do no wrong but follow His ways.' I do my best to follow His way but I still do wrong from time to time. I must not be a Christian."

"Why don't you sit where I am sitting and type this paragraph from this commentary? I need it for a class I'm teaching," I asked.

He sat and began to type the long paragraph. It was not long before he finished, and we went to the "spell checker" to see how well he had done.

"Oops – there's a mistake," I said. "Oh my – there's another. I wonder," I asked, "if you made two mistakes does that mean you do not know how to spell?"

"Of course not," came the reply. "I know how to spell. I just made two small mistakes that I didn't mean to make. But, that doesn't mean I can't spell."

"Well," I said, "it's also possible for one who is a Christian to commit an incidental sin from time to time and still remain a Christian. Besides, our God will forgive."

Prayer: Our Father, help us to keep focused on You and to follow Your ways. But if we fail, please forgive us. Then, would You help us to forgive ourselves? In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: They do no wrong but follow His ways. Psalm 119:3



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## 2022 Community Events

- 01/30/2022 84th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)  
01/30/2022 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am – 1pm, Groton Community Center, 109 N 3rd St, Groton,  
04/07/2022 Groton CDE  
04/09/2022 Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)  
04/09/2022 Dueling Pianos Baseball Fundraiser at the Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm  
04/23/2022 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)  
04/24/2022 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)  
05/07/2022 Lions Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sales 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)  
St John's Lutheran Church VBS 9-11am  
05/30/2022 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)  
Transit Fundraiser at the Community Center 4-7pm (Thursday Mid-June)  
06/17/2022 SDSU Alumni & Friends Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 12pm Start  
06/18/2022 Groton Triathlon  
Ladies Invitational at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration 10am Start  
07/04/2022 Firecracker Couples Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration, 10am Start  
(4th of July)  
07/10/2022 Lions Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)  
Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar 11am-1pm at the Groton Legion  
Baseball Tourney  
07/21/2022 Pro Am Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course  
Ferney Open Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start  
How can we... "Love Groton"? United Methodist Church 9:30am  
Moonlight Swim at the Swimming Pool 9-11pm for 9th grade to age 20  
Golf Fundraiser Lunch at Olive Grove Golf Course 11a-1pm  
08/05/2022 Wine on Nine at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm  
08/12/2022 GHS Basketball Golf Tournament  
United Methodist Church VBS 5-8pm  
Groton Firemen Summer Splash Day 4-5pm GHS Parking Lot  
09/10/2022 Lions Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)  
6th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3:30-5pm  
09/11/2022 Couples Sunflower Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 12pm  
Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport  
10/14/2022 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am (2nd Friday in October)  
10/01/2022 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm  
10/31/2022 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)  
10/31/2022 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm  
11/12/2022 Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)  
11/24/2022 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)  
12/03/2022 Tour of Homes & Holiday Party at Olive Grove Golf Course  
Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-12pm

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## News from the Associated Press

### SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) \_ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Saturday:

Dakota Cash

05-06-15-31-33

(five, six, fifteen, thirty-one, thirty-three)

Estimated jackpot: \$42,000

Lotto America

04-19-22-43-48, Star Ball: 9, ASB: 4

(four, nineteen, twenty-two, forty-three, forty-eight; Star Ball: nine; ASB: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$8.65 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$22 million

Powerball

19-20-37-39-61, Powerball: 8, Power Play: 2

(nineteen, twenty, thirty-seven, thirty-nine, sixty-one; Powerball: eight; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$112 million

### Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL=

SDHSAA State Tournament=

#### Class AA

Seventh Place: Rapid City Central 48, Sioux Falls Lincoln 39

Fifth Place: Sioux Falls Washington 49, Harrisburg 37

Third Place: Sioux Falls Jefferson 46, Brandon Valley 42

Championship: Sioux Falls O'Gorman 49, Rapid City Stevens 42

#### Class A

Seventh Place: Sioux Falls Christian 62, Lakota Tech 58

Fifth Place: Dakota Valley 63, Red Cloud 43

Third Place: West Central 62, Wagner 54

Championship: St. Thomas More 52, Hamlin 30

#### Class B

Seventh Place: White River 54, Wall 52

Fifth Place: Aberdeen Roncalli 44, Aberdeen Christian 34

Third Place: Corsica/Stickney 75, Faith 50

Championship: Viborg-Hurley 58, DeSmet 53

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

### Russia-Ukraine war: Key things to know about the conflict

Russia has escalated attacks in western Ukraine, striking a military base where its troops had trained with NATO forces and bringing the conflict closer to Poland and other members of the bloc.

The Ukrainians said that over 30 cruise missiles were fired at the base located 30 kilometers (19 miles) northwest of regional hub Lviv, killing at least nine people and wounding 57. No further information on the

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casualties was immediately available.

A day earlier, a senior Russian diplomat said Moscow had warned the United States that it considered foreign shipments of military equipment to Ukraine "legitimate targets," and thus fair game for attack.

It was unclear immediately what the base was being used for. U.S. President Joe Biden has announced an additional aid to Ukraine of up to \$200 million for weapons, military services, education and training — atop \$6.5 billion of military aid already approved.

The strike comes a day after Russia bombarded cities across Ukraine, pounding Mariupol in the south, shelling the outskirts of the capital, Kyiv, and thwarting the efforts of people trying to flee the violence.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy also accused Russia of trying to create new "pseudo-republics" to break his country apart. He called on Ukraine's regions not to repeat the experience of two eastern areas where pro-Russian separatists began fighting Ukrainian forces in 2014.

As Russian units fanned out to prepare for an assault on Ukraine's capital of Kyiv, Zelenskyy said Russia would need to carpet-bomb the city and kill its residents to take it.

Now in its third week, the war has forced more than 2.5 million people to flee Ukraine.

Here are some key things to know about the conflict:

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN BESIEGED MARIUPOL?

Russian shelling of this Ukrainian port city of 430,000 has been relentless, and the mayor's office says more than 1,500 have died since the siege began. Russian forces hammered the city's downtown on Saturday as residents hid.

Repeated attempts to bring food to Mariupol and evacuate civilians have been canceled due to ongoing Russian fire. The unceasing shelling has even interrupted efforts to bury the dead in mass graves.

On Saturday, a Ukrainian official said Russian soldiers blocked a humanitarian convoy headed for Mariupol and stole from another. Doctors Without Borders said some residents are dying for lack of medication, with the city without drinking water or medicine for over a week now. The aid group says people are resorting to boiling water from the ground or extracted from heating pipes.

Ukraine's military said Russian forces captured Mariupol's eastern outskirts. Taking Mariupol and other ports on the Azov Sea would be strategic for Russian President Vladimir Putin, as it could allow Russia to establish a land corridor to Crimea, which it seized from Ukraine in 2014.

## WHAT HAS THE AP DIRECTLY WITNESSED OR CONFIRMED?

An Associated Press journalist witnessed tanks firing on a 9-story apartment block in Mariupol and was with a group of medical workers who came under sniper fire on Friday. Conditions at a local hospital there were deteriorating, electricity was reserved for operating tables and the hallways were lined with people with nowhere else to go.

Anastasiya Erashova wept and trembled as she held a sleeping child. Shelling had just killed her other child as well as her brother's child. "No one was able to save them," she said.

In Irpin, on the northwest outskirts of Kyiv, bodies laid in the open in a park and on a street Saturday. Residents said they had no information about what or where was safe as shooting echoed.

Some residents huddled in a pitch-dark basement for shelter, unsure where they could go and how they would get food if they left. Others were on the move, toting luggage across planks to get over a waterway where a bridge had been damaged. Armed men carried one older man on a stretcher.

Sergiy Stakhovsky, a recently retired professional tennis player from Ukraine, said he left his wife and three young children at home in Hungary to return to Ukraine and fight. He told The Associated Press that he would never have imagined to be in his home city with a gun in his hands.

## WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING ELSEWHERE ON THE GROUND IN UKRAINE?

In the northeast, Russian forces were blockading Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, even as efforts have been made to create new humanitarian corridors around it and other urban centers.

In multiple areas around Kyiv, heavy artillery fire sent residents scurrying for shelter as air raid sirens wailed. An ammunition depot outside the city was shelled overnight, sending billowing black smoke into the sky, according to video provided by emergency workers.

Britain's Defense Ministry said Russian ground forces that had been north of Kyiv for most of the war

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had edged to within 25 kilometers (15 miles) of the city center and spread out, likely to support an attempted encirclement.

Russian airstrikes also again hit the airport in Ivano-Frankivsk, another city in western Ukraine south of Lviv and 250 kilometers away from Ukraine's border with NATO members Slovakia and Hungary. The city's Mayor Ruslan Martsinkiv, who reported the strikes on the airport on Sunday, said Russia's goal was "to sow panic and fear." The airport has a military area.

## THE MOST VULNERABLE

Ukraine's chief prosecutor's office says at least 85 children have been killed since the invasion began on Feb. 24, and over 100 wounded. At least 2.5 million people have fled the country, according to the United Nations refugee agency.

About 60 child cancer patients from Ukraine boarded a medical train Saturday in Medyka, Poland, bound for hospitals in Warsaw and elsewhere. Medical workers carried some of the children in their arms, on stretchers and pushed them in wheelchairs at the train station near the Ukrainian border.

Dominik Daszuta, an anesthesiologist from Warsaw Hospital, said the train has transported 120 children with cancer so far.

Ukraine's defense ministry said Saturday that Russian forces shelled a convoy of refugees fleeing Peremoha, a village about 20 kilometers (12 miles) northeast of Kyiv, killing seven people including a child.

The seven were among hundreds of people who tried to flee Peremoha. An unknown number of people were wounded, the report added.

Moscow has said it would establish humanitarian corridors out of conflict zones, but Ukrainian officials have accused Russia of disrupting those paths and firing on civilians.

## Invasion jolts Russia's friends in tiny West-leaning Moldova

By HELENA ALVES Associated Press

COMRAT, Moldova (AP) — Across the border from war-engulfed Ukraine, tiny, impoverished Moldova — an ex-Soviet republic now looking eagerly Westward — has watched with trepidation as the Russian invasion unfolds.

