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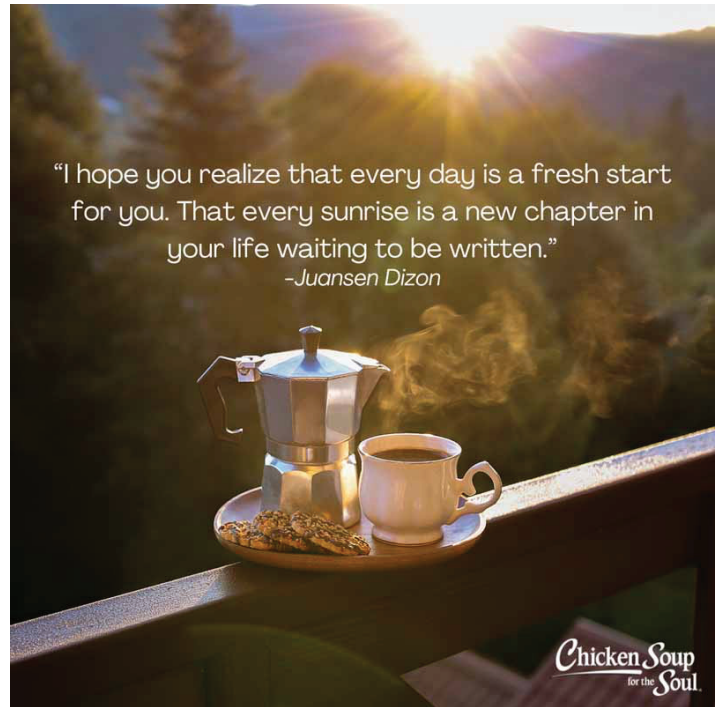
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Up Coming Events

Sunday, March 20

5 p.m.: Welcome Home Celebration in the Arena

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.

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

Bates Township Equalization Meeting Notice:

The Bates Township Board of Equalization will meet at the Clerk's home on Tuesday, March 22nd, 2022 at 6:30 pm.

All persons disputing their assessments are requested to notify the clerk prior to the meeting.

Betty Geist

Bates Township Clerk

14523 409th Ave

Conde, SD 57434

Truss Pros Help Wanted

Truss Pros in Britton is looking to hire a CDL driver to deliver trusses in the tri-state area. Home every night. Competitive wage! Full benefit package!

To apply call 605-277-4937 or go to www.uslbm.com/careers and search for jobs in Britton, SD.

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 20, 2022

Conde Worship 9:00 AM

NO Sunday School

Groton Worship 11:00 AM

Monday, March 21, 2022

Pastor Brandon Lent Study 7:00 PM

Tuesday, March 22, 2022

Newsletter Items Due

Bible Study 10:00 AM

Pastor Brandon Lent Study in Conde 6:00 PM

Wednesday, March 23, 2022

Community Coffee Hour 9:30 AM

UMYF 7:00 PM

Sunday, March 27, 2022

UMCOR Sunday

Conde Worship 9:00 AM

Sunday School 10:00 AM

Groton Worship 11:00 AM

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Groton

Sunday, March 20

9 am Worship/Comm

No Sunday School

10:15 Grace Alone Study

3 pm Avantara (MMBS)

7 pm Choir

Newsletter deadline

Monday, March 21

6:30 a.m.: Bible Study

Wednesday, March 23

6 p.m.: Soup Supper (Emmanuel men hosts)

7 p.m.: Lenten Service

Sunday, March 27

9 a.m.: Worship/Milestones

10:15 a.m.: Sunday school

10:15 a.m.: Grace Alone Study

7 p.m.: Choir

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 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

Monday, March 21

7:30 p.m.: Christian Literature Circle

Tuesday, March 22

9 a.m.: Quilting

Wednesday, March 23

7 p.m.: Lent Service

Sunday, March 27

8 a.m.: Bible Study

9 a.m.: St. John's Worship

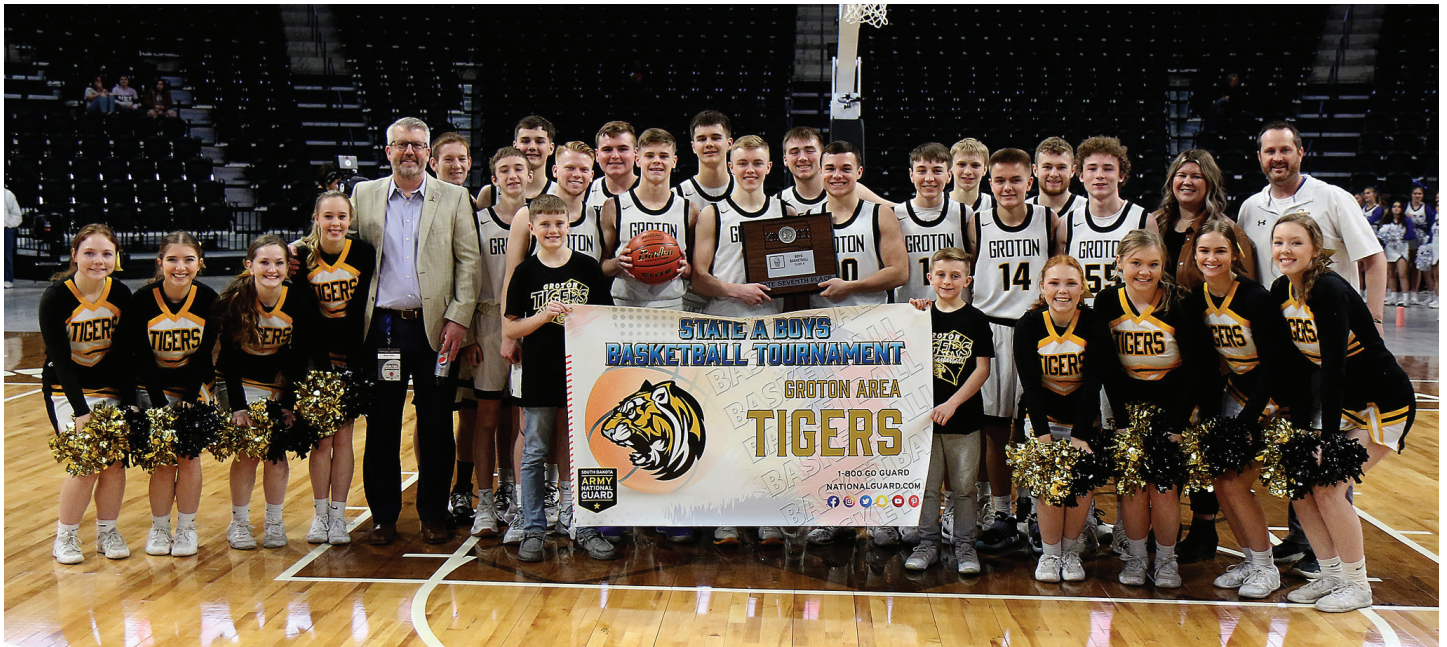
10 a.m.: Sunday School

11 a.m.: Zion Lutheran Worship

To submit your monthly or
weekly church calendar, email
to
news@grotonsd.net

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Groton Area takes seventh place at state

The Groton Area Tigers took seventh place at the State A Boys Basketball Tournament held this past weekend in Rapid City. The Tigers defeated Lakota Tech, 66-57. Lane Tietz was named to the All Tournament Team.

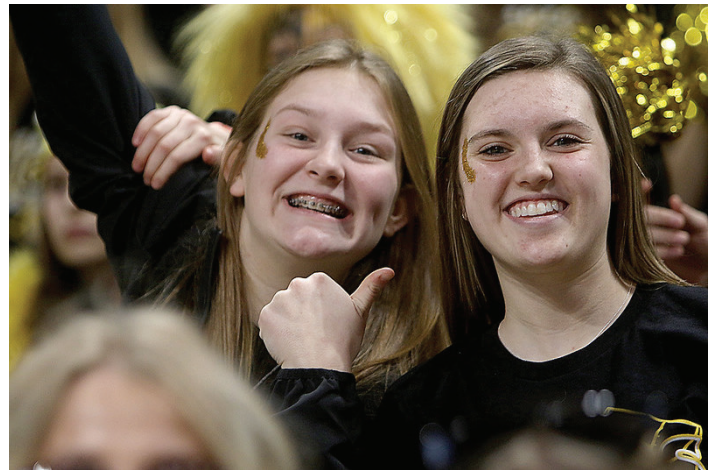
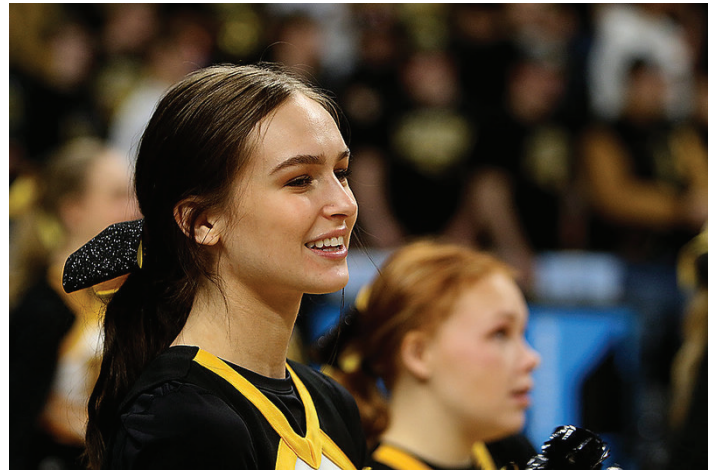
The results and full coverage will be forthcoming today.

Meanwhile, enjoy the pictures in this issue that were taken by SDPB



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Photos Courtesy of South Dakota Public Broadcasting

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Photos Courtesy of South Dakota Public Broadcasting

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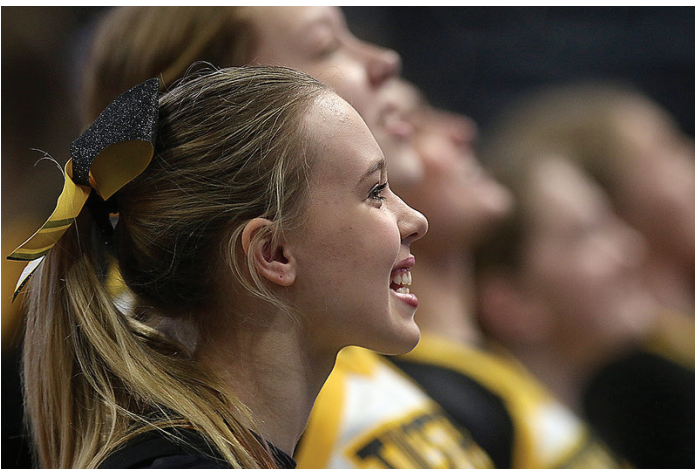
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Photos Courtesy of South Dakota Public Broadcasting

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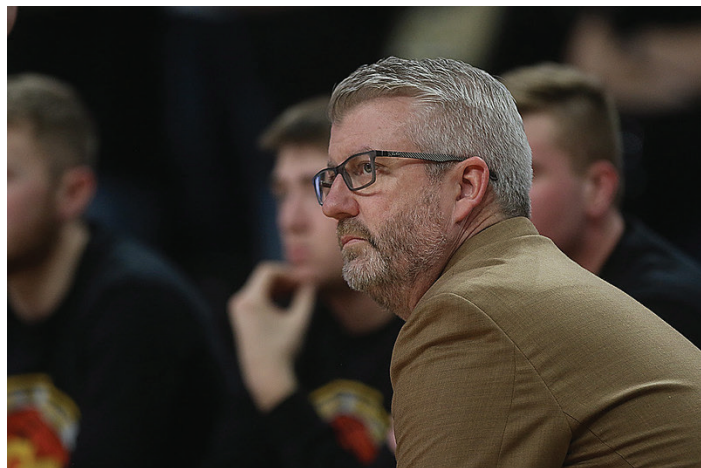
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Photos Courtesy of South Dakota Public Broadcasting

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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE



...If a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. ❧

1 CORINTHIANS 11:15

"Francoise" by Pablo Picasso (1946)

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DIDN'T WORK THEN...



...WON'T WORK NOW



BIBLE TRIVIA by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Nebuchadnezzar in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. In which book's 34th chapter does the Lord tell Moses to tear down all pagan altars? *Genesis, Exodus, Judges, Ruth*

3. How many books of the Bible (KJV) begin with the letter "G"? *1, 2, 3, 4. From 1 Kings 9, who built the walls of Jerusalem? David, Solomon, Belshazzar, Nimrod*

5. What angel appeared to Mary and Zacharias? *Haniel, Paschar, Sofiel, Gabriel*

6. From Genesis 4, who invented tents? *Cain, Jabal, Abel, Adam*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Exodus; 3) 2 (Galatians, Genesis); 4) Solomon; 5) Gabriel; 6) Jabal

"Test Your Bible Knowledge," a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online.

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by Healthy Exchanges
Mom's Comfort Food

Try this glorified rice dish once, and I promise, you'll make sure you have leftover rice often!

- 1 1/2 cups cold, cooked rice
- 1 (8-ounce) can crushed pineapple, packed in fruit juice, drained
- Sugar substitute to equal 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup seedless green grapes
- 3/4 cup miniature marshmallows
- 3/4 cup reduced-calorie whipped topping

1. In a large bowl, combine rice, pineapple, sugar substitute and vanilla extract. Stir in grapes and marshmallows. Add whipped topping. Mix gently to combine.

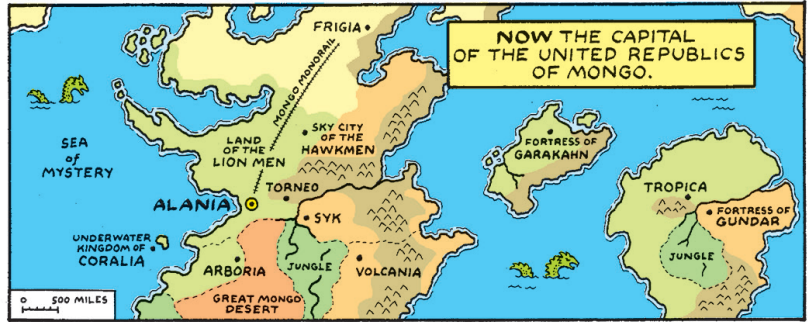
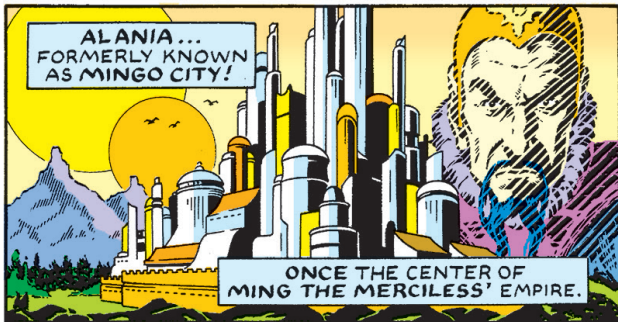
2. Cover and refrigerate for at least 15 minutes. Gently stir again just before serving. Makes 6 (1/2 cup) servings.

* Each serving equals: 100 calories, 0g fat, 1g protein, 24g carbs., 9mg sodium, 1g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Starch, 1/2 Fruit.

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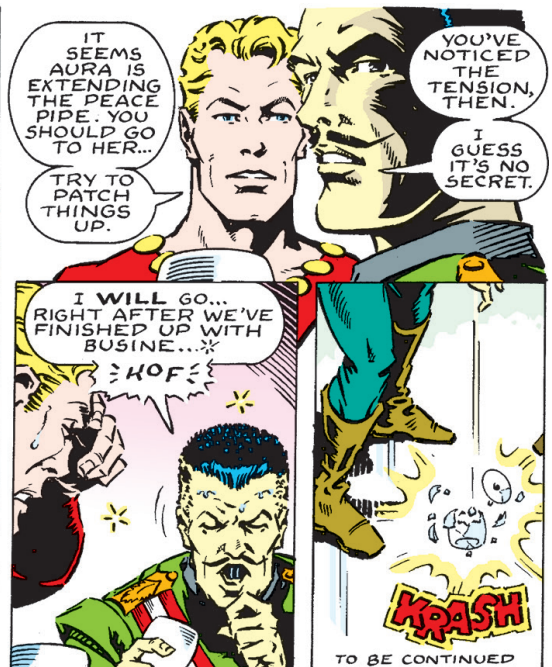
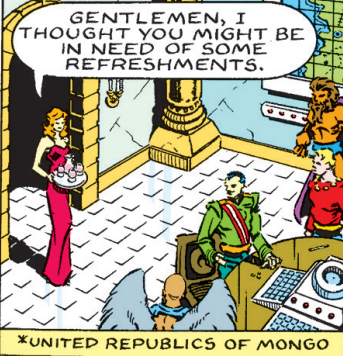


FLASH GORDON

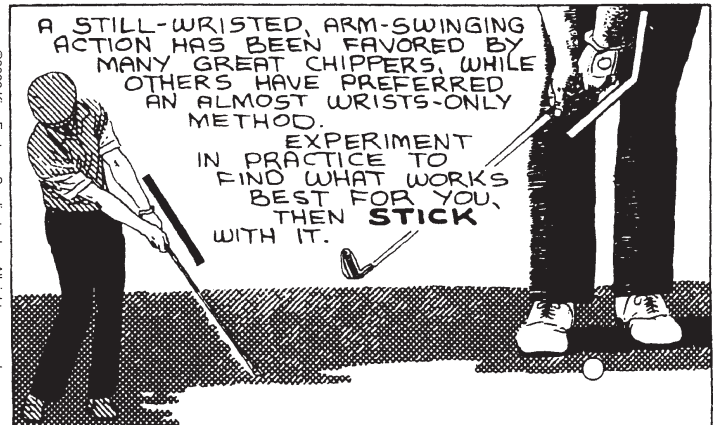
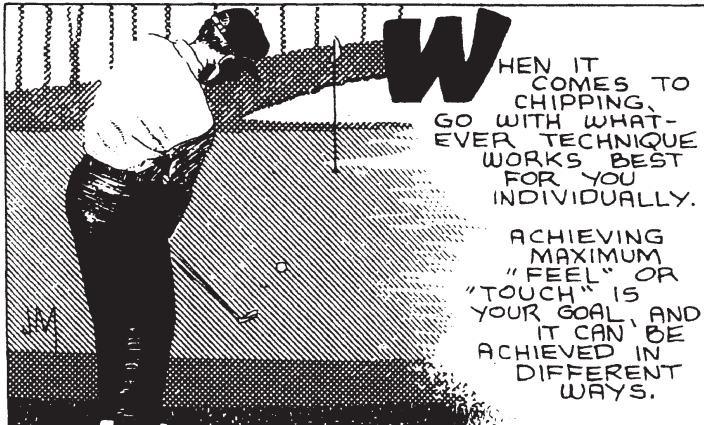
By JIM KEEFE

3-13

WITH KING BARIN PRESIDING, A SELECT COUNCIL OF THE U.R.M.* WORKS LATE INTO THE NIGHT.



Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



Yellow Lenses to Rescue for Macular Degeneration



DEAR DR. ROACH: I have an elderly friend who's becoming blind from macular degeneration. After hearing of a particularly frustrating event she experienced due to vision loss, I remembered the great clarity that the yellow-lens (to reduce glare) glasses gave me, not just at night, but daytime also.

So, I sent her a pair to see if it would help, as a last-ditch effort. She called me crying, it had made such a difference! She has now had her prescription eyeglasses done with the yellow (blue-canceling?) lenses. Of course, we understand that this is just a temporary help, and won't prevent the blindness from taking its course, but it has given her much better vision for a time. -- I.L.B.

ANSWER: Age-related macular degeneration is the leading cause of vision loss in industrialized countries. It is a degeneration of the central part of the retina, called the macula, which is responsible for fine detail central vision. The underlying cause is not precisely known, and the course is progressive.

I was able to find a 2002 study that confirmed that yellow or orange lenses improved contrast sensitivity in people with early age-related macular degeneration, whereas red and gray lenses worsened it. Another study suggested that the perceived benefit (the subjective experience by the person) was enhanced, but that objective improvement in vision was not actually improved much at all.

In my opinion, perceived benefit is still worth a great deal, and since there is little effective treatment for the more common "dry" form of ARMD beyond vitamins and smoking cessation, I am publishing your letter in hopes that some people will get improvements in their vision, as your friend did, from this low-cost treatment with essentially no risk of side effects.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a healthy 73-year-old man who has always had a large prostate. Thirty years ago, my urologist described it more like the size of an orange rather than a walnut. Despite its size, it has never given me any problems -- no UTIs, sudden urination, poor stream, waking me in the middle of the night, etc. Despite not having symptoms, about 10 years ago I was prescribed finasteride at a dose of 5 milligrams, and Rapaflo to "try to keep it in check." In 2018 I had an ultrasound done of my prostate, and it was measured at 185 grams. It was measured again recently and is now 232 grams. My PSA is always in the 3.2-3.5 range.

At what point does a prostate get too large? Should I be concerned even without having any symptoms? To his credit, my urologist discussed my surgical options, along with the related side effects. I am reluctant to do anything if it's not necessary. -- J.J.

ANSWER: The normal prostate gland is about 20 grams, and only 4% of men will develop a prostate over 100 grams. Yours is well past that, though far short of the world record of 2,410 grams.

It is striking that the size of the prostate does not well correlate with a man's symptoms. Since you have no symptoms and a low PSA level (especially considering the size), there is no indication to do anything surgically. The risk of surgical complications is higher in men with very enlarged prostate glands, so I would certainly be cautious about considering surgery.

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.

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Bridgerton (TV-MA) — After garnering great success in its 2020 debut, the romance-filled period drama series begins its second season on Netflix. While many fans of “Bridgerton” lamented the loss of Rege-Jean Page, who portrayed the Duke of Hastings, the show doesn’t seem to be losing any of the steaminess that made the first season so enticing. Season two will mainly focus on a heart-wrenching love triangle involving the Viscount Anthony Bridgerton (Jonathan Bailey) as he finally plans to wed, as well as the introduction of two new characters — the Sharma sisters. With last season’s major reveal of the face behind Lady Whistledown’s newsletters, viewers are now able to tag along with the anonymous columnist as even more gossip and scandal gets revealed. Premieres March 25. (Netflix)

Deep Water (R) — Vic and Melinda Van Allen (Ben Affleck and Ana de Armas) aren’t exactly your average married couple. They have somewhat of an understanding in their marriage, where Melinda can have as many lovers as she wants on the side as long as she doesn’t desert Vic or their family. But it’s as if Melinda almost morphs into a different person when she’s not with her husband, catching their friends quite off guard as she flaunts other relationships in Vic’s face. This arrangement inevitably takes a turn for the worse as one of Melinda’s lovers ends up dead. Is Vic behind the death, or did Melinda’s games just go a little too far? (Hulu)

Starstruck (TV-MA) — In what

can be described as a fanfiction come to life, “Starstruck” follows New Zealander Jessie, who finds out that her New Year’s Eve fling, Tom, is actually an A-list movie star. Jessie, who mostly works odd jobs in London, could be considered the opposite of someone a movie star would date (and boy, does she hear it time and time again). However, Jessie and Tom can’t help but grow closer, and she makes the decision to stay in London for him instead of returning to New Zealand. Season two premieres March 25. (HBO Max)



Courtesy of Netflix

Jonathan Bailey in “Bridgerton”

WeCrashed (TV-MA) — If you haven’t yet learned the story behind the commercial real estate company WeWork, you’re in for a treat with this new miniseries. Based on a podcast of the same name, “WeCrashed” tells the story of how Adam Neumann, his wife, Rebekah, and Miguel McKelvey team up to create a first-of-its-kind office experience called WeWork. The startup’s main goal is to sell workspaces to other companies, but WeWork’s success skyrockets it in a way no one could have predicted, as do its founders, their greed and their consequences. Academy Award winners Jared Leto and Anne Hathaway star as the eerily obsessive couple, with America Ferrera and Kyle Marvin making up the rest of the main cast. (AppleTV+)

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1. Who released "Give a Little Bit," and when?
2. Which artist released "Love Is a Battlefield"?
3. Who released "Yes Sir, I Can Boogie"?
4. Why did Billy J. Kramer add the middle initial when he created his stage name?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "This is the moment I've waited for, I can hear my heart singing, Soon bells will be ringing."

Answers

1. Supertramp, in 1977. It first appeared on their "Even in the Quietest Moments ..." album and was later released as a single.
2. Pat Benatar, in 1984. The song netted Benatar a Grammy for Best Female Rock Vocal Performance,

her fourth. The Grammys no longer separate by gender in this category.

3. Baccara, a Spanish flamenco dance duo, in 1977. The disco tune became a big hit in Europe and topped the charts in the U.K.

4. John Lennon told him to. The "J" was for Julian, Lennon's son.

5. "Hawaiian Wedding Song," by Andy Williams in 1958. The song was from the 1926 Hawaiian "Ke Kali Nei Au" (Waiting There for Thee). It was retitled and has been covered by numerous others, such as Elvis Presley in the 1961 film "Blue Hawaii."

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Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{by Wagner}



"Never give up, Slugg ... especially on that tunnel."

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Lamppost is missing. 2. Dog's ear is moved. 3. Collar is different. 4. Leash is missing. 5. Jacket is smaller. 6. Poster is different.

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- For moister and softer cookies, use honey as a substitute for a third of the sugar in your cookie recipe.

- And speaking of honey, did you know it has antibacterial properties? Yep! Try rubbing a bit of it over a small cut for faster, more natural healing.

- “Keep venetian blinds from sticking to one another and discourage dust by rubbing them down individually with a sheet of fabric softener. This effect will last at least a month, in my experience.” — *S.F. in Alabama*

- “Have a headache? Try drinking a couple of glasses of a sports drink. This works for my friends and me. Maybe we just need to be drinking more water, but the sports drinks get us back on track more quickly than medicine most times.” — *E.L. in Colorado*

- “This time-tested tip will keep your houseplants in the green while you’re away from home: Set plants in the bathtub in an inch or less of water.

If your flowerpot does not have drain holes, get a short length of cotton rope and feed it from the topsoil to the tub. This will keep plants alive and thriving for a week or more.” — *D.R. in Florida*

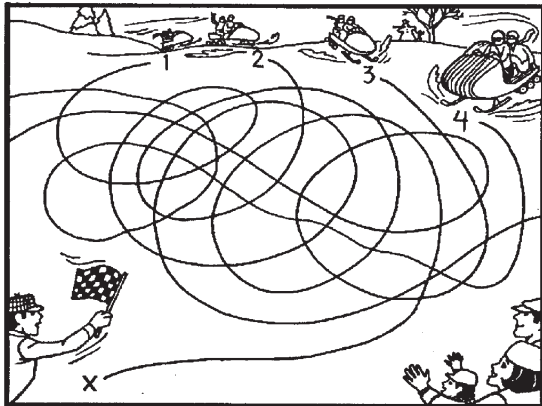
- “Having a hard time cutting out soda? Try this: Every time you reach for a glass of soda, drink a full cup of water first. You will find that your thirst is sated better, and you are not as “thirsty” for that sugar water!” — *F.E. in South Carolina*

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

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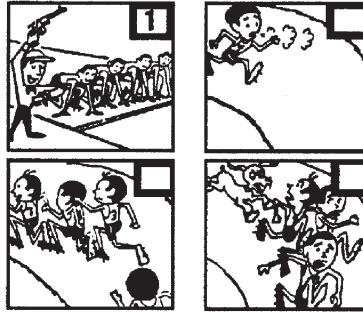


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SNOW FLURRY! Who wins the snowmobile race? Pick 1, 2, 3 or 4, and see who crosses the finish line at point marked X.

Junior Whirl

by Hal Kaufman



QUICK TURNAROUND RACING CAPER

HOW quickly can you clear the track, at left? That is to say, starting with panel No. 1, indicated, put unnumbered panels in order.

When you think you've discovered the right sequence, insert numbers in heavy black squares. Reasoning is required, so think things over a bit before answering.

On your mark ...

Order: Across — 1, 3, 2, 4, will do it.

MURKY MATH! I am thinking of a number that is twice as great as a number that is four more than one-third of the number I have in mind. Of what number am I thinking?

I'm thinking of number 24.

SUM TRICK! Select any one of the 16 numbers shown at right and jot it down on a sheet of paper. Now, strike out selected number in diagram together with all other numbers appearing in the same horizontal and vertical rows. Example: If you pick 4, strike out 4 and 1, 2, 3, 8, 12, 16.

Choose two more numbers, jotting them down as before, and repeat the process for each. (Once a number has been crossed out, it can't be reused.) Add the remaining single number on the board to the three you have chosen. Alakazam, your final total will always be 34.

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

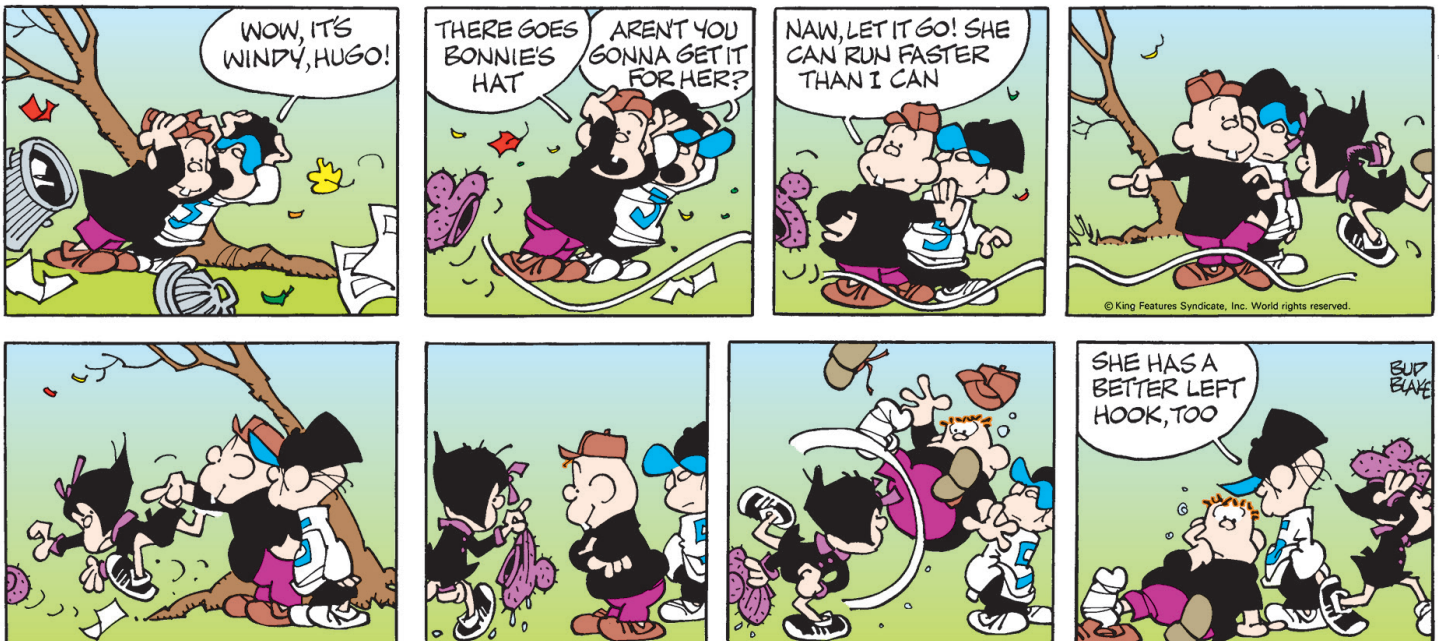
FANCY DIGS! Insert missing vowels to complete names of structures cited in luxury real estate listing:

M_NS_ _N, C_TT_G_ ,
ST_BL_ , B_ _TH_ _S_ ,
G_Z_B_ .

