

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 1 of 75

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [1- Truss Pros Help Wanted](#)
- [2- Groton Area Loses to Howard](#)
- [4- Hoover Collects Four Hits as Groton Area Defeats Oldham-Ramona/Rutland/Arlington Varsity Rebels](#)
- [6- Beautiful Sunset](#)
- [6- Legion Coach Wanted](#)
- [7- Jumbo Graduation Cards](#)
- [8- Jumbo Mother's Day Cards](#)
- [9- Graduation Balloons](#)
- [10- Sunday Extras](#)
- [29- Rep. Johnson's Weekly Column](#)
- [30- Gov. Noem's Weekly Column](#)
- [32- Rep. Thune's Weekly Column](#)
- [33- Rev. Snyder's Column](#)
- [35- EarthTalk - Allergies](#)
- [36- COVID-19 Reports](#)
- [40- Weather Pages](#)
- [45- Daily Devotional](#)
- [46- 2022 Community Events](#)
- [47- Subscription Form](#)
- [48- News from the Associated Press](#)

UpComing Events

Sunday, April 17 - EASTER SUNDAY

Emmanuel: 7 a.m. Worship with communion and breakfast, 9:30 a.m. Worship with communion, 3 p.m. worship at Avantara (serving group)

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

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m., SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

United Methodist: Conde Worship, 9 a.m.; Groton Worship, 11 a.m.; no Sunday school, Newsletter items due.

Monday, April 18 - Easter Monday

No School, Groton City & States offices closed
10 a.m.: Girls Golf at Whetstone Creek GC in Milbank

1 p.m.: Senior Citizens meet at Groton Community Center

St. John's: Christian Literature Circle, 7:30 p.m.

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

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



"The very first Easter taught us this: that life never ends and love never dies."

-Kate McGahan

Chicken Soup
for the Soul

Senior Menu: Creamed chicken, buttermilk biscuit, peas, mandarin oranges, cookie.

Emmanuel: 6:30 a.m.. Bible Study

Tuesday, April 19

7 p.m.: City Council Meeting

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

School Breakfast: Cereal.

School Lunch: Pulled pork sandwich, tater tots.

Senior Menu: Salisbury steak, mashed potatoes/gravy, coleslaw, fruit, frosted brownie, whole wheat bread.

United Methodist: Conde Ad Council.

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

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Groton Area Loses Lead Early in Defeat to Howard

Groton Area watched the game slip away early and couldn't recover in a 6-3 loss to Howard HS Tigers on Saturday. Howard HS Tigers scored on a single by Luke Koepsell in the first inning, a groundout by Jace Sifore in the first inning, a double by Kade Shumaker in the first inning, and a double by Griffin Clubb in the second inning.

In the first inning, Howard HS Tigers got their offense started. Koepsell singled on a 2-0 count, scoring one run.

Jack Neises earned the victory on the hill for Howard HS Tigers. The righthander allowed one hit and zero runs over four innings, striking out five and walking zero. Logan Mentele threw three innings in relief out of the bullpen.

Jackson Cogley took the loss for Groton Area. Cogley surrendered five runs on six hits over four innings, striking out six.

Colby Dunker led Groton Area with two hits in three at bats. Groton Area didn't commit a single error in the field. Dillon Abeln had the most chances in the field with seven.

Howard HS Tigers totaled eight hits in the game. Clubb and Ryder Erickson all collected multiple hits for Howard HS Tigers.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 3 of 75

Groton Area 3 - 6 Howard HS Tigers

📍 Away 📅 Saturday April 16, 2022

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R	H	E
GRTN	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	5	0
HWRD	3	2	0	0	0	1	X	6	8	1

BATTING

Groton Area	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
P Kettering (CF, P)	2	1	0	0	0	1
J Cogley (P, CF)	3	0	0	0	0	1
J Bjerke (2B)	3	0	0	1	0	0
B Althoff (1B)	3	0	0	0	0	0
D Abeln (C)	3	0	1	0	0	0
C Dunker (3B)	3	1	2	0	0	1
K Hoover (SS)	3	0	1	0	0	0
B Fliehs (LF)	3	0	0	1	0	1
C McInerney (RF)	3	1	1	0	0	1
Totals	26	3	5	2	0	5

2B: C Dunker, **TB:** D Abeln, C Dunker 3, K Hoover, C McInerney, **HBP:** P Kettering, **SB:** K Hoover, C McInerney, **LOB:** 3

PITCHING

Groton Area	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
J Cogley	4.0	6	5	5	3	6	0
P Kettering	2.0	2	1	1	0	1	0
Totals	6.0	8	6	6	3	7	0

L: J Cogley, **P-S:** J Cogley 79-48, P Kettering 24-16, **WP:** P Kettering, **HBP:** J Cogley, **BF:** J Cogley 21, P Kettering 8

Howard HS Tigers	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
C Claussen (SS)	2	1	0	0	1	1
L Koepsell (RF)	3	1	1	1	0	2
G Clubb (C)	3	1	2	2	0	0
J Sifore (3B, 1B)	3	0	0	1	0	1
J Neises (P, 3B)	2	0	0	0	1	0
K Shumaker (CF)	3	0	1	1	0	2
K Koepsell (1B, LF)	3	0	1	0	0	1
J Sifore (LF)	1	0	0	0	0	0
L Mentele (LF, P)	1	1	1	0	0	0
K Feldhaus (2B)	2	1	0	0	1	0
R Erickson (LF)	2	1	2	1	0	0
Totals	25	6	8	6	3	7

2B: K Shumaker, G Clubb 2, R Erickson, **TB:** K Shumaker 2, L Koepsell, K Koepsell, G Clubb 4, R Erickson 3, L Mentele, **HBP:** J Sifore, **SB:** C Claussen 2, **LOB:** 5

Howard HS Tigers	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
J Neises	4.0	1	0	0	0	5	0
L Mentele	3.0	4	3	3	0	0	0
Totals	7.0	5	3	3	0	5	0

W: J Neises, **P-S:** J Neises 43-33, L Mentele 41-30, **HBP:** L Mentele, **BF:** J Neises 13, L Mentele 14

Hoover Collects Four Hits as Groton Area Defeats Oldham-Ramona/Rutland/Arlington Varsity Rebels

Kaleb Hoover would not be denied at the plate on Saturday, picking up four hits and leading Groton Area to a 12-3 win over Oldham-Ramona/Rutland/Arlington Varsity Rebels. Hoover singled in the second, doubled in the third, singled in the fifth, and doubled in the seventh.

Groton Area grabbed an early lead. Groton Area scored on a single by Bradin Althoff in the first inning, a single by Pierce Kettering in the second inning, a groundout by Jackson Cogley in the second inning, and a single by Jordan Bjerke in the second inning.

Groton Area took the lead for good with four runs in the second inning. In the second Kettering singled on a 2-1 count, scoring one run, Cogley grounded out, scoring one run, and Bjerke singled on a 1-2 count, scoring two runs.

Kettering was the winning pitcher for Groton Area. Kettering surrendered two runs on two hits over two innings, striking out two. Dillon Abeln and Hoover entered the game out of the bullpen and helped to close out the game in relief.

Kadyn Geherls took the loss for Oldham-Ramona/Rutland/Arlington Varsity Rebels. Geherls went five and two-thirds innings, allowing nine runs on 11 hits and striking out two.

Groton Area scattered 14 hits in the game. Hoover, Abeln, Brevin Flihs, and Althoff all managed multiple hits for Groton Area. Hoover led Groton Area with four hits in four at bats. Flihs led Groton Area with two stolen bases, as they ran wild on the base paths with 11 stolen bases. Groton Area was sure-handed in the field and didn't commit a single error. Hoover had the most chances in the field with eight.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 5 of 75

Oldham-Ramona/ Groton Area **12 - 3** Rutland/Arlington Varsity Rebels

📍 Away 📅 Saturday April 16, 2022

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R	H	E
GRTN	1	4	2	0	2	0	3	12	14	0
OLDH	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	4	1

BATTING

Groton Area	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
P Kettering (P, C)	3	1	1	2	0	0
J Cogley (CF, SS,...)	5	0	0	1	0	0
J Bjerke (2B)	3	1	1	2	1	0
B Althoff (1B)	4	1	2	1	0	0
D Abeln (C, CF, P)	4	1	3	0	0	1
C Dunker (3B)	3	2	1	0	1	1
K Hoover (SS, P,...)	4	4	4	2	0	0
B Flihs (LF)	3	1	2	2	0	0
C McInerney (RF)	3	1	0	0	1	1
Totals	32	12	14	10	3	3

2B: K Hoover 2, B Flihs, **TB:** K Hoover 6, D Abeln 3, B Flihs 3, B Althoff 2, P Kettering, J Bjerke, C Dunker, **SF:** P Kettering, **HBP:** B Flihs, P Kettering, **SB:** K Hoover 2, D Abeln 2, B Flihs 2, B Althoff, P Kettering, J Bjerke 2, C Dunker, **LOB:** 5

PITCHING

Groton Area	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
P Kettering	2.0	2	2	2	2	2	0
K Hoover	2.0	0	1	1	4	2	0
D Abeln	3.0	2	0	0	2	4	0
Totals	7.0	4	3	3	8	8	0

W: P Kettering, **P-S:** K Hoover 46-18, D Abeln 41-27, P Kettering 33-16, **WP:** K Hoover 3, **BF:** K Hoover 9, D Abeln 12, P Kettering 10

Oldham-Ramona/R	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
K Geherls (P, SS)	3	1	0	0	1	2
R Schneider (CF)	3	1	1	1	1	1
C Hojer (1B)	3	0	1	0	1	1
B Bickett (C)	4	0	1	1	0	0
W Bickett (RF)	3	0	0	0	0	3
A Stewert (LF)	2	0	0	0	1	0
C Merager (3B)	3	0	1	0	0	0
B Pooler (SS, 2B)	1	1	0	0	2	1
B Oftedal (2B, P)	1	0	0	0	2	0
Totals	23	3	4	2	8	8

2B: R Schneider, **TB:** C Hojer, R Schneider 2, B Bickett, C Merager, **LOB:** 7

Oldham-Ram	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
K Geherls	5.2	11	9	8	2	2	0
B Oftedal	1.1	3	3	3	1	1	0
Totals	7.0	14	12	11	3	3	0

L: K Geherls, **P-S:** B Oftedal 24-14, K Geherls 108-66, **WP:** K Geherls 2, **HBP:** K Geherls 2, **BF:** B Oftedal 8, K Geherls 30

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 6 of 75



Another beautiful sunset. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)

Senior Legion Coach Wanted



Groton Legion Post #39 is seeking qualified applicants for Head Coach for the Groton Legion Post #39 Senior Baseball Team. The applicant must have previous coaching experience. The application period will close on April 29, 2022.

Applications can be picked up at Groton City Hall and mailed to:

**Doug Hamilton
411 N. 4th St.
Groton, SD 57445**

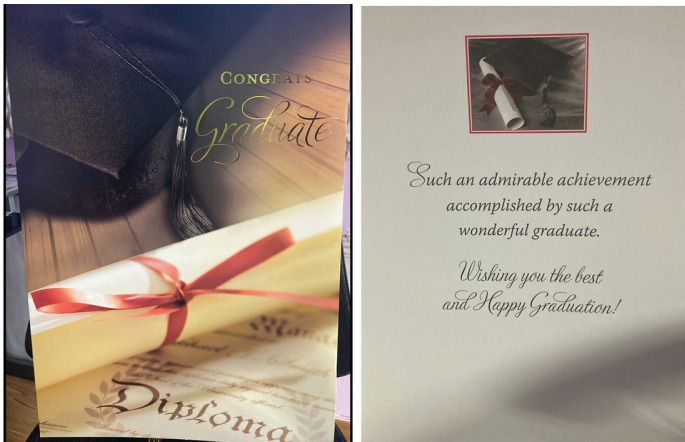
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 7 of 75

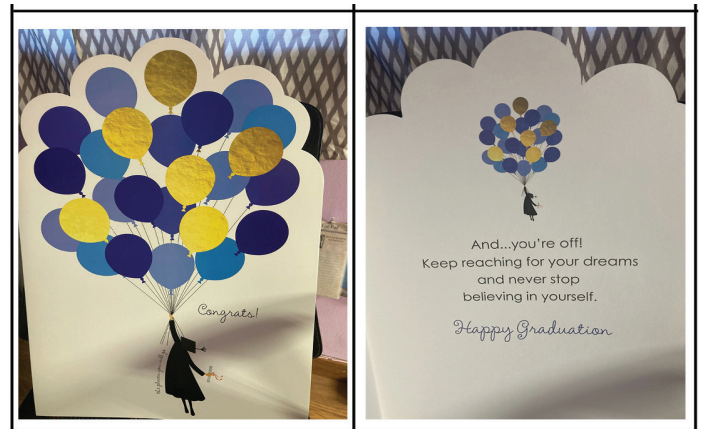
Jumbo Graduation Cards

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 8 of 75

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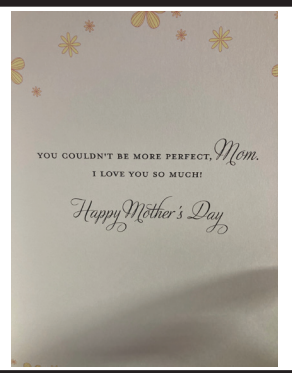
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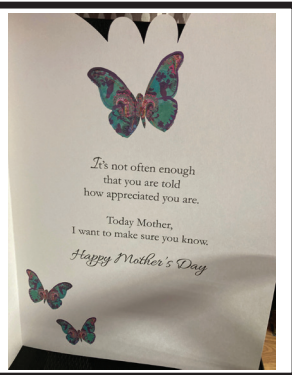
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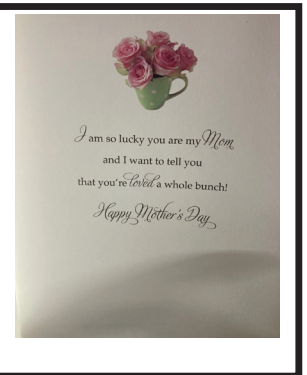
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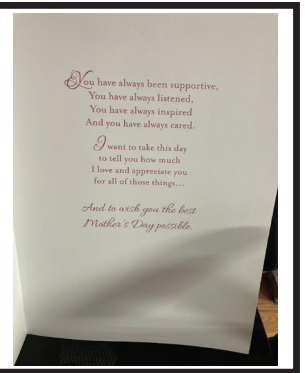
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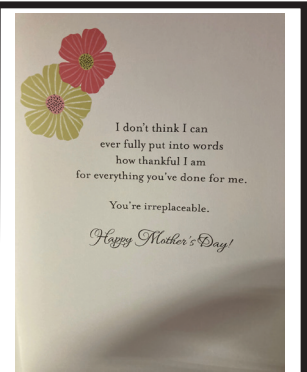
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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 9 of 75



15 N Main St., Groton
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Call/Text Paul: 605/397-7460
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GDI FIT
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and Air Bike



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Order your Graduation Balloons while we have a good supply!



#1 - \$5



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#4 - \$10 - 45"



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\$3.50 - 9" on a stick



#7 - \$10 - 36"



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#9 - \$5



#10 - \$5



#11 - \$5



#12 - \$5



#13 - \$8 35"



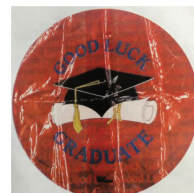
#14 - \$5



#15 - \$5



#16 - \$5



#17 - \$5



#18 - \$5



#19 - \$5



#20 - \$5

We have many other balloons available as well. We now offer locker pickup in the laundromat so you can pick up your order ANY TIME once the order is completed!

Groton Daily Independent

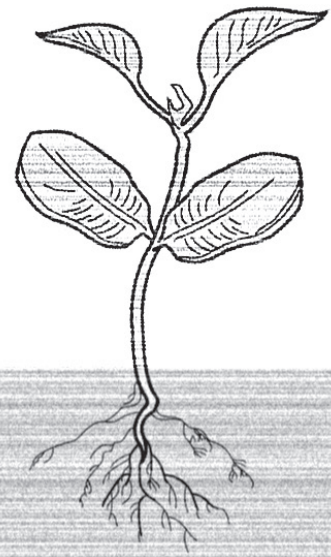
Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 10 of 75



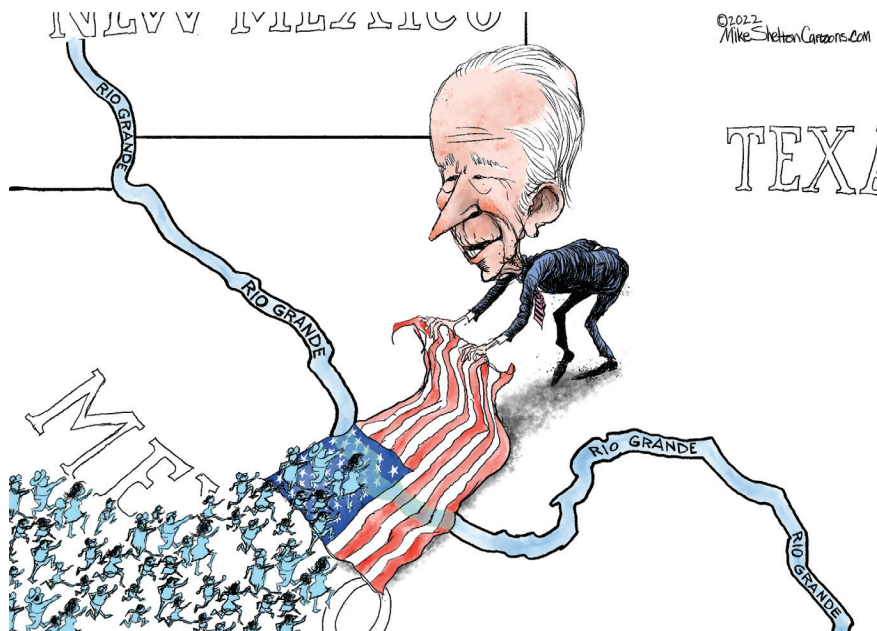
THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

For as the earth brings forth its bud, as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

Isaiah 61:11 



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BIBLE TRIVIA by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Astaroth in the Old Testament or New Testament or neither?
2. In Exodus 4, from what tribe of Israel did all priests come? *Judah, Ephraim, Levi, Manasseh*
3. From Matthew 7, upon what did the wise man build his house? *Bush, Sand, Rock, Sea*
4. Which book first accredited Jesus as the Prince of Peace? *Isaiah, Daniel, Luke, Romans*
5. What does the Epistle of Jude primarily warn against? *Stranger cruelty, Gossiping, False teachers, Lusting*
6. Who was the father of Moses? *Chemosh, Jacob, Marduk, Amram*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Levi; 3) Rock; 4) Isaiah 9:6; 5) False teachers; 6) Amram

“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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Comfort foods Made fast and healthy by Healthy Exchanges

Hello Dolly Snack Bars

I was always partial to the famous Hello Dolly Bars back in the day. Now, I can enjoy the flavors of those bars, but keep the fats and sugars in check! Who could ask for more?!

- 1 1/2 cups reduced-fat biscuit baking mix
Sugar substitute to equal 1/2 cup sugar, suitable for baking
- 2/3 cup fat-free milk
- 2 tablespoons non-fat sour cream
- 1 egg or equivalent in egg substitute
- 1 teaspoon coconut extract
- 1/4 cup mini chocolate chips
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 1/4 cup flaked coconut

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray an 8-by-8-inch baking dish with butter-flavored cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, combine baking mix and sugar substitute. Add milk, sour cream, egg and coconut extract. Mix gently just to combine. Fold in chocolate chips, pecans and coconut. Spread batter into prepared baking dish.

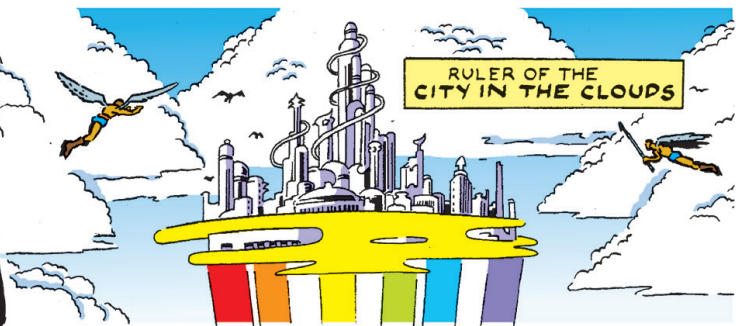
3. Bake for 20 to 24 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Place baking dish on a wire rack and let set for at least 5 minutes. Cut into 24 bars. Makes 12 (2 bars each) servings. Freezes well.

* Each serving equals: 108 calories, 4g fat, 2g protein, 16g carbohydrates, 192mg sodium, 1g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Starch, 1/2 Fat.

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Groton Daily Independent

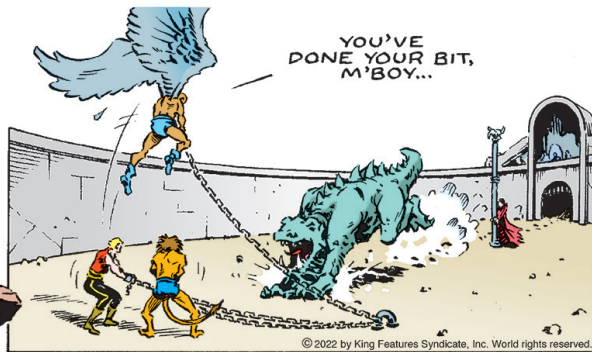
Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 12 of 75



FLASH GORDON By JIM KEEFFE
4-10 Pencils: MARK McMURRAY

FLASH FRANTICALLY ATTEMPTS TO DRAW THE CREATURE'S ATTENTION AWAY FROM DALE!

OVER HERE..!



Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

NEVER GO FOR MORE DISTANCE THAN IS BUILT INTO THE CLUB WITH A SHORT IRON. EVEN IF YOU MAKE GOOD CONTACT WITH AN EXCESSIVELY FORCEFUL SWING, YOU'LL GET EXTRA HEIGHT RATHER THAN ADDED YARDAGE.

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A BETTER WAY IS TO TAKE PLENTY OF CLUB, THEN TRY TO SWING EASILY YET FIRMLY. DON'T FORCE THE BODY ACTION, AND AVOID FLIPPING AT THE BALL WITH YOUR HANDS.

TRY TO MAKE THE SAME SWING YOU DO WITH THE DRIVER, ONLY ON A SMALLER SCALE.

There's No Magic Bullet to Put Belly Fat in Check



DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a 70-year-old woman, mostly healthy (apart from well-controlled high blood pressure). Looking at me, people assume I am skinny, but I have a well-concealed HUGE belly along with my thin arms and legs. I look like an olive stuck with toothpicks. My diet is healthy for the most part: I eat snack foods, deep-fried fast foods or sweets only rarely. I have read about how to eliminate belly fat, but there is so much contradictory info, each claiming to be the best. What are truly effective ways to help eliminate belly fat? -- M.H.

ANSWER: First, I would want to be sure what you have really is belly fat. While there are men (and a few women) who have that body shape due to fat, I have seen far too many cases of liver disease (where the abdominal cavity is filled with fluid due to high pressure in the liver) and ovarian cancer (where the abdomen is filled with fluid due to tumor). I would want to be sure you had been evaluated for these (and other) concerns, especially if this is a change in your normal body shape.

If it is abdominal fat, there is no magic diet. What works for someone else (even your twin sister, if you had one) might not work for you. For this reason, one single type of diet does not fit all. It may take patience and trying several different options before finding what works for you.

General advice includes avoiding the foods you noted you eat sparingly. Eat lots of vegetables and whole grains with fiber; modest amounts of fruits; several servings of nuts and fish weekly; and no more than modest amounts of meats. Advice from an expert in weight management may be of great benefit.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have a lot of moisture in my eyes. I have to keep wiping them. My previous doctor gave me a prescription eyedrop that helped. After I moved, my new doctor didn't give me the same thing. I got "dry eye" drops, which didn't help at all. Do you have a solution? -- W.L.

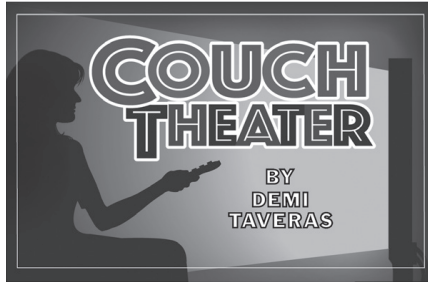
ANSWER: It is not intuitive that watery eyes can be a symptom of dry eyes, but it is indeed often the case. Eye lubrication may come from several parts of the eye, including the conjunctiva (a tissue that lines the insides of the eyelids), which secretes a mucus that lasts a long time and keeps the eyes comfortably moist. When the mucus production is inadequate in quantity or quality, the eyes get dry. When they become dry and irritated, one of the body's responses is to increase tear production from the lacrimal gland, which is what you are wiping away. The fluid from the lacrimal gland is not as long-lasting nor comfortable.

