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

-Kate McGahan

Chicken Soup
for the Soul

Sunday, April 24

Princess Prom 4:30-8pm

Emmanuel: 9 a.m. Worship, 10:15 a.m. Sunday school, 10:15 a.m. Grace Alone Study, 7 p.m. Choir
St. John's: 8 a.m. Bible Study, Worship 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.

Monday, April 25

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

School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

Junior High Track Meet at Britton, 3:30 p.m.

Noon: Senior Citizens potluck meeting at Groton Community Center

School Breakfast: Eggs and breakfast potatoes.

School Lunch: Hamburgers, tiny whole potatoes.

Senior Menu: Swiss steak with mushroom gravy, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, pears, whole wheat bread.

Tuesday, April 26

State FFA Convention at SDSU

11:30 a.m.: Track Meet in Groton (Aberdeen Central, Aberdeen Christian, Aberdeen Roncalli, Britton-Hecla, Frederick, Griggs-Midkota, Ipswich, James Valley Christian, Langford, Milbank, Miller, Sisseton, Tiospa Zina, Tri-State, Wagner Community, Warner @ Groton Area High School)

School Breakfast: Doughnuts.

School Lunch: Popcorn chicken, tater tots.

Senior Menu: Lemon chicken breast, creamy noodles, spinach salad, baked apple slices, whole wheat bread.

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.uslbn.com/careers and search for jobs in Britton, SD.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

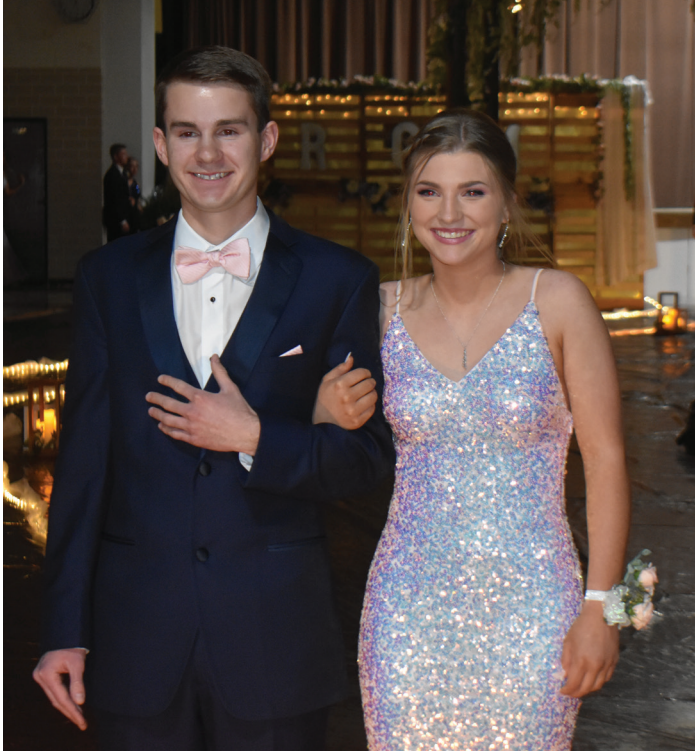
Groton Daily Independent
PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445
Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460

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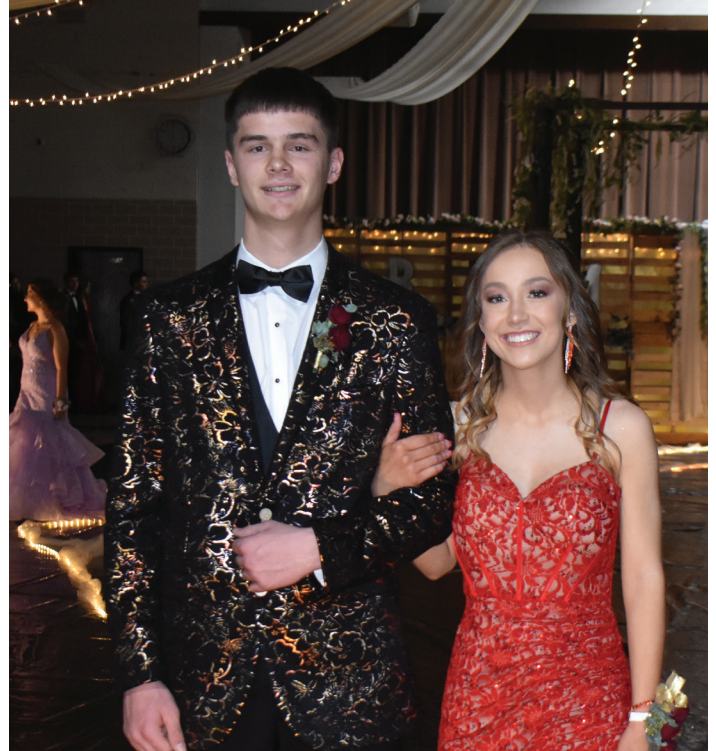
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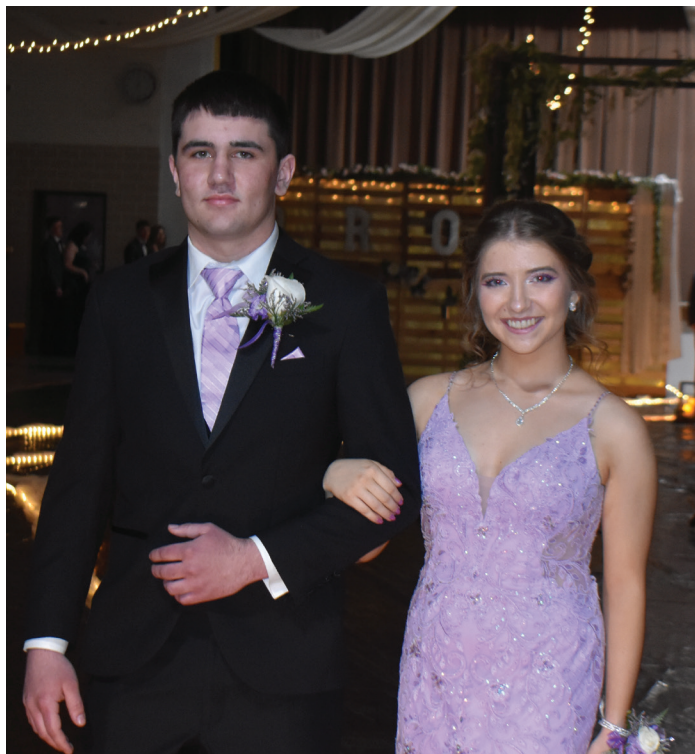
2022 GHS Prom



Junior Class President Jacob Lewandowski escorting Carly Guthmiller



Senior Class President Alyssa Thaler escorted by Tate Larson



Cole Bisbee escorting Shaylee Peterson



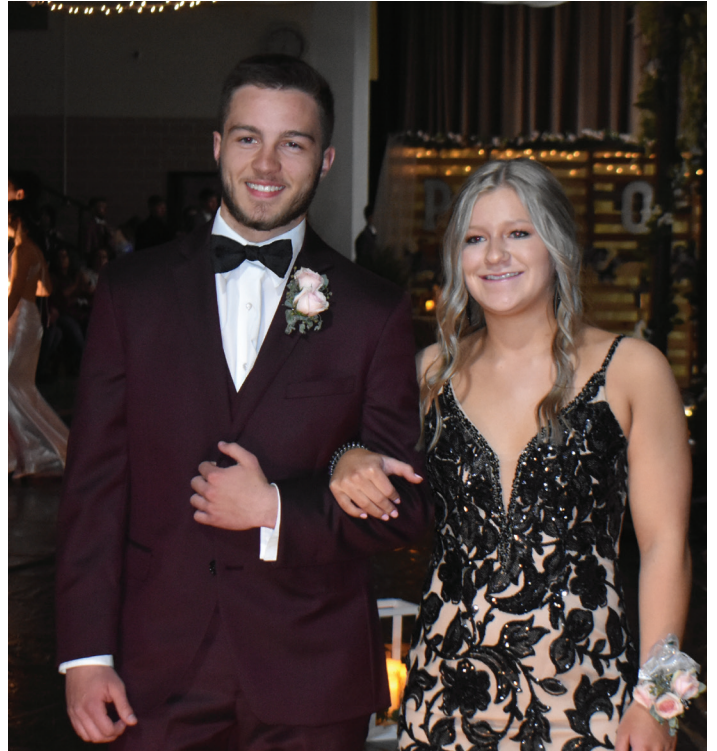
Colby Dunker escorting Aspen Johnson

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Ryder Daly escorting Jillian Kiefer



Jackson Cogley escorting Brooke Gengerke



Carter Barse escorting Ashtyn Bahr



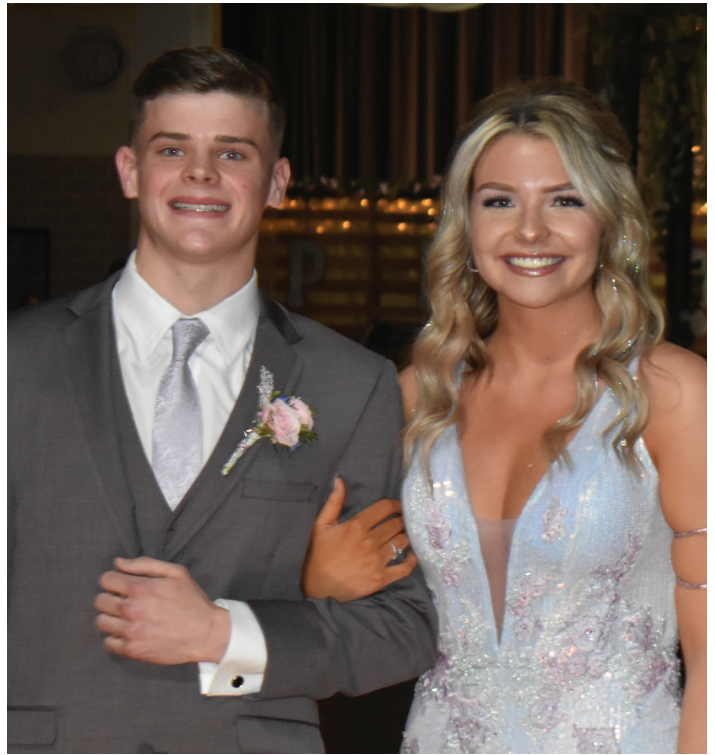
Lane Krueger escorting Maddie Sumption

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Jordan Bjerke escorting Alexa Herr



Wyatt Hearnen escorting Madeline Flihs



**Kaleb Antonsen escorting
Shallyn Foertsch**



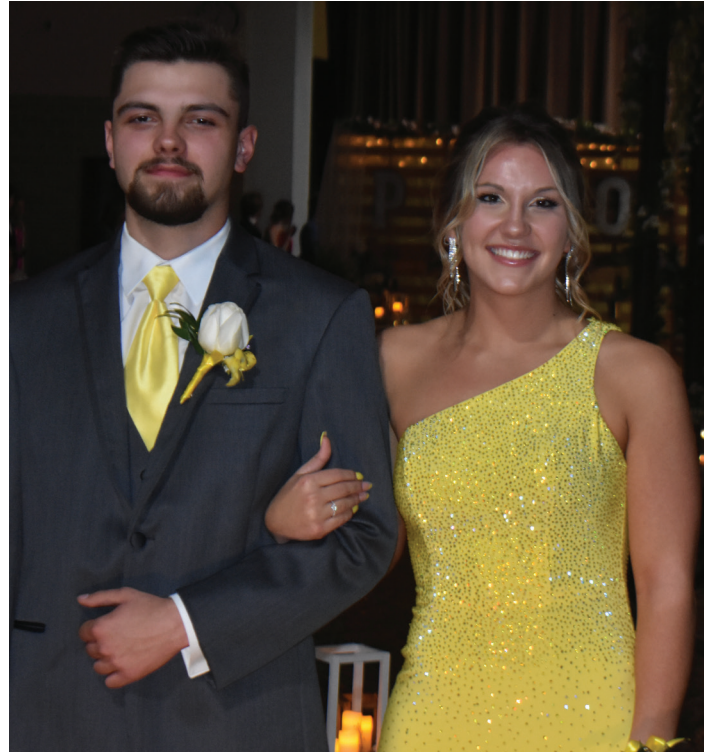
Cole Simon escorting Sydney Leicht

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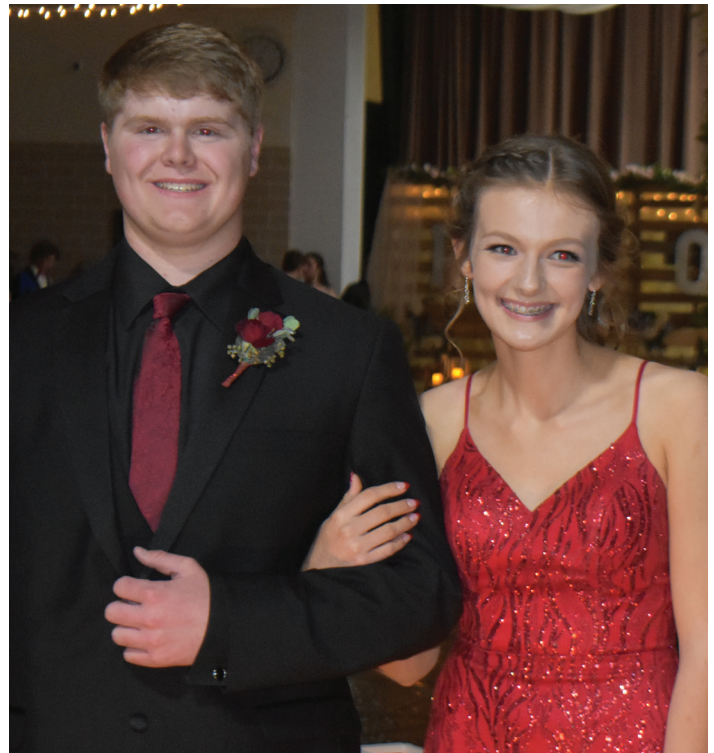
Dillon Abeln escorting Ellie Weismantel



Trista Keith escorted by Logan Nagel



Ethan Gengerke escorting Emma Schinkel



Caleb Hanten escorting Anna Fjeldheim

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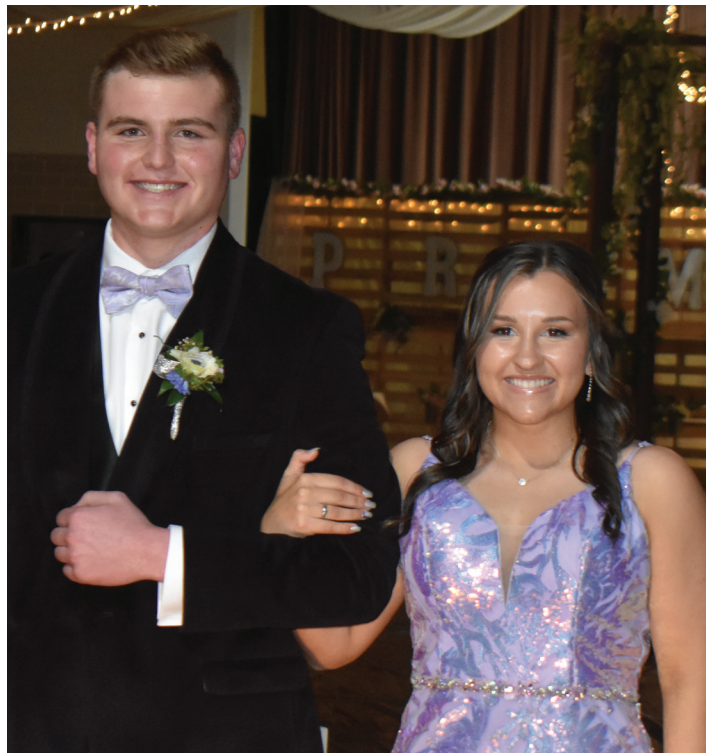
Holden Sippel escorting Madisen Bjerke



Marlee Tollifson escorted by Payton Mitchell



Seth Johnson escorting Megan Flihs



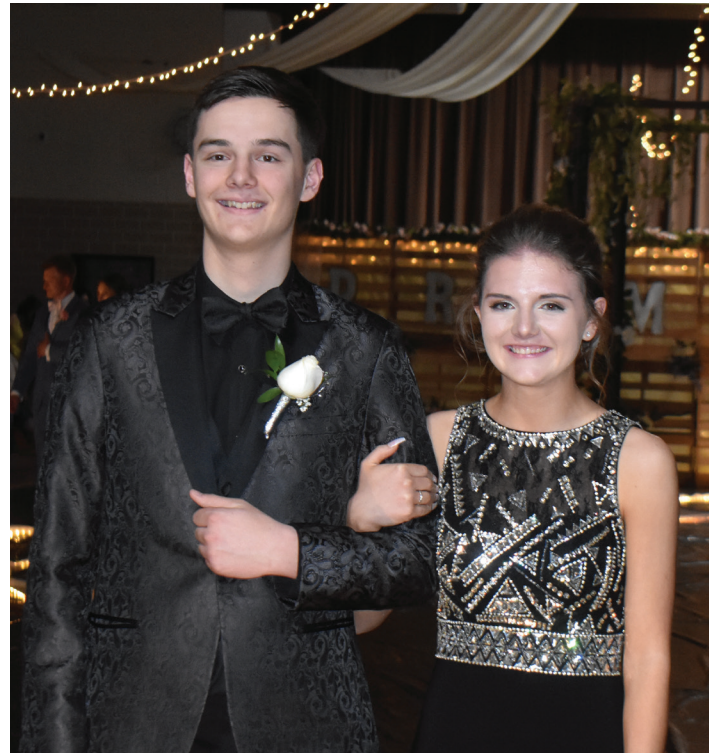
Logan Ringgenberg escorting Allyssa Locke

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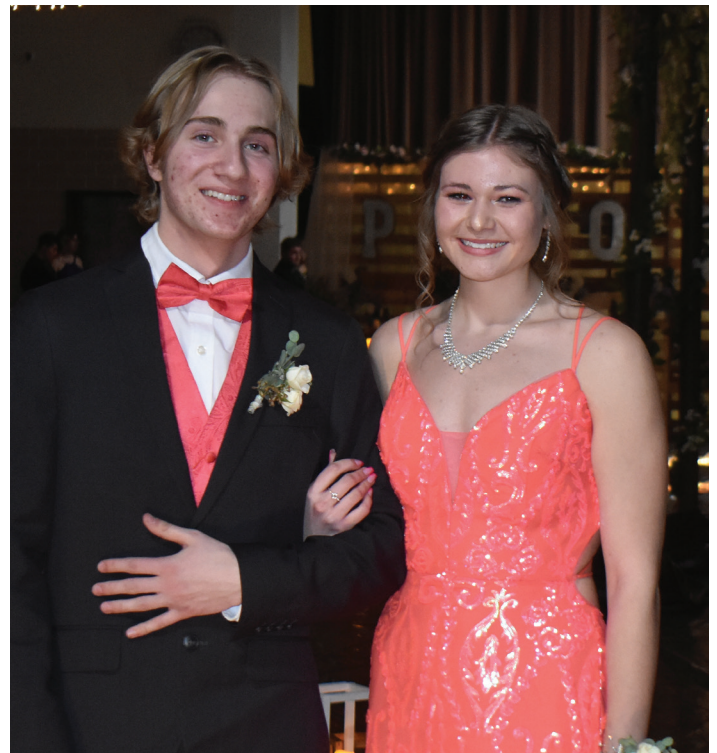
Tristan Leidholt escorting Trinity Smith