Mansion, cottage, stable, boathouse, gazebo.

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Slander in print
- 6 L-P link
- 9 Old map letters
- 12 Fred's dancing partner
- 13 Goal
- 14 Salt Lake athlete
- 15 Lightweight wood
- 16 "Lust for Life" punk rocker
- 18 Duration
- 20 Sea predator
- 21 "I'm not im-pressed"
- 23 Poseidon's home
- 24 Serpentine
- 25 "— a roll!"
- 27 Lent a hand
- 29 Live-in nanny
- 31 Mine vehicle
- 35 Call on
- 37 Activist Parks
- 38 Island porch
- 41 Stitch
- 43 Resistance unit
- 44 "Oops!"
- 45 Proverbial burg
- 47 1987 Peter Weller film
- 49 Hotel posting
- 52 CBS logo

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				

- 53 Group of two "Wow!"
- 54 Said something
- 55 ISP alternative
- 56 Norm (Abbr.)
- 57 Plains shelter
- 9 Toyota model
- 10 Inventory
- 11 Settle a debt
- 17 There
- 19 Bike components
- 21 Ms. Farrow
- 22 Ostrich's kin
- 24 Sun. talk
- 26 Arizona tribe
- 28 Fawned (on)
- 30 Jr.'s son
- 32 Stove workspace
- 33 Fireplace residue
- 34 Zodiac animal
- 36 14-legged crustacean
- 38 Enticed
- 39 Greetings at sea
- 40 Prestigious prize
- 42 German sausage
- 45 Sulk
- 46 Scruff
- 48 LPs' successors
- 50 Scrape (out)
- 51 Observe

DOWN

- 1 Science room
- 2 Writer Tarbell
- 3 Hotel staffer
- 4 Otherwise
- 5 Inclines
- 6 Rum cocktail
- 7 At hand
- 8 Texter's

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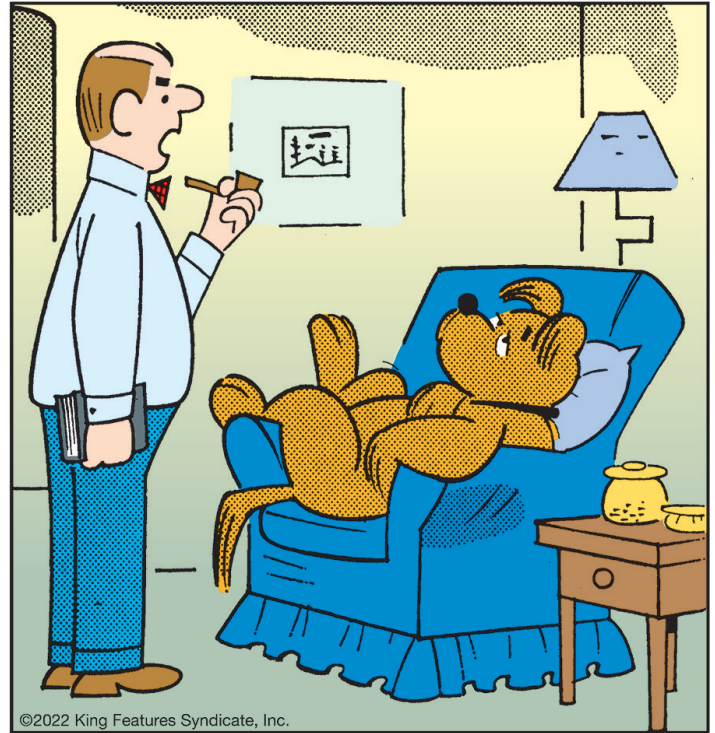
— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

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

LAFF - A - DAY

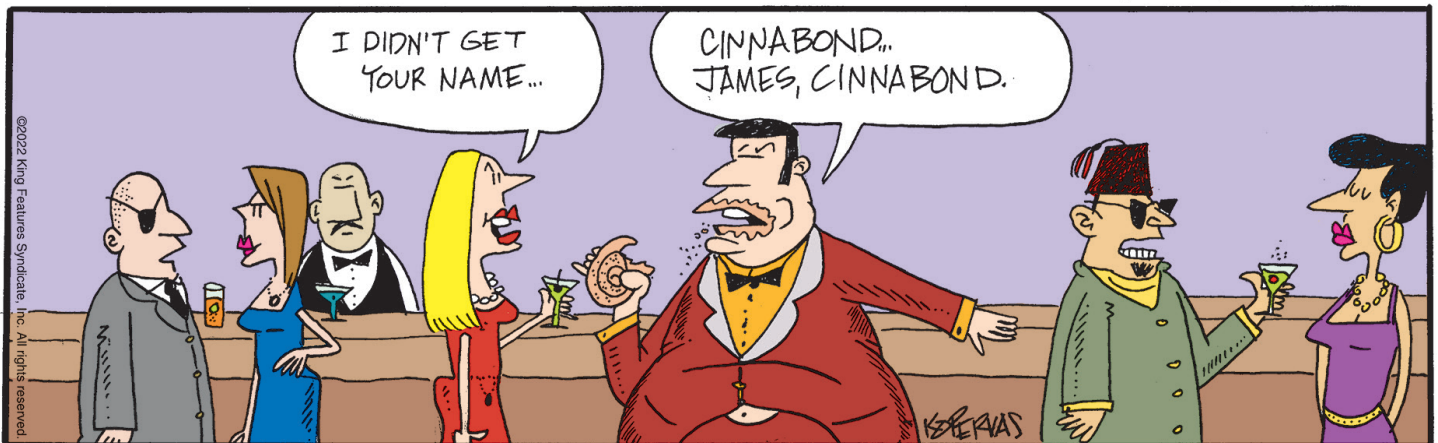


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"You can be replaced by a nice cat you know!"

Out on a Limb

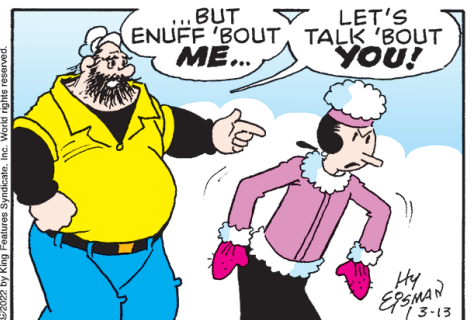
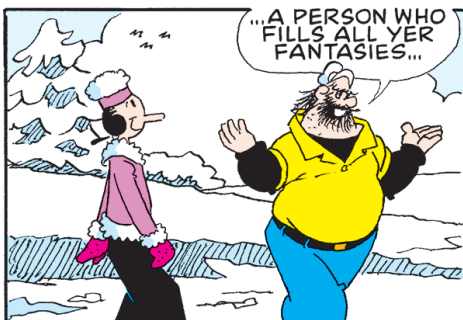
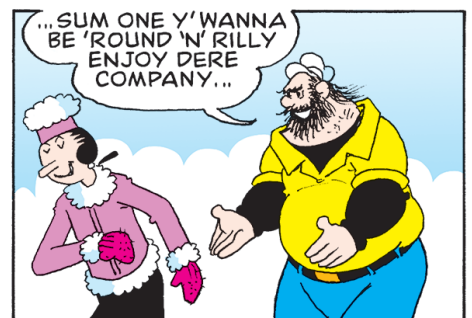
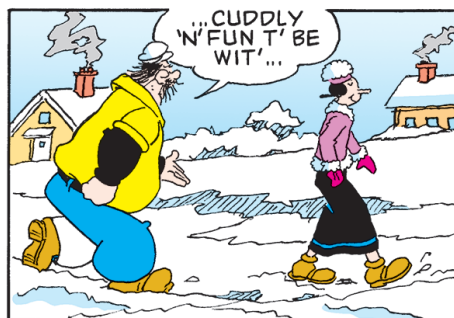
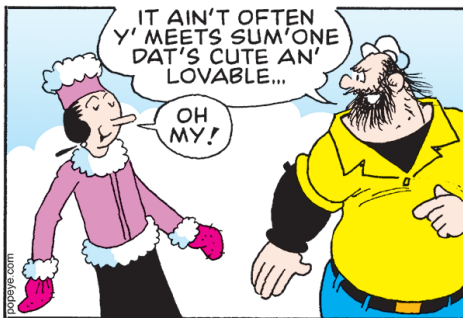
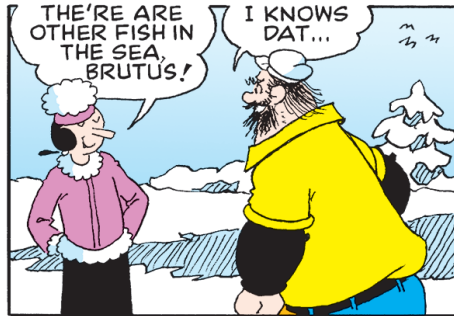
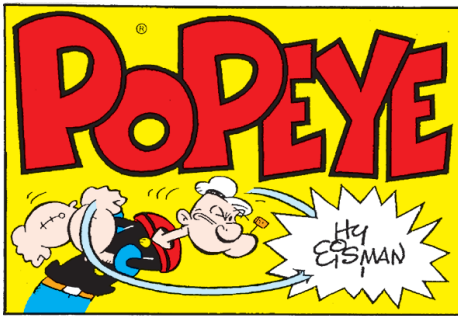
by Gary Kopervas



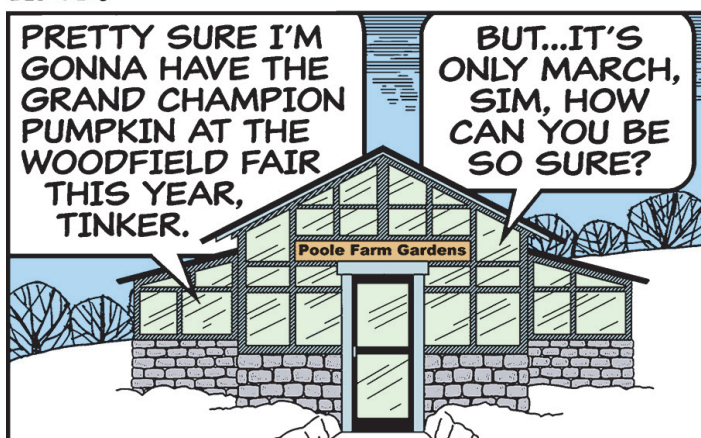
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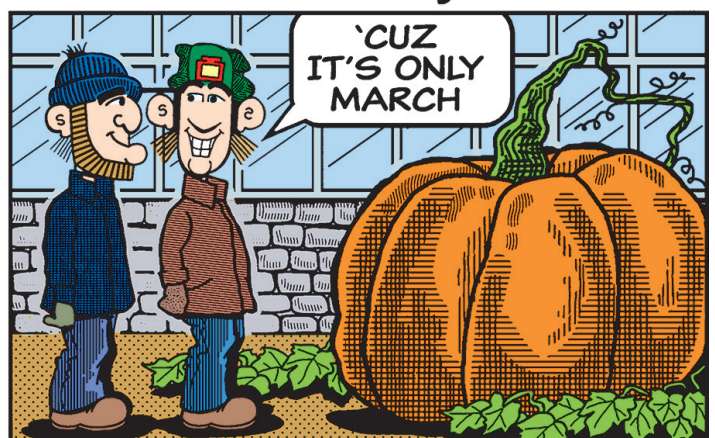
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R.F.D.



by Mike Marland



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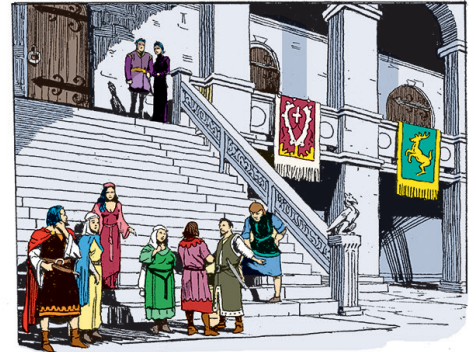
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Hal Foster's
Prince Valiant
By Gianni and Schultz

VAL, ARN AND GAWAIN WATCH AS MILLIONS OF WOODBORING BEETLES ABANDON THE SCAFFOLDS. HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN?



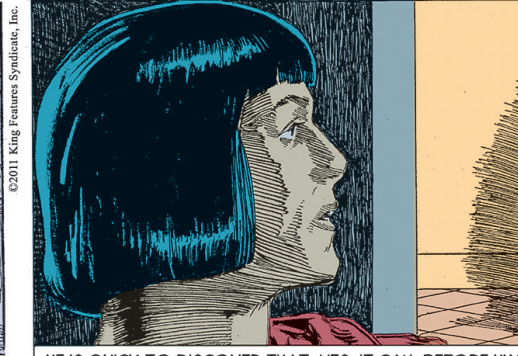
"THE OAKEN BEAMS WERE APPROVED BY THE REGENT ARN HIMSELF!" THIS FACT GENERATES MORE RUMORS, WITH ARN AND VAL CAST AS MONEY-GRUBBERS.



COURT GOSSIP HAS FATHER AND SON PURCHASING CHEAP MATERIALS AND POCKETING THE BALANCE THEMSELVES. OVER ALL THE INNUENDO, DRACO AND MALDUBH HOVER.



VAL GROWS DESPONDENT, AND RETURNS TO HIS CHAMBERS, MUTTERING, "CAN MY PREVIOUSLY CHARMED LIFE GROW ANY STRANGER?"



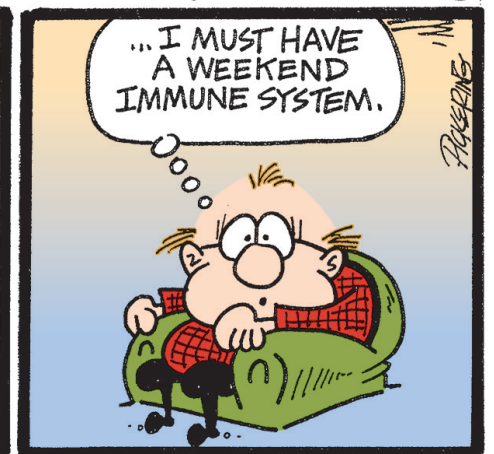
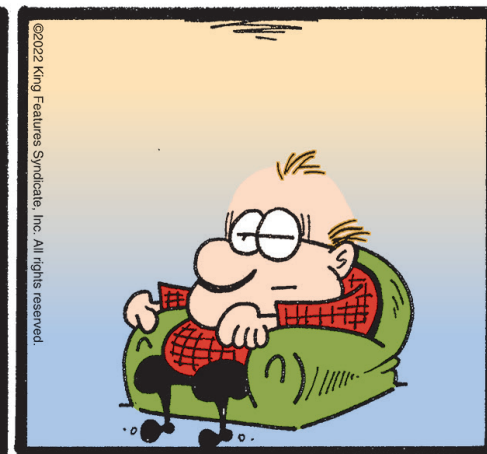
HE IS QUICK TO DISCOVER THAT, YES, IT CAN. BEFORE HIM KNEELS ALETA - WHOM HE ASSUMES HE KNOWS AS WELL AS HIMSELF - IN THE MIDST OF RITUAL ...

...WITCHCRAFT! NEXT: ~~Home~~ security



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Waiting Out COVID

An unscientific poll of senior friends and neighbors revealed just what we've accomplished during the past two years of this pandemic. The answer: not much.

Mostly, it seems, we've been waiting. Waiting for it to be safe to shop in person. Waiting for our clubs and meetings to start up again. Waiting for a visit from family across the country that has feared bringing COVID to our door. Waiting for all the vaccines and boosters to do what they were supposed to do. Waiting to be unafraid again.

In the beginning we were all for following the rules. We seniors are a tough bunch, and we know a lot. We have coping skills that got us through any number of crises life has thrown at us. But this pandemic has brought many of us to our knees. Each person in my humble survey could, when queried, point to the exact time when the tide turned in their mental health. It was the omicron variant and the additional vaccine

booster, when it became apparent that COVID wasn't going away soon.

For me, a daily to-do list has come in handy. On a sheet of paper I have two columns: one work, one play. In the work column there are household tasks such as doing one load of laundry. In the play column are things like wiping the dust off the piano and learning a new song each week.

On the back of the page are two more columns. One is a list of names, and somebody gets called every day. In the other column is an ever-lengthening list of things that are going right. This one is sometimes hard to fill out, but it gets done, even if it's only notes like: Completed a crossword puzzle in seven minutes.

Try it. Make your lists, especially if you've felt yourself sinking under the weight of this never-ending pandemic.

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1. What piece of sports equipment served as the ball in the first-ever game of softball played in Chicago in 1887?

2. Name the Scottish golfer who won the Open Championship in 1985 and the Masters Tournament in 1988.

3. During the 1970s, the unofficial, unsanctioned cross-country auto race known as the Cannonball Run had its finish line at what location?

4. What bowling show aired on NBC TV from 1959-61 and had Leo Durocher, Mel Allen and Bud Palmer among its hosts?

5. Name the Australian tennis great who won 24 Grand Slam singles titles — including seven straight at the Australian Open — during her pro career from 1959-77?

6. Who succeeded Buddy Ryan as head coach of the Philadelphia Eagles in 1991?

7. Basketball Hall of Famer Nate



Archibald has his No. 1 jersey retired by what NBA franchise?

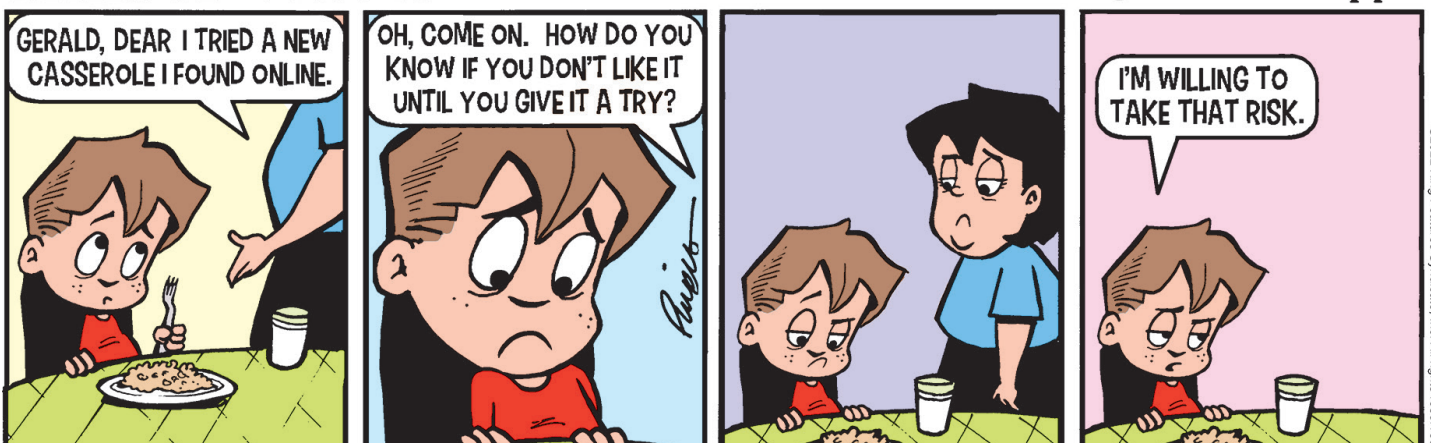
Answers

1. A boxing glove.
2. Sandy Lyle.
3. The Portofino Inn in Redondo Beach, California
4. "Jackpot Bowling."
5. Margaret Smith Court.
6. Rich Kotite.
7. The Sacramento Kings.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Don't Forget to Provide for Pets in Your Will

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: As an attorney who helps clients prepare wills, I'd like to urge your readers to review their end-of-life plans and make sure that their pets are provided for. It's so important to designate a new caregiver for their pets so that they are quickly rehomed to a person who will love and care for them. I own a lovable German Shepherd, and each year, I review my own life plan and adjust it if needed — usually an adjustment in the amount I'll give to his future caregiver to help with the financial aspects of taking in a pet, which can be substantial. — Darren H., Philadelphia

DEAR DARREN: Thank you for this reminder. None of us likes to think about the possibility of dying, but as

people who love and care for our pets, we need to do it for them, and make sure they will be loved and cared for. You can read more about how to include a pet clause in your will at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/3yjbzmdx>.

What if you're not in a position to make or update your will at this time? Put it on your to-do list, and in the meantime, make a list of trusted relatives and friends who you think would be good caregivers for your pet. Contact each of them to ask if they'd be willing to take in your pet if something should happen to you. This type of informal arrangement will give you some peace of mind. As soon as you're able to do so, create a written will or review your existing will. This helps ensure that your pet will go to a loving home and minimize their stress and grief.

Send your tips, questions or comments to ask@pawscorner.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

include Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis.

* The *Rhizanthella gardneri* orchid, which grows entirely underground, was discovered by an Australian farmer in 1928 and generated such excitement that a wax model of it toured the British Isles.

* A hen will eat her own raw eggs if not satisfied with her diet.

* The Mexican language Ayapaneco, or, more properly, Nuumte Oote ("the true voice"), is dying out, and small wonder: Its only fluent speakers number a grand total of two, and they refuse to talk to each other!

* A paired kidney exchange allows people to donate their kidney that wasn't a match for an intended recipient to a stranger in exchange for a kidney that is a match for their loved one.

* In 2010 a San Diego Chipotle customer in a wheelchair successfully sued the restaurant chain with the claim that their tall order counter denied him the full "Chipotle experience" -- like watching his order being assembled.

* Sand is the most extracted material in the world.

* Actor Joe Pesci was a singer and guitar player in his early 20s and once played in the same band (called Joey Dee and the Starlites) as Jimi Hendrix.

Thought for the Day: "Change your thoughts and you change your world." --Norman Vincent Peale

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* Agree with those diehard fans of Pluto who still insist it's a planet? So does New Mexico. Its legislature resolved that Pluto is still legally a planet ... at least whenever it passes over the state.

* During a time of political turmoil, Michelangelo hid in a secret room under Florence's Medici Chapel for three months, passing the time by sketching on the walls. His secret wasn't discovered until some five centuries later, when the museum director stumbled upon the room in 1976.

* Honorary members of the Harlem Globetrotters

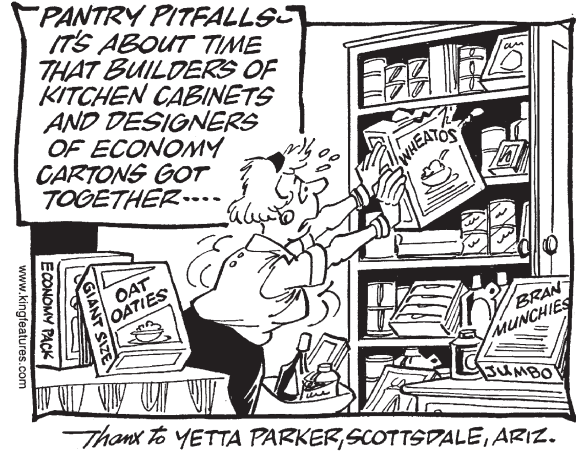
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THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME



BY AL SCADUTO



BIG DECISION—EVER HAPPEN TO YOU? YOU'RE A NEW PUPPY OWNER AND YOU GO TO THE SUPERMART—AND—IT'S YOUR FIRST TIME PICKING WHICH FOOD TO GET FOR THE LIL PURP—



Turning soil

Prepping your soil for the demands of the growing season ahead is key to the success of your garden this year. You want to add in what might be lacking in your soil as your plants begin their growth. If the soil crumbles when you work it around in your hands, then it is ready to till; if it's sticky, it may be too wet. Use a soil testing kit to see what nutrients should be added to your soil, then work the needed amounts into the soil before planting. — Brenda Weaver

Source: uvm.edu

VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

Compounded Drugs Can be Rx for Greed

The Department of Justice nabbed a doctor who was licensed in both Texas and Oklahoma for writing drug prescriptions in exchange for kick-backs. The drugs in question were compounded, which are expensive because they are either multiple drugs mixed together, pills made into liquid or drugs made without dyes in them.

In this case, the doctor ordered the drugs after a compounding company solicited him, and paid a hefty bribe, to write prescriptions that would be filled by that company's pharmacy. Footing the bill for these pricey drugs was Medicare, TRICARE, CHAMPVA and the Federal Employees Compensation Act Program.

The doctor ran pain clinics in both states, which is a good place to hide specialty drugs. He pleaded guilty and could face paying back \$1.5 million.

However, part of his plea deal is that he serves 36 months of supervised probation, with no jail time.

One hopes that the judge doesn't accept that plea. Compounded drugs are potentially dangerous, especially when the participants aren't thinking first of patient safety.

A couple years ago, the major players in another compounding company were caught up in a deadly scheme that caused a nationwide meningitis outbreak, the biggest ever seen by a pharmaceutical drug. They cut corners, shipped in bulk without individual prescriptions, ignored patient safety, misbranded drugs, didn't await sterility test results, let mold and bacteria into their clean-room facility and created drugs with expired ingredients. Almost 800 patients across the country came down with a fungal infection after getting injections of those drugs. Of those, over 100 patients have died.

They also tried, and failed, to hide their activities. They weren't too bright, apparently, shipping drugs to patients named Bud Weiser, Fat Albert, Samuel Adams and others.

All the participants received average prison sentences ... until a federal appeals court decided that the original judge was wrong. One by one the criminals are being resentenced with extra time added on.

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



PROBLEM SOLVING—Supply Chain Edition

Supply chain problems are still plaguing producers, manufacturers, transporters, and consumers across America. These high prices and delayed shipments have been aggravated by steady increased demand. Consumer spending on e-commerce is expected to hit a record \$1 trillion this year due to the shift of online shopping driven by the pandemic. This is a 13% increase from 2021.

Increased demand is placing more stress on our port system and this stress is complicated by unfair practices by foreign ocean carriers. These carriers are leaving American exports at our ports and going back to Asia with empty containers—leaving American products heading overseas, stuck. This new practice increased the largest ocean carrier profits by more than triple over the last year.

This dilemma is what led U.S. Rep. John Garamendi (D-CA) and I to introduce the Ocean Shipping Reform Act (OSRA), which passed the House overwhelmingly (364-60) in December 2021. As OSRA is still pending Senate consideration, members of the House are still speaking up to ensure its quick passage.

On Thursday, I held a roundtable discussion with some of my Problem Solvers Caucus colleagues—U.S. Reps. Jim Costa (D-CA), and David Valadao (R-CA)—and supply chain experts to discuss these problems and how OSRA would help alleviate some of the supply chain delays felt across the country.

Last month, loaded exports from the Port of Los Angeles decreased 24.7%, while the number of imports increased. With the current state of the supply chain, manufacturers are expecting delays to continue into the first half of 2023. This is alarming.

Experts in American manufacturing and agriculture made it clear at this week's roundtable: America's economy and businesses need OSRA signed into law. There are solutions to some of the problems we're seeing with our supply chain and foreign flagged ocean shippers – OSRA establishes rules of the road and puts America on an equal playing field.

The Senate will hold a markup on OSRA on March 22. Getting this bill across the finish line and signed by the President is crucial to begin easing the costly problems created by foreign carriers' unfair shipping practices. My colleagues and I in the House will keep working alongside industry experts to ensure Senate passage of the House version of OSRA to strengthen our supply chain security.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

The Hope of Springtime

Sunday, March 20 marks the first day of Spring — at 10:33 a.m. CT/9:33 a.m. MT precisely, according to the Farmer's Almanac. Spring is a crucial season for both of our state's two largest industries: agriculture and tourism.

Spring is always a great time of year. Easter is right around the corner. Every day we see signs of renewal that give us hope: the warm sun melting away the chill of winter; Buffalo calves on the prairie; and Spring blooms returning to the fields and trees.

After two years of COVID looming over the lives of people across the country, Americans are looking for wide-open spaces like what we have in South Dakota. Even as inflation climbs to record highs, recent data from experts like Expedia suggests Americans are gearing up for another big year of travel. After our record-breaking tourism year in 2021, we are optimistic about another big tourism season for South Dakota.

As gas prices blow past historic peaks, fueled by a 40-year high for inflation, Americans are planning to put a higher premium on travel and vacation this year. With airlines potentially ending mask mandates in mid-April, we could also see a rise in air travel in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, and other regional airports.

While it is impossible to know for sure how many visitors will make their way to South Dakota in the coming months, a look back at 2021 shows that folks want to visit our great places and see our great faces. Record numbers of people visited our parks, and our airports in Rapid City and Sioux Falls saw a 74% increase over the previous year.

All told, our state saw about 13.5 million visitors in 2021. That's because we have so much to offer: national monuments, the most beautiful parks, plenty of places to hunt & fish, rodeos, livestock shows, some of the best county fairs in America, and rich cultural experiences such as Pow Wows and the Crazy Horse Memorial.

All of these attractions led to visitors spending a record \$4.4 billion last year in South Dakota. That's an amazing figure for our state's No. 2 industry.

As we look forward to warmer days and the chance to enjoy the outdoors, my thoughts are also turning to our farmers and ranchers. A milder winter has given way to earlier spring weather. Unfortunately, the lack of snow hasn't helped ease drought conditions. As Spring comes, let's all pray for some April showers (and some March showers, too) to help our farmers as they put crops in the ground.

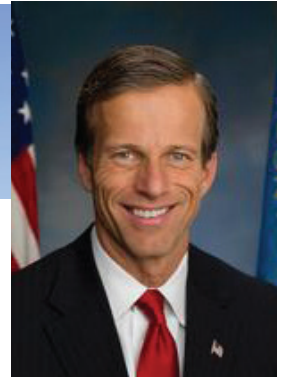
Last year, Agriculture accounted for more than \$32 billion in our state economy, making it our largest industry by far. With the drought hanging around, it's likely our Ag economy could take a hit this year.