There are many different kinds of treatments for dry eyes. Artificial teardrops (these can be used every few hours) are a great place to start and perfectly adequate for most. Since those have failed, it's time to try something new. I'd recommend going back to the eye doctor with the name of the prescription medicine you had from your previous doctor. If you don't recall what it was, call your old pharmacy.

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.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 14 of 75

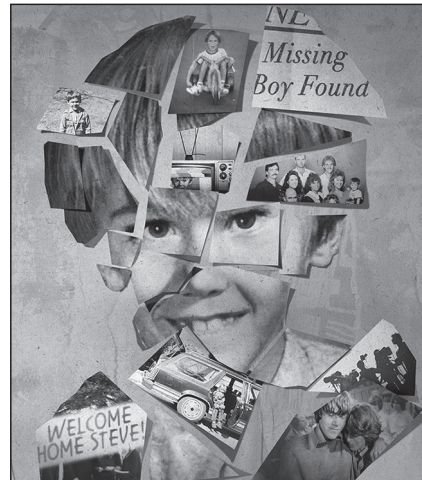


Captive Audience (NR) — Many might still remember the case of Steven Stayner, a 7-year-old who, in 1972, was abducted on his way home from school. Stayner returned home nearly a decade later, and as if their lives hadn't already been transformed enough, he and his family consequently received tons of media attention. These events left quite the impact on them in unprecedented ways; almost two decades later, Stayner's older brother shockingly committed a series of murders, leading to the deaths of four women. The limited documentary series "Captive Audience" dives into the duality of the Stayner family by breaking down the dark and multifaceted stories of a man regarded as a hero versus his brother who, in the shadows, emerges as a villain. From executive producers The Russo Brothers. Premieres April 21. (Hulu)

Cheaper by the Dozen (PG) — The 2022 remake of the family classic "Cheaper by the Dozen" is out now! The Disney+ original stars Zach Braff and Gabrielle Union as married couple Paul and Zoey Baker, who have nine children between them. Add in Paul's nephew, Seth, who gets taken in after his mother checks into rehab, and — you guessed it — that makes a dozen people in just one house! The phrase "never a dull moment" sums up the Baker house and their daily adventures in attempting to take on life as a 12-some. (Disney+)

White Hot: The Rise & Fall of Abercrombie & Fitch (NR) — Ah, the era of Abercrombie & Fitch. If you, like me, don't recall what caused this perfume-infested, dimly lighted store to be erased from most shopping centers across the nation, then Netflix has the perfect documentary film for you.

"White Hot" examines the exclusionary politics behind the Abercrombie & Fitch brand when it was at its highest point in American fashion. The models, the store employees, even the CEOs all had to fit into this "All-American" look that only reflected a certain percentage of our diverse population. The question remains, with the brand now showing efforts in improving inclusivity within the company, will Abercrombie & Fitch evolve past this "White Hot" time in its history? Premieres April 19. (Netflix)



Hulu

"Captive Audience" promo

They Call Me Magic (NR) — Earvin "Magic" Johnson's career in basketball only scratches the surface of his achievements. In a four-part documentary series, Johnson takes the spotlight, starting from his days playing ball with the Lakers leading up to the fateful day he announced his retirement, all the way to his involvement within several of the communities he serves. Johnson has become an advocate of those living with the HIV virus. He works as a leader in greenlighting projects that provide direct help to the Black community and also has made strides in helping to end gang violence. "They Call Me Magic" showcases just how many barriers Johnson has broken throughout the legacy of his life. Premieres April 22. (Apple TV+)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 15 of 75

FLASH BACK POP, ROCK & SOUL TRIVIA BY MICK HARPER

1. How many No. 1 chart toppers have Stray Cats had?
2. Which group released "How 'Bout Us"?
3. What city was "Leroy Brown" from?
4. Who had his first hit with "Splish Splash"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Look at us baby, up all night, Tearing our love apart, Aren't we the same two people, Who lived through years in the dark?"

Answers

1. Just one: "Runaway Boys," in 1980 ... in Finland. The song, from their debut album, also did well in Belgium and the U.K., but not the U.S.
2. The R&B group Champaign, in 1981, off their debut album. The song charted around the world and reached

No. 1 in the U.S. on the Adult Contemporary chart.

3. "The baddest man in the whole downtown" was from the south side of Chicago. Songwriter Jim Croce wrote the song about a soldier he met in the Army who went AWOL but was arrested when he came back to pick up his paycheck.

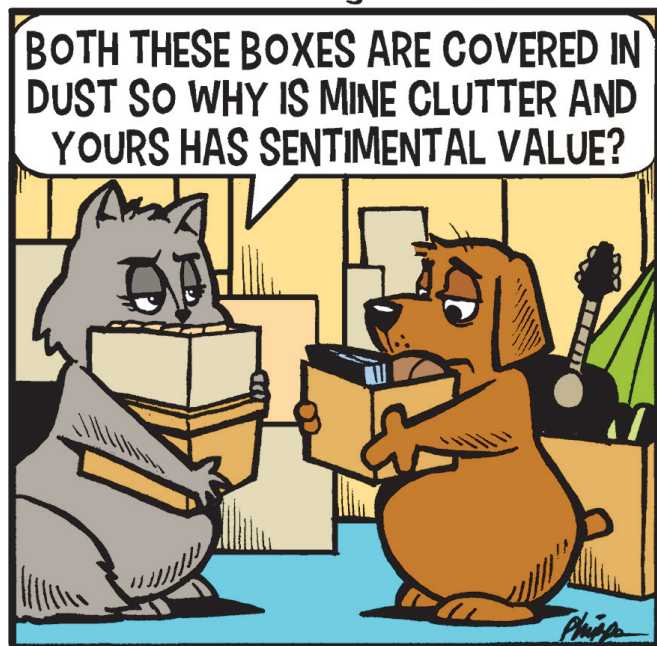
4. Bobby Darin, in 1958.

5. "I Can't Tell You Why," by the Eagles in 1980. The rock ballad went to the Top 10 on multiple charts and was the first Eagles' song to feature bass guitarist Timothy B. Schmit on lead vocals.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{Wagner}

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



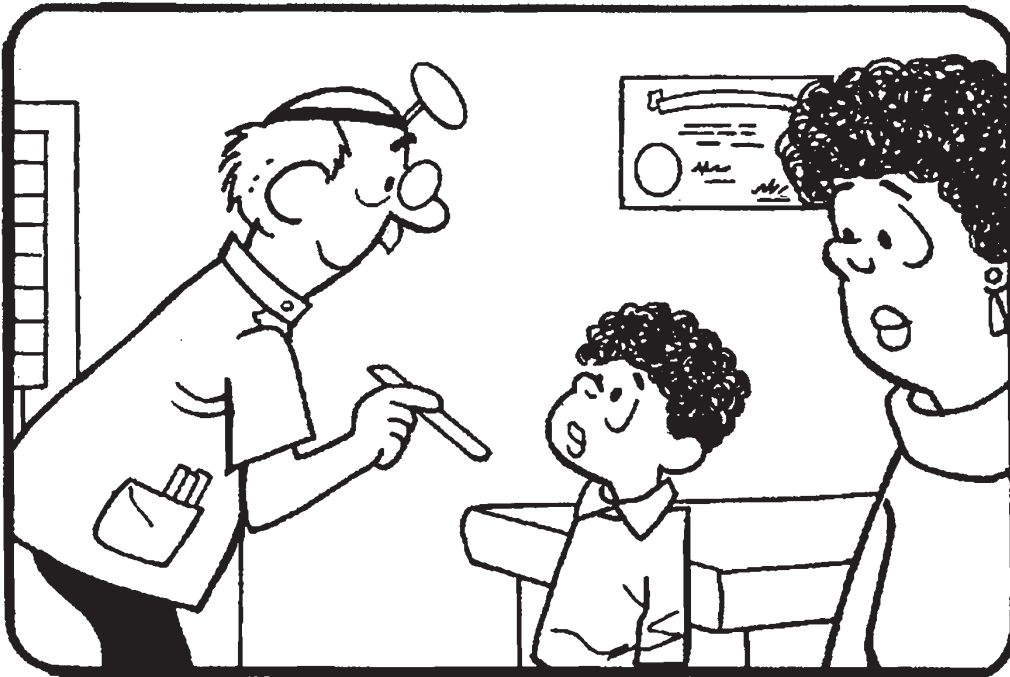
"Just for laughs, Senator, could you repeat that?"

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Switch is missing. 2. Hair is different. 3. Arm is moved. 4. Shirt logo is missing. 5. Diploma is missing. 6. Locket is missing.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 17 of 75



- A good non-slip bathmat is essential in the tub to prevent accidents. Grab an extra one to drape over the edge of the tub for help when entering and exiting.

- “To remove residue left over from price tags, use hairspray. Remove as much paper as possible, and then give it a good squirt. Use a plastic scraper to lightly scrape off the adhesive.” — *L.P. in Ohio*

- “Guacamole is a precious commodity at my house, but sometimes I want a snack, not a whole bowl. I have struggled with how to save the leftovers, because once it browns, it’s done. I learned a new trick, though. Simply put the leftovers in the smallest container possible and tamp down to press out all the air. Then carefully add a thin layer of water. Seal and refrigerate for up to three days. When you’re ready to dip, pour off the water and stir!” — *C.D. in California*

- “I have an old cedar chest from my grandmother that had lost its smell. My husband removed all the contents and sanded it with superfine grit sandpaper. It smells wonderful now.” — *J.K. in Iowa*

- Got bread ends? Store in a bag in the freezer until you need breadcrumbs for a recipe. Pulse frozen chunks in a chopper or blender for instantly useable crumbs.

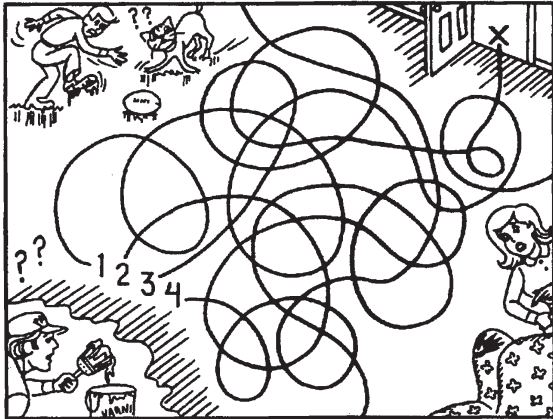
- Need a quick measure? A dollar bill (or other U.S. paper currency) is exactly 6 inches long.

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

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Groton Daily Independent

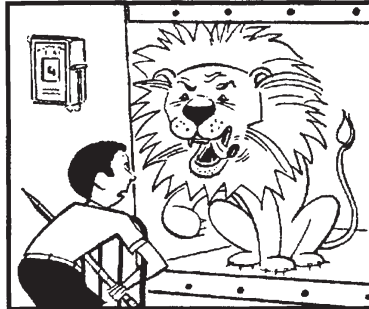
Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 18 of 75



CORNER KICK! Our floor-painting pal has worked himself into a corner. Which of four routes leads to the door?

Junior Whirl

by Hal Kaufman



QUICK ON THE DRAW UNDER PRESSURE?

LET'S see if you have your wits about you under a great deal of pressure. Suppose you are the young man at left who hopes to avoid being clawed by an obviously free-to-roam lion.

What can you do with an object at hand — an object in the picture — that will keep the beast in its place?

Think fast, and not too hard.

SEVEN-UP! Think of a number — any number. Double it, add 17, take away three, halve the result, and subtract the original amount. Alakazam, answer is always seven.

MATCHUPS! Challenge: You are asked to form six two-syllable words from the 12 one-syllable words provided at right. Words in left-hand column are to precede words in right-hand column in answers.

One way to proceed is to begin with first word at top left, find a compatible word at right and draw a line to it. Move on to second word, etc. See how quickly you can make the six matchups. Time limit: two minutes.

1. OAR	PIPE
2. GAIN	KIN
3. HIGH	SAY
4. POST	WAY
5. BAG	LOCK
6. PUMP	AGE

Simply use pencil to draw lines vertically dot to dot to form bars of cage.

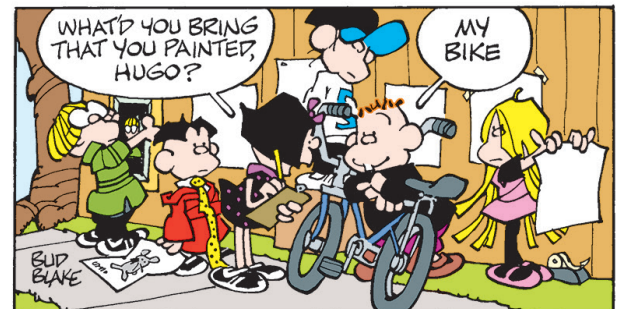
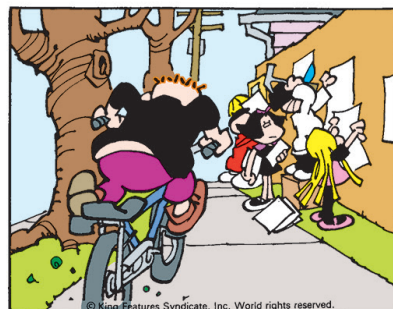
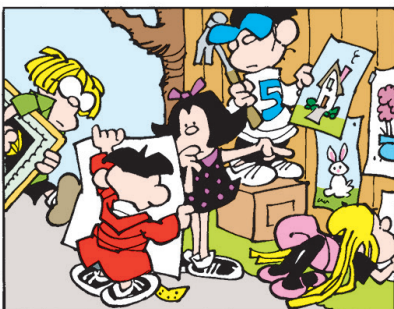
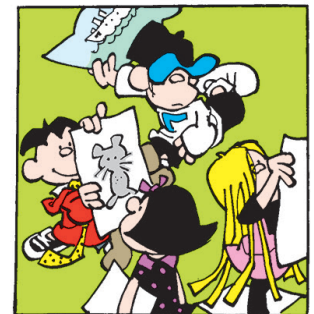
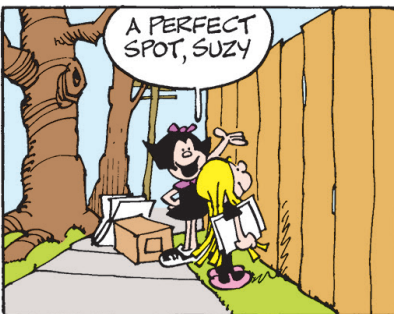
STRING TRIO! If the sum of three consecutive numbers is 63, what are the numbers?

Numbers are twenty, twenty-one and twenty-two.

1. Carlock. 2. Gainsay. 3. Highway. 4. Postage. 5. Bagpipe. 6. Pumpkin.

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 19 of 75

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Facts and figures
- 5 Bygone jet
- 8 Son of Seth
- 12 Latin love
- 13 Historic period
- 14 "Peter Pan" pooch
- 15 "No problem!"
- 17 Darkens
- 18 Skip
- 19 "Delicious" crop
- 21 Three, in Rome
- 22 Hold sway
- 23 Zsa Zsa's sister
- 26 Stitch
- 28 Justice Ruth — Ginsburg
- 31 Missing
- 33 Pouch
- 35 Shrill barks
- 36 Toy (with)
- 38 Prattle
- 40 Make lace
- 41 Beer, slangily
- 43 Capote nickname
- 45 Black Sea port
- 47 Indigenous
- 51 Accomplishes
- 52 "Yes?"
- 54 Garfield's pal
- 55 Napoleon's

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15				16					17			
18							19	20				
			21				22					
23	24	25		26		27		28			29	30
31			32		33		34		35			
36				37		38		39		40		
		41			42		43		44			
45	46						47			48	49	50
51					52	53						
54					55				56			
57					58				59			

- title (Abbr.)
- 56 Actress Turner
- 57 Breaks down
- 58 Coifs
- 59 Stretches (out)
- DOWN**
- 1 Calendar squares
- 2 Mine, in Montreal
- 3 Talk up
- 4 Lingo
- 5 Small sofas
- 6 Lanka lead-in
- 7 Early Mongolian
- 8 Bridge tactic
- 9 Aced a test
- 10 "My treat"
- 11 Lip
- 16 Partially mine
- 20 Tavern
- 23 Sprite
- 24 Book-spine abbr.
- 25 "In my view ..."
- 27 Witty one
- 29 Clean air org.
- 30 Trio after Q
- 32 Bridge supports
- 34 Short snoozes
- 37 Super Bowl stats
- 39 Unruly kid
- 42 Cut lumber
- 44 Of service
- 45 Scent
- 46 Nitwit
- 48 Author Dinesen
- 49 Tarzan's computer line?
- 50 LAX guesses
- 53 Med. plan

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 20 of 75

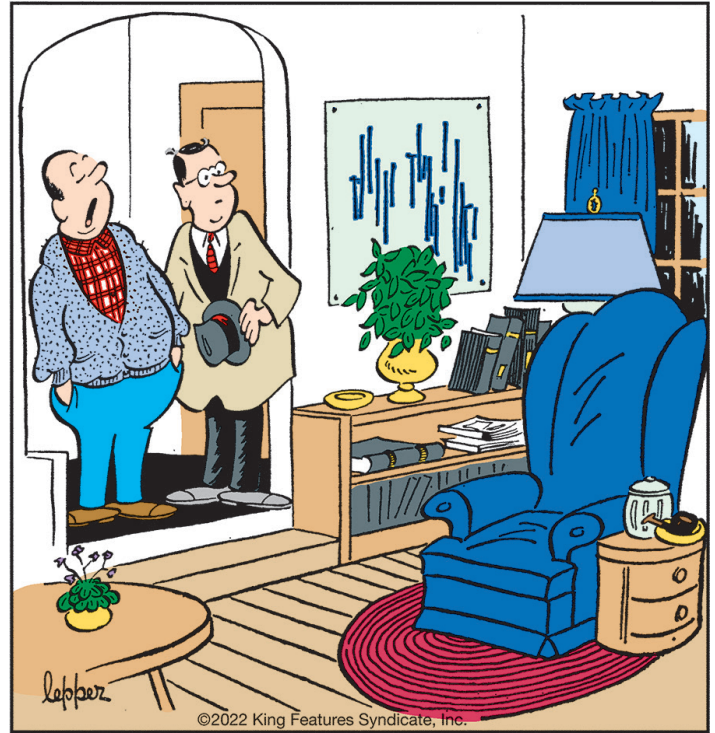
— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 24 mins.

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

LAFF - A - DAY



"This is our sunken living room.
Sunk over \$5,000 in it."

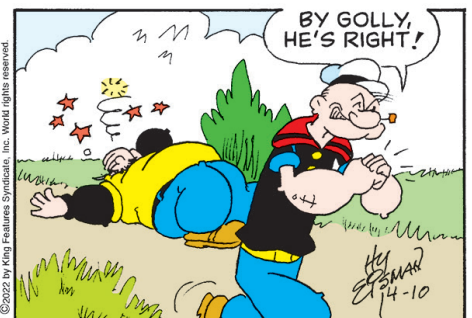
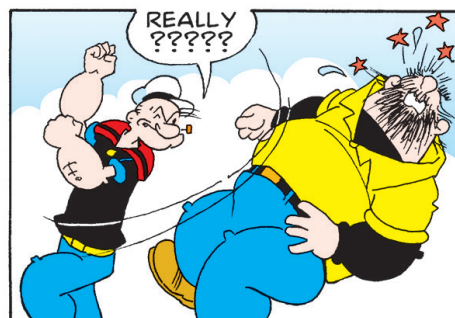
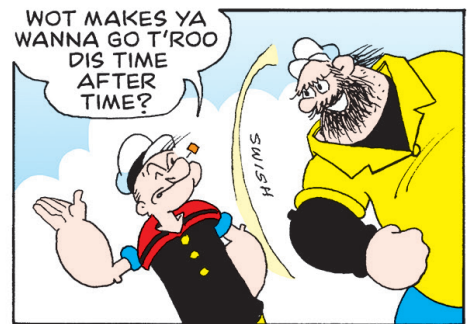
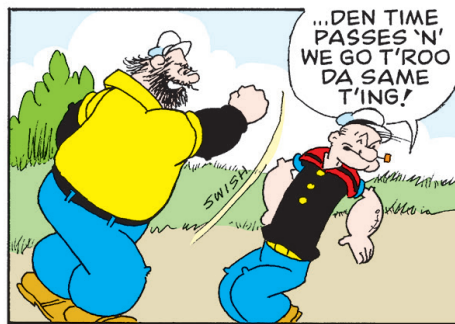
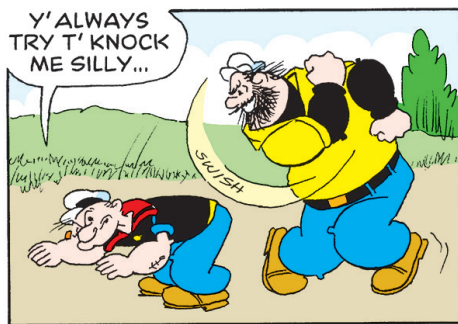
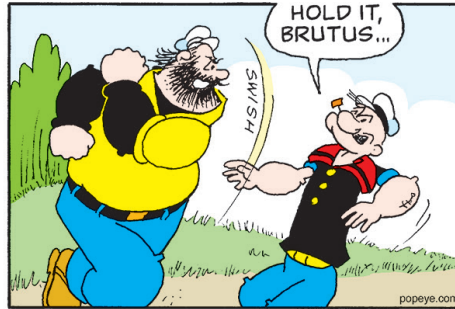
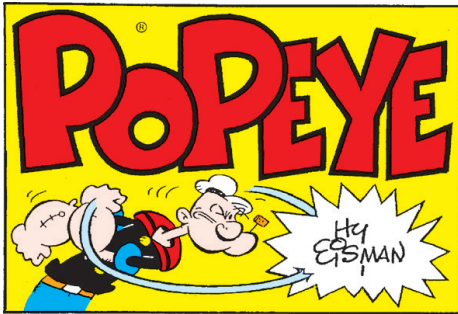
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



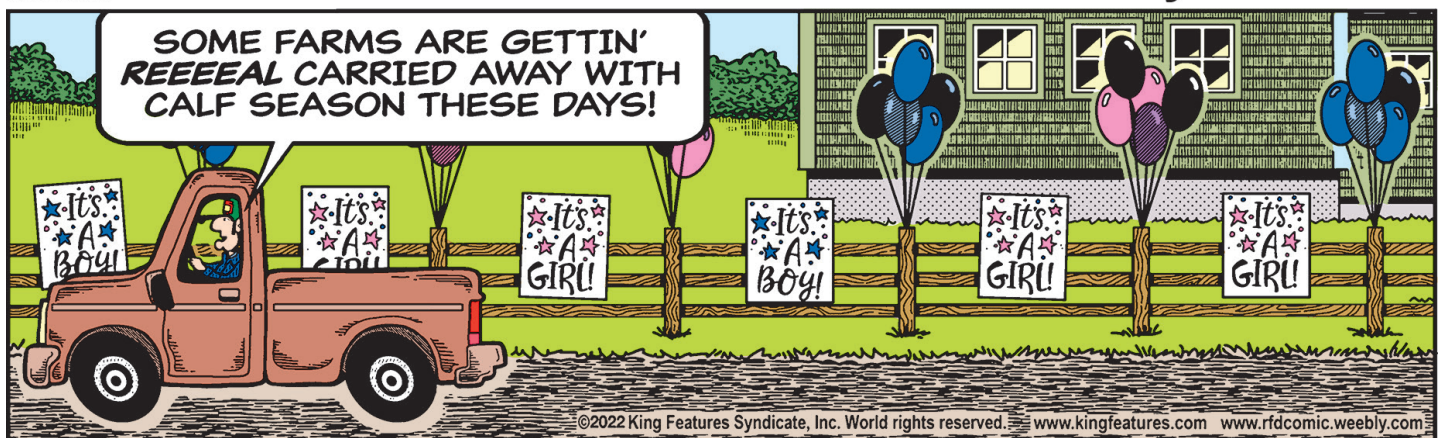
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 21 of 75



R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 22 of 75



Hal Foster's
Prince Valiant
BY GIANNI AND SCHULTZ

ALETA WORKS INTO THE NIGHT,
MUTTERING INCANTATIONS UNTIL
SHE COLLAPSES.
VAL CANNOT SLEEP.