In Gagauzia, a small, autonomous part of the country that's traditionally felt closer to the Kremlin than the West, people would normally back Russia, which they never wanted to leave when Moldova gained independence. But this time, most have trouble identifying with either side in the war.

Anna Koejoglo says she's deeply conflicted.

"I have sisters (in Ukraine), I have nephews there, my own son is in Kyiv," the 52-year-old said, quickly adding that her other, younger, son is studying in Russia.

"My heart is (broken), my insides are burning," she told The Associated Press.

Koejoglo is one of Moldova's 160,000 Gagauz, an Orthodox Christian people of Turkic origin who were settled there by the Russian Empire in the 19th century. They make up over 80% of Gagauzia's population, but only 5% of Moldova's 2.6 million people.

In the early 1990s, when landlocked Moldova voted to leave the Soviet Union, its Gagauz and Russian minorities wanted to stay. But unlike Russian-backed separatists in eastern Moldova who took up arms in 1992 to establish the unrecognized, breakaway Trans-Dniester area — which Russia essentially controls, maintaining some 1,500 troops there — the Gagauz in the south chose to compromise.

In 1994, they reached an agreement with the government in Moldova's capital, Chisinau, settling for a high degree of autonomy. Still, Gagauzia has maintained a strong relationship with Russia, where many Gagauz find education and job opportunities. Its population generally opposes the pro-Western shift embraced by ethnic Moldovans who account for 75% of the country's people.

For Peotr Sarangi, a 25-year-old Gagauz, the old ties still hold strong.

"(The) Gagauzian population supports Russia more, many remain pro-Russian," he said.

Although Moldova is neutral militarily and has no plans to join NATO, it formally applied for EU membership when the Russian invasion began. It's also taken in about a tenth of the more than 2.3 million Ukrainians

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who fled their country for safety.

Ilona Manolo, a 20-year-old Gagauz, has no qualms in laying the blame with Moscow. "I think that Russia is at fault. ... I'd rather support (Ukrainian) refugees," than Russia, she said.

There's similar sentiment elsewhere among Moldova's rich patchwork of ethnic minorities — even expressed by ethnic Russians who live outside the separatist region of Trans-Dniester.

One of the latter group, Nikola Sidorov, described the invasion of Ukraine as a "terrible thing." He said he believed Russian President Vladimir Putin "went too far (and) needs to calm down."

The 79-year-old added that the issue has become a subject of heated debates among his ethnic kin in Moldova's second largest city, Balti, where ethnic Russians make up some 15% of the population.

An ethnic Ukrainian who lives in Balti said her sympathies were divided.

"I'm very sorry for the people of Ukraine ... but I also feel sorry for Russians," said Iulia Popovic, 66. "I understand that it is all (happening because of) politics and that the situation is very difficult."

## US: Missiles fired from Iran hit near US consulate in Iraq

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — As many as 12 missiles struck near a sprawling U.S. consulate complex in the northern Iraqi city of Irbil on Sunday, in what a U.S. defense official and an Iraqi official said was a strike launched from neighboring Iran.

No injuries were reported in the attack, which marked a significant escalation between the U.S. and Iran. Hostility between the longtime foes has often played out in Iraq, whose government is allied with both countries.

The Iraqi official in Baghdad initially said several missiles had hit the U.S. consulate in Irbil and that it was the target of the attack. Later, Lawk Ghafari, the head of Kurdistan's foreign media office, said none of the missiles had struck the U.S. facility but that areas around the compound had been hit.

The U.S. defense official said it was still uncertain exactly how many missiles were fired and exactly where they landed. A second U.S. official said there was no damage at any U.S. government facility and that there was no indication the target was the consulate building, which is new and currently unoccupied.

Neither the Iraqi official nor the U.S. officials were authorized to discuss the event with the media and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Satellite broadcast channel Kurdistan24, which is located near the U.S. consulate, went on air from their studio shortly after the attack, showing shattered glass and debris on their studio floor.

The attack came several days after Iran said it would retaliate for an Israeli strike near Damascus, Syria, that killed two members of its Revolutionary Guard. On Sunday, Iran's state-run IRNA news agency quoted Iraqi media acknowledging the attacks in Irbil, without saying where they originated.

An Iranian spokesperson rejected the accusation that Iran was behind the Irbil attack. Mahmoud Abbaszadeh, spokesman for Iran's parliamentary committee on national security and foreign policy, said the allegation could not be confirmed so far.

"If Iran decides to take revenge ... it will be very, very serious, strong, obvious," he said in an interview with a local news website.

The missile barrage coincided with regional tensions. Negotiations in Vienna over Tehran's tattered nuclear deal hit a "pause" over Russian demands about sanctions targeting Moscow for its war on Ukraine. Meanwhile, Iran suspended its secret Baghdad-brokered talks aimed at defusing yearslong tensions with regional rival Saudi Arabia, after Saudi Arabia carried out its largest known mass execution in its modern history with over three dozens Shiites killed.

The Iraqi security officials said there were no casualties from the Irbil attack, which they said occurred after midnight and caused material damage in the area. They spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

One of the Iraqi officials said the ballistic missiles were fired from Iran, without elaborating. He said the projectiles were the Iranian-made Fateh-110, likely fired in retaliation for the two Revolutionary Guards

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killed in Syria.

Another U.S. official said in a statement that the U.S. condemned what it called an "outrageous attack against Iraqi sovereignty and display of violence."

U.S. forces stationed at Irbil's airport compound have come under fire from rocket and drone attacks in the past, with U.S. officials blaming Iran-backed groups.

The top U.S. commander for the Middle East has repeatedly warned about the increasing threats of attacks from Iran and Iranian-backed militias on troops and allies in Iraq and Syria.

In an interview with The Associated Press in December, Marine Gen. Frank McKenzie said that while U.S. forces in Iraq have shifted to a non-combat role, Iran and its proxies still want all American troops to leave the country. As a result, he said, that may trigger more attacks.'

The Biden administration decided last July to end the U.S. combat mission in Iraq by Dec. 31, and U.S. forces gradually moved to an advisory role last year. The troops will still provide air support and other military aid for Iraq's fight against the Islamic State.

The U.S. presence in Iraq has long been a flash point for Tehran, but tensions spiked after a January 2020 U.S. drone strike near the Baghdad airport killed a top Iranian general. In retaliation, Iran launched a barrage of missiles at al-Asad airbase, where U.S. troops were stationed. More than 100 service members suffered traumatic brain injuries in the blasts.

More recently, Iranian proxies are believed responsible for an assassination attempt late last year on Iraq's Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi.

And officials have said they believe Iran was behind the October drone attack at the military outpost in southern Syria where American troops are based. No U.S. personnel were killed or injured in the attack.

Al-Kadhimi tweeted: "The aggression which targeted the dear city of Irbil and spread fear amongst its inhabitants is an attack on the security of our people."

Masrour Barzani, prime minister of the semi-autonomous Kurdish-controlled region, condemned the attack. In a Facebook post, he said Irbil "will not bow to the cowards who carried out the terrorist attack."

## China's virus cases rise, access to Shanghai tightened

By JOE McDONALD Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — The number of new coronavirus cases in an outbreak in China's northeast tripled Sunday and authorities stepped up anti-disease controls by suspending bus service to Shanghai and ordering residents of another city to stay at home.

The case numbers in China's latest surge of infections are low compared with some other countries. But authorities are enforcing a "zero tolerance" strategy that temporarily shuts down cities to isolate every infected person despite a rising economic cost.

The government reported 1,938 new cases on China's mainland in the 24 hours through midnight Saturday, more than triple the previous day's total.

About three-quarters, or 1,412 cases, were in Jilin province in the northeast, where access to the industrial metropolis of Changchun was suspended on Friday and families were told to stay home after a spate of infections.

In Hong Kong, the territory's government reported 15,789 new cases, down by almost half from Saturday's total.

The territory's leader, Chief Executive Carrie Lam, warned Saturday the peak of the latest infection surge might not be past yet.

China, where the first coronavirus cases were detected in late 2019 in the central city of Wuhan, has reported a total of 4,636 deaths on the mainland since the pandemic started out of 115,466 confirmed cases.

On Sunday, 831 new cases were reported in Changchun, 571 in the nearby provincial capital city of Jilin, 150 in the eastern port city of Qingdao and 60 in Shenzhen, a business center adjacent to Hong Kong.

Authorities in Jilin are stepping up anti-disease measures after concluding their earlier response was inadequate, according to Zhang Yan, deputy director of the provincial Health Commission.

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"The emergency response mechanism in some areas is not sound enough," Zhang said at a news conference, according to a transcript released by the government.

In Shanghai, China's most populous city with 24 million people, the number of cases in the latest surge rose by 15 to 432.

The city government called on the public not to leave unless necessary. It said inter-city bus service would be suspended starting on Sunday.

"Those who come or return to Shanghai must have a negative nucleic acid test report within 48 hours before arrival," said a city health agency statement.

Also Sunday, some residents of Cangzhou, south of Beijing, were told to stay home after nine cases were reported, according to a government notice. It wasn't clear how many of its 7.3 million people were affected.

## Russia's war idles some European mills as energy costs soar

By COLLEEN BARRY AP Business Writer

MILAN (AP) — Italian paper mills that make everything from pizza boxes to furniture packaging ground to a halt as Russia's war in Ukraine has sent natural gas prices skyrocketing.

And it's not just paper. Italian steel mills, likewise, turned off electric furnaces last week. And fishermen, facing huge spikes in oil prices, stayed in port, mending nets instead of casting them.

Nowhere more than in Italy, the European Union's third-largest economy, is dependence on Russian energy taking a higher toll on industry. Some 40% of electricity is generated from natural gas that largely comes from Russia, compared with roughly one-quarter in Germany, another major importer and the continent's largest economy.

Over the past decade, Italy's dependence on Russian natural gas has surged from 27% to 43% — a fact lamented by Premier Mario Draghi. It will take at least two years to replace, his energy transition minister says.

Even before the war, Europe was facing a serious energy crunch that drove up costs for electricity, food, supplies and everything in between for people and businesses. Ever higher prices tied to fears that the conflict will lead to an energy cutoff are hitting the continent much harder than the U.S. because it imports so much of its oil and gas from Russia.