Cade Larson escorting Brooklinn Halvorson



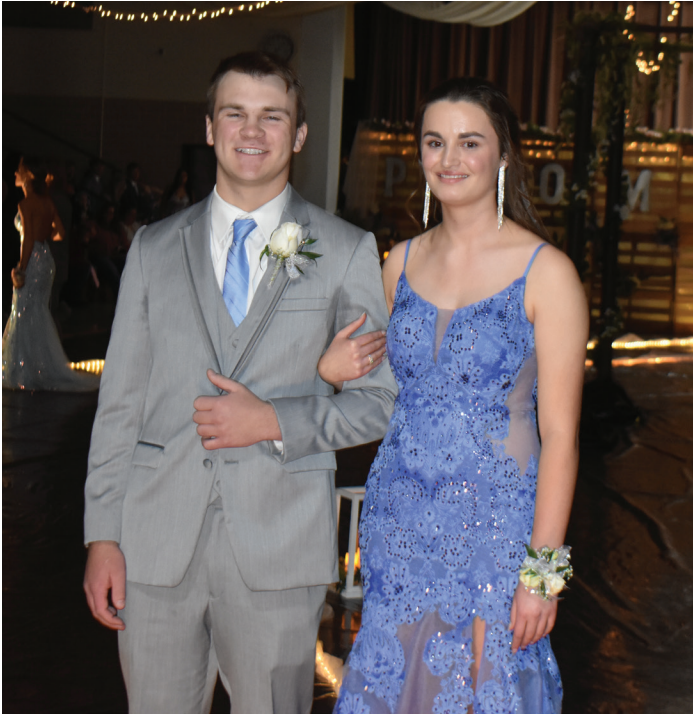
Andrew Marzahn escorting Faith Traphagen



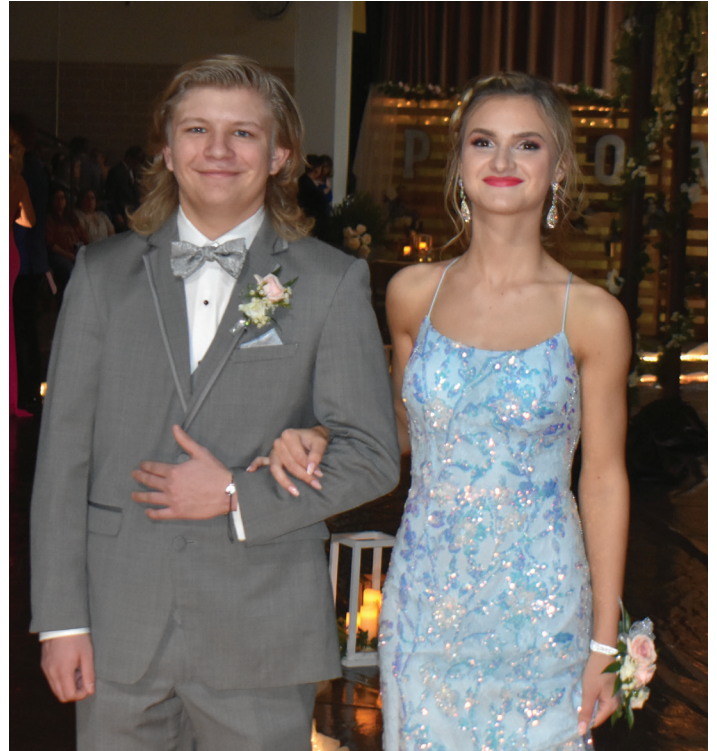
Julianna Kosel escorted by Isaac Hubsch

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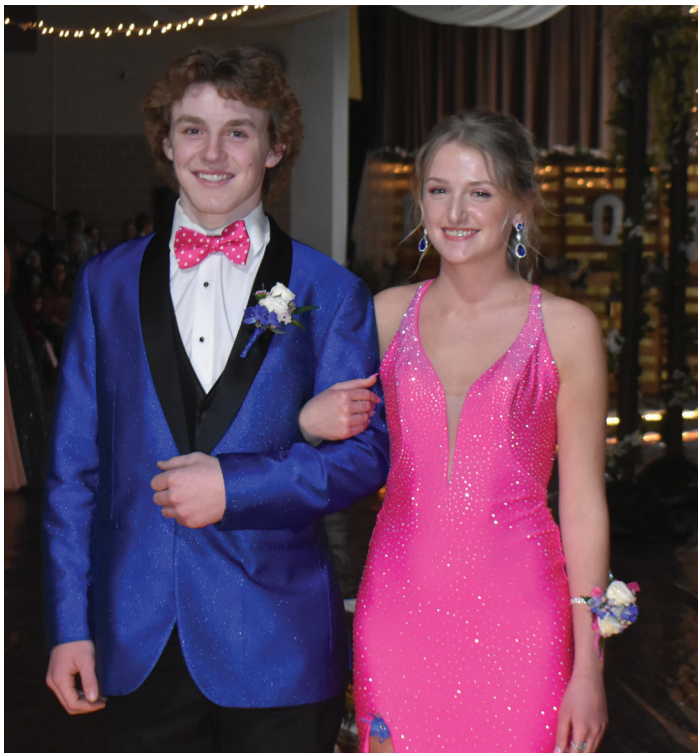
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Cassie Schultz escorted by Carson Helms



Dragr Monson escorting Sierra Ehresmann



Riley Leicht escorted by Jesse Keough



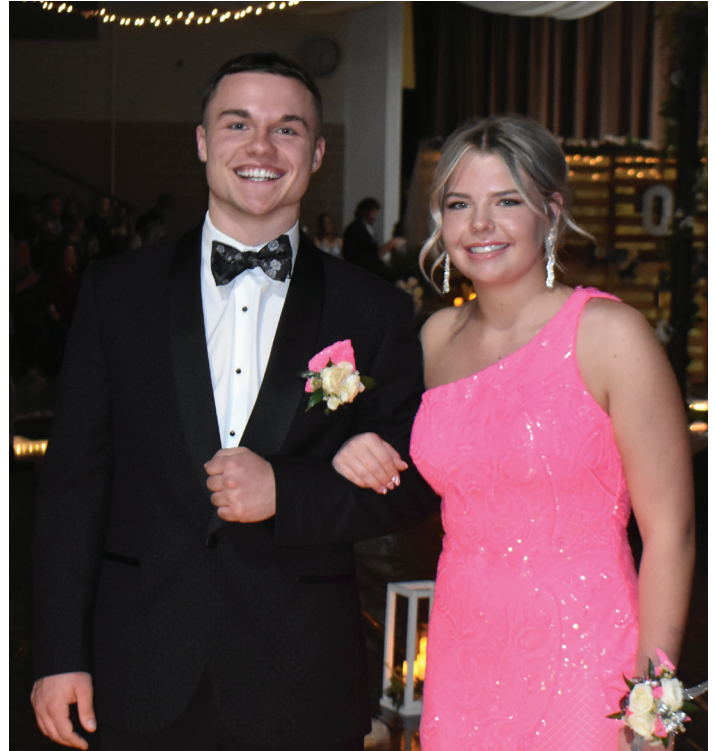
Torrence Wiseman and Abigail Gackle

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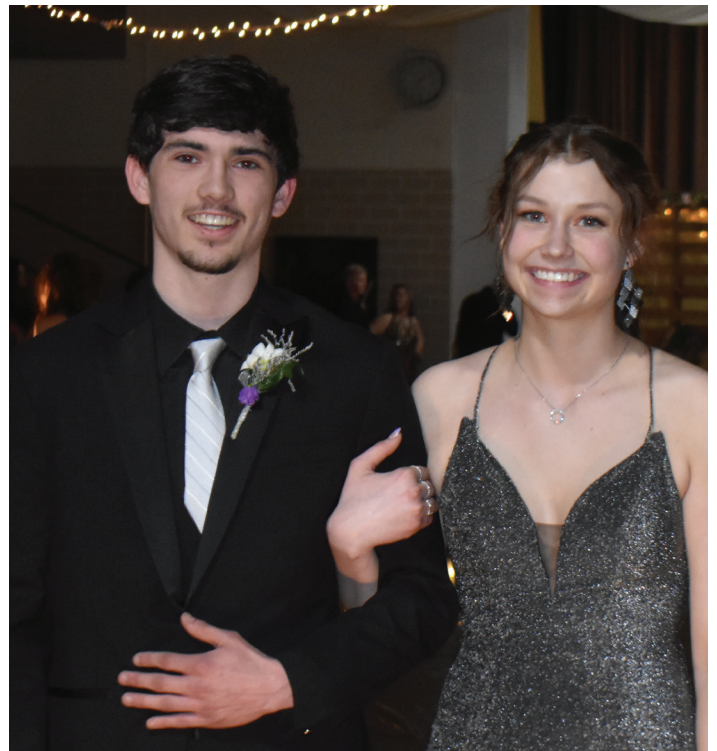
Tyson Parrow escorting Kaylynn Overacker



Kaden Kurtz escorting Elizabeth Fliehs



Kaden Kampa escorting Christina Zoellner



Bradyn Hansen escorting Kennedy Anderson

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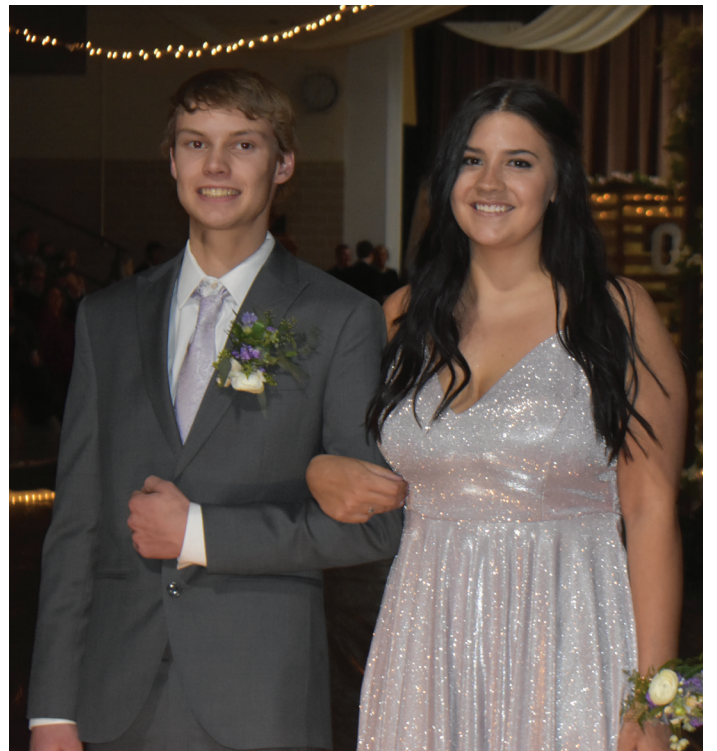
Nicholas Cunningham escorting Ava Kramer



Caden McInerney escorting Cadence Tullis



Sarah Jacobs and LeeLee Volk



Jace Craig escorting Andrea Davidson

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Evin Nehls escorting Ava Wienk



Porter Johnson escorting Ashlyn Sperry



Trey Johnson escorting Macine McGannon



Matt Mork escorting Rease Jandel

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Jace Kroll escorting Jaycie Lier



Travis Townsend escorting Faith Flihs



Aiden Nicholas escorting Kansas Kroll



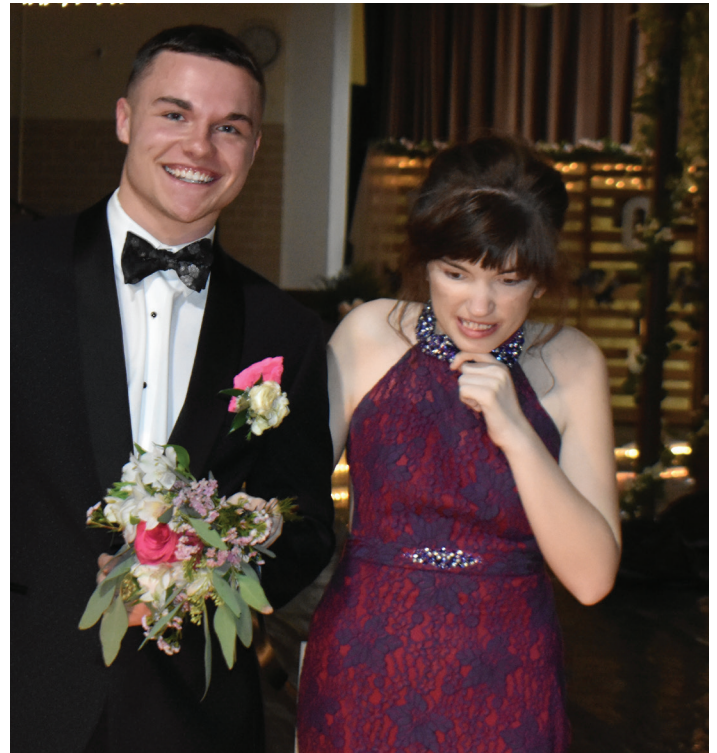
Michal Tabke escorted by Layne Hansen

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Landon Ellingson escorting Gracie Traphagen



Kaden Kurtz escorting Tatum Wright



Kamryn Flihs and Brenna Carda



Danny Feist escorting Payton Biedler

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Pierce Kettering escorting Emilie Thurston

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

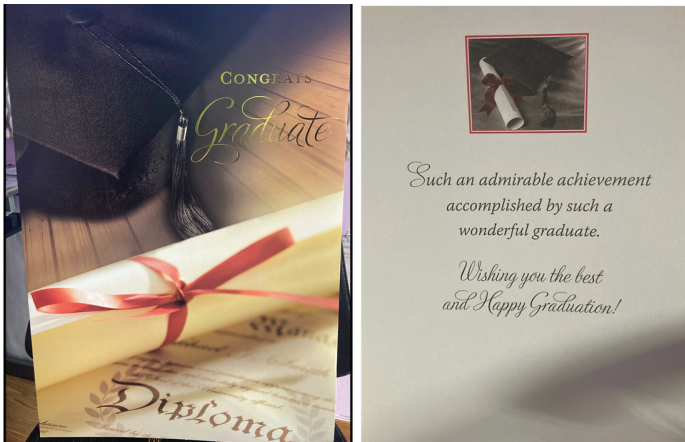
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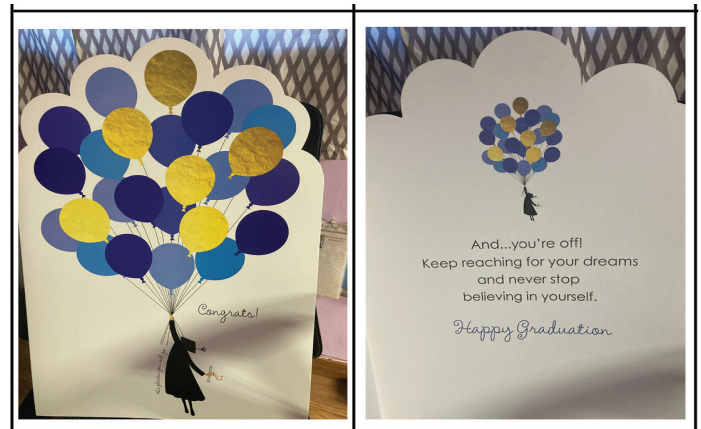
Jumbo Graduation Cards

Only \$7.99 each ~ Card Size: 16.25" x 24"

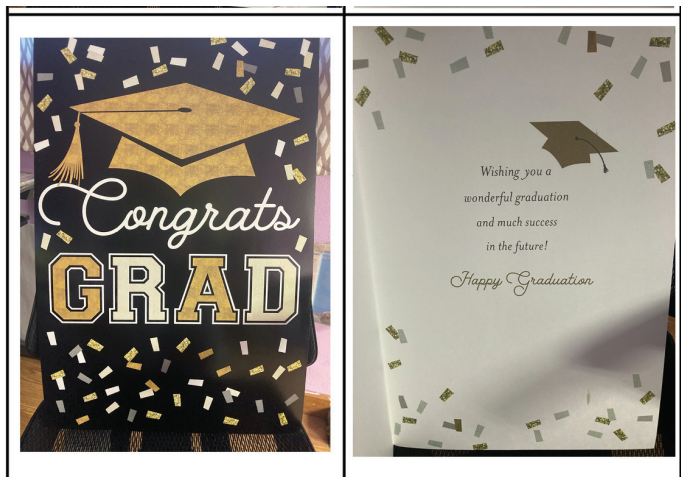
Can now be ordered on-line at 397news.com - Link on Black Bar
Or Call/Text Paul at 605-397-7460 or Tina at 605-397-7285
to reserve your card(s)



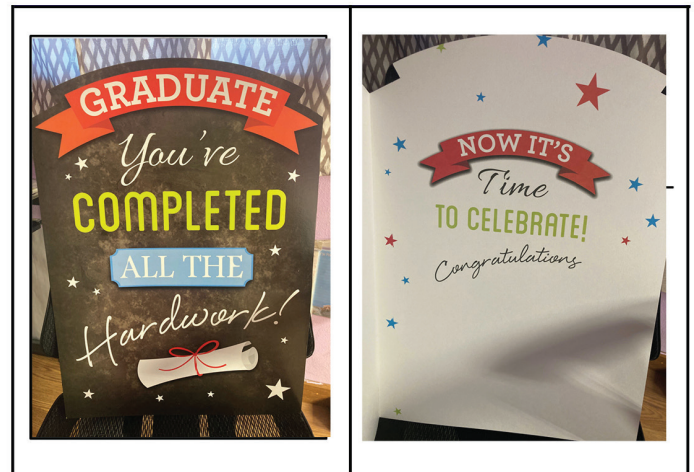
50-9903-C
\$7.99



50-9666-C
\$7.99



50-10977JM-C
\$7.99



50-9360-C
\$7.99

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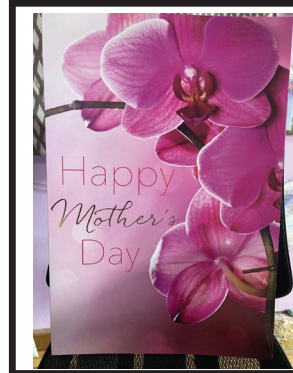
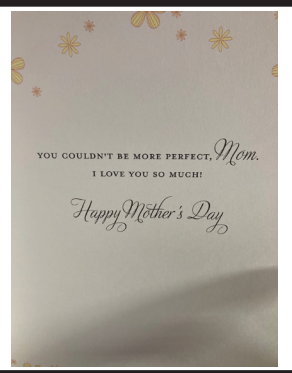
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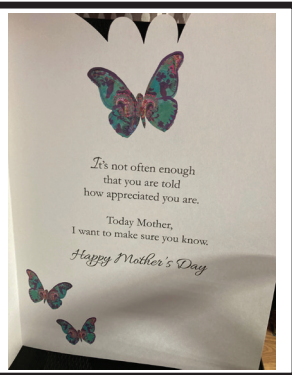
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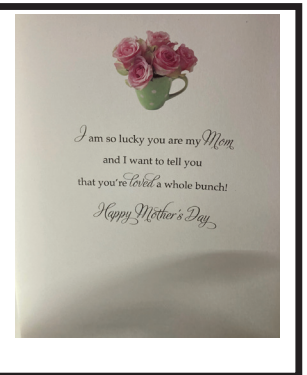
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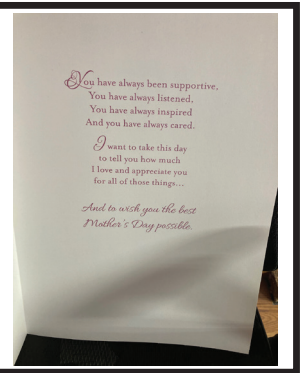
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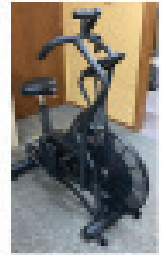


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New at the
GDI FIT
 The Stairmaster
 and Air Bike



Call/Text Paul at 605/397-7460
 or Tina at 605/397-7285
 for membership info

Order your Graduation Balloons while we have a good supply!