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HAD HE DONE
SO, HE MIGHT
NEVER HAVE
HEARD THE
SCRATCHING...



... THAT BRINGS HIM TO HIS FEET A SPLIT
SECOND BEFORE A GHASTLY MOUNTAIN
OF MUSCLE EXPLODES INTO THE CHAMBER!

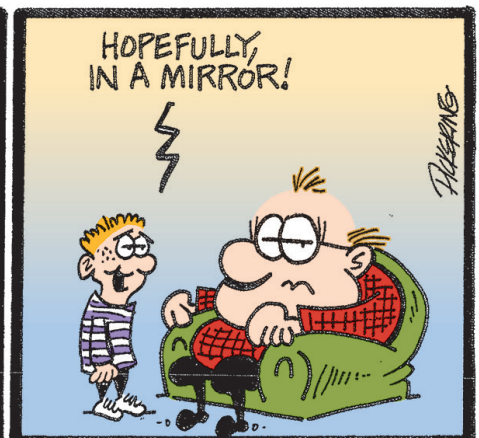
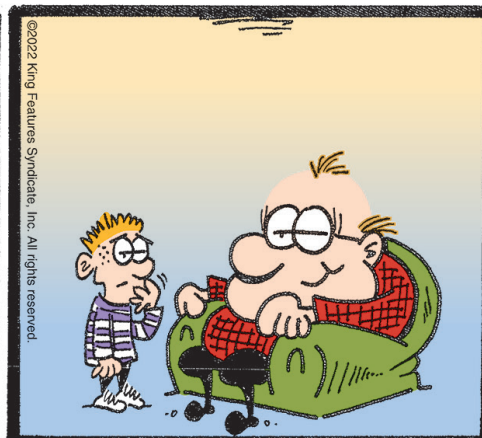
AND JUST LIKE THAT, ALETA'S FEARS
AND WARNINGS OF MALDUBH'S
INTENTIONS BECOME VERY
REAL TO VAL.

NEXT:
Berserk



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Odds Are Your Pantry Holds Expired Food

Is it time to go through your pantry and look for any expired food items that might have been purchased over the past two years? You might be surprised. I sure was.

I'd been careful, with new items lined up behind old ones in my cabinets. The problem I just discovered, after picking up a load of curbside items, is the expiration dates of newer items aren't necessarily better than items that have been in the cabinet for a while. They might be worse.

Why, I inquired of our store manager, was a box of crackers due to expire sooner than the box I bought two months ago? With a sigh, he admitted the problem: The warehouse is having a terrible time getting in anything. And managers have set up their own grocery swap with other nearby stores in the chain, basically bidding on items another store might have. "I'll give you six boxes of crackers for six half-gallons of whole milk!"

Additionally, he said, he's having a heck of a time getting trained people to work the night shift to stock the shelves correctly. Then, when the curbside pickup people race through the aisles to select items for each order, they grab from the front ... without looking at expiration dates.

Which is a long way of saying: Check your groceries. Either when you pick them up curbside and bring them home or when you take something out of your cabinets, look at the expiration dates and store them accordingly.

A helpful note in seeing those expiration dates at home: A black marker is very handy to write expiration dates on packages and cans that can be seen at a glance. No more turning jars over trying to find a date; no more squinting at the tiny print. You'll have all the dates in large black letters.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 24 of 75

1. Name the 2011 and '14 Wimbledon singles champion from the Czech Republic who was attacked and injured by a knife-wielding intruder at her home in 2016.

2. French actor, film choreographer and stunt coordinator David Belle is credited with founding what athletic discipline that commonly turns urban environments into obstacle courses?

3. What 1990 nonfiction book by American journalist Bill Buford chronicled his eight years witnessing and studying football hooliganism in the United Kingdom?

4. The Cameron Crazies are highly enthusiastic fans of what college basketball team?

5. Name the legendary ABC sportscaster who was famous for his college football play-by-play calls and his signature catchphrase, "Woah, Nellie!"

6. Mustachioed, portly golfer Craig Stadler, winner of the 1982 Mas-



by Ryan A. Berenz

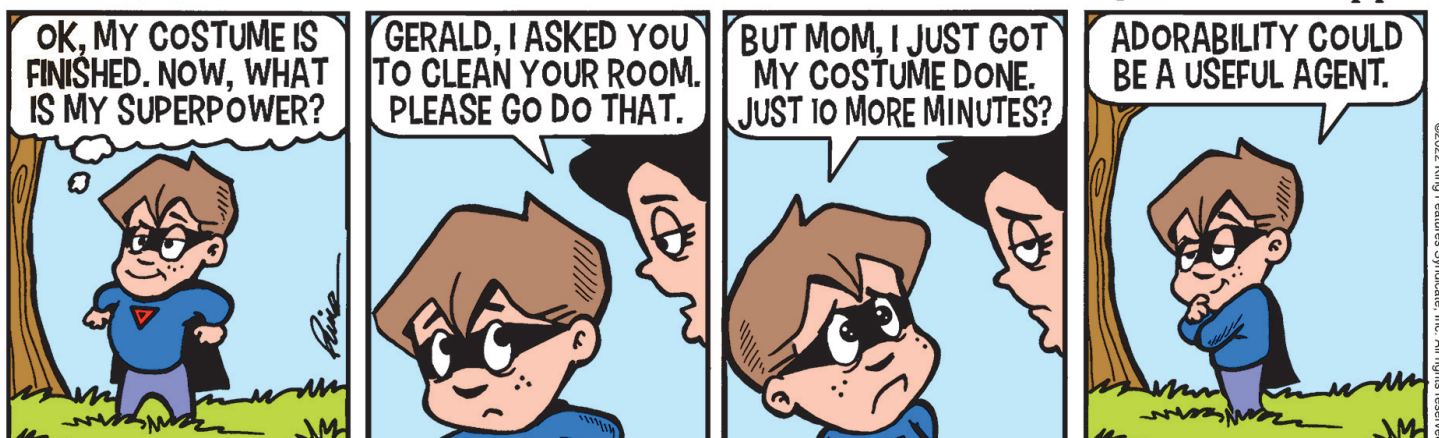
ters Tournament, was affectionately known by what nickname?

7. What Portland State University football standout went on to play quarterback for the St. Louis/Phoenix Cardinals from 1981-88?

Answers

1. Petra Kvitova.
2. Parkour.
3. "Among the Thugs: The Experience, and the Seduction, of Crowd Violence."
4. The Duke Blue Devils.
5. Keith Jackson.
6. The Walrus.
7. Neil Lomax.

Amber Waves





Pets Wearing Pants? How About No!

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I saw something on social media about a town in New York state that passed an ordinance requiring pets to “cover their genitals” by wearing pants. This is ridiculous! Is it for real? — *Clark G.*

DEAR CLARK: It's a wild idea, but no, the photo circulating on social media is fake. Pet owners, you can put away those doggy pants. (Unless your dog enjoys wearing them, of course.)

Officials with the city of Auburn, New York, were unpleasantly surprised to find their city's letterhead going viral on social media just a couple of weeks ago. A fake letter said that residents' pets would be required to wear pants outside so that their genitals would not be in view.

“It is an uncomfortable and difficult situation for a parent, grandparent or guardian to have to explain to their ward when they are questioned about canine and feline genitals,” the letter said. It also claimed that many towns in New England have made pet pants mandatory — also not true.

It's probably no accident that the fake letter started circulating just before April Fool's Day. And while it seems like a funny prank, the city of Auburn isn't laughing. “The intentional misrepresentation of the law and the forgery of the signature of an elected official are illegal acts and should be taken seriously,” City Clerk Chuck Mason told *The Citizen*. (Read the article at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8uedv4>, or search for “auburn-pub.com, pet pants”).

Hopefully, no one takes this to heart and tries to get a similar ordinance passed in their town. Our dogs and cats can let it all hang out with no fear of official reprisal, or ladies fainting away from the shock.

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

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 26 of 75

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

* Queen Elizabeth II is the only person in all of Britain allowed to legally drive without a license.

* Charles Darwin once conducted a study to discover whether more people with brown hair existed because they were more dependable and likely to settle down and get married. The results were inconclusive.

* In Australia, Speedos are called "Budgy Smugglers."

* In the 1940s during World War II, interest in

continental knitting, or knitting with the yarn in one's left hand, decreased because of its origins in Germany, while English knitting, or knitting with the yarn in the right hand, gained popularity.

* Many of us will not be surprised to learn that approximately five months of a person's life is spent waiting in a car at red lights.

* Looking to retire at age 65? You might want to reconsider, as scientists have noted that employees should keep working until they turn 80, but the good news is that for optimal productivity, they should also only work 25 hours a week.

* The Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan denounced the Beatles as atheistic, and Klan members picketed the band's concerts during their 1966 U.S. tour.

* 7UP was originally called "Bib-Label Lithiated Lemon-Lime Soda" and, until 1948, contained the mood-stabilizing drug lithium citrate. One theory claims its abbreviated moniker originated from its seven ingredients -- sugar, carbonated water, essence of lemon and lime oils, citric acid, sodium citrate and lithium citrate, with "UP" referring to the lithium-induced mood lift.

* Speaking of product name changes, L'Oreal was founded as the French Harmless Hair Dye Company.

* A 1991 study revealed that female politicians who employed Hollywood makeup artists were 30% more likely to win their elections.

Thought for the Day: "A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery while on a detour." -- Anonymous

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 27 of 75

THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

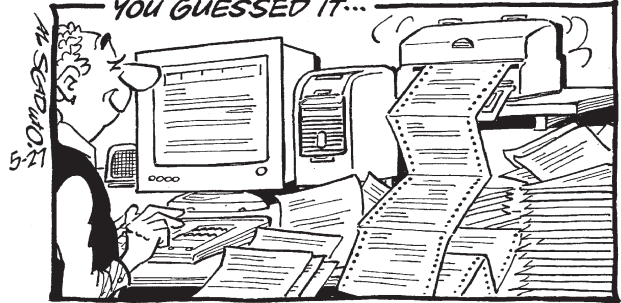
PUZZLE PIC-
FIND THE
PASSENGER
WHO
INSISTED ON
A WINDOW
SEAT...THE
BETTER TO
VIEW THE
SCENERY,
RIGHT?
RS. HE HAS THE
CURTAIN DOWN
THE WHOLE
SIX-HOUR
FLIGHT...



Thank to KEN & SUSAN GESCHWINT,
SUMNER, WA.

BY AL SCADUTO

SIGN OF THE TIMES- THE COMPUTER WAS
DEvised TO SAVE PAPER..SO-O-O WHAT GOES?
PEOPLE SEND JOKES, STORIES, QUIZZES ETC., ETC..
AND END UP PRINTING THEM ALL ON...AW-W-W..
YOU GUESSED IT...



Thank to MANY CONTRIBUTORS ALL OVER U.S.A.

WHYZZIT?
DOC EPSOM
WILL NOT TAKE
YOUR PHONE
CALL WHEN HE'S
WITH PATIENTS.
HE MUST GIVE
THEM HIS
UNDIVIDED
ATTENTION,
SEZ HE...

Thank to
SIMI SIEGEL,
ORMOND BEACH,
FL.



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Best Apps for Gardeners

From Seed to Spoon	Gardenize
Garden Journal	GardenTags
Garden Manager	Gardroid
Moon and Garden	iNaturalist
Smart Plant Home	LeafSnap
Sun Seeker	Planta
	Planter

— Brenda Weaver

Sources:
www.gardenersoasis.com
mashable.com

VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

More VA Scammers Nabbed by OIG

The Department of Veterans Affairs investigative arm has been busy.

Thanks to the VA's Office of Inspector General, a group of Georgia men have been convicted of stealing monthly Social Security and disabled veterans benefits and diverting them to their own accounts, starting in 2012. Some of the cash was put on prepaid credit cards and mailed to the creator of the scheme in Jamaica. Using personal information gathered from their victims, the scammers contacted the VA and Social Security to have the monthly benefit money redirected to their own accounts.

In all, 18 thieves were nabbed, and so far, they've been sentenced to over 600 months in prison. Several of them will be paying back \$1 million apiece in restitution. The maximum penalty for each could have been 30 years in

prison. Unfortunately, it wasn't.

Then there was the Rhode Island woman (a VA employee) who held herself out as being a wounded Marine Corps veteran and ... you guessed it, a Purple Heart recipient. When will they ever learn? Genuine Purple Heart recipients are known. This particular thief forged military discharge documents (DD-214) and committed wire fraud for the purpose of cashing in on the benefits and help that would come to her. She used her personal VA email account to order a Purple Heart, which she wore on a Marine Corps uniform.

Then she started in on her cash collection endeavors, which included \$207,000 from the Wounded Warrior program; \$18,472 from another group for mortgage payments and a gym membership; and \$4,700 from a web fundraising for her alleged cancer, which she claimed she got from burn pits in Iraq.

Meanwhile, as her schemes and scams unfolded, she served as commander at the local VFW, wearing her uniform (and the Purple Heart) at many events. She was tripped up when she asked for more money from another organization, and someone thought to (finally) check her info in the VA database.

Nope, it didn't exist.

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



SPRING CLEANING—Getting Rid of Out-of-Date COVID Policies

As we move past winter storms (hopefully) and signs of spring begin to pop up, this time of year is often associated with “spring cleaning.”

This year, the list might look something like this:

Scrub the shower

Clean out the closets

De-clutter the drawers

Part ways with old COVID-19 policies

Over the past several months, I’ve heard from many South Dakotans frustrated with out-of-date one-size-fits-all COVID policies. From the continued extension of masks on planes to the USDA Farm Service Agency and Social Security Administration offices that are still working remote—these policies don’t follow the science.

COVID-19 infection numbers are low nationwide, but there are agencies within the federal government that are still following “work from home” policies that were implemented over 26 months ago – that’s unacceptable.

These COVID-19 policies have affected so many of you—making it more difficult to contact an agency to get help with forms, loans, and taxes. As we approach the Tax Day deadline on Monday, it serves as a reminder of the immense backlog at the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

As of January 28, 2022, there were 23.7 million unprocessed tax returns and correspondence filed in 2021 and 2022. The IRS remote work has made it virtually impossible for taxpayers to talk to a representative on the phone, or they experience long wait times if the call is even connected. If you’re facing an issue with the IRS, please connect with a caseworker in my Sioux Falls, Rapid City, or Aberdeen office.

There is a light at the end of the tunnel. The IRS recently announced they will be fully back in the office by the end of June. Last week, the Social Security Administration offices resumed in-person services for 98% of its offices for the first time since March 2020. I’m sure we are all relieved to see some agencies part ways with COVID-19 policies and return to the office, as these programs and services are best rendered in-person.

However, if you call USDA FSA offices you get a voicemail that says they are not accepting visitors because of COVID-19. I don’t think our South Dakota FSA offices want to be operating at a limited capacity – many of these policies come from the top in Washington. The primary job of an FSA office is to serve our farmers – how can they do so effectively if they are closed? Every day on the farm is different, and the unexpected will always come up. South Dakotans deserve better. These old COVID-19 policies have got to go.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 30 of 75

South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

The Week to Celebrate Life

Everywhere we turn, we see symbols of renewal and rebirth. Spring snows blanket Custer State Park while buffalo calves are being born on the prairie. Elsewhere, the snow has turned to rain showers — a blessing to all, especially our farmers preparing the fields for spring planting.

This Easter weekend, regardless of the weather, churches across our great state will be filled with celebrations for Jesus' resurrection. We celebrate his sacrifice for our sins so that one day we all may enjoy the promise of everlasting life. Unfortunately, the promise of life on Earth is not so simple.

The Founders of this great nation understood that God endowed us all with certain rights that cannot be taken or given away. Risking their own lives in defiance of King George,

56 patriots boldly declared the unalienable rights to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Thomas Jefferson, who wrote those words, also said "the care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only object of good government."

And yet across this country, many hold up abortion as an essential right, ignoring the inherent right to life of those unborn children. Those voices, though present, don't echo as loudly here. South Dakota is a Pro-Life state.

It's one of the few issues where there have been unanimous, bipartisan victories in the legislature on this issue. In 2021, lawmakers banned selective abortions on the basis of a Down syndrome prenatal test.

That was a heartwarming moment for me as governor and as a mother. That same year, I signed the Born-Alive Protection Act to ensure that every baby, regardless of the circumstances of their birth, receives the same life-saving treatment when they are brought into this world.

In the last four years, I have signed more than a dozen new laws protecting life in South Dakota. I was the first governor in the nation to appoint an Unborn Child Advocate

in my office. Since then, we've defined abortion in statute, criminalized causing an abortion against a mother's will, and strengthened reporting requirements. This year, we passed the strongest law in the country banning abortion via telemedicine. We've also continued the fight against abortion in federal court.

Last year, I was the lead signee on an important amicus brief in the

Dobbs v Jackson case. In that brief, I joined 240 female scholars, professionals, and others in pushing back on the

Roe v Wade narrative that women cannot be both mothers and successful career women. Meanwhile, South Dakota continues to protect its pro-life standing, and the lives of mothers and children, in the decade-long legal battle in the case known as

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 31 of 75

Planned Parenthood v Noem.

South Dakota is closer than it has ever been to banning abortion — but the work doesn't end there.

Since taking office, I have worked hard to support mothers and build stronger families. Two initiatives have seen great success in improving outcomes. This year, I was successful

in funding the Bright Start program statewide so we can bring this life-changing program to more communities.

Bright Start helps pregnant mothers, their babies, and their fathers build a stronger family by offering training and services to teach young families how to raise their

children in healthy homes and build a strong foundation for their futures.

Another way we are strengthening families is through our Stronger Families Together initiative. This program is making strong progress to reach its goal of enrolling 300

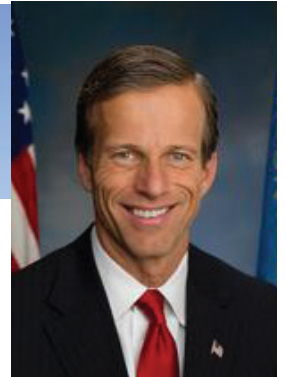
new foster families around the state. We are seeing tremendous success rates for reuniting families that were once in crisis. But there is always more work that can be done.

When we have finally secured the rights to life and liberty, all that is left is the pursuit of happiness. Springtime is a great reminder of how we can all get a fresh start

on that pursuit — that includes helping others on their journey.

God bless you all and Happy Easter!

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Pain at the Pump

Inflation hit 8.5 percent in March, the highest it's been since 1981, and it's hitting families where it hurts. From utilities and other monthly bills to beef and eggs to cars and airline fares – folks are paying more for just about everything right now.

One of the price hikes hitting Americans the hardest is the increase in the price of gas. I continue to hear from South Dakotans who tell me about the tremendous toll these high fuel costs have on their household budgets. The national average for a gallon of gas has been over \$4, and for working families, these rising costs could mean reprioritizing their spending and adding more stress when it comes to making rent and filling the tank.

Our country is in an energy crisis. If you ask the Biden administration, it will point to Russia's invasion of Ukraine as the primary cause for sky-rocketing prices in an attempt to deflect from its long-standing assault on domestic energy production. American families and small businesses know better, though – they've been coping with soaring energy bills since last fall.

President Biden made his attitude toward conventional energy production clear on day one when he cancelled the Keystone XL pipeline, and since then, his administration has tried to make it more expensive and more difficult to tap into America's abundant energy resources. Rather than embracing homegrown energy, the president has pursued an agenda that is hostile to it. Instead of prioritizing American energy independence, he has focused almost exclusively on alternative energy technologies, including what seems to be an obsession with electric vehicles, which his administration has clearly picked as its preferred winner in the clean-energy stakes.

The fact of the matter is, our nation is not going to magically transition to a 100 percent zero-emission energy fleet overnight, no matter how much the administration would like it to. From technological advancements and supplying critical minerals to upgrading our electric grid and energy storage, this is going to take time, and liquid fuels aren't going away in the near term. Right now, consumers need affordable and reliable energy supplies to power their homes and businesses and low-cost fuel options to fill their vehicles.

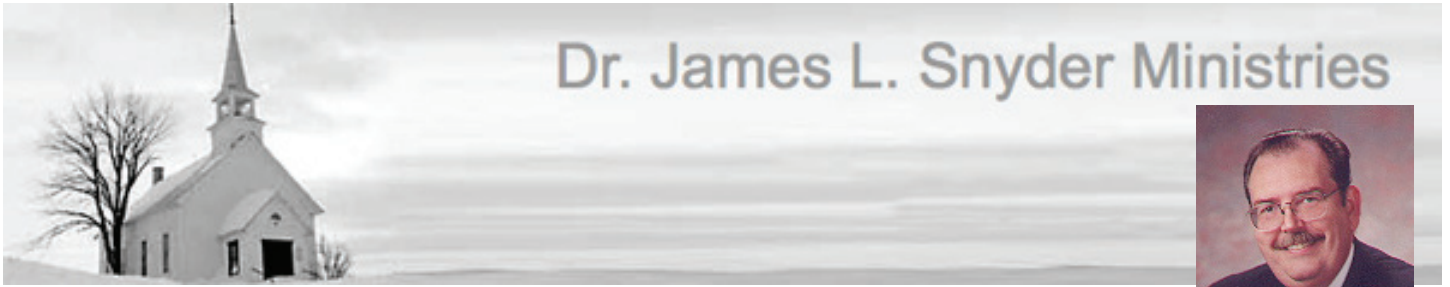
For months, I have been calling on the Biden administration to leverage American biofuels as one way to reduce the pain at the pump. In March, I led a bipartisan letter with Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) urging President Biden to unleash American biofuels and permit the year-round sale of E15 fuel in order to reduce the United States' reliance on foreign sources of energy. I'm glad to announce that he finally listened to my repeated calls and extended E15 sales this summer. This is a step in the right direction toward providing some near-term relief for consumers while also utilizing American agriculture as an energy and environmental solution. This is important progress, but at the end of the day, we need an all-of-the-above energy strategy to ensure long-term independence, and we need the president and his administration to join us.

High gas prices and other energy costs directly contribute to many price increases throughout the supply chain. For example, manufacturers who face higher transportation costs are forced to pass at least some of those increased fuel costs on to consumers in the form of higher prices for goods. On top of record-high inflation, which has outstripped wage growth, resulting in a de facto pay cut for many Americans, families across South Dakota are having to dig deep into their pocketbooks to make ends meet.

I will continue supporting policies that would put our country back on track to once again achieving complete energy independence and provide relief to consumers by lowering gas prices. I hope that the shocking inflation and energy crises that Americans continue to face will resonate with Democrats and help redirect their attention to issues that are impacting Americans the most.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 33 of 75



Just When I Think I Got Everything Covered

I like to have an organized life. I must confess that my idea of organization is not The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage's idea. We may share many things, but not planning and organization.

When she begins a project, it is well planned and organized down to the tiniest detail, and she never stops until it is finished. (I think she is still working on me.)

On the other side of the parsonage, there is a different attitude about planning and organization.

I get an idea and think about it for a long time. Then when I feel the time is right, I begin the project. It makes no difference if I'm at the beginning of the project or the end. The only thing that matters is that I am working on "The Project." So I jump in and begin working on that project.

One afternoon while in the middle of a project, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage came into my office and said, "What are you doing?"

This was rather sudden and caught me off guard, and I had to stop and think a little bit and ask myself the question, "What am I doing?" After thinking for a little while, I look up at her and say, "I'm working on one of my projects." I thought that would settle the matter.

But it did not satisfy her, and she asked, "What specific project are you working on right now? And, when will you be finished?"

I never know why she needs to know such personal information. At the time, I had to come up with some response to her question, and it may not be exactly what I'm doing.

I have a bunch of projects I work on throughout the week. For example, I have a sermon, a weekly newspaper column, a magazine article and a book that I am working on.

I must confess there are times I mix them up and get a little bit confused, and my whole week is spent trying to un-confuse my organizational catastrophe.

Once I went back to my wife's craft room, which I stay away from as much as possible, and saw she was working. I smiled and asked her bluntly, "What are you doing?" I was hoping to catch her off guard.

I wasn't quite prepared for the answer because, for the next 30 minutes, she explained to me her project from beginning to end, and when she was done, I had no idea what she was doing. So I don't

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 34 of 75

ask her that question ever again.

I'm not into crafts like she is. I would not know one craft from another, but she is quite an expert on that.

Looking into her craft room one time when she was away, I noticed how well organized it was. Everything was in its place and a place for everything. It would take me many years to get my office as well organized as hers.