Without additional moisture, our farmers and ranchers will face challenges. They are already feeling the pinch on their margins thanks to inflation, including rising diesel prices. Without adequate spring showers, ranchers will be spending more to keep their stock fed, and farmers will have a harder time growing their crops.

In times like these, I turn to my faith. The Bible tells us not to fear, "For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground." It also says "Ask the Lord for rain in the springtime; it is the Lord who sends the thunderstorms. He gives showers of rain to all people, and plants of the field to everyone." Let's remember those promises and pray for rain.

Hope springs eternal as we approach the celebration of Jesus' resurrection. May we remain thankful for our blessings in South Dakota and work together to lift our neighbors who are waiting for their blessings to come in the form of rain clouds.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Let's End the Madness

I always look forward to the month of March because the weather slowly starts to improve, and, of course, we have the start of March Madness basketball. While I'm all for the madness of the basketball variety, this March marked the first anniversary of a different kind of madness that was happening in Congress. Unfortunately, if many Democrats had it their way, it would never end.

One year ago, just weeks after Congress responded to the COVID pandemic by again providing some much-needed, targeted assistance, Democrats were busy passing their multi-trillion-dollar American Rescue Plan. In my view, the only thing it rescued was Democrats who were eager to spend more taxpayer money. Unfortunately, though, it helped create the inflation crisis that many South Dakotans are dealing with today. While it's true that supply chain issues and the reopening of economies after COVID shutdowns created certain inflationary pressures, a major cause of our current inflation crisis was Democrats' decision to pass the American Rescue Plan last March.

The definition of inflation is too many dollars chasing too few goods and services, and that's exactly the situation Democrats helped create. At the time, our economy was well on its way to a healthy recovery, and the majority of states had the money they needed to deal with the pandemic. It was abundantly clear that the economy was not in immediate need of trillions of dollars more in government spending. But that didn't stop Democrats and the far-left political base to which they were trying to appeal.

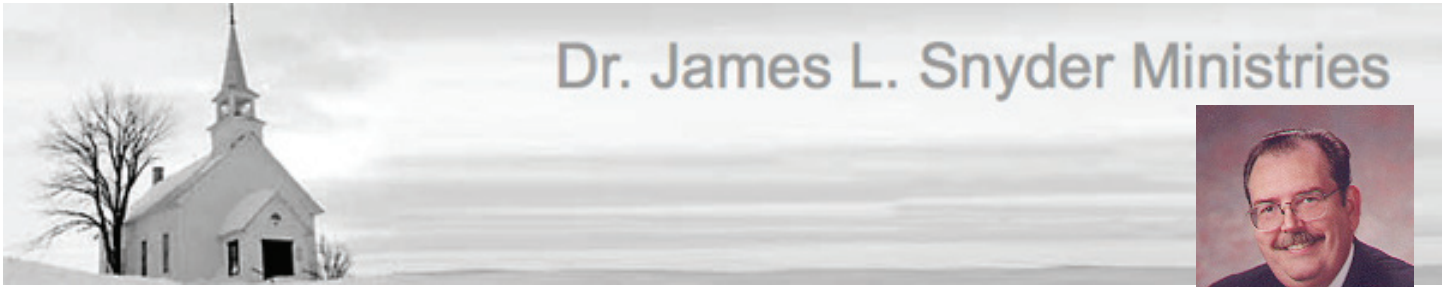
Now that they were in charge, they were eager to take advantage of the COVID crisis to begin implementing their big-government vision. So, in the name of "COVID relief," they pushed through a massive, partisan \$1.9 trillion piece of legislation filled with unnecessary spending and handouts to Democrat interest groups. Less than 9 percent of that \$1.9 trillion was directed to actually combating COVID. And despite being billed as essential and urgent COVID relief, a substantial portion of the money appropriated isn't required to be spent until after this year.

The end result of the Democrats' partisan crusade was entirely predictable. They flooded the economy with unnecessary government money, and the economy overheated as a result. Inflation started to rise almost as soon as the ink was dry on the American Rescue Plan, and it just keeps rising. Going to the grocery store is taking up a huge chunk of South Dakotans' paychecks, not to mention what rampant gas prices are doing to family budgets.

The bottom line is that the American Rescue Plan was a bad deal for Americans. It was a bloated and unnecessary bill, and it was irresponsible legislating. I hope that Democrats do not have the chance to double down on this legislation and make our current inflation crisis even worse. My message to Democrats in Washington: Let's keep the madness on the basketball court.

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Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall, Stop Laughin

As old as I am, and I expect to get as old as possible, I have noticed that I see things differently than I did a few years ago. I'm not sure if my vision has changed or my perspective. But one thing is certain; something has changed.

A lot of things are very aggravating in my life. When I think I got them all lined up, I find something more aggravating than all of them put together. I guess that's just the way life is and there is nothing I can do about that.

One of the most aggravating things in my life is the mirror in my bathroom.

I would like to know who it was that invented the mirror and I would like to give him a piece of my mind, if I have any pieces left. A few things may be okay with the mirror, but my mirror is terrible from my current perspective.

The other morning it dawned on me. I walked into the bathroom, glanced at my mirror, and laughed. At first, I did not know what I was laughing at until I re-examined my mirror.

That morning, the image in that mirror was the funniest thing I've seen in a long time.

There this person was, hair going in every direction, at least the hair that was left, and wrinkles all over the face to such an extent I could not recognize the face. So I just busted out laughing for all I was worth.

I guess it's good to start each day with laughter. If I'm having a good day, I can measure it by my laughter.

The more I looked at the image in the mirror, the more I began to see something familiar. Then, all at once, I gasped and said, "Oh, my goodness. That's me!"

When that dawned on me, I realized that either the mirror was crazy or I was. For the record, I believe it was the mirror that was crazy.

Looking at the reflection in the mirror, I said to myself that nobody, I mean nobody, could look that crazy even in the morning after a night of dreaming nightmares.

I know some people, especially those living under our roof, believe that the mirror is very truthful in its reflection. So what you see in that mirror is what is absolutely true.

I don't think I'm the only one to suspicion the legitimacy of the bathroom mirror. After all, it's in that

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bathroom 24 hours a day every day, so what does it do during all of that time? What is it seeing?

Thinking about this, I thought it might be good to put some blinds on my bathroom mirror only to use it when I want to use it. Who knows what that bathroom mirror is seeing all day long. So how do I know that that mirror has not crossed the line somewhere into crazyville?

The thing that I thought about the other day was, is the reflection I see in that mirror what other people see when I'm on the outside? I certainly hope not.

That bathroom mirror is very judgmental. And by that, I mean, it only sees me on the outside and defines me by my outer appearance. It doesn't see the inside of me, which would make all the difference in the world.

I thought maybe I should talk this over with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage; is my mirror lying to me?

The danger of that is, what if she agreed with my mirror? What if she told me that what I see in the mirror is what other people on the outside are seeing as well?

Of course, it could explain why so many people laugh when they see me coming. Up to this point, I thought they were laughing because they enjoyed my company. What if it's not that?

The other morning the wife went shopping, so I thought I would try an experiment. I would go into my bathroom, look in my mirror, and then go into her bathroom and look in her mirror to see any difference.

Imagine my disappointment when my wife's mirror reflected the same image that my bathroom mirror did. I think those two mirrors are in cahoots with one another, and this reflection proves it.

Another thought was to take a picture of me when I was young and have it blown up to the size of the mirror and put it on my mirror. Then, every morning, when I looked into the mirror, I would see a very young version of myself.

I went as far as to pick out the picture I would use for my bathroom mirror.

I've been thinking of many ways to trick my mirror into getting a better image of myself when I get up in the morning. So far, nothing has worked, and I still have that old man in the mirror looking back at me laughing.

I couldn't help but think of a verse of Scripture, "Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" (Isaiah 5:21).

Sometimes my sight is wrong and what I'm seeing is not reality. I discovered that God leads me down a path I'm unfamiliar with, and I can't see the next step; I cannot judge how I'm going by my sight. I simply need to trust God.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What exactly is gravity energy storage and why are some environmentalists so bullish on it?

-- James McIntosh, New York, NY

Gravity energy storage, whereby engineers harness the energy in gravitational forces by connecting the momentum generated to the electric grid, is a relatively new technology that could serve to revolutionize energy storage given its low carbon footprint and engineering simplicity. Pilot programs to test the technology and bring it to scale are already underway in Switzerland, Scotland and the United States. Environmentalists are bullish about the technology as a way to bolster energy reserves beyond intermittent clean energy sources like solar and wind, and to have a better way to store energy than in costly and environmentally problematic lithium-ion batteries.

So far researchers have isolated two different techniques for harvesting gravity energy. One employs a tower to drop weights from above, harnessing the momentum generated by the gravitational force during the fall. Another uses mineshafts filled with water to float and drop weights. Both types of processes extract energy from electrical sensors attached to the weights generating momentum and pass it directly to the power grid. Typically, about 20 percent of the energy created during a concrete block's fall is needed to power the weights back up to the top.

Unlike solar and wind power, gravity energy storage isn't dependent on the sun to shine or the wind to blow for the generation of electricity. Herein lies the great green promise of this new technology since energy can be generated steadily but without the inevitability of pollution from fossil fuels. Besides substituting for fossil fuels, gravity storage can also replace batteries as a way to supply electricity locally and/or back to the grid. This is good news for environmentalists who decry the uptick in lithium mining to supply precious metals for the lithium-ion battery makers. Likewise, the more energy we can derive from the constant renewable source of gravity energy means that much less fossil-fuel derived power we need.

While gravity energy may be green and cheap at scale, developers of the technology face great hurdles to making it publicly available. One major issue is policymakers' fear of novelty: It's hard to rewire a system built around fossil fuels. New plants would have to be built. Paying for both the plants and the infrastructure surrounding them would involve replacing existing systems and structures.

But in the end, fossil fuels will ultimately cost us more. Indeed, our addiction to fossil fuels has already resulted in air pollution, rising atmospheric temperatures, contaminated landscapes and even damaged human health.

It may seem strange at first glance that gravity alone can generate so much energy. Yet these simple mechanical operations generate a vast promise for new advancements in energy production that dwarf previous advancements. This innovative discovery may prove to be a sea change regarding the way we generate and store energy moving forward—if only we can build it out to scale.



Switzerland-based Energy Vault is one of the companies developing prototype gravity energy storage solutions that could someday replace batteries as a way to hold onto energy and dole it out as needed for use on days when intermittent renewables (solar, wind) aren't cutting it in a post-fossil-fuel world.

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South Dakota COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

49

Active Cases

2,597
-419

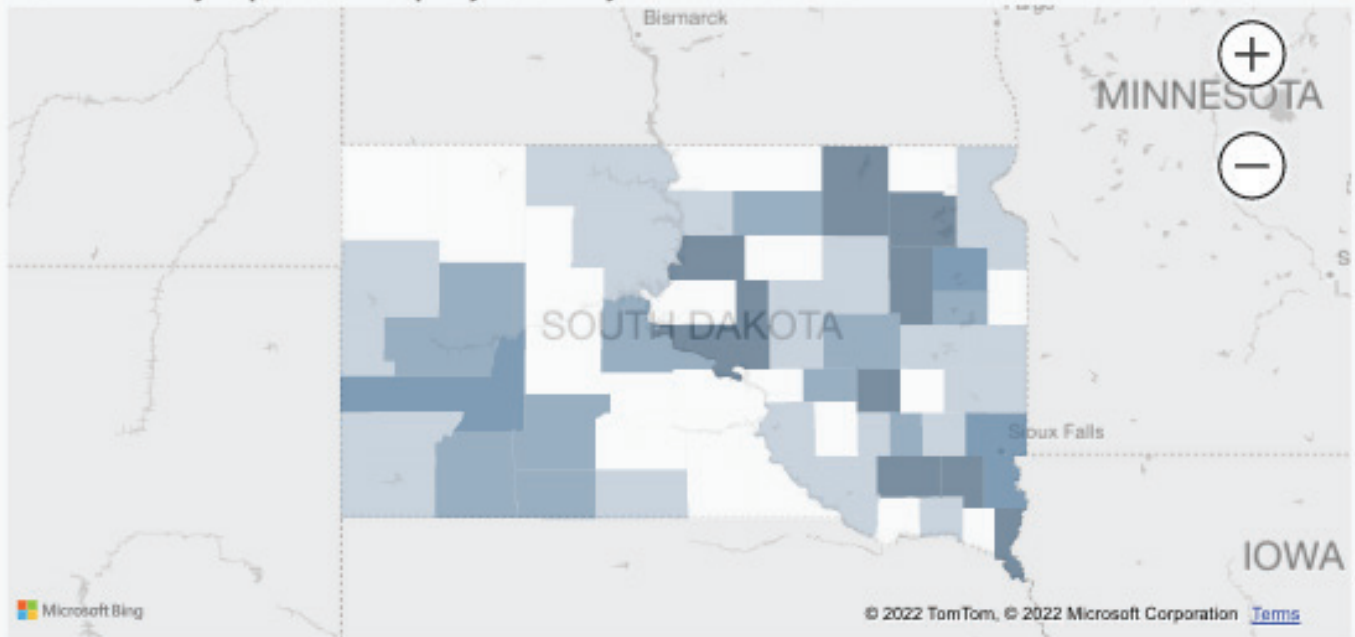
Recovered Cases

231,373

Currently Hospitalized

70

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

236,845

PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 7 Days

4.8%

3/10/2022 - 3/16/2022

Total Tests

2,123,819

Ever Hospitalized

10,673

Deaths Among Cases

2,875

% Progress (January Goal: 44233 Tests)

423%

% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)

169%

% Progress (March Goal: 44233 Tests)

62%

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Brown County COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

49

Active Cases

152
-47

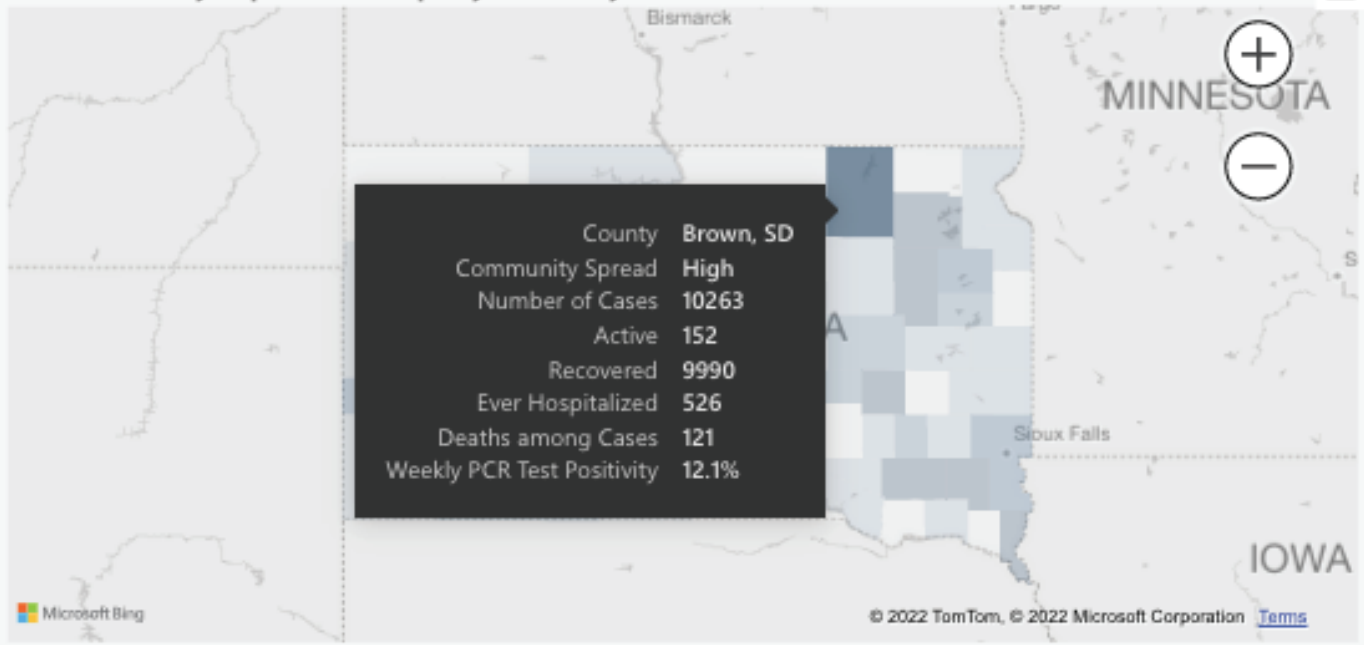
Recovered Cases

9,990

Currently Hospitalized

70

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

10,263

PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 7 Days

7.0%

3/10/2022 - 3/16/2022

Total Tests

102,311

Ever Hospitalized

526

Deaths Among Cases

121

% Progress (January Goal: 44233 Tests)

423%

% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)

169%

% Progress (March Goal: 44233 Tests)

62%

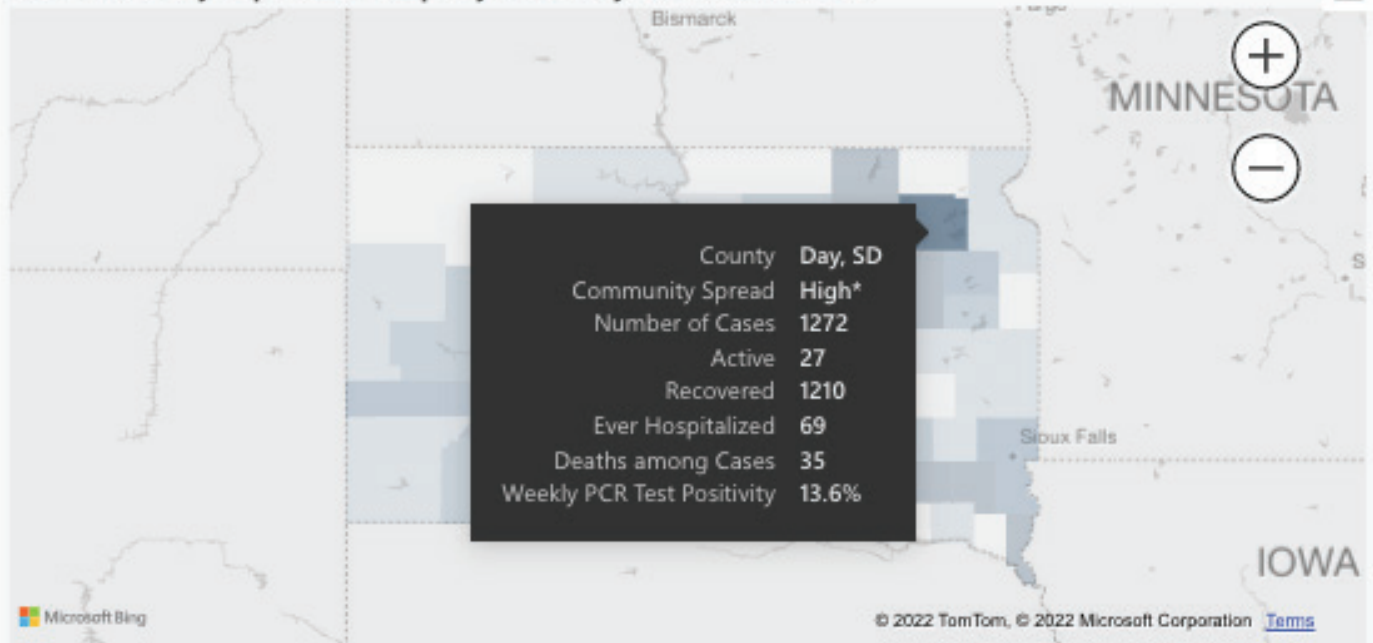
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Day County COVID-19 Report



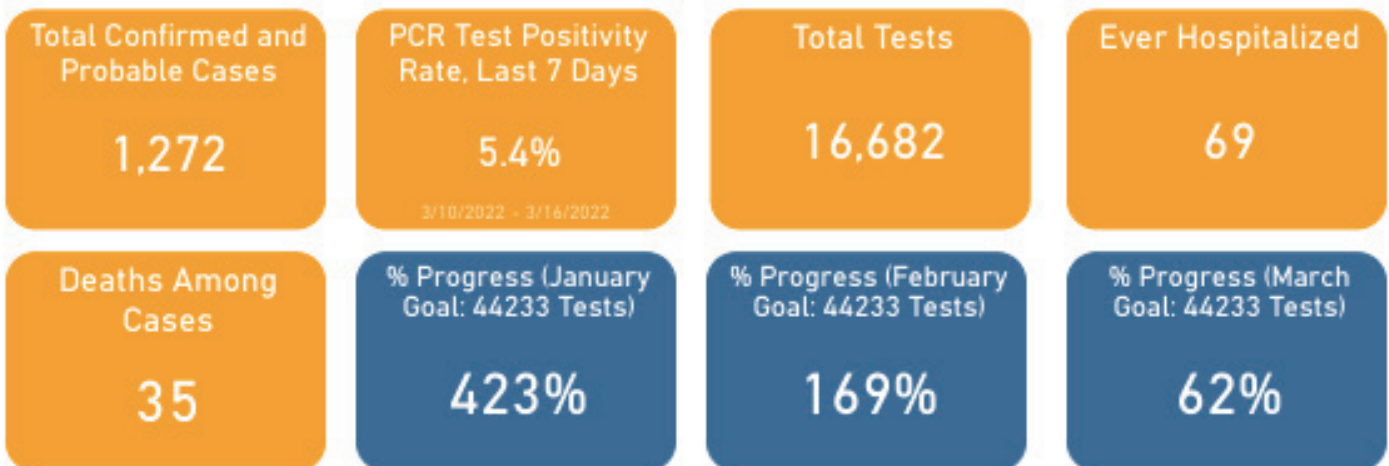
Community Spread Map by County of Residence



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>



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COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Currently Hospitalized	-18	70
Active Cases		2597
Deaths Among Cases	+4	2875
Ever Hospitalized		10673
Recovered Cases		231373
Total Cases		236845

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths Among Cases
Female	125197	1305
Male	111648	1570

VARIANT CASES OF COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

COVID-19 Variant	# of Cases
Delta (B.1.617.2 & AY lineages)	1677
Omicron (B.1.1.529 & BA lineages)	861
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	15864	3
10-19 years	28738	2
20-29 years	41566	14
30-39 years	40250	50
40-49 years	33227	85
50-59 years	30433	219
60-69 years	25093	464
70-79 years	13131	675
80+ years	8543	1363

RACE/ETHNICITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Race/Ethnicity	# of Cases	% of Cases
Asian / Pacific Islander	3264	1%
Black	5826	2%
Hispanic	10194	4%
Native American	30152	13%
Other	1978	1%
Unknown	4431	2%
White	181000	76%

Groton Area COVID-19 Report

Groton Area School District

Active COVID-19 Cases

Updated March 16, 2022; 9:07 AM

Same number as last week

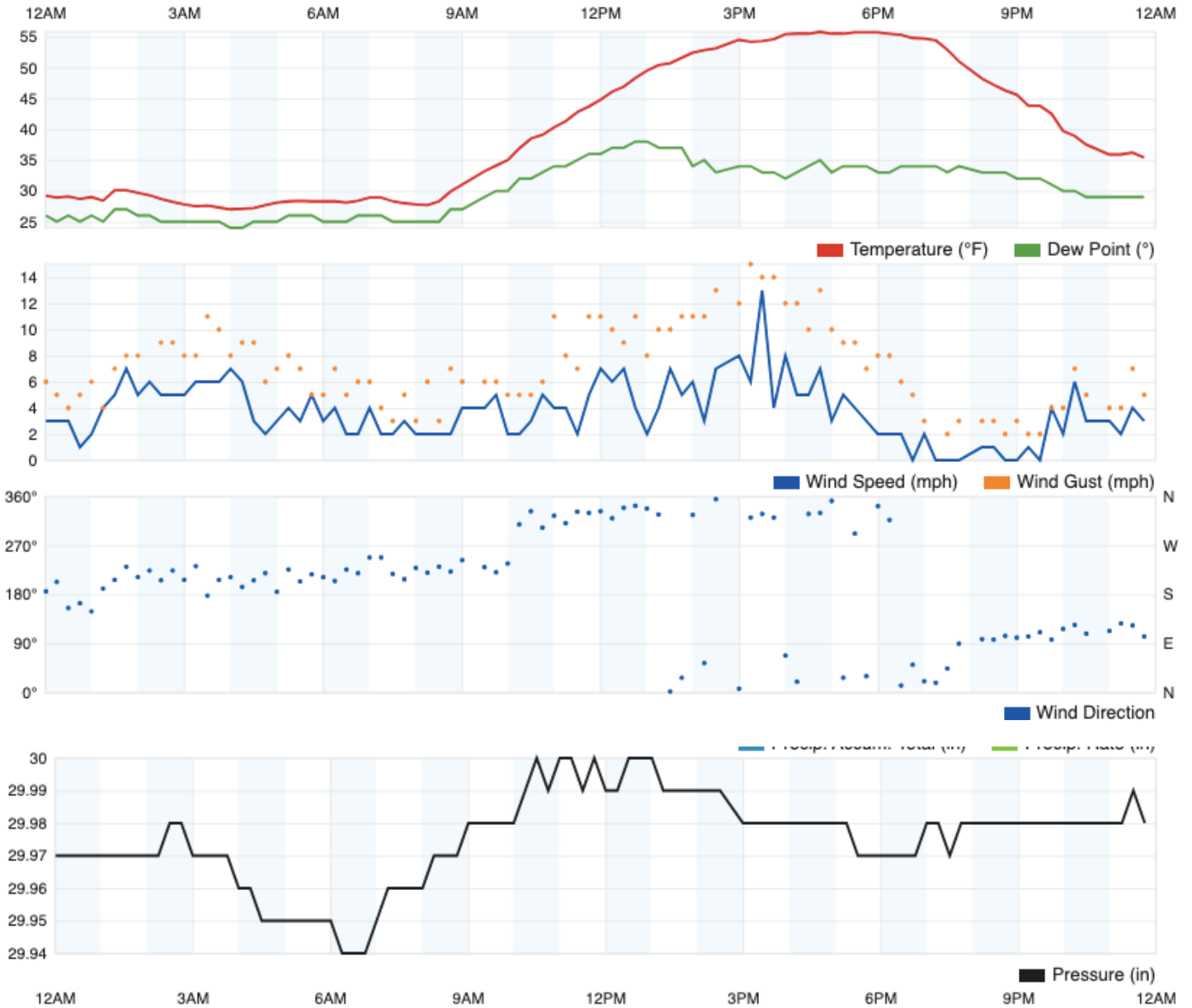
J	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	1	1	S	T
K	G										0	1	2	t	o
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1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2

Change **+1** **0** **0** **0** **0** **0** **0** **0** **0** **0** **0** **+1** **0** **0** **0** **-1** **+1**

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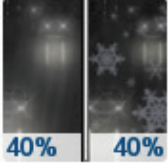

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
				
Mostly Sunny then Partly Sunny and Breezy	Mostly Cloudy	Chance Rain and Breezy	Chance Rain and Breezy then Chance Rain/Snow	Breezy. Chance Rain/Snow then Chance Rain
High: 70 °F	Low: 37 °F	High: 52 °F	Low: 32 °F	High: 44 °F

Mild Again Today

Today

Partly Sunny

*Highs mid 50s east to near
75° south*

Monday

*Considerable cloudiness
with a chance of rain
Highs mostly in the 50s.*

Red Flag Warning Issued

***** A Red Flag Warning is in effect for
Much of Central/NE SD this afternoon *****

Gusty winds, *dry* vegetation, and very *dry* air will
lead to very high to extreme grassland fire danger
this afternoon.



Issued Sunday 3:30 AM CDT NWS Aberdeen SD



Another mild day is on tap for the region. The mild temps, dry air and breezy winds will lead to very high or extreme fire danger this afternoon. #sdwx #mnwx

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Today in Weather History

March 20, 1982: A winter storm dropped 10-20 inches of heavy wet snow across the northern two-thirds of South Dakota. Five persons were killed and eight others injured in indirect accidents. Downed power lines caused isolated power outages. A half dozen newborn calves died of exposure near Lemmon in Perkins County. Also, 5% of the pheasant population in Brown, Edmunds, and Faulk Counties were killed. The weight of the snow collapsed a canopy of a grocery store in McLaughlin, Corson County, tearing out part of the brick front and breaking windows in the store.

March 20, 2008: An upper-level disturbance coupled with an area of low pressure moving across the Central Plains brought widespread heavy snow from the late afternoon through the early morning hours to north-central and northeast South Dakota. Heavy snow of 6 to as much as 18 inches fell in this area resulting in school delays and cancelations along with treacherous travel conditions. Some snowfall amounts included: 6 inches at Bowdle, South Shore, and Bradley; 7 inches at Eureka, Chelsea, Bristol, and Pollock; 8 inches near Hosmer, Osaka, and Roscoe; 9 inches at Victor; 10 inches at Westport and Ipswich. Locations with a foot or more of snowfall included: 12 inches at Columbia, Milbank, and Waubay; 13 inches at Sisseton and Webster; 14 inches at Big Stone City; 15 inches at Summit; 16 inches at Roy Lake; 18 inches at Wilmot and Pickerel Lake State Park.

1924 - A late winter storm in Oklahoma produced nearly a foot of snow at Oklahoma City and at Tulsa. (David Ludlum)

1948: The city of Juneau received 31 inches of snow in 24 hours, a record for the Alaska Capitol. (20th - 21st)

Also, on this day, an F3 tornado tracked through Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City, OK just before 10 pm destroying 54 aircraft, including 17 transport planes valued at \$500,000 apiece. The total damage amounted to more than \$10 million, a record for the state that stood until the massive tornado outbreak of 5/3/1999. Major Ernest W. Fawbush and Captain Robert C. Miller were ordered to see if operationally forecasting tornadoes were possible. The tornado prompted the first attempt at tornado forecasting. Forecasters at Tinker believed conditions were again favorable for tornadoes and issued the first recorded tornado forecast. Five days later, on 3/25 at 6 pm, a forecasted tornado occurred, crossing the prepared base, and the damage was minimized. The successful, albeit somewhat lucky forecast, paved the way for tornado forecasts to be issued by the U.S. Weather Bureau after a lengthy ban.

1984 - A severe three day winter storm came to an end over the Central Plains. The storm produced up to twenty inches of snow in Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas, and left a thick coat of ice from eastern Kansas across northwestern Missouri into Iowa. (Storm Data)

1986: Great Britain recorded its highest wind gust ever as the summit of Scotland's Cairngorm Mountains, at 4,085 feet, had a gust of 172 mph.