#1 - \$5



#2 - \$5



#3 - \$6



#4 - \$10 - 45"



#5 - \$5



#6 - \$6



\$3.50 - 9" on a stick



#7 - \$10 - 36"



#8 - \$5



#9 - \$5



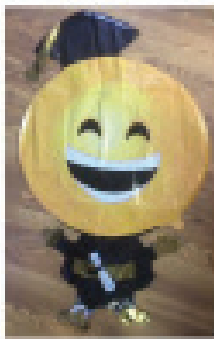
#10 - \$5



#11 - \$5



#12 - \$5



#13 - \$8 35"



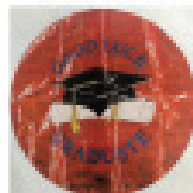
#14 - \$5



#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!

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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

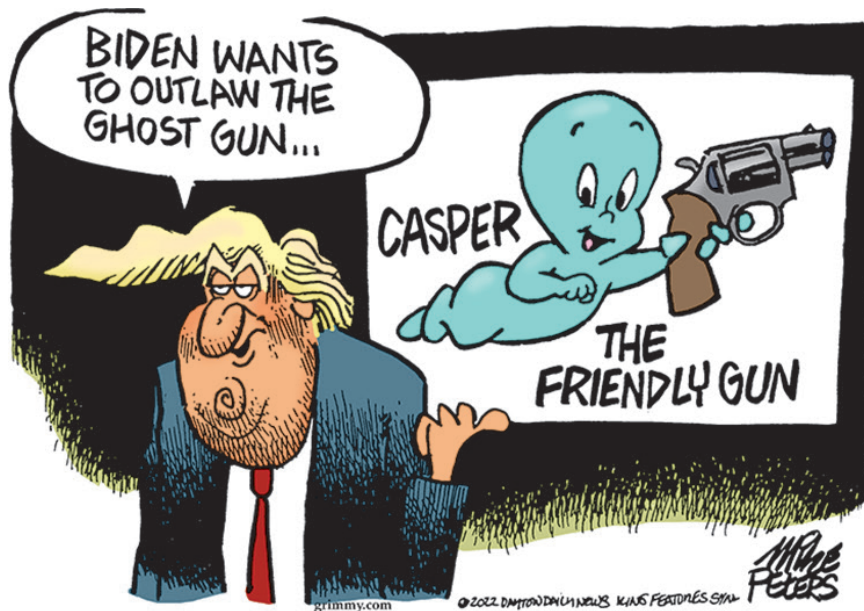


For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 6: 14,15

"Jesus Forgives the Adulteress" by Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1794-1872)

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BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Judas in the Old Testament or New Testament or neither?
2. From Exodus 16, what bird served as miracle food for the Israelites? *Raven, Dove, Quail, Duck*
3. In Genesis 29:17, what part of Leah was tender (weak)? *Foot, Hand, Mind, Eyes*
4. From Jonah 1:15, how did he (Jonah) end up in the sea? *Drunkenness, Fell in, Capsized ship, Cast in*
5. In Matthew 17, what size faith did Jesus say was needed? *Mountain, Mustard seed, Ant hill, One's heart*
6. James and John were the sons of ... ? *Bartholomew, Zebedee, Zadok, Barnabas*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Quail; 3) Eyes; 4) Cast in (thrown); 5) Mustard seed; 6) Zebedee

Hardcore trivia fan? Visit Wilson Casey's subscriber site at www.patreon.com/triviaguy.

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by Healthy Exchanges
Mexicali Tenderloins

This recipe guarantees a kiss for the cook every time!

- 4 (4-ounce) lean pork tenderloins or cutlets
- 1 (10 3/4-ounce) can reduced-fat tomato soup
- 1/2 cup chunky salsa
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes
- 1 cup frozen whole-kernel corn, thawed

1. In a large skillet sprayed with olive oil-flavored cooking spray, lightly brown meat on both sides for about 3 minutes. In a medium bowl, combine tomato soup, salsa, parsley flakes and corn.

2. Spoon soup mixture evenly over browned meat. Lower heat, cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Uncover and continue simmering for 5 minutes.

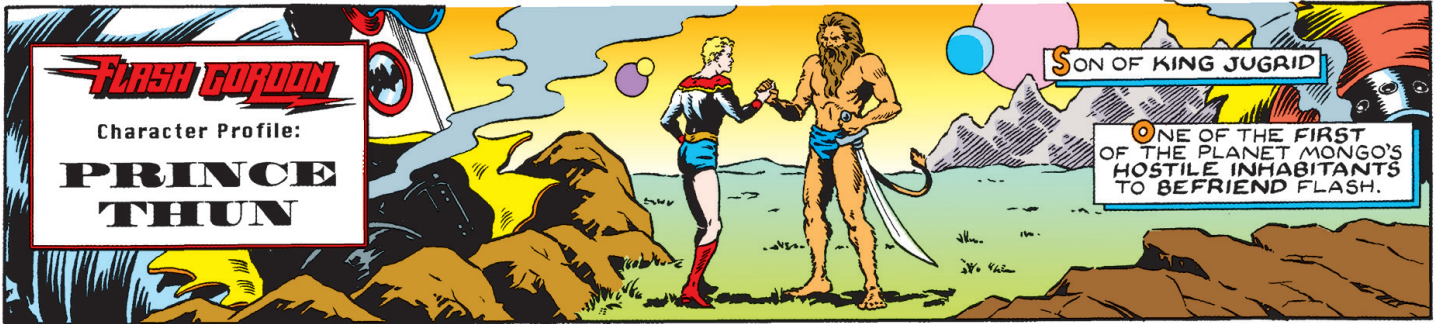
3. When serving, place a piece of meat on a plate and spoon about 3/4 cup sauce mixture over top. Serves 4.

* Each serving equals: 243 calories, 7g fat, 27g protein, 18g carbohydrates, 417mg sodium, 2g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 3 Meat, 1 Starch.

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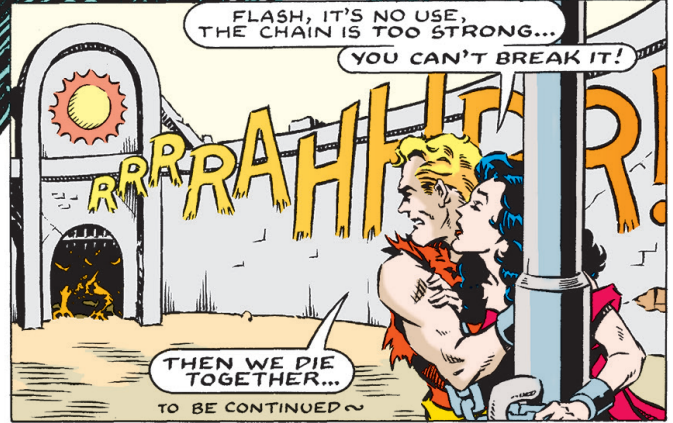
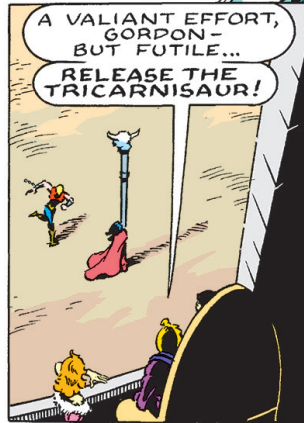


FLASH GORDON
By JIM KEEFE
4-17
Pencils: MARK McMURRAY

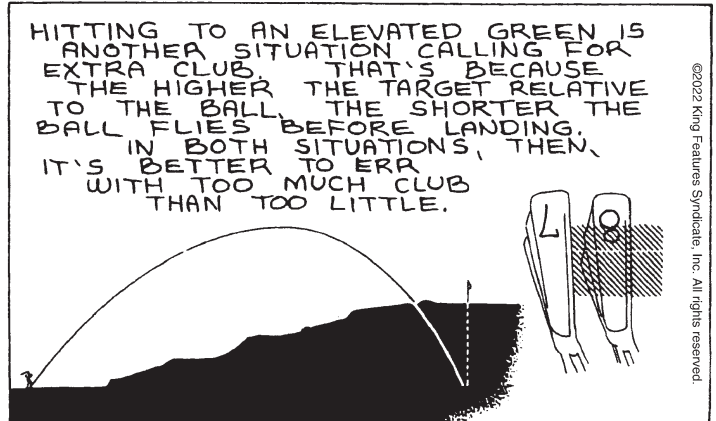
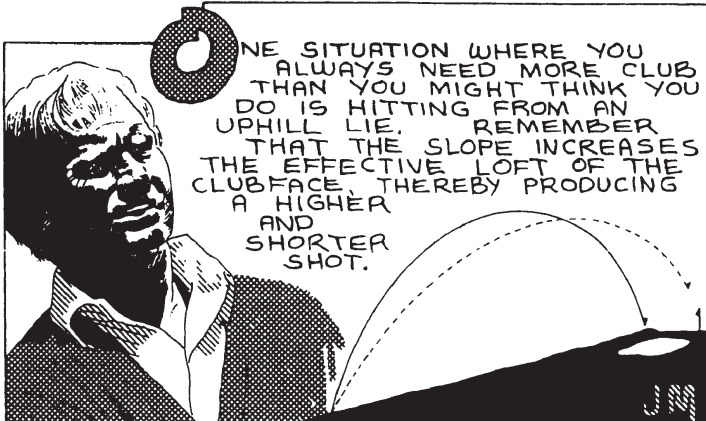
AS THE MONSTER BUCKS WILDLY AT ITS BONDS...



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Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



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Can Prilosec be Taken for More than 14 Days?



DEAR DR. ROACH: What's the story with Prilosec? Doctors routinely tell people with GERD or acid stomach to take this forever. Yet it clearly describes only a 14-day treatment on the box. A physician assistant told me that because of a rare infrequent condition some users have that the manufacturer is legally bound to post the 14-day limit, but that the general population can safely ignore it. Can you enlighten and reassure those of us whose physicians have said to take it long term? -- C.D.C.

ANSWER: The patient instructions in the over-the-counter versions of proton pump inhibitors, such as omeprazole (Prilosec), do recommend a 14-day course. However, longer courses may indeed be prescribed by a licensed prescriber, such as a PA. Even so, there are relatively few people who need

lifelong medication. Those who do may have a condition such as Barrett's esophagus, in which PPIs -- the most potent medical treatment to suppress stomach acid -- are necessary. They not only relieve symptoms, they are also prescribed in hopes of reducing the risk of developing cancer of the esophagus. The data on this are still not clear.

For people with acid reflux (also called gastroesophageal reflux disease), PPIs are usually not needed lifelong. However, it may still be reasonable to use these drugs long term if the prescriber feels the benefit outweighs the risk.

There are several risks of long-term use of PPIs. Stomach acids are important in protecting against bacteria, and two kinds of bacterial infections are more common in PPI users. The first is in the colon, especially of *Clostridium difficile*, where PPI users are about 30% more likely to be infected and may do so even without the antibiotic use that is the most common risk factor for *C. diff*. The second is pneumonia, although the apparent association may not be as strong as formerly thought.

Low stomach acid may decrease absorption of vitamins and minerals, especially magnesium, iron and vitamin B12.

PPIs were thought to increase the risk of a rare tumor, gastric carcinoid, based on data from rats, and of colon cancer. Those risks have not been seen in humans. Early data suggest increased risk of kidney disease and dementia. That risk appears to be small, if it even exists.

Long-term PPI use has some risk of side effects and should be used only when there are benefits to PPIs that can't be obtained with other treatments, including other medications and lifestyle changes. This especially includes better diet, weight loss when appropriate and not eating right before bed.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm not against medical marijuana when prescribed, but why do patients want or need to smoke it? What does the secondhand smoke do to children and adults around those who are smoking it? -- C.G.

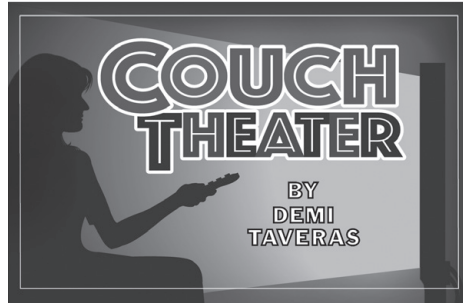
ANSWER: Secondhand cannabis smoke has potential adverse effects. It can be irritating to the eyes and respiratory tract. The psychoactive component, THC, can be absorbed by someone in close proximity, especially if exposed over a prolonged period. This is also true for the vapor made by an e-cigarette device.

Cannabis smoke is irritating for the user as well. Many people who use medical cannabis use edibles containing extracts, THC and CBD. These have no risk to others, although they do carry a higher risk of acute intoxication for the user. In any event, cannabis users should take care not to expose people who do not want to be exposed, especially children.

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

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The Batman (PG-13) — It's finally time to watch this long-awaited film at home! Directed by Matt Reeves, the legendary superhero Batman is darkly portrayed by Robert Pattinson in a tone that's never been seen before. Batman's gloom extends to his alter ego, Bruce Wayne, whose persona is far from the suave billionaire we've come to know in other films. Bruce has outcasted himself, pouring every fiber into being the Batman, and the heaviness weighs him down greatly. Only when a series of murders, committed by the morbidly comical Riddler, start to unravel the pent-up pain and trauma long hidden within Bruce does the Batman earn the title of being a superhero. Zoe Kravitz stars opposite Pattinson as the alluring Selina Kyle, who doubles as Catwoman. (HBO Max)

Crush (PG-13) — High-school student Paige (Rowan Blanchard) dreams of getting into art school, but finds she's lacking the inspiration to make something worthy of getting accepted. Those closest to her advise her to loosen up a little, instead of putting so much pressure on herself. So, Paige tries to follow their advice by joining the track team with the intent of getting closer to her crush, Gabby. But when the track coach assigns Gabby's sister, AJ (Auli'i Cravalho), to help train Paige, a classic love triangle ensues, and Paige becomes torn on which sister is her true crush. Premieres April 29. (Hulu)

Silverton Siege (TV-MA) — Based on true events that occurred in South Africa in 1980, this nail-biting action thriller focuses on three anti-apartheid

freedom fighters whose mission ends in failure, which forces them into the standoff of their lives. The fighters enter a bank and keep several hostages, but realize once they're in the standoff that it will only yield two results for them: prison or death. So, they decide to use this high-risk situation as an opportunity for the launch of a global movement. The three fighters agree to release the hostages and end the standoff in exchange for the release of anti-apartheid revolutionary Nelson Mandela, who is being held in prison. Premieres April 27. (Netflix)



HBO Max

Zoe Kravitz, Robert Pattinson in "The Batman"

Polar Bear (PG) — Disney+ takes viewers on an adventure to the Arctic to visit a longtime favorite animal, the polar bear, in the latest Disney+ nature movie. According to World Wildlife, Arctic polar bears were listed as a threatened species in 2008 because of the effects of climate change on their habitats. Following a mother polar bear and her cubs throughout the seasons of one of the coldest environments in the world, this documentary showcases their journey as the cubs begin to grow and adapt to their changing Arctic home. Previous Disney+ nature movies include "Penguins," "Bears" and "Oceans." (Disney+)

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FLASH BACK POP, ROCK & SOUL TRIVIA BY MICK HARPER

1. Name the artist who released "Maybe I Know" in 1964.
2. Who wrote and released "In Dreams"?
3. What group released "Big Girls Don't Cry"?
4. Which Gene Pitney song was released for a film by the same name?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "When tears come down like falling rain, You'll toss around and call my name."

Answers

1. Lesley Gore, on her "Girl Talk" album. The Seashells released their own version in 1972 in the U.K.
2. Roy Orbison, in 1963. The notes, which Orbison hit

effortlessly, spanned two octaves, which meant the song wasn't picked up by other artists who didn't have his range.

3. Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, in 1962.

4. "Town Without Pity," in 1961. It nabbed a Golden Globe Award for Best Song the following year.

5. "Your Cheatin' Heart," by Hank Williams in 1952. The song, released weeks after Williams' death from a sudden heart attack, topped the charts for six weeks. The song was covered by Kitty Wells, Patsy Cline and Ray Charles, among others. Elvis Presley's 1958 version went to No. 1.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{Wagner}



"Now he gets lost going to the men's room."

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Earring is different. 2. Sleeve is different. 3. Hair is shorter. 4. Light is missing. 5. Glasses are missing. 6. Jacket is opened.

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- “If you add a teaspoon of sugar to your biscuit mix or to the dough for rolls, it will help them to brown well, and they will come out of the oven with golden tops.” — *J.R. in Michigan*

- Two ways to save money on laundry expenses: First, spring and summer are an excellent time to get into line-drying clothes — especially towels and jeans that take longer to dry thoroughly in a dryer. Then, clean out and shorten your dryer’s vent hose to make your machine more energy efficient. It cuts down on drying time, too, saving you time AND money.

- “Got an odd job coming up? Before you go out and purchase an expensive limited-use tool, check with friends and neighbors to see if you can borrow instead of buying. Check with local hardware stores to see if it’s cheaper to rent, too.” — *S.L. in Kentucky*

- “I have pets that leave hair and dirt on the couch. When I wash my cush-

ion covers, one thing I always do is put them back on the pillows when they are not quite dry. They stretch better when they’re a little bit damp. I had a terrible time a few years ago when I let them dry all the way and couldn’t get them back on!” — *H.P. in Arizona*

- “To clean burned-on bits from your cast-iron skillet, scrub with a plastic scrubbie and salt as an abrasive. Dry immediately and rub with oil to keep moist.” — *R.T. in Ohio*

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

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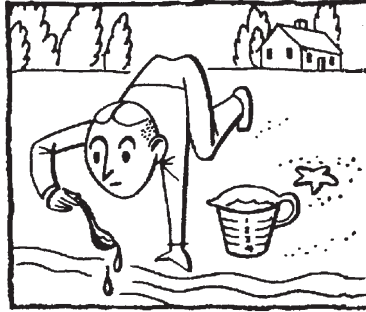
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Junior Whirl

by Hal Kaufman



TESTING WATERS WORDWISE

WILL you sink or swim in this quiz on water? Let's see. Simply fill blanks to complete statements:

1. If you're in trouble, you're in ___ water.
2. To discourage something is to throw ___ water on it.
3. Niagara and Victoria are water ___.
4. ___ water is a city in Florida.
5. The water ___ is an oxlike animal.
6. Water ___ is a symbol of defeat.
7. Past history is known as water ___.

Time limit: two minutes.

1. Hot 2. Cold 3. Falls 4. Clear 5. Buffalo 6. Loo 7. Over the dam.

CLUB STAKE! Our artist claims to have included 25 golf clubs in the picture above. How many clubs do you see?

CLIPSO FACTO! Bonnie clipped six letters from a magazine: M, E, N, Y and two T's. She turned one letter upside down and arranged the lot to form a number. What number?

She turned M upside down and formed TWENTY.

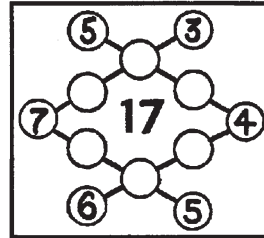
SUM-TE-DUM! Challenge: Place the numbers 1 to 6 in empty circles of the diagram at right so that the sum of each four-number row will be 17. (Numbers presently shown remain in place.)

Remember, all six numbers 1-6 are to be inserted. Duplicates, in rows, of numbers now in place are permitted.

Starter clue: Uppermost and lowermost vacant circles require even-numbered digits.