European leaders meeting Friday in Versailles outside Paris discussed ways of easing the pain. Draghi pushed to diversify gas sources, develop renewables and introduce a cap on natural gas prices. He said his foreign minister, who recently visited Algeria and Qatar, was working on new gas markets.

"We are talking about errors made over many years," said Francesco Zago, CEO of the Veneto-based paper and packaging manufacturer Pro-Gest. "We get too much gas from Russia. In school, they tell us we need to diversify the sources, otherwise there is a danger."

Natural gas prices were on the rise last year as reserves dwindled in Europe, but Zago said his company was able to stabilize prices and continue operating. That changed with the Russian invasion, when already high prices soared from 90 euros a megawatt hour to over 300 euros a megawatt hour.

"We found ourselves facing huge losses," Zago said.

To remain profitable, he said they would have had to nearly double prices from 680 euros a ton to 1,200 euros — not doable on the marketplace.

He suspended operations at six mills that recycle paper to supply one-third of all of Italy's packaging needs, and he is keeping a close eye on the energy market to see when production can relaunch. For now, there is still enough stock to keep open the company's sites that make cardboard boxes and other packaging, supplying industries from food to pharmaceuticals to furniture. But that could run out soon.

Likewise, Acciaierie Venete shut three of its steel mills for a few days last week as prices spiked to 10 times above normal. The makers of high-quality steel for automotive and agricultural machinery had enough stock to work on finished product, waiting for prices to dip so they could reopen.

"Never, ever has this happened that we had to shut down ovens," said Francesco Semino, an executive



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at the steel-making company based in the northeastern region of Veneto.

The urgency of Italy's energy situation is trickling down to consumers in the form of higher heating bills, and more recently, rising prices at the pump, with gasoline topping 2 euros a liter this week, or nearly \$6 a gallon.

Radio call-in shows are soliciting ideas about how to save energy, reviving memories of long-abandoned tricks like ember-fueled bedwarmers. Italy's state broadcaster has launched a campaign with lists of how to save energy, including turning off lights, lowering thermostats and regularly defrosting refrigerators, under the motto "M'illumino di meno," or "I light up less."

Truckers who say they can't afford higher gasoline prices are set to strike this coming week. Fishermen took the hit last week, deciding not to trawl the waters off Italy, with fishing boats along the entire peninsula moored in port.

At current prices, it costs 1,250 euros a day to run boats out of Fiumicino, leaving little room for profits after plying the sea for cod, sea bass, sea bream, octopus, squid and shrimp, said Pasquale Di Bartolomeo, who runs one of 22 boats out of the port near Rome.

Restaurants, he said, will make do with frozen seafood or farm-raised fish. He hopes the prices ease so he can return to work.

"The family needs to eat, there are expenses," Di Bartolomeo said.

Italy decreased its gas consumption from 2010 to 2014, thanks to the addition of subsidized wind and solar power, but reliance on natural gas pushed back up again in recent years as it took polluting coal power plants offline.

They have been substituted mostly by natural gas as renewables stalled, partly because of Italy's infamous bureaucracy that has kept many investors away, said Matteo Di Castelnuovo, an energy economist at Milan's Bocconi University.

"Italy clearly underestimated the problem of increasing its gas consumption the last few years, and with that, its dependence on Russian gas," he said.

The government has pledged to simplify red tape, and this week approved six new wind parks that will produce more than 400 megawatts of energy. Energy transition minister Roberto Cingolani has floated the idea of next-generation nuclear to a reluctant population.

"Nuclear fusion will not save us from Russian gas," Di Castelnuovo said, referring to a technology that is still decades away.

Italy's dependence on Russian gas can most quickly and effectively be reduced by simple conservation methods, he said, given the time and investments it takes to transition to other energy sources.

That can include such measures as improving home insulation, using appliances that consume less energy and lowering the thermostat.

"My heat, my thermostat, is actually paying for Putin's missiles and bombs," Di Castelnuovo said. "It is good enough for me to lower it by 2 degrees and wear a jumper instead."

## Ukraine's only woman rabbi among the many Jews fleeing war

By VANESSA GERA Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — On her first Shabbat away from the fighting in Ukraine, Rabbi Julia Gris twice led services to welcome the Jewish holy day.

A week earlier, Ukraine's only woman rabbi had been fleeing the war that scattered her Odesa congregation from Moldova to Romania and Israel. Some stayed behind, braving the Russian shelling.

She first led an online service for those congregants scattered abroad. Then, she officiated one in person for a small group in Poland, taken in by a Christian couple near Warsaw.

Gris lit sabbath candles that she had carried from Ukraine, while her 19-year-old daughter Izolda played the guitar and sang, just as she had during services back home in the her Reform community, Shirat ha-Yam.

"There were so many stories, so much crying and so much pain," Gris said. "For those who are here, and even more so for those still in Ukraine."

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Gris and her daughter found safety after a 30 kilometer (20 mile) walk lugging suitcases and their two cats, reaching the border with Poland where they negotiated a 40-hour wait without food, water or toilets.

The mother and daughter are part of the exodus from Ukraine that has become the fastest-growing humanitarian crisis in Europe since World War II.

With some 200,000 Jews in Ukraine, one of the world's largest Jewish communities, it is inevitable that many Jewish people are also among those fleeing.

International Jewish organizations have mobilized to help, working with local Jewish communities in Poland, Romania, Moldova and elsewhere to organize food, shelter, medical care and other assistance.

The reality that so many Jews have joined the mass civilian exit from Ukraine exposes the deceitfulness of Russian claims that it's there to "denazify" Ukraine. In truth, Ukraine has steadily grown into a pluralistic society, led by a Jewish president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

"Why is a Russian regime that claims to be "denazifying" Ukraine brutalizing a country led by a democratically elected and proud Jew?" said David Harris, the CEO of the American Jewish Committee (AJC), who visited Poland this week to assess the needs of refugees. "Why is Moscow adopting Nazi-like tactics of the 1930s — fake history, phony grievances, blitzkrieg, attacks on civilians and civilian institutions, and murder of children?"

Gris said she always felt very much at home in Ukraine, a Russian-born Jew who had never felt discrimination.

Now Russia's invasion has plunged the country into an acute humanitarian crisis affecting Jews and non-Jews alike. Jewish organizations say they are there to help all refugees irrespective of faith. But for some Jews, the organizations' involvement is essential to helping them emigrate to Israel or stay true to their faith's observances, for instance by getting kosher food.

Aside from the AJC there are others helping. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), a New York-based Jewish humanitarian organization, has so far evacuated thousands of Jews to Moldova and helped several thousand more after they reached Poland and other countries.

Poland's chief rabbi, Michael Schudrich, said some of the Jewish refugees plan to go to Israel while others intend to join family in countries like Germany or Britain. Others, he said, "have to figure out what to do with their lives — do they want to settle in Poland or elsewhere?"

The dark historical irony isn't lost on Schudrich. Eight decades ago, Jews desperately tried to flee German-occupied Poland and other eastern European countries under Nazi German rule. Six million of them were exterminated.

"The struggles that people had, the splitting up of families, saying goodbye and never knowing if you would see each other again, and most times you didn't," Schudrich said. "And to think now that Jews and others are not fleeing out of Poland but into Poland, and we, the small Jewish community of Poland, can now welcome them."

Gris is awaiting a sponsorship letter in hopes of going to the U.K. She was ordained a rabbi at the Leo Baeck College in London and has friends and colleagues there who are supporting her.

Wearing a sequined kippa and a ribbon pinned to her chest in the blue and yellow of Ukraine's flag, Gris said that she never experienced anti-Semitism in her 22 years of living in Ukraine.

It was the fact that she was Russian that made her nervous after Russian troops attacked Ukraine on Feb. 24. Friends advised her that she would be better off leaving. Ukrainian authorities froze her bank account — a step taken against Russian and Belarusian citizens. At the border, she said Ukrainian guards asked, "how do we know you're not a spy?"

Gris said she could understand that reaction from a nation under attack, but it still hurt because "my heart and soul is with Ukraine."

Gris, 45, was born in Bryansk, Russia, before the breakup of the Soviet Union. She embarked on her spiritual journey as a teenager at a time of a broader revival of Jewish life in eastern Europe. Judaism, like other religions, had been suppressed by the the officially atheistic ideology of the communist era.

In her youth she was told by a rabbi that she was so wise that she could even aspire to being a rabbi's wife. But she said to herself: "No, I will be a rabbi myself."

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Gris doesn't know where the war will lead but fears that Jewish life will never be the same there.

On Saturday, her second Shabbat in safety, she was joined in Warsaw by a member of her Odesa congregation — two thirds of whom have fled now — a reunion that was comforting to them both.

She denounced Russian propaganda, and recounted how her own mother, who is still in Russia, didn't believe that Russia attacked Ukraine. "I had to tell her yes, I can hear the sirens and the bombs myself!"

Now she feels her life in Odesa may be lost forever. "I don't know when I can go back," Gris said fighting back tears. "Or if I will go back."

## Police: Man stabs 2 workers at New York's MoMA and flees

By MARINA VILLENUEVE and BRYAN GALLION Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A man stabbed two employees multiple times inside the Museum of Modern Art in New York on Saturday afternoon, leaping over a reception desk to attack them after he was denied entrance for previous incidents of disorderly conduct, authorities said.

Police said the victims, a 24-year-old man and a 24-year-old woman, were in stable condition at Bellevue Hospital later Saturday. Their names weren't immediately released. People posted on social media that museumgoers ran for the exits in confusion and chaos after the stabbing.

John Miller, NYPD deputy commissioner of intelligence and counterterrorism, said the man's membership had been revoked for two separate incidents of disorderly behavior at the museum in recent days.

A letter informing the suspect of his expired membership had been sent out Friday, but he came to the museum Saturday saying he intended to see a film there, Miller said.

He then became upset and stabbed the museum employees in the back, collar bone and the back of neck, Miller said. They were rushed within minutes to the hospital.