1987 - A storm produced blizzard conditions in Wyoming and eastern Nebraska, and severe thunderstorms in central Nebraska. Snowfall totals ranged up to 12 inches at Glenrock WY and Chadron NE. Thunderstorms in central Nebraska produced wind gusts to 69 mph at Valentine, and wind gusts to 76 mph at Bartley. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1998: A deadly tornado outbreak occurred over portions of the southeastern United States on this day. Particularly hard hit were rural areas outside of Gainesville, Georgia, where at least 12 people were killed during the early morning hours. The entire outbreak killed 14 people and produced 12 tornadoes across three states. The town of Stoneville, North Carolina, hard hit by the storms.

2005 - An F1 tornado hits South San Francisco. Trees are uprooted. At least twenty homes and twenty businesses are damaged, including the city's new fire station.

2006 - Grand Island, NE, receives 17.8 inches of snow in 24 hours, breaking the old local record for the most snowfall in a day by 4.8 inches. 29.7 inches in 48 hours also breaks a record.

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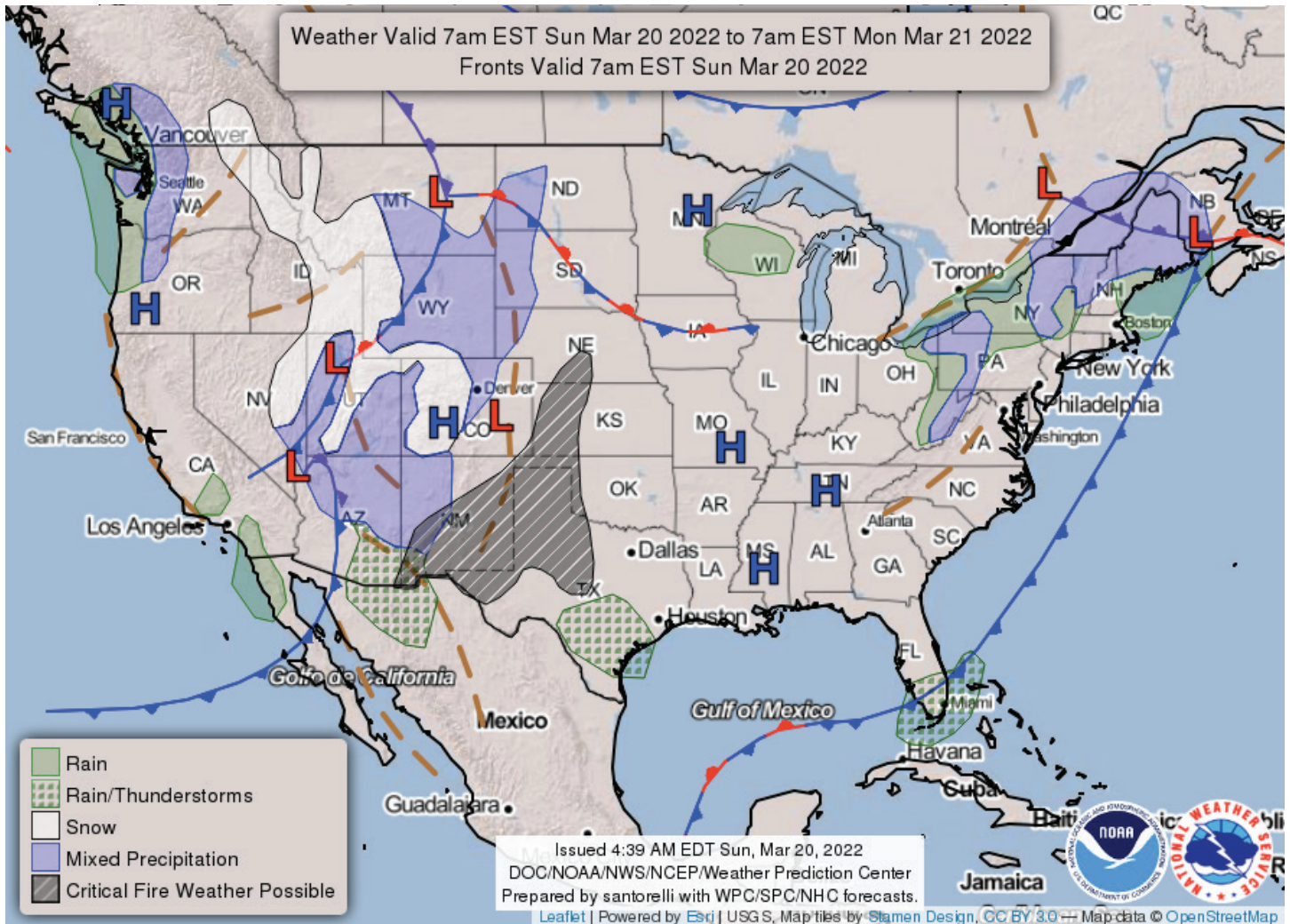
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 56 °F at 5:36 PM
Low Temp: 27 °F at 3:59 AM
Wind: 15 mph at 3:08 PM
Precip: 0.00

Day length: 12 hours, 12 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 75 in 1910
Record Low: -6 in 1965
Average High: 44°F
Average Low: 21°F
Average Precip in Mar.: 0.52
Precip to date in Mar.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 1.69
Precip Year to Date: 0.97
Sunset Tonight: 7:46:16 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:31:22 AM



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HOW CLOSE IS NEAR?

Lord Moynihan of Leeds, England, was very highly respected for his brilliance and skills as a surgeon. He became so famous that other surgeons would travel great distances to observe him operate. One day, after a long and difficult procedure, he was asked if he objected to the large group that had been watching him.

After thinking for a moment, he said, "Well, it's like this: when I operate there are just three people in the room - the patient and myself."

"But that's only two. You said three. Who is the third person?" he was asked.

"The Lord," Lord Moynihan said.

The Psalmist once said, "Yet, You are near, Lord."

What might he have meant? Two things for certain.

We know that God is near us to guide us. Many ask the question, "Where am I going?" Perhaps it would be much better to ask, "Who am I following?" Our God has infallible wisdom, knows what is best for us and will meet our every need as long as we look to and depend on Him.

Secondly, we know that our God is near us to guard us. He walks before us, and His angels surround us. No one or no thing can touch us without His permission. We have His Word "that in all things God is working for His good with those who love Him."

Surrendering all that we are and all that we have to Him is the first step for us to take if we want Him to be our Leader. After we do this, we will have His assurance that everything will work to our good and His glory.

Prayer: Lord, open our eyes that we may see You, our ears that we may hear You and our wills to obey You. Would You make us aware of Your nearness? In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Yet you are near, Lord, and all your commands are true. Psalm 119:151

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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
01/29/2023 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)

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The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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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

02-17-18-21-22

(two, seventeen, eighteen, twenty-one, twenty-two)

Estimated jackpot: \$20,000

Lotto America

01-07-11-27-32, Star Ball: 8, ASB: 3

(one, seven, eleven, twenty-seven, thirty-two; Star Ball: eight; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$9.2 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$39 million

Powerball

08-09-18-48-52, Powerball: 6, Power Play: 2

(eight, nine, eighteen, forty-eight, fifty-two; Powerball: six; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$147 million

Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL

SDHSAA State Tournament

Class AA

Seventh Place: Sioux Falls Jefferson 54, Yankton 32

Fifth Place: Sioux Falls Lincoln 69, Mitchell 52

Third Place: Sioux Falls Washington 66, Harrisburg 55

Championship: Sioux Falls Roosevelt 54, Sioux Falls O'Gorman 52, OT

Class A

Seventh Place: Groton Area 66, Lakota Tech 57

Fifth Place: Sioux Falls Christian 67, Winner 54

Third Place: St. Thomas More 43, Flandreau 42

Championship: Dakota Valley 82, Sioux Valley 65

Class B

Seventh Place: Aberdeen Christian 72, Freeman Academy/Marion 65

Fifth Place: Waubay/Summit 40, Castlewood 39

Third Place: White River 83, Potter County 74

Championship: De Smet 49, Lower Brule 26

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

South Dakota kidnapping suspect arrested in North Dakota

EDGELEY, N.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man was arrested near Edgeley early Saturday morning in connection with a suspected kidnapping, authorities said.

Ryan Degroat is accused of abducting a 41-year-old woman from her mother's home in Brown County, South Dakota, KFGO radio reported. The incident was reported around 10:30 Friday night.

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Law enforcement was able to use cell phone triangulation to locate the suspect's car north of Edgeley. The woman was taken to a Jamestown hospital and treated for undisclosed injuries sustained in the incident.

]South Dakota women finally move on, get Baylor in 2nd round

WACO, Texas (AP) — South Dakota is moving on in the women's NCAA Tournament for the first time. The reward is a matchup with Baylor on the second-seeded Bears' home court, where they've won 17 consecutive tournament games.

"I think they're a really, really good basketball team," Baylor coach Nicki Collen said of the 10th-seeded Coyotes. "Probably underseeded with respect to their league. They didn't have those like feather-in-their-cap marquee non-conference wins, but they're a really good basketball team."

The second-round meeting Sunday night comes after South Dakota (28-5) picked up its third-ever win over a Southeastern Conference team, leading by double digits for long stretches in a 75-61 victory over Mississippi.

Baylor's 89-49 victory over Hawaii came in Collen's tournament debut with the Bears, a notable moment considering she replaced three-time champion Kim Mulkey.

Now the Bears (28-6) will chase a 13th consecutive trip to the Sweet 16, while Alabama graduate transfer Jordan Lewis is looking for her first. She led Baylor with 23 points against Hawaii.

"I think it's a motivating factor, but I think it's one of the reasons I came here to play in a program like Baylor because they're known for going to the Sweet 16 and known for competing at a high level," Lewis said. "When you come here, you have to have that same competitive mindset and not just settle for what you think is OK."

DOUBLING UP

Two-time All-American NaLyssa Smith is third nationally with 25 double-doubles after getting 21 points and 14 rebounds against Hawaii. She had 17 and nine in the third quarter, when Baylor outscored the Rainbow Wahine 34-8 to turn the game into a blowout.

"She's one of them players, you might not realize it but you can look up at any given moment and she'll have 20," teammate Sarah Andrews said. "It's amazing just the way she impacts the game, and at any given moment I know she's going to go off."

POWER DUO

Senior standouts Chloe Lamb and Hannah Sjerven led South Dakota's first tournament victory. They'll have to be brilliant again if the Coyotes hope to have any chance at a huge upset.

Lamb is the guard in charge of setting things up and scoring from the perimeter, while Sjerven is the crafty post player facing a huge challenge against the 6-foot-4 Smith and 6-3 frontcourt mate Queen Agbo.

"The successes always brings confidence, so I think with that, a little more comfortable going into the next one," Lamb said. "Just see what we can do."

Sjerven made all seven of her shots against a solid defensive team in Mississippi, starting with a 3-pointer on the first possession of the game.

"These young ladies have been incredible leaders in our program in the way that they work and the way they communicate with each other, in the way they lead us in terms of making sure that we're recovered and ready to go," coach Dawn Plitzuweit said.

SMITH AND COMPANY

Lewis hasn't carried the scoring load often but did against Hawaii. Andrews helped finish the second-half rout by scoring the first 11 Baylor points of the fourth quarter on her way to 16 points, seven rebounds and six assists.

Egbo, who isn't as prolific as Smith on double-doubles, recorded her 13th against Hawaii. She had four in a row during Big 12 play, and a career-high 21 rebounds against Iowa State in January.

"I know everyone asks before even we played this game, obviously, NaLyssa Smith is really good, but what will it take for you guys to ultimately try to win a national championship?" Collen said. "I talked a

lot about Jordan and Queen.

"Jordan has the ability to make 3s. She's a kid who gets in the gym. She can get three-point plays, and she can make the right pass. She's a huge key for us."

Sioux Falls, developers reach deal over failed parking ramp

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The city of Sioux Falls and a private development group have settled a three-year dispute over who was to blame for the failure of a commercial building project around the city's newest downtown parking ramp.

The Argus Leader reports Mayor Paul TenHaken authorized the city to enter into a settlement agreement with Village River Group, following an alleged breach of contract by the developers in 2019. In exchange for settling the dispute, the city will pay Village River Group \$500,000.

"(The settlement) will allow a clean and final end to the development agreement and a path forward for the city to immediately proceed with improving the appearance of and developing the site of the downtown parking ramp," the mayor said Friday.

A seven-story city-owned parking ramp in downtown Sioux Falls was completed in summer 2020 for a cost of about \$22 million.

But Village River Group never began its portion of the work. The group of investors had a deal with City Hall under former mayor Mike Huether to construct 15 stories of private hotels, restaurants, bars and retail space on top of and around the city's ramp.

That's because a year before the ramp opened, the city terminated that agreement, alleging the developers had breached its contract.

Live updates: Patriot air defense systems move into Slovakia

By The Associated Press undefined

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia — Slovakia's Defense Minister Jaroslav Nad says the first multinational NATO units with the Patriot air defense systems have been moving to his country.

Nad said on Sunday the transfers will continue in the next days.

Germany and the Netherlands have agreed to send their troops armed with the Patriots to Slovakia. The troops are some of the 2,100 soldiers from several NATO members, including the United States, who will form a battlegroup on Slovak territory as the alliance boosts its defenses in its eastern flank following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Nad says the Patriots will be initially deployed at the armed forces base of Sliac in central Slovakia before they will be stationed at various places to protect the largest possible Slovak territory.

He thanked Germany and the Netherlands for their "responsible decision" to fundamentally boost Slovakia's defenses.

At the same time, Nad said, the Patriots would not replace the Russian-made S-300 air-defense system his country has relied on, calling their deployment "another component to protect Slovakia's airspace."

Nad previously has said his country will be willing to provide its S-300 long-range air defense missile system to Ukraine on condition it has a proper replacement.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy mentioned the S-300s when he spoke to U.S. lawmakers by video Wednesday, appealing for anti-air systems that would allow Ukraine protect its airspace against Russian warplanes and missiles. NATO members Bulgaria, Slovakia and Greece have the S-300s.

The Slovak minister said Sunday his country will work to replace the S-300s with a different system that would be compatible with the systems used by the allies.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR:

- School bombed in Ukraine city; Zelenskyy cites war crimes
- Even if Russia is denied an easy victory, Putin can keep pounding Ukraine for months
- Surrogate babies born in Ukraine wait out war in basement

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- Grassroots groups help rescue Holocaust survivors in Ukraine
- Minister: Clearing the live ordnance now scattered across Ukraine will take years and outside help
- Go to <https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine> for more coverage

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS TODAY:

KYIV, Ukraine — The authorities in the besieged Ukrainian city of Mariupol say that nearly 40,000 people have fled over the past week. That's nearly 10% of its 430,000 population.

The city council in the Azov Sea port city said Sunday that 39,426 residents have safely evacuated from Mariupol in their own vehicles. It said the evacuees used more than 8,000 vehicles to leave via a humanitarian corridor via Berdyansk to Zaporizhzhia.

The strategic city has been encircled by the Russian troops and faced a relentless Russian bombardment for three weeks, coming to symbolize the horror of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Local authorities have said the siege has cut off food, water and energy supplies, and killed at least 2,300 people, some of whom had to be buried in mass graves. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Sunday that the siege of Mariupol would go down in history for what he said were war crimes committed by Russian troops.

KYIV, Ukraine — Authorities in Ukraine's eastern city of Kharkiv say at least five civilians have been killed in the latest Russian shelling.

Regional police in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, said the victims of the Russian artillery attack early Sunday included a 9-year-old boy.

Kharkiv has been besieged by Russian forces since the start of the invasion and has come under a relentless barrage.

KYIV, Ukraine — Authorities in Ukraine have evacuated scores of baby orphans from a city engulfed by combat.

The governor of the northeastern Sumy region, Dmytro Zhyvytskyy, said Sunday that 71 infants have been safely evacuated via a humanitarian corridor. Zhyvytskyy said on Facebook that the orphans will be taken to an unspecified foreign country. He said most of them require constant medical attention.

Like many other Ukrainian cities, Sumy has been besieged by Russian troops and faced repeated shelling.

The Russian military says it has carried out a new series of strikes on Ukrainian military facilities with long-range hypersonic and cruise missiles.

Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov said Sunday that the Kinzhal hypersonic missile hit a Ukrainian fuel depot in Kostiantynivka near the Black Sea port of Mykolaiv. The strike marked the second day in a row that Russia used the Kinzhal, a weapon capable of striking targets 2,000 kilometers (1,250 miles) away at a speed 10 times the speed of sound.

The previous day, the Russian military said the Kinzhal was used for the first time in combat to destroy an ammunition depot in Diliatyn in the Carpathian Mountains in western Ukraine.

Konashenkov noted that the Kalibr cruise missiles launched by Russian warships from the Caspian Sea were also involved in the strike on the fuel depot in Kostiantynivka. He said Kalibr missiles launched from the Black Sea were used to destroy an armor repair plant in Nizhyn in the Chernihiv region in northern Ukraine.

Konashenkov added that another strike by air-launched missiles hit a Ukrainian facility in Ovruch in the northern Zhytomyr region where foreign fighters and Ukrainian special forces were based.

KYIV, Ukraine — Authorities in the besieged Ukrainian port city of Mariupol say that the Russian military has bombed an art school where about 400 people had taken refuge.

Local authorities said Sunday that the school building was destroyed and people could remain under the rubble. There was no immediate word on casualties.

Russian forces on Wednesday also bombed a theater in Mariupol where civilians took shelter. The au-

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thorities said 130 people were rescued but many more could remain under the debris.

Mariupol, a strategic port on the Azov Sea, has been encircled by Russian troops, cut off from energy, food and water supplies, and has faced a relentless bombardment.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the siege of Mariupol would go down in history for what he said were war crimes committed by Russian troops.

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has ordered activities of 11 political parties with links to Russia to be suspended.

The largest of them is the Opposition Platform for Life, which has 44 out of 450 seats in the country's parliament. The party is led by Viktor Medvedchuk, who has friendly ties with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is the godfather of Medvedchuk's daughter.

Also on the list is the Nashi (Ours) party led by Yevheniy Murayev. Before the Russian invasion, the British authorities had warned that Russia wanted to install Murayev as the leader of Ukraine.

Speaking in a video address early Sunday, Zelenskyy said that "given a large-scale war unleashed by the Russian Federation and links between it and some political structures, the activities of a number of political parties is suspended for the period of the martial law." He added that "activities by politicians aimed at discord and collaboration will not succeed."

Zelenskyy's announcement follows the introduction of the martial law that envisages a ban on parties associated with Russia.

KYIV, Ukraine -- In peacetime, Ukraine has a thriving surrogate industry, one of the few countries where foreigners can get Ukrainian women to carry their pregnancies. Now at least 20 of those babies are stuck in a makeshift bomb shelter in Ukraine's capital, waiting for parents to travel into the war zone to pick them up.

They're well cared for at the moment. Surrogacy center nurses are stranded with them, because constant shelling makes it too dangerous for them to go home. Russian troops are trying to encircle the city, with Ukrainian defenders holding them off for now, the threat comes from the air.

Nurse Lyudmilla Yashchenko says they're staying in the bomb shelter to save their lives, and the lives of the babies, some of whom are just days old. They have enough food and baby supplies for now, and can only hope and wait for the newborns to be picked up, and the war to end.

The British defense ministry said the Ukrainian Air Force and air defense forces are "continuing to effectively defend Ukrainian airspace."

"Russia has failed to gain control of the air and is largely relying on stand-off weapons launched from the relative safety of Russian airspace to strike targets within Ukraine," the ministry said on Twitter. "Gaining control of the air was one of Russia's principal objectives for the opening days of the conflict and their continued failure to do so has significantly blunted their operational progress."

A Ukrainian military official meanwhile confirmed to a Ukrainian newspaper that Russian forces carried out a missile strike Friday on a missile and ammunition warehouse in the Delyatyn settlement of the Ivano-Frankivsk region in western Ukraine.

But Ukraine's Air Forces spokesman Yuriy Ihnat told *Ukrainskaya Pravda* on Saturday that it has not been confirmed that the missile was indeed a hypersonic Kinzhal.

Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said earlier Saturday that Russian military hit the underground warehouse in Delyatyn on Friday with the hypersonic Kinzhal missile in its first reported combat use. According to Russian officials, the Kinzhal, carried by MiG-31 fighter jets, has a range of up to 2,000 kilometers (about 1,250 miles) and flies at 10 times the speed of sound.

LVIV, Ukraine -- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the siege of Mariupol will go down in history for what he's calling war crimes by Russia's military.

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"To do this to a peaceful city, what the occupiers did, is a terror that will be remembered for centuries to come," he said early Sunday in his nighttime video address to the nation.

Zelenskyy told Ukrainians the ongoing negotiations with Russia were "not simple or pleasant, but they are necessary." He said he discussed the course of the talks with French President Emmanuel Macron on Saturday.

"Ukraine has always sought a peaceful solution. Moreover, we are interested in peace now," he said.

Meanwhile, Russia's military isn't even recovering the bodies of its soldiers in some places, Zelenskyy said.

"In places where there were especially fierce battles, the bodies of Russian soldiers simply pile up along our line of defense. And no one is collecting these bodies," he said. He described a battle near Chornobayivka in the south, where Ukrainian forces held their positions and six times beat back the Russians, who just kept "sending their people to slaughter."

WASHINGTON — The math of military conquests and occupation may be against Russian President Vladimir Putin in Ukraine.

Estimates of Russian deaths vary widely. Yet even conservative figures are in the low thousands. That's a much faster pace than in previous Russian offensives, threatening support for the war among ordinary Russians. Russia had 64 deaths in five days of fighting during its 2008 war with Georgia. It lost about 15,000 in Afghanistan over 10 years, and more than 11,000 over years of fighting in Chechnya.

Russia's number of dead and wounded in Ukraine is nearing the 10% benchmark of diminished combat effectiveness, said Dmitry Gorenburg, a researcher on Russia's security at the Virginia-based CNA think tank. The reported battlefield deaths of four Russian generals — out of an estimated 20 in the fight — signal impaired command, he said.

Researchers tracking only those Russian equipment losses that were photographed or recorded on video say Russia has lost more than 1,500 tanks, trucks, mounted equipment and other heavy gear. Two out of three of those were captured or abandoned, signaling the failings of the Russian troops that let them go.

When it comes to the grinding job of capturing and holding cities, conventional military metrics suggest Russia needs a 5-to-1 advantage in urban fighting, analysts say. Meanwhile, the formula for ruling a restive territory in the face of armed opposition is 20 fighters for every 1,000 people — or 800,000 Russian troops for Ukraine's more than 40 million people, said Michael Clarke, former head of the British-based Royal United Services Institute, a defense think tank.

That's almost as many as Russia's entire active-duty military of 900,000, and it means controlling substantial Ukrainian territory long term could take more resources than Russia can commit, he said.

"Unless the Russians intend to be completely genocidal — they could flatten all the major cities, and Ukrainians will rise up against Russian occupation — there will be just constant guerrilla war," said Clarke.

Ukraine says Russia bombs another shelter in besieged city

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

LVIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian authorities said Sunday that Russia's military bombed an art school sheltering some 400 people in the embattled port city of Mariupol, where Ukraine's president said an unrelenting Russian siege would be remembered for centuries to come.

It was the second time in less than a week that city officials reported a public building where residents had taken shelter coming under attack. A bomb hit a Mariupol theater with more than 1,300 believed to be inside on Wednesday, local officials said.

There was no immediate word on casualties from the reported strike on the art school, which The Associated Press could not independently verify. Ukrainian officials have not given an update on the search of the theater since Friday, when they said at least 130 had been rescued.

Mariupol, a strategic port on the Azov Sea, has been under bombardment for at least three weeks and has seen some of the worst horrors of the war in Ukraine. At least 2,300 people have died, some of whom had to be buried in mass graves, and food, water and electricity have run low.

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"To do this to a peaceful city, what the occupiers did, is a terror that will be remembered for centuries to come," Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address to the nation. "The more Russia uses terror against Ukraine, the worse the consequences for it."

In recent days, Russian forces have battled their way into the city, cutting it off from the Azov Sea and devastating a massive steel plant. The fall of Mariupol would be an important but costly victory for the Russians, whose advance is largely stalled outside other major cities more than three weeks into the biggest land invasion in Europe since World War II.

In major cities across Ukraine, hundreds of men, women and children have been killed in Russian bombardments, while millions of civilians have raced to underground shelters or fled the country.

In the capital, Kyiv, at least 20 babies carried by Ukrainian surrogate mothers are stuck in a makeshift bomb shelter, waiting for parents to travel into the war zone to pick them up. The infants — some just days old — are being cared for by nurses who cannot leave the shelter because of constant shelling by Russian troops who are trying to encircle the city.

In the hard-hit northeastern city of Sumy, authorities evacuated 71 orphaned babies through a humanitarian corridor, regional governor Dmytro Zhyvytsky said Sunday. He said the orphans, most of whom need constant medical attention, would be taken to an unspecified foreign country.

Russian shelling killed at least five civilians, including a 9-year-old boy, in Kharkiv, an eastern city that is Ukraine's second-largest.

The British Defense Ministry said Russia's failure to gain control of the skies over Ukraine "has significantly blunted their operational progress," forcing them to rely on stand-off weapons launched from the relative safety of Russian airspace.

A rocket attack on the Black Sea port city of Mykolaiv early Friday killed as many as 40 marines, a Ukrainian military official told The New York Times, making it one of the deadliest single attacks on Ukrainian forces.

In a separate strike, the Russian Defense Ministry said a Kinzhal hypersonic missile hit a Ukrainian fuel depot in Kostiantynivka, a city near Mykolaiv. The Russian military said Saturday that it used a Kinzhal for the first time in combat to destroy an ammunition depot in the Carpathian Mountains in western Ukraine.

Russia has said the Kinzhal, carried by MiG-31 fighter jets, has a range of up to 2,000 kilometers (about 1,250 miles) and flies at 10 times the speed of sound. Pentagon press secretary John Kirby said Saturday that the U.S. couldn't confirm the use of a hypersonic missile in Ukraine.

Konashenkov said Kalibr cruise missiles launched by Russian warships from the Caspian Sea were also involved in the strike on the fuel depot in Kostiantynivka and were used to destroy an armor repair plant in northern Ukraine.

Unexpectedly strong Ukrainian resistance has dashed Russian President Vladimir Putin's hopes for a fast victory after he ordered his troops to invade Ukraine on Feb. 24.

While the Kremlin has said Russia is conducting a "special military operation" aimed at legitimate targets, U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said Saturday that "brutal, savage techniques" targeting civilians had allowed Moscow's troops to advance.

U.N. bodies have confirmed more than 847 civilian deaths since the war began, though they concede the actual toll is likely much higher. The U.N. says nearly 3.4 million people have fled Ukraine as refugees.

Estimates of Russian deaths vary widely, but even conservative figures are in the low thousands. The reported battlefield deaths of four Russian generals — out of an estimated 20 deployed in Ukraine, suggest an impaired command of the fighting, said Dmitry Gorenburg, a researcher on Russia's security at the Virginia-based CNA think tank. Gorenburg said.

Russia would need 800,000 troops — almost equal to its entire active-duty military — to control Ukraine in the face of prolonged armed opposition, according to Michael Clarke, former head of the British-based Royal United Services Institute, a defense think tank.

"Unless the Russians intend to be completely genocidal — they could flatten all the major cities, and Ukrainians will rise up against Russian occupation — there will be just constant guerrilla war," Clarke said.

Ukraine and Russia have held several rounds of negotiations aimed at ending the conflict, but the neigh-

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boring countries remain divided over several issues. Zelenskyy has said he is willing to drop Ukraine's bid to join NATO but wants certain security guarantees from Russia. Moscow is pressing for Ukraine's complete demilitarization.

Evacuations from Mariupol and other besieged cities proceeded along eight of 10 humanitarian corridors that Ukraine and Russia agreed to on Saturday, Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said, and officials said a total of 6,623 people left Kyiv and other cities.

Vereshchuk said planned humanitarian aid for the southern city of Kherson, which Russia seized early in the war, could not be delivered because the trucks were stopped along the way by Russian troops.

Mariupol authorities said Sunday that nearly 40,000 people had left the city in the last week, the vast majority in their own vehicles, despite ongoing air and artillery strikes.

The Mariupol city council claimed Saturday that Russian soldiers had forcibly relocated several thousand city residents, mostly women and children, to Russia. It didn't say where, and AP could not immediately confirm the claim.

Some Russians also have fled their country amid a widespread crackdown on dissent. Since the invasion of Ukraine started, police have arrested thousands of antiwar protesters, while government agencies have silenced independent media and cut off access to social media sites like Facebook and Twitter.

In Ukraine, Zelenskyy on Sunday ordered the activities of 11 political parties with links to Russia to be suspended during the period of martial law. The largest of those parties has 44 out of 450 seats in the country's parliament.

"Activities by politicians aimed at discord and collaboration will not succeed," he said in the address.

N. Korea fires artillery into sea days after missile launch

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea fired suspected artillery pieces into the sea on Sunday, South Korea's military said, days after the North's latest missile launch ended in failure amid the country's recent burst of weapons testing activity.

There is speculation that North Korea could soon try to launch its developmental longest-range ballistic missile to bolster its arsenal and dial up pressure on the United States to wrest concessions as negotiations remain stalled. South Korea's military suggested North Korea's midair missile explosion last Wednesday involved parts of the Hwasong-17 missile, its biggest weapon.

On Sunday, South Korea's Defense Ministry said it detected firings likely from multiple rocket launch systems off North Korea's west coast. The ministry said the military closely monitors North Korean moves and maintains its readiness.

South Korea's presidential office said in a separate statement it held an emergency national security council meeting to discuss what it called the North's "short-range projectile launches."

Council members worked to analyze details of the firings in close coordination with the United States, it said. The statement added that South Korea will use its enhanced military capability and its alliance with the U.S. to prevent a security vacuum from occurring during a power transition period in Seoul.

President Moon Jae-in's single five-year term ends in May and he will be replaced by a new conservative government led by Yoon Suk Yeol. A former top prosecutor, Yoon has vowed to boost Seoul's military alliance with Washington and win a stronger U.S. security commitment to neutralize growing North Korean nuclear threats.

Wednesday's failed missile firing was the North's 10th weapons launch this year. The U.S. and South Korean militaries said they concluded that two of North Korea's recent launches before Wednesday's were meant to test a Hwasong-17 system. North Korea later said those launches were designed to test cameras and other systems for a spy satellite.

Some outside experts say North Korea will likely fire a Hwasong-17 rocket to test its long-range missile technology and also to put its first functioning spy satellite into orbit. The Hwasong-17's potential maximum range of 15,000 kilometers (9,320 miles) would place the entire U.S. mainland within its striking distance,

and its huge size suggests it can carry a bigger payload or multiple nuclear warheads.