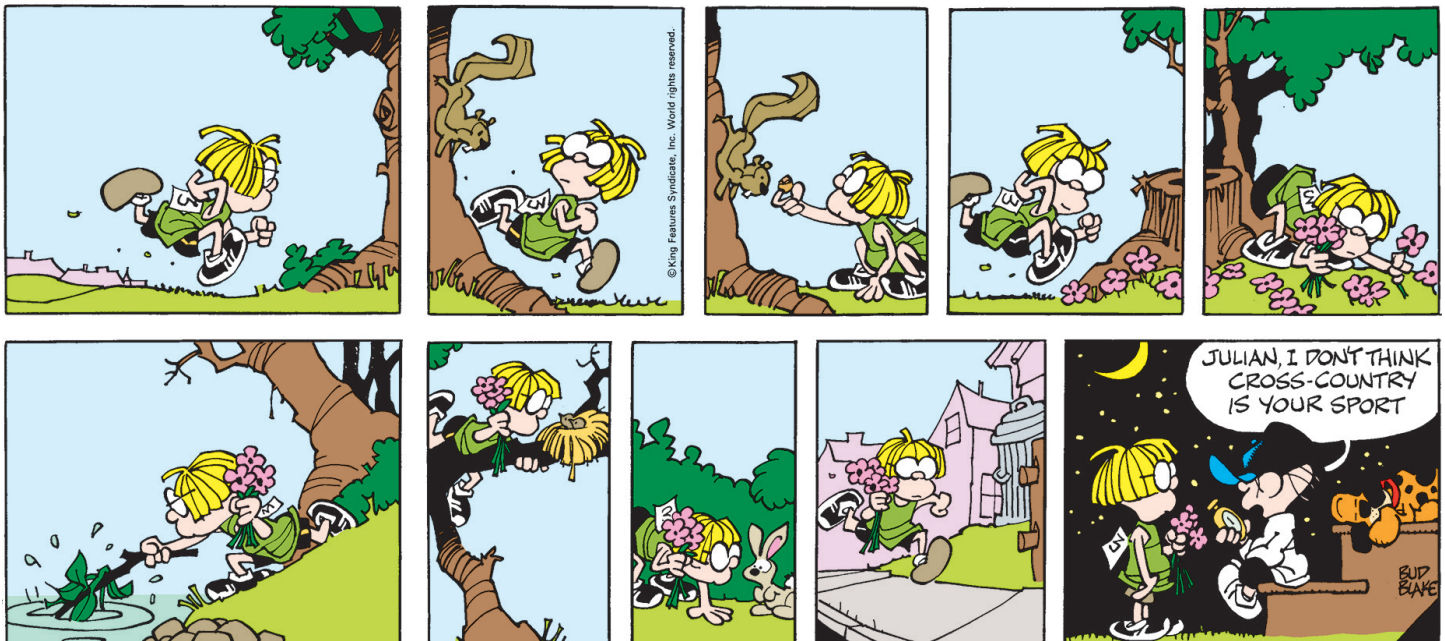
See if you can puzzle it out.

Top—2, then clockwise 6, 3, 4, 1, 5, will do it.



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Karate level
- 5 Caprice
- 9 Perch
- 12 Writer Wiesel
- 13 Car
- 14 Man-mouse link
- 15 Time between vernal equinoxes
- 17 "Viva — Vegas"
- 18 Wesley of "Blade"
- 19 Striped critter
- 21 Symbol of strength
- 22 Chirp
- 24 Right on the map?
- 27 — chi
- 28 Evening, in an ad
- 31 Duo
- 32 Grass shack
- 33 Feedbag tid-bit
- 34 Big name in scat
- 36 Boom times
- 37 "Mad Money" network
- 38 Beetle Bailey's boss
- 40 Italian river
- 41 "Untrue!"
- 43 "Jurassic Park" bird
- 47 Paris pal

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			

- 48 Game for one
- 51 Pouch
- 52 Daring Knieval
- 53 Village People hit
- 54 Exist
- 55 Fill fully
- 56 Fashion line?
- 7 Call — day abbr.
- 8 Code name?
- 9 Puzzle answer
- 10 Persia, today
- 11 To-do list item
- 16 "Toy Story" dinosaur
- 20 Understand-ing
- 22 Hosiery shade
- 23 Funny folks
- 24 Paris summer
- 25 Piercing tool
- 26 Start of summer or winter
- 27 Hoodlum
- 29 Bar bill
- 30 List-ending
- 35 Small batteries
- 37 Patients' shares
- 39 Kentucky Derby prize
- 40 Bit of butter
- 41 Houston acronym
- 42 Actor Epps
- 43 Anger
- 44 Marathoner's stat
- 45 Killer whale
- 46 500 sheets
- 49 Eggs
- 50 Allow

DOWN

- 1 Porgy's love
- 2 Carolina college
- 3 Actress Taylor
- 4 Oolong brewer
- 5 Methods
- 6 Shade

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— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

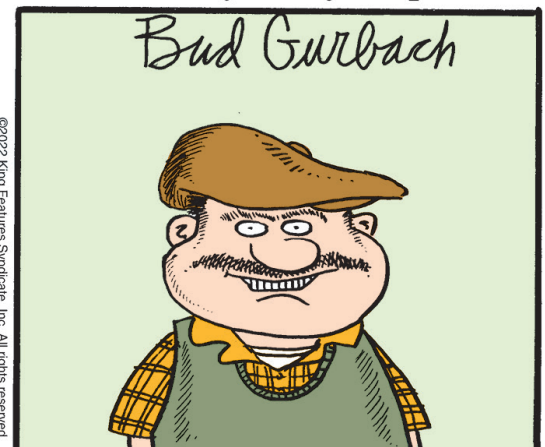
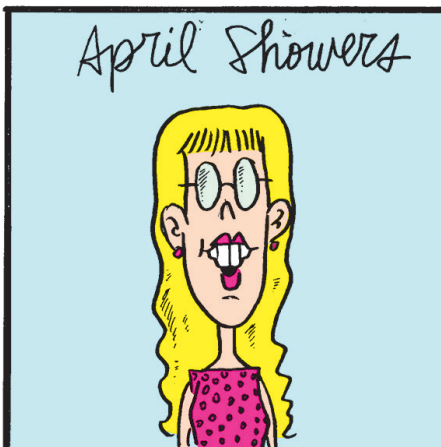
LAFF - A - DAY



"I believe your case is without precedent in my experience...your shoes are too large."

Out on a Limb

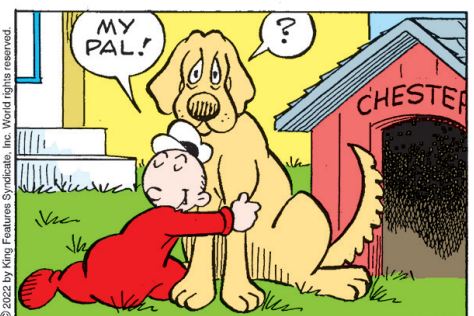
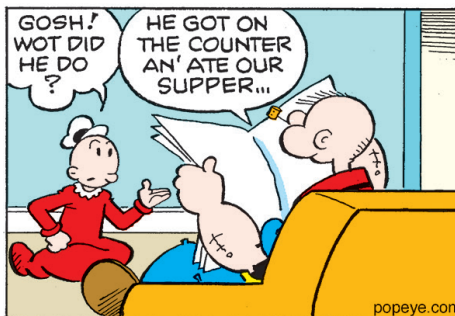
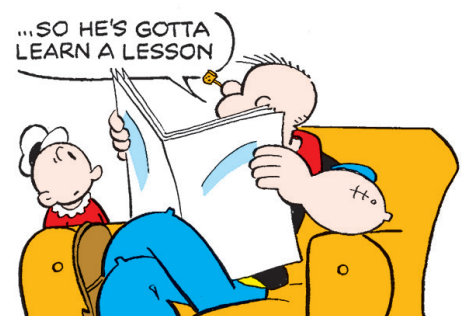
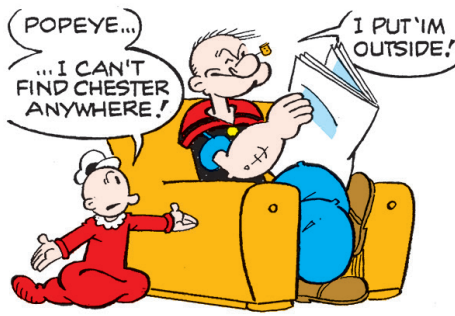
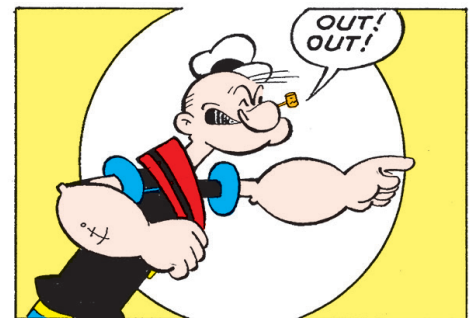
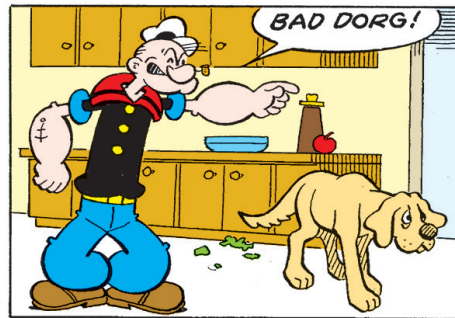
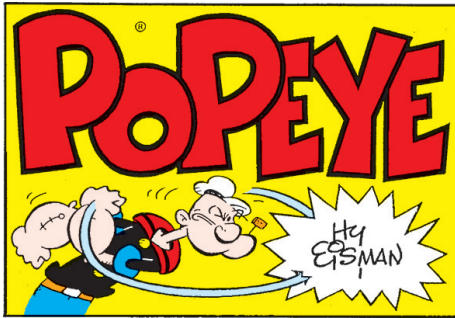
by Gary Kopervas



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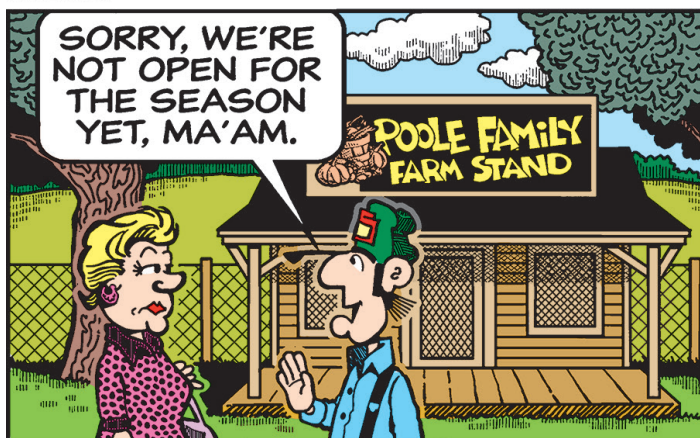
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R.F.D.

by Mike Marland

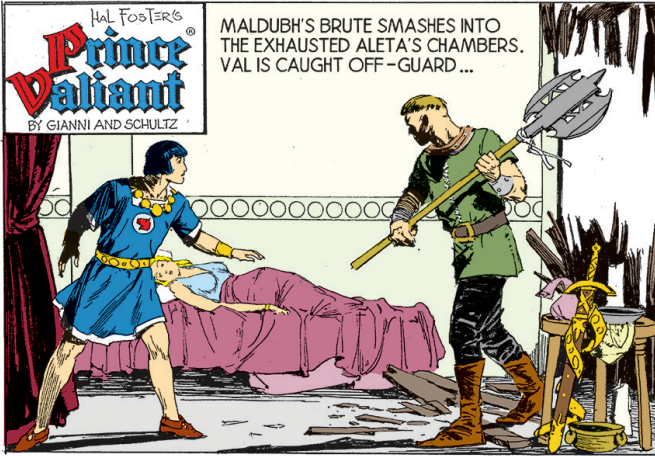


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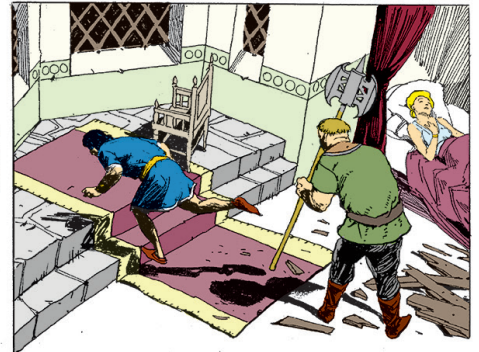
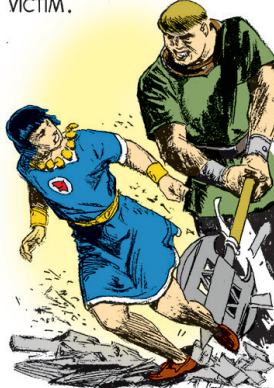
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Hal Foster's
Prince Valiant
By Gianni and Schultz

MALDUBH'S BRUTE SMASHES INTO THE EXHAUSTED ALETA'S CHAMBERS. VAL IS CAUGHT OFF-GUARD...



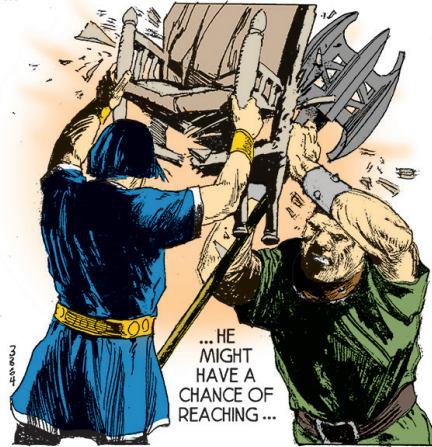
... BUT EVEN WEAPONLESS, HIS QUICK WITS MAKE HIM FAR FROM A COOPERATIVE VICTIM.



THE PRINCE METHODICALLY LURES THE BERSERK ASSASSIN AWAY FROM HIS WIFE, AND TO A BIT OF HIGH GROUND.

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IF ONLY HE CAN THROW HIS ADVERSARY SLIGHTLY OFF-BALANCE ...



... HE MIGHT HAVE A CHANCE OF REACHING ...

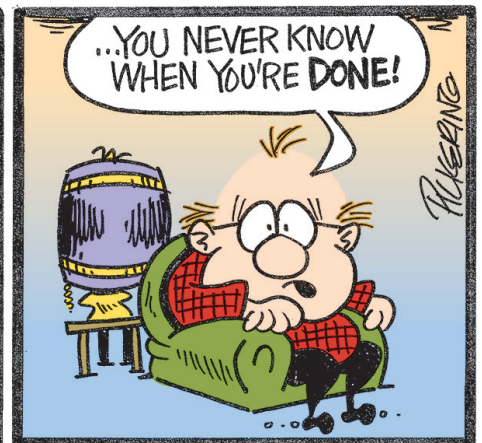
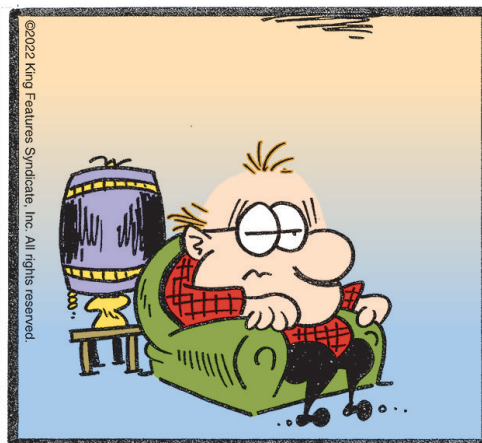
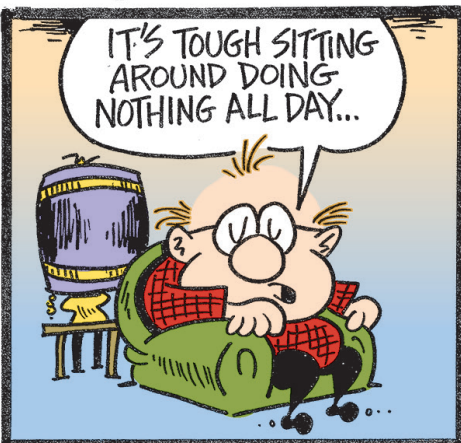
... THE SINGING SWORD! THE ASSASSIN, HOWEVER, SEEMS LITTLE CONCERNED WITH VAL'S DESPERATE PLOY...

Close
NEXT: quarters



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Surviving Inflation

Recent government figures outlined food price increases for one month. The numbers are grim.

Fruits and vegetables went up 2.3%, the highest since 2010. Dairy went up 1.9%, the highest since 2011. Cereals and bakery items went up 1.1%.

Averaged over the past 12 months, food prices have risen 8.6% (the highest increase since 1981), with poultry and fish climbing 13% and beef soaring 16%.

Wow! We knew it was bad because each time we go to the grocery store, we're spending more to get less. But to see the figures laid out in print just brings home how bad things have gotten.

Bloomberg (www.bloomberg.com), whose economists we need to keep an eye on, predicts that this year we'll pay an additional \$5,200 for all household items (including gas, heating fuel and everything else) and services, which it calculates at \$433 per month.

We need to reconsider how we feel about food banks. We seniors generally don't want to do that, saying, "Oh, others need it more." Well, at this point, maybe we are those others?

In a few days, I'll be driving three of my senior neighbors to the food bank for the weekly pickup. It will be their first time, and they are nervous. But I made a scouting trip last week, parking across the street from the line of cars and walking over to talk to the person in charge. I was able to report back: No, they don't take your name or ask questions (except maybe to ask if you'd prefer apple or orange juice). No, they're not judgmental. No, it's not leftover expired food, and the fruits and vegetables were fresh and lovely. The people were friendly and welcoming, happy to do what they were doing.

Just go to the food bank. You won't be judged.

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1. In 1957, Amelia Wershoven set a women's world record for throwing what object more than 252 feet?

2. What golfer bested Tiger Woods by one stroke to win the 2002 PGA Championship at Hazeltine National Golf Club?

3. Name the 1978 World Series MVP for the New York Yankees who later became manager for the team from 1989-90.

4. ICC Cricket Hall of Famer Imran Khan became prime minister of what country in 2018?

5. In 2008, what San Francisco 49ers head coach pulled down his pants at halftime to illustrate how embarrassed he was by his team's performance?

6. What Basketball Hall of Famer from China played with the Houston Rockets from 2002-11?

7. What Major League Baseball commissioner held the office for five



by Ryan A. Berenz

months before he died unexpectedly in 1989?

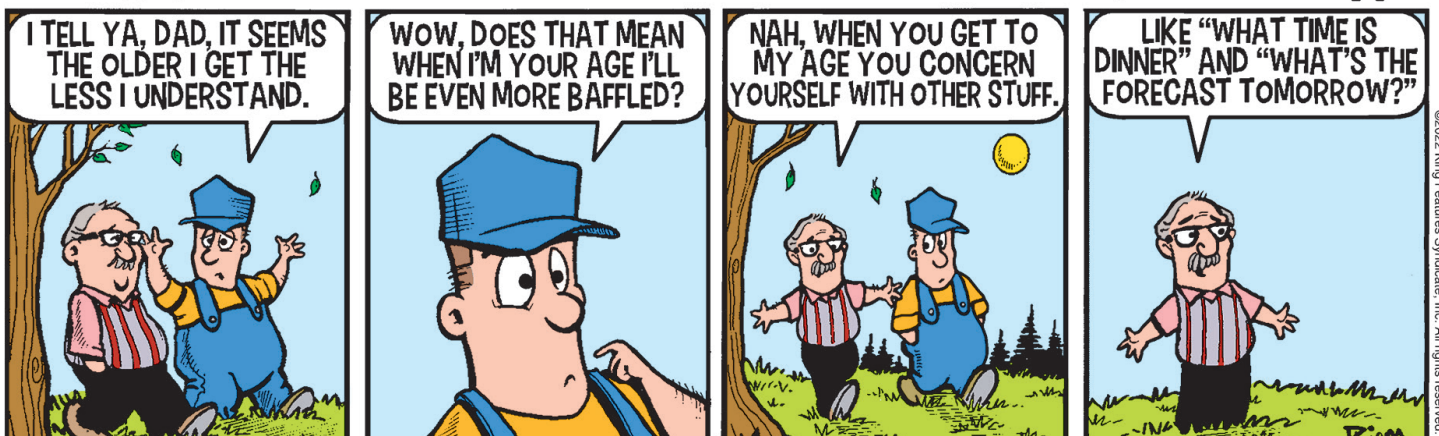
Answers

1. A baseball.
2. Rich Beem.
3. Bucky Dent.
4. Pakistan.
5. Mike Singletary.
6. Yao Ming.
7. A. Bartlett Giamatti.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Dog Bitten in Snout Keeps Licking Wound

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My dog "Jesse" was bitten on the face by another dog, injuring his snout and nose so badly that it required several stitches. I can't get Jesse to stop licking and pawing at the wound, and now he's tearing out the stitches. The wound looks infected. What should I do? — *Kamo M.*

DEAR KAMO: Head straight back to the veterinarian to get the wound treated for infection and closed up again. This time, have Jesse fitted for a cone-shaped E-collar. It's jokingly called the "cone of shame," but is an important medical device for helping to heal just such an injury.