Miller said video showed which way the suspect went after leaving the museum. Police shared photos of the attacker late Saturday night, asking for the public's help finding him.

Miller did not identify the man by name but described him as a white male wearing a black jacket, blue surgical mask, a colorfully patterned shirt and hood. He said the man was a "regular" at the museum, and that the building had adequate security.

The department has no record of a previous arrest for the man.

The museum didn't immediately respond to an emailed request for comment on the incident, but said on social media that it would be closed to the public Sunday.

The midtown Manhattan museum evacuated its patrons Saturday afternoon. Yuichi Shimada, a museumgoer present at the time of the attack, tweeted he was on the second floor when a couple suddenly came running toward him, and he heard security guards' radios throughout the museum loudly announcing something at the same time.

"It was chaotic, partly because it was snowing, with a group of young women in a panic and crying," Shimada said. "Not being good with claustrophobia myself, I headed for the exit early."

Shimada was diverted to the side on his way out as a stretcher was hurriedly brought in. Police vehicles and ambulances, emergency lights flashing, thronged outside the museum as dozens of patrons hurried away.

Mayor Eric Adams tweeted Saturday evening he'd been briefed on the attack and said the victims' injuries were not life-threatening.

"We're grateful for the quick work of our first responders," Adams, a former New York City police captain, said.

MoMA, founded in 1929, is one of New York City's top tourist attractions, and drew more than 700,000 visitors in 2020. Its collection of modern art includes "The Starry Night" by Vincent Van Gogh and works by Henri Matisse and Paul Gauguin.

**In America, a few days in March 2020 echo two years later**

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By TED ANTHONY AP National Writer

The conversations went like this: It will be just a few days. It can be kept at bay. There will be some inconvenience, sure, but the world will merely be paused — just a short break, out of an abundance of caution, and certainly not any kind of major grinding to a halt. Certainly not for two years.

Certainly not for hundreds of thousands of Americans who were among us at that moment in mid-March 2020 — who lived through the beginning, watched it, worried about it (or didn't), and who, plain and simple, aren't here anymore.

"Just a temporary moment of time," the man who was then president of the United States insisted. Just a few days. Just a few weeks. Just a few months. Just a few years.

The fact is that on March 12, 2020, no one really knew how it would play out. How could they?

Flattening the curve — such a novel term then, such a frozen moment of a phrase today — seemed genuinely possible two years ago this weekend, when Major League Baseball's spring training games trickled to an end with their season suddenly postponed, when universities told students to stay away, when Congress — astonishingly — began to talk about whether it would be able to work from home.

"We would recommend that there not be large crowds," the nation's top infectious disease researcher told Congress two years ago Friday, presaging two years of arguments over that exact statement. His name was Anthony Fauci, and he would become one of Pandemic America's most polarizing figures, caught between provable science and charges of alarmism and incompetence and malevolence, even occasionally from the former president himself.

And for a while, there weren't large crowds. Except when there were.

For weeks in those early days, Americans in many corners of the republic all but shut down. Faces disappeared as masks went up against the invisible adversary — if you could actually obtain them. Hand sanitizer was squirted so liberally that some distilleries pivoted from whiskey to alcohol antiseptics. People discussed ventilator shortages over family meals. Zoom became, for the nation, a household word; suddenly your colleagues were arrayed on a screen in front of you like personalized, workaday "Brady Bunch" opening credits.

All these things were new once.

In the weeks that followed, as the scope of things revealed itself gradually, there were questions we knew to ask, and questions we didn't.

The ones we knew to ask: How does it spread, and how easily? Can we keep it out? Can I even go outside safely? Should I wash my groceries? Will there be a vaccine, and if so, how quickly?

The ones we didn't: How to combat the extreme mountains of mis- and disinformation surrounding the virus and the vaccines that emerged from the scientific community astonishingly quickly? How to manage the anger, and the national division, that poured from the political arena into the protracted virus discussion and burned in conversational trash fires across the land? How to navigate the emotional rubble of an entire generation of kids whose lives and educations would be upended?

Those questions are the ones that, right now, don't seem outdated. They seem fresh and immediate, and they remain largely unanswered today — a time when it can be difficult to summon memories of the beginning of this thing because of all that's happened since, and all that's still happening.

The American memory is a strange beast. The nation, which is younger than most societies on the planet, loves to trumpet its storyline of action but has long had trouble reckoning with or even acknowledging its history — whether it be racial or military, gender or economic. Pandemic history, even in the two years since those days in March 2020, is hardly an exception.

Do you remember those moments when people were talking about working together, when daily life was thrown off its axis enough that Americans were, for a time, a bit gentler with each other? When the word "COVID" was barely used yet, and everyone was just talking about the coronavirus?

"If we avoid each other and listen to the scientists, maybe in a few weeks it will be better," Koloud "Kay" Tarapolsi of Redmond, Washington, told The Associated Press on March 11, 2020. Exactly two years later, this week, she said of those early days: "I just wish we would have taken it more seriously."

And now: More than 6 million souls lost across the world. In the United States, nearly a million dead —

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and the polarization that was already poking at the fabric of American society redeployed into pandemic anger, setting masked neighbor against unmasked one, creating a fertile petri dish to grow as-yet undiscovered brands of mistrust and misconception.

The thing about history is this: Sometimes we talk about “now” as if it were the culmination of all that came before — the actual destination of everything. What we often fail to consider is that “now” is just another junction along the track, another waystation en route to the next thing and the next and the next.

That goes for the “now” of March 2020, yes. But it also applies to the “now” of March 2022 as well. Looking back on the uniquely strange and bedeviling year of 2020 is useful — you try to learn from what came before — but it also affords the chance to think about something else: Two years later, how will we look at right now? How will we take the measure of what we are doing two years after it all began? Is this thing anywhere near done? And what happens when it is?

“Who are we after this? Who are we after dealing with this situation that we’ve never dealt with before?” Hilary Fussell Sisco, a professor at Quinnipiac University who studies how people communicate in troubled moments, said precisely two years ago Saturday. “You find out who you are when a crisis hits.”

Have we?

## Russia-Ukraine war: Key things to know about the conflict

A relentless assault on the Ukrainian port city of Mariupol continued Saturday, as Russian forces shelled the city’s downtown, including an area around a mosque that was sheltering more than 80 people — some children.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said Moscow has warned the United States that Moscow could attack convoys carrying military equipment to Ukraine, calling them “legitimate targets.” U.S. President Joe Biden announced additional aid to Ukraine of up to \$200 million for weapons, military services, education and training.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Saturday accused Russia of trying to create new “pseudo-republics” to break his country apart. He called on Ukraine’s regions not to repeat the experience of two eastern regions where pro-Russian separatists began fighting Ukrainian forces in 2014.

Russian units fanned out to prepare for an assault on Ukraine’s capital of Kyiv. Zelenskyy said Russia would need to carpet-bomb Kyiv and kill its residents to take the city.

Now in its third week, the war has forced more than 2.5 million people to flee Ukraine.

Here are some key things to know about the conflict:

### WHAT’S HAPPENING IN BESIEGED MARIUPOL?

Russian shelling of this Ukrainian port city of 430,000 has been relentless, and the mayor’s office says more than 1,500 have died since the siege began. Russian forces hammered the city’s downtown on Saturday as residents hid.

The Ukrainian government said a mosque where people sought shelter in the city’s center was shelled. However, an unverified Instagram post by a man claiming to be the mosque association’s president said the mosque itself wasn’t hit, but a bomb fell about 750 yards (700 meters) away. The Ukrainian Embassy in Turkey said 86 Turkish nationals, including 34 children, were among those who had sought safety in the mosque.

Repeated attempts to bring food to Mariupol and evacuate civilians have been canceled due to ongoing Russian fire. The unceasing shelling has even interrupted efforts to bury the dead in mass graves.

On Saturday, a Ukrainian official said Russian soldiers blocked a humanitarian convoy headed for Mariupol and stole from another. Doctors Without Borders said some residents are dying for lack of medication, with the city without drinking water or medicine for over a week now. The aid group says people are resorting to boiling water from the ground or extracted from heating pipes.

Ukraine’s military said Russian forces captured Mariupol’s eastern outskirts. Taking Mariupol and other ports on the Azov Sea would be strategic for Russian President Vladimir Putin, as it could allow Russia to establish a land corridor to Crimea, which it seized from Ukraine in 2014.

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## WHAT HAS THE AP DIRECTLY WITNESSED OR CONFIRMED?

An Associated Press journalist witnessed tanks firing on a 9-story apartment block in Mariupol and was with a group of medical workers who came under sniper fire on Friday. Conditions at a local hospital there were deteriorating, electricity was reserved for operating tables and the hallways were lined with people with nowhere else to go.

Anastasiya Erashova wept and trembled as she held a sleeping child. Shelling had just killed her other child as well as her brother's child. "No one was able to save them," she said.

In Irpin, on the northwest outskirts of Kyiv, bodies laid in the open in a park and on a street Saturday. Serhy Protsenko walked his neighborhood as explosions sounded.

"When I woke up in the morning, everything was covered in smoke, everything was dark. We don't know who is shooting and where," he said. "We don't have any radio or information."

Some residents huddled in a pitch-dark basement for shelter, unsure where they could go and how they would get food if they left. Others were on the move, toting luggage across planks to get over a waterway where a bridge had been damaged. Armed men carried one older man on a stretcher.

Sergiy Stakhovsky, a recently retired professional tennis player from Ukraine, has left his wife and three young children at home in Hungary and is back in Ukraine, serving with the territorial defense, a branch of the Ukraine armed forces.

Stakhovsky said in a video interview with The Associated Press that he would never have imagined he would be in his home city with a gun in his hands.

"The first couple of days (it's) surreal, you don't believe it is actually happening," he said. "The next thing you know you know you get used to it and you're just trying to find a way of helping your country to actually survive."

He earned more than \$5 million in prize money in tennis and upset Roger Federer at Wimbledon in 2013. Stakhovsky's last match came in Australian Open qualifying in January.

## WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING ON THE GROUND IN UKRAINE?

In the northeast, Russian forces were blockading Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, even as efforts have been made to create new humanitarian corridors around it and other urban centers.