The Hwasong-17 launch, if made, would be the North's most serious provocation since the country carried out three intercontinental ballistic missile tests in 2017.

The South Korean government didn't immediately disclose where Sunday's weapons firings occurred. The Koreas' poorly marked western sea boundary saw naval clashes in 1999, 2002 and 2009. Attacks blamed on North Korea in the area in 2010 killed 50 South Koreans — 46 on a warship and four on a border island.

S. Korea's next leader to abandon Blue House for new office

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea's incoming president said Sunday he will abandon the mountainside presidential palace of Blue House and establish his office at the Defense Ministry compound in central Seoul to better communicate with the public.

The plan drew an immediate backlash from critics of the relocation plan, who warned that a hasty movement of top government offices would undermine South Korea's national security, require excessive spending and violate property rights of residents in the new presidential office area.

Relocating the presidential office was one of President-elect Yoon Suk Yeol's main campaign promises. The conservative former top prosecutor whose single five-year term begins on May 10 said the location and design of the Blue House have fed criticism that South Korean leaders are cut off from the public and wield excessive power.

At the Blue House compound, offices for presidential advisers and the press room are not in the same building where the president works and are hundreds of meters (yards) apart. Some former officials said they sometimes used bicycles or cars to visit the president.

Yoon told a televised news conference Sunday that he chose the Defense Ministry compound because it's already equipped with security-related command facilities. He said his team dropped other sites because of inconveniences to the public by presidential security.

Yoon said he'll begin his term at the new office. He said Defense Ministry officials would be moved to the Joint Chiefs of Staff building at the compound, and that JCS staff would be moved in phases to a war command center near Seoul.

Yoon said a massive public park will be set up near the new presidential office and ordinary citizens will be able to look at his office at a close distance. He said he also plans to establish a press center and meet journalists frequently.

According to Yoon's plans, the current Blue House will be open to the public as a park on his inauguration day. He said he'll collect public opinions to choose the name of the new office.

Critics of Yoon's plan have called on him not to rush the relocation, saying other tasks require more urgent attention, such as surging COVID-19 cases, the North Korean nuclear threat and diverse economic woes.

Yun Ho-jung, a leader of the liberal Democratic Party, the biggest political party in South Korea, said the relocation would cause "a big hole in national security" amid North Korean threats because of the hasty movement of key facilities at the Defense Ministry compound. He said some Seoul residents will also likely suffer "immense damage" in their property rights because of expected government-imposed restrictions on developments in the areas near the new office.

"Is it appropriate to unilaterally push for the relocation of the Blue House and the Defense Ministry, which would determine national security and citizens' property rights, without asking the public opinions?" Yun said. He urged the president-elect to cancel the relocation plan.

Outgoing liberal President Moon Jae-in, a Democratic Party member, had earlier also promised to move out of the Blue House but canceled the plans after failing to find a site for the new office.

Yoon said he was aware of concerns but said if he starts his term at the Blue House, which critics have called "a symbol of imperial power," it will become harder to move out.

"I know relocating the presidential office isn't an easy thing. But if I back down on a promise with the

people (on the relocation) again, no other future president would attempt to do it," Yoon said. "I've made this decision for the future of the country."

Yoon said the relocation would cost about 50 billion won (\$41 million). Some critics earlier said it would cost up to 1 trillion won (\$825 million), an estimate Yoon called "groundless."

Hong Kong will review COVID-19 restrictions as cases decline

By HUIZHONG WU Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Hong Kong's leader said Sunday that the government would consider lifting strict social distancing measures as new COVID-19 infections in the city continued trending downward.

"I wouldn't promise now that there's room for adjustment," Chief Executive Carrie Lam said. "But following a review, we have a duty to account for the findings in this review and the direction we will take."

Hong Kong is in the middle of a massive outbreak, recording over 1 million total cases in the city of 7.4 million. The city has been hit hard, with mortuaries full as they try to cope with a high number of deaths. Hong Kong has so far refrained from a strict city-wide lockdown like those that China regularly imposes to control the spread of the virus.

But new infections in the city have been declining. In early March, Hong Kong reported more than 50,000 new infections in one day. On Saturday, it recorded 16,583 new cases.

"Having gone through the peak that you have seen here ... I think a responsible government should regularly and vigorously review these measures, to see whether there is room for adjustment," Lam said.

Lam said she would present the findings on Monday.

A vast majority of Hong Kong's COVID-19 deaths have been among those not fully vaccinated, with many in the elderly population. The city has reported 5,437 deaths as of Saturday's data, which have far outstripped the death toll in China at 4,638.

Hong Kong, although a part of China, is a special administrative region and counts its death toll separately.

Lam warned that the city could still see a resurgence in infections.

"The COVID situation is still severe although we have hit the peak apparently and there's a downward trend," said Lam. "However, from sewage surveillance, we can see there can be a possibility of rebound."

Zelenskyy says siege of Mariupol involved war crimes

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

LVIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said early Sunday the siege of the port city of Mariupol would go down in history for what he said were war crimes committed by Russian troops.

"To do this to a peaceful city, what the occupiers did, is a terror that will be remembered for centuries to come," Zelenskyy said in a video address to the nation.

Russian forces have pushed deeper into the besieged and battered city, where heavy fighting shut down a major steel plant and local authorities pleaded for more Western help.

In the capital, Kyiv, at least 20 babies carried by Ukrainian surrogate mothers are stuck in a makeshift bomb shelter, waiting for parents to travel into the war zone to pick them up. Some just days old, the babies are being cared for by nurses who cannot leave the shelter because of constant shelling by Russian troops who are trying to encircle the city.

The fall of Mariupol, the scene of some of the war's worst suffering, would mark a major battlefield advance for the Russians, who are largely bogged down outside major cities more than three weeks into the biggest land invasion in Europe since World War II.

"Children, elderly people are dying. The city is destroyed and it is wiped off the face of the earth," Mariupol police officer Michail Vershnin said from a rubble-strewn street in a video addressed to Western leaders that was authenticated by The Associated Press.

Details also began to emerge Saturday about a rocket attack that killed as many as 40 marines in the southern city of Mykolaiv the previous day, according to a Ukrainian military official who spoke to The New York Times.

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Russian forces have already cut Mariupol off from the Sea of Azov, and its fall would link Crimea, which Russia annexed in 2014, to eastern territories controlled by Moscow-backed separatists. It would mark a rare advance in the face of fierce Ukrainian resistance that has dashed Russia's hopes for a quick victory and galvanized the West.

Ukrainian and Russian forces battled over the Azovstal steel plant in Mariupol, Vadym Denysenko, adviser to Ukraine's interior minister, said. "One of the largest metallurgical plants in Europe is actually being destroyed," Denysenko said in televised remarks.

The Mariupol city council claimed hours later that Russian soldiers had forcibly relocated several thousand city residents, mostly women and children, to Russia. It didn't say where, and AP could not immediately confirm the claim.

Zelenskyy adviser Oleksiy Arestovych said the nearest forces that could assist Mariupol were already struggling against "the overwhelming force of the enemy" and that "there is currently no military solution to Mariupol."

Despite the siege in Mariupol, many remained struck by Ukraine's ability to hold back its much bigger, better-armed foe. The United Kingdom's Defense Ministry said Ukraine's airspace continued to be effectively defended.

"Gaining control of the air was one of Russia's principal objectives for the opening days of the conflict and their continued failure to do so has significantly blunted their operational progress," the ministry said on Twitter.

Russia is now relying on stand-off weapons launched from the relative safety of Russian airspace to strike targets within Ukraine, the ministry said.

In Mykolaiv, rescuers searched the rubble of the marine barracks that was destroyed in an apparent missile attack Friday. The region's governor said the marines were asleep when the attack happened.

It wasn't clear how many marines were inside at the time, and rescuers were still searching the rubble for survivors the following day. But a senior Ukrainian military official, who spoke to The New York Times on condition of anonymity to reveal sensitive information, estimated that as many as 40 marines were killed, which would make it one of the deadliest known attacks on Ukrainian forces during the war.

Estimates of Russian deaths vary widely, but even conservative figures are in the low thousands. Russia had 64 deaths in five days of fighting during its 2008 war with Georgia. It lost about 15,000 in Afghanistan over 10 years, and more than 11,000 in years of fighting in Chechnya.

Russia's number of dead and wounded in Ukraine is nearing the 10% benchmark of diminished combat effectiveness, said Dmitry Gorenburg, a researcher on Russia's security at the Virginia-based CNA think tank. The reported battlefield deaths of four Russian generals — out of an estimated 20 in the fight — signal impaired command, Gorenburg said.

Russia would need 800,000 troops — almost equal to its entire active-duty military — to control Ukraine long-term in the face of armed opposition, said Michael Clarke, former head of the British-based Royal United Services Institute, a defense think tank.

"Unless the Russians intend to be completely genocidal — they could flatten all the major cities, and Ukrainians will rise up against Russian occupation — there will be just constant guerrilla war," said Clarke.

The Russian military said Saturday that it used its latest hypersonic missile for the first time in combat. Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov said Kinzhal missiles destroyed an underground warehouse storing Ukrainian missiles and aviation ammunition in the western region of Ivano-Frankivsk.

Russia has said the Kinzhal, carried by MiG-31 fighter jets, has a range of up to 2,000 kilometers (about 1,250 miles) and flies at 10 times the speed of sound.

Pentagon press secretary John Kirby said the U.S. couldn't confirm the use of a hypersonic missile.

U.N. bodies have confirmed more than 847 civilian deaths since the war began, though they concede the actual toll is likely much higher. The U.N. says more than 3.3 million people have fled Ukraine as refugees.

Evacuations from Mariupol and other besieged cities proceeded along eight of 10 humanitarian corridors, Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said, and a total of 6,623 people left.

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Vereshchuk said planned humanitarian aid for the southern city of Kherson, which Russia seized early in the war, could not be delivered because the trucks were stopped along the way by Russian troops.

Ukraine and Russia have held several rounds of negotiations aimed at ending the conflict but remain divided over several issues, with Moscow pressing for its neighbor's demilitarization and Kyiv demanding security guarantees.

Around Ukraine, hospitals, schools and buildings where people sought safety have been attacked.

At least 130 people survived the Wednesday bombing of a Mariupol theater that was being used a shelter, but another 1,300 were believed to be still inside, Ludmyla Denisova, the Ukrainian Parliament's human rights commissioner, said Friday.

"We pray that they will all be alive, but so far there is no information about them," Denisova told Ukrainian television.

A satellite image from Maxar Technologies released Saturday confirmed earlier reports that much of the theater was destroyed. It also showed the word "CHILDREN" written in Russian in large white letters outside the building.

Russian forces have fired on eight cities and villages in the eastern Donetsk region in the past 24 hours, including Mariupol, Ukraine's national police said Saturday. Dozens of civilians were killed or wounded, and at least 37 residential buildings and facilities were damaged including a school, a museum and a shopping center.

In the western city of Lviv, Ukraine's cultural capital, which was hit by Russian missiles on Friday, military veterans were training dozens of civilians on how to handle firearms and grenades.

"It's hard, because I have really weak hands, but I can manage it," said one trainee, 22-year-old Katarina Ishchenko.

Top-seeded Gonzaga rallies in 2nd half to beat Memphis 82-78

By TIM BOOTH AP Sports Writer

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Drew Timme gathered his Gonzaga teammates at midcourt, pointed at the scoreboard showing a 10-point halftime deficit for the top overall seed and expressed a few choice words.

Timme's goal was to spark his teammates with words. He did it with his play on the court, too.

Or as Memphis coach Penny Hardaway said, "the Drew Timme effect came into play."

Timme scored 21 of his 25 points in the second half, and Gonzaga rallied from a 10-point halftime deficit to beat No. 9 seed Memphis 82-78 on Saturday night in the second round of the NCAA Tournament.

Trailing at the half for only the fourth time this season, Gonzaga leaned on its star junior to reach its seventh straight Sweet 16. The Bulldogs (28-3) will face No. 4 seed Arkansas in the West Region semifinals on Thursday in San Francisco.

"What I said was, no matter what happens, no matter what the score is, win or lose, this could very well be the last 20 minutes of basketball you ever play, and go out with no regrets," Timme recalled.

That was the G-rated version. But his point was made and the Bulldogs responded.

Andrew Nembhard added 23 points, Rasir Bolton scored 17 and Gonzaga never trailed after a basket from Timme and Bolton's 3-pointer with 10 minutes remaining that made it 61-57.

Timme made 10 of 16 shots and grabbed 14 rebounds.

"The way we came out fighting in the second half I thought it was more who we are," Gonzaga coach Mark Few said. "And then we just did a great job down the stretch executing all our late game stuff."

Memphis (22-11) didn't go away despite Gonzaga's surge. The Tigers pulled even at 66 on DeAndre Williams' basket. After Nembhard's 3 put the Bulldogs up 76-69, the Tigers still made it a one-possession game with 32 seconds left on Lester Quinones' 3-pointer.

Nembhard, the only consistent free-throw shooter for Gonzaga on the night, made four at the foul line in the final 25 seconds.

"We hung in there long enough. But we couldn't get the shots, we couldn't get the stops, and they did," Hardaway said.

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Williams scored 14 points for Memphis but sat a big chunk of the second half with foul trouble. Tyler Harris had 11 of his 13 points in the first half and Quinones finished with 10.

The matchup between future NBA lottery picks Chet Holmgren of Gonzaga and Jalen Duren of Memphis never fully materialized because of foul trouble. Duren finished with seven points and seven rebounds but played just 19 minutes and sat for more than 10 minutes of the second half after picking up his fourth foul.

Holmgren had nine points, nine rebounds and four blocks before fouling out in the final seconds.

For a while, Memphis looked willing and able to spoil what was essentially a Gonzaga home game a 6-hour drive from its campus. Memphis dominated the latter stages of the first half and built a 41-31 lead at the break as nervous energy filled Moda Center.

"We knew we could go out there and play with those guys," Williams said. "The crowd got into it, they were very resilient. They played together. They were poised. And like coach said, they showed us the bar."

Timme erupted to start the second half, scoring the first 11 points for the Bulldogs and in the process helping land Duren and Williams in foul trouble. Timme knocked down a 3-pointer, hit a pair of tough jumpers and scored on a slick baseline reverse to erase a big chunk of Memphis' halftime lead.

From there, he got help from Bolton and Nembhard. The trio combined for 42 of Gonzaga's 51 points in the second half.

"I just want to step up for my team in those types of moments," Nembhard said. "I know they have ultimate confidence in me, coaching staff has ultimate confidence in me so I just want to step up and make those kinds of plays for us."

TIMME'S TOURNEY

Timme became the third player to have back-to-back games of at least 25 points, 10 rebounds and 60% shooting in the past 30 NCAA Tournaments. Shaquille O'Neal in 1992 and Blake Griffin in 2009 were the other two.

BIG PICTURE

Memphis: The Tigers' season started with high expectations and ended with an impressive showing against Gonzaga. The Tigers are likely to look far different next season with Duren expected to head to the NBA. Fellow freshman Emoni Bates could follow.

Gonzaga: Free-throw shooting continues to be a major concern for the Bulldogs. Gonzaga went 13 for 24 at the line after going 16 for 30 in the first round against Georgia State.

"These guys have all had better nights than they had at the free throw line," Few said. "They didn't shoot them very well down here. Thank God we have Andrew."

UP NEXT

The Zags will face the Razorbacks in the round of 16. The last time Gonzaga failed to reach the Sweet 16 was in 2014 as a No. 8 seed.

Saint Peter's is 3rd 15 seed in Sweet 16, beats Murray State

By GARY B. GRAVES AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Undersized in every way, Saint Peter's became the latest NCAA Tournament darling that only the most ardent hoops fans had heard of before it stepped onto a court with a March Madness logo.

These proud Peacocks from Jersey City, New Jersey, became the third No. 15 seed to advance to the Sweet 16, first tossing eight-time national champion Kentucky out of the bracket and then taking care of Murray State in a workmanlike 70-60 win on Saturday night.

Even mid-major Murray State was taller and beefier than the Peacocks, but that didn't bother coach Shaheen Holloway or his 6-foot-7, 195-pound power forward, KC Ndefo, who had 17 points and 10 rebounds and played bruising defense at the rim.

"I'm going to say this. It's going to come off a little crazy. I got guys from New Jersey and New York City," Holloway said. "You think we're scared of anything? You think we're worried about guys trying to muscle us and tough us out?"

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Yep, the Jesuit school with an enrollment of 3,000 has a big Jersey attitude.

"We have played bigger teams the whole time. So them being a little bigger and stronger, it doesn't faze us. When you got tough, hard-nosed kids, they're ready to play," Holloway said.

They were ready enough to break the hearts of Kentuckians two times in three days and join Florida Gulf Coast (2013) and Oral Roberts (last year) as 15 seeds to reach a regional semifinal.

Saint Peter's (21-11) ended a 21-game winning streak and a memorable season for Murray State (31-3), located 265 miles from Lexington in Kentucky's southwestern corner.

The memories will be lifelong for the Peacocks and Holloway, a North Jersey hoops lifer who played at Seton Hall and apprenticed there as an assistant. On Friday, Pirates coach Kevin Willard endorsed Holloway as his replacement if he departs in the offseason.

The last team from New Jersey to reach the Sweet 16? That would be Seton Hall in 2000, with Holloway at point guard.

"I was a decent player. I'm small. People counted me out. So I had something to prove every time. So I coached that way," he said.

His next opportunity comes Friday in Philadelphia against either Texas or Purdue.

Doug Edert came off the bench to score 13 points for the Peacocks, including some big baskets late. Saint Peter's built a 13-point lead early in the second half and never trailed, but Murray State still made it tense. Justice Hill hit a 3-pointer to get the Racers within 59-57 with 4:07 left. Edert followed with a 3 and a layup, and the Peacocks closed it out at the free-throw line.

"I always do my best to get as many shots as I can," Edert said. "I don't think about anything when I'm in the game. I just let it happen."

Hill made five 3s for 19 points and Tevin Brown scored 14 for Murray State. First-half foul trouble hurt the Racers, who had to figure out how to keep DJ Burns and Nicholas McMullen in the game with three fouls each.

Shooting was a problem, too: The Racers shot 35%, including 9 of 28 in the first half. Saint Peter's finished at 42% and closed the game with a 6-0 run for its ninth consecutive victory. KJ Williams had 12 points and Trae Hannibal scored 10 before leaving the game late with an ankle injury. Murray State was also without starting guard Carter Collins, who turned an ankle against San Francisco in the first round.

"It's tough because you care. It's tough because it means something to you," Racers coach Matt McMahon said. "Because you're passionate about it. These guys have invested a lot to have this historic season. You certainly don't want it to end."

KEY NUMBERS

Saint Peter's outrebounded Murray State 38-31 and controlled the boards 32-20. The teams combined for 46 fouls. The Peacocks converted 23 of 31 from the line while the Racers made 16 of 25.

BIG PICTURE

Saint Peter's didn't buckle in its overtime win over No. 2 seed Kentucky and showed no fear this time, either. The campus was buzzing after that victory and Holloway said he received more than 800 text messages. The Peacocks are likely to receive a hero's welcome back in Jersey City.

Murray State eventually regrouped after its early foul problems, but for the first time since late December, the Racers failed to close out a game.

"It's a letdown," Brown said. "We haven't had the feeling of losing a game in a long time."

UP NEXT

Saint Peter's gets to watch its next opponent on TV when No. 6 seed Texas meets No. 3 seed Purdue in Milwaukee on Sunday.

March Madness descends on women's NCAA Tournament

By DOUG FEINBERG AP Basketball Writer

March Madness is finally part of the women's NCAA Tournament vernacular and the first round has so far aptly fit that phrase.

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Six double-digit seeds advanced to the round of 32 — just short of the record seven set in 1998. And that doesn't include two near upsets by No. 14 seeds.

Belmont became the sixth double-digit seed to win when the No. 12 Bruins topped Oregon in double OT. It was the first game to go that long since 2013.

"There's a lot of mid-major teams that are good enough to compete with the big guys. There are," Belmont coach Bart Brooks said. "And doing it on a neutral floor I think was a really big deal for us, that we weren't — if we were in Oregon's gym today, I'm not sure it would have turned out the way it did. But being on a neutral floor, that's a big deal."

It's the second consecutive year that Belmont has pulled off an upset in the opening round as a double-digit seed.

South Carolina, Stanford and UConn also made history on the defensive end. The Gamecocks shattered the previous marks for points allowed in a game and in a half in their rout of Howard. The Cardinal and the Huskies became the second and third teams to not allow a point in a quarter in their easy victories.

Stanford added another piece of history: Fran Belibi's dunk on the break. She became the third women's basketball player to dunk in an NCAA Tournament game, joining Candace Parker and Brittney Griner.

Notre Dame's Olivia Miles became the 18th player to have a triple-double in a women's NCAA Tournament game when she had 10 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists in the Irish's win over UMass. There have been 37 triple-doubles this season — the second-most in Division I history.

And earlier in the week, the women's basketball tournament had its first-ever First Four; the men's field expanded to 68 teams in 2011.

It was a long time coming, according to Florida State coach Sue Semrau, whose team lost to Missouri State in the new round.

"It's been way too long that this hasn't been part of the women's tournament," Semrau said. "It's a learning process, but it was so vital."

Two 14 seeds, Jackson State and UT Arlington, vied to pull off the first wins ever in the women's tournament for that seed, holding leads in the fourth quarter before falling short.

Not all was crazy in the opening rounds. The No. 1 and 2 seeds all cruised to easy victories, winning by an average of nearly 38 points a game.

Here are a few other highlights from the round of 64:

HOLD THAT TIGER!

The 11th-seeded Princeton Tigers won their second NCAA tourney game by taking down sixth-seeded Kentucky. The Tigers have won 18 consecutive games and will try and advance to the Sweet 16 for the first time when they face Indiana on Monday night. Princeton was undefeated in 2015 heading into the NAAs before beating Wisconsin-Green Bay in its NCAA opener, but fell to host Maryland in the second round. The Ivy League has one other victory in NCAA play — when Harvard pulled off the only win for a No. 16 seed by topping Stanford in 1998.

AID FOR UKRAINE

Stanford coach Tara VanDerveer announced she'd donate \$10 for every 3-pointer made in the tournament to Ukrainian aid efforts, and some of her coaching friends in both the men's and women's fields agreed to jump in as well, including Bruce Pearl and Dawn Staley. Staley hoped that coaches could use their platform to also raise money with each tournament rebound to help homelessness in places like Columbia, South Carolina, or Staley's hometown of Philadelphia.

A CONFERENCE SUPREME

It's been a great start to the tournament for the Big 12, which went 6-0. Baylor, Texas, Kansas, Kansas State and Iowa State were all victorious. Oklahoma capped off the first round with the final win for the conference. Coupled with the Big 12 men's teams in the NCAA Tournament, the league went 12-0 in the first round.

Video shows cop kneeling on Wisconsin student's neck

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KENOSHA, Wis. (AP) — School officials in Kenosha, Wisconsin, released surveillance footage that shows an off-duty police officer putting his knee on a 12-year-old girl's neck to restrain her amid a lunchtime fight.

The Kenosha Unified School District released redacted footage of the March 4 fight on Friday. It shows Kenosha officer Shawn Guetschow intervening in the fight and then scuffling with the girl, before falling to the ground and hitting his head on a table.

Guetschow, who was working as a security guard at the school, then pushes the girl's head into the ground and uses his knee on her neck for about half a minute before handcuffing her and walking her out of the cafeteria.

Jerrel Perez, the girl's father, has called for criminal charges against Guetschow for using a type of restraint that was banned for Wisconsin law enforcement officers last year. He said his daughter is in therapy and seeing a neurologist for her injuries.

The school district initially placed Guetschow on paid leave. He resigned from his part-time security job with the school on Tuesday, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported.

In his resignation letter, Guetschow complained the school district has not supported him and that the incident has placed a heavy burden on his family.

The district told the newspaper it would not provide any additional details and did not respond to messages left by The Associated Press on Saturday. Kenosha police, in a statement, said Guetschow is still employed by the department.

"We continue our investigation, paying careful attention to the entire scope of the incident," the statement said. "We have no further update at this time."

AP FACT CHECK: Republicans twist Jackson's judicial record

By WILL WEISSERT and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the court of public opinion — like the Supreme Court nomination hearings coming this week — politicians ask questions of witnesses to score points for their side. In the court of law, judges ask questions to get answers.

That difference will be on display as Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson fields loaded questions from Republicans and Democrats, the former mostly opposing her nomination, the latter favoring it.

But the distinction between political and judicial inquiry has already been lost as Republicans in the days before her hearings selectively cited her record to try to make a case against her. They are treating questions from her judge's life over the years as statements of opinion to portray her as an outlier not deserving of a seat on the high court.

Their assertions on this front don't stand up to scrutiny:

GOP SEN. JOSH HAWLEY OF MISSOURI: "Judge Jackson has opined there may be a type of 'less-serious child pornography offender.' ... 'A 'less-serious' child porn offender?" — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: She opined no such thing. She asked questions about it.

Jackson was vice chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission when it held a hearing on sentencing guidelines in 2012.

She told the hearing she was surprised at a Justice Department expert's testimony that, as she put it, some child-sex offenders may actually "not be pedophiles" but perhaps "loners" looking for like-minded company in child pornography circles. Being surprised by an assertion and wanting to know more are not the same as endorsing it.

"So I'm wondering whether you could say that there is a — that there could be a — less-serious child pornography offender who is engaging in the type of conduct in the group experience level?" she asked the expert witness. "They're very sophisticated technologically, but they aren't necessarily that interested in the child pornography piece of it?"

From those questions, Hawley extrapolated that Jackson had drawn conclusions, when she hadn't.

But several behavioral science researchers testified at that hearing that there may be nonsexual motivations among a portion of child-sex criminals. It is not a radical view. And many judges do see a distinction

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between those who produce child pornography and those who receive it.

In 2020, in denying compassionate release on medical grounds to a convicted sex offender serving almost six years in prison, Judge Jackson asserted: "The possession and distribution of child pornography is an extremely serious crime because it involves trading depictions of the actual sexual assault of children, and the abuse that these child victims endure will remain available on the internet forever."

REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE: "Ketanji Brown Jackson's record also includes defending terrorists." — tweet from RNC Research on Feb. 25.

THE FACTS: That's misleading on several fronts.

First, she did not defend convicted terrorists but rather suspects. The RNC ignored the presumption of innocence that is at the heart of the legal system. Second, defending people accused of a crime is exactly what defense lawyers are supposed to do. That's why public defender's offices exist – to represent suspects who cannot afford a lawyer or who have cases that lawyers for hire don't want to take.

Jackson was working in the federal public defender's office in the District of Columbia when she was assigned four Guantanamo Bay detainees, later continuing some of her work with them in private practice. This was after the Supreme Court ruled in 2004 that the detainees could file lawsuits challenging their indefinite detention.

Even those who were charged had those charges dropped, and all were eventually released. None was convicted by the military commissions created to try detainees.

Jackson was going by the textbook when she wrote that under "the ethics rules that apply to lawyers, an attorney has a duty to represent her clients zealously" regardless of the attorney's personal views.

HAWLEY: "Judge Jackson went below the maximum, the minimum, and below what the government requested in every single case for which we can find records, except two. In those two the law required her to impose the sentence the government recommended." — statement Friday.

THE FACTS: Not so. In most of the child pornography cases where she imposed lighter sentences than federal guidelines suggested, prosecutors or others representing the Justice Department generally argued for sentences that were lighter than those recommended by federal guidelines.

So it is not correct to assert that all but two sentences she handed down in such cases, when she served as a district court judge from 2013 until last year, were "below what the government requested."

HAWLEY: "As far back as her time in law school, Judge Jackson has questioned making convicts register as sex offenders." — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: That's fair. She did question mandatory registry of sex offenders back in law school but did not come out explicitly against the practice.

Jackson wrote an unsigned statement for the Harvard Law Review in 1996 that suggested judges should be wary of mixing larger public safety concerns and punitive measures when sentencing sex offenders.

It said in part: "In the current climate of fear, hatred, and revenge associated with the release of convicted sex criminals, courts must be especially attentive to legislative enactments that 'use public health and safety rhetoric to justify procedures that are, in essence, punishment and detention.'"

Tar Heels survive ejection, big rally, beat '21 champ Baylor

By STEPHEN HAWKINS AP Sports Writer

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — So much for the idea that North Carolina is soft against top-tier competition. These Tar Heels are going to the Sweet 16 after knocking off the defending champions.

No, it wasn't easy. The Tar Heels blew a 25-point second-half lead after Brady Manek was ejected for a wild elbow and starting guard Caleb Love fouled out, and they had some issues when top-seeded Baylor turned up the full-court pressure. But they never fell behind, played with poise in overtime and pulled out a 93-86 victory Saturday in the second round of the NCAA Tournament.

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"All year we've just been hearing different things about us, how we're a soft team, how we don't like to fight," All-Atlantic Coast Conference power forward Armando Bacot said. "Today, I think we really showed that we can fight. To persevere in a moment like that and just come together, I'm just so proud of everyone."

RJ Davis scored a career-high 30 points with a nifty layup while being fouled in overtime, when Bacot made the tiebreaking free throws after missing three in the final 38 seconds of regulation. Bacot had 15 points and 16 rebounds, along with three blocked shots.

A year after losing in the first round of the tourney in coach Roy Williams' final game, the Tar Heels (26-9) pulled off a shocker for his successor, Hubert Davis, who moves on to the East Region semifinals to play fourth-seeded UCLA in a matchup of programs with a combined 17 national titles.

"Baylor's a great team. They're the defending national champions, and they did not want to go home," Davis said. "They stepped up their effort, but we stepped up our effort as well and we were able to make the plays we needed to make to win the game."

Overtime started with a 3-pointer by freshman Dontrez Styles, who was 2 of 14 from long range on the season before that. RJ Davis, who had five 3-pointers in regulation, got his only points in overtime on the off-balance layup with 1:18 left and added the free throw for a 91-85 lead.

"I didn't want to go home. There was no time to be tired," Davis said. "Our mindset was gather my teammates together and regrouping and to contain our composure and let's get this win."

Adam Flagler had 27 points for Baylor (27-7), which was 1-of-11 shooting in overtime. James Akinjo had 20 points while Jeremy Sochan had 15 points and 11 rebounds.

The Tar Heels won as a No. 8 seed over a top seed for a third time. They did so on the way to the Final Four in 2000, 10 years after beating top-seeded Oklahoma when Davis was a player for Dean Smith.