One thing I have to deal with in my office is when I think I got everything covered, and I realize everything is wrong. So looking at a project that I'm working on, you would think I had half a dozen projects on the table.

One of my problems is concentration. I may be working on one project, but suddenly something happens, and I'm thinking about another project I have coming up. Unfortunately, I will stop what I'm doing, jump to that project, and make some notes.

I like to have music in my office while I'm working, and there are times I hear a song that reminds me of something, and I have no projects in the works associated with that, so I'm developing now a new project. Whether that project gets finished or not, it's tough to tell.

I could stop having new ideas today and continue working on what's on the table for the next ten years.

As I said, I like to finish everything that I start, but it doesn't always work out that way.

On the stand next to my bed are a notebook and pen. Many times in a week, I wake up in the middle of the night with a thought just buzzing in my head; I quickly jot down some notes before going back to sleep. When I get up in the morning, I look at those notes and have no idea what they are about.

Sometimes those notes look as though they are written in Chinese. Wouldn't it be something if they were?

At the end of the week, I like to sit on my easy chair with a cup of coffee and think over my projects for the week. How many did I finish? What did I accomplish?

Sometimes that Saturday night draws a blank, and I don't know how to fill it in.

Once in a while, as I'm thinking about the past week, I remember a project I started Monday and never finished and forgot all about it. Well, that's on the list for next week.

I thought of a verse of Scripture along this line. "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40).

This is something to think about, and I have tried to apply it to my life, particularly my spiritual life. When I think I have everything covered in my spiritual life, I discover something I haven't done.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: Could climate change really be making my allergies worse?

-- L. Pulaski, New Bern, NC

Pollen may be an unfortunate contributor to poor health in the first place, but there are signs that this nuisance will become worse. Warm weather contributes to an uptick in pollen count, and air pollution can concentrate it. Climate change is now a known contributor to changes not only in the seas and atmosphere but also modifying the life cycles and even biological processes of everyday plants.

In fact, carbon dioxide pollution is especially pernicious in this regard. Not only does it cause the vast majority of global warming in general, but it also has a strong connection with allergens. Plants grow bigger in the presence of more carbon dioxide, a potent greenhouse gas. In the process, they produce more flowers with greater amounts of pollen. Combining larger plants, more flowers and more pollen means longer allergy seasons.

Furthermore, some plants will produce more pollen when they are concentrated in urban "heat islands" which trap and concentrate heat. Examples of plants affected by this include poison ivy and ragweed. Poison ivy grows in greater abundance and larger sizes. It also produces more irritants such as the chemical urushiol in these conditions. Ragweed produces more pollen when temperatures rise and possibly even produces more irritants than as well.

Another type of irritant we need to worry about is mold, especially in household materials such as walls or insulation materials. Persistent mold exposure can result in infection and other breathing troubles. Carbon dioxide production, fluctuating moisture levels and temperature shifts—all typical of our new climate—enable mold growth even more.

The pernicious grip of allergies on human health has been around for millennia, but it takes little imagination to understand that this budding health crisis will become increasingly insidious. The research clearly shows that pollen seasons are lengthening.

While reducing climate change will take concerted global effort, there are some ways we can reduce the impact of allergens on our own health. For starters, try landscaping with trees that produce less pollen, such as female trees and bushes when landscaping. Ways to support policy and civil society initiatives include donating to asthma and allergy research centers such as the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America to help understand further causes plus mitigation. Understanding what triggers allergen production and how we are affected by it will help everyday people live healthier, happier lives.

Allergies may be worsening, but losing hope over the climate change fight as a whole would be a wrong turn. Allergy shifts are simply a difficult wakeup call to invest in further climate efforts. Reducing emissions will lessen the production of greenhouse gasses that lead to warming temperatures and pollen production.



Caption: If you've noticed your allergies getting worse in recent years, climate change may indeed be to blame. Credit: Pavel Danilyuk, Pexels.com.

Danilyuk, Pexels.com.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 36 of 75

South Dakota COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

127

Active Cases

416
-72

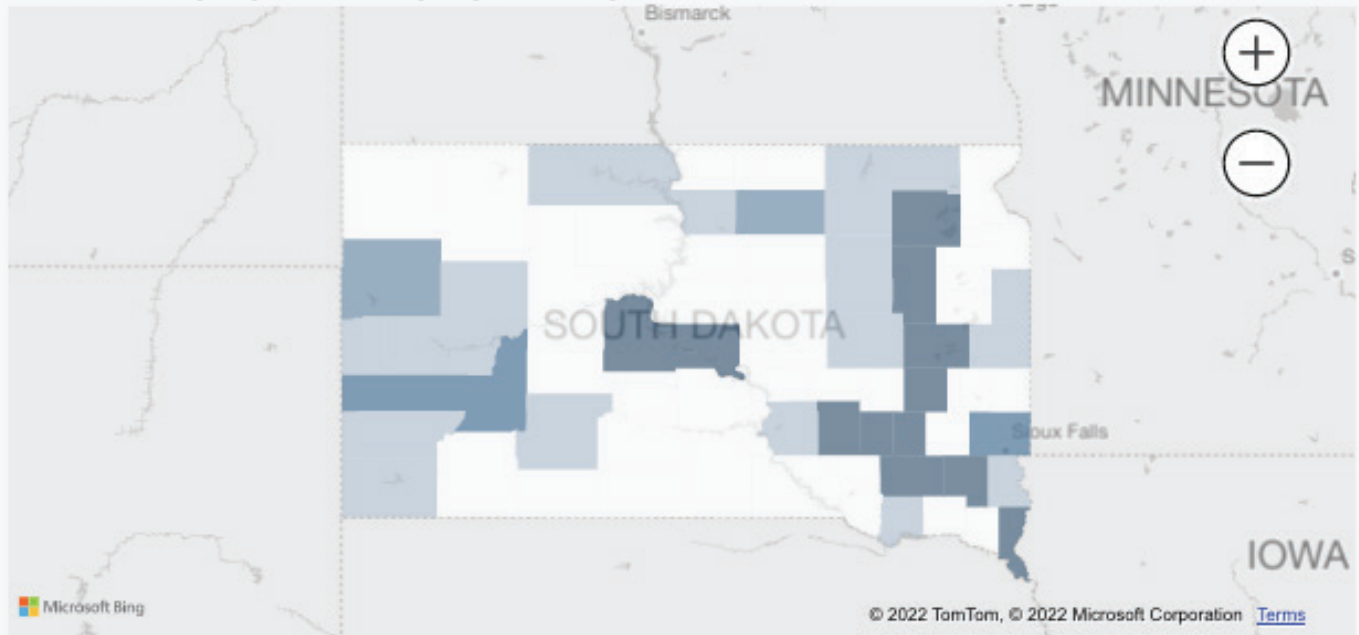
Recovered Cases

234,056

Currently Hospitalized

47

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

237,370

PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 7 Days

3.9%

4/5/2022 - 4/11/2022

Total Tests

2,150,132

Ever Hospitalized

10,742

Deaths Among Cases

2,898

% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)

169%

% Progress (March Goal: 44233 Tests)

100%

% Progress (April Goal: 44233 Tests)

22%

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 37 of 75

Brown County COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

4

Active Cases

21
-12

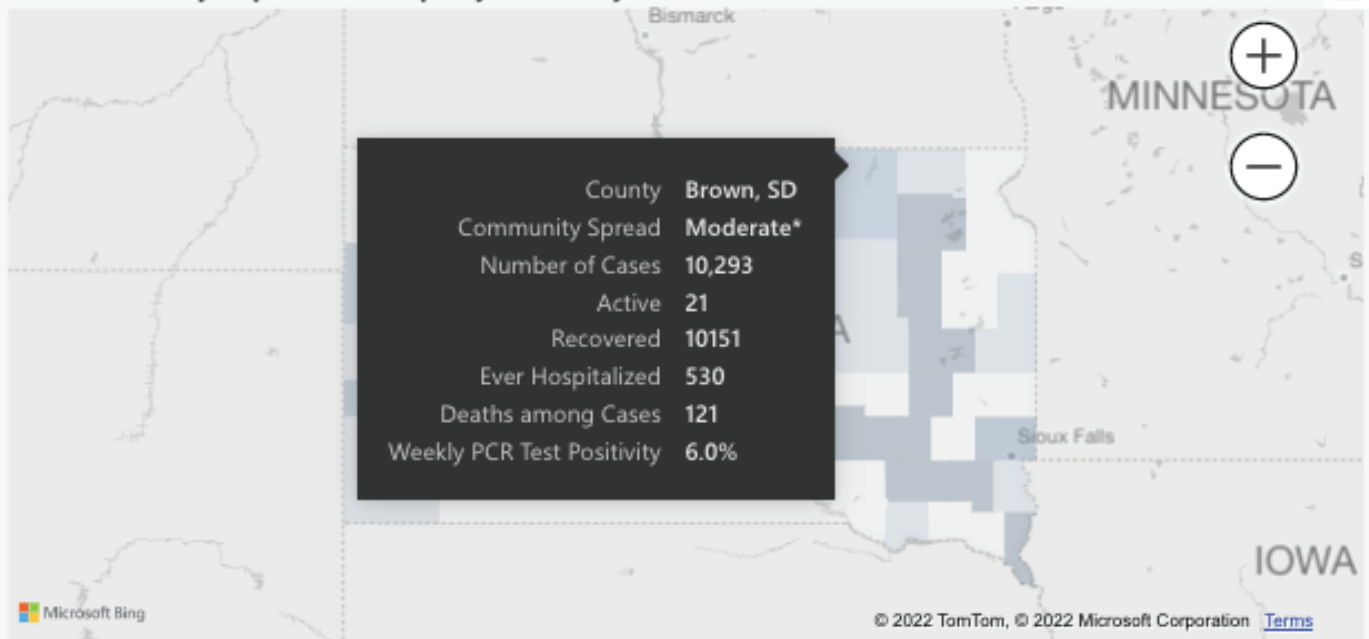
Recovered Cases

10,151

Currently Hospitalized

47

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

10,293

PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 7 Days

2.7%

4/5/2022 - 4/11/2022

Total Tests

103,504

Ever Hospitalized

530

Deaths Among Cases

121

% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)

169%

% Progress (March Goal: 44233 Tests)

100%

% Progress (April Goal: 44233 Tests)

22%

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 38 of 75

Day County COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

6

Active Cases

10
+4

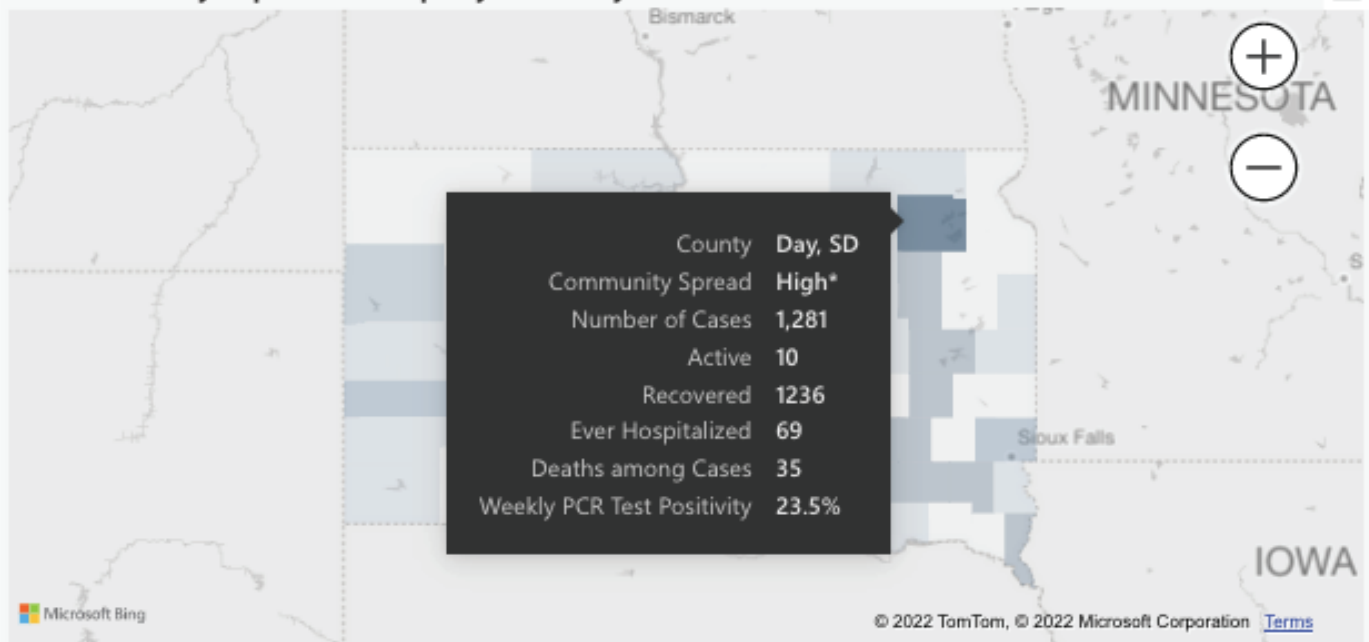
Recovered Cases

1,236

Currently Hospitalized

47

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

1,281

PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 7 Days

35.0%

4/5/2022 - 4/11/2022

Total Tests

16,940

Ever Hospitalized

69

Deaths Among Cases

35

% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)

169%

% Progress (March Goal: 44233 Tests)

100%

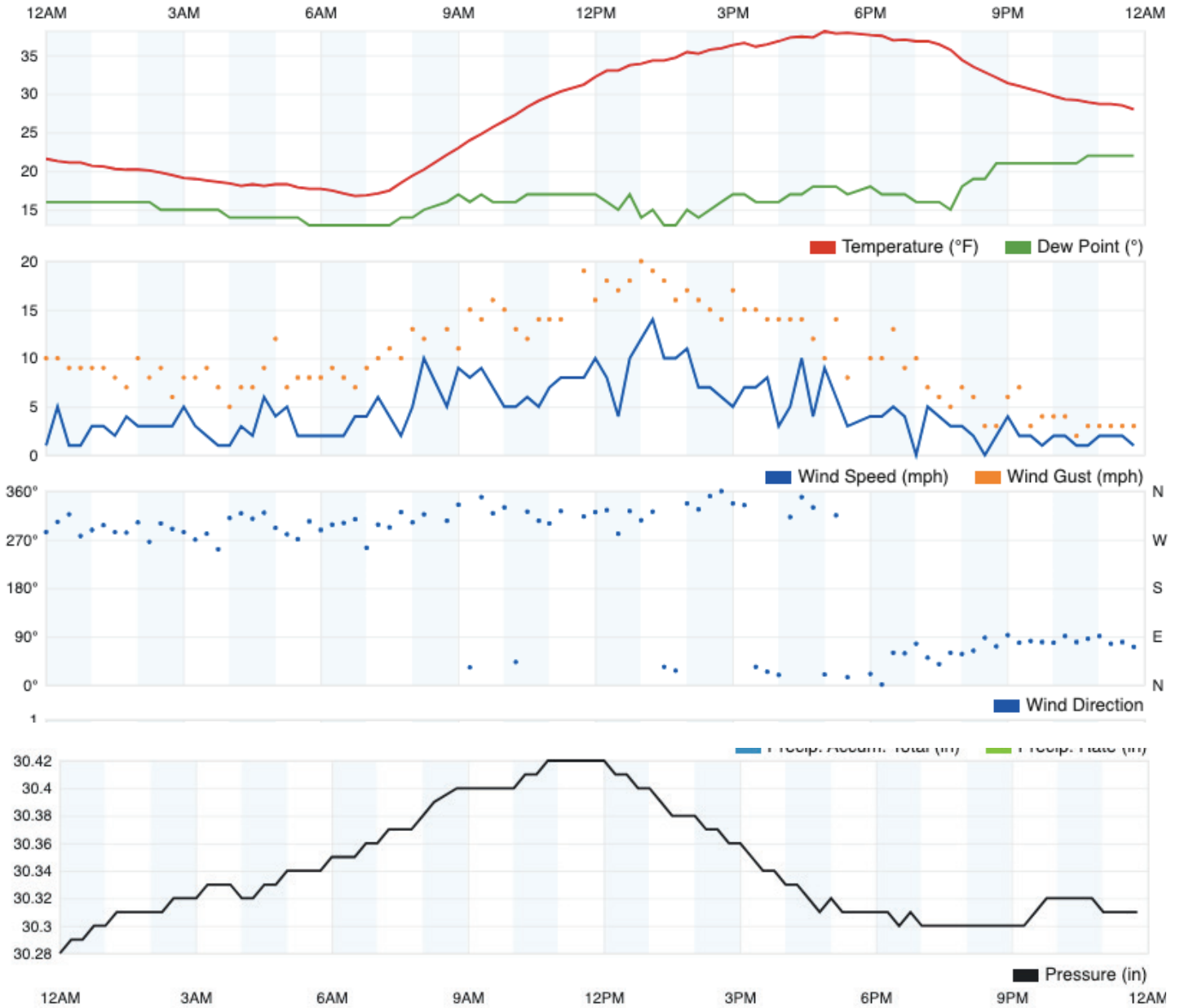
% Progress (April Goal: 44233 Tests)

22%

Groton Daily Independent

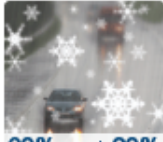




Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 40 of 75

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 41 of 75

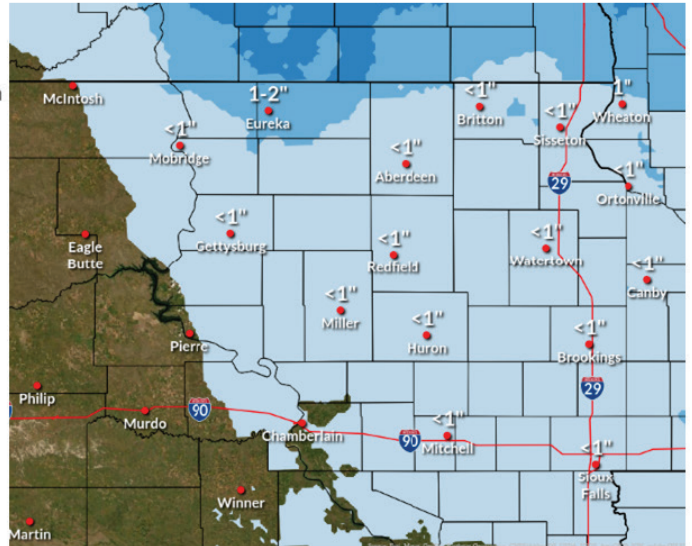
Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
				
60% → 30%				
Breezy. Rain/Snow Likely then Chance Rain/Snow	Partly Cloudy and Breezy	Sunny and Breezy	Increasing Clouds	Mostly Cloudy and Breezy
High: 46 °F	Low: 22 °F	High: 40 °F	Low: 23 °F	High: 47 °F



Light Snow Timing & Accumulations Updated: 4/17/2022 3:35 AM Central

Probability of Precipitation Forecast

	4/17 Sun																
	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm
Aberdeen	10	28	47	58	58	34	26	14	13	9	5	4	3	0	2	2	2
Britton	6	22	38	56	70	67	72	67	39	30	21	16	12	4	3	4	3
Eagle Butte	42	28	14	6	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Eureka	42	67	92	68	41	20	11	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	1
Gettysburg	67	60	52	17	14	5	4	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Kennebec	42	34	27	15	5	5	5	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
McIntosh	69	44	18	10	5	3	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	0
Milbank	1	11	21	40	64	79	76	72	69	51	33	31	29	9	5	5	3
Miller	37	42	47	50	17	10	14	7	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Mobridge	81	61	42	23	10	5	3	0	1	0	0	2	3	0	1	1	1
Murdo	47	29	11	5	5	4	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Pierre	69	41	13	6	4	9	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Redfield	23	34	45	50	38	21	19	11	7	5	3	3	2	0	0	0	0
Sisseton	2	12	22	34	60	64	74	77	69	51	33	31	30	4	5	5	5
Watertown	4	22	40	48	58	58	54	53	51	35	19	22	25	1	2	3	2
Wheaton	1	7	13	24	52	60	77	87	83	72	61	51	41	30	16	8	9



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

A weak system will cross the region producing light snow and gusty winds.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 42 of 75



Timing & Wind Intensity

Updated: 4/17/2022 3:41 AM Central

Maximum Wind Gust Forecast

	4/17 Sun											4/18 Mon														
	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am
Aberdeen	22	26	30	35	38	39	39	39	38	37	37	39	41	41	41	44	43	39	37	35	35	33	33	32	31	30
Britton	21	26	30	32	33	36	39	39	40	39	38	37	37	38	40	43	43	40	39	39	39	36	36	36	36	35
Eagle Butte	40	37	36	35	32	35	40	45	48	51	52	51	49	46	43	39	37	36	33	32	31	28	26	26	24	24
Eureka	36	37	38	38	38	38	39	38	39	44	48	49	48	47	45	44	40	38	36	35	33	31	30	28	25	24
Gettysburg	33	37	37	37	36	35	35	36	39	43	45	46	46	44	41	41	40	39	38	36	35	35	33	31	29	28
Kennebec	26	32	35	38	38	35	33	36	40	43	45	46	46	44	41	39	36	33	32	32	31	29	26	25	24	23
McIntosh	40	41	40	40	39	40	44	48	52	55	56	56	54	51	46	43	38	35	32	30	28	25	24	22	21	20
Milbank	12	16	20	22	24	26	29	30	30	30	30	29	29	29	30	33	35	36	37	38	38	37	37	37	36	36
Miller	28	31	35	37	39	39	39	37	36	37	40	41	43	41	40	39	38	38	40	41	39	37	33	31	30	26
Mobridge	37	36	36	36	35	33	35	37	40	44	47	47	47	45	41	39	36	33	31	31	29	26	24	23	22	21
Murdo	32	37	37	37	36	39	44	46	47	48	51	51	49	47	44	40	37	33	31	31	29	28	26	24	23	23
Pierre	30	31	32	32	31	32	35	38	41	45	47	48	47	44	41	40	39	37	35	31	29	26	26	22	16	15
Redfield	26	30	33	36	38	38	38	38	37	36	36	38	40	41	41	40	39	38	40	41	39	37	35	31	30	30
Sisseton	14	17	21	25	28	29	31	32	33	33	33	31	31	33	37	39	41	41	41	41	45	43	43	40	39	39
Watertown	16	21	24	28	30	32	35	35	35	33	33	32	32	31	32	35	35	35	37	38	39	39	39	38	38	38
Wheaton	15	18	21	23	26	28	29	30	31	31	31	31	31	30	30	33	36	35	35	35	40	40	41	40	39	38

*Table values in mph

**Created: 3 am CDT Sun 4/17/2022

***Values are maximums over the period beginning at the time shown.



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Wind speeds today.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 43 of 75

Today in Weather History

April 17, 2006: A strong spring storm moved across the Northern and Central Plains, bringing precipitation and stiff northwest winds. Sustained winds of 30 to 50 mph, with gusts around 70 mph, were felt across a good portion of western South Dakota for more than 24 hours as the storm slowly crossed the region.

1922: Southern Illinois and Western Indiana saw two rounds of severe weather, including tornadoes. The first significant tornado occurred just before midnight on the 16 near Oakdale, Illinois. This tornado killed 4 and injured 22 others. Five additional tornadoes took place between midnight and 3 AM on the 17. During the mid-morning and early afternoon hours, two estimated F4 tornadoes caused devastation in Hedrick and near Orestes in Indiana. A postcard from one farm near Orestes was dropped near Mt. Cory, Ohio, 124 miles away.

1942: West Palm Beach, FL was soaked by 8.35 inches of rain in just two hours.