Ukraine's emergency services reported that the bodies of five people were pulled from an apartment building that was struck by shelling in Kharkiv, including two women, a man and two children.

In multiple areas around Kyiv, heavy artillery fire sent residents scurrying for shelter as air raid sirens wailed. An ammunition depot outside the city was shelled overnight, sending billowing black smoke into the sky, according to video provided by emergency workers.

Britain's Defense Ministry said Russian ground forces that had been north of Kyiv for most of the war had edged to within 25 kilometers (15 miles) of the city center and spread out, likely to support an attempted encirclement.

## THE MOST VULNERABLE

Ukraine's chief prosecutor's office says at least 79 children have been killed since the invasion began on Feb. 24. At least 2.5 million people have fled the country, according to the United Nations refugee agency.

About 60 child cancer patients from Ukraine boarded a medical train Saturday in Medyka, Poland, bound for hospitals in Warsaw and elsewhere. Medical workers carried some of the children in their arms, on stretchers and pushed them in wheelchairs at the train station near the Ukrainian border.

Dominik Daszuta, an anesthesiologist from Warsaw Hospital, said the train has transported 120 children with cancer so far.

Ukraine's defense ministry said Saturday that Russian forces shelled a convoy of refugees fleeing Peremoha, a village about 20 kilometers (12 miles) northeast of Kyiv, killing seven people including a child.

The seven were among hundreds of people who tried to flee Peremoha. An unknown number of people were wounded, the report added.

Moscow has said it would establish humanitarian corridors out of conflict zones, but Ukrainian officials have accused Russia of disrupting those paths and firing on civilians.

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Elena Yurchuk, a nurse from the northern city of Chernihiv, was in a Romanian train station Saturday with her teenage son, Nikita, doubting that their home was still standing. Her hometown has been heavily shelled.

"We have nowhere to go back to. Nothing left," said Yurchuk, 44, who hopes to find work in Germany. WHAT ARE PUTIN, ZELENSKY AND OTHER WORLD LEADERS SAYING?

Putin participated in a 90-minute phone call Saturday with French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. Macron's office said the call was "very frank and also difficult."

The Kremlin said Putin laid out his demands for ending the war, including Ukraine's demilitarization. Moscow has also demanded that Ukraine drop its bid to join NATO, adopt a neutral status and acknowledge Russian sovereignty over Crimea, among other things. Putin also threatened to seize the assets of U.S. and Western companies that have announced plans to leave Russia.

Zelenskyy again deplored NATO's refusal to declare a no-fly zone over Ukraine. He said Ukraine has sought ways to procure air defense assets, though he didn't elaborate.

Zelenskyy also told Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett that he would be open to meeting Putin in Jerusalem to discuss an end to the war, but that first there would have to be a cease-fire. Putin has ignored Zelenskyy's previous offers to talk.

## Late winter storm blasts South, Northeast with snow and wind

By The Associated Press undefined

A late winter storm blasted the northeastern United States on Saturday with high winds and snow that could pile up to a foot high, sending temperatures plummeting and making travel hazardous after first taking aim at the Deep South.

The National Weather Service said 7 to 12 inches (18 to 30 centimeters) could be expected in northern areas of Pennsylvania and New York with winds gusting as high as 45 mph (72 kph). Philadelphia residents, while expecting only a few inches of snow, were warned that blizzard-like conditions were possible at one point, and later a flash freeze was possible with wet surfaces rapidly becoming icy due to plummeting temperatures.

Gale warnings were in effect in coastal New Jersey and Delaware areas, with gusts of 40 to 50 mph (65 kph to 95 kph) possible and forecasters warning of tree damage and resulting power outages as well as rough boating conditions. A wind advisory was in effect for other areas.

Meteorologist Andrew Orrison of the weather service office in College Park, Maryland, said moderate to heavy snow had fallen over "a rather large area" of the eastern United States, but the storm was moving quickly to the northeast.

Parts of the Tennessee Valley and central Appalachia had already seen as much as 8 to 12 inches (20 to 30 centimeters) of snow, and areas of Pennsylvania, New York and northern New England were expected to receive similar amounts before the storm pulled away early Sunday, he said. By Saturday afternoon, 10 inches (25 centimeters) of snow or more had been reported in parts of New York and northern Pennsylvania and as much as 6 inches (15 centimeters) in eastern Pennsylvania.

Intensifying low pressure accompanying the storm had been generating high winds, and plunging temperatures would freeze any moisture on roadways, making for hazardous travel in icy conditions, he said.

State police said Saturday afternoon that a crash involving 73 vehicles on a central Pennsylvania highway had resulted in multiple injuries, but no life-threatening injuries were immediately reported. Trooper Megan Ammerman said the crash was reported shortly after 2 p.m. Saturday on PA 581 in Cumberland County.

The cause of the crash and other details weren't immediately available. WCAU-TV reported that temperatures in the area ranged from the lower to mid-20s, well below freezing, with winds gusting to 30 to 40 mph (50-60 kph) resulting in reduced visibility.

Slick roads were also blamed for crashes as rain turned to snow and began to pile up in parts of Maine, northern New Hampshire and Vermont. New Hampshire State Police responded to multiple crashes involving cars sliding off snowy roads, prompting warnings to slow down. In Vermont, where as much as

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14 inches (35 centimeters) of snow was expected, officials warned that potential blizzard conditions and blowing snow could make travel "difficult to impossible."

PPL reported more than 10,750 customers without power in eastern and central Pennsylvania by mid-afternoon Saturday but that had dropped to 5,000 hours later. FirstEnergy reported 10,350 customer outages in Pennsylvania and New York but that had been reduced to 7,650 later in the day.

The system also brought snow and rain to several Southern states, including Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi, on Friday and Saturday. Parts of northern Mississippi and portions of the Mississippi Delta also saw between 2 and 3.5 inches (5 to 9 centimeters) of snow.

Several inches of snow fell in eastern Tennessee, delaying by at least a day the season opening of Dollywood in Pigeon Forge. In Knoxville, the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade was canceled and several inches of snow in the middle of the state contributed to multiple crashes on interstate highways.

A number of St. Patrick's Day parades were postponed elsewhere, including events scheduled in Albany, New York, and Erie and Scranton, Pennsylvania, as well as suburban Philadelphia. The parade scheduled Sunday in the city of Philadelphia was still scheduled to go on. The holiday falls on Thursday this year.

## Uber charging customers new fuel fee for rides, delivery

The Associated Press undefined

Citing record-high prices for gasoline, Uber is charging customers a new fuel fee to help offset costs for ride-hail and delivery drivers.

The temporary surcharge will be either 45 cents or 55 cents for each Uber trip and either 35 cents or 45 cents for each Uber Eats order, depending on location, the company announced Friday.

It will take effect on Wednesday. All the money will go directly to drivers, San Francisco-based Uber said. The surcharge will be in effect for at least 60 days, after which Uber said it will assess the situation.

The surcharges are based on the average trip distance and the increase in gas prices in each state, Uber said.

As Russia's war in Ukraine has intensified, U.S. gas prices have reached record levels. The average price of gasoline in the U.S. hit a record \$4.17 a gallon this week as President Joe Biden banned imports of Russian oil, gas and coal in retaliation for the invasion of Ukraine.

The amount of U.S. gasoline in storage fell last week as demand starts to increase with summer approaching. The increase in gas demand and the lower trend in inventories also are contributing to rising prices at the pump.

A spokesperson for Uber rival Lyft didn't immediately respond to a question Saturday on whether it was considering a similar move.

## Russian footholds in Mideast, Africa raise threat to NATO

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER and ZEINA KARAM Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine dominates world attention. But with less global scrutiny, Putin is also busy advancing Russia's presence in the Middle East and Africa -- an expansion that military and civilian leaders view as another, if less immediate, threat to security in the West.

Putin's strategy in the Mideast and Africa has been simple, and successful: He seeks out security alliances with autocrats, coup leaders, and others who have been spurned or neglected by the U.S. and Europe, either because of their bloody abuses or because of competing Western strategic interests.

— In Syria, Russia's defense minister last month showed off nuclear-capable bombers and hypersonic missiles over the Mediterranean, part of a security partnership that now has the Kremlin threatening to send Syrian fighters to Ukraine.

— In Sudan, a leader of a junta that's seized power in that East African country has a new economic alliance with the Kremlin, reviving Russia's dreams of a naval base on the Red Sea.

— In Mali, the government is the latest of more than a dozen resource-rich African nations to forge security alliances with Kremlin-allied mercenaries, according to U.S. officials.



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Especially in the last five or six years, "what you've seen is a Russia that is much more expeditionary and casting its military power further and wider afield," retired U.S. Gen. Philip M. Breedlove told The Associated Press.

"Russia is trying to show itself as a great power, as at the seat in world affairs, as driving international situations," said Breedlove, the top NATO commander from 2013 through 2016, and now a distinguished chair at the Middle East Institute think tank in Washington.

But with Putin's hands already full battling the fierce resistance from a much weaker Ukrainian military, experts view his expansionist goals in the Middle East and Africa as a potential long-term threat, not a present danger to Europe or the NATO alliance.

"It's threatening NATO from below," Kristina Kausch, a European security expert at the German Marshall Fund think-tank, said of the leverage Russia is gaining. "The Russians have felt encircled by NATO – and now they want to encircle NATO," she said.

To achieve its strategic aims, Russia provides conventional military or Kremlin-allied mercenaries to protect the regimes of often outcast leaders. In return, these leaders pay back Russia in several ways: cash or natural resources, influence in their affairs, and staging grounds for Russian fighters.

These alliances help advance Putin's ambitions of returning Russia's influence to its old Cold War boundaries.

Russia's new security partnerships also aid it diplomatically. When the U.N. General Assembly condemned Putin's Ukraine invasion this month, Syria joined Russia in voting against, and many of the African governments that have signed security deals with Russian mercenaries abstained.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Friday that Russia would bring recruits from Syria to fight in Ukraine. The threat was seen primarily as an intimidation tactic and U.S. officials say there's been no sign of Syrian recruits in Ukraine. Some security experts say Russian mercenaries are using Mali as a staging ground for deployment to Ukraine, but U.S. officials have not confirmed these reports.