Dogs really don't like E-collars, and they can cause stress, but if he's able to paw at the wound, it must be worn.

You can take it off Jesse at mealtimes so he can access his food, but it must go right back on.

There are a few other protective collars available that are more comfortable, like padded rings, but these may not stop the pawing.

Jesse's also licking his nose, which is understandable since it probably feels weird and swollen and itchy. This can be a problem area because dogs naturally lick their nose throughout the day. The vet may give you medicine to help it heal or may recommend an over-the-counter antibiotic ointment. Put the medicine on as directed.

Help reduce the chance of infection by having clean, fresh water for Jesse to drink (to clean his tongue before licking his nose) and replacing any manky old dog toys (which have a lot of germs) with clean chew toys. Don't let Jesse sniff at or eat nasty stuff (dogs love roadkill and other animals' poo) until the wounds heal.

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

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

* In 2013, Belgium created five limited-edition stamps that smelled and tasted like chocolate (but were not, in fact, edible).

* Gambling slips from ancient China that date to between 201 BC and 187 BC are the first recorded instance of a lottery. It's believed these lotteries likely helped finance large government projects, such as the Great Wall of China.

* There are more tanning salons in major American cities than McDonald's or Starbucks.

* A parenting tradition in Maharashtra, India, involves tossing babies from the side of a 50-foot temple and catching them in a sheet. The practice is thought to endow newborns with courage and intelligence.

* The person who graduates last in his class from West Point Military Academy is called "the goat" and receives a dollar from each classmate, as well as membership in a club that includes Gen. George Custer.

* The average woman wears six different bra sizes throughout her life.

* While Merriam-Webster defines "hussy" as "a girl or woman who behaves in a disrespectful or inappropriate way or who has many casual sexual relationships," the word is actually derived from the 13th-century "husewife," meaning mistress of the household.

* To help combat driver fatigue and boredom on long, straight roads of up to 90 miles in Australia, the government posted signs labeled "Fatigue Zone" featuring trivia questions and answers.

* In 2009, Patricia Demauro brought \$100 to a craps table in Atlantic City. Four hours and 18 minutes later, she had rolled 154 times, setting a world record for craps rolls. The odds of her accomplishing such a feat? One in 1.56 trillion!

* Ice cream was invented in 7th-century China and originally consisted of buffalo milk, flour and camphor.

Thought for the Day: "Spring is nature's way of saying 'Let's party!'" --- Robin Williams

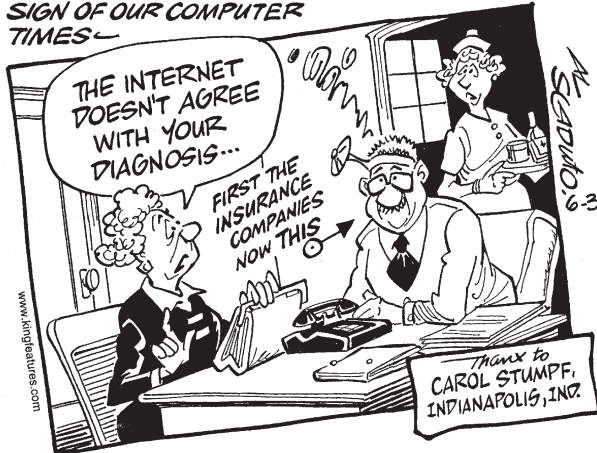
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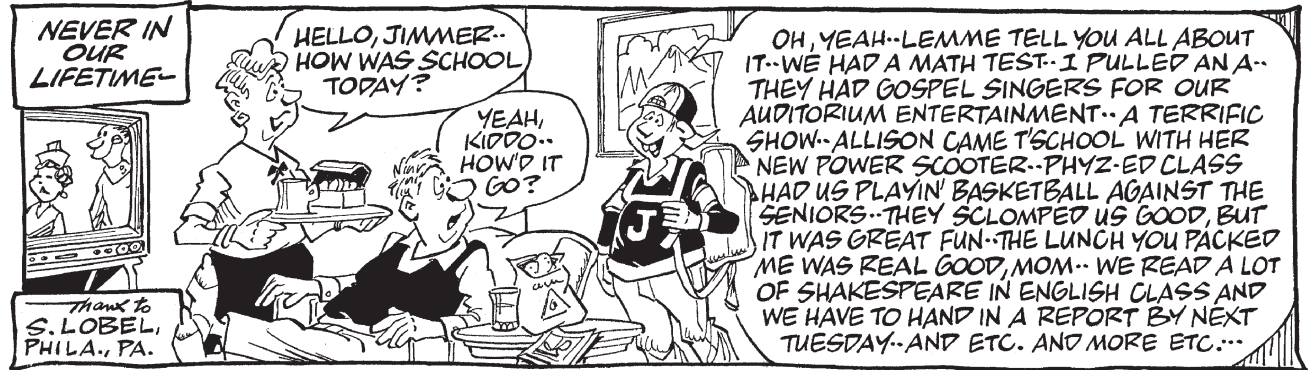
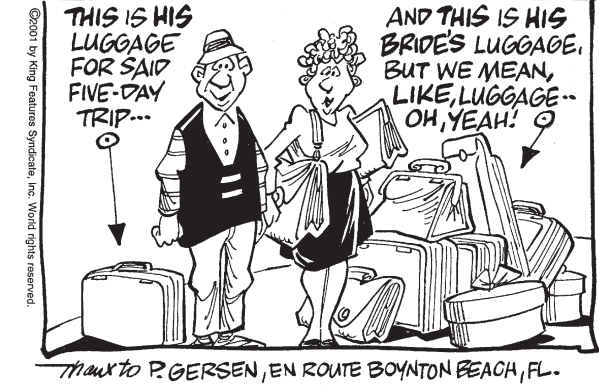
THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

SIGN OF OUR COMPUTER TIMES—



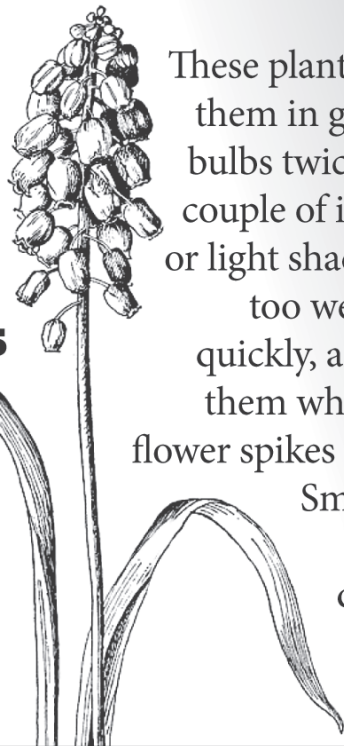
BY AL SCADUTO

HOLIDAY HI-JINX—ARFO and MIGRAINA ARE ABOUT TO LEAVE ON A FIVE DAY VACATION—



The Garden Bug

Grape hyacinths



These plants start from small bulbs. Place them in groups of ten or more, with the bulbs twice as deep as they are tall and a couple of inches apart. They grow in sun or light shade. Don't plant them where it's too wet or too dry. They spread very quickly, and can be quite invasive; plant them where they can spread freely. The flower spikes don't appear until mid-spring. Smoky blue is the most common color. Once their leaves die off, you can cut them back.

— Brenda Weaver

Source: www.gardeningknowhow.com

VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

Can VA Puppy Program Help Combat PTSD?

The Department of Veterans Affairs has published its plan for starting up a pilot program for the Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers for Veterans Therapy Act. In the PAWS Act, the VA will do a five-year pilot program to train dogs as a means of assisting veterans with PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), with the veterans doing the training.

Five VA medical centers will be part of the pilot program: San Antonio; West Palm Beach, Florida; Anchorage, Alaska; Asheville, North Carolina; and Palo Alto, California.

There are three requirements for veterans to be eligible to join the pilot program: be enrolled in VA health care, be diagnosed with PTSD and get a recommendation from a VA mental health-care provider.

Veterans getting care from a non-VA

provider will need to contact the VA facility where they get authorization for the non-VA care and ask about taking part in the pilot. Additionally, the veteran must have had an appointment for some type of care within three months of asking to join the program, and then continue with appointments every three months.

The VA would be required to provide the dogs to veterans with mental illnesses who do not have mobility problems with training provided by certified trainers. Veterans would not be allowed to be around the dogs unless the trainer is present, nor to use any shock collars.

At the end of training, the veteran can adopt the dog if the trainer believes it's in the veteran's best interest, and additional training will continue for the life of the dog. However, some of the training involves getting a dog ready to be a service animal for someone else, so a veteran might work with multiple dogs.

To read all the fine print about the dog program, go to the Federal Register (www.federalregister.gov) and search for PAWS Act, then look for Implementation of the PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act.

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



EARTH DAY – Conservative Care for our Planet

South Dakota is blessed to be the home of many state and national parks and forests. From Badlands National Park and Wind Cave National Park to the Mount Rushmore National Memorial, our parks are truly one of our greatest natural resources. Our state offers many ways to enjoy the outdoors. My family and I love getting outside any way we can. We enjoy hiking, camping, and hunting together.

The Badlands offer dozens of outdoor activities—exploring fossil trails, taking long hikes, driving the scenic routes, encountering wildlife, and much more. The Missouri River running through the middle of the state is another treasure that many people love to hunt and fish along. Conserving our parks and resources doesn't just benefit us, but the wildlife that live among them.

I believe it is important that we work together to protect our shared environment. I am a member of the Conservative Climate Caucus, a group that seeks solutions to lower emissions while enhancing economic prosperity. Currently, there is bipartisan momentum to solve environmental problems, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on reasonable conservation efforts.

Recently, the Gilt Edge Mine Conveyance Act passed out of the House Natural Resources Committee by unanimous consent. This bill that I introduced with U.S. Senators Thune and Rounds would authorize the State of South Dakota to purchase approximately 266 acres of U.S. Forest Service land in Lawrence County. This purchase would allow the State to continue clean-up efforts of the Gilt Edge Mine, protecting and conserving our natural resources and environment.

Today, along with every day, is an opportunity to reflect and appreciate our planet and all the amazing things we can do in it. However you spend your Earth Day, I hope you do it outside.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Opportunity, Not Difficulty

An optimistic mindset can change more than just how we see the world – it can change everything about our lives. Winston Churchill summed up how when he said, “A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.” Two years ago, when the pandemic made its way to America, states across this country shut their doors out of fear. All but one. South Dakota built opportunity out of that difficulty, and the result is a booming economy — the strongest in the nation.

For decades, South Dakota has had all the right ingredients to become an economic powerhouse. We’re one of the best states to start a small business because of our low taxes and lack of a state income tax or business income tax. The affordability of living in South Dakota also makes it easier to raise a family and for bold thinkers to kickstart their ideas.

When I first took office, I promised that South Dakota could be an example for other states. I began that work immediately, taking the first steps toward a more diversified economy. It started with a big vision of expanding broadband across our state and making cybersecurity our state’s next big industry. Within two years, we have fully secured the funding to take broadband statewide, and this year, we took a big leap in expanding the cybersecurity program at Dakota State University to help bring expand that industry in South Dakota.

Before we could get here, we had some smaller steps to take.

Not knowing what lied ahead, I took the initiative in 2019 of having the SDReadyToWork website revamped so we could connect more employers with potential employees. That was a smart mov, as we have seen a tremendous increase in the number of jobs posted, creating new points of entry for a growing workforce.

Over the last four years, my administration has taken on licensure reform in several industries. This includes making it easier for military soldiers and their spouses to transfer out-of-state licenses, as well as medical professionals. In all, South Dakota in recent years has simplified licensure procedures for barbers and cosmetologists, plumbers, counselors, appraisers, medical assistants, and electricians.

This year, we focused on turning the difficulties of some of our workforce challenges into opportunities for the next generation of South Dakotans. Thanks to these investments in our economy, we are building a stronger career pipeline from our colleges and universities to a variety of industries.

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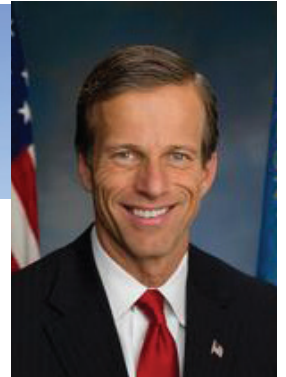
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Two big areas of focus are healthcare and agriculture — our state's No. 1 industry. In total, the legislature approved \$20 million for healthcare programs, such as the West River Health Science Center, the Lake Area Tech Archway Complex, and Southeast Technical College's health simulation center. For agriculture, lawmakers approved more than \$22 million in funding for programs like USD's Discovery District, the Ag/Diesel lab at Mitchell Technical College, and continued improvements to the South Dakota State University's Cyber Precision Ag program.

The early economic indicators for this year already point to more success on the horizon for our state. Travel and tourism numbers are already increasing above 2021's record numbers. Our unemployment rate continues to be among the lowest in the country and is far below the national rate. Our population grew three times faster than the national growth rate in 2021. All of these are signs that what we are doing in South Dakota is working.

As South Dakota's top promoter and number one fan, I will continue to support policies that turn challenges and difficulties into opportunities. And if this is your first time hearing about South Dakota, we welcome you to visit anytime. The new opportunity you are looking for is just around the corner.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Bipartisan Solutions to Shipping and Supply Chain Crises

American families are currently struggling with the worst inflation in 40 years. Food prices. Gas prices. Used car prices. Everywhere Americans look, they're paying more. Wages increased on average last year, but inflation outstripped wage growth, which means that instead of a wage increase, a lot of Americans got a de facto pay cut. And there's no clear end in sight.

While it's true that supply chain issues and the reopening of economies after COVID shutdowns contributed somewhat to inflationary pressures, a big reason for our current inflation crisis is too much Washington spending. The definition of inflation is too many dollars chasing too few goods and services. That's exactly the situation Democrats helped create with their so-called American Rescue Plan. They flooded the economy with unnecessary government money, and the economy overheated as a result.

Unfortunately, there is no easy fix for this self-inflicted inflation crisis, but there are things we can do to at least lessen its effects, starting with legislation to help ease supply-chain woes. The Senate recently passed my bipartisan shipping legislation with the support from all 100 senators, which is not an easy accomplishment these days.

The Ocean Shipping Reform Act, which I introduced with Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), would help ease supply chain pressures, particularly at our nation's ports. For some time now, I've been hearing reports of ocean carriers refusing to transport certain goods – often American agricultural products. This would be a difficult situation at any time, as export markets around the world are critically important to American producers. But it is particularly painful at a time when inflation is soaring and the supply chain is under significant strain. The Ocean Shipping Reform Act is designed to address these kinds of shipping problems and create a more level playing field for American producers.

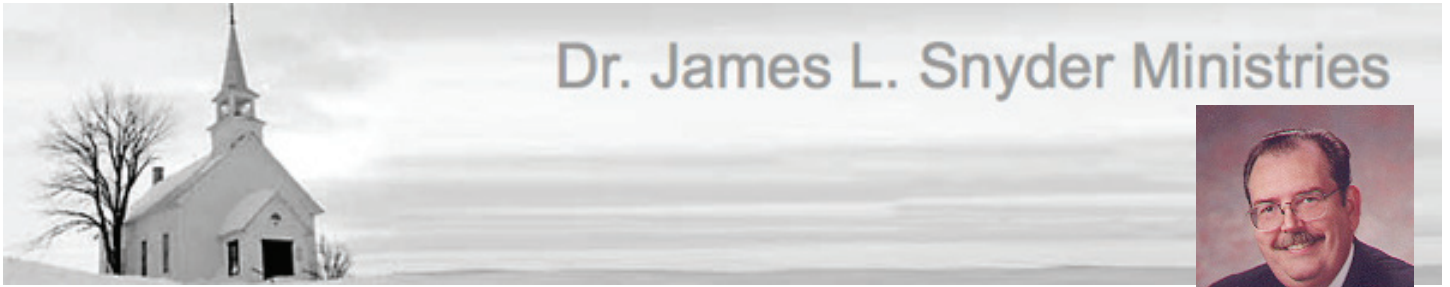
When I'm traveling throughout the state, I get a lot of questions about the supply chain bottlenecks that are driving up prices and hitting South Dakota's agriculture industry particularly hard. I recently visited the AGP soybean plant in Aberdeen, which, like many ag exporters in the state, has been dealing with increased costs to ship goods overseas and the effects of shipping container delays and cancellations. South Dakota businesses are also struggling to meet the demands of their customers – especially small businesses, which have fewer resources to fight supply chain problems.

My legislation responds to unfair ocean carrier practices – whether that involves refusing to carry certain cargo or discriminating against certain commodities for export, like agricultural products. It would help more quickly resolve detention and demurrage disputes, which would bring greater efficiency and transparency to a process that leaves many shippers frustrated, especially agriculture producers and other small businesses. And the legislation would take steps to improve the movement of goods at our nation's ports, which would help ease supply chain bottlenecks and improve the speed at which goods reach consumers.

The Ocean Shipping Reform Act would bring long-term positive changes to the maritime supply chain, which I hope would benefit exporters, importers, and consumers alike. I'm glad my colleagues on both sides of the aisle recognized the need for this important legislation, and I look forward to working with the House, including Rep. Dusty Johnson (R-S.D.), to see this across the finish line.

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The Good, the Bad, and the Grouchy



Have you ever had a week where everything went just perfect? Neither have I. Every Monday morning, I plan a perfect week, and I try my best to stick to that plan.

My problem is simply, I do not know the meaning of the word "perfect." So I asked The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage once, she looked at me and said with a smile, "Just watch me."

I flashed a smile back at her, knowing exactly what she was saying. I also knew that if I were as perfect as she was, she would not know how perfect she really was. I believe it's part of my responsibility as a husband to show her how perfect she is every day. I hope someday to get a Nobel Peace Prize for this.

My plans are quite simple, I just want to have somewhat of a perfect week. To have a perfect week, I need to have a perfect plan. To have a perfect plan, I need to have perfect ideas. Thus, I have a great challenge before me.

Recently my week wasn't going very well, and I was getting a little, well, what should I say, grouchy.

Normally I'm never grouchy, so I did not know how to be grouchy until I was at the grocery store and saw the epitome of Mr. Grouchy.

I'm not sure the basis of this guy's grouchiness, but from my point of view, he has practiced this all his life. If there ever was a Mr. Grouchy, it was this guy. At the time, I had a little bit of pity for his wife. But, of course, I didn't know if he was married or not. If he was, she deserves my pity.

Not only could you see his grouchy demeanor, but he followed that up and supported it with words that I cannot repeat in public. Let me just say he was well-versed in French.

My curiosity got the best of me, and I just wanted to know more about him. I couldn't go up and talk to him, I knew how that would turn out. So, I followed him throughout the store from a distance and watched and listened. That afternoon, I got a Ph.D. in Grouchology.