2002: The heat wave continued across the east as high pressure off the Carolina blocked a frontal boundary across the Plains. Records for the date included:

Newark, New Jersey: 97

NYC Central Park: 96

Hartford, Connecticut: 95

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: 95

Reagan National Airport, DC: 95 (Tied monthly high)

Lynchburg, Virginia: 94

Atlantic City, New Jersey: 94

Norfolk, Virginia: 93

Providence, Rhode Island: 93

Boston, Massachusetts: 93

Portland, Maine: 80

1953 - One of the few severe hailstorms accompanied by snow, sleet, glaze, and rain, pelted parts of Kay, Osage, Creek, Tulsa, Washington, and Rogers Counties in northeastern Oklahoma late in the day. Nearly 10,000 insurance claims were filed. (The Weather Channel)

1965 - The Mississippi River reached a flood crest at Saint Paul MN four feet higher than any previous mark. During the next two weeks record levels were reached along the Mississippi between Saint Paul and Hannibal MO. Flooding caused more than 100 million dollars damage, but timely warnings kept the death toll down to just twelve persons. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Twenty-two cities in the central U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. Temperatures warmed into the 70s and 80s from the High Plains Region to the Mississippi Valley, with readings in the low 90s reported in the Southern Plains Region. Tulsa OK hit 92 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Heavy snow blanketed northern Arizona. Snowfall totals ranged up to 16 inches at Pinetop, with 10 inches reported at Flagstaff. Afternoon thunderstorms spawned a couple of tornadoes in Idaho. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Arctic cold invaded the north central U.S. Missoula MT was blanketed with four inches of snow, and Glasgow MT reported a record cold morning low of 14 degrees above zero. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - High winds in northern Utah, gusting to 90 mph in Weber County, blew a trampoline through a living room window, and strong winds associated with a cold front crossing the Middle Atlantic Coast Region gusted to 75 mph in the Chesapeake Bay area of Virginia. Unseasonably cold weather prevailed in the north central U.S. Valentine NE was the cold spot in the nation with a record low of 10 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 44 of 75

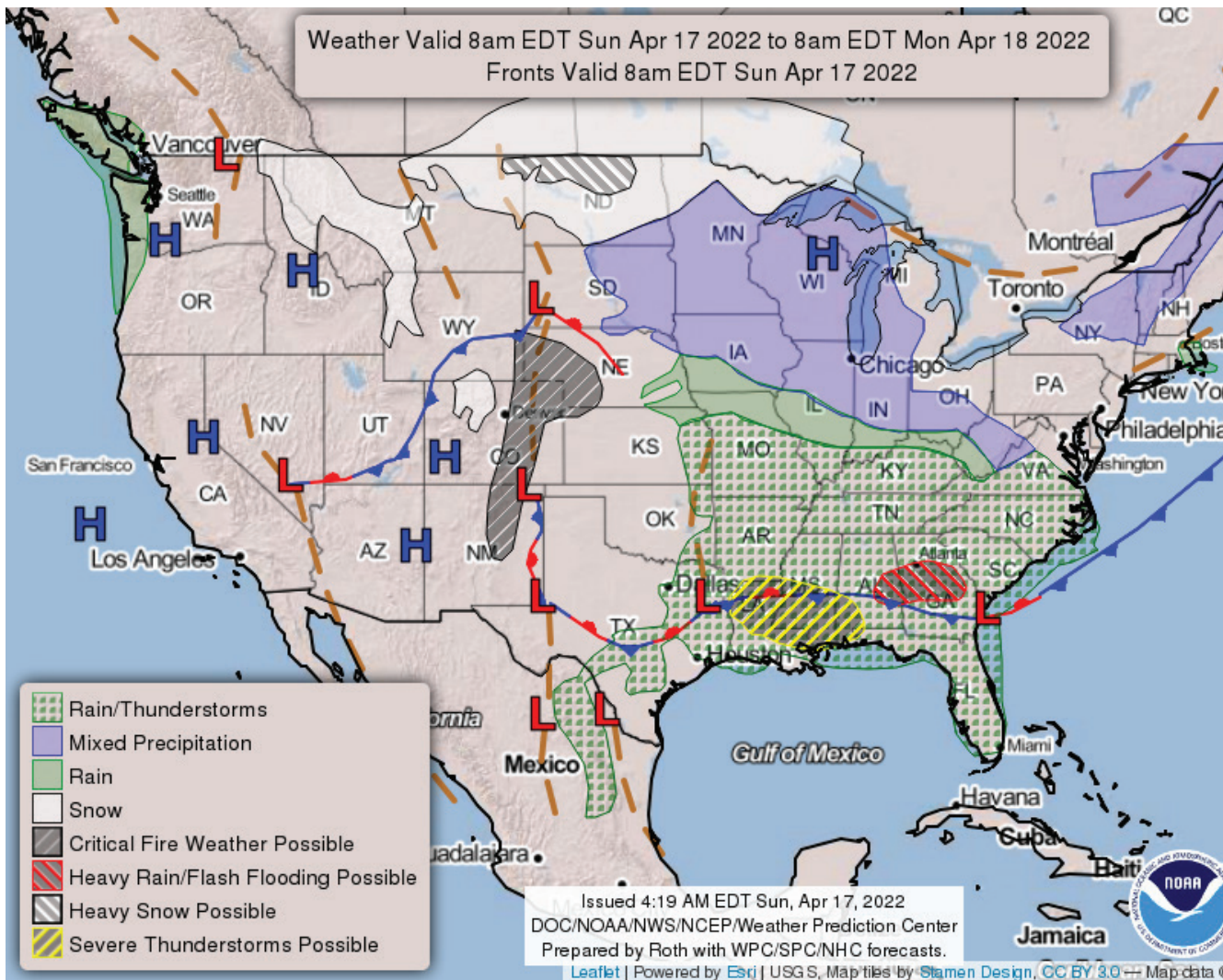
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 38 °F at 4:50 PM
Low Temp: 17 °F at 6:41 AM
Wind: 20 mph at 12:58 PM
Precip: 0.00

Day length: 13 hours, 41 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 92 in 1913
Record Low: 10 in 1953
Average High: 59°F
Average Low: 32°F
Average Precip in April.: 0.85
Precip to date in April.: 1.79
Average Precip to date: 2.91
Precip Year to Date: 3.59
Sunset Tonight: 8:22:32 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:39:32 AM



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 45 of 75



ALWAYS ON HIS MIND

Mrs. Hattie Hollowell is known as "The Forgotten Woman of New York City." She spent three years, four months and sixteen days in jail without a member of her family, a friend or an attorney visiting her.

When she was finally "discovered," an investigation revealed that she had never been brought to trial. Instead of being helped, she was forgotten and ignored by "the system." When she finally was discovered, the legal machinery moved swiftly to release her.

Others may forget and ignore us, but not the Lord. In Psalm 136:23 we read, "He remembered us in our low estate and weaknesses. His faithful love endures forever."

One day Jesus was teaching a group of followers. He wanted to get them involved in his lesson, so He asked, "What is the price of five sparrows?" Then, He answered his question by saying, "A couple of pennies? Not much more than that." He continued, "And yet God does not forget a single one of them. And He even knows the number of hairs on your head. In fact, He knows all about you - your weaknesses, your wants, and even your worries. And never forget that He cares for every one of you!"

If a little bird is the object of His love, how much more does He love each one of us, no matter who or what or where we are. We may be forsaken by our family and friends, but not the Lord. He remembers us in our "low estate," and His faithful love endures forever.

Jesus promised, "Remember, I am always with you!"

Prayer: We thank You, Father, for the promise of Your presence and the fact that Your love for us will never end. We are blessed to always be remembered. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: He remembered us in our low estate and weaknesses. His faithful love endures forever. Psalm 136:23

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 46 of 75

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)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 47 of 75

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 48 of 75

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

07-13-20-25-29

(seven, thirteen, twenty, twenty-five, twenty-nine)

Estimated jackpot: \$20,000

Lotto America

08-10-14-18-23, Star Ball: 2, ASB: 2

(eight, ten, fourteen, eighteen, twenty-three; Star Ball: two; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$11.14 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$20 million

Powerball

15-21-32-62-65, Powerball: 26, Power Play: 5

(fifteen, twenty-one, thirty-two, sixty-two, sixty-five; Powerball: twenty-six; Power Play: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$325 million

Russia bears down on Mariupol, strikes other Ukraine cities

By ADAM SCHRECK and MSTYSLAV CHERNOV Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian forces pummeled a hulking steel plant that held the last pocket of resistance Sunday in Mariupol, a southern Ukraine city that has suffered under siege for six weeks and whose capture would aid Moscow's plans for a full-scale offensive in the country's east.

With the last Ukrainian fighters in Mariupol refusing to surrender, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Russia "is deliberately trying to destroy everyone who is there." He said Ukraine needs more heavy weapons from the West immediately to have any chance of saving the port city on the Sea of Azov.

"Either our partners give Ukraine all of the necessary heavy weapons, the planes, and without exaggeration immediately, so we can reduce the pressure of the occupiers on Mariupol and break the blockade," he said, "or we do so through negotiations, in which the role of our partners should be decisive."

Earlier, Zelenskyy had told Ukrainian journalists that the continuing siege of Mariupol, which has come at a horrific cost to trapped and starving civilians, could scuttle attempts to negotiate an end to the war.

A Russian Defense Ministry spokesman said Saturday that Ukrainian forces had been driven out of most of the city and remained only in the Azovstal steel mill, where tunnels allow the defenders to hide and resist until they run out of ammunition.

The Russians already control what is left of the city after weeks of bombardment. Striking the steel plant to take the rest is part of Russia's preparations for the anticipated assault in eastern Ukraine.

Capturing Mariupol would allow Russian forces in the south, which came up through the annexed Crimean Peninsula, to fully link up with troops in the Donbas region, Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland and the focus of the anticipated offensive.

Ukraine's deputy defense minister, Hanna Malyar, said Sunday that Mariupol's defenders have tied up significant Russian forces besieging the city. She described the city as a "shield defending Ukraine" that prevents the Russian troops encircling the city from advancing to other areas of the country.

Malyar said that the Russians have continued to hit Mariupol with airstrikes and appeared to be preparing an amphibious landing to beef up their forces in the city.

Meanwhile, scattered Russian attacks elsewhere in Ukraine were an explosive reminder to Ukrainians and their Western supporters that the whole country remains under threat from an invasion now in its

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 49 of 75

eighth week.

After failing to capture Ukraine's capital and the humiliating loss of the flagship of its Black Sea Fleet, and Russia's military command vowed to step up missile strikes on the capital, Kyiv. The Russians said they hit an armored vehicle plant on Saturday, a day after targeting a missile plant.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said Saturday's strike killed one person and wounded several. He advised residents who fled the city earlier in the war not to return.

"We're not ruling out further strikes on the capital," he said. "If you have the opportunity to stay a little bit longer in the cities where it's safer, do it."

Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said the plant was among multiple Ukrainian military sites hit with "air-launched high-precision long-range weapons." The Ukrainian president's office reported missile strikes and shelling in eight regions across the country between Friday and Saturday.

The governor of the Lviv region in western Ukraine, which has been only sporadically touched by the war's violence, reported airstrikes on the region by Russian Su-35 aircraft that took off from neighboring Belarus.

In Kharkiv in the northeast, Mayor Ihor Terekhov said three people were killed and 34 wounded Saturday. One explosion believed to have been caused by a missile sent rescue workers scrambling near an outdoor market. The workers said one person was killed and at least 18 wounded.

"All the windows, all the furniture, all destroyed. And the door, too," recounted stunned resident Valentina Ulianova.

The day before, rockets hit a residential area of Kharkiv, killing a 15-year-old boy, an infant and at least eight other people in Ukraine's second-largest city, officials said.

Nate Mook, a member of the World Central Kitchen NGO run by celebrity chef José Andrés, said in a tweet that four workers in Kharkiv were wounded by a strike. Andrés tweeted that staff members were unnerved but safe.

Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer, who met with Vladimir Putin this past week in Moscow — the first European leader to do so since the invasion began Feb. 24 — said the Russian president is "in his own war logic" on Ukraine.

In an interview on NBC's "Meet the Press," Nehammer said he thinks Putin believes he is winning the war and "we have to look in his eyes and we have to confront him with that, what we see in Ukraine."

Nehammer said he told Putin what he saw during a visit to the Kyiv suburb of Bucha, where more than 350 bodies have been found along with evidence of killings and torture under Russian occupation, and "it was not a friendly conversation."

Zelenskyy estimated that 2,500 to 3,000 Ukrainian troops have died in the war, and about 10,000 have been wounded. The office of Ukraine's prosecutor general said Saturday that at least 200 children have been killed, and more than 360 wounded.

Russian forces also have taken captive some 700 Ukrainian troops and more than 1,000 civilians, Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said Saturday. Ukraine holds about the same number of Russian troops as prisoners and intends to arrange a swap but is demanding the release of civilians "without any conditions," she said.

Russia's warning of stepped-up attacks on Kyiv came after it accused Ukraine on Thursday of wounding seven people and damaging about 100 residential buildings with airstrikes in Bryansk, a region bordering Ukraine. Ukrainian officials have not confirmed hitting targets in Russia.

Russian Maj. Gen. Vladimir Frolov, whose troops have been among those besieging Mariupol, was buried Saturday in St. Petersburg after dying in battle, Gov. Alexander Beglov said. Ukraine has said several Russian generals and dozens of other high-ranking officers have been killed in the war.

Pope leads crowds in 1st outdoor Easter Mass since pandemic

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis celebrated Easter Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square for the first time

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 50 of 75

since the coronavirus pandemic, making Christianity's most joyous day at a time when the war in Ukraine has weighed heavily on his heart.

The pontiff, who has a knee ligament problem, limped badly as he stepped out from the back of St. Peter's Basilica to reach an altar set up on the steps outside, shaded by a canopy against brilliant sunshine.

Tens of thousands of people, numbered at 50,000 by the Vatican, many in shirt sleeves, packed the flower-bedecked square and a nearby boulevard to hear his words.

After the Mass, Francis, who is 85 and also suffers from chronic back problems, was set to move to the central balcony of the basilica, where he will deliver a geopolitical speech known in Latin as "Urbi et Orbi" (to the city and to the world), which pontiffs in recent decades have used to decry conflicts and injustices across the globe.

Right after the end of Mass, Francis shook hands with prelates, then got aboard the white popemobile for a whirl through the square to greet cheering well-wishers among the rank-and-file faithful.

Meanwhile, in London, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby called for Russia to declare a cease-fire and withdraw from Ukraine. The leader of the Anglican church said Easter is a time for peace and not "blood and iron."

Noting that in the Eastern Orthodox church followed by many in Russia and Ukraine Sunday marks the start of Holy Week — with Easter coming on April 24 — Welby exhorted Russia to withdraw from Ukraine and commit to talks.

In an unusually blunt political remark, Welby also condemned the British government's recent plan to send some asylum-seekers to Rwanda as going against God.

Warm weather and the easing of many pandemic restrictions — including what had been for most of the pandemic in Italy a mandatory outdoor mask requirement — have seen tourism boom in Rome, with many visitors flooding the city for Holy Week ceremonies that culminated on Easter.

In Spain, believers and secular enthusiasts flocked back in large numbers to Holy Week processions this week for the first time since the start of the pandemic after most health restrictions were lifted.

Police arrest suspect in South Carolina mall shooting

By MICHELLE LIU Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Police have arrested a suspect in connection with a shooting at a busy shopping mall in South Carolina's capital on Saturday that left 14 people injured.

Columbia Police Chief W.H. "Skip" Holbrook said 22-year-old Jewayne M. Price, who was one of three people initially detained by law enforcement as a person of interest, remains in police custody and is expected to be charged with unlawful carrying of a pistol.

It is not immediately known if Price has an attorney who could speak on his behalf.

Fourteen people were injured during the shooting at Columbiana Centre, Holbrook said in a news release Saturday. The victims ranged in age from 15 to 73.

Holbrook said no fatalities have been reported but that nine people were shot and five people suffered injuries while attempting to flee the mall for safety.

Police said the 73-year-old victim continues to receive medical treatment, but the other victims have been released from local hospitals or will be released shortly.

"We don't believe this was random," Holbrook said. "We believe they knew each other and something led to the gunfire."

Investigators believe that at least three suspects displayed firearms inside the mall but are working to determine how many suspects fired weapons. Police said at least one firearm was seized.

Daniel Johnson said he and his family were visiting from Alabama and were eating in the food court when they first heard shots ring out and started seeing people running.

Johnson said people were screaming for their children and spouses, knocking over tables in the food court as they fled.

"Everybody was trying to get outside," Johnson said. "When I was coming out, you could see baby

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 51 of 75

strollers turned over, people's phones and left keys. It was kind of a hectic situation."

Johnson said he gathered his wife, daughter and son and began heading toward the exit after letting the crowd clear out for a bit.

"My biggest thing was — and not to sound selfish — was to make sure that our family was OK and to get them out safely because this is not something that we love to do for Easter weekend."

Heavy police presence continued in the area hours after the shooting, though officers began letting more traffic through the streets surrounding the shopping centers and strip malls that are usually packed on weekends. Officers were also stationed outside a nearby hotel designated as a reunification area for people at the scene of the shooting and their families.

Workers from a couple of stores remained clustered in the mostly empty parking lot Saturday evening, waiting for police to let them back inside to retrieve their car keys and personal belongings so they could leave. They said they did not hear or see anything during the shooting but followed the mall's alert system and were evacuated by police shortly after. They declined to give their names, citing company policies.

"Today's isolated, senseless act of violence is extremely upsetting and our thoughts are with everyone impacted," Columbiana Centre said in a statement. "We are grateful for the quick response and continued support of our security team and our partners in law enforcement."

The shooting is the latest in a rash of shootings at or near malls across the country.

A 15-year-old boy was shot in the head Wednesday outside Brooklyn's Atlantic Terminal Mall. His injuries were not believed to be life-threatening. Officials said he was with a group of boys when they got into a dispute with a second group.

On Tuesday, a Southern California shoe store owner mistakenly shot a 9-year-old girl while firing at two shoplifters at the Mall of Victor Valley, police said.

And earlier this month, police said six people were killed and 12 others wounded in Sacramento, California, during a gunfight between rival gangs as bars closed in a busy area near the Downtown Commons shopping mall and the state Capitol.

For many, Easter Sunday marks a return to in-person worship

By STEVE LeBLANC, GIOVANNA DELL'ORTO and LUIS ANDRES HENAO Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — For many U.S. Christians, this weekend marks the first time since 2019 that they will gather in person on Easter Sunday, a welcome chance to celebrate one of the year's holiest days side by side with fellow congregants.

The pandemic erupted in the country in March 2020, just ahead of Easter, forcing many churches to resort to online or televised worship. Many continued to hold virtual services last spring after a deadly winter wave of the coronavirus and as vaccination campaigns were still ramping up. But this year more churches are opening their doors for Easter services with few COVID-19 restrictions, in line with broader societal trends.

Among them are Catholic parishes in the Archdiocese of Boston, which since last June has once again required most churchgoers to attend Mass in person — though those with health risks may still watch remotely, and pastors have been asked to make space for social distancing in churches.

MC Sullivan, chief health care ethicist for the archdiocese, said celebrating Mass communally is important to how Catholics profess their faith. Church attendance has been trending upward, and parishioners are excited to gather again to commemorate Christ's resurrection.

"It has been quite wonderful to see how well-attended Mass is right now. ... It seems to have brought a lot of people back to the idea of what's important to them," she said.

While most pandemic restrictions have been lifted, some area parishes are holding Easter Sunday services outside, including a 6 a.m. sunrise Mass near the waterfront in South Boston.

Hundreds of people lit candles in the vast Cathedral of St. Paul, Minnesota, after Archbishop Bernard Hebda blessed the fire and lit the Paschal Candle to open the Easter Vigil service late Saturday.

The century-old cathedral echoed with the singing of the congregation as candles flickered in the dark-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 52 of 75

ness. Well past 8 p.m., wide-eyed children fascinated by the little flames and the cantors far outnumbered people wearing masks – the archdiocese rescinded all Covid protocols on April 1, while allowing the faithful and individual parishes to retain precautions if they wish.

Similarly the nearby Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, which became a community hub during protests over George Floyd's killing in 2020, ended its mask requirement as of Palm Sunday and returned to shoulder-to-shoulder communion at the rail instead of in the pews. Ingrid Rasmussen, the pastor, said Easter attendance was expected to be similar to pre-pandemic levels — but split between those in pews and those joining remotely.

Christ Church Lutheran, an architectural landmark also in Minneapolis, is taking a cautious approach to loosening COVID protocols. But while masks and social distancing measures remain in place, there was an indoor Easter Vigil Saturday night, to be followed by a gospel procession to the middle of the sanctuary Sunday.

"The gift of being in the same physical space for the first time in three years is so grounding and beautiful," said Miriam Samuelson-Roberts, the pastor. "We do not take it for granted."

Peace Lutheran Church in Baldwin, Wisconsin, was holding Easter in the sanctuary again after spending 16 months hosting services, baptisms and funerals in the parking lot, surrounded by fields and dairy farms. But services continue to be broadcast via social media and local TV — that has been successful in attracting people from other communities.

"One thing I am certain is that should we have to restrict our gatherings — for any reason — we will certainly be drawing on our resources to 'meet people where they are,'" said John Hanson, pastor.

In New York City, Middle Collegiate Church was gathering for its first in-person Easter service since 2019, only not in their historic Manhattan church, which was destroyed by fire two Decembers ago.

While they rebuild, they're sharing space at East End Temple, where Rabbi Joshua Stanton will offer a prayer during the Easter celebration — at a time when the synagogue is observing its own holy days of Passover.

The Rev. Jacqui Lewis, Middle Collegiate's senior minister, said everyone will have to be "vaxxed and masked," and attendance in the 190-person temple is being capped at 150. Those leading the service, plus choir singers and musicians, took rapid COVID tests. Coffee hour will be outdoors, in the park across the street.

"We'll miss it, but we will not hug for passing the peace. We'll just bow to each other," Lewis said. "We are watching numbers and will pivot as we need to stay safe."

Just north of the city in Westchester County, Bedford Presbyterian Church also was keeping a close eye on local infection rates and following public health guidelines. The congregation will split into two in-person Easter services to allow for social distancing, the sanctuary's windows will remain open and the church will use heavy-duty air purifiers.

"Ministers juggle a lot of concerns and expectations as we head into our third Easter with COVID looming," said the Rev. Carol Howard Merritt, the senior pastor. "We know church wards off isolation and builds up community, so we try to figure out ways to worship in person and online."

Art Rupe, pioneering record executive, dead at 104

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Music executive Art Rupe, whose Specialty Records was a premier label during the formative years of rock 'n roll and helped launch the careers of Little Richard, Sam Cooke and many others, has died. He was 104.

Rupe, who was inducted into the Rock Hall of Fame in 2011, died Friday at his home in Santa Barbara, California, according to the Arthur N. Rupe Foundation. The foundation did not release his cause of death.

The Greensburg, Pennsylvania, native was a contemporary of Jerry Wexler, Leonard Chess and other white businessmen-producers who helped bring Black music to a general audience. He founded Specialty in Los Angeles in 1946 and gave early breaks to such artists as Cooke and his gospel group the Soul Stir-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 53 of 75

ers, Little Richard, Lloyd Price, John Lee Hooker and Clifton Chenier.

"Specialty Records' growth paralleled, and perhaps defined, the evolution of Black popular music, from the 'race' music of the 1940s to the rock n' roll of the 1950s," music historian Billy Vera wrote in the liner notes to "The Specialty Story," a five-CD set that came out in 1994.

Rupe's most lucrative and momentous signing was Little Richard, a rhythm 'n blues and gospel performer since his teens who had struggled to break through commercially. In a 2011 interview for the Rock Hall archives, Rupe explained that Little Richard (the professional name for the late Macon, Georgia, native Richard Penniman) had learned of Specialty through Price, sent a demo and for months called trying to find out if anyone had listened. He finally demanded to speak to Rupe, who dug out his tape from the reject pile.

"There was something in Little Richard's voice I liked," Rupe said. "I don't know — it was so exaggerated, so over emotional. And I said, 'Let's give this guy a chance and maybe we can get him to sing like B.B. King.'"

Initial recording sessions were uninspiring, but during a lunch break at a nearby inn Little Richard sat down at a piano and pounded out a song he had performed during club dates: "Tutti Frutti," with its immortal opening shout, "A-wop-bop-a-loo-mop-a-wop-bam-boom!"

Released in September 1955 and one of rock n' roll's first major hits, "Tutti Frutti" was a manic, but cleaner version of the raunchy original, which featured such rhymes as "Tutti Frutti/good booty." Rupe noted that Little Richard's performance was transformed when he accompanied himself on piano.

"Up that up to that point Bumps (producer Robert "Bumps" Blackwell) was having Little Richard just be a vocalist," Rupe said. "The neck bone connected to the knee bone or something; his voice and his playing sort of gave it a lift."

Critic Langdon Winner would liken Little Richard's Specialty recordings to Elvis Presley's Sun Records sessions as "models of singing and musicianship that have inspired rock musicians ever since."