Regardless of how imminent the threat is, U.S. and European leaders are paying increasing attention to Putin's moves in the Middle East and Africa — and Russia's growing alliance with China — as it formulates plans to protect the West from future aggression.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said in mid-February that the West could no longer ignore the competition for influence across Africa, where China spends billions on infrastructure projects to secure mineral rights, and Russia provides security through Kremlin-allied mercenaries.

"We see and realize that if we withdraw from this competition as liberal democracies, then others are going to fill these gaps," Baerbock said as Western diplomats huddled on the Ukraine crisis, in the last days before Russia's invasion.

Perhaps the boldest example of Russia flexing its global reach was when it sent defense minister Sergei Shoigu last month to Damascus to oversee Russia's largest military drills in the Mediterranean since the Cold War, just as Russia's military made final preparations for its assault on Ukraine.

The drills, involving 15 warships and about 30 aircraft, appeared choreographed to showcase the Russian military's capability to threaten the U.S. carrier strike group in the Mediterranean.

Russia's Hmeimeem air base on Syria's Mediterranean coast has served as its main outpost for launching attacks in Syria since September 2015. Russia's attacks in Syria, which leveled ancient cities and sent millions of refugees to Europe, allowed President Bashar al-Assad's brutal government to reclaim control over most of the country after a devastating civil war.

"Hmeimeem base is now an integral part of Russia's defense strategy not just in the Middle East but all the world," said Ibrahim Hamidi, a Syrian journalist and senior diplomatic editor for Syrian affairs at the London-based Asharq al-Awsat newspaper.

In Africa, too, Russia is open to working with leaders known for anti-democratic actions and abuses of human rights.

On the eve of Russia's invasion with Ukraine, Kremlin officials met in Moscow with an officer of a military junta that seized power in Sudan.

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Isolated by the West, Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagolo warmly responded to Russia's overture of a new economic-focused alliance. Upon returning home, Gen. Dagolo announced that Sudan would be open to allowing Russia to build its long hoped-for naval base at Port Sudan on the Red Sea.

It's far from certain that Russia would be able to take advantage anytime soon. The Ukraine invasion is straining its military and financial resources and showing Russia's military weaknesses, and international sanctions are crippling its economy.

But longer-term, a Red Sea port could help give it a greater role in the Mediterranean and Black Sea, increase Russian access in the Suez Canal and other high-traffic shipping lanes, and allow Russia to project force in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean.

"They certainly could create enough havoc to cause problems," said Breedlove, the former NATO commander.

Russia's expanding alliances aren't just about its conventional military.

From 2015 to 2021, Russian mercenary security outfits increased their presence around the world seven-fold, with operations in 27 countries as of last year, according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies. The most prominent is the Wagner Group, which the U.S. and EU consider to be a surrogate of the Russian military, but which the Kremlin denies even exists.

From Libya to Madagascar, security contracts granted to Wagner Group and others give Russia access to mineral resources, staging grounds for deployments and substantial footholds challenging Western nations' influence there.

In Mali, the U.S. and Europe expressed alarm in December at reports that the Wagner Group had signed a \$10 million-a-month security contract with that government. Experts say Wagner took advantage of local unhappiness over the failures of a years-long French-led deployment in the sub-Saharan targeting extremist factions.

Mali denied any such deployment, but some in Mali saw the arrival of Russians as a slam to Mali's colonial ruler France, which had struggled to protect them against armed extremists. They hope for better results from any Russian fighters arriving in the sub-Saharan. "Long live Russia!" cried one man in a crowd cheering the sight of a Russian delegation in the capital in January. "Long live the people of Mali!"

## Saudi Arabia puts 81 to death in its largest mass execution

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Saudi Arabia on Saturday executed 81 people convicted of crimes ranging from killings to belonging to militant groups, the largest known mass execution carried out in the kingdom in its modern history.

The number of executed surpassed even the toll of a January 1980 mass execution for the 63 militants convicted of seizing the Grand Mosque in Mecca in 1979, the worst-ever militant attack to target the kingdom and Islam's holiest site.

It wasn't clear why the kingdom choose Saturday for the executions, though they came as much of the world's attention remained focused on Russia's war on Ukraine — and as the U.S. hopes to lower record-high gasoline prices as energy prices spike worldwide. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson reportedly plans a trip to Saudi Arabia next week over oil prices as well.

The number of death penalty cases being carried out in Saudi Arabia had dropped during the coronavirus pandemic, though the kingdom continued to behead convicts under King Salman and his assertive son, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

The state-run Saudi Press Agency announced Saturday's executions, saying they included those "convicted of various crimes, including the murdering of innocent men, women and children."

The kingdom also said some of those executed were members of al-Qaida, the Islamic State group and also backers of Yemen's Houthi rebels. A Saudi-led coalition has been battling the Iran-backed Houthis since 2015 in neighboring Yemen in an effort to restore the internationally recognized government to power.

Those executed included 73 Saudis, seven Yemenis and one Syrian. The report did not say where the

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executions took place.

"The accused were provided with the right to an attorney and were guaranteed their full rights under Saudi law during the judicial process, which found them guilty of committing multiple heinous crimes that left a large number of civilians and law enforcement officers dead," the Saudi Press Agency said.

"The kingdom will continue to take a strict and unwavering stance against terrorism and extremist ideologies that threaten the stability of the entire world," the report added. It did not say how the prisoners were executed, though death-row inmates typically are beheaded in Saudi Arabia.

An announcement by Saudi state television described those executed as having "followed the footsteps of Satan" in carrying out their crimes.

The executions drew immediate international criticism.

"The world should know by now that when Mohammed bin Salman promises reform, bloodshed is bound to follow," said Soraya Bauwens, the deputy director of Reprieve, a London-based advocacy group.

Ali Adubusi, the director of the European Saudi Organisation for Human Rights, alleged that some of those executed had been tortured and faced trials "carried out in secret."

"These executions are the opposite of justice," he said.

The kingdom's last mass execution came in January 2016, when the kingdom executed 47 people, including a prominent opposition Shiite cleric who had rallied demonstrations in the kingdom.

In 2019, the kingdom beheaded 37 Saudi citizens, most of them minority Shiites, in a mass execution across the country for alleged terrorism-related crimes. It also publicly nailed the severed body and head of a convicted extremist to a pole as a warning to others. Such crucifixions after execution, while rare, do occur in the kingdom.

Activists, including Ali al-Ahmed of the U.S.-based Institute for Gulf Affairs, and the group Democracy for the Arab World Now said they believe that over three dozen of those executed Saturday also were Shiites. The Saudi statement, however, did not identify the faiths of those killed.

Shiites, who live primarily in the kingdom's oil-rich east, have long complained of being treated as second-class citizens. Executions of Shiites in the past have stirred regional unrest. Saudi Arabia meanwhile remains engaged in diplomatic talks with its Shiite regional rival Iran to try to ease yearslong tensions.

Sporadic protests erupted Saturday night in the island kingdom of Bahrain — which has a majority Shiite population but is ruled by a Sunni monarchy, a Saudi ally — over the mass execution.

The 1979 seizure of the Grand Mosque remains a crucial moment in the history of the oil-rich kingdom.

A band of ultraconservative Saudi Sunni militants took the Grand Mosque, home to the cube-shaped Kaaba that Muslims pray toward five times a day, demanding the Al Saud royal family abdicate. A two-week siege that followed ended with an official death toll of 229 killed. The kingdom's rulers soon further embraced Wahhabism, an ultraconservative Islamic doctrine.

Since taking power, Crown Prince Mohammed under his father has increasingly liberalized life in the kingdom, opening movie theaters, allowing women to drive and defanging the country's once-feared religious police.

However, U.S. intelligence agencies believe the crown prince also ordered the slaying and dismemberment of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi, while overseeing airstrikes in Yemen that killed hundreds of civilians.

In excerpts of an interview with The Atlantic magazine, the crown prince discussed the death penalty, saying a "high percentage" of executions had been halted through the payment of so-called "blood money" settlements to grieving families.

"Well about the death penalty, we got rid of all of it, except for one category, and this one is written in the Quran, and we cannot do anything about it, even if we wished to do something, because it is clear teaching in the Quran," the prince said, according to a transcript later published by the Saudi-owned satellite news channel Al-Arabiya.

"If someone killed someone, another person, the family of that person has the right, after going to the court, to apply capital punishment, unless they forgive him. Or if someone threatens the life of many people, that means he has to be punished by the death penalty."

He added: "Regardless if I like it or not, I don't have the power to change it."

## All smiles, Jackson tries for Senate reset on Supreme Court

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Engaging in lawyerly small talk, Missouri Sen. Josh Hawley was telling Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson this past week how he met his wife while clerking at the high court.

Jackson already knew the story, he discovered. She even "filled in some of the details for me."

"So I thought — she's very well prepared."

Jackson was prepared, as well, for the Republican senator's questions about Guantanamo Bay detainees she represented 15 years ago as a public defender and, after that, in private practice. Hawley said after the meeting that he is still concerned about that part of her record but found her forthcoming and engaging, with a "very high degree" of legal acumen.

"I think her hearings will be very substantive," he said.

Jackson, who sits on the federal appeals court and would replace retiring Justice Stephen Breyer, is unlikely to need support from Hawley or any other Republican to be confirmed, and may not win over any of them. But as she makes the rounds at the Capitol, traversing from one Senate office to the next before her confirmation hearings later this month, Jackson is networking with zeal, restoring a collegial tone to a confirmation process that had grown increasingly embittered during the Trump era.

"I want to make this a bipartisan vote," Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Dick Durbin said after Breyer announced his retirement. "I think it is not only good for the Supreme Court, it's good for the Senate."

Democrats and the White House are hoping that Jackson's enviable resume, empathetic style and historic potential as the first Black female justice will win at least a few crossover votes. And because her confirmation to replace the liberal-leaning Breyer wouldn't shift the ideological balance of the court, Republicans aren't expending much political energy opposing her.