During these times, stores are not as well-stocked as they used to be. For example, I can't find the cans of cat food I used to get for my cats. They're just not there. And, many other things aren't on the shelves anymore.

Obviously, Mr. Grouchy did not know that the rough times we were going through were affecting our stores.

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I didn't know all of the things he was looking for because his French got in the way of understanding what he was saying. Obviously, he couldn't find what he wanted, which fueled his grouchiness.

Soon one of the employees walked by, and Mr. Grouchy caught him and angrily told him a thing or two, No, make that a dozen, but then I stopped counting. Obviously, Mr. Grouchy knew more about the store than this poor employee. So I would say he was giving the employee a piece of his mind, but he's a sorry person if that was his mind he was giving.

"Is there anything I can do to help you?" The employee asked. After he asked that I'm sure he wished that he had never asked that question.

For the next 10 minutes, Mr. Grouchy lectured the store employee on what he should be doing. I couldn't help but stand in the aisle next to him and just listen to his lecture. I'm sure the store employee learned quite a bit from Mr. Grouchy's lecture.

I want to go back someday and meet up with the store employee and ask him how much he learned from those lectures.

When Mr. Grouchy paused to catch his breath the store employee said, "Please forgive me, but I have an appointment to go to, and I'm late for it." With that, he hurried away as fast as ever. I think I know what appointment he had and I'll ask him when I see him.

Even after the store employee had departed for his "appointment," Mr. Grouchy continued the lecturing in his outdoor voice.

Then Mr. Grouchy realized that the store employee wasn't there. So he looked around and yelled, "Hey, where are you? Get back here."

I was so tempted to answer that question, and it took every resource I had available to keep from answering.

Finally, he went to the checkout counter and told the cashier how miserable his visit was in the store, while she rang up his purchases.

I wasn't too far behind, and I slowly came up to the same cashier to check out my things. I looked at her, smiled, and said, "Aren't you glad there are customers like me?" Then she laughed.

As I got in my vehicle to drive home, I realized that my week wasn't quite as crazy as Mr. Grouchy.

Driving home I was reminded of a verse of Scripture. "This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger;" (James 1:19).

Everybody faces moments of anger. The key is not to let those anger moments control your attitude at the time. When I control my tongue everything else is under control.

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EARTHTALK ™



Dear EarthTalk: I'm confused: Is China's government committed to fighting climate change or just making the problem worse?

—Paul J., Austin, TX

In the wake of the global climate summit in Glasgow, nations across the globe are not only self-reflecting, but also expecting others to carry their weight as we desperately try to keep the planet from warming. China is a common target for criticism when it comes to emissions; the most populous country on the planet uses fossil fuels for 87 percent of its energy production. To exacerbate the issue, 80 percent of that fossil fuel usage is represented by coal energy production. China is the world's largest producer of coal, consuming more than half of the global supply.

China's President Xi has responded to criticism surrounding the nation's coal production by pledging to phase down its coal usage starting in 2026 as well as halting construction on new coal plants abroad. While they will not be expanding coal plants to other countries, China has 60 new coal plants in production nationally, arguing that they have a right to pollute as they develop their country much like Western nations did to develop their economies.

China has been the world leader in carbon dioxide emissions since 2006, and today they are responsible for 25 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. While they have shown to be prolific polluters, the nation is also demonstrating that they are on the cutting edge of renewable energy. China leads the globe in solar energy production with 254,355 megawatts annually, while the next closest country, the United States, produces only 75,572 megawatts.

It is important to acknowledge that when it comes to the raw data associated with both greenhouse gas emissions and renewable energy production, China's 1.4 billion population (more than four times that of the U.S.) inflates those values. When broken down to the percentage of energy use, the United States and China are much closer than it seems. The United States uses renewable energy for nine percent of its total energy production while China's renewable energy production makes up ten percent of their total energy use. Both countries score as being "highly insufficient" according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in their efforts to reach emissions reduction goals required to mitigate warming.

China's latest announcement includes their goal to have emissions peak by 2030 and ultimately reach carbon neutrality by 2060. While this goal is far from being able to reduce the impacts of warming, environmental diplomats are optimistic that China will achieve these goals early, citing that China achieved nine of the 15 quantitative targets in its 2015 climate commitments ahead of schedule. Reducing emissions does not mean that China will cut all of their fossil fuel use, but they can also put effort into carbon sequestration through reforestation. China is getting greener at a rate faster than any other country with some areas increasing vegetation coverage by 16 percent per decade. On a global scale, while the sheer population of the country makes their pollution numbers seem much worse, they are on the same track as other global leaders like the United States: taking "green" strides, but just not fast enough.

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South Dakota COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

167

Active Cases

412
-4

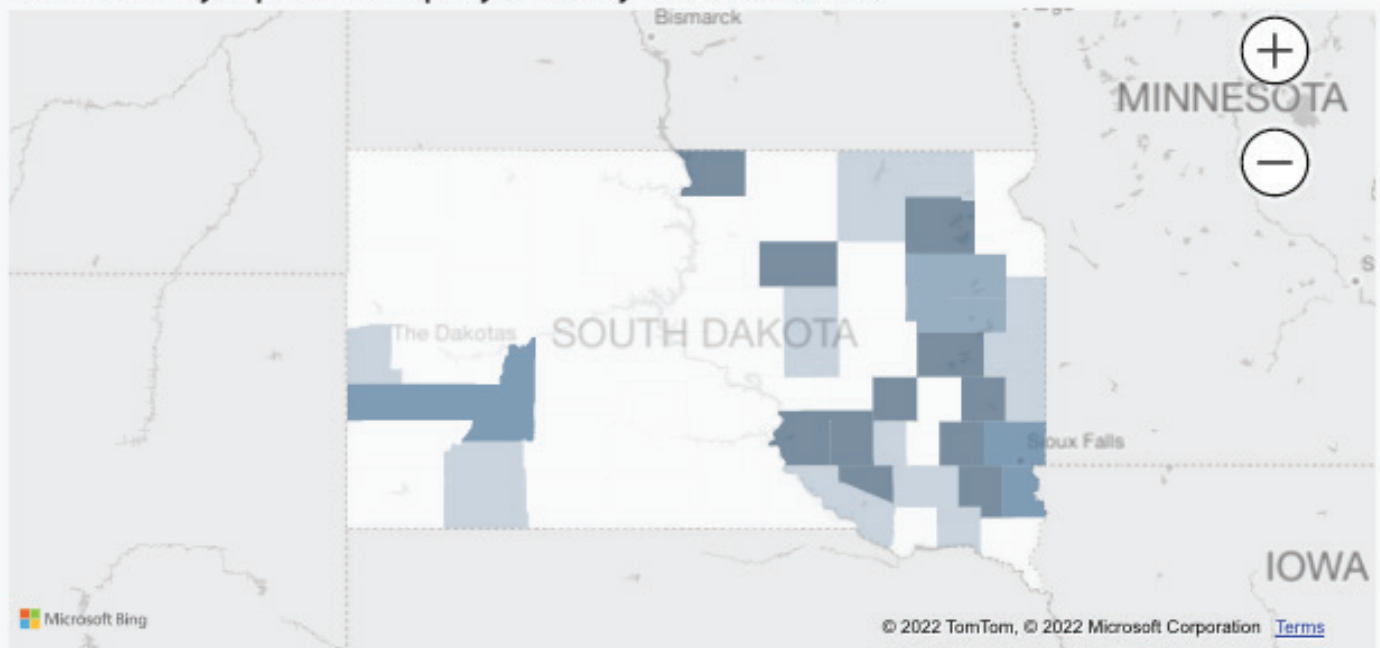
Recovered Cases

234,222

Currently Hospitalized

38

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

237,535

PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 7 Days

4.9%

4/12/2022 - 4/18/2022

Total Tests

2,155,506

Ever Hospitalized

10,745

Deaths Among Cases

2,901

% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)

169%

% Progress (March Goal: 44233 Tests)

100%

% Progress (April Goal: 44233 Tests)

34%

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Brown County COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

10

Active Cases

26
+5

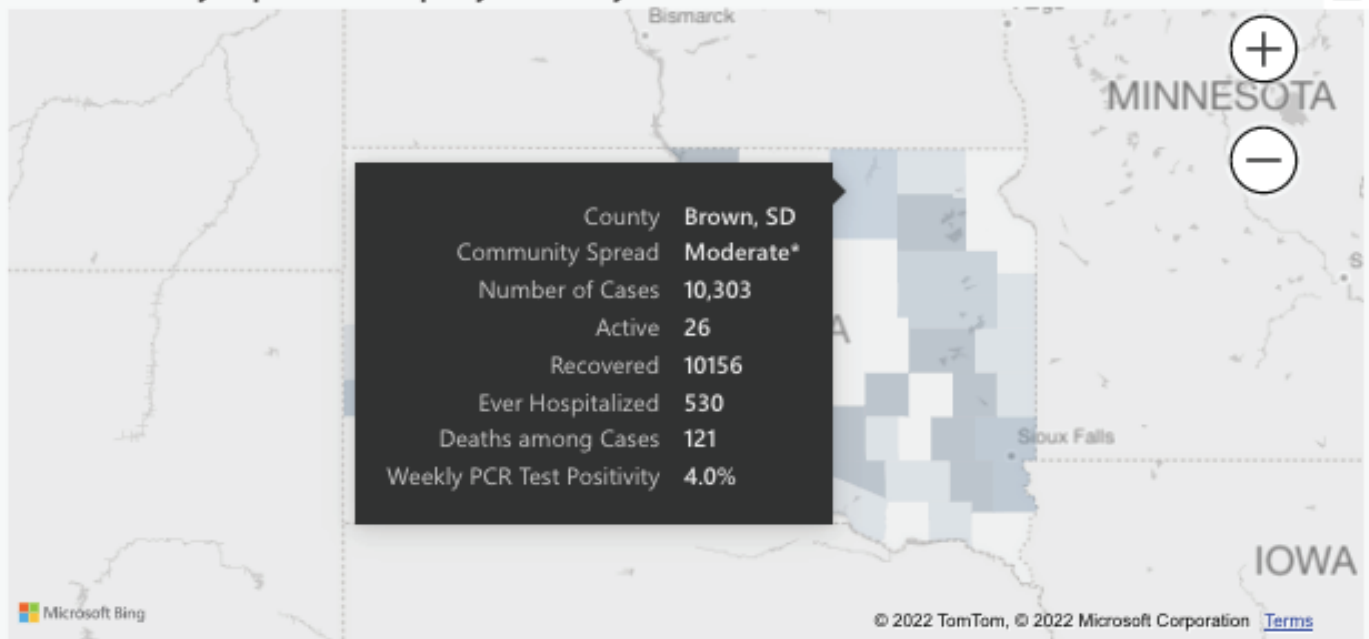
Recovered Cases

10,156

Currently Hospitalized

38

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

10,303

PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 7 Days

12.4%

4/12/2022 - 4/18/2022

Total Tests

103,685

Ever Hospitalized

530

Deaths Among Cases

121

% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)

169%

% Progress (March Goal: 44233 Tests)

100%

% Progress (April Goal: 44233 Tests)

34%

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Day County COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

3

Active Cases

10

No Change

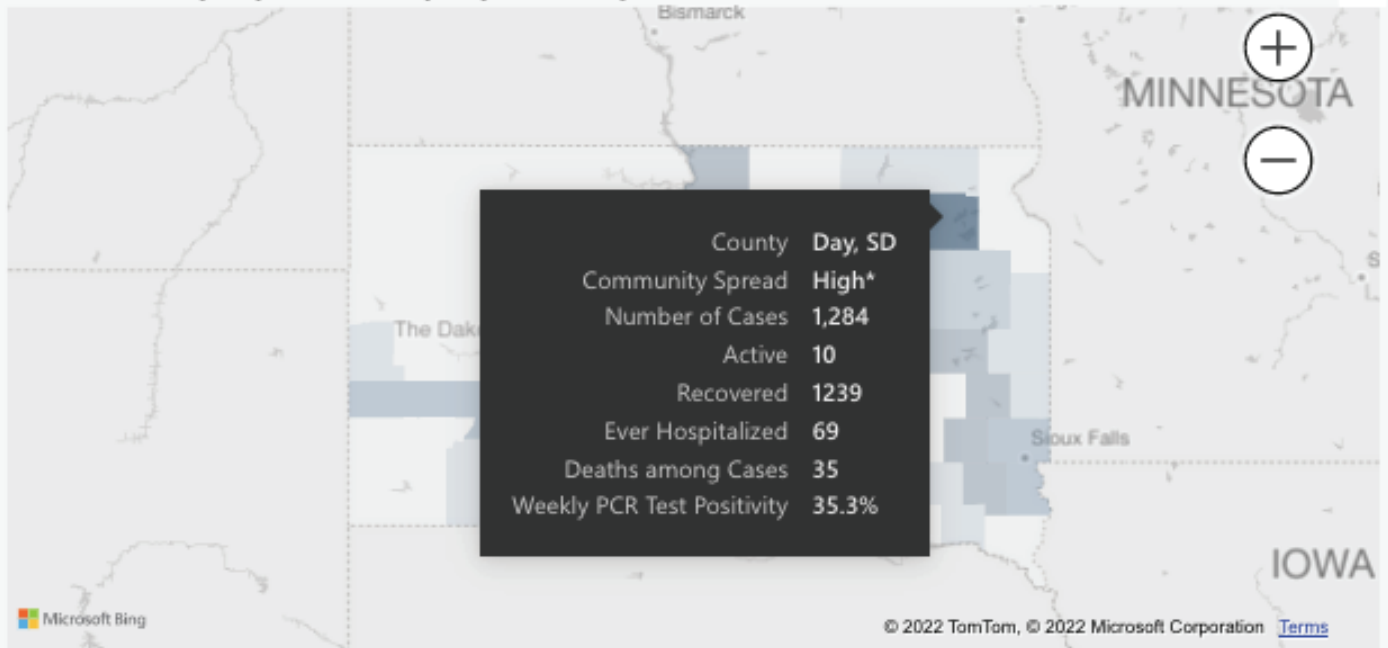
Recovered Cases

1,239

Currently Hospitalized

38

Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread ● Low ● Moderate ● Substantial ● High

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

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

Total Confirmed and Probable Cases

1,284

PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 7 Days

21.4%

4/12/2022 - 4/18/2022

Total Tests

16,972

Ever Hospitalized

69

Deaths Among Cases

35

% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)

169%

% Progress (March Goal: 44233 Tests)

100%

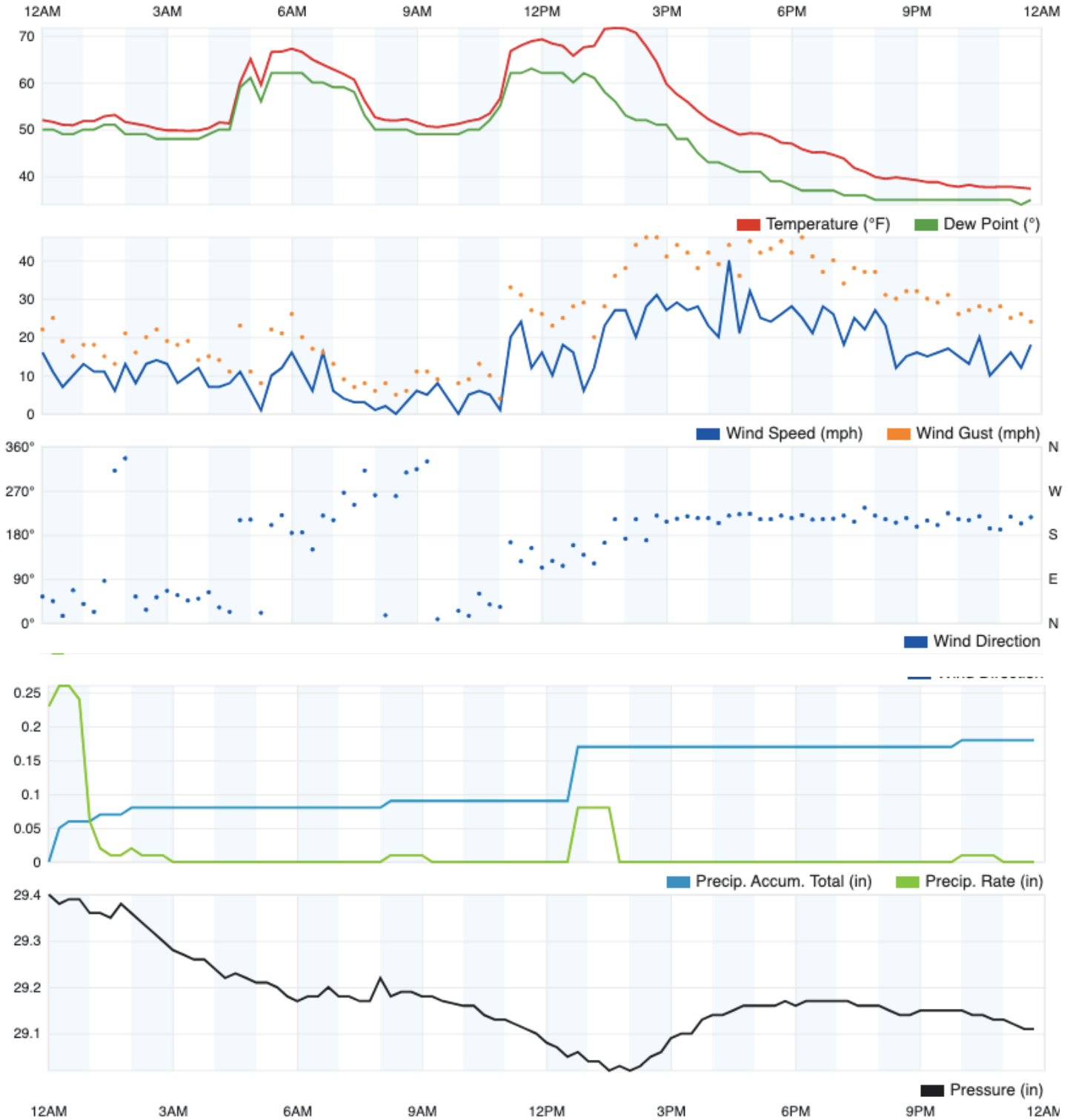
% Progress (April Goal: 44233 Tests)