Little Richard's other hits with Specialty included such rock classics as "Long Tall Sally," "Good Golly Miss Molly" and "Rip it Up" before he abruptly (and temporarily) retired in 1957. Specialty also was home to Price's "Lawdy Miss Clawdy" (with Fats Domino on piano); Don and Dewey's "Farmer John"; Larry Williams' "Dizzy Miss Lizzy," which the Beatles later covered; and music by such leading gospel acts as Dorothy Love Coates, the Swan Silvertones and the Pilgrim Travelers.

Rupe was known for how little he paid his artists and engaged in an exploitative practice common among label owners in the early rock era: Having performers sign contracts leaving him with much or all of the royalties and publishing rights. Little Richard would sue him in 1959 for back royalties and settled out of court for \$11,000.

Around the same time, Rupe grew increasingly frustrated with the "payola" system of bribing broadcasters to get records played and distanced himself from the music business. He sold Specialty to Fantasy Records in the early 1990s, but continued to earn money through oil and gas investments. In recent years, he headed the Art N. Rupe Foundation, which supported education and research to shine "the light of truth on critical and controversial issues."

Rupe's survivors include his daughter, Beverly Rupe Schwarz, and granddaughter Madeline Kahan.

He was born Arthur Goldberg, a Jewish factory worker's son whose passion for Black music began through hearing the singers at a nearby Baptist church. He studied at the University of California, Los Angeles, briefly considered a career in movies and decided on music instead, schooling himself by purchasing "race records" and listening with a metronome and stopwatch. He co-founded Juke Box Records in the mid-1940s, but soon left to start Specialty. He also changed his last name to Rupe, the family's ancestral name.

Rupe's discerning taste made him a success, but did cost him at least one major hit. In the mid-1950s, Cooke was anxious to expand his appeal beyond gospel and recorded some pop songs at Specialty, including a ballad that became a standard, "You Send Me." Rupe found the song bland and was appalled by its white backup singers. He let Cooke and Blackwell, who had become Cooke's manager, purchase the copyright and release "You Send Me" through RCA.

"I did not think 'You Send Me' was that great. I knew it would have a certain intrinsic value because

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 54 of 75

Sam was good. I never dreamed it would be multimillion seller," said Rupe, who added, sarcastically, "A wonderful stroke of genius on my part."

WNBA players say life in Russia was lucrative but lonely

By DOUG FEINBERG AP Basketball Writer

For the elite athletes in the WNBA, spending the offseason playing in Russia can mean earning more money than they can make back home — sometimes even two or three times as much.

But those who have done that also describe the loneliness of being away from family and friends, of struggling with an unfamiliar language and culture, and of living in a place with only a few hours of sunlight in the winter and temperatures well below freezing.

Brittney Griner is one of those players who went to Russia in recent years to earn extra money. For the two-time Olympian, however, it has turned into a prolonged nightmare.

Since arriving at a Moscow airport in mid-February, she has been detained by police after they reported finding vape cartridges allegedly containing cannabis oil in her luggage. Still in jail, she is awaiting trial next month on charges that could bring up to 10 years in prison.

Her arrest came at a time of heightened political tensions over Ukraine. Since then, Russia has invaded Ukraine and remains at war.

A half-dozen American players contacted by The Associated Press shared their experiences on playing in Russia. Although none found themselves in the same situation as Griner, they described difficulties such as isolation and boredom, apart from basketball.

"Playing there was not easy because the lifestyle and the way of living is a lot different than what you experience in other places in Europe and America," said DeLisha Milton-Jones, one of the first marquee American players to play in Russia in the early 2000s.

"The extremes of the weather — it's pitch black dark at 5 p.m. I had to wear my big jacket warming up sometimes since it was minus-40 degrees outside," said Milton-Jones, who played for UMKC Ekaterinburg — the same team as Griner.

The former All-American at Florida, WNBA All-Star and two-time WNBA champion with the Los Angeles Sparks said the decision to play in Russia was simply a "business one."

In the early 2000s, top WNBA players could earn about \$125,000 a year as part of a marketing deal with the league. Today, the salary for elite players is about \$500,000. By playing in Russia, those players can earn another \$1 million to \$1.5 million.

Players say the Russian teams try to make them as comfortable as possible, including sometimes providing drivers and translators. The clubs also give players extra days off during breaks, knowing they have longer travel back to the U.S., if they go home.

Apartments provided by the teams are comparable with what the players are accustomed to in the WNBA, including Western-style kitchens and laundry facilities, and they also have access to streaming services and video calls.

Milton-Jones, 47, played in other European leagues but said Russia paid the most at the time. And none topped UMKC Ekaterinburg, which continues to be an attractive destination for players.

Milton-Jones helped the club win its first EuroLeague title. The team's owner, Shabtai Kalmanovich, changed the standard of pay and living for WNBA players in Russia before he was shot and killed in Moscow in 2009.

"We chartered. Did everything five-star," Milton-Jones said at USA Basketball training camp earlier this month. "He would just spoil us. He'd send us to France for a weekend and give us thousands of dollars to go shopping on a private plane. No matter the club, you didn't know where the money was coming from and you didn't care. You were there to do a job."

Sue Bird and Diana Taurasi also spent many years playing in Russia for Kalmanovich and spoke of luxurious living conditions and the lavish trips he would provide.

"Everything literally was first-class," Bird once said. "We're staying at the best hotels. We go to Paris.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 55 of 75

We're in, like, the bomb hotel in Paris."

That treatment at Ekaterinburg continues.

"My experience in Russia has been amazing, to be honest," said Breanna Stewart, who has played for Ekaterinburg since 2020. "They make sure they take care of the players by chartering everywhere."

But Milton-Jones also remembers how different life was 20 years ago, when cellphones and the internet were relatively new.

"Back in the day, you had to go to the cigarette shop and buy the scratch-off cards and you'd type that number in the phone and it says you have 25 minutes to talk," she said. "We didn't have the popular apps nowadays on your phone. It was a struggle"

Connecticut Sun guard Natisha Hiedeman, who spent this past season in Russia before returning to home in March, said her daily routine consisted of going to the gym and returning home. The only other place she went was the grocery store.

"It's just challenging going out when you can't communicate. Everything is 10 times harder," she said. "I stayed in the house. I was fortunate that I had my dog out there, (to) do stuff with him."

Hiedeman said being in Russia felt more isolating than playing in Israel.

"In Israel, everyone was 20 minutes apart and there were a whole bunch of Americans, so it was easier," she said. "Russia is a huge country, and to be near any other team you had to get on a plane and travel."

Hiedeman stayed connected with her family through technology despite the time differences.

"I don't know how the old cats used to do it without FaceTime," she said, laughing.

Brianna Turner, a teammate of Griner with the Phoenix Mercury, also played in Russia in 2020-21. She competed for Nika Syktyvkar, a team based in Russia's remote European north.

Turner said Syktyvkar didn't have a shopping mall or many places to go, but it had a McDonald's — although she didn't go there often.

She often stayed at home and streamed movies and shows on her computer. When her team went on the road, she'd try to spend some time in the mall in those places.

"There wasn't much to do outside of basketball," she said.

"My city was very cold. When I first got there, the sun set at 3," said Turner, who is from South Bend, Indiana. "The weather was a big adjustment. It was even colder. Wake up, and it would be negative 20 multiple days in a row. It was cold every single day."

Crews fight New Mexico fires as some evacuations lift

RUIDOSO, N.M. (AP) — Authorities have lifted some evacuation orders for a mountain community in drought-stricken southern New Mexico as firefighters worked Saturday to contain a wind-driven blaze that killed two people and destroyed over 200 homes.

The evacuation orders lifted late Friday covered about 60% of the estimated 4,500 people ordered to leave their homes since the fire started Tuesday, Village of Ruidoso spokesperson Kerry Gladden told The Associated Press on Saturday. Evacuation estimates were previously reported to be around 5,000 people.

"The big story is we're in a re-population mode," Gladden said earlier during a media briefing.

Those evacuation orders remaining in effect may be lifted in coming days, officials said.

Those waiting to return included Barbara Arthur, the owner of a wooded 28-site RV park that had wind damage but didn't burn.

"We feel blessed," said Arthur, who on Saturday was staying at a motel and preparing taco ingredients to take to another RV park for dinner with people displaced by the fire, including some of her tenants.

Arthur said the fire came within a half-mile (0.8 kilometer) of her park and that she saw flames while evacuating. "It's the scariest thing I've ever been through in my 71 years of living," she said.

Bob Moroney, who works for a company that manages nightly rentals at Ruidoso River Resort, said three different groups, roughly 15 people overall, were displaced by the fire and are staying in units at the complex.

"These are literally people that left for work in the morning and never went back home," he said, adding

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 56 of 75

that for many, their homes are "total losses. They're just down to chimneys and foundations at this point."

Moroney, a qualifying broker for Keller Williams Casa Ideal, said that for now, the displaced are just trying to decompress as they figure out insurance and other next steps.

Fire incident commander Dave Bales said crews worked to put out hot spots and clear lines along the fire's perimeter to keep the fire from spreading. The fire has no containment but Bales expressed a mix of satisfaction with work done so far and prospects for coming days.

Weather conditions Saturday appeared favorable with reduced wind and increased humidity, Bales said. "We have lines in. We just want to make sure they hold in that wind," he said.

The fire and the winds that spread it downed power lines and knocked out electricity to 18,000 customers. Electricity has been restored to all but a few dozen customers, said Wilson Guinn, a Public Service Co. manager.

But people returning to their homes needed to be cautious and call utility officials if they encounter downed lines, Guinn said.

"We may have missed something," Guinn said. "Don't try to touch them, fix them, roll them up, whatever."

Gladden, the village spokesperson, said residents also need to be aware that the strong winds earlier in the week may have damaged trees that could still fall or lose limbs.

"It's important that what started this whole event was a significant wind storm," she said.

Hotlines lit up Friday afternoon as residents reported more smoke, which fire information officer Mike De Fries said was caused by flare-ups within the interior of the fire as flames found pockets of unburned fuel.

The fire started in the neighborhood and then spread to more remote areas, De Fries said Saturday. Authorities are investigating the cause.

"What you have here in Ruidoso are stretches where homes are destroyed, multiple homes are destroyed within neighborhoods," De Fries said. "And then there is the clear evidence and the trail of the fire as it progressed further north and west and in some cases neighborhood to neighborhood as it burned through the Village of Ruidoso's north and east side."

Authorities have yet to release the names of the couple who died. Their bodies were found after worried family members contacted police, saying the couple had planned to evacuate Tuesday when the fire exploded but were unaccounted for later that day.

As of Saturday, the fire had burned 9.6 square miles (25 square kilometers) of timber and brush.

Hotter and drier weather coupled with decades of fire suppression have contributed to an increase in the number of acres burned by wildfires, fire scientists say. The problem is exacerbated by a more than 20-year Western megadrought that studies link to human-caused climate change.

There are other blazes in the state, including the smaller Nogal Canyon fire to the northwest of Ruidoso. That fire was caused by downed power lines, De Fries said, and has burned six homes and eight outbuildings. People have been ordered to leave the area.

"We are right now in a time, even though it's very early in the year, where places like New Mexico have had extra stretches of just extremely dry weather," De Fries said. "Combining that with some winds, and you can see by the number of fires that are taking place and number of new starts every day and each week that fire conditions are a big concern."

Ruidoso a decade ago was the site of the most destructive wildfire in New Mexico's recorded history when more than 240 homes burned and nearly 70 square miles (181 square kilometers) of forest were blackened by a lightning-sparked blaze.

While many older residents call Ruidoso home year round, the population of about 8,000 people expands to about 25,000 during the summer months as Texans and New Mexicans from hotter climates seek respite.

FDA investigating Lucky Charms after reports of illness

By DEE-ANN DURBIN AP Business Writer

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is investigating Lucky Charms cereal after dozens of customers

complained of illness after eating it.

The FDA said Saturday it has received more than 100 complaints related to Lucky Charms so far this year. "The FDA takes seriously any reports of possible adulteration of a food that may also cause illnesses or injury," the agency said in a statement.

Several hundred people have also posted on a food safety website, iwaspoisoned.com, complaining of nausea, diarrhea and vomiting after eating Lucky Charms.

General Mills Inc., the Minneapolis-based company that makes Lucky Charms, Cheerios and other cereals, said it's aware of those reports and takes them seriously. But the company said its own investigation has not found any evidence of consumer illness linked to Lucky Charms.

General Mills said it encourages consumers to share their concerns directly with the company.

Suit seeks to overturn renewed Philadelphia mask mandate

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Several businesses and residents have filed suit in state court in Pennsylvania seeking to overturn Philadelphia's renewed indoor mask mandate scheduled to be enforced beginning Monday in an effort to halt a surge in COVID-19 infections.

The lawsuit, filed in Commonwealth Court on Saturday, said Philadelphia lacks the authority to impose such a mandate.

Philadelphia earlier this week became the first major U.S. city to reinstate its indoor mask mandate after reporting a sharp increase in coronavirus infections, with the city's top health official saying she wanted to forestall a potential new wave driven by an omicron subvariant.

Attorney Thomas W. King III, who was among those involved in last year's successful challenge to the statewide mask mandate in schools, said the city's emergency order went against recommendations of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and "imposed a renegade standard unfound anywhere else in the world."

The suit accuses city health officials of having "usurped the power and authority" of state lawmakers, the state department of health and the state advisory health board.

Kevin Lessard, communications director of the Philadelphia mayor's office, said officials were "unable to comment on this particular case" but cited a court's denial of an emergency motion by another plaintiff for a preliminary injunction against the mandate. Lessard said "the courts once again confirmed that city has both the legal authority and requisite flexibility to enact the precautionary measures necessary to control the spread of COVID-19."

Most states and cities dropped their masking requirements in February and early March following new guidelines from the CDC that put less focus on case counts and more on hospital capacity and said most Americans could safely take off their masks.

Philadelphia had ended its indoor mask mandate March 2. But on Monday Dr. Cheryl Bettigole, the health commissioner, cited a more than 50% rise in confirmed COVID-19 cases in 10 days, the threshold at which the city's guidelines call for people to wear masks indoors.

"If we fail to act now, knowing that every previous wave of infections has been followed by a wave of hospitalizations, and then a wave of deaths, it will be too late for many of our residents," Bettigole said. Health inspectors are to begin enforcing the mask mandate at city businesses on Monday.

The restaurant industry pushed back against the renewed mandate, saying workers will bear the brunt of customer anger over the new rules.

The state Supreme Court in December ruled that the governor's administration had no legal authority to require masks in Pennsylvania's schools and child care centers, citing state lawmakers' elimination of an emergency disaster declaration. The 6-0 ruling said state law gives health officials broad authority to protect public health but doesn't permit the department "to act by whim or fiat in all matters concerning disease."

DA: 3 of 6 dead in Sacramento shootout were in gang dispute

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 58 of 75

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Newly filed court documents in the downtown Sacramento shooting that killed six people and wounded a dozen others reveal that three of the dead had been involved in the gang dispute that led to the massive shootout, with at least one of them firing a weapon.

Documents filed Friday by Sacramento County District Attorney Anne Marie Schubert's office show that the three deceased men affiliated with gangs were Joshua Hoyer-Lucchesi, 32, Devazia Turner, 29, and Sergio Harris, 38, The Sacramento Bee reported Saturday.

Turner fired a weapon, but it was unclear if all three fired weapons. Police have said there were at least five suspects in the April 3 shooting.

Two of the suspects — brothers Smiley and Dandrae Martin — were wounded and are hospitalized or in jail. A third suspect, Mtula Payton, 27, remains at large.

In a social media clip posted hours before the shooting, the Martin brothers are seen posing with Hoyer-Lucchesi and two handguns and a rifle. In the video, Hoyer-Lucchesi and Smiley Martin, 27, talk about going downtown while armed to loiter outside nightclubs and "boast about shooting rival gang members," according to a 13-page document.

In the video, both Hoyer-Lucchesi and Smiley Martin state allegiance to the Garden Blocc Crips.

Later, surveillance footage from downtown Sacramento April 3 at 1:57 a.m. shows a person next to Smiley Martin pointing in the direction of Payton and Turner, according to the documents. Authorities say both are members of a rival gang, G-Mobb.

Seconds later, Payton and Turner start approaching the corner where the Martin brothers and Hoyer-Lucchesi are standing, court papers said. Payton and Turner are joined by Sergio Harris, identified in documents as a member of ally gang Del Paso Heights Bloods.

Shortly after 2 a.m., Smiley Martin is seen exchanging gunfire with Devazia Turner, the documents said.

Hoyer-Lucchesi, Turner and Harris were killed, along with Johntaya Alexander, 21; Melinda Davis, 57; and Yamile Martinez-Andrade, 21.

Deputy District Attorney Brad Ng filed the documents to make sure Smiley Martin, who is hospitalized, is not released on bail once he is booked into Sacramento County Main Jail, the Bee reported. Authorities plan to charge him with being a felon in possession of a handgun and carrying a machine gun that night.

Martin reportedly fired 28 rounds from a Glock 19 handgun and others returned fire until more than 100 shell casings littered the streets, according to the court documents.

Dandre Martin, 26, is in jail on weapons related charges but has not been charged with homicide.

Macron courts Marseille voters; climate activists in Paris

PARIS (AP) — French President Emmanuel Macron held a major campaign rally Saturday in Marseille, touting his environmental and climate accomplishments and future plans in a bid to draw in young voters who supported more politically extreme candidates in the first round of France's presidential election.

Citizens and especially millennials in Marseille, a multicultural southern French city on the Mediterranean, favored hard-left presidential candidate Jean-Luc Melenchon over the centrist Macron in the April 10 first round of voting. Marseille's young voters, who leaned mainly to the far right and the far left last Sunday, are particularly engaged with climate issues — a point which Macron hoped to capitalize on in a rousing speech at the edge of the glistening sea.

"I hear the anxiety that exists in a lot of our young people. I see young people, adolescents, who are fearful about our planet's future," he said.

Macron is facing off against far-right challenger Marine Le Pen in France's April 24 presidential runoff after 10 other candidates, including Melenchon, were eliminated in the first round of voting.

For many who voted for left-wing candidates in the first round, the presidential runoff vote is an unpalatable choice between a candidate who is anathema to them, Le Pen, and a president who some feel has veered to the right of center during his first term. The runoff outcome could depend on how left-wing voters make up their minds: between backing Macron or leaving him to fend for himself against Le Pen.

Macron has mixed green credentials, something he hopes to improve on. Although he was associated

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 59 of 75

with the slogan "Make The Planet Great Again," in his first five-year term he capitulated to angry yellow vest protesters by scrapping a tax hike on fuel prices.

To cheers on Saturday, Macron said his next prime minister would be placed in charge of environmental planning as France seeks to become carbon neutral by 2050. He also promised more public transport nationwide to wean people off being dependent on cars.

Even though Macron came out on top in the first round of voting, the 44-year-old incumbent has acknowledged that "nothing is decided" in the increasingly tight race to become France's next leader. In Marseille, he targeted his rival Le Pen, who has gained increasing support in recent weeks.

"The far-right represents a danger for our country. Don't just hiss at it, knock it out," he said, warning about the political dangers posed by overconfident supporters who abstain in the vital runoff vote.

Le Pen spent Saturday reaching out to voters in Saint-Rémy-sur-Avre, a village in northwestern France where she visited an antiques market.

While campaigning Friday, both candidates were grilled over their differing stances on Muslim religious dress in public spaces — Le Pen wants to ban headscarves in France, a country that has Europe's largest Muslim population. Both Le Pen and Macron were confronted by women in headscarves who asked why their clothing choices should be caught up in politics.

Across France, protesters are railing against a host of issues ahead of the presidential runoff.

In the center of Paris on Saturday, the environmental group Extinction Rebellion launched a three-day demonstration against what they call France's inaction on climate issues. The activists say their objective is "to put climate issues back at the center of the presidential debate."

Hundreds of activists from the environmental group XR are also asking both presidential candidates to make commitments to protect the environment.

At a Paris march against racism on Saturday, many left-wing voters described the runoff choices as agonizing. Some said they would hold their noses and vote for Macron, simply to block Le Pen. But many said they wouldn't vote at all or would cast a vote with no name. One marcher said they had barely slept and repeatedly wept since Melanchon came in third in the first round after Le Pen.

Faridi Djoumoi said he voted for Macron in round one but he still protested with a sign that read "Better a vote that stinks than a vote that kills," in hopes of convincing people to rally around the president against Le Pen.

"The vote that stinks is Emmanuel Macron, because there have been a lot of problems under his leadership," he said. "The vote that kills is the National Rally, Marine Le Pen, ... a party founded on hatred."

Ukrainian mayor and lawmakers attend Vatican Easter vigil

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis on Saturday invoked "gestures of peace in these days marked by the horror of war" in an Easter vigil homily in St. Peter's Basilica attended by the mayor of the occupied Ukrainian city of Melitopol and three Ukrainian lawmakers.

The pontiff noted that while "many writers have evoked the beauty of starlit nights, the nights of war, however, are riven by streams of light that portend death."

Francis did not refer directly to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but he has called for an Easter truce in order to reach a negotiated peace. That call appeared in vain Saturday, as Russia resumed missile and rocket attacks on Kyiv, western Ukraine and beyond in a stark reminder that the whole country remains under threat.

At the end of his homily, the pontiff directly addressed Melitopol Mayor Ivan Fedorov and Ukrainian lawmakers Maria Mezentseva, Olena Khomenko and Rusem Umerov, who sat all together in the front row.

"In this darkness of war, in the cruelty, we are all praying for you and with you this night. We are praying for all the suffering. We can only give you our company, our prayer," Francis said, adding that "the biggest thing you can receive: Christ is risen," speaking the last three words in Ukrainian.

Fedorov was abducted and held for five days by Russian troops after they occupied Melitopol, a strategic southern city. Fedorov and the lawmakers have been visiting European capitals asking for more aid for

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 60 of 75

their war-torn country and met earlier Saturday with the Vatican's No. 2, Secretary of State Pietro Parolin. For Christians, Easter is a day of joy and hope, as they mark their belief that Jesus triumphed over death by resurrection following his crucifixion.

"For with Jesus, the Risen Lord, no night will last forever; and even in the darkest night, the morning star continues to shine," the pope said in his homily.

Francis, who has been suffering from an inflamed ligament, did not participate in a candle-lit procession up the aisle of the darkened basilica at the start of the Mass. He instead sat in front of the altar on a wooden upholstered chair in white robes. Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re said the Mass instead.

Arrayed before the steps of the altar was a row of cardinals, wearing ivory robes and face masks for the first Easter vigil Mass with the faithful present since the pandemic.

Among those in the basilica were seven adults who were baptized by the pope during the Mass. The Vatican said these new faithful are from Italy, the United States, Albania and Cuba. From a shell-shaped silver dish, Francis poured holy water over the bowed heads of the seven, after they walked up to him one by one and listened to him calling their first names.

On Sunday, Francis celebrates Easter Mass in the late morning in St. Peter's Square and gives a speech from the basilica balcony, known by its Latin name "Urbi et Orbi" (to the city and to the world), in which he recounts the trials and conflicts facing the world.

"My golden sunshine": Teen killed by shelling deeply mourned

By The Associated Press undefined

KHARKIV, Ukraine (AP) — The mother and grandmother of a 15-year-old Ukrainian boy could not hold back their tears. Their anguish filled the cramped hallway as they knelt over the teen's body.

Artem Shevchenko was killed by shelling in Kharkiv, a partially blockaded northeastern city where Russian shelling has increased in recent days. Ukraine's second-largest city, Kharkiv is only 40 kilometers (25 miles) from the Russian border.

Nine civilians died and more than 50 people were wounded Friday in the attack on one of Kharkiv's residential areas, the Ukrainian president's office reported.

"Please open your eyes, my bunny. Please," Nina Shevchenko pleaded, captured in a moving Associated Press video in which she mourns her son.

The boy's grandmother arrived as people came to take his body away.

"Let me see him! My baby. My golden sunshine!" the grandmother cried. "My dear sunshine. We just spoke today. My dear, why should I live, if you are gone? I lived for you. My sunshine. Curse them all! They should not find any place, neither on Earth, nor in heaven."

"I lived for you," Nina Shevchenko told her son.

"Please open your eyes," she said, touching his face before paramedics and neighbors took the boy away in a body bag. A seven-month-old baby was also killed in the shelling.

In another building's hallway, a young girl broke down in tears as she recounted the horror of the attack and how she was saved only when "some woman, God bless her, covered me with her body."

Outside, bloodied people lay in pain on the streets, where ambulances arrived to treat them.

Amid burned-out cars and debris, a man who had helped his friend into an ambulance spoke out against Russian forces, whose invasion sparked a war in his country.

"What did this guy do to them (Russians)?" asked Sergey Kirichenko, a friend of the wounded man.