Durbin and President Joe Biden have been reaching out to some GOP senators personally, promising to answer any questions and give them extended time with the nominee.

The most gettable Republican vote is Maine Sen. Susan Collins, who has already received three calls from Biden and met Jackson for more than 90 minutes on Tuesday. Collins, one of only three Republicans to vote for Jackson when she was confirmed to the circuit court last year, called the meeting "lengthy and very productive." She signaled that that the nominee is likely to have her vote.

"She takes a very thorough, careful approach in applying the law to the facts of the case, and that is what I want to see in a judge," Collins said.

Jackson was prepared for the small talk in that meeting, as well, telling Collins in the first few minutes that she got engaged to her husband in Maine.

"She passed that test," Collins joked to reporters in her office as the two women smiled together for the cameras.

Even if other Republicans don't vote for Jackson, it's clear that she has impressed many of them as she has navigated the awkward ritual of the meet and greet. Texas Sen. John Cornyn praised her experience as a public defender and said she was "charming." North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis noted how prepared she was, a move he said was "wise." Nebraska Sen. Ben Sasse shook her hand and congratulated her while the two smiled for cameras under a large buffalo head on his office wall.

The effusiveness from some Republicans is a sharp departure from the last several Supreme Court nominations.

In 2016, after the death of Justice Antonin Scalia, the Republican majority denied a vote on President Barack Obama's nominee, now-Attorney General Merrick Garland, and most Republicans refused even to meet him. Democrats' frustration over their jilted nominee was ever-present when President Donald Trump nominated Neil Gorsuch to fill the post the next year.

In 2018, Trump nominated Brett Kavanaugh to replace retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy; his confirmation came after an explosive, combative hearing in which Christine Blasey Ford accused him of sexually

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assaulting her in high school, which Kavanaugh denied.

And Democrats had few words of praise for Justice Amy Coney Barrett, who Trump nominated to replace the liberal icon Ruth Bader Ginsburg after her death just weeks before 2020 presidential election.

Republican reaction to Jackson hasn't all been positive. Before Biden named her as the nominee, several Republicans, including Hawley, criticized the president's pledge to nominate a Black woman to the post. Hawley called the pledge "hard woke left." Texas Sen. Ted Cruz said it was "offensive" to have that criteria. Mississippi Sen. Roger Wicker likened it to affirmative action.

The good vibes could dissipate in the hearings, as well, if race moves to the forefront or if some Republicans make more personal arguments against her. Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell has so far signaled to his ranks to avoid that kind of questioning and keep the focus on issues they see as more damaging to Democrats, like inflation.

Asked about Biden's pledge to nominate a Black woman, McConnell replied: "Honestly, I did not think that was inappropriate."

Still, Republicans are sure to question Jackson aggressively at her confirmation hearings, which begin March 21, and criticize her for any rulings that they see as too far to the left. Hawley, Cornyn and Tillis — all members of the Senate Judiciary Committee — said they have questions about whether Jackson is guided by any specific judicial philosophy.

Democrats who have met with the nominee appear thrilled with Biden's choice, gushing over Jackson's eight years as a federal judge, her time as a public defender and her ability to connect with others — a quality they say could help her bring the Supreme Court closer together, as well.

Democratic Sen. Mazie Hirono, a member of the Judiciary panel, said that when she met with Jackson she asked the judge what stood out to her most about Breyer, whom she had clerked for many years ago. She said Jackson replied that it was the justice's ability to reach out to other members of the court.

"Even if she can't convince other people to her way of approaching a case, I think that that willingness to talk, and understanding another perspective, is a very important aspect of the kind of person she is," Hirono said.

Another Democrat on the committee, Connecticut Sen. Richard Blumenthal, said after his meeting that Jackson has a "really engaging personality" as well as a superior intellect.

"What really struck me most was her personal depth and warmth, and her intuitive interest in how real people are affected by her decisions beyond the abstract legalisms," Blumenthal said.

## AP video shows tank and sniper fire in besieged Mariupol

By MSTYSLAV CHERNOV Associated Press

MARIUPOL, Ukraine (AP) — A tank emblazoned with a giant Z backs up clumsily in the besieged city of Mariupol, crashing into destroyed buses before letting loose a shell. Ukrainian fighters later destroyed it, notching up one small victory.

An Associated Press journalist witnessed tanks firing on a 9-story apartment block and was among a group of medical workers who came under sniper fire Friday in the city completely surrounded by Russian soldiers.

The video he shot shows shells exploding as they hit the apartment block, already severely damaged, setting balconies on fire. It wasn't possible to tell whether the Russian positions had first received fire from the targeted locations.

At another point, a medical worker was hit in the hip by sniper fire. She survived, but conditions in the hospital were deteriorating. Windows rattled from nearby tank and artillery fire, electricity was reserved for operating tables, and the hallways were lined with people with nowhere else to go.

One of them was Anastasia Erashova, who wept and trembled as she held a sleeping child. Shelling had just killed her other child as well as her brother's child. Erashova's scalp was encrusted with blood.

"We came to my brother's (place), all of us together. The women and children went underground and then some mortar struck that building. We were trapped underground, and two children died. No one was

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able to save them," she said through tears.

Her anguish deepened, and she cried out: "I don't know where to run to. Who will bring back our children, who?"

In a video message broadcast to European cities on Saturday, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the families of the 79 children killed in the war "had been destroyed," and pleaded for help from Europe so that the number does not grow.

Zelenskyy emphasized the plight of Mariupol, a port city of 430,000 in southeastern Ukraine, surrounded by Russian troops.

"They are bombing it 24 hours a day ... launching missiles," he said, recalling the destruction this week of a maternity hospital in the city. "It is hatred. They kill children. They destroy maternity hospitals. They destroy hospitals, why? So Ukraine has no more children."

"This is happening in all of our country. They have destroyed dozens of hospitals, hundreds of schools and day cares, they are destroying universities, they are destroying residential quarters," Zelenskyy said. "Imagine how we can survive, what it means for us Ukrainians and our families, for our children. What it means when you cannot even find the peace in church because Russians are bombing even the churches."

He sought help from European countries to defend Ukraine but also the continent's own way of life. He again appealed for protection of Ukraine's skies.

The night before in Mariupol, a building that was hit by tank fire during the day still burned later in the night. No one was around to extinguish the flames.

## Road to table: Wyoming's got a new app for claiming roadkill

By MEAD GRUVER Associated Press

LANDER, Wyo. (AP) — The aroma of sizzling meat in melted butter wafts from a cast iron pan while Jaden Bales shows his favorite way to cook up the best steak cuts from a big game animal.

The deep red backstrap pieces, similar to filet mignon of beef, are organic and could hardly be more local. They're from a mule deer hit by a car just down the road from Bales' rustic home in a cottonwood grove beneath the craggy Wind River Range.

Bales was able to claim the deer thanks to a new state of Wyoming mobile app that's helping get the meat from animals killed in fender benders from road to table and in the process making roads safer for critters.

State wildlife and highway officials rolled out the app — possibly the first of its kind in the U.S. — this winter when Wyoming joined the 30 or so states that allow people to collect roadkill for food.

The doe was crossing U.S. 287 south of Lander early on the morning of Presidents Day just as Marta Casey was headed out in her Subaru to go snowboarding.

She hadn't been snowboarding in years. A world traveler who'd only settled in Wyoming a year ago, little did she know she was in for a whole new experience in rural living.

"I tried to slow down and get around it," said Casey. "It was very ... yeah."

After a Wyoming Highway Patrol trooper took a report and promised to shoot the injured deer, Casey was a couple runs into snowboarding when she remembered the app she heard about from Bales, whom she had just recently met.

She alerted Bales, who soon found the doe and used the app to claim it by entering the species and verifying that it wasn't killed illegally.

Next thing Casey knew, Bales had hauled the doe home in his pickup truck and Casey was helping cut it up so they could hang the quarters in Bales' garage.

Wyoming's new roadkill feature within the state Department of Transportation app helps people quickly claim accidentally killed deer, elk, moose, wild bison or wild turkey after documenting the animal and reviewing the rules for collecting roadkill to eat.

Another purpose is to help people follow the rules. For safety reasons, roadkill in Wyoming may not be collected after dark, along interstate highways or in construction zones.

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National parks, such as Yellowstone and Grand Teton, also are off-limits for roadkill retrieval. Unlike in other states such as Alaska, roadkill meat in Wyoming can't be donated to anybody, including charities.

The whole carcass must be retrieved, not just the antlers or hide. In Oregon, which allows people to claim roadkill with an online form, people must surrender the head and antlers to wildlife authorities within five days but in Wyoming the whole animal is fair game.

The Wyoming app helps to collect data. By geotagging roadkill with their phones and documenting the species, app users will contribute to the data that help Wyoming wildlife biologists and highway officials decide where to install wildlife crossing signs and other ways of reducing critter deaths.

Wyoming is famous for its abundant wildlife and big game migration routes that are among the longest in North America. From keeping roadsides mowed to installing warning signs and multimillion-dollar wildlife underpasses along migration routes, Wyoming officials have been trying to reduce the at least 6,000 animals killed on the state's roads each year.

"That's quite a lot. And we know that the majority of those are mule deer," Game and Fish Department spokesperson Sara DiRienzo said.

Mule deer, so named for their mule-like ears, inhabit the western half of North America and are generally bigger than the whitetail deer found across the continent.

Wyoming is home to about 400,000 mule deer, or roughly two for every three of the state's human residents. Although they're not rare and are still enthusiastically hunted, drought and diminishing habitat have played roles in reducing Wyoming mule numbers by almost 30% in the past 30 years.

"Mule deer already are struggling because of a number of factors. Roadkill collisions don't help that," DiRienzo said.

Roadkill is indiscriminate, though, and includes a wide range of scavengers — coyotes, eagles and skunks, to name a few — that feed on highway-killed creatures and end up getting hit themselves.

"You can play the circle of life card and be like, 'Well, there is never something that is wasted,'" Bales said. "But whenever you've got roadkill, it is really dangerous for any of the critters who come and try to eat it."

In the case of Casey's deer, Bales, a spokesperson for the Wyoming Wildlife Federation that pushed for Wyoming roadkill legislation last year, got to the meat before any scavenging animals could risk getting hit.