North Carolina had double-digit losses to Kentucky, Tennessee, Duke, Miami and Wake Forest, and was on the NCAA bubble before winning seven of its last eight regular-season games. That included a 94-81 win at Duke in retiring coach Mike Krzyzewski's final home game.

Baylor lost in the second round for the second time in the last three NCAA tourneys. The Bears, who fell to top-seeded Gonzaga in the round of 32 three years ago, were trying to match the biggest comeback to win an NCAA Tournament game.

"Rudy Tomjanovich said it best, never underestimate the heart of a champion," coach Scott Drew said, fighting back tears. "You're down 25 and come back and force overtime. Real proud of these guys and the heart with which they compete. I think the perseverance they showed, the resilience all year. Spiritually, they've been a great group. They've really grown. We didn't win on the court, but we've won in life."

Manek had 26 points before getting ejected because of a flagrant foul with 10:08 left in regulation after his left elbow to the face of Sochan as they were battling underneath the Baylor basket. Manek had just drained a 3-pointer that gave the Tar Heels their largest lead at 67-42.

With Manek out, and Love fouling out soon after that, the Tar Heels had 10 turnovers as Baylor turned up the pressure and made a furious rally.

"It was just crazy because their press, they was turning us over a lot and then we weren't making free throws," Bacot said. "There was a lot of pressure in those moments. But, I mean, it was just a next-play mentality and we just really had to dig in and just keep pushing and just keep a level head. And luckily, we came out with a win."

The Bears got within 76-73 on a three-point play with 1:48 left by Akinjo, who had another one with 16 seconds left to tie the game at 80-80. North Carolina had one more shot, but Davis' 3-point try hit off the front of the rim.

"We knew that our team wasn't going to give up," Flagler said.

Baylor scored 11 straight points in less than two minutes after Manek's ejection. Sochan made the second free throw before having an assist on a layup by Flagler, who then had consecutive 3s off UNC turnovers. The Bears moved within 67-53 when Akinjo hit two free throws after Bacot was called for a technical foul as the two tumbled to the floor.

Things got testy midway through the first half, and Sochan got a technical foul when he appeared to lock his legs together and almost pull Bacot to the floor with him.

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BIG PICTURE

North Carolina: With former coach Williams in Dickies Arena, which is less than 100 miles from Baylor's campus, Davis scored the Tar Heels' first eight points in an 80-second span after the Bears had a quick 4-0 lead. North Carolina never trailed again. Baylor tied it just before the end of regulation and once in overtime.

Baylor: The Bears outscored North Carolina 38-13 over the final 10 minutes of regulation. They fell just short of matching BYU, which overcame a 25-point first-half deficit to beat Iona in a First Four game in 2012.

BUNCH OF HELPERS

North Carolina had 22 assists on its 28 field goals, two days after 29 assists on 34 baskets against Marquette. Davis became the first Tar Heels player with 10 assists in one NCAA tourney game and 30 points in the next. He had six assists against Baylor, matching Leaky Black for the team lead.

UP NEXT

The Sweet 16 in Philadelphia. UCLA has won a record 11 national titles, the last in 1995, while North Carolina got its sixth championship in 2017.

Belmont women knock off Oregon 73-70 in double OT in NCAAs

By TERESA M. WALKER AP Sports Writer

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — The Belmont Bruins made history a year ago with the program's first women's NCAA Tournament win.

They found a way to top that.

Destinee Wells knocked down a pair of free throws with 1:02 left in double overtime, and Belmont knocked off No. 5 seed Oregon 73-70 Saturday for the Bruins' second straight win as a 12 seed to open an NCAA Tournament.

Belmont (23-7) upset 14th-ranked Gonzaga in the sterile Texas bubble with no fans on hand last year in the NCAA Tournament. This time, the Bruins won their 13th straight and 19th in 21 games with a victory made all the more precious by being able celebrate immediately in the arena with family, friends and fans.

"It's so hard to rank them because last year we made history," Belmont senior forward Conley Chinn said. "It was the first time it had been done in our program. But I mean, just today, you kind of can't get it better than that. That was pretty sweet."

They will play fourth-seeded Tennessee, an 80-67 winner over Buffalo, on Monday in the second round.

This was the first double-overtime game in the NCAA Tournament since Dayton and St John's in the first round in 2013. This was a thriller from start to finish with 10 ties and Wells' go-ahead free throws was the seventh lead change and the only time Belmont led in the second overtime.

Belmont coach Bart Brooks loved how his Bruins never quit.

"They had every opportunity to fold, and when it got really hot, a lot, and they just always had an answer," Brooks said. "They always fought. They found a way. They made a play. That's our team. That's what we've been. That's who we are. It was really cool to be in that atmosphere. Great performance."

After Wells split two free throws with 4.5 seconds left, Oregon had a final chance. But Sedona Prince's long 3 bounced off the rim as the Bruins rushed the court to hug each other and Prince hung her head in dejection.

Oregon had the ball for much of the final minute in the second overtime and couldn't get a shot to fall.

The Ducks won a jump ball situation with 29.8 seconds remaining. They kicked the ball out to Endiya Rogers whose 3 hit off the far rim, and Madison Bartley got the rebound with 6.5 seconds left to start the Belmont celebration.

Oregon coach Kelly Graves said his Ducks had plenty of chances and credited Belmont.

"It just seemed like we did not make that right play other than the shot at the end of regulation when we needed to," Graves said.

The Bruins led 50-44 lead with 5:02 left in the fourth before Oregon rallied with a 9-3 run capped by Te-Hina Paopao's 3 from the left corner with 7.9 seconds left tied it at 53. All Pac-12 forward Nyara Sabally

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blocked Nikki Baird's 3-point attempt at the buzzer to force overtime.

Both teams had a chance to win at the end of the first overtime tied at 64. Sabally missed a layup in the final seconds before the All-Pac-12 forward blocked a couple inside chances by Bartley before the buzzer.

Tuti Jones led Belmont with 22 points, making all four of her 3-pointers. Wells finished with 16, and Conley Chinn added 10. The Bruins came in 20th in the nation knocking down an average of 8.4 3s per game. This time, they set a program record making 12.

Oregon (20-12) snapped a streak of five straight wins in the first round with this the Ducks' first opening loss since 2001. The Ducks also snapped a streak of four straight Sweet 16 berths after being one of only six teams to make the regional semifinals each of the last four tournaments.

Sabally finished with a career-high 31 points and grabbed 12 rebounds. Te-hina Paopao added 18.

"It just hurts right now," Sabally said.

Belmont set the tone early taking a 9-2 lead with three 3s and led 13-8 after the first quarter. Oregon led 28-26 at halftime and 40-36 after the third.

BIG PICTURE

Belmont: The Bruins came into the tournament with a NET ranking of 50 and the sixth-most difficult non-conference schedule in the country. They beat Mississippi early and also played Georgia Tech, Louisville, Auburn and Arkansas.

"If you want to get a good seed, you have to schedule really good," Brooks said. "Well, it's really hard to be really good in November and December."

Oregon: The Ducks had been very strong in the fourth quarter this season, outscoring teams by an average of 19 to 14.5 points a game. They were outscored 17-13 in the fourth.

Krzyzewski, Izzo set for final meeting in NCAA tourney

By AARON BEARD AP Basketball Writer

GREENVILLE, S.C. (AP) — In a sport where the only lasting stars are the coaches, few are more recognizable than Duke's Mike Krzyzewski and Michigan State's Tom Izzo.

Both have spent decades at the top of their profession, with national titles, Final Fours and enshrinement in the Hall of Fame.

They've squared off far more frequently than usual for teams in different leagues, including on the sport's biggest stage in the NCAA Tournament.

On Sunday, they'll do it one final time.

"The game is bigger than normal," Izzo said Saturday, adding later: "There's going to be weird emotions on both sides of the scorers' table."

The second-seeded Blue Devils (29-6) and seventh-seeded Spartans (23-12) meet in the West Region's second round in a matchup that has more at stake than which team advances to next week's Sweet 16 in San Francisco.

It's a farewell to a series, entering its 16th meeting, between coaching buddies whose meetings have become a welcome staple on the nonconference schedule. It's also a reminder of the changing college basketball landscape. Krzyzewski plans to retire after Duke's final game, and a coaching rivalry like his with Izzo could become a thing of the past amid today's churn of coaching changes.

"It's kind of hard for me to prepare," Izzo said. "Everybody's saying, 'Are you going to end his career on this note? Are you going to do this? Are you going to do that?'"

"First of all, I'm not going to do any of that. The players will hopefully find a way to win. But just think what he's going through and his players are going through. Emotionally, it's got to be an incredible — I can't even imagine."

The resumes are just as incredible for the pair of tournament-tested coaches.

The 75-year-old Krzyzewski is the winningest coach in college basketball history and can reach 1,200 victories on Sunday to go with his five national championships and record-tying 12 Final Four trips in a 47-year career, 42 coming at Duke. Izzo, 67, won the 2000 NCAA title and is second among active coaches

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with eight Final Fours in his 27 seasons.

Yet what makes this meeting special is the fact these long-successful coaches keep finding their way to each other; this will mark the sixth straight season that the Blue Devils and Spartans will meet. Both are part of the four-team Champions Classic along with Kentucky and Kansas that traditionally kicks off the season. They've also met as part of the annual series between the Atlantic Coast and Big Ten conferences.

Krzyzewski has gotten the best of Izzo with a 12-3 record, including 3-2 in the NAAs with Final Four wins in 1999 and 2015. But the most recent postseason meeting went to Izzo, whose Spartans edged a top-seeded Duke team led by eventual No. 1 overall NBA draft pick Zion Williamson in the 2019 Elite Eight.

Izzo acknowledged his losing mark after Friday's win over Davidson by saying he has "got to be (Krzyzewski's) favorite coach because he's beaten us like a drum."

"You don't put a banner up by your record against a certain team or a certain coach," Krzyzewski said. "So if you get caught up in that or your record on a Saturday afternoon or whatever, for me, it's been the wrong thing to do.

"I know the only banners that are up at Duke are championship banners, and that means you have to beat a number of people."

Krzyzewski is nearly out of time to add to that list, his career down to no more than five games before he joins the list of prominent retirees like North Carolina Hall of Famer Roy Williams and Oklahoma's Lon Kruger, both of whom left the sport last spring.

The future beyond that? Krzyzewski, who has long advocated for more proactive NCAA leadership when it comes to helping the game evolve, is thinking about it in the fleeting moments between preparing his team for the next game.

"I would hope that people, whoever is looking at the future of our game and the future of college sports would try to get the veteran coaches — whether it be women's basketball, men's basketball, especially the two of us together — to take a look at the world of basketball on the collegiate level and share ideas, share what we think might be good for a new structure," Krzyzewski said.

"That would, I think, give a greater in-depth look at our game and how it might be able to advance and stay with the stature that it has and maybe increase."

Izzo seems like one of the first names to add to that list, though he's not quite ready to turn his thoughts beyond coaching. Asked whether recent retirement announcements affect his thinking on his future, Izzo said he's planning to stay with it "for a while" and knows he'll have friends to reach out to in Krzyzewski, Williams and others when it's time to consider walking away.

For now, all he can do is get ready for one more round with his pal.

"For 40 minutes, I'll bet you Mike wants to beat the hell out of me, and I bet you I want to beat the hell out of him," Izzo said. "And what happens after, only time will tell."

MLB deal took 11 months of bargaining, most moves at end

By RONALD BLUM AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Rob Manfred had just made a 6 o'clock decision to cancel a second week of games, and MLB Deputy Commissioner Dan Halem was thinking the lockout could go on quite a while longer.

Then at 6:24 p.m. on March 9, a new proposal from union deputy general counsel Matt Nussbaum plopped into his inbox.

By the time Halem left the office that night, he recalled thinking: "I thought we had a chance to get it done."

After 11 months of bickering in bargaining, Major League Baseball's labor contract came together in just a few hours on March 10.

Talks had broken off over an international draft, but Halem's outlook changed in the short time between Manfred green-lighting the cancellation announcement and MLB's publication of the news release at 6:30 p.m.

Labor relations in baseball is a mix of banter and bluster, tenacity and tedium, revising and resisting.

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In the end, there was not a single face-to-face meeting in the final 24 hours as the sides negotiated on the telephone and through email.

Manfred's cancellation decision came four hours after the last in-person session. MLB staff sent the union an edit of Nussbaum's email that night, and after some back-and-forth in the morning, players accepted.

Manfred convened a Zoom of the labor policy committee at 10:30 a.m. on March 10, and at noon Senior Vice President Patrick Houlihan emailed to chief negotiator Bruce Meyer, general counsel Ian Penny and Nussbaum what was labeled a best-and-final offer to preserve a 162-game season and full pay, attaching a 3 p.m. deadline.

The union executive board met by Zoom starting at 1 p.m., and Meyer texted Halem a little before 2 p.m. asking for more time.

Veteran baseball writer Jon Heyman tweeted the balloting in what appeared to be real time, first at 2:50 p.m.: "Union executive board appears to be voting against approval." Then at 3:07: "Team votes are coming on now. ... So far players are going against the executive council."

At 3:17 management negotiators heard cheers erupt from elsewhere on the floor of MLB's Rockefeller Center office. They were a response to his tweet: "Union votes yes on deal."

The final vote was 26-12 in favor, with the executive subcommittee all opposed and the team player representatives 26-4 for approval.

About 20 minutes later, Meyer called Halem to deliver the news, and at 6 p.m. the 30 owners unanimously approved during their own Zoom.

"We had 38 guys on our executive board who were intimately involved in every step of the way — either they took part directly in meetings or they were being briefed multiple times a day," Meyer said.

"Everything that we did was done based on the input and guidance from the board. We obviously wanted to explore all possibilities of getting a fair deal without missing games. If there wasn't a fair deal to be had, then guys were prepared to do whatever is necessary. Ultimately, a majority of guys believed that the deal we had on the table was a good deal and worth taking without the risk of missing games."

Collective bargaining in sports is a process of posturing by management and players who refuse to reveal bottom-line positions until the last possible moment before big money is in danger.

Meyer, a bespectacled, bearded 60-year-old sports law attorney and litigator who spent 30 years at Weil, Gotshal & Manges, was hired by the union in August 2018 as senior director of collective bargaining and legal.

Halem, a 55-year-old former Proskauer partner, joined MLB in 2007 and took over as MLB's chief negotiator ahead of the 2016 agreement.

Bargaining has a Rashomon effect on the parties.

MLB felt an initial turning point was on Feb. 28 during 16 hours of talks in Jupiter, Florida, that would stretch until 2 a.m. the next morning. A two-on-two meeting among Halem, executive vice president Morgan Sword, Meyer and union director of player services Kevin Slowey started just after 7 p.m. and lasted almost an hour in a second-floor office next to a conference room. The sides discussed what could lead to a framework of various packages and trades.

Meyer remained pessimistic, focused on the large gap in numbers and was convinced management was trying to spin an unwarranted upbeat outlook.

There had been 15 largely unproductive core bargaining sessions leading up to the lockout on Dec. 2 plus 22 days of meetings on other issues. Initial presentations were made April 20 and the first proposal on May 6. Because of the pandemic, sessions were held over Zoom and dominated to some extent by speeches.

The sides met in person on Aug. 16 in Denver, when MLB made an economic offer. The union responded on Oct. 29, the day of World Series Game 3. There were four more meetings during the first few weeks of November, then three starting Nov. 29 at the Four Seasons Resort at Las Colinas in Irving, Texas, site of the union's executive board meeting. Players made an offer, and MLB concluded there was little to respond to.

"It was clear there wasn't going to be a deal before the deadline," Halem said.

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Bargaining broke off, and management's negotiators left the hotel about nine hours before the contract expired at midnight EST. While MLB prepared for a signing freeze, teams feverishly concluded a one-day record of \$1.4 billion in contracts to 27 players.

Economic negotiations didn't resume until Jan. 13, and then only with another Zoom. The sides held a core economic meeting in person for the first time since the lockout on Jan. 24 at the union's New York office, and players withdrew their proposal to liberalize free agency with an age-based backstop.

The sides met again the following day and MLB eliminated its plan to cut salary arbitration eligibility and also for the first time agreed to the union's concept of a pre-arbitration bonus pool, though at \$10 million to the union's \$105 million.

What followed was a series of glacially paced sessions that reinforced spring training would not start as scheduled on Feb. 16. MLB's request for a federal mediator was rejected by the union and a Feb. 17 session lasted just 15 minutes. At a one-on-one side session after, Halem told Meyer a deal would have to be reached by Feb. 28 to salvage March 31 openers.

Talks shifted on Feb. 21 to Roger Dean Stadium, the spring training home of the St. Louis Cardinals and Miami Marlins, less than three miles from the home of Max Scherzer, whose \$43 million salary tops the majors. With more than a dozen players and several owners on hand, the sides spent four straight days mostly feeling each other out, testiness increasing and players pounding the table and shouting at Halem and owners in frustration over management's lack of movement on tax proposals.

A one-on-one meeting that Friday on Feb. 25 between Manfred and union head Tony Clark started at just before 4 p.m. and lasted about 30 minutes on the possible path to deal. It was the first sign of movement.

There was slightly more intense bargaining over the weekend, but not until Monday's marathon of 13 sessions over 16 1/2 hours was extensive progress made.

"I haven't had so little sleep since college," Yankees manager general partner Hal Steinbrenner said.

MLB voiced more confidence than the union and extended Manfred's deadline to save opening day until 5 p.m. Tuesday. But after a union conference call, talks stalled again with each side lashing out.

Manfred held a news conference in the left-field corner as the deadline passed, canceling a week of games. Two hours later, the union held its own media session 5 1/2 miles away at the Wyndham Grand Jupiter, with Scherzer and reliever Andrew Miller flanking Clark and Meyer, and more than a dozen players sitting in the audience to lend support.

Bargaining resumed on Sunday, March 6, with the union making minor movement, what would turn out to be the start of five straight days of negotiations culminating in the deal. By then, there had been enough progress that MLB counsel Vanish Grover and Justin Wiley started preparing what would become a 20-page memo outlining terms that Halem would send on the evening of March 10 to club control persons.

On Monday, Manfred got approval from the labor policy committee for the Tuesday deadline to cancel another week while telling the union it was the last time to get in 162 games and keep full pay, That was conveyed during a three-on-three meeting at the union office that started at 3:30 p.m.

"The use of deadlines and extending deadlines and figuring out when to set them and when to back off them is part of the art of collective bargaining," Manfred said.

MLB extended that deadline to Wednesday during 16 1/2 hours of talks that recessed at 2 a.m. to allow another player meeting in the morning. That became the day of hang-ups over the draft, which included the final in-person meeting, when three union officials make a three-block walk through a wintry mix of snow and rain to hand-deliver an offer.

Manfred's fifth deadline was the one that worked, enabling the season to start a week behind schedule on April 7.

"The deal got better and better for us at every stage, including even in the last 24 hours," Meyer said. "Players generally don't appreciate being given deadlines. They don't react well to it. Having said that, there were certain aspects of the calendar that did affect the parties' assessment of where they were."

MLB's luxury tax threshold offer rose from \$214 million on Feb. 26 to \$220 million two days later and \$230 million on March 8. For 2026, the figure rose from \$222 million on Feb. 26 to \$244 million by the end.

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Similarly, the pre-arbitration bonus pool increased from \$10 million on Jan. 25 to \$40 million on March 8 and \$50 million in the final deal.

The executive subcommittee thought the union could have pushed for more — seven of the eight earned \$12 million or more last year, and five are represented by the game's leading agent, Scott Boras. The majority of the larger executive committee took the deal in what the union said showed the democratic nature of a union that encouraged widespread attendance on the Zooms.

"We don't tell teams how to vote or who to vote for for player reps," Meyer said. "Teams obviously make their decisions. Some clubhouses, they tend to be younger guys. Other clubhouses, they're veterans."

A contract was reached on the 99th day of the lockout, 325 days into negotiations that took longer than a season. There was no joint news conference, instead media sessions separated by three city blocks and one day, an indication the 2026-27 negotiations may have the same tone.

Just 161 1/2 hours after the start of Manfred's news conference to announce the lockout's end, Boston's Michael Feliz threw the first pitch of spring training, a fastball high taken by Minnesota's Byron Buxton before a crowd of 8,303 at JetBlue Park in Fort Myers, Florida.

Baseball was back to some semblance of normal.

Mariupol police officer pleads for help from Biden, Macron

MARIUPOL, Ukraine (AP) — A Ukrainian police officer in Mariupol has warned that the besieged port city has been "wiped off the face of the earth" and pleaded with the presidents of the United States and France to provide his country with a modern air defense system.

In a video post from a rubble-strewn street, Mariupol police officer Michail Vershnin told President Joe Biden and French President Emmanuel Macron that they had promised assistance "but what we have received is not quite it," and urged them to save the civilian population.

"Children, elderly people are dying. The city is destroyed and it has been wiped off the face of the earth," he said speaking in Russian in the video filmed Friday that was authenticated by The Associated Press.

In it, flames can be seen coming from several buildings while others were decimated in the city on the Sea of Azov that before the Russian invasion had 440,000 people. Apparent explosions could also be heard.

"You have promised that there will be help, give us that help. Biden, Macron, you are great leaders. Be them to the end," he said.

Vershnin said the city is facing the fate of the Syrian city of Aleppo that was destroyed in 2016 in a Russian-backed siege during Syria's revolution-turned-civil war. Russia helped Syrian President Bashar Assad's government with a ruthless strategy by locking sieges around opposition-held areas, bombarding and starving them until the population's ability to hold out collapsed.

Years ago, Mariupol also endured fierce fighting against Russia-backed separatists after Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, but managed to beat back repeated assaults.

US lawmakers visit Poland, urge help for Ukraine military

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — A bipartisan delegation of U.S. lawmakers visiting Poland said Saturday that the most urgent need in Ukraine's fight against a Russian invasion is to equip and support the country in every way that will help it defend its independence.

The seven-member delegation led by Rep. Stephen Lynch, a Democrat from Massachusetts, has visited reception centers for refugees from Ukraine in eastern Poland. They noted Poland's openness in accepting refugees from Ukraine, including in private homes. More than 2 million people fleeing war have come to Poland since Feb. 24, when Russia's troops invaded Ukraine.

"We are here to reassure and support the people of Ukraine. We are here to thank the people of Poland for the unbelievable generosity they have shown to the refugees," said Lynch, who is chairman of the subcommittee on National Security in the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

During an online meeting with the media Saturday, the American lawmakers stressed the need to urgently assist Ukraine's military in their fight against Russian forces. They said there is no room for peace

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talks as long as there is a "hot war."

"The most urgent action that we can take is to make sure that the Ukrainian fighters — those valiant patriots who are fighting for their freedom — have every bit of equipment, every bit of supply, every bit of support that we can possibly deliver to them," Lynch said.

Answering a question about a potential peace mission in Ukraine, he said "there will be time for discussion, hopefully there will be time for diplomacy, but right now I think that the Ukrainian military is stepping up in a very heroic fashion against a much larger enemy."

U.S. President Joe Biden will attend an extraordinary NATO summit in Brussels on Thursday that is focused on the war in Ukraine and European security.

As long as Russian President Vladimir Putin continues the aggression, "there is only one way to respond to that and that's military force," Lynch said.

Rep. Mark Green, a Republican from Tennessee who is on the House Armed Services Committee, had a message for Putin.

"You've united NATO, you've united the EU and you've united the United States Congress. We stand against your tyranny, you are a war criminal," Green said. "Withdraw your troops from Ukraine!"

Other members of the delegation included Democratic Reps. Lori Trahan of Massachusetts and Chellie Pingree of Maine and Republican Reps. Jake LaTurner from Kansas, Pat Fallon from Texas and Nancy Mace from South Carolina.

American lost in Ukraine flew into war to help sick partner

By CLAUDIA LAUER Associated Press

Katya Hill tried to talk her brother out of it. She urged Jimmy Hill to postpone his trip to Ukraine as she saw reports of Russian tanks lining up at the border. But he needed to help his longtime partner, who has been suffering from progressive multiple sclerosis.

"He said, 'I don't know what I would do if I lost her, I have to try to do everything I can to try to stop the progression of MS,'" Katya said. "My brother sacrificed his life for her."

James "Jimmy" Hill, 68, was killed in a Russian attack on the northern Ukrainian city of Chernihiv that was reported Thursday, as his partner Irina Teslenko received treatment at a local hospital. His family says she and her mother are trying to leave the city, but because of her condition they would need an ambulance to help and it was unclear when or if that could happen.

In an interview from Pittsburgh Saturday, Hill's sister called her brother's relationship with Irina a "beautiful love story, but unfortunately it has a tragic ending."

Katya Hill said Irina's illness had progressed to the point that she had lost the ability to walk and much of the use of her hands. She said her brother — a native of Eveleth, Minnesota, who was living in Driggs, Idaho — had spent months trying to secure treatments to stop the progression of the disease and had finally arranged for treatment in February.

Katya said her brother thought the world wouldn't let the invasion happen.

Katya said the two met while her brother, who taught social work and forensic psychology at universities in various countries, was teaching a class in Ukraine. He knew instantly that he was in love and they spent years together, talking for hours every day on the phone when Jimmy was back in the United States.

Katya said in the last few weeks as the bombings grew more frequent and resources more scarce, her brother had been daydreaming of ways to get Ukrainian families to the U.S. to set up a "little Ukraine" at his Airbnb properties he owned in Idaho and Montana. She said her brother loved Ukraine and even on the day he was killed, friends had helped her piece together that he had decided to stay to be with Teslenko and her mother at the hospital.

It was initially reported that Jimmy was gunned down while waiting in a breadline, but Katya said the family had received new details through their senators and from Jimmy's friends in Ukraine Saturday.

Katya said Jimmy and a friend who lives near the hospital had gone to an area where they had heard buses were waiting to evacuate people who wanted to leave the city via a safe corridor. There were more than a thousand people already waiting in line, and Jimmy told the friend he was going to return to the

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hospital. The friend told Katya that Russian shelling began as he was leaving, and the blast that killed her brother had caused the friend to lose hearing in one of her ears.

Katya said her family is still waiting to hear directly from the U.S. State Department to get details of where his body is.

Chernihiv police and the State Department confirmed the death of an American but did not identify him. The Associated Press reached out to the State Department to confirm details of Hill's death, but had not received information as of early Saturday.

In poignant posts on Facebook in the weeks before his death, Hill described "indiscriminate bombing" in a city under siege. Katya said he had described increasing hardships in a Facebook Messenger group, starting each day by saying he was still alive.

But electricity and heat had been cut off, and food and supplies were becoming more scarce. Katya said he would go out to wait in line for food and supplies and bring back whatever he could for the hospital staff.

Most patients at the hospital had moved to the basement bomb shelter, but Irina and her mother remained in the upper levels because of the cold and so she could continue the treatment.

Katya said Irina's mother had been told about Jimmy's death, but had not wanted to tell her daughter. She said they had hoped for help to evacuate back to their home village southeast of Kyiv, where Irina's father was waiting, but it was unclear whether they could find an ambulance to take them or a safe route for the trip.

Russian military slog in Ukraine a 'dreadful mess' for Putin

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The signs are abundant of how Ukraine frustrated Vladimir Putin's hopes for a swift victory and how Russia's military proved far from ready for the fight.

A truck carrying Russian troops crashes, its doors blown open by a rocket-propelled grenade. Foreign-supplied drones target Russian command posts. Orthodox priests in trailing vestments parade Ukraine's blue and yellow flag in defiance of their Russian captors in the occupied city of Berdyansk.

Russia has lost hundreds of tanks, many left charred or abandoned along the roads, and its death toll is on a pace to outstrip that of the country's previous military campaigns in recent years.

Yet more than three weeks into the war, with Putin's initial aim of an easy change in government in Kyiv long gone, Russia's military still has a strong hand. With their greater might and stockpile of city-flattening munitions, Russian forces can fight on for whatever the Russian president may plan next, whether leveraging a negotiated settlement or brute destruction, military analysts say.

Despite all the determination of Ukraine's people, all the losses among Russia's forces and all the errors of Kremlin leaders, there is no sign that the war will soon be over. Even if Putin fails to take control of his neighbor, he can keep up the punishing attacks on its cities and people. Ukraine's president said Russia is trying to starve Ukraine's cities into submission and that Putin is deliberately creating "a humanitarian catastrophe."

"His instinct will be always to double down because he's got himself into a dreadful mess, a huge strategic blunder," said Michael Clarke, former head of the British-based Royal United Services Institute, a defense think tank.

"And I don't think it's in his character to try to retrieve that, except by carrying on, going forward," he said.

Putin's forces are waging Russia's largest, most complex combined military campaign since taking Berlin in 1945. His initial objective, which he announced in a television address on Feb. 24 as the invasion began, was to "demilitarize" Ukraine and save its people from "neo-Nazis" — a false description of Ukraine's government, which is led by a Jewish president.

Fatefully, Putin underestimated the national pride and battlefield skills that Ukrainians have built up over the past eight years of battling Russian-backed separatists in the country's east.

At the start, Russians thought "they would install, you know, some pro-Russian government and call it a day and declare victory," said Dmitry Gorenburg, a researcher on Russia's security at the Virginia-based

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CNA think tank. "That was sort of Plan A, and as near as we can tell, they didn't really have a Plan B."

Russia's first apparent plan — attack key Ukrainian military targets, and make a quick run to Kyiv, the capital — failed immediately. It was foiled by Ukraine's defenses along with the countless mistakes and organizational failures by a Russian force that had been told it was only mobilized for military drills.

Clarke, the British researcher, related accounts of Russian troops selling communication equipment and fuel out of military vehicles to locals during the weeks they waited on Ukraine's borders.

With no friendly population to welcome them, Russian forces reverted to tactics from their past offensives in Syria and Chechnya — dropping bombs and lobbing missiles into cities and towns, sending millions of men, women and children fleeing.

Putin's forces are in position to capture the besieged port city of Mariupol. Overall, Russians appear to be fighting with three objectives now: to surround Kyiv, to encircle spread-out Ukrainian fighters in the east and to break through to the major port city of Odessa in the west, said Michael Kofman, an expert on the Russian military and program director at CNA.

Kofman cautions that much of the information on the war is coming from Ukrainians or from their American or other allies. That makes the partial picture skewed and a full picture impossible.

A senior U.S. defense official on Friday said the Russians have launched more than 1,080 missiles since the start of the war and that they retain about 90% of the combat power they had arrayed around Ukraine at the beginning of the invasion.

The U.S. assesses that the airspace over Ukraine remains contested, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the military assessments. The Ukrainian air force is continuing to fly aircraft and employ air and missile defenses..

"Just look at the map, and you just look at how little progress the Russians have been able to make," Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said recently.

The math of military conquests and occupation may be against Putin in Ukraine.