34%

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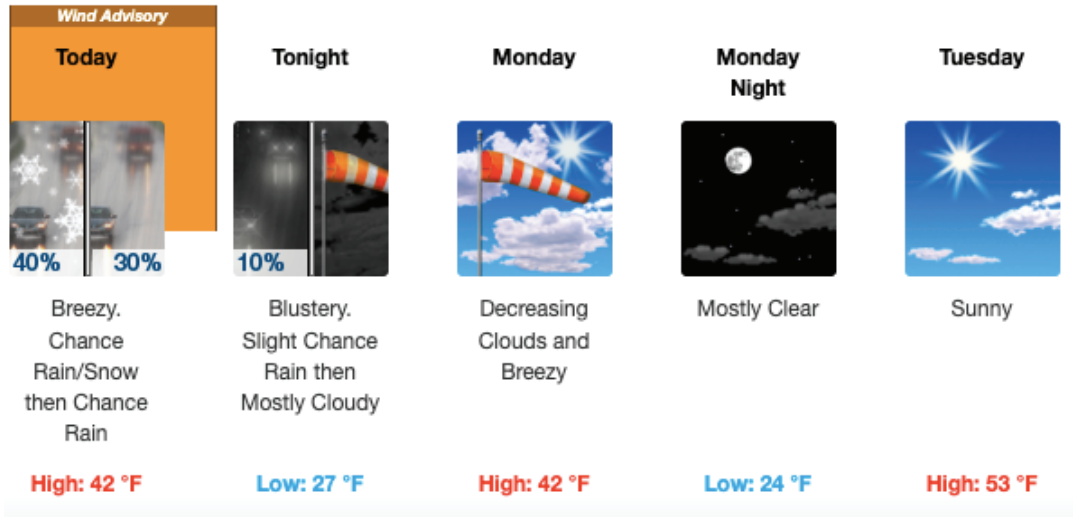
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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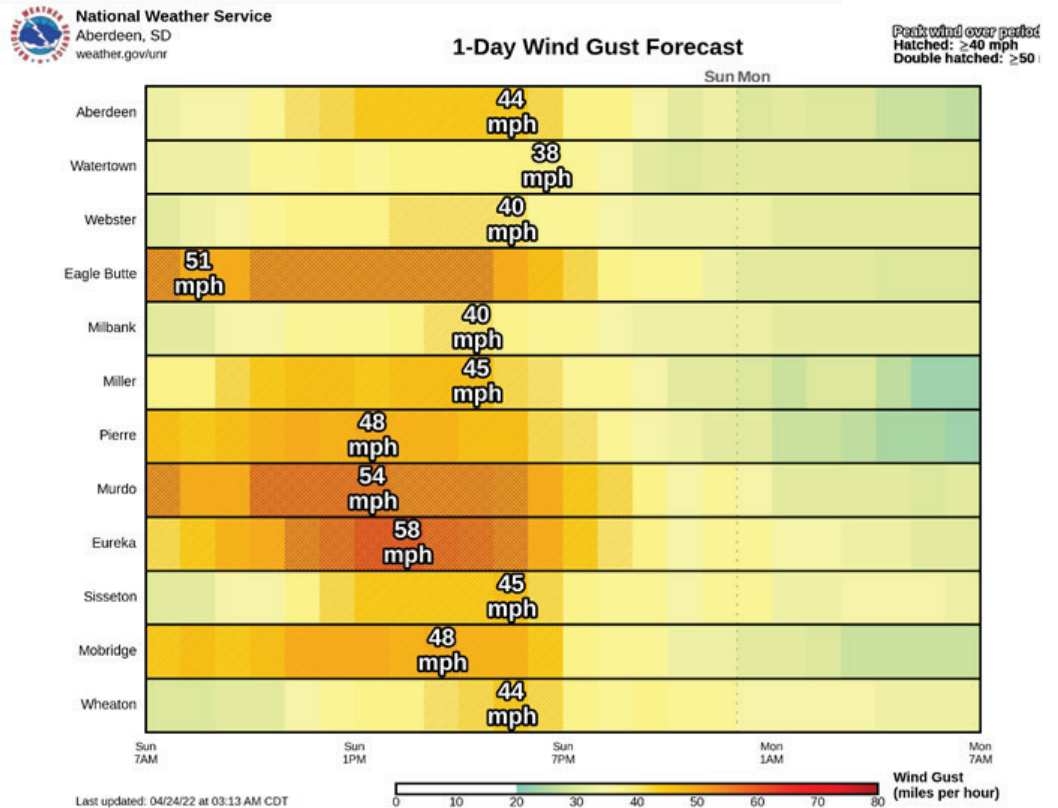


Another Windy Day Sunday, April 24th

Strong low pressure exits to the east today, leading to continued **strong northwest winds with peak gusts of 40 to 60 mph**. Winds decrease this evening, but breezy conditions continue through Monday afternoon. **Hazardous travel is possible for drivers of high-profile vehicles.**

Light rain/snow and then rain showers are possible through the day, with cloudy skies.

Updated: 4/24/2022 5:06 AM Central



Strong low pressure exits to the east today, leading to continued strong northwest winds with peak gusts of 40 to 60 mph. Winds decrease this evening, but breezy conditions continue through Monday afternoon. Hazardous travel is possible for drivers of high-profile vehicles. Light rain/snow and then rain showers are possible through the day, with cloudy skies.

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Chilly For April Sunday, April 24th

High temperatures will be in the upper 30s to mid 40s today, around 20 degrees below normal. Tonight, lows drop into the 20s, and when combined with the breezy conditions, **it'll feel as cold as 10 to 20 degrees across the area into Monday morning.** Bundle up!

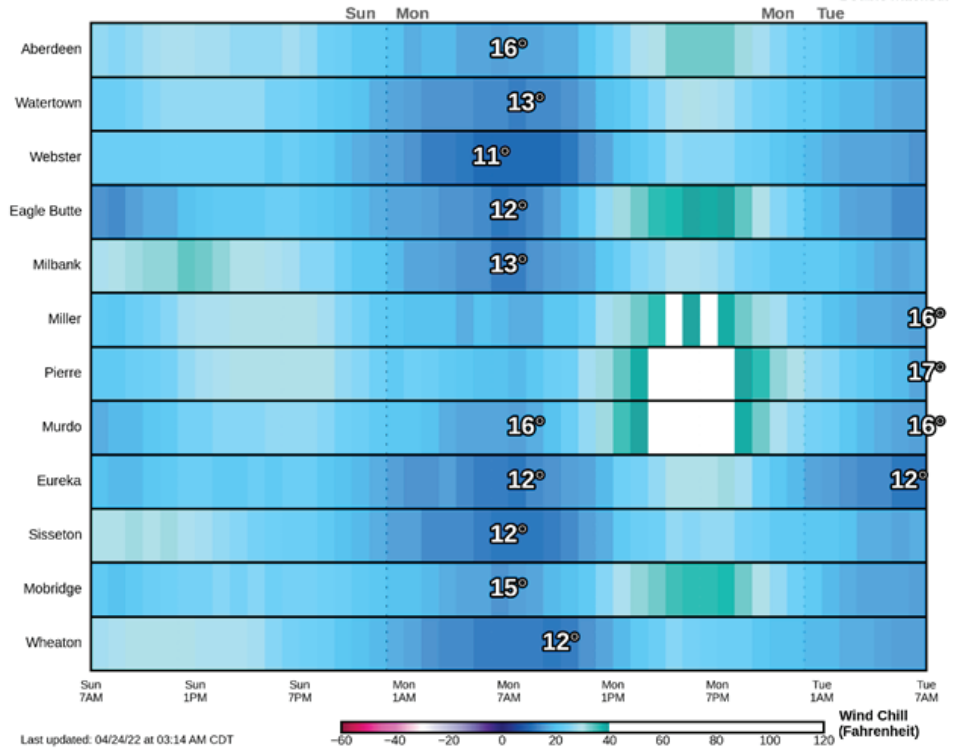
Below normal temperatures continue through Monday night. Then, a warming trend Tuesday through Thursday.

Updated: 4/24/2022 5:09 AM Central



2-Day Wind Chill Forecast

Min wind chill over past
Hatched: ≤ -25°
Double hatched: ≤ -35°



High temperatures will be in the upper 30s to mid-40s today, around 20 degrees below normal. Tonight, lows drop into the 20s, and when combined with the breezy conditions, it'll feel as cold as 10 to 20 degrees across the area into Monday night. Bundle up! Below normal temperatures continue through Monday night. Then, a warming trend Tuesday through Thursday.

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Today in Weather History

April 24, 1948: A significant F2 tornado moved northeast from South of Castlewood to near Goodwin. Barns were destroyed on two farms. Also on this day, two other tornadoes were observed in South Dakota. One moved from Turner County on into Minnehaha County, injuring two people. The other touchdown 3 miles Southeast of Sioux Falls, destroying barns and other buildings on the west edge of Brandon.

1880: Several tornadoes affected parts of central and southwest Illinois. One tornado of F4 intensity touched down near Jerseyville and killed one person along the 18-mile path. Another F4 tornado passed just north of Carlinville and lifted near Atwater, destroying 50 buildings. Six people died in Christian County by an F5 tornado, which tracked from 9 miles southwest of Taylorville to near Sharpsburg.

1899 - Two women and one son lived to tell the story of being picked up by a tornado and carried more than a fourth of a mile, flying far above the church steeples, before being gently set down again. The young boy and one of the ladies said they had the pleasure of flying alongside a horse. The horse "kicked and struggled" as it flew high above, and was set down unharmed about a mile away. (The Weather Channel)

1908: Severe thunderstorms spawned eighteen tornadoes over across the Central Gulf Coast States claiming the lives of 310 persons. The state of Mississippi was hardest hit. A tornado near Hattiesburg, Mississippi killed 143 persons and caused more than half a million dollars damage. Four violent tornadoes accounted for 279 of the 310 deaths. The deadliest of the four tornadoes swelled to a width of 2.5 miles as it passed near Amite, Louisiana. The tornado also leveled most of Purvis Mississippi.

1987 - Showers and thunderstorms produced heavy rain in the Middle Atlantic Coast Region. Up to seven inches of rain drenched Virginia in three days. Morgantown WV received 4.27 inches in 24 hours, and flooding was reported in south central West Virginia. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Low pressure produced high winds and severe thunderstorms in the Southern Plains Region. Strong thunderstorm winds destroyed two mobile homes at Whitt TX injuring two persons. Winds associated with the low pressure system gusted to 70 mph at Guadalupe Pass TX. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Twenty cities in the central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Russell KS was the hot spot in the nation with a reading of 101 degrees. Evening thunderstorms produced severe weather from Colorado to Wisconsin. Hail four and a half inches in diameter was reported at Sargeant NE. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from the Southern High Plains to north central Kansas. Thunderstorms spawned ten tornadoes, including one which injured four persons and caused 1.5 million dollars damage at Shattuck OK. Thunderstorms also produced softball size hail at Wheeler TX, wind gusts to 85 mph southwest of Arnett OK, and 13.45 inches of rain near Caldwell TX, which resulted in the worst flooding in recent memory for that area. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2003: The temperature soared to a maximum of 70 degrees in Juneau, Alaska. This is the earliest record of 70-degree reading to occur in Juneau.

2010: April Tornado Outbreak- During a significant severe weather outbreak across the South on April 22-25, 142 tornadoes raked the region, including 77 on April 24 alone. Ten died from the long-track tornado that swept across Mississippi on April 24. A long-lived twister left a trail of destruction extending over 149 miles from Louisiana through Mississippi, resulting in 10 deaths and 75 injuries. This EF4 storm, which grew to a width of 1.75 miles, sported the fourth longest track in Mississippi history. This storm destroyed part of Yazoo City, Mississippi. The Swiss Reinsurance Company estimated insured damages with this outbreak at \$1.58 billion.

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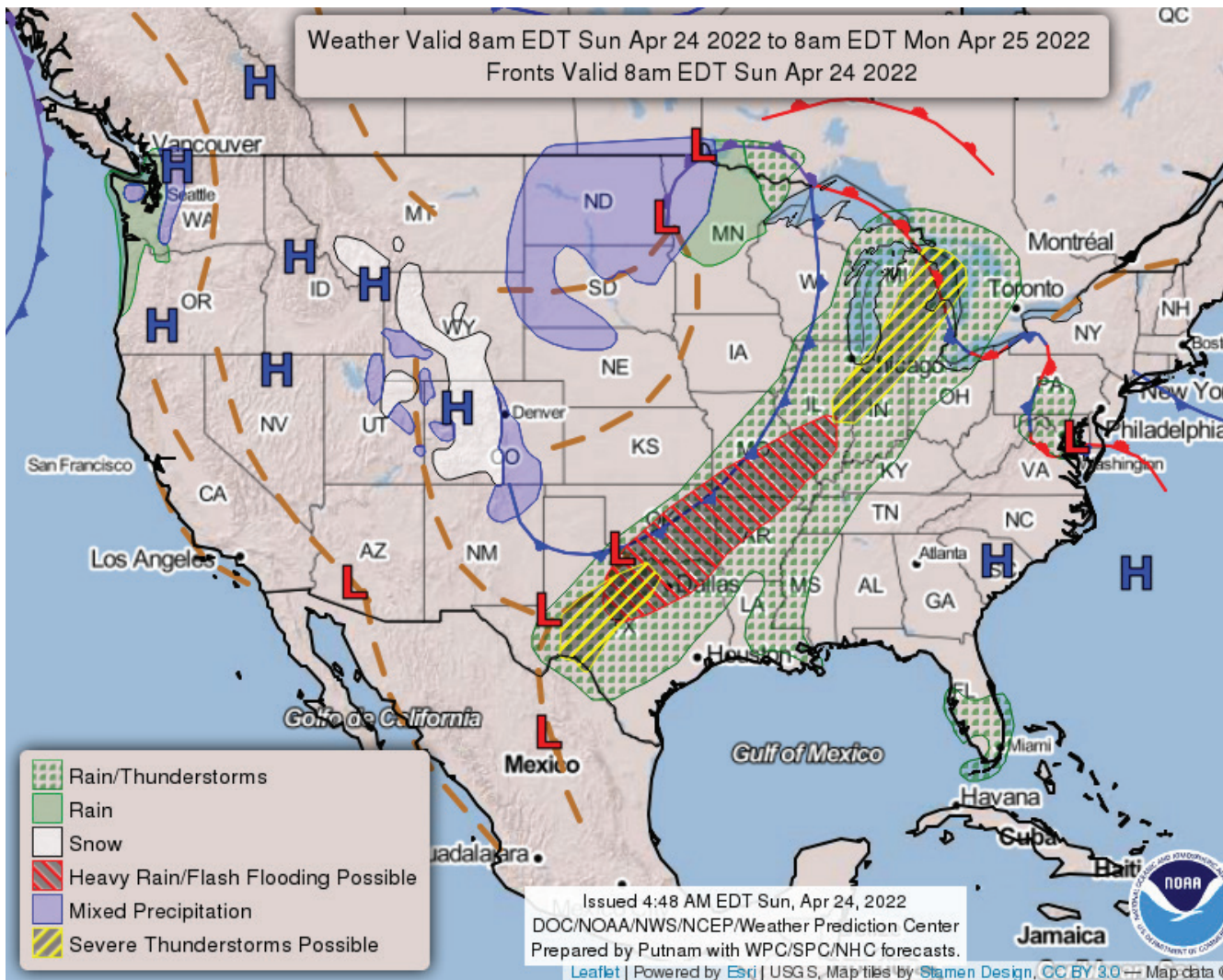
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 72 °F at 1:37 PM
Low Temp: 37 °F at 11:54 PM
Wind: 46 mph at 2:28 PM
Precip: 0.09

Day length: 14 hours, 02 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 92 in 1962
Record Low: 17 in 1956
Average High: 62°F
Average Low: 35°F
Average Precip in April.: 1.36
Precip to date in April.: 3.13
Average Precip to date: 3.42
Precip Year to Date: 4.93
Sunset Tonight: 8:31:33 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:27:47 AM



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BEING ALONE IS A CHOICE

We all enter this world alone, and we all depart this world alone. But we do not need to go through life alone.

A visitor walked through the Garden and then came into the office. After sitting quietly for a moment, he began to weep loudly, his body trembling. "You know," he said, "I am so alone and so misunderstood. I wish I belonged to somebody, anybody. I hate life with all of its bitterness and loneliness. I am afraid to die."

Continuing, he said, "I have wealth and property, success and influence. But I would rather feel accepted by someone, anyone in exchange for all of my possessions."

Unfortunately, he was not aware of our Father. The Psalmist said, "O, Lord, You have searched me and You know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; You perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; You are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue, You know it completely, O Lord."

Many lead lonely lives because of a fear of being known - or as some might say, "being found out." Being "known" comes from a fear of not being acceptable to others for who we are or what we might have done in the past. "If you know me," so it seems, "you probably won't like me."

Perhaps that may be true of people, but not God! He has searched us, knows everything about us, and in spite of it all loves us so much that "He gave His only begotten Son to die on our behalf so we can be saved." And if we accept His salvation, He'll never leave us nor forsake us.

Prayer: Thank You, Father, that You offer us a love we do not deserve and Your salvation that we cannot earn. Even though You do know us, You do love us! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: O, Lord, You have searched me and You know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; You perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; You are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue, You know it completely, O Lord. Psalm139:2-4

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2022 Community Events

- 01/30/2022 84th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
01/30/2022 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am – 1pm, Groton Community Center, 109 N 3rd St, Groton,
04/07/2022 Groton CDE
04/09/2022 Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)
04/09/2022 Dueling Pianos Baseball Fundraiser at the Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm
04/23/2022 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
04/24/2022 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)
05/07/2022 Lions Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sales 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
St John's Lutheran Church VBS 9-11am
05/30/2022 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
Transit Fundraiser at the Community Center 4-7pm (Thursday Mid-June)
06/17/2022 SDSU Alumni & Friends Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 12pm Start
06/18/2022 Groton Triathlon
Ladies Invitational at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration 10am Start
07/04/2022 Firecracker Couples Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration, 10am Start
(4th of July)
07/10/2022 Lions Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar 11am-1pm at the Groton Legion
Baseball Tourney
07/21/2022 Pro Am Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
Ferney Open Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start
How can we... "Love Groton"? United Methodist Church 9:30am
Moonlight Swim at the Swimming Pool 9-11pm for 9th grade to age 20
Golf Fundraiser Lunch at Olive Grove Golf Course 11a-1pm
08/05/2022 Wine on Nine at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm
08/12/2022 GHS Basketball Golf Tournament
United Methodist Church VBS 5-8pm
Groton Firemen Summer Splash Day 4-5pm GHS Parking Lot
09/10/2022 Lions Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
6th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3:30-5pm
09/11/2022 Couples Sunflower Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 12pm
Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
10/14/2022 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am (2nd Friday in October)
10/01/2022 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
10/31/2022 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)
10/31/2022 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
11/12/2022 Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
11/24/2022 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)
12/03/2022 Tour of Homes & Holiday Party at Olive Grove Golf Course
Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-12pm
01/29/2023 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)

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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

04-10-25-27-30

(four, ten, twenty-five, twenty-seven, thirty)

Estimated jackpot: \$20,000

Lotto America

06-15-31-43-46, Star Ball: 3, ASB: 3

(six, fifteen, thirty-one, forty-three, forty-six; Star Ball: three; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$11.82 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$31 million

Powerball

10-39-47-49-56, Powerball: 8, Power Play: 3

(ten, thirty-nine, forty-seven, forty-nine, fifty-six; Powerball: eight; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$400 million

Ukraine marks Orthodox Easter with prayers for those trapped

By CARA ANNA and INNA VARENYTSIA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The sun came out as Ukrainians marked Orthodox Easter in the capital, Kyiv, on Sunday with prayers for those fighting on the front lines and others trapped beyond them in places like Mariupol.

St. Volodymyr's Cathedral in Kyiv was ringed by hundreds of worshipers with baskets to be blessed. Inside, a woman clutched the arm of a soldier, turning briefly to kiss his elbow. Other soldiers prayed, holding handful of candles, then crossed themselves. An older woman slowly made her way through the crowd and stands of flickering candles. One young woman held daffodils.

Outside the cathedral, a soldier who gave only his first name, Mykhailo, used his helmet as an Easter basket. He said he didn't have another.

"I hope I'll only have to use the helmet for this," he said.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at a service elsewhere in Kyiv urged Ukrainians not to let anger at the war overwhelm them.

"All of us believe our sunrise will come soon," he said.

The spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians called for the opening of humanitarian corridors in Ukraine, saying a "human tragedy" was unfolding in the country.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I spoke Saturday night in Istanbul during midnight Mass. He is considered first among equals among Eastern Orthodox patriarchs, which gives him prominence but not the power of a Catholic pope.

With the Orthodox church split by the tensions between Russia and Ukraine, some worshippers hoped the holy day could inspire gestures of peacemaking. "The church can help," said one man who gave only his first name, Serhii, as he came to a church in Kyiv under the Moscow Patriarchate.

He and others brought baskets to be blessed by priests for Easter, with flicks of a brush sprinkling holy water over offerings of home-dyed eggs, lighted candles and even bottles of Jack Daniels.

Residents of rural villages battered by the war approached the holiday with some defiance.

"We'll celebrate Easter no matter what, no matter much horror," said Kateryna Lazarenko, 68, in the northern village of Ivanivka outside Chernihiv, where ruined Russian tanks still littered the roads.