"With whom should we make peace?" Kirichenko asked. "With these monsters?"

The Russian Defense Ministry said Russian military strikes in the Kharkiv region "liquidated a squad of mercenaries from a Polish private military company" of up to 30 people and "liberated" an iron and steel factory in the southern Ukrainian port of Mariupol.

The claims could not be independently verified.

Invictus Games opens with Prince Harry tribute to Ukrainians

By MIKE CORDER Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — The Invictus Games competition for wounded, injured and ill service personnel and veterans opened Saturday night in the Netherlands with a standing ovation and a tribute from Prince Harry for the Ukrainian team members who left their war-torn nation to compete.

With Harry and his wife Meghan in the front row for opening ceremony, competitors cheered for nearly a minute as the Ukrainian team waved their nation's blue-and-yellow flag after Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte welcomed them to the event that was delayed for two years by the coronavirus pandemic.

Harry founded the Invictus Games to aid the rehabilitation of injured or sick military service members and veterans by giving them the challenge of competing in sports events similar to the Paralympics.

Welcoming all competitors, Harry singled out the Ukrainian team and their supporters.

"Your bravery in choosing to come and for being here tonight cannot be overstated," he said, a day after meeting the Ukrainians at a reception.

"You know, we stand with you. The world is united with you. And still you deserve more. And my hope is that these events, this event, creates the opportunity ... of how we as a global community can better show up for you," Harry added.

Meghan took to the stage before Harry and introduced him, saying: "I could not love and respect him more. And I know that all of you feel the same, because he is your fellow veteran, having served two tours of duty in Afghanistan and 10 years of military service."

She called Harry "the founder of the Invictus Games and the father to our two little ones, Archie and Lili."

Earlier in the opening ceremony, the Dutch prime minister said portraits of Invictus athletes that have been placed around The Hague, the city hosting this year's competition, underscore the "resilience of fortitude in the face of adversity, of vulnerability and strength" of the competitors.

"These are your stories, your lifelines, and the events unfolding now in Ukraine make them resonate even more. I'd like to extend a special welcome to the Ukrainian team," he said as applause and cheers erupted.

The Ukrainians — many of them taking a brief break from defending their country against the Russian invasion that triggered a devastating war — are among 500 competitors from 20 nations taking part in the games that run through April 22.

Earlier Saturday, competition at the games got underway with a driving challenge around an automotive obstacle course. Harry got close to the action when he was driven around the course. He and Meghan later waved to spectators as they were driven around in miniature Land Rover cars with children at the wheel.

Beginning Sunday, competitors will take part in athletics, archery, cycling, indoor rowing, powerlifting, sitting volleyball, swimming, wheelchair basketball and wheelchair rugby.

On Friday, the duke and duchess of Sussex, as Harry and Meghan are also known, attended a welcome event for competitors and their friends and family. It was the couple's first public appearance in Europe since they gave up their formal royal roles and moved to the U.S. more than two years ago, citing the unbearable pressure of their roles and racist attitudes of the British media.

On Thursday the couple visited Harry's grandmother, the 95-year-old Queen Elizabeth II, at Windsor Castle. The queen has been struggling with mobility issues of late.

'I feel so lost': The elderly in Ukraine, left behind, mourn

By CARA ANNA and RODRIGO ABD Associated Press

MYKULYCHI, Ukraine (AP) — This was not where Nadiya Trubchaninova thought she would find herself at 70 years old, hitchhiking daily from her village to the shattered Ukrainian town of Bucha, trying to bring her son's body home for burial.

The questions wore her down, heavy like the winter coat and boots she still wears against the chill. Why had the 48-year-old Vadym gone to Bucha, where the Russians were so much harsher than the ones occupying their village? Who shot him as he drove on Yablunsk Street, where so many bodies were found? And why did she lose her son just one day before the Russians withdrew?

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 62 of 75

After word reached her that Vadym had been found and buried by strangers in a yard in Bucha, she spent more than a week trying to bring him home to a proper grave. But he was just one body among hundreds, part of an investigation into war crimes that has grown to global significance.

Trubchaninova is among the many elderly people left behind or who chose to stay as millions of Ukrainians fled across borders or to other parts of the country. They were the first to be seen on empty streets after Russian troops withdrew from communities around the capital, Kyiv, peering out from wooden gates or carrying bags of donated food back to freezing homes.

Some, like Trubchaninova, survived the first weeks of the war only to find it had taken their children.

She had last seen her son on March 30. She thought he was taking a walk as part of his long recovery from a stroke. "It would be crazy to go farther," she said. She wondered whether he went driving to search for a cellphone connection to call his own son and wish him a happy birthday.

She wondered whether Vadym thought the Russians in Bucha were like those occupying their village, who told them they wouldn't be harmed if they didn't fight back.

More than a week later, she found his makeshift grave with the help of a stranger with the same name and age as her son. The following day, she spotted the body bag containing Vadym at a Bucha cemetery. He always stood out for his height and his foot stuck out from a hole in the corner. Anxious not to lose him, she found a scarf and tied it there. It was her marker.

She believed she knew where her son's body was held for days, in a refrigerator truck outside Bucha's morgue. She was desperate to find an official to hurry the process of inspecting her son and issuing the documents needed to release him.

"I get worried, where he'd go, and whether I'd be able to find him," she said.

Once she collected his body, she would need a casket, which equals a month of her pension, about \$90. She, like other elderly Ukrainians, hasn't received her pension since the war began. She gets by selling the vegetables she grows, but the potatoes she meant to plant in March withered while she was hiding in her home.

Her aging cellphone keeps losing battery life. She forgets her phone number. Her other son, two years younger than Vadym, is unemployed and troubled. Nothing is easy.

"I would walk out of this place because I feel it's so hard to be here," Trubchaninova said, sitting at home under a tinted black-and-white photo of herself at 32, full of determination.

She recalled watching her television, when it still worked, in the early days of the war, as broadcasts showed so many Ukrainians fleeing. She worried about them. Where are they going? Where will they sleep? What will they eat? How will they remake their lives again?

"I felt so sorry for them," she said. "And now, I'm in that situation. I feel so lost inside. I don't even know how to describe how lost I am. I'm not even sure I'll put my head on this pillow tonight and wake up tomorrow."

Like many elderly Ukrainians, she worked without taking time for herself, determined to give her children an education and a better life than her own.

"Those were my plans," she said, agitated. "What plans do you want me to have now? How do I make new plans if one of my sons is lying there in Bucha?"

On Thursday, she waited outside the Bucha morgue again. After another long day without progress, she sat on a bench in the sun. "I just wanted to sit in nice weather," she said. "I'm going to go home. Tomorrow I'll come again."

Across town that day was the kind of closure that Trubchaninova wanted so badly. At a cemetery, two 82-year-old women rose from a bench and crossed themselves as the now-familiar white van arrived carrying another casket.

The women, Neonyla and Helena, sing at funerals. They have performed at 10 since the Russians withdrew. "The biggest pain for a mother is to lose her son," Neonyla said. "There is no word to describe it."

They joined the priest at the foot of the grave. Two men with handfuls of tulips attended, along with a man with cap in hand. "That's it," a gravedigger said when the exhausted-looking priest was finished.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 63 of 75

Another man with a gold-ink pen wrote basic details on a temporary cross. It was for a woman who had been killed by shelling as she cooked outside. She was 69.

A row of empty graves lay waiting.

Finally, on Saturday, Trubchaninova was reunited with her son. In a small cemetery in a field in her village under a cast-iron sky, she clutched at a donated casket. She knelt and she wept. And Vadym was buried.

Pandas devour ice cake to celebrate 50 years at National Zoo

By ASHRAF KHALIL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The “cake” was made from frozen fruit juice, sweet potatoes, carrots and sugar cane and it lasted about 15 minutes once giant panda mama Mei Xiang and her cub Xiao Qi Ji got hold of it.

The National Zoo’s most famous tenants had an enthusiastic breakfast Saturday in front of adoring crowds as the zoo celebrated 50 years of its iconic panda exchange agreement with the Chinese government.

Xiao Qi Ji’s father Tian Tian largely sat out the morning festivities, munching bamboo in a neighboring enclosure with the sounds of his chomping clearly audible during a statement by Chinese ambassador Qin Gang. The ambassador praised the bears as “a symbol of the friendship” between the nations.

Pandas are almost entirely solitary by nature, and in the wild Tian Tian would probably never even meet his child. He received a similar cake for lunch.

In addition to hailing the 1972 agreement sparked by President Richard Nixon’s landmark visit to China, Saturday’s celebration also highlighted the success of the global giant panda breeding program, which has helped bring the bears back from the brink of extinction.

Xiao Qi Ji’s birth in August 2020 was hailed as a near miracle, due to Mei Xiang’s advanced age and the fact that zoo staff performed the artificial insemination procedure under tight restrictions shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic shut the entire zoo. At age 22, Mei Xiang was the oldest giant panda to successfully give birth in the United States.

Normally they would have used a combination of frozen sperm and fresh semen extracted from Tian Tian. But in order to minimize the number of close-quarters medical procedures, zoo officials used only frozen semen.

“It was definitely a long-shot pregnancy,” said Bryan Amaral, the zoo’s senior curator for mammals.

In honor of that long shot, the now 20-month-old cub was given a name that translates as “little miracle.” His birth in mid-pandemic sparked a fresh wave of panda-mania, with viewership on the zoo’s panda-cam livestream spiking by 1,200 percent.

“I know how passionate people are about pandas,” Amaral said. “I’m not surprised by that passion at all.”

Sure enough, crowds started streaming straight for the panda section at 8 a.m. when the zoo opened. Sisters Lorelai and Everley Greenwell, age 6 and 5, ran toward the enclosure chanting “Pandas! Pandas!”

They watched the cub tumble around, try to wrestle his mom and tear the zero off the giant 50 emblazoned on the ice cake.

“They knew this was coming,” said their mother Kayleigh Greenwell of Mount Ranier, Maryland, said of her girls. “We’ve been talking about it all week.”

The zoo’s original 1972 panda pair, Ling-Ling and Hsing-Hsing, were star attractions at the zoo for decades, but panda pregnancies are notoriously tricky and none of their cubs survived.

Mei Xiang and Tian Tian arrived in 2000, and the pair has successfully birthed three other cubs: Tai Shan, Bao Bao and Bei Bei — also by artificial insemination. All were transported to China at age 4, under terms of the zoo’s agreement with the Chinese government.

Similar agreements with zoos around the world have helped revitalize the giant panda population. Down to just over 1000 bears in the 1980s, the species has since been removed from the lists of animals in danger of extinction.

Some state lawmakers calling it quits, can’t afford to serve

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 64 of 75

By SUSAN HAIGH Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — When trying to decide whether to seek a fourth term in the Connecticut House of Representatives, Rep. Joe de la Cruz ran the question by his wife, whom he jokingly refers to as his lawyer and financial adviser.

While Tammy de la Cruz didn't want to discourage her 51-year-old husband from stepping away from the part-time job he has grown to love, she acknowledged it didn't make financial sense for him run again in November.

"The retirement planner in her didn't even have to use a calculator to do the math," Joe de la Cruz, a Democrat, told fellow House members when he announced in February that he's not seeking reelection. "The \$30,000 a year we make to do this illustrious job, the one that we all really care for, is truly not enough to live on. It's truly not enough to retire on."

Lawmakers in other states, often those with part-time "citizen" legislatures, have raised similar complaints. In Oregon, where the base pay is about \$33,000 a year, three female state representatives announced in March they are not seeking reelection because they can't afford to support their families on a part-time salary for what's really full-time work. They called the situation "unsustainable" in a joint resignation letter.

Connecticut legislators haven't seen an increase in their \$28,000 base pay in 21 years.

While it varies by state as to how legislative salaries are adjusted, bills increasing legislator pay were proposed in several states this year, including Connecticut, Georgia, Oregon, and New Mexico, which is the nation's only unsalaried legislature. So far the bills have faltered as some lawmakers fear rankling voters by approving their own pay raises.

It's also not clear whether higher salaries ultimately lead to more diversified legislatures, something proponents of pay raises say is at risk. A 2016 study published in the American Political Science Review determined there was "surprisingly little empirical evidence" that raising politicians' salaries would encourage more working-class people to run for political office. The study found that higher salaries "don't seem to make political office more attractive to workers; they seem to make it more attractive to professionals who already earn high salaries."

Arturo Vargas, CEO of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, said he believes that low pay, coupled with the threats and picketing some lawmakers and their families have received over issues like COVID-19 rules, will discourage people of modest means from running. And that often means people of color.

"It makes it more challenging for people who don't have a lot of free time and need to rely on income to be able to perform their public service," he said. "And it does make it an occupation that becomes more limited to the wealthy. And the wealthy in this country tend to be more white than people of color."

In Washington, Democratic Sen. Mona Das, a child of immigrants from India who was first elected in 2018, recently announced on Facebook that she's not seeking reelection. Part of the reason, she said, is the difficulty she's had in meeting her financial obligations on a state Senate salary. Senators in Washington earn \$56,881 a year plus a per diem to offset living expenses when the legislature is in session. That per diem jumped from up to \$120 a day to up to \$185 a day this year while the salary is scheduled to increase to \$57,876 on July 1.

This year, roughly 71% of state legislators are white, 9% Black, 6% Hispanic and 2% Asian or Hawaiian, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. Legislative chambers continue to remain male-dominated on average. Nationally, around 29% of state lawmakers are women, up from about 25% five years ago.

There are roughly 1,600 millennial and Gen Z individuals serving in state legislatures and in Congress nationwide, and the Millennial Action Project said that number has grown in recent years. Reggie Paros, chief program officer for the nonpartisan organization that supports legislators and members of Congress born after 1980, said younger lawmakers haven't been in the workforce long enough to establish the financial stability needed to make up for a low-paying legislative job.

"That financial barrier is one of the biggest struggles for getting into public office," Paros said.

Political polarization is another potential deterrent for new participants.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 65 of 75

"I think it becomes harder to make an argument for a lot of people that they should put themselves into the political maelstrom at what could come as a considerable cost to their families," said Peverill Squire, professor of political science at the University of Missouri.

His research on how and why legislatures change over time has found a "greater diversity on a range of different dimensions" in recent years. In Oregon, for example, women held the majority of seats in the state's House of Representatives for the first time in 2021.

"But that change," he said, "is perhaps going to be more difficult to achieve in the future if, in fact, the compensation that often gets offered for legislative services is lagging behind what most people during their working years would need to support themselves and their families."

When De la Cruz, a union sheet metal worker, leaves office, he said there will be no employed construction workers serving in the Connecticut General Assembly, never mind anyone who works as a cashier at Walmart or an attendant at a gas station. He contends it's important to have those voices of "laymen" represented at the state Capitol.

"It's a huge concern of mine," de la Cruz said. "Regular folks, like regular working folks, they don't see the value in other working folks up there for them ... They don't understand that my voice ... is about as close to a voice that they're going to have."

Connecticut Rep. Bob Godfrey, a 17-term Democrat from Danbury who has proposed legislation increasing salaries for at least five years, recalled a plumber, manufacturing assembly line worker and a meter reader serving with him in the House during his early days. Godfrey, who relies on his legislative pay and Social Security to pay his bills, said he fears the lack of blue-collar workers "skews policymaking toward the affluent" in Connecticut.

"We don't look like the state," he said.

In New Mexico, a Senate panel this year endorsed a proposed constitutional amendment to provide a salary to legislators who currently collect a daily stipend of approximately \$165 during legislative sessions and for travel. Democratic Sen. Katie Duhigg of Albuquerque argued that a salary would "really expand the universe of people who are able to serve," noting the legislature is "largely the rich and retired." But action on the proposal was postponed indefinitely.

Earlier this year in Alaska, lawmakers rejected a plan that would have raised their annual base salary from \$50,400 to \$64,000. It hasn't been changed since 2010. But the same proposal would have capped their daily \$307 per diem for expenses like food and lodging at \$100 and required receipts for claims. Some legislators complained \$100 wouldn't be enough to cover the cost of living in Juneau, the state's capital, during session.

Sen. Mike Shower, a Republican from Wasilla, Alaska, raised concerns about the ramifications of low pay in a letter to the State Officers Compensation Commission, which proposed the revised salary and per diem plan.

"If there isn't a good compensation package," he wrote, "how do we get decent public servants who aren't wealthy, retired or have the luxury of a spouse with a good enough job to support someone being a legislator?"

Georgia man accused of leaving grandmother in freezer to die

ARMUCHEE, Ga. (AP) — Police say a northwest Georgia man killed his grandmother by stuffing her in a freezer while she was still alive.

Floyd County Police discovered the body of Doris Cumming, 82, late Thursday in the Armuchee home she shared with her grandson, 29-year-old Robert Keith Tincher III.

Tincher was charged with murder, aggravated battery and concealing the death of another. He remains jailed in Rome. It's unclear if he has a lawyer who could comment on his behalf.

Police said Cumming's family believed she had moved out of state, but grew concerned after not hearing from her and reported she might be missing.

Police said they believe that Cumming was injured in a fall in December and that instead of getting

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 66 of 75

her medical attention, Tincher dragged her through home. Criminal charges say Tincher "heard and saw numerous bones break." He then wrapped her in plastic bags and placed her in a large freezer, with the charges saying Tincher "acknowledged her back broke going into the freezer." Charges say there was "no altercation or provocation" leading up to the acts.

"From what we determined, at the time, he believed she was still breathing and had some movement at the time she was going into the freezer," said Floyd County Investigator Brittany Werner told WAGA-TV.

Tincher continued living in the home with the body inside the freezer for months, but moved it to a storage unit in March, fearing Cumming's body might be found.

Werner said Tincher told police he didn't call 911 because he was wanted for arrest because of terroristic threats made in 2018 against his wife.

Tincher also told investigators how much he loved his grandmother.

"He said she was the only family member that gave him the courtesy and love and attention he needed," said Werner.

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation is conducting an autopsy to determine Cumming's cause and time of death.

US Coast Guard searches for man who jumped from cruise ship

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — The U.S. Coast Guard is searching for a man who jumped overboard from a cruise ship early Saturday as it approached Florida.

The man jumped from the Carnival Cruise Lines ship Mardi Gras just after midnight about 55 miles (89 kilometers) east of Port Canaveral, according to the Coast Guard and Carnival.

The Coast Guard responded with two cutters and an airplane to search for the 43-year-old man. The Mardi Gras and the cruise ship Elation also participated in the search, said Coast Guard spokesman David Micallef.

"The Carnival Care Team is supporting the guest's family. Mardi Gras," said Carnival spokesman Matt Lupoli. "Our thoughts and prayers are with the guest and his family."

Lupoli said the Coast Guard released the ship from the search efforts and it continued to Port Canaveral. It will continue sailing as scheduled.

Biden to host Southeast Asian leaders for May 12-13 summit

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden will host leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian nations in Washington next month for a summit, the White House said Saturday.

The May 12-13 gathering is meant to demonstrate the United States' commitment to being a partner with countries in the region.

The White House previously had announced that the summit would be held March 28-29, but the regional grouping of countries known as ASEAN sought a postponement due to scheduling concerns among some of its members.

The summit will commemorate 45 years of relations between the U.S. and the ASEAN nations. The gathering follows Biden's participation in an October 2021 summit where he announced \$102 million in new initiatives to help these countries with COVID-19 and health security, climate change, economic growth and gender equality.

"It is a top priority for the Biden-Harris Administration to serve as a strong, reliable partner in Southeast Asia," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Saturday in a statement. "Our shared aspirations for the region will continue to underpin our common commitment to advance an Indo-Pacific that is free and open, secure, connected, and resilient."

ASEAN's 10 members are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Its members have been at odds with each other over Myanmar, which has been wracked by violent unrest since the army ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February last year.

ASEAN is seeking to implement a five-point plan for Myanmar it reached last year stressing dialogue, humanitarian assistance and an end to violence. But Myanmar's ruling military council has delayed the plan's implementation even as the country has slipped into a situation that some U.N. experts have described as civil war.

Myanmar's lack of cooperation led ASEAN last year to bar its leader, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, from attending its annual summit meeting, an unprecedented step for the body whose members traditionally have avoided public criticism of each other and have operated by consensus.

It has applied a similar policy for subsequent meetings, saying that it would allow Myanmar to send only non-political representatives.

Biden hosted Singapore's prime minister, Lee Hsien Loong, for talks last month in which the president tried to assure Singapore and other Pacific allies that the administration remains focused on the region even while working with Europe and other allies to end Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

6 arrested in UK after oil tanker climate protest

LONDON (AP) — Six people have been arrested after climate change activists climbed onto an oil tanker in central London to protest investments in fossil fuel, British police said Saturday.

The Extinction Rebellion climate activism group said two Olympic athletes — gold medal-winning canoeist Etienne Stott and Laura Baldwin — were among those protesting Friday. The oil tanker protest was part of mass climate demonstrations Friday that saw hundreds of activists blocking four key bridges across the British capital, causing delays and disruption across central London.

Extinction Rebellion said thousands of people are expected at London's Hyde Park on Saturday for more protests.

More than 600 people have been arrested over the past two weeks after environmental activists climbed atop oil tankers, padlocked themselves to structures and blocked roads at oil depots across the U.K. The group Just Stop Oil, which is affiliated with Extinction Rebellion, is demanding that Britain's Conservative government stop any new oil and gas projects.

The demonstrations are part of a growing climate action movement that has also seen the group Insulate Britain obstruct highways and roads to press its demands that the government fund more energy-efficient homes. The demands have become more urgent as energy prices are skyrocketing in the U.K. and elsewhere.

A spokesperson for Shell said the company respects "the right of everyone to express their point of view — we only ask that they do so with their safety and the safety of others in mind."

"We agree that society needs to take urgent action on climate change. Shell has a clear target to become a net-zero emissions business by 2050, in step with society," the spokesperson said.

Meanwhile, police in central England said nine people were charged after Just Stop Oil held a demonstration Friday at an oil terminal in Kingsbury, near the city of Birmingham.

Ex-WNBA guard pleads not guilty to strangling former partner

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Former WNBA player Shoni Schimmel was arrested Friday and pleaded not guilty to assaulting a former partner on the Umatilla Indian Reservation in northeastern Oregon.

Schimmel, 29, has been charged with assault by strangulation of an intimate dating partner and assault resulting in substantial bodily injury, The Oregonian/OregonLive reported.

The incident allegedly happened June 13, 2021. Schimmel was first arrested on June 14 last year and was held in the Umatilla County jail on charges including felony assault and criminal mischief.

Schimmel was arrested by federal authorities Friday and pleaded not guilty to the charges at an initial

appearance in federal court.

Schimmel was released pending a two-day jury trial scheduled to begin in June.

If convicted, Schimmel could be facing a maximum sentence of 15 years in federal prison, three years' supervised release and a \$250,000 fine.

The case was investigated by the FBI and the Umatilla Tribal Police Department.

Schimmel averaged 6.6 points per game after being drafted eighth overall draft by the Atlanta Dream in 2014. She played two seasons there with All-Star game appearances both years, including being named Most Valuable Player as a rookie, before being traded to the New York Liberty in 2016. Schimmel also played two games in 2018 with the Las Vegas Aces.

Schimmel also was an Associated Press second team All-American selection in 2013-14. As a junior she helped Louisville reach the 2013 NCAA women's basketball championship game before the team fell to UConn.

Police stops of Black people often filled with fear, anxiety

By COREY WILLIAMS and AARON MORRISON Associated Press

The video seems clear: Patrick Lyoya disobeyed an officer during a traffic stop, tried to run, then wrestled with the officer over his Taser before the officer fatally shot him in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

For a number of Black men and women, resisting arrest during encounters with police for minor traffic stops have been deadly. Experts say anxiety levels of the people stopped and even the officers involved can be high, adding to the tension.

George Floyd's 2020 slaying by Minneapolis police Officer Derek Chauvin, the 2014 strangulation death of Eric Garner by a New York City officer and the shooting death of Michael Brown that same year by an officer in Ferguson, Missouri, are among high-profile encounters that proved deadly for Black men.

A store employee called police, saying Floyd allegedly tried to pass a counterfeit \$20 bill. Police stopped Garner on suspicion of selling untaxed cigarettes. An officer confronted Brown and a companion as they walked to Brown's home from a convenience store. Brown was shot after scuffling with the officer. All three men were unarmed.

"Because of the way police are commonly portrayed, there can be anxiety for young men of color when they are pulled over," said Jason Johnson, president of the Law Enforcement Legal Defense Fund. "Am I going to get a ticket? Am I going to get arrested?" They may believe they are going to be a victim of abuse. Many times they enter into these interactions thinking they are going to be a victim of brutality."