Estimates of Russian deaths vary widely. Yet even conservative figures are in the low thousands. That's a much faster pace than in previous Russian offensives, threatening support for the war among ordinary Russians. Russia had 64 deaths in five days of fighting during its 2008 war with Georgia. It lost about 15,000 in Afghanistan over 10 years, and more than 11,000 over years of fighting in Chechnya.

Russia's number of dead and wounded in Ukraine is nearing the 10% benchmark of diminished combat effectiveness, Gorenburg said. The reported battlefield deaths of four Russian generals — out of an estimated 20 in the fight — signal impaired command, he said.

Researchers tracking only those Russian equipment losses that were photographed or recorded on video say Russia has lost more than 1,500 tanks, trucks, mounted equipment and other heavy gear. Two out of three of those were captured or abandoned, signaling the failings of the Russian troops that let them go.

Meanwhile, Russia needs to limit its use of smart, long-range missiles in case they're needed in any larger war with NATO, military analysts say. On Saturday, the Russian military said it has used its latest hypersonic missile for the first time in combat, claiming that the Kinzhal, with a range of up to 2,000 kilometers (about 1,250 miles), destroyed an underground warehouse storing Ukrainian missiles and aviation ammunition.

When it comes to the grinding job of capturing and holding cities, conventional military metrics suggest Russia needs a 5-to-1 advantage in urban fighting, analysts say. Meanwhile, the formula for ruling a restive territory in the face of armed opposition is 20 fighters for every 1,000 people — or 800,000 Russian troops for Ukraine's more than 40 million people, Clarke notes. That's almost as many as Russia's entire active-duty military of 900,000.

On the ground, that means controlling any substantial chunk of Ukrainian territory long term would take more resources than Russia could foreseeably commit.

Other Russian options remain possible, including a negotiated settlement. Moscow is demanding that Ukraine formally embrace neutrality, thus swearing off any alliance with NATO, and recognize the independence of the separatist regions in the east and Russian sovereignty over Crimea, which Russia annexed in 2014.

Russia's other options include an unrelenting air campaign in which it bombs and depopulates cities as it did in Chechnya and Syria. U.S. officials also warn of the risk of Russian chemical attacks, and the threat of escalation to nuclear war.

"Unless the Russians intend to be completely genocidal — they could flatten all the major cities, and Ukrainians will rise up against Russian occupation — there will be just constant guerrilla war" if Russian troops remain, Clarke said.

Priceless paper: Refugees get IDs for new lives in Poland

By MONIKA SCISLOWSKA Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Hoping to restore some normalcy after fleeing the war in Ukraine, thousands of refugees waited in long lines Saturday in the Polish capital of Warsaw to get identification cards that will allow them to get on with their lives — at least for now.

Refugees started queuing by Warsaw's National Stadium overnight to get the coveted PESEL identity cards that will allow them to work, live, go to school and get medical care or social benefits for the next 18 months. Still, by mid-morning, many were told to come back another day, the demand was too high even though Polish authorities had simplified the process.

"We are looking for a job now," said 30-year-old Kateryna Lohvyn, who was standing in the line with her mother, adding it took a bit of time to recover from the shock of the Russian invasion.

"We don't yet know (what to do)," she added. "But we are thankful to the Poles. They fantastically welcome us."

Maryna Liashuk said the warm welcome from Poland has made her feel at home already. If the situation worsens, Liashuk said she would like to stay permanently in Poland with her family.

"If the war ends and if there is someplace to return to, we will do that. And if not, then we simply will remain here," said Liashuk.

Poland has so far taken in more than 2 million refugees from Ukraine — the bulk of more than 3.3 million people that the U.N. says have fled since Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24. Hundreds of thousands more have also streamed into Hungary, Slovakia, Moldova and Romania.

Most of the refugees fleeing Ukraine have been women and children, because men aged 18 to 60 are forbidden from leaving the country and have stayed to fight.

Polish authorities said more than 123,000 refugees have been given the ID numbers — including more than 1,000 each day in Warsaw — since the program was launched Wednesday.

Svetlana, a Ukrainian woman from Ivano-Frankivsk who has lived and worked in Poland for over 10 years, has had relatives come now to Poland. She said receiving the Polish ID numbers will make a huge difference for everyone from Ukraine.

"This is really so important to us that we can officially look for work, send children to school and be active here," Svetlana said. "It really changes the way we feel here."

Refugees can receive one-time benefit of 300 zlotys (\$70) per person and a monthly benefit for each child under 18 of 500 zlotys (\$117). Those who find jobs will have to pay taxes just like Polish workers.

Pavlo Masechko, a 17-year-old from Novovolynsk in the Volyn region of western Ukraine, has been trying to rebuild his life in the southeastern Polish city of Rzeszow. Before the war, Masechko had plans to come to Poland to study when he finished high school, but he says being forced out of his country by war is something completely different.

"This is so stressful to leave your country in this moment like this," said Masechko, who has joined a local school in Poland since arriving. Now, Masechko's Ukrainian teacher is seeking to organize classes online that were suspended when Russia attacked.

"When the situation started, it was very difficult for me to focus on other things. But time passed and now the situation is more stable and stable in my head also," he said. "I have started to focus again on other things in my life."

Many of the refugees from Ukraine have since moved on to other countries in Europe, mostly to stay

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with friends and family. Some, however, have chosen to go back home even as the end of the conflict is nowhere in sight.

Among them was 41-year-old Viktoria, who was waiting Saturday with her teenage daughter Alisa to board a train back to Zhitomyr in central Ukraine.

"For the last five days it has been quiet," said Viktoria. "Our local authorities are good. They prepared everything for us there so we can go back to work, have normal life and children can have online education."

Alisa said she is not afraid to return and wants to reunite with the rest of the family who are still in Ukraine.

"My relatives are there," she said.

One Shining Moment: Players can cash in on NCAA success

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Sports Writer

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — This March Madness, basketball players can monetize their shining moments.

The NCAA lifted its ban last summer on athletes earning money off their name, image and likeness. Since then all kinds of business opportunities have sprung up from modest online endorsement deals to national sponsorship campaigns to booster-funded collectives that can pay athletes thousands of dollars.

The NCAA Tournament is a chance for new stars to emerge, such as New Mexico State's Teddy Allen.

Allen scored 37 points in an upset over UConn on Thursday, flexing, dancing and waving goodbye to the Huskies fans.

By Friday night, there were T-shirts and hooded sweatshirts available for purchase online with a graphic of Allen, the words "BYE BYE" and the score and date of the Aggies' first NCAA Tournament victory since 1993.

"Everyone understands how crucial it is to really capitalize on the moment in the moment. As this is happening. As it's the talk of the town. As it's trending on Twitter. That's the time to really make a strong post," said Hunter Pomerantz, co-founder of The Players Trunk, an online merchandise store for college athletes to sell their gear and memorabilia.

Pomerantz, a former student-manager for the Syracuse basketball team, said The Players Trunk reaches out to athletes and offers them a contract to make a cut of the sales of the apparel. He declined to say what percentage goes to the players.

The shirts sell for \$29.99 and the sweatshirts go for between \$49.99 and \$59.99. Pomerantz said the contract covers only sales of the gear and all they ask of the athletes is to promote the merchandise on their social media accounts.

Even before the tournament began, The Players Trunk started making money on March Madness.

The company produced shirts and hoodies for Wisconsin guard Chucky Hepburn, whose bank shot in the final seconds against Purdue sealed the Big Ten regular-season title for the Badgers, and Chattanooga's David Jean-Baptiste, who sent the Mocs to the NCAA Tournament with a long buzzer-beater in the Southern Conference championship game.

Selling merch is just the tip of the earning potential for March's shooting stars.

Jim Cavale, CEO of INFLCR, a company that works with thousands of college teams and athletes on a range of NIL programs, said there is a potentially lucrative market for March Madness related NFTs and digital collectibles.

But that takes planning and coordination and the current state of the NIL market is not set up to allow athletes to efficiently take advantage.

The NCAA does not have uniformed, detailed rules governing NIL compensation. The association has instructed its member schools to follow state laws where applicable or to create their own rules in states without legislation.

Many athletes are not permitted to use their schools' marks and logos in their NIL activities. In some cases they can't work on NIL deals while representing the school.

The Players Trunk gear with Allen's image makes no reference to New Mexico State, but it does use the colors of the Aggies basketball uniforms.

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Also, licensing agreements between the NCAA and media rights holders CBS and Turner put restrictions of what athletes can use to create content.

Even if the content can clear legal hurdles, it takes quick work and insight to capitalize on newfound fame. "You still have to be knowledgeable enough and take enough initiative or have help in being knowledgeable and taking enough initiative to make the most of that new value," Cavale said.

This first March Madness with NIL is likely to set a blueprint for schools and athletes to better position themselves for sudden stardom in years to come.

"This will be the last year that kids aren't fully ready for it," Blake Lawrence, the CEO of Opendorse, another company that works with schools and athletes to manage NIL activities.

Lawrence said the muddled nature of current NIL rules and regulations is holding back the market.

He said a national brand wanted to do advertising around both the men's and women's tournaments using athletes whose teams advanced from the first round to the second round.

So a player such as Allen could have appeared in an ad on Saturday after his big game on Thursday. But there were questions about whether athletes would be permitted to engage in NIL activities while on road trips, representing their schools.

"Once they started to navigate this stuff they decided it's too hard and so they decided not to spend with student athletes at all," he said.

For now, T-shirts and hoodies will have to do.

Boris Johnson: Russian win would bring 'age of intimidation'

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Saturday that Russia's invasion of Ukraine was a "turning point for the world," arguing that a victory for Russian President Vladimir Putin's forces would herald "a new age of intimidation."

But the British leader was accused by opponents of making a crass comparison by likening Ukraine's fight against invasion to the U.K.'s exit from the European Union.

Speaking to a Conservative Party conference in Blackpool, northwest England, Johnson claimed Putin was "terrified" that the example of a free Ukraine would spark a pro-democracy revolution in Russia.

"That is why he is trying so brutally to snuff out the flame of freedom in Ukraine and that's why it is so vital that he fails," Johnson said.

"A victorious Putin will not stop in Ukraine. And the end of freedom in Ukraine will mean the extinction of any hope of freedom in Georgia and then Moldova, it will mean the beginning of a new age of intimidation across Eastern Europe from the Baltic to the Black Sea," Johnson said.

Johnson praised Ukrainians' defense of their country, and added that it was also "the instinct" of people in the U.K. "to choose freedom." As an example, he said British voters opted in a 2016 referendum to leave the EU "because they wanted to be free to do things differently and for this country to be able to run itself."

Johnson helped lead the campaign for the U.K. to leave the bloc it joined in 1973. Britain's departure, eventually completed in 2020, remains highly divisive.

Ed Davey, leader of the opposition Liberal Democrats, called Johnson "a national embarrassment."

"To compare a referendum to women and children fleeing Putin's bombs is an insult to every Ukrainian," he said.

Gavin Barwell, who served as chief of staff to former Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May, said "voting in a free and fair referendum isn't in any way comparable with risking your life to defend your country against invasion."

Barwell also pointed out that Ukraine has asked to join the EU.

Egypt displays recently discovered ancient tombs in Saqqara

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

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CAIRO (AP) — Egypt on Saturday displayed recently discovered, well-decorated ancient tombs at a Pharaonic necropolis just outside the capital Cairo.

The five tombs were unearthed earlier this month and date back to the Old Kingdom — a period spanning roughly from around 2700 BC to 2200 B.C., as well as to the First Intermediate Period, which lasted for over a century after the Old Kingdom collapsed, according to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

Mostafa Waziri, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, said Egyptian archeologists started excavating the site in September. The tombs, he said, were for senior officials including regional rulers and palace supervisors in ancient Egypt.

“All of those five tombs are well-painted, well-decorated. Excavations did not stop. We are planning to continue our excavations. We believe that we can find more tombs in this area,” he told reporters at the site.

The tombs were found near the Step Pyramid of Djoser, in the Saqqara Necropolis, 24 kilometers (15 miles) southwest of Cairo.

Footage shared on the ministry’s social media pages showed burial shafts leading to the tombs. Walls were seen decorated with hieroglyphic inscriptions and images of sacred animals and after-life items used by ancient Egyptians.

The Saqqara site is part of a sprawling necropolis at Egypt’s ancient capital of Memphis that includes the famed Giza Pyramids as well as smaller pyramids at Abu Sir, Dahshur and Abu Ruwaysh. The ruins of Memphis were designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1970s.

In recent years, Egypt has heavily promoted new archaeological finds to international media and diplomats in the hope of attracting more tourists to the country.

The vital tourism sector, a major source of foreign currency for Egypt, suffered from years of political turmoil and violence that followed a 2011 uprising that toppled autocrat Hosni Mubarak.

The sector has recently started to recover from the coronavirus pandemic, but was hit again by the effects of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Along with Russia, Ukraine is a major source of tourists visiting the Middle Eastern nation.

Afghanistan world’s unhappiest country, even before Taliban

By KATHY GANNON Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Afghanistan is the unhappiest country in the world — even before the Taliban swept to power last August. That’s according to a so-called World Happiness report released ahead of the U.N.-designated International Day of Happiness on Sunday.

The annual report ranked Afghanistan as last among 149 countries surveyed, with a happiness rate of just 2.5. Lebanon was the world’s second saddest country, with Botswana, Rwanda and Zimbabwe rounding out the bottom five. Finland ranked first for the fourth year running with a 7.8 score, followed by Denmark and Switzerland, with Iceland and the Netherlands also in the top five.

Researchers ranked the countries after analyzing data over three years. They looked at several categories, including gross domestic product per capita, social safety nets, life expectancy, freedom to make life choices, generosity of the population, and perceptions of internal and external corruption levels.

Afghanistan stacked up poorly in all six categories, a confounding result coming as it did before the Taliban arrival and despite 20 years of U.S. and international investment. The U.S. alone spent \$145 billion on development in Afghanistan since 2002, according to reports by the U.S. special inspector general for Afghanistan.

Still, there were signs of increasing hopelessness.

Gallup did a polling in 2018 and found that few Afghans they surveyed had much hope for the future. In fact the majority said they had no hope for the future.

Years of runaway corruption, increased poverty, lack of jobs, a steady increase in people forced below the poverty line, and erratic development all combined into a crushing malaise, said analyst Nasratullah Haqpal. Most Afghans had high hopes after 2001, when the Taliban were ousted and the U.S.-led coalition declared victory,

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"Unfortunately the only focus was on the war, the warlords and the corrupt politicians," said Haqpal.

"People just became poorer and poorer and more disappointed and more unhappy... that is why these 20 years of investment in Afghanistan collapsed in just 11 days," he said referring to the Taliban's lightning blitz through the country before sweeping into Kabul in mid August.

When Masoud Ahmadi, a carpenter, returned to Afghanistan from neighboring Pakistan after the 2001 collapse of the Taliban, his hopes for the future were bright. He dreamed of opening a small furniture-making shop, maybe employing as many as 10 people. Instead, sitting in his dusty 6-foot by 10-foot workshop on Saturday, he said he opens just twice a week for lack of work.

"When the money came to this country, the leadership of the government took the money and counted it as their personal money, and the people were not helped to change their life for the better," said Ahmadi.

The report warns that Afghanistan's numbers might drop even further next year when it measures Afghans' happiness level after the arrival of the Taliban. The economy is currently in free fall as the group struggles to transition from insurgency to governing.

Marshall, 1st Black justice, faced down Senate critics

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The first Black woman nominated to the Supreme Court is likely to face questioning at her Senate hearing that would have been familiar to Thurgood Marshall, the first Black man who served on the high court.

Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson's nomination has come before the Senate during what Senate Republican Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., has called a national crime wave.

"Amid all this, the soft-on-crime brigade is squarely in Judge Jackson's corner," McConnell said on the Senate floor.

Other Republican senators and some in the conservative media have focused on Jackson's work as a federal public defender, which included representation of several men held without charges at Guantanamo Bay naval base. Jackson's hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee begins Monday.

Fifty-five years ago, a band of Southern senators, almost all Democrats, used riots in the nation's cities and Americans' fears about crime to try to derail Marshall's nomination.

"I know there is a crisis in this country, a crime crisis. And I know the philosophy of the Supreme Court one way or the other on these vital issues is going to be of untold consequences, and has already been in my judgment of serious consequences to the crime situation," Sen. John McClellan, D-Ark., said during Marshall's hearing before the committee.

The Supreme Court, under the leadership of Chief Justice Earl Warren, had expanded the rights of people accused of crimes, in a series of decisions that included the famed Miranda case that limited police questioning of suspects without a lawyer present.

But concerns about crime were inextricably linked to the issue of race, author Wil Haygood wrote in "Showdown," his account of Marshall's confirmation.

The only significant opposition to Marshall came from McClellan and the other ardent segregationists on the committee, Sens. Sam Ervin, D-N.C., James Eastland, D-Miss. and Strom Thurmond, R-S.C. They were determined to make life difficult for Marshall, the storied civil rights lawyer. Marshall had argued the Brown v. Board of Education case in which the Supreme Court outlawed official segregation.

The previous three choices of Democratic presidents had been confirmed within a month of their nominations by voice votes in a Senate controlled by Democrats.

The party still held the reins in the Senate in 1967 when President Lyndon Johnson maneuvered to create a Supreme Court opening and then sought to fill it with a groundbreaking choice.

By then, Marshall had been a federal appeals court judge and was serving as solicitor general, Johnson's top Supreme Court lawyer, at the time of his nomination to the court.

But Marshall's stellar resume didn't impress the Southerners.

"They were pretty awful to Marshall. Thurmond in particular kept asking questions that were like trivia

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questions. "Tell us the names of the people on the committee that voted out the 14th Amendment," said Carolyn Shapiro, a professor at the Chicago-Kent School of Law who has studied Supreme Court nominations. That amendment, which includes the due process, equal protection and citizenship clauses, was passed by Congress in 1866 and ratified two years later.

The same senators had previously voted against Marshall's confirmation to the appeals court and tried to block adoption of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

But they insisted that Marshall's race had nothing to do with their view of his nomination.

Ervin explained his opposition on the Senate floor just before the final vote on Marshall. "I know that in so doing I lay myself open to the easy, but false, charge that I am a racist. I have no prejudice in my mind or heart against any man because of his race. I love men of all races," Ervin said.

Instead, Ervin said, Marshall would be another "judicial activist" to cement the direction of the Warren Court.

Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., who would later recant his segregationist views, said it would be smart politically for him to support Marshall because Marshall was Black. "Yet, I consider it my duty as a senator, under the Constitution, not to let Mr. Marshall's race influence my decision. Having reached the definite conclusion that were Mr. Marshall white, I would vote against him. I cannot, therefore, let the fact that he is a Negro influence me to vote for him when I would not do so otherwise," Byrd said.

In the end, the Senate confirmed Marshall by a 69-11 vote, a healthy margin, but only a couple of votes beyond what was needed to overcome a filibuster at the time. Johnson and his teams lobbied hard to persuade other Marshall opponents to simply not vote, Haygood wrote.

Marshall was a target for people who were unapologetic about their opposition to civil rights for Black Americans, Shapiro said.

More than half a century later, much has changed, she said, but race remains front and center in American politics.

President Joe Biden pledged during the 2020 campaign to put a Black woman on the Supreme Court for the first time.

Jackson, along with other Biden nominees, has been asked whether she ever took part in a riot. Senators also wanted her to tell them what role race plays in judging.

"We're in a moment of political division and a lot of it revolves around race," Shapiro said.

Marshall endured five days of questioning spanning three weeks. It was another month before his nomination reached the Senate floor. He was sworn in as a justice on Sept. 1, 1967.

Democrats who control the Senate have a much faster timetable in store for Jackson. She will testify over two days, standard practice for high court nominees these days. Barring a major misstep, Jackson could be confirmed before Easter.

Ukraine's cultural capital no longer distant from the war

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

LVIV, Ukraine (AP) — Until the missiles struck within walking distance of the cathedrals and cafes downtown, Ukraine's cultural capital was a city that could feel distant from the war. The early panic had eased, and the growing response to morning air raid sirens was not to head downstairs but roll over in bed.

But Friday's Russian airstrikes at dawn in Lviv, just outside the international airport, made nearby buildings vibrate and shook any sense of comfort as thick black smoke billowed.

Still, the hours after the airstrikes were absent of the scenes in other Ukrainian cities that have horrified the world: shattered buildings and people fleeing under fire. Lviv was already returning to its centuries-old role as an ever-adapting crossroads.

"In the morning it was scary, but we have to go on," said Maria Parkhuts, a local restaurant worker. "People are arriving with almost nothing, and from where it's worse."

The city has been a refuge since the war began nearly a month ago, the last outpost before Poland and host to hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians streaming through or staying on. From the other direction

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come aid and foreign fighters.

Midstream is a city that, on the surface, carries on amid world heritage churches and coffee kiosks. Food delivery cyclists with backpacks of global brands wobble down the cobblestones. Yellow trams ding through narrow streets lined with the history of one occupation after another, from the Cossacks to the Swedes to the Germans and the Soviet Union.

The threat of another occupation by Russia, after so long a fight to break from its influence, and so close to the rest of Europe, is where the new Lviv emerges now.

"It's war," said Maxim Tristan, a 28-year-old soldier, of Friday's attack. "It only makes us more motivated to fight."

On a street corner, young men line up outside a weapons shop, passing around a gun sight. Anything's available if you have cash, one man said, prompting grins from the others. On the same block is a range for target practice, with the face of Russian President Vladimir Putin in the bull's-eye. Elsewhere in the city, military veterans train civilians how to shoot.

In a popular city park, a bunker from World War II has been reopened just steps from the playground. Outside an academy for architecture, men are filling sandbags. Some of the city's churches have wrapped up their statues and covered their stained-glass windows. Others leave their fate to God.

In the military section of the main cemetery are more than a dozen graves too new for marble crosses. The earth is piled with frosted flowers. The ground is marked with boot tracks. Behind the graves is open ground ready for several rows more.

Hours after Friday's attack in Lviv, activists placed 109 baby strollers in the square at the heart of the city to represent the children killed in the war.

Tattoo artists prick clients with patriotic symbols. A brewery turns to making "Molotov cocktails." A street poster shows a woman in Ukraine's yellow and blue colors, jabbing a pistol into the mouth of a kneeling Putin. In the front room of a local business, a young woman sketches a drawing of a dove.

Volunteerism has seized the city. People are opening their homes, and local news outlets report on residents cutting up old clothing to make camouflage netting for checkpoints.

"War is not just people who fight," said Volodymyr Pekar.

The 40-year-old local businessman is behind a drive to dot the countryside around the city with yellow-and-blue billboards with slogans including "God save Ukraine" and "Do not run, defend." He was uncomfortable with the profane language that emerged early on in war messaging, and he said the more religious villagers were too.

At the same time, Pekar has used crowdfunding to raise money for what he called two of Ukrainian soldiers' biggest needs: flak jackets and cigarettes.

"After you fight, you need to smoke," he said.

In the shadow of slogans and bravado are the estimated 200,000 people who have fled to Lviv from harder-hit parts of Ukraine. Embraced by the city's residents and absorbed into homes and shelters, they look the most nervous of all.

The displaced pick through boxes at aid collection points, scan notices, check their phones. Their presence has led Lviv to pivot from getaway to refuge: Instead of promoting local confectionaries and romantic places, the city's official tourism website now shares information on bomb shelter locations and radiation alerts.

Promising "warmth for the soul," locals on Friday launched a distinctly Lviv series of free cultural walks for internally displaced people, with the aim of visiting galleries, the medieval quarter and more.

Just days ago, thousands of newcomers crammed the central train station at the height of the flood of refugees heading west. Now the station's platforms at times are almost bare, awaiting the millions who continue to roam Ukraine looking for a place of rest or a new purpose.

There was the furniture maker from the bombarded capital, Kyiv, who trained in air defense years ago and was on his way to an army post. Standing alone on the platform with a backpack and sleeping mat, he planned to visit his family in the western Transcarpathia region before heading east again.

Farther down the platform was a young couple, restlessly remaining in Ukraine because the man, 20, is

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of fighting age and is prohibited from leaving.

"I didn't travel my country this much. Now I have to," said the woman, Diana Tkachenko, 21. Their journey began last month in Kyiv on a crowded train and with no idea where they were going.

Their arrival in Lviv was terrible. Fellow travelers pushed and screamed, Tkachenko said. Some were coming from so far east, from Russian-speaking areas, that they didn't speak Ukrainian.

Their train had pulled into the most Ukrainian of cities. For Tkachenko, it was her first visit to Lviv.

"I walked a lot," she said. "I tried to enjoy the place. It's really beautiful. It feels a lot more safe."

But there were too many people and no place to live, she said. She and her boyfriend decided to head back east, toward Kyiv.

As their train prepared for departure, yet another was arriving.

Pope releases Vatican reform, gives weight to fighting abuse

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pope Francis released his long-awaited reform program of the Holy See bureaucracy on Saturday that envisages greater decision-making roles for the laity and gives new institutional weight to efforts to fight clerical sex abuse.

The 54-page text, titled "Praedicate Evangelium," or "Proclaiming the Gospel," replaces the founding constitution "Pastor Bonus" that was penned by St. John Paul II in 1988.

Francis was elected pope in 2013 in large part on his promise to reform the bulky and inefficient Vatican bureaucracy, which acts as the organ of central governance for the 1.3-billion strong Catholic Church. He named a Cabinet of cardinal advisers who have met periodically since his election to help him draft the changes.

Much of the reform work has been rolled out piecemeal over the years, with offices consolidated and financial reforms issued. But the publication of the new document, for now only in Italian, finalizes the process and puts it into effect in June.

The document was released Saturday, the ninth anniversary of Francis' installation as pope and the feast of St. Joseph, an important figure to Francis' ministry.

The new reform emphasizes the missionary and charitable focus of the church as well as the need for the Vatican to be at service both to the pope and local dioceses. It envisages greater roles for laity, making explicitly clear that lay people — not just priests, bishops or cardinals — can head a major Vatican office, and that all staff should reflect the geographic universality of the church.

In one of the major changes, it brings the pope's advisory commission on preventing sexual abuse into the Vatican's powerful doctrine office which oversees the canonical investigations of abuse cases.

Previously, the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors existed as an ad hoc commission that reported to the pope but had no real institutional weight or power. It often found itself at odds with the more powerful Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which reviews all cases of abuse.

Now the advisory commission is part of the newly named Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, where presumably its members who include abuse survivors can exert influence on the decisions taken by the prelates who weigh whether predator priests are sanctioned and how.

Cardinal Sean O'Malley, who heads the pontifical commission, welcomed the change and said it was evidence of Francis' effort to promote a stronger culture of safeguarding within the Vatican and wider church.

"For the first time, Pope Francis has made safeguarding and the protection of minors a fundamental part of the structure of the church's central government: the Roman Curia," O'Malley said in a statement. "Maintaining its status as a separate body within the dicastery that enjoys direct access to the Holy Father and with its own leadership and staffing, the renewed and re-affirmed Pontifical Commission will play an increasingly incisive role in ensuring the church is a safe place for children and vulnerable persons."

Other changes involve making the pope's personal envoy for charity and alms into the head of a dicastery in its own right, making clear the importance that this service-oriented job has for Francis. The position is currently headed by Polish Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, who recently headed a humanitarian mission to

Ukraine on behalf of the pope.

In addition, two Vatican offices for evangelization are merging into one Dicastery for Evangelization. Previously the Vatican had an entire parallel bureaucracy dedicated to supporting the church in the developing world where Catholics are a minority, with another office dedicated to reviving the faith in countries where Catholicism is already heavily present. The new office combines them and is headed by the pope, assisted by two deputy prefects.

Overall, the reform document calls for a "healthy decentralization" to give more decision-making authority to local bishops rather than have Rome continue to be the central clearing-house for governance decisions. But the text also makes clear that such authority cannot touch on matters of "doctrine, discipline and communion," a warning that individual bishops conferences cannot stray from core tenets of church teaching.

It seeks to break down the siloed nature of the bureaucracy, in which each congregation operated on its own fiefdom, by seeking to encourage greater communication and collaboration among offices. In a break with the past, it calls for the heads of Vatican offices to meet regularly as a group with the pope rather than just individually. In essence, it calls for the Vatican bureaucracy to function more like a Cabinet that meets regularly with the head of state.

It makes clear that each "dicastery" as the departments are known, are considered equal to one another. Previously the Vatican secretariat of state had an outsized role of influence and importance, followed closely by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Now, all dicasteries are equal.

4 US Marines die in NATO drill when Osprey crashes in Norway

HELSINKI (AP) — Four U.S. Marines were killed when their Osprey aircraft crashed in a Norwegian town in the Arctic Circle during a NATO exercise unrelated to Russia's war in Ukraine, authorities said Saturday.

Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Stoere tweeted that they died in the crash on Friday night. The cause was under investigation, but Norwegian police reported bad weather in the area.

The Marines, assigned to 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, II Marine Expeditionary Force, were taking part in a NATO exercise called Cold Response.

The U.S. says the identities of the Marines wouldn't be immediately provided in keeping with U.S. Defense Department policy of notifying relatives.

The aircraft was an MV-22B Osprey. It "had a crew of four and was out on a training mission in Nordland County" in northern Norway, the country's armed forces said in a statement.

It was on its way north to Bodoe, where it was scheduled to land just before 6 p.m. Friday. The Osprey crashed in Graetaedalen in Beiarn, south of Bodoe. Police said a search and rescue mission was launched immediately. At 1:30 a.m. Saturday, the police arrived at the scene and confirmed that the crew of four had died.

The Cold Response drill includes around 30,000 troops, 220 aircraft and 50 vessels from 27 countries. Non-NATO members Finland and Sweden are also participating. The exercises began on March 14 and end on April 1.

No cause was given for the crash, but the Norwegian armed forces said that Cold Response "will carry on as planned, with the measures we have to take due to the weather."

A Norwegian rescue helicopter spotted the crash site late Friday and local Red Cross crews were assigned to assist police on the ground, Norwegian media said.

Norwegian newspaper VG said Red Cross members drove close to the crash site with scooters and marked the trail with GPS for police in what they described as extremely difficult weather conditions early Saturday.

"It was a special night, it was a real storm. There were five of us driving towards the scene of the accident. There was one meter of visibility, snow and storm in the mountains," Red Cross team leader Oerjan Kristensen told VG. "I guess it was a wind gust of 30-40 meters per second. When it blows like that, it is difficult to stand upright."

Kristensen added that the rescue operation is being hampered by the risk of landslides in the mountains, and the remoteness of the crash site.

Police launched an investigation into the crash and accident commission members and police representatives were due to arrive at the crash site on Saturday.