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"How do I feel? Very nervous, everyone is nervous," said another resident, Olena Koptyl, as she prepared her Easter bread. "The Easter holiday doesn't bring any joy. I'm crying a lot. We cannot forget how we lived." She and 12 others spent a month sheltering from Russian soldiers in the basement of her home before the soldiers withdrew.

Ukraine on Sunday prepared for the first high-level U.S. trip to Kyiv since before the war began on Feb. 24 after Zelenskyy announced he would meet with Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin.

Zelenskyy in a news conference Saturday night gave few details but said he expected results — "not just presents or some kind of cakes, we are expecting specific things and specific weapons."

10 of 26 people from sunken Japan tour boat confirmed dead

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Rescuers said that 10 people who were retrieved Sunday from the frigid sea and the rocky coast of a northern Japanese national park had died, a day after a tour boat with 26 aboard apparently sank in rough waters, triggering questions why it was allowed to sail.

The search for the others is still ongoing after the boat sent a distress call on Saturday afternoon saying it was sinking. The location, near the Kashuni Waterfall, is known as a difficult place to maneuver boats because of its rocky coastline and strong tide.

There were two crew and 24 passengers, including two children, on the the 19-ton Kazu 1 when it ran into troubles while traveling off the western coast of the Shiretoko Peninsula. The coast guard said the 10 victims — seven men and three women — were adults.

The Transport Ministry launched an investigation into the boat's operator, which had two accidents last year. The ministry said it was looking into safety standards and the decision to conduct the tour despite rough weather on Saturday.

The operator, Shiretoko Pleasure Cruise, had been instructed to take steps to improve its safety following earlier accidents in which it ran aground in June without causing injuries, and another in May, when three passengers suffered minor injuries when the boat collided with an object.

"We will thoroughly investigate what caused this situation and what kind of safety oversight was involved to allow the tour in order to prevent another accident," Transport Minister Tetsuo Saito, who visited the area Sunday, told reporters.

Following an intensive search involving six patrol boats, several aircraft and divers that went through the night, rescuers on early Sunday found four people near the tip of Shiretoko Peninsula and later six more in the same area, about 14 kilometers (8.7 miles) north from where the boat sent a distress call. Some of them were plucked from the sea, while others were washed onto the rocky coast.

An orange-colored, square-shaped lifesaving float with the boat's name on it was also found near the rocks, the coast guard said.

Footage on public broadcaster NHK showed one of the victims arriving on a helicopter and being transferred to an ambulance on a stretcher. Rescuers held up blue plastic shields to protect the victim's privacy.

The sightseeing vessel made an emergency call early Saturday afternoon, saying its bow had flooded and that it was beginning to sink and tilt, the coast guard said. Contact with the boat had since been lost. The coast guard said the operator told them that everyone on the boat was wearing a life vest, but some of the victims found were without them.

Average April sea temperatures in Shiretoko National Park are just above freezing, which experts say would cause hypothermia.

"It's a very severe condition especially when they are wet," Jun Abe, vice chairman of the Society of Water Rescue and Survival Research, told TBS TV.

Yoshihiko Yamada, a Tokai University marine science professor, said the boat was likely to have run aground after it was tossed around in high waves and damaged. A boat of that size usually does not carry a life boat, he said.

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Prime Minister Fumio Kishida cut short his attendance at a two-day summit in Kumamoto in southern Japan and returned to Tokyo. He told reporters early Sunday that he instructed officials "to do everything they can for the rescue."

The cause of the accident is under investigation, but officials and experts suspect a safety negligence. High waves and strong winds were forecast when the boat left and Japanese media reports said fishing boats had returned to port before noon Saturday because of the bad weather.

A tour boat crew belonging to another operator told NHK that he warned the Kazu 1 crew of rough seas and told them not to go. He also said the same boat ran aground last year and suffered a crack on its bow.

Saturday's tour was reportedly the first by the operator this season, and the accident just before Japan's Golden Week holidays starting late April could dampen local tourism, which slumped during the pandemic. Japan is still largely closed to foreign visitors.

Hokkaido Gov. Naomichi Suzuki told reporters Sunday that he planned to request safety checks by tour operators in the prefecture ahead of the holidays.

According to the operator's website, the tour takes around three hours and offers scenic views of the western coast of the peninsula and a chance to see whales, dolphins and brown bears. The national park is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site and is famous as the southernmost region to see drifting sea ice.

Macron vs Le Pen: France votes in tense presidential runoff

By THOMAS ADAMSON and PATRICK HERMANSEN Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — France voted in a presidential runoff election Sunday with repercussions for Europe's future, with centrist incumbent Emmanuel Macron the front-runner but fighting a tough challenge from far-right rival Marine Le Pen.

The centrist Macron is asking voters to trust him for a second five-year term despite a presidency troubled by protests, the pandemic and the war in Ukraine. A Macron victory in this vote would make him the first French president in 20 years to win a second term.

The result of voting in France, a nuclear-armed nation with one of the world's biggest economies, could also impact the conflict in Ukraine, as France has played a key role in diplomatic efforts and support for sanctions against Russia.

Le Pen's support in France's electorate has grown during this campaign to her highest level ever, and much will depend Sunday on how many people turn out to vote. Participation was 26.1% at midday, slightly higher than at the same point in the first-round vote April 10.

Many of those expected to choose Macron are doing so to keep out Le Pen and ideas seen as too extreme and anti-democratic, such as her plan to ban the Muslim headscarf in public, or her ties to Russia.

"I am serene," she said as she cast her ballot in the northern town of Henin-Beaumont. "I have confidence in the French." She took selfies with fans, as Macron greeted crowds with handshakes and embraces in the English Channel coastal town of Le Touquet.

Both candidates are trying to court the 7.7 million votes of leftist candidate Jean-Luc Melenchon, who was defeated in the first round on April 10.

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

Voting west of Paris in the suburb of Le Pecq, Stephanie David cast her ballot for Macron "without much joy." She had voted for the Communist Party candidate in round one.

"It was the least worst choice," said the transport logistics worker. Le Pen was anathema to her: "Even if she tries to soften her rhetoric, I can't stomach it."

All opinion polls in recent days converge toward a win for the 44-year-old pro-European Macron — yet the margin over his 53-year-old far-right rival varies broadly. Polls also forecast a possibly record-high number of people who will either cast a blank vote or not vote at all.

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Retiree Jean-Pierre Roux voted to keep out Le Pen's father Jean-Marie in the 2002 runoff and again against his daughter in 2017. But Roux could not bring himself to vote Macron again this time. He put an empty envelope in the voting box. He said he regarded Macron as too arrogant to vote for again, citing a common complaint of the president that Le Pen echoed, too.

"I am not against his ideas but I cannot stand the person," he said.

Le Pen has sought to appeal to working class voters struggling with surging prices amid the fallout of Russia's war in Ukraine -- an approach that even Macron acknowledged has found resonance in the wider public. She said bringing down the cost of living would be her priority if elected as France's first woman president, and she portrayed herself as the candidate for voters unable to make ends meet.

She says that Macron's presidency has left the country deeply divided. She has repeatedly referenced the so-called yellow vest protest movement that rocked his government before the COVID-19 pandemic, with months of violent demonstrations against his economic policies that some thought hurt the poorest.

France's presidential campaign has been especially challenging for voters of immigrant heritage and religious minorities, notably because of Le Pen's proposed policies targeting Muslims.

Macron has also touted his environmental and climate accomplishments in a bid to draw in young voters popular with far left candidates. Citizens and especially millennials voted in droves for Melenchon. Many young voters are particularly engaged with climate issues.

Although Macron was associated 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. Macron has said his next prime minister would be placed in charge of environmental planning as France seeks to become carbon neutral by 2050.

Le Pen, once considered a climate-change skeptic, wants to scrap subsidies for renewable energies. She vowed to dismantle windfarms and invest in nuclear and hydro energy.

Ukrainian steel plant bombed; Zelenskyy to meet US officials

By DAVID KEYTON and YESICA FISCH Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian forces called in airstrikes on a besieged steel factory in the southern city of Mariupol to try to dislodge the last Ukrainian troops holding out in the strategic port, Ukrainian officials said Sunday, while President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he would meet in Kyiv with two top American officials.

Zelenskyy gave few details about the logistics of his planned talks with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on what was the 60th day since Russia invaded Ukraine. But he told reporters he expected the Americans to come bringing "not just presents or some kind of cakes, we are expecting specific things and specific weapons."

The visit would be the first to Ukraine's capital by high-level U.S. officials since the invasion began Feb. 24. While visiting Poland in March, Blinken stepped briefly onto Ukrainian soil to meet with the country's foreign minister. Zelenskyy's last face-to-face meeting with a U.S. leader was Feb. 19 in Munich with Vice President Kamala Harris.

The meeting was set to take place as Ukrainians and Russians observed Orthodox Easter, an occasion Zelenskyy highlighted the allegorical significance of to a nation wracked by nearly two months of war.

"The great holiday today gives us great hope and unwavering faith that light will overcome darkness, good will overcome evil, life will overcome death, and therefore Ukraine will surely win!" he said, speaking Sunday from the ancient St. Sophia Cathedral.

Russia has been trying to take Mariupol for nearly two months, and the city on the Sea of Azov has seen some of the war's worst deprivations. Its capture would deprive Ukraine of a vital port, free up Russian troops to fight elsewhere, and establish a land corridor to the Crimean Peninsula, which Moscow seized in 2014.

Some 2,000 troops have been fighting tenaciously to hold on to the last remaining Ukrainian outpost in the city, the Azovstal steel plant, which also has civilians taking refuge in its labyrinthine tunnel system.

Russian forces have continued to pummel the plant, hitting it with air strikes, including by long-range

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aircraft, Oleksandr Shtupun, spokesman for the Ukrainian Armed Forces General Staff, said Sunday.

Mariupol has been blockaded for most of the war. Ukrainian officials have said they expect to find thousands of dead civilians and evidence of war crimes there when the fighting ends. Satellite images have shown what appear to be mass graves dug in towns to the west and east of Mariupol.

In the last day, Russia also pressed its attacks elsewhere in the eastern Donbas region, where Moscow-backed separatists controlled some territory before the war and the Russians are aiming to gain full control over Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland.

Shtupun said Russian forces intensified their assault operations toward the cities of Popasna and Siverodonetsk in Luhansk, and Kurakhiv in Donetsk. Luhansk regional Gov. Serhiy Haidai said Sunday that eight people were killed and two others were wounded in a Russian barrage on Saturday.

The Russians also have shelled the Dnipro region west of Donbas, where at least one person was killed by a Russian missile, according to regional Gov. Valentyn Reznichenko.

Russia has pulled back forces from Kyiv, and the north of the country to feed into the Donbas offensive, but the British Ministry of Defense said Sunday that Ukrainian forces had repelled numerous assaults in the past week.

"Despite Russia making some territorial gains, Ukrainian resistance has been strong across all axes and inflicted significant cost on Russian forces," the ministry said in an intelligence update.

"Poor Russian morale and limited time to reconstitute, re-equip and reorganize forces from prior offensives are likely hindering Russian combat effectiveness," it said.

In attacks on the eve of Orthodox Easter, Russian forces pounded cities and towns in southern and eastern Ukraine. A 3-month-old baby was among eight people killed when Russia fired cruise missiles at the Black Sea port city of Odesa, officials said. Zelenskyy said 18 more were wounded.

"The war started when this baby was one month old. Can you imagine what is happening?" Zelenskyy said. "They are just bastards. ... I don't have any other words for it, just bastards."

The Ukrainian military said Saturday it destroyed a Russian command post in Kherson, a southern city that fell to Russian forces early in the war.

The command post was hit on Friday, killing two generals and critically wounding another, the Ukrainian military intelligence agency said in a statement. The Russian military did not comment on the claim, which could not be confirmed.

If true, at least nine Russian generals have been killed since the start of the invasion, according to Ukrainian reports.

On Saturday the Azov Regiment of Ukraine's National Guard, which has members holed up in the Mariupol steel plant, released a video of around two dozen women and children sheltering there. Its contents could not be independently verified, but if authentic, it would be the first video testimony of what life has been like for civilians trapped underground there.

The video shows soldiers giving sweets to children who respond with fist-bumps. One young girl said she and her relatives had "seen neither the sky nor the sun" since they left home Feb. 27.

The regiment's deputy commander, Sviatoslav Palamar, told the AP the video was shot Thursday. The Azov Regiment has its roots in the Azov Battalion, which was formed by far-right activists in 2014 at the start of the separatist conflict in eastern Ukraine and has elicited criticism for some of its tactics.

More than 100,000 people — down from a prewar population of about 430,000 — are believed to remain in Mariupol with scant food, water or heat. Ukrainian authorities estimate that over 20,000 civilians have been killed in the city.

Yet another attempt to evacuate women, children and older adults from Mariupol failed Saturday. Petro Andryushchenko, an adviser to Mariupol's mayor, said Russian forces did not allow Ukrainian-organized buses to take residents to Zaporizhzhia, a city 227 kilometers (141 miles) to the northwest.

Yemen war sides fail to operate 1st flight as part of truce

By AHMED AL-HAJ and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

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SANAA, Yemen (AP) — Yemen's warring parties failed to operate the first commercial flight in six years from the rebel-held capital Sunday in a blow to an already fragile truce in the country's grinding conflict.

The flight, with an Amman, Jordan destination, had been planned as part of the U.N.-brokered, 60-day truce agreement that the internationally recognized government and the Houthi rebels struck earlier this month.

The truce, which went into effect on April 2, is the first nationwide cease-fire in Yemen in six years. It came amid concerted international and regional efforts to find a settlement to the conflict that devastated the Arab World's poorest country and pushed it to the brink of famine.

Yemen's brutal civil war erupted in 2014, when the Iranian-backed Houthis seized the capital of Sanaa and forced the government into exile. The Saudi-led coalition entered the war in early 2015 to try restore the government to power.

The conflict has in recent years become a regional proxy war that has killed more than 150,000 people, including over 14,500 civilians. It has also created one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world.

As part of the truce, the two sides agreed to operate two commercial flights a week to and from Sanaa to Jordan and Egypt. Sanaa is blockaded by the Saudi-led coalition.

However, both sides failed to operate the first flight more than three weeks since the truce took effect. They have traded blame for the failure.

The Houthis accused the Saudi-led coalition of failing to issue needed permits for the flight without giving further details.

Moammar al-Iryani, information minister of the internationally recognized government, said the Houthis did not adhere to the agreement by providing passengers with passports issued by the rebels.

He said the government allowed the travel of 104 passengers on the Sanaa-Amman flight but the Houthis insisted on adding 60 more passengers "with unreliable passports."

The internationally recognized government announced in March 2017 that it doesn't recognize documents issued by the rebels.

A spokesman for the Houthis did not respond to a request for comment.

Hans Grundberg, the U.N. special envoy for Yemen, urged both sides to "work constructively" with the U.N. to address the challenges that delayed the flight.

"The Truce is meant to benefit civilians including through reducing violence, making fuel available, and improving their freedom of movement to, from and within their country," he said on Twitter. He did not elaborate.

Along with the flights, the truce also included allowing 18 vessels carrying fuel into the port of Hodeida, which is controlled by the Houthis.

The sides have also yet to convene on a reopening of roads around Taiz and other provinces as part of the truce. The government accused the Houthis of delaying the meeting as they did not send their delegation's members to the U.N. envoy's office where the meeting was to be held.

Erin Hutchinson, Yemen director at the Norwegian Refugee Council, said she was deeply disappointed by the last-minute cancellation of the flight. She urged both sides to adhere to their commitments in the truce, including the flights and the reopening of roads in Taiz and elsewhere in Yemen.

"The first few weeks of the truce have already allowed us to reach areas that were inaccessible for over three years because of the fighting," she said.

The truce has resulted in a subsiding of ground and air fighting and the rebels have stopped their cross-border attacks on Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, another pillar of the anti-Houthi coalition.

Both sides, however, have reported almost daily violations of the cease-fire, especially around the government-held central city of Marib, which the Houthis have attempted to seize for over a year.

Slovenians vote in tight race between populists, liberals

By ALI ZERDIN Associated Press

LJUBLJANA, Slovenia (AP) — Slovenians are casting ballots Sunday in a parliamentary election that is

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expected to be a tight race between the ruling right-wing populist party of Prime Minister Janez Jansa and opposition green-liberals in the politically divided European Union nation.

About 1.7 million voters will choose from an array of parties running for seats in the 90-member legislature. The ruling conservative Slovenian Democratic Party and newly formed Freedom Movement have led polls ahead of the vote.

Surveys, however, have suggested that there will be no clear winner in the election and that a coalition government will have to be formed after the vote, made up of at least three or four parties.

"Today is an important day as these elections decide how Slovenia will develop not only in the next four years, but in the next decade," Jansa said upon voting on Sunday. "Expectations are good."

Jansa became prime minister a little over two years ago after the previous liberal premier resigned. An admirer of former U.S. President Donald Trump, Jansa has pushed the country to the right since taking over at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The main challenger Sunday is U.S.-educated former business executive Robert Golob and his Freedom Movement party. The party has advocated green energy transition and sustainable development over Jansa's nation-centered narrative.

The two blocs are projected to win an almost equal number of votes — around 20-25% — which would mean the composition and course of the future government could depend on which smaller groups pass the 4% election threshold. Observers have given Golob better chance than Jansa of gathering a post-election alliance.

Jansa's SDS won the most votes in an election four years ago, but couldn't initially find partners for a coalition government. He took over after lawmakers from centrist and left-leaning groups switched sides following the resignation in 2020 of liberal Prime Minister Marjan Sarec.

Jansa has since faced accusations of sliding toward authoritarian rule in the style of his ally, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban. Jansa came under EU scrutiny amid reports that he pressured opponents and public media, and installed loyalists in key positions for control over state institutions.

Liberals have described Sunday's election as a referendum on Slovenia's future. They argue that Jansa, if reelected, would push the traditionally moderate nation further away from "core" EU democratic values and toward other populist regimes.

The Freedom House democracy watchdog recently said that "while political rights and civil liberties are generally respected (in Slovenia), the current right-wing government has continued attempts to undermine the rule of law and democratic institutions, including the media and judiciary."

The 63-year-old political veteran Jansa has denied this, portraying himself as a victim of an elaborate leftist smear plot. In order to polish his image before the election, Jansa has distanced himself from Orban and adopted a tough stance toward Russia over the invasion of Ukraine.

EXPLAINER: How France's old-school voting system works

PARIS (AP) — Paper ballots tucked in paper envelopes. No absentee voting, and no early voting either. French voters in Sunday's presidential election are using an old-school system that has defied calls for more flexibility or modernization.

As France's 48.8 million voters are invited to choose between President Emmanuel Macron and his far-right challenger Marine Le Pen, here is a look at how the French election works:

HOW DO THEY CAST BALLOTS?

Voters make their choices in a booth, with the curtains closed, then place their ballot in an envelope that is then put into a transparent ballot box. They must show photo identification and sign a document, next to their name, to complete the process.

Machine-voting has been allowed on an experimental basis, but the purchase of new machines has been frozen since 2008 due to security concerns. Only about 60 towns still use them, out of 35,000 municipalities in France.

Last year, Macron's centrist government tried to pass an amendment to allow early voting by machine to

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encourage electoral participation amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The Senate, led by a conservative majority, rejected the measure, arguing it was announced with too little notice and wasn't solid enough legally.

A nationwide effort to streamline voter rolls, notably to remove people who had died or changed addresses, led to some people being unable to vote in the first round presidential election April 10. The state statistics agency reported that about 3,100 voters who were removed by error were restored to voting lists in time for the second round.

ARE THERE OTHER OPTIONS?

Mail-in voting was banned in 1975 amid fears of potential fraud.

People who can't go to the polls for various reasons can authorize someone else to vote for them.

To do so, a voter