You don't have to know the person who struck roadkill to be able to claim it in Wyoming, but it's not a bad idea. Bales said he never would have claimed the deer without knowing it had died only a few hours earlier and was still fresh.

Bales mailed in a lymph node from the animal to be tested for chronic wasting disease, a neurological illness similar to mad cow disease that's been spreading through U.S. deer populations for decades, and it came back negative.

After cutting up the deer, Bales and Casey sliced the heart and ate it fried in observance of a tradition that Bales, an avid hunter, grew up with. From there, they carved off roasts and steaks and smaller bits destined for grinding up like hamburger.

Casey had never hunted before and had only eaten wild game a couple times but liked the idea of at least making use of the animal that put her car in the body shop.

"It's always been important to me to understand where our food comes from," she said.

Bales prepared the prized backstraps using a family recipe that includes seasoned salt and fresh-ground fennel seeds.

The verdict? Tender, tasty ... delicious.

## US pays \$2M a month to protect Pompeo, aide from Iran threat

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The State Department says it's paying more than \$2 million per month to provide 24-hour security to former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and a former top aide, both of whom face "serious and credible" threats from Iran.

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The department told Congress in a report that the cost of protecting Pompeo and former Iran envoy Brian Hook between August 2021 and February 2022 amounted to \$13.1 million. The report, dated Feb. 14 and marked "sensitive but unclassified," was obtained by The Associated Press on Saturday.

Pompeo and Hook led the Trump administration's "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran and the report says U.S. intelligence assesses that the threats to them have remained constant since they left government and could intensify. The threats have persisted even as President Joe Biden's administration has been engaged in indirect negotiations with Iran over a U.S. return to a landmark 2015 nuclear deal.

As a former secretary of state, Pompeo was automatically given 180 days of protection by the State Department's Bureau of Diplomatic Security after leaving office. But that protection has been repeatedly extended in 60-day increments by Secretary of State Antony Blinken due to "a serious and credible threat from a foreign power or agent of a foreign power arising from duties performed by former Secretary Pompeo while employed by the department," the report said.

Hook, who along with Pompeo was often the public face of the Trump administration's imposition of crippling sanctions against Iran, was granted the special protection by Blinken for the same reason as Pompeo immediately after he left government service. That has also been repeatedly renewed in 60-day increments.

The latest 60-day extensions will expire soon and the State Department, in conjunction with the Director of National Intelligence, must determine by March 16 if the protection should be extended again, according to the report.

The report was prepared because the special protection budget will run out in June and require a new infusion of money if extensions are deemed necessary.

Current U.S. officials say the threats have been discussed in the nuclear talks in Vienna, where Iran is demanding the removal of all Trump-era sanctions. Those sanctions include a "foreign terrorist organization" designation of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps that Pompeo and Hook were instrumental in approving.

The Vienna talks had been expected to produce an agreement soon to salvage the nuclear agreement that President Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from in 2018.

But the talks have been thrown into doubt because of new demands made by Russia and a small number of unresolved U.S.-Iran issues, including the terrorism designation, according to U.S. officials.

## Cashless and flightless, Russian tourists stuck in Thailand

By CHALIDA EKVITTHAYAVECHNUKUL Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Thousands of Russian tourists are stranded in Thailand's beach resorts because of the war in Ukraine, many unable to pay their bills or return home because of sanctions and canceled flights.

The crisis in Europe also put a crimp in recovery plans for the Southeast Asian nation's tourism industry, which has hosted more visitors from Russia than any of its neighbors before the pandemic hit.

There are about 6,500 Russian tourists stuck in Phuket, Surat Thani, Krabi and Pattaya, four provinces that are popular seaside resort destinations, in addition to 1,000 Ukrainians, Yuthasak Supasorn, governor of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, told The Associated Press on Friday.

Some 17,599 Russians accounted for the largest bloc of arrivals in February, representing 8.6% of a total of 203,970, according to the Public Health Ministry. After the Feb. 24 Russian invasion of Ukraine, their numbers drastically declined.

Yuthasak said the Russians face two main problems: cancellations of their flights home by airlines that have stopped flying to Russia, and suspension of financial services, particularly by credit card companies that have joined sanctions against Moscow. There are also some who prefer to delay their return.

"There are some airlines that still fly to Russia, but travelers have to transit in another country. We are trying to coordinate and search the flights for them," Yuthasak said.

While almost all direct flights from Russia have been suspended, connections are still available through major carriers based in the Middle East.



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He said efforts are also being made to find alternative methods of payments for Russian tourists.

Siwaporn Boonruang, a volunteer translator for Russians stranded in Krabi, said some cannot pay their bills because they can no longer use Visa or Mastercard credit cards.

Many have cash and those with UnionPay credit cards, which are issued by a Chinese financial services company, can still use them, but payment by cryptocurrency is not allowed, she said.

Many hotels have helped by offering discounted rates, she added.

Thailand's government has offered 30-day visa extensions without payment, and is trying to find low-cost alternative accommodation for people forced to stay for an extended period.

The problems associated with the war in Ukraine have compounded Thailand's hopes for economic recovery. Officials hope to see the threat from the COVID-19 pandemic ebbing by July, even though daily cases are currently at record highs, driven by the omicron variant of the coronavirus.

Thai authorities later this year expect to drop most quarantine and testing regulations that have been in place to fight the spread of the virus, which would make entry easier for foreign travelers.

Thailand may have to lower its targets for tourist arrivals and revenues this year because of the knock-on effects of rising oil prices and inflation on global travel, Yuthasak was quoted saying by the Bangkok Post newspaper.

"Tourism is still a key engine to revive our economy, even though revenue was stymied by negative factors," he said.

According to the report, Thailand had projected gaining a total of 1.28 trillion baht (\$38.4 billion) in revenue this year from foreign and domestic tourists.

## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, March 13, the 72nd day of 2022. There are 293 days left in the year. Daylight saving time returns Sunday at 2 a.m. local time.

Today's Highlight in History:

In 1925, the Tennessee General Assembly approved a bill prohibiting the teaching of the theory of evolution. (Gov. Austin Peay (pee) signed the measure on March 21; Tennessee repealed the law in 1967.)

On this date:

In 1781, the seventh planet of the solar system, Uranus, was discovered by Sir William Herschel.

In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed a measure prohibiting Union military officers from returning fugitive slaves to their owners.

In 1933, banks in the U.S. began to reopen after a "holiday" declared by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In 1938, famed attorney Clarence S. Darrow died in Chicago.

In 1943, financier and philanthropist J.P. Morgan Jr., 75, died in Boca Grande, Florida.

In 1946, U.S. Army Pfc. Sadao Munemori was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for sacrificing himself to save fellow soldiers from a grenade explosion in Seravezza, Italy; he was the only Japanese-American service member so recognized in the immediate aftermath of World War II.

In 1954, the Battle of Dien Bien Phu began during the First Indochina War as Viet Minh forces attacked French troops, who were defeated nearly two months later.

In 1995, two Americans working for U.S. defense contractors in Kuwait, David Daliberti and William Barloon, were seized by Iraq after they strayed across the border; sentenced to eight years in prison, both were freed later the same year.

In 1996, a gunman burst into an elementary school in Dunblane, Scotland, and opened fire, killing 16 children and one teacher before killing himself.

In 2011, the estimated death toll from Japan's earthquake and tsunami climbed past 10,000 as authorities raced to combat the threat of multiple nuclear reactor meltdowns while hundreds of thousands of people struggled to find food and water.

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In 2013, Jorge Bergoglio (HOHR'-hay behr-GOHG'-lee-oh) of Argentina was elected pope, choosing the name Francis; he was the first pontiff from the Americas and the first from outside Europe in more than a millennium.

In 2020, Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old Black woman, was fatally shot in her apartment in Louisville, Kentucky, during a botched raid by plainclothes narcotics detectives; no drugs were found, and the warrant used to enter by force was later found to be flawed. (A grand jury brought no charges against officers in her death, and prosecutors said two officers who fired at her were justified because her boyfriend shot at them; one officer was found not guilty of endangering Taylor's neighbors by firing into the side of her apartment during the raid.)

Ten years ago: A resurgent Rick Santorum swept to victory in Republican presidential primaries in Alabama and Mississippi. Twenty-two young people returning from a ski holiday and six adults died when their bus crashed inside a tunnel in southern Switzerland. A ferry carrying more than 200 people collided with a cargo boat and sank just short of Dhaka, Bangladesh; most on board died. Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc. said it would stop publishing print editions of its flagship encyclopedia.

Five years ago: Once the world's most-wanted fugitive, Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, the man known as "Carlos the Jackal," appeared in a French court for a deadly 1974 attack on a Paris shopping arcade that killed two people. (He was convicted and sentenced to life in prison for the third time.)

One year ago: Marvelous Marvin Hagler, the middleweight boxing great whose title reign and career ended with a split-decision loss to "Sugar" Ray Leonard in 1987, died at age 66 at his New Hampshire home.

Today's Birthdays: Jazz musician Roy Haynes is 97. Songwriter Mike Stoller (STOH'-ler) is 89. Singer-songwriter Neil Sedaka is 83. R&B/gospel singer Candi Staton is 82. Opera singer Julia Migenes is 73. Actor William H. Macy is 72. Comedian Robin Duke is 68. Actor Dana Delany is 66. Sen. John Hoeven, R-N.D., is 65. Rock musician Adam Clayton (U2) is 62. Jazz musician Terence Blanchard is 60. Actor Christopher Collet is 54. Rock musician Matt McDonough (Mudvayne) is 53. Actor Annabeth Gish is 51. Actor Tracy Wells is 51. Rapper-actor Common is 50. Rapper Khujo (Goodie Mob, The Lumberjacks) is 50. Singer Glenn Lewis is 47. Actor Danny Masterson is 46. Actor Noel Fisher is 38. Singers Natalie and Nicole Albino (Nina Sky) are 38. Actor Emile Hirsch is 37. U.S. Olympic gold medal skier Mikaela Shiffrin is 27. Tennis star Coco Gauff is 18.