"The weather is very bad in the area to complete work at the scene, but police will take it up again as soon as the weather conditions allow it," operations manager Ivar Bo Nilsson from the Norland police district told reporters.

Lt. Gen. Yngve Odlo, head of the Norwegian Armed Forces' operational headquarters, said that Cold Response would continue despite the crash.

"Right now there is full focus on ending the rescue operation, taking care of the people and then there will be a normal procedure with causation," Odlo was quoted as saying by Norwegian public broadcaster NRK.

The first Cold Response exercise was held in 2006, and the drills are conducted every two years. They take place in southeastern, central and northern Norway.

Ari Wegner: The other woman behind 'The Power of the Dog'

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Next week, Ari Wegner could make Oscar history. The 37-year-old Australian has a very good shot at being the first woman to win an Academy Award for best cinematography for helping create the indelible images of "The Power of the Dog" alongside director Jane Campion.

Together, Campion and Wegner battled the extreme conditions of the New Zealand landscape to transport audiences to a desolate ranch in 1920s Montana and create an unforgettable piece about human fragility. Some of the images, like a shot of two actors silhouetted through a barn door, are the kinds that aspiring filmmakers are already studying.

And they might have never met were it not for an Australian bank commercial. Campion, an Oscar-winning auteur, had never done a commercial before, but she said yes to that one and hit it off with the young cinematographer. Yet it was still an adrenaline rush for Wegner to get a call from Campion a few years about a potential project to adapt Thomas Savage's 1967 book. She went out that day, bought it and read it.

Wegner was already making a name for herself with work on films like "Lady Macbeth" and "Zola." But the visual languages of the films were distinct and impactful, they did have one thing in common: They were all lower budget, independent fare.

"The Power of the Dog" was in a different league and not just because of Campion's involvement. Here they would have the backing of Netflix. The streaming company gave Campion a budget that she'd never had the chance to work with before. "It was like working with the Medicis," Campion said.

Wegner and Campion got a year of prep to drive around New Zealand, scout locations, learn about the landscape and discuss every aspect of the film, from small technical details to the themes and values they wanted to communicate.

"I had read about other filmmakers having these dream pre-productions. I thought, well, that's something that happens to other people," Wegner said. "But I had an instinct that with more time that there was another level of filmmaking out there. And that was definitely the case."

They got to know the conditions on New Zealand's South Island so that when it came time to shoot they knew what they'd be working with. But there were still challenges of shooting in the valley, which is one of the windiest places on the island.

"I can only relate it to skiing on a sunny day when the sun's coming down and it's also bouncing up at you. The air is even intense," Wegner said. "It is a really hard environment to think creatively in because a lot of the time you are just trying to keep your eyes open."

Every morning, they'd prep inside over tea and toast before heading out to brave the elements because, "It's hard to come up with a plan from scratch when your body is under assault."

And yet, the part of the shoot that Wegner was most anxious about was the interiors. She worried about creating an authentic environment in a big, sterile warehouse in Auckland worthy of a Campion film.

"In the end, it turned into one of the greatest joys of starting with a completely blank slate and being able to control absolutely everything," Wegner said. "It was a real playground."

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Shooting the exteriors first was a blessing, too. She was more aware of when something felt off, like when the air was too still or clear or the light not wild enough to match the conditions in the valley, and they could adjust appropriately.

Wegner was always open to inspiration in the moment, too, like when the clouds would part perfectly and the mountains looked great. She was conscious of being attuned to "the possibility of some really beautiful iconic frames."

Campion invited her collaborators to seize on unplanned opportunities, one of which happened to be the shot in the barn, which they captured after they'd shot the scene. Wegner said Campion created a "spell of calm" on the set that allowed for improvisations.

"When you're with her, the seconds on the clock kind of tick slower," Wegner said.

And while it's always the shots that get the most attention, the most ineffable part of a cinematographer's job is their relationship with actors. Wegner laughed that if she had another lifetime she'd write a thesis about the intimate, voyeuristic, one-sided relationship where you both have to be invested in the emotions of the scene while also being invisible, even while sometimes literally touching the actor as would happen with Benedict Cumberbatch in some of the handheld shots. For her, the experience is like going into a meditative state.

"You're both really present and all your senses are attuned and you're also somewhere else," she said. "During a take I would never feel temperature or pain or hunger and I'd get home at the end of the day and wonder, 'Where did that bruise come from? I don't remember smashing my shin on something.'"

It's been a surreal ride for Wenger since Oscar nominations were announced last month, and she is not taking the honor for granted. The statistics, she knows, are grim for female cinematographers in Hollywood. In a survey of the top 250 films of 2021, only 6% had female cinematographers — a number that hasn't budged since 1998. And only two have ever been nominated for an Oscar in the 94 years of the awards. The first was Rachel Morrison, in 2018, for "Mudbound."

And yet, she does see a glimmer of hope in that second statistic. After 90 years of nothing, two women have been nominated in the past five years. Change, she believes, is possible if people give women the opportunity to shoot big, high-profile movies.

Campion, who has worked with some of the great cinematographers over the years, from Dion Beebe to Greig Fraser (who is nominated for "Dune") said she "wanted to work with a female DP" on "The Power of the Dog." And part of that decision meant taking a chance on someone. Morrison was also hired by a woman, director Dee Rees.

"I think about how much we've missed out on. All that talent that could have been there that we never got to see in the past 100 years, not because the talent wasn't there, but the gate wasn't ever open. It's the film industry's loss," Wegner said. "Now I think it's time we can do some catch up."

Finding solace through helping a TV show understand war

By JAMES LAPORTA Associated Press

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP) — The car door opens, then slams. The ignition rumbles. Music roars. Hands fixed on the wheel. Ten and two. Then we're off, hurtling down empty Santa Monica side streets before dawn.

Milo Ventimiglia is as composed as a Top Gun pilot. First gear grinds, then second — but in that cool way where velocity bursts with a swish and car lights blur.

Riding shotgun is an exercise in grip strength. Knuckles white, wheels screaming, heart pounding, music blaring. Today's feature: "Red Eyes" by The War on Drugs.

For the man who has been held up as America's dad for the past six years on NBC's "This Is Us," this is simply controlled chaos. For me, a U.S. Marine veteran of the war in Afghanistan, the entire experience — the early morning car ride, the story you're reading and how I came to work on his television show — is equal parts surreal and ridiculous.

It is also my own melancholic — and, ultimately, therapeutic — reflection of my war experiences and

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life afterwards.

We jump on I-10. Eastbound down the Santa Monica Freeway. Sailing into the busy morning traffic, we bob and weave and rev past fleeting cars and 18-wheeled semi-trucks. A chess game fueled with raw velocity.

I think back to four years ago. I had set up an interview with the creator of "This Is Us," Dan Fogelman, and the renowned American novelist Tim O'Brien, who wrote "The Things They Carried" and had been hired to help craft the Vietnam War storyline in season three of the show. The interview was to go over the verisimilitude of the show — the blending of fiction with the memories of a real-life war and its aftermath.

An hour before the call, scrolling through Instagram posts, I found out that a Marine I had served with in Afghanistan had taken his own life nine months earlier. Gunnery Sgt. Vaughn Canlas was an infantryman turned human intelligence collector. He was 39 and had over 16 years of service when he shot himself in the head.

Once I got on the phone with Fogelman and O'Brien, I broke down. All I remember of the interview is a barrage of apologies from me as I struggled to ask my questions through tears. Fogelman said I was being too hard on myself and that I should stop by if I find myself in California.

Three months later, in January 2019, I'm walking from one sound stage to another, touring the "This Is Us" sets and editing bays. Fogelman asks: Would I be willing to chat with the writers for about 15 minutes? The idea was to help craft a new character: Cassidy Sharp, played by Jennifer Morrison.

Two hours later, I was offered a job.

The development of Cassidy Sharp in a roomful of strangers was, ultimately, a deep mining of my own internal struggle to understand life after war. Along the way, the show's writing room turned into my therapy room — which, according to Fogelman, is commonplace.

"That's our show," he told me. "I've always felt that the show, if you had to pick one thing, was about losing a parent — about grief and about the trauma that comes with that unexpected loss."

I identified. I told the writers about the curious Afghan boy I watched step on an improvised explosive device. I told them about my survivor's guilt. About my depression.

I told them, too, about how Lance Cpl. Charles "Seth" Sharp (who inspired Cassidy's last name) bled out in front of his friends. About my loss of innocence and purpose and my crumbling marriage. About the time my ex-wife pulled a Beretta 9mm out of my mouth.

Fogelman asked me what I hated about Hollywood depictions of service members and veterans. For me, it was caricatured tropes that painted an individual as either incredibly heroic or incredibly broken. No shades of gray.

That's not reality. Veterans with post-traumatic stress, I said, still have bills to pay and families to take care of. So we often compartmentalize and pretend we're OK.

Even when we're not.

On some level, everyone touched by war dies.

Lives are lost. Innocence, too. There is a permanent shattering that occurs upon the topography of the human condition — a before and after. That experience is complex and multilayered, and a genuine depiction of a veteran should include those aspects.

I remember the night of Sept. 24, 2019, vividly. It was a day after my father's birthday. He had died four years earlier, and his death was why I started watching the show.

I remember being asked if I was excited to see the introduction of Cassidy Sharp during the season four premiere of "This is Us." I wasn't. I was terrified. What if people didn't watch or didn't care?

The episode paid homage to two of my friends who died in Afghanistan: Sharp and Lance Cpl. Jeremy Lasher. But the scene I remember most is Cassidy in her Marine Corps uniform coming home from war. She exits a cab and is greeted by friends and family. In the background, someone holds a handwritten

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sign that reads, "Welcome back Sharp."

My Sharp didn't get that. His family didn't get that experience. But 7.7 million viewers heard his name. Sharp's dad, Ric, told Stars and Stripes in an interview: "It gave me cold chills. I teared up. I'm tearing up right now."

"I wanted everyone that I knew to watch it — family, friends, people in the area," he said. "I was proud and just excited to know that his name is being remembered. I'm a firm believer that when you say their names, they're not forgotten."

I hear the sound of Ventimiglia's clapping hands as he tries to quiet production assistants and cameramen on Paramount's soundstage 20.

He's the director on this episode — number 608, which aired this past week. Smokey Robinson & the Miracles singing "Ooo Baby Baby" reverberates off the walls as the camera captures actors Griffin Dunne and Vanessa Bell Calloway dancing in the background.

In the foreground, Cassidy Sharp is there, pretending to be OK in front of her son and friend Kevin Pearson (played by Justin Hartley), but suffering in silence over how the war in Afghanistan just ended. Her memories fluctuate between her broken marriage and her broken promises.

In the character's mind — and in mine — is a replay of last August, when thousands of desperate Afghans spilled out onto the tarmac at Hamid Karzai International Airport, fearful of living under another Taliban regime. The memory of a U.S. Air Force C-17 transport aircraft taking off as several people are crushed under its wheels flashes into my mind's eye.

I think about how I gripped the door handle in Ventimiglia's car on the ride over to Paramount. I think about the Afghans and their grips, how they clung to the underside of the plane as it gained altitude, how they fell to their death. My hands grow clammy. The stress tightens my muscles. My breathing grows labored. I cry.

On the screen, Dunne, who plays Vietnam veteran Nicky Pearson, senses something is off about Cassidy. That is by design. The conversation between myself and "This Is Us" writers Jake Schnesel and Kevin Falls in the months prior to filming focused on the connection between the Vietnam and Afghanistan veterans — and, in particular, the sins they both feel are their burden to carry.

On some level, I believe, veterans are unreliable narrators in their own war stories. They are always on the inside looking out, and that perspective — while unique and important — can be limited to a narrow field of vision.

And in the absence of any kind of coherent narrative around the wars of either Vietnam or Afghanistan, it's easy for soldiers to assume responsibility for things that are not their fault — to shrink the war down to their own small, horrific experiences, as Army veteran turned writer Adam Linehan put it.

It becomes their war — a war of the mind. And in their war, they feel like the bad guys.

So in that storyline, the U.S. didn't leave Afghans behind; Cassidy did. Jack didn't bring all his soldiers back alive. Nicky feels unforgivable for accidentally killing an innocent boy in Vietnam. And for me, it is years of playing the what-if game that might have prevented a little boy — a toddler, virtually — from disappearing into a dust cloud of fire and ripped flesh.

After a withdrawal or a surrender or the signing of a peace treaty, the memories of war do not simply get filed away and frozen. They ebb and flow as time passes for those who were there, and for the families impacted when the reverberations of violence rippled outward.

My conclusion from my experience with the "This Is Us" writing process is this: In a storyline about war, and maybe in real life as well, perhaps there's no better person than a veteran who watched Saigon fall in 1975 to help an Afghanistan veteran navigate the emotional impact of the withdrawal of U.S. forces.

Maybe fiction can offer the lesson of how wars of the mind should end — with a connection made, with something added and a path forward in sight, rather than just a tale of all that was lost along the way. A sense that even when we're not OK, we could be.

East Timor vote highlights young nation's political impasse

By FERNANDO da COSTA Associated Press

DILI, East Timor (AP) — Vote counting was underway in East Timor's presidential elections Saturday with two former fighters for independence — one current and one former president — considered to be the front-runners, each accusing the other of causing a yearslong political paralysis.

Ahead of the election day, former President Jose Ramos-Horta, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, had a lead over incumbent Francisco "Lu Olo" Guterres in an opinion survey. Four women were among 13 other candidates, the highest number of women taking part in the fifth election since East Timor won independence from Indonesia 20 years ago.

Official results were not expected until Thursday.

"I am confident that I will win the election again," Guterres told reporters after casting his vote in Dili, the capital. "I call on people to accept whatever the result and I am ready to work with whoever wins this election."

Guterres, 67, is from the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor party, known by its local acronym Fretilin. Ramos-Horta, 72, is backed by the rival National Congress of the Reconstruction of East Timor, known as CNRT, a party led by former Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao, also an ex-resistance leader who remains influential.

More than 835,000 of the country's 1.3 million people were registered to vote. The winner will take the oath of office May 20, the 20th anniversary of East Timor's independence from Indonesia, which had invaded the former Portuguese colony in 1975.

If none of the candidates secures more than 50% of the votes in the first round, a runoff between the two top vote-getters is scheduled for April 19.

Tensions between Fretilin and CNRT, the two largest parties, led to the resignation of Prime Minister Taur Matan Ruak in February 2020 after the government repeatedly failed to pass a budget.

Ruak agreed to stay on until a new government is formed and to oversee the battle against the coronavirus pandemic with a \$250 million war chest. His government has operated without an annual budget and has relied on monthly injections from its sovereign fund savings, called the Petroleum Fund.

Guterres refused to swear in nine people nominated by CNRT as Cabinet ministers in 2018. CNRT has accused Guterres and Fretilin of acting unconstitutionally and illegally seizing the post of speaker of parliament.

Fretilin said that Horta is unfit for president, accusing him of causing a crisis as prime minister in 2006, when dozens were killed as political rivalries turned into open conflict on the streets of Dili.

A clash between Fretilin and CNRT supporters also broke out in 2018, leaving more than a dozen injured and cars torched.

Ramos-Horta, speaking to media while casting his vote, said the benefits of his party's development plans would be spread more widely and vowed to work closely with Gusmao to implement them.

"We have voted based on our own wish for a new president who is able to maintain stability, to develop our economy and to change the current situation," Ramos-Horta said.

East Timor's transition to a democracy has been rocky, with leaders battling massive poverty, unemployment and corruption. The nation continues to recover from the bloody break for independence two decades ago, with an economy reliant on dwindling offshore oil revenues and bitter factional politics.

Joaquim Fonseca, a political analyst at RENETIL, a youth organization established during Indonesia's occupation of East Timor, said that no single party would be able to form a government on its own but that coalitions were necessary.

"This remains a challenge for both of the candidates," said Fonseca, who is also East Timor's former ambassador to the U.K. "At this point, there is no absolute certainty that either of the candidates will bring the desired changes."

The U.N. estimates that nearly half of East Timor's population lives below the extreme poverty line of \$1.90 a day and half of children under the age of 5 suffer physical and mental stunting as a result of malnutrition.

"I do hope the winning president will look after the clean water, the roads to villages and health facili-

ties," said Lucio Cardozo, a Dili resident.

Oil revenues, which finance more than 90% of government spending, are rapidly dwindling and the country's nearly \$19 billion sovereign wealth fund could be empty within a decade as the government's annual withdrawals exceed its investment returns, according to La'o Hamutuk, an East Timorese research institute.

"The finite amount in our Petroleum Fund will be quickly exhausted if we don't use it wisely to support building strong human resources and sustainable productive sectors," La'o Hamutuk said last November in recommendations to the government about its proposed 2022 budget.

While over 30% of the population is illiterate, the wealthiest earn over 42% of the national income and the bottom half take only about 16%, said Dinna Prapto Raharja, an international relations analyst and the founder of Synergy Policies, an independent consulting firm based in Jakarta.

"This is a big gap that's not easy to bridge unless there is a fundamental governance change from whoever wins the 2022 election," she said. "The elite may need to discuss different models of sharing power."

Ketanji Brown Jackson's Guantanamo clients an issue for GOP

By JESSICA GRESKO and MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden's Supreme Court nominee will face sharp questions from Republican lawmakers this coming week about the work she did as a public defender representing four Guantanamo Bay detainees.

Some Republicans say Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson has a record of "defending terrorists" and they plan to raise questions about it at Senate hearings on her nomination that begin Monday. The criticism comes even as prominent Republicans have previously defended those who represented Guantanamo detainees, saying ensuring everyone access to a lawyer is a fundamental part of the American legal system.

Jackson was nominated to replace retiring Justice Stephen Breyer, and her selection fulfills a campaign promise by President Joe Biden to name the first Black woman to the Supreme Court. Democrats have the votes to confirm her even without GOP support. But three Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee, which is holding the hearings, are considering running for president in 2024 and are likely to use Jackson's Guantanamo Bay work, among other issues, to try to paint her as soft on crime and terrorism.

Already, the Republican Party has branded Jackson as a "radical, left-wing activist" and suggested her representation of Guantanamo detainees was "'zealous,' going beyond just giving them a competent defense."

Jackson has written that under "the ethics rules that apply to lawyers, an attorney has a duty to represent her clients zealously," no matter their own views. That includes the men she represented, men alleged to have been an al-Qaida bomb expert, a Taliban intelligence officer, a man who trained to fight American forces in Afghanistan and a farmer associated with the Taliban.

None of the men, however, was ever convicted by the military commissions created to try detainees. Even those who were eventually charged had those charges dropped, and all were eventually released.

Jackson was assigned all four cases while working as a federal public defender from 2005 to 2007. She continued at least some work when she moved on to private practice. In 2010, she joined the U.S. Sentencing Commission. She became a federal judge in 2013.

Earlier this month Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo., said after meeting with Jackson that it was "interesting" and in his view "a little concerning" that she had continued to represent the men after going into private practice at Morrison & Foerster, a firm that also had other lawyers representing detainees. Hawley, who also praised Jackson for "substantive answers" in her meeting with him, is one of the Republicans on the committee with White House aspirations. The others are Sens. Ted Cruz of Texas and Tom Cotton of Arkansas.

A.J. Kramer, Jackson's former boss at the public defenders' office, confirmed that she was assigned the Guantanamo cases and had not specifically sought them out. She was chosen, he said, for her experience working on appeals court cases, a skill that helped round out the team of lawyers.

Unlike colleagues, she never went to Guantanamo to visit her clients. Her work was legal research and writing, and the assignments were not her main ones while in the office, a former colleague said.

At the time, the Guantanamo detention center was still new. Jackson's assignments came after a 2004

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Supreme Court decision that those held at Guantanamo, which had opened two years earlier, had a right to challenge their detention in court. At the time Jackson's brother was also an Army infantryman deployed in Iraq, she has said, making her "keenly and personally mindful" of the circumstances that led to the men's detention.

In one case, Jackson's representation did not last long. Court records say she was assigned Khudai Dad's case in November 2005, but he was sent back to Afghanistan within three months. Jackson also represented Tariq Mahmoud Ahmed Al Sawah, whom the U.S. government has described as an explosives expert for al-Qaida, the terrorist group that carried out the 9/11 attacks. But charges ultimately brought against him were dismissed, and he was released to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2016.

Jackson represented Jabran al Qahtani, who traveled from his home in Saudi Arabia to train and fight against American forces and others in Afghanistan. While Republican talking points say Jackson "worked as a lawyer for several terrorists," that's too strong a word to use for Qahtani, according to another lawyer who worked on his case.

John Kolakowski said Qahtani was "young and foolish," traveling to undertake what he thought was a religious calling. He quickly regretted his decision and then "tried to get out of Dodge," Kolakowski said. But he was in the wrong place at the wrong time, Kolakowski said. He was captured in a raid on the Pakistan home of a man then thought to be a high-ranking al-Qaida member, Abu Zubaydah. The government ultimately dropped charges against Qahtani, and he was sent back to Saudi Arabia in 2017.

Jackson has written that she considers the work she did on behalf of a different detainee, Khi Ali Gul, some of her most significant as an attorney. Gul, described in documents as a Taliban intelligence officer, was also allegedly involved in the planning of an attack in which six rockets were fired at a U.S. base in Afghanistan.

Jackson has said that she represented him from 2005 to 2007, including writing a brief challenging his classification as an enemy combatant and his detention at Guantanamo. He was sent back to Afghanistan in 2014.

In a questionnaire prepared ahead of her Senate hearings, Jackson listed Gul's case as one of the 10 most significant cases she handled as a lawyer. She also included the case twice before — when she was nominated to serve as a federal judge in the District of Columbia and then as a federal appeals court judge.

Still, her representation came up only briefly at her appeals court confirmation last year. Cotton asked her: "Have you ever represented a terrorist at Guantanamo Bay." Yes, she said, though she couldn't recall Gul's name. She also answered written questions about him after the hearing.

Not all Republicans seem concerned about Jackson's Guantanamo work. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, noted after meeting with her that her role was mostly as an appellate lawyer, not working directly with the client.

Democrats have rushed to her defense. "Capable advocates willing to defend the most reviled in society, without endorsing the crime, is a pillar of our system," members of former President Barack Obama's administration wrote the committee.

In 2007, Charles "Cully" Stimson was a senior Pentagon official working on detainee issues when he criticized law firms for their representation of people held at Guantanamo.

Stimson soon apologized for what he called "boneheaded" remarks and resigned his position. He now works at the conservative Heritage Foundation.

"When you are advocating on behalf of anybody, including a Guantanamo person, you are required under state bar ethics rules to do so ethically and zealously," Stimson said in a recent interview. "The fact that they may be a terrorist doesn't take away from the fact that they are due zealous representation."

First woman on high court, O'Connor faced little opposition

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ninety-nine to zero. That was the tally, unimaginable in today's hyperpolarized environment, by which the Senate in 1981 made Sandra Day O'Connor the first woman on the Supreme Court.

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Such a lopsided result is certainly not in the cards for Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, who would be the first Black woman to serve on the Supreme Court if she wins Senate confirmation after hearings that begin Monday.

Democrats, who hold a Senate majority by virtue of the tiebreaking vote of Vice President Kamala Harris, all appear to be on board to support Jackson, and could confirm her without a single Republican vote.

Most Republicans, who largely opposed Jackson's confirmation to a federal appeals court last year, are expected to vote against her again.

Both nominations resulted from pledges that presidents made on the campaign trail.

President Joe Biden sought to revive his flagging campaign by promising to put a Black woman on the court. President Ronald Reagan, seeking to soften his conservative edges, said he would pry open the doors to the exclusive men's club that was the Supreme Court for its first 192 years.

What little opposition there was to O'Connor, then a little-known Arizona judge, was over her record on abortion when she had earlier served in the Arizona Senate. Anti-abortion groups rose up in alarm, complaining that Reagan was going back on the Republican platform promise to appoint judges who respect "the sanctity of innocent human life."

Father Charles Fiore, an anti-abortion leader who testified at O'Connor's hearing, said Reagan's choice of O'Connor elicited "virtually unanimous disappointment on the part of rank-and-file right-to-lifers" because it was at odds with the party platform and Reagan's appeal to white Democrats who were so important to his victory.

Public opinion polls, though, found deep support for the nomination. And with the president having made his choice, the White House had little interest in probing too deeply on the subject of abortion, as the author Joan Biskupic noted in her biography of O'Connor. "President Reagan already had put himself on the line with the nominee," Biskupic wrote in "Sandra Day O'Connor: How the First Woman on the Supreme Court Became Its Most Influential Justice."

Senate Republicans largely followed suit, even if some privately expressed their doubts to Reagan.

Sen. Strom Thurmond, the Republican chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, made clear his distaste for the high court's 1973 ruling in *Roe v. Wade*, which guaranteed a woman's right to an abortion. But he said O'Connor was constrained in what she could say about it because the issue was certain to come before the court again.

"I do not think she could be censured ... for not saying how she would vote as a member of the Supreme Court on abortion because she would disqualify herself from voting on that question if it does come before the Supreme Court again," Thurmond said.

As it turned out, the anti-abortion opposition to O'Connor was not unfounded. She would go on to be one of three authors of the 1992 decision that reaffirmed a woman's right to choose, although the court also strengthened states' ability to regulate abortion.

Some Democrats also raised mild concerns about O'Connor, including Biden, then the junior senator from Delaware. "If there is one aspect of this nomination that concerns me — and I must acknowledge it does not concern me very much at this point — it is your lack of extensive constitutional experience," Biden said.

But when the Senate held its final vote on Sept. 21, 1981, Biden was a vote to confirm, one of 45 Democrats and 54 Republicans. One Democrat was out of town the day of the vote.

"That's almost unthinkable today, that that would happen," said Renee Knake Jefferson, a University of Houston law professor and the co-author of "Shortlisted," about women who have been under consideration for Supreme Court openings.

Two senators remain from 1981: Democrat Pat Leahy of Vermont and Republican Chuck Grassley of Iowa. Leahy voted for Jackson last year; Grassley opposed her confirmation to the appeals court.

O'Connor, who turns 92 next week, served nearly 25 years on the court, retiring in 2006. Suffering from dementia, she withdrew from public life several years ago.

Today in History

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By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, March 20, the 79th day of 2022. There are 286 days left in the year. Spring arrives at 11:33 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 20, 1996, a jury in Los Angeles convicted Erik and Lyle Menendez of first-degree murder in the shotgun slayings of their wealthy parents. (They were sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.)

On this date:

In 1413, England's King Henry IV died; he was succeeded by Henry V.

In 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte returned to Paris after escaping his exile on Elba, beginning his "Hundred Days" rule.

In 1852, Harriet Beecher Stowe's influential novel about slavery, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," was first published in book form after being serialized.

In 1854, the Republican Party of the United States was founded by slavery opponents at a schoolhouse in Ripon (RIH'-puhn), Wisconsin.

In 1922, the decommissioned USS Jupiter, converted into the first U.S. Navy aircraft carrier, was recommissioned as the USS Langley.

In 1952, the U.S. Senate ratified, 66-10, a Security Treaty with Japan.

In 1969, John Lennon married Yoko Ono in Gibraltar.

In 1976, kidnapped newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst was convicted of armed robbery for her part in a San Francisco bank holdup carried out by the Symbionese Liberation Army. (Hearst was sentenced to seven years in prison; she was released after serving 22 months, and was pardoned in 2001 by President Bill Clinton.)

In 1995, in Tokyo, 12 people were killed, more than 5,500 others sickened when packages containing the deadly chemical sarin were leaked on five separate subway trains by Aum Shinrikyo (ohm shin-ree-kyoh) cult members.

In 2014, President Barack Obama ordered economic sanctions against nearly two dozen members of Russian President Vladimir Putin's inner circle and a major bank that provided them support, raising the stakes in an East-West showdown over Ukraine.

In 2018, in a phone call to Vladimir Putin, President Donald Trump offered congratulations on Putin's reelection victory; a senior official said Trump had been warned in briefing materials that he should not congratulate Putin.

In 2020, the governor of Illinois ordered residents to remain in their homes except for essential needs, joining similar efforts in California and New York to limit the spread of the coronavirus. Stocks tumbled again on Wall Street, ending their worst week since the 2008 financial crisis; the Dow fell more than 900 points to end the week with a 17% loss.

Ten years ago: Front-runner Mitt Romney won the Illinois Republican primary with ease, routing Rick Santorum for his third big-state win in a row. Army linebacker Andrew Rodriguez received the James E. Sullivan Award, given by the Amateur Athletic Union to the top amateur athlete in the United States.

Five years ago: U.S. Supreme Court nominee Neil Gorsuch pledged to be independent or "hang up the robe" as the Senate began confirmation hearings on President Donald Trump's conservative pick for the nation's highest bench. Trump met for the first time with Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi at the White House. David Rockefeller, guardian of the Rockefeller fortune and billionaire philanthropist, died at his home in Pocantico (poh-KAN'-tih-koh) Hills, New York, at age 101.

One year ago: VCU was kicked out of the NCAA Tournament shortly before its first-round game because of multiple positive COVID-19 tests. Officials announced that spectators from outside Japan would be barred from the postponed Tokyo Olympics, which would open in four months; officials said it was too risky to admit ticket holders from overseas during a pandemic. Protesters in Germany clashed with police over coronavirus measures; protests against government efforts to rein in the pandemic were also reported in

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several other European countries.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Hal Linden is 91. Former Canadian prime minister Brian Mulroney (muhl-ROO'-nee) is 83. Country singer Don Edwards is 83. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Pat Riley is 77. Country singer-musician Ranger Doug (Riders in the Sky) is 76. Hockey Hall of Famer Bobby Orr is 74. Blues singer-musician Marcia Ball is 73. Rock musician Carl Palmer (Emerson, Lake and Palmer) is 72. Rock musician Jimmie Vaughan is 71. Actor Amy Aquino (ah-KEE'-noh) is 65. Movie director Spike Lee is 65. Actor Theresa Russell is 65. Actor Vanessa Bell Calloway is 65. Actor Holly Hunter is 64. Rock musician Slim Jim Phantom (The Stray Cats) is 61. Actor-model-designer Kathy Ireland is 59. Actor David Thewlis is 59. Rock musician Adrian Oxaal (James) is 57. Actor Jessica Lundy is 56. Actor Liza Snyder is 54. Actor Michael Rapaport is 52. Actor Alexander Chaplin is 51. Actor Cedric Yarbrough is 49. Actor Paula Garcés is 48. Actor Bianca Lawson is 43. Comedian-actor Mikey Day is 42. Actor Nick Blood (TV: "Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.") is 40. Rock musician Nick Wheeler (The All-American Rejects) is 40. Actor Michael Cassidy is 39. Actor-singer Christy Carlson Romano is 38. Actor Ruby Rose is 36. Actor Barrett Doss is 33.