In 2015, a white police officer in Columbia, South Carolina, pulled over Walter Scott, a 50-year-old Black man, for a broken brake light. A bystander's video captured the two tumbling to the ground after the officer hit Scott with a Taser. The officer then shot Scott as he tried to run.

In Lyoya's case, some — including his family and their high-profile attorney, Ben Crump — have said the 26-year-old Congolese refugee was slain for having a license plate that did not belong to the vehicle. While that's why the officer stopped Lyoya, Johnson said, that's not why Lyoya was killed.

"It's one of the disconnects or misunderstandings between the police and the public," Johnson said. "If you look a little bit deeper, that's not what happened. (Lyoya) had a number of opportunities to comply with the officer's directions. This use of deadly force had nothing to do with a traffic violation and everything to do with (Lyoya) actively resisting arrest."

Lyoya's actions led "down the path that ultimately ended in deadly force," Johnson added.

Grand Rapids police on Wednesday released video of the April 4 stop, including from the officer's vehicle and body camera, from a bystander's cellphone and from a doorbell camera. The videos show the brief foot chase and a struggle as the white officer repeatedly tells Lyoya to stop. At one point, Lyoya has his hand on the officer's stun gun, and the officer yells at him to let go.

The struggle ended when the officer shot Lyoya in the head as Lyoya was facedown, with the officer straddling him.

Scott Roberts, senior director of criminal justice and democracy campaigns at Color of Change, a na-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 69 of 75

tional racial justice organization, said officers are often fearful given the dangers involved with making stops. But that doesn't negate that Black motorists suffer for showing or expressing their justified fears in traffic stops, he said.

"Looking at police culture, there is just this pushback on the notion that policing is rooted in white supremacy and has been a tool of white supremacy," Roberts said. "And so there is a kind of denial of why Black people would have that fear. You've already criminalized the person when you're making a pre-textual stop. Your assumption is going to be that this is only a confirmation of their guilt, that fear."

Roberts added that these dynamics have increasingly led cities, prosecutors and police to enact policies that deemphasize or end stops for minor infractions.

Skin color and experiences could skew how all parties interpret interactions and confrontations between Black Americans and white officers, said Paul Bergman, professor emeritus of law at UCLA.

"Cultural narratives may lead white officers as well as Black officers to anticipate trouble when the person they are stopping is Black," he said.

In Lyoya's case, "was he more likely to be pulled over because he was Black?" Bergman asked. "If he wasn't Black, would this be more of a minor infraction and would the police officer think he had better things to do?"

The situation escalated when Lyoya didn't produce a driver's license and tried to run. That likely raised the officer's suspicions, Bergman said.

But Lyoya also might have believed his best option was to flee, he said.

"Maybe he's thinking to just escape a situation that's threatening," Bergman added. "Lawfully, you're expected to comply with lawful demands. The place to argue if you think it's unlawful is later. We're expected to fight those arguments out in courts and not in the street."

Amara Enyia, policy and research manager for the Movement for Black Lives, a coalition of more than 150 Black-led organizations, said the fear that Black motorists feel is rooted in generations of adversarial relations with police.

When stops for license plates, broken taillights or improper lane changes turn into violent arrests or fatal encounters, departments turn to old solutions, such as anti-bias training, that have failed to make a difference, Enyia said.

"You just have to wonder how many billions and billions of dollars does it take to train that kind of bias out of someone," she said. "Instead of making structural changes to the entire system, you have to rely on the benevolence, goodwill or altruism of a police officer to stay alive in what is otherwise a routine traffic stop."

'Magic mushrooms' for therapy? Vets help sway conservatives

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Matthew Butler spent 27 years in the Army, but it took a day in jail to convince him his post-traumatic stress disorder was out of control.

The recently retired Green Beret had already tried antidepressants, therapy and a support dog. But his arrest for punching a hole in his father's wall after his family tried to stage an intervention in Utah made it clear none of it was working.

"I had a nice house, I had a great job, whatever, but I was unable to sleep, had frequent nightmares, crippling anxiety, avoiding crowds," he said. "My life was a wreck."

He eventually found psychedelic drugs, and he says they changed his life. "I was able to finally step way back and go, 'Oh, I see what's going on here. I get it now,'" said Butler, now 52. Today his run-ins with police have ended, he's happily married and reconciled with his parents.

Butler, who lives in the Salt Lake City suburbs, is among military veterans in several U.S. states helping to persuade lawmakers to study psychedelic mushrooms for therapeutic use.

Conservative Utah has become at least the fourth state over the last two years to approve studying the potential medical use of psychedelics, which are still federally illegal. A string of cities have also decriminal-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 70 of 75

ized so-called magic mushrooms and an explosion of investment money is flowing into the arena.

Experts say the research is promising for treating conditions ranging from PTSD to quitting smoking, but caution some serious risks remain, especially for those with certain mental health conditions.

Oregon is so far the only state to legalize the therapeutic use of psilocybin, the psychedelic active ingredient in certain mushrooms. But studying them for therapy has made inroads not only in blue states like Hawaii, Connecticut and Maryland, but also GOP-led Texas, Utah and Oklahoma, which passed a study bill through the state House this year.

The progress stands in contrast to medical marijuana, which Utah lawmakers refused to allow until a ballot measure helped push it through. However, the proposal to study a broad range of psychedelic drugs passed easily this year.

Texas has yet to legalize medical marijuana, but former Republican Gov. Rick Perry helped shepherd through a bill last year to use \$1.4 million to fund a study of psilocybin for treating PTSD.

"The stigma attached to psilocybin and most psychedelics dates back to the 60s and 70s. It's been very hard for them to overcome," said Democratic Rep. Alex Dominguez, who sponsored the bill. "My approach was, 'Let's find the group that all sides claim that they are supportive of.' And that would be veterans."

He also heard from conservatives like Perry who support the use of psilocybin to treat PTSD — and let advocates from that end of the political spectrum take the lead publicly.

Maryland also gave bipartisan approval to spending \$1 million this year to fund alternative therapies for veterans, including psychedelics. Democratic sponsor Sen. Sarah Elfreth, whose district includes the U.S. Naval Academy, noted the spike in suicides among veterans.

"I don't envision the VA acting anytime soon," she said. "We're at a true crisis level and it's time for the states to step up."

Psilocybin has been decriminalized in nearby Washington, D.C., as well as Denver, which decriminalized it in 2019, followed by Oakland and Santa Cruz in California, Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

There's also plenty of venture capital being invested from people who have had positive experiences and are "highly motivated" to invest in psychedelics as treatment, said John Krystal, the chair of psychiatry at Yale University.

Rhode Island lawmakers are weighing a proposal to decriminalize psilocybin this year, and in Colorado there's an effort to get statewide decriminalization on the ballot. But similar measures have stalled in Statehouses elsewhere, including California and Maine.

Studying psychedelics, though, has gained more traction. In Oklahoma, a bill from Republican Reps. Daniel Pae and Logan Phillips would legalize research on psilocybin.

"I believe the research will show that there is a way to use this drug safely and responsibly, and it could save the lives of thousands of Oklahomans," Pae said in a statement. The bill passed the House last month and is now under consideration in the Senate.

It's a stunning turnaround for a field that captivated researchers in the 1950s and 1960s, before mushrooms and LSD became known as recreational drugs. They were federally outlawed during the Nixon administration, sending research to a screeching halt.

New studies, though, have indicated psilocybin could be useful in the treatment of everything from major depression to alcoholism, said Ben Lewis, an assistant professor of psychiatry at the University of Utah Huntsman Mental Health Institute.

"People are referring to this current period of time as the psychedelic Renaissance," he said. Up to 30% of depression sufferers are considered resistant to current treatment, and there have been few recent leaps forward in drug innovation, he added.

The risk of addiction or overdose is considered low with psychedelics, especially under medical supervision, and while some cardiac conditions can present a physical risk, many people's physical reactions aren't dangerous.

But there are serious psychological risks, especially for people with certain forms of mental illness or a

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 71 of 75

family history of conditions like schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

"Then there's a possibility that a high-dose psychedelic experience could sort of trigger that and lead to long-lasting mental health issues," said Albert Garcia-Romeu, an assistant professor at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

Classic psychedelics include LSD, mescaline, psilocybin and ayahuasca. Plant-based psychedelics have long been used in indigenous cultures around the world.

Today, their therapeutic use at Johns Hopkins is carefully monitored, Garcia-Romeu said. Patients are rigorously screened and typically have at least three appointments: one for preparation, a second to take the drugs and a third to work through the psychedelic experience.

For Butler, the 2018 arrest at his parents' home was a turning point. He started researching new ways to deal with the PTSD he has suffered since deploying six times to Iraq and Afghanistan and working in counterterrorism and hostage rescues in Somalia for the U.S. Special Forces before retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 2017.

Eventually he came across ayahuasca, long a part of traditional cultures in South America. Last summer, he took part in a ceremony involving the psychoactive brew, overseen by a woman knowledgeable about its effects. She talked to him as the experience took hold, including a feeling of euphoria, the sight of geometric shapes and a sense he was entering his subconscious.

She spoke to him about his childhood and how the military had shaped his life.

"It really was as simple as having an experienced person who understood the medicine, who understood that subconscious space and understood PTSD. It was as simple as listening to her," he said.

He credits that single session with getting his PTSD about 80% under control, though he occasionally does another if he finds his symptoms returning.

About two-thirds to three-quarters of people in studies have experienced significant improvements in their symptoms, Garcia-Romeu said. Those are promising results, especially for quitting smoking, where current treatments only work for about one-third of people, he said.

The Food and Drug Administration designated psilocybin a "breakthrough therapy" in 2018, a label that's designed to speed the development and review of drugs to treat a serious condition. MDMA, often called ecstasy, also has that designation for treatment of PTSD.

How quickly states move from study to wider availability remains to be seen. Connecticut recommended legal medical use only after psilocybin is approved by the FDA, which may take until 2025 or later as the agency works through its process, including risk assessment.

Approval is important to safety as well as access, the Connecticut assessment said — without it, many insurance companies likely wouldn't cover the treatment, leaving it open only to the wealthy.

In Utah, the study team is expected to complete its work in the fall.

"We'll see what can and can't be done," said Republican Rep. Brady Brammer, who sponsored the bill. "If if they feel like it's safe, it'll be an interesting ride."

North Korea's Kim attends parade honoring grandfather

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un attended a massive civilian parade in the capital, Pyongyang, celebrating a milestone birth anniversary of his state-founding grandfather in which thousands marched in a choreographed display of loyalty to the Kim family, state media said Saturday.

The reports didn't mention any speech or comments made by Kim during Friday's event and it appeared the country passed its biggest holiday without showcasing its military hardware, amid heightened tensions over its nuclear program.

Commercial satellite images in recent weeks have indicated preparations for a large military parade in Pyongyang, which could take place on the April 25 founding anniversary of North Korea's army and display the most advanced weapons in Kim's nuclear arsenal, such as intercontinental ballistic missiles.

There's also expectation that Pyongyang will further escalate its weapons testing in the coming weeks or months, possibly including a resumption of nuclear explosive tests or test-flying missiles over Japan, as

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 72 of 75

it attempts to force a response from the Biden administration while it's preoccupied with Russia's invasion of Ukraine and a rivalry with China.

State media images showed Kim waving from a balcony looking over Kim Il Sung Square, which is named after his grandfather, as huge columns of people carrying red plastic flowers and floats with political slogans marched below.

Ri Il Hwan, a member of the ruling Workers' Party Politburo, issued a call for loyalty, saying in a speech that North Koreans will "always emerge victorious" under Kim's guidance. It appeared Kim didn't deliver a speech and state media didn't mention any comments regarding the United States or rival South Korea.

The parade came hours before thousands of young people performed a mass dance in the square as fireworks launched from a nearby riverbank lit up the night sky.

Kim Il Sung's birthday is the most important national holiday in North Korea, where the Kim family has ruled under a strong personality cult since the nation's founding in 1948. This week's celebrations marking the 110th anniversary of his birth came as his grandson revives nuclear brinkmanship aimed at forcing the United States to accept the idea of North Korea as a nuclear power and remove crippling economic sanctions.

North Korea has opened 2022 with a slew of weapons tests, including its first flight test of an ICBM since 2017. South Korea's military has also detected signs that North Korea is rebuilding tunnels at a nuclear testing ground it partially dismantled weeks before Kim's first summit with then-U.S. President Donald Trump in June 2018.

Kim Jong Un's defiant displays of his military might are also likely motivated by domestic politics, experts say, as he doesn't otherwise have significant accomplishments to trumpet to his people after a decade in power.

His stated goals of simultaneously developing nuclear weapons and bringing economic prosperity to his impoverished populace derailed after the collapse of his second summit with Trump in 2019, when the Americans rejected North Korea's demands for major sanctions relief in exchange for a limited surrender of its nuclear capabilities. The COVID-19 pandemic unleashed further shock on his broken economy, forcing him to acknowledge last year that the North was facing its "worst-ever situation."

Sung Kim, the top U.S. official on North Korea, is scheduled to visit South Korea next week for talks on the international community's response to the North's recent missile tests.

North Korea has recently resumed its trademark harsh rhetoric against its rivals. One of its international affairs commentators labeled U.S. President Joe Biden as "an old man in senility," while Kim's powerful sister, Kim Yo Jong, called South Korea's defense minister "a scum-like guy" and threatened to annihilate South Korea with nuclear strikes.

"Kim Jong Un's stated goal of deploying tactical nuclear weapons, Kim Yo Jong's recent threats toward Seoul and satellite imagery of tunneling activity at Punggye-ri all point to an upcoming nuclear test," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor of international studies at Ewha Womans University in Seoul. "Additional missile launches are also expected for honing weapons delivery systems."

1 dead, 7 injured in explosion aboard tanker off Hong Kong

HONG KONG (AP) — One person was killed and seven others injured Saturday in an explosion aboard an oil tanker in waters off Hong Kong, authorities reported.

The Hong Kong Maritime Rescue Coordination Center said the tanker was 300 kilometers (186 miles) east of Hong Kong when it caught fire as a result of an explosion. The fire was extinguished, according to state-run Radio Television Hong Kong.

The Government Flying Service sent a fixed-wing aircraft and two helicopters with doctors aboard to the Panama-registered Chuang Yi vessel to transport the injured to a hospital in the city. One crew member was reported to have died and four others were in serious condition, RTHK reported.

The cause of the explosion was not immediately clear.

The casualties reportedly included crew members from Indonesia and Myanmar.

According to ship tracking apps, the 5,500-ton oil and chemical tanker was on its way to Taiwan. The

120-meter (393-foot) long tanker is 22 years old.

US Army using lessons from Ukraine war to aid own training

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

FORT IRWIN, Calif. (AP) — In the dusty California desert, U.S. Army trainers are already using lessons learned from Russia's war against Ukraine as they prepare soldiers for future fights against a major adversary such as Russia or China.

The role-players in this month's exercise at the National Training Center speak Russian. The enemy force that controls the fictional town of Ujen is using a steady stream of social media posts to make false accusations against the American brigade preparing to attack.

In the coming weeks, the planned training scenario for the next brigade coming in will focus on how to battle an enemy willing to destroy a city with rocket and missile fire in order to conquer it.

If the images seem familiar, they are, playing out on televisions and websites worldwide right now as Russian forces pound Ukrainian cities with airstrikes, killing scores of civilians. The information war on social media has showcased impassioned nightly speeches by Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, as well as Russian efforts to accuse Ukraine's forces of faking mass killings in towns such as Bucha — massacres that the West blames on Moscow's troops.

"I think right now the whole Army is really looking at what's happening in Ukraine and trying to learn lessons," said Army Secretary Christine Wormuth. Those lessons, she said, range from Russia's equipment and logistics troubles to communications and use of the internet.

"The Russia-Ukraine experience is a very powerful illustration for our Army of how important the information domain is going to be," said Wormuth, who spent two days at the training center in the Mojave Desert watching an Army brigade wage war against the fictional "Denovian" forces.

"We've been talking about that for about five years. But really seeing it and seeing the way Zelenskyy has been incredibly powerful. ... This is a world war that the actual world can see and watch in real time."

At the center, the commander, Brig. Gen. Curt Taylor, and his staff have ripped pages out of the Russian playbook to ensure that U.S. soldiers are ready to fight and win against a sophisticated near-peer enemy.

It's a common tool. For example, his base and the Joint Readiness Training Center in Louisiana both shifted to counterinsurgency training during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. And the military services have focused other training on how to fight in cold weather — mimicking conditions in Russia or North Korea. But these latest changes have happened quickly in the early months after Russia invaded Ukraine.

About 4,500 soldiers from 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, based at Fort Hood, Texas, are out in the vast desert training area at Fort Irwin, where they will spend two weeks fighting the NTC's resident 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, which acts as the enemy military. Soldiers from the regiment — known as Blackhorse — are arrayed in and around Ujen, which also includes role-players acting as the locals.

As the sun was rising earlier this past week, Army Col. Ian Palmer, the brigade commander, stood on Crash Hill, on the outskirts of the town, preparing his soldiers to launch an attack. Lines of tanks spread out in the distance. Heavy winds the night before hampered his progress, so the attack was a bit behind.

He said the exercise is using more drones by the friendly and enemy forces, both for surveillance and attacks. So his forces are trying to use camouflage and tuck into the terrain to stay out of sight. "You know if you can be seen, you can be shot, where ever you are," he said.

Down in the makeshift town, the opposition forces are confident they can hold off Palmer's brigade despite the size difference. The Denovians only have about 1,350 forces, but they are throwing everything they have at the brigade, from jamming and other electronic warfare to insurgency attacks and propaganda.

The role-players have their phones ready to film and post quickly to social media.

The Denovian forces want to portray the unit in the worst possible light, said Taylor, and constantly twist the narrative on social media so Palmer's troops realize they are in a battle for the truth.

That's a challenge, he said, because "when I've got a bunch of casualties and I'm getting overrun on my left flank and my supply trains aren't where they need to be and I can't find the bulldozers, it's hard

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 74 of 75

to think about something that someone said about me on Twitter.”

The training goal, said Taylor, is teaching the brigades that come in how to fuse all elements of their combat power into a coordinated assault.

“Everyone can play an instrument, but it’s about making music — bringing it all together in a synchronized fashion. And what you saw today was the artillery was doing the artillery thing, the aviation was doing the aviation thing and the maneuver guys were doing the maneuver thing. But part of the delay in their assault on the town was they couldn’t synchronize those three,” he said.

Again, they can look to Ukraine to see how Russia failed to do that in the early weeks of the war. U.S. leaders repeatedly noted that in Russia’s initial multipronged assault in Ukraine, commanders consistently failed to provide the airstrikes and support their ground troops needed to move into key cities such as Kyiv.

That failure led to Russian troops bombing the cities from the outskirts, hitting hospitals, apartment buildings and other structures, and killing civilians.

So when the next brigade arrives at the training center, Taylor said it will face an enemy on board with doing just that.

“We will be very focused on how to fight against an adversary that is willing to destroy infrastructure because that’s how we think our adversaries will fight,” Taylor said. “We’ve got to be prepared for urban combat where we have an adversary that is indiscriminately firing artillery.”

Wormuth, the Army secretary, said seeing the training also underscored other lessons the U.S. is taking from the war in Ukraine.

“As we’re watching what’s happening to the Russians now, it’s informative for us to think about what is right, from a modernization standpoint,” she said, noting that some U.S. tanks are very heavy and the terrain in Europe is muddier, not like the hard-packed sand of the desert.

The Army, she said, has to determine “what’s the right balance between the mobility of a tank, the survivability of a tank and the lethality of a tank? If you want to make it more mobile, you make it lighter, but that makes it less survivable. And so you have to decide where you’re going to take risks.”

Today in History: April 17, Bay of Pigs invasion

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, April 17, the 107th day of 2022. There are 258 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On April 17, 1961, some 1,500 CIA-trained Cuban exiles launched the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in an attempt to topple Fidel Castro, whose forces crushed the incursion by the third day.

On this date:

In 1521, Martin Luther went before the Diet of Worms (vohrms) to face charges stemming from his religious writings. (Luther was later declared an outlaw by Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.)

In 1961, “The Apartment” won the Academy Award for best picture of 1960; Burt Lancaster was named best actor for “Elmer Gantry,” while the best actress award went to Elizabeth Taylor for “Butterfield 8.”

In 1964, Ford Motor Co. unveiled the Mustang at the New York World’s Fair.

In 1969, a jury in Los Angeles convicted Sirhan Sirhan of assassinating Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

In 1970, Apollo 13 astronauts James A. Lovell, Fred W. Haise and Jack Swigert splashed down safely in the Pacific, four days after a ruptured oxygen tank crippled their spacecraft while en route to the moon.

In 1972, the Boston Marathon allowed women to compete for the first time; Nina Kuscsik was the first officially recognized women’s champion, with a time of 3:10:26.

In 1973, Federal Express (later FedEx) began operations as 14 planes carrying 186 packages took off from Memphis International Airport, bound for 25 U.S. cities.

In 1975, Cambodia’s five-year war ended as the capital Phnom Penh fell to the Khmer Rouge, which instituted brutal, radical policies that claimed an estimated 1.7 million lives until the regime was overthrown

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, April 17, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 284 ~ 75 of 75

in 1979.

In 1986, at London's Heathrow Airport, a bomb was discovered in the bag of Anne-Marie Murphy, a pregnant Irishwoman about to board an El Al jetliner to Israel; she'd been tricked into carrying the bomb by her Jordanian fiance, Nezar Hindawi. The bodies of kidnapped American Peter Kilburn and Britons Philip Padfield and Leigh Douglas were found near Beirut; they had been slain in apparent retaliation for the U.S. raid on Libya.

In 1991, the Dow Jones industrial average closed above 3,000 for the first time, ending the day at 3,004.46, up 17.58.

In 1993, a federal jury in Los Angeles convicted two former police officers of violating the civil rights of beaten motorist Rodney King; two other officers were acquitted. Turkish President Turgut Ozal died at age 66.

In 2020, President Donald Trump urged supporters to "LIBERATE" three states led by Democratic governors, apparently encouraging protests against stay-at-home mandates aimed at stopping the coronavirus. Washington Democratic Gov. Jay Inslee accused Trump of "fomenting domestic rebellion and spreading lies."

Ten years ago: Riding on the back of a 747 jet, retired space shuttle Discovery traveled from Cape Canaveral, Florida, to Chantilly, Virginia, to be installed in its new home: the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum annex near Washington Dulles Airport in Northern Virginia. Jamie Moyer, at age 49, became the oldest pitcher ever to win a major league contest as the Colorado Rockies beat the San Diego Padres 5-3.

Five years ago: Opening his first White House Easter Egg Roll, President Donald Trump extolled the strength of America as thousands of kids, and some adults, reveled in the time-honored tradition of rolling hard-boiled eggs across the manicured lawn. Kenyans ruled the Boston Marathon, with Geoffrey Kirui and Edna Kiplagat winning the race in their debuts.

One year ago: The global death toll from the coronavirus topped 3 million people, according to Johns Hopkins University, amid repeated setbacks in the worldwide vaccination campaign and a deepening crisis in places such as Brazil, India and France. Britain's Prince Philip was laid to rest in a funeral ceremony at Windsor Castle that honored his lifetime of service; his wife of 73 years, Queen Elizabeth II, sat alone at the ceremony, setting an example amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Today's Birthdays: Actor David Bradley is 80. Composer-musician Jan Hammer (yahn HAH'-mur) is 74. Actor Olivia Hussey is 71. Actor Clarke Peters is 70. Rapper Afrika Bambaataa is 65. Actor Sean Bean is 63. Former NFL quarterback Boomer Esiason (eh-SY'-uh-suhn) is 61. Actor Joel Murray is 60. Rock singer Maynard James Keenan is 58. Actor Lela Rochon (LEE'-lah rohn-SHAHN') is 58. Actor William Mapother is 57. Actor Leslie Bega is 55. Actor Henry Ian Cusick is 55. Actor Kimberly Elise is 55. Singer Liz Phair is 55. Director/producer Adam McKay is 54. Rapper-actor Redman is 52. Actor Jennifer Garner is 50. Singer Victoria Beckham is 48. Actor-singer Lindsay Korman is 44. Actor Tate Ellington is 43. Actor Nicholas D'Agosto is 42. Actor Charlie Hofheimer is 41. Actor Rooney Mara is 37. Actor Jacqueline MacInnes Wood is 35. Actor Paulie Litt is 27. Actor Dee Dee Davis is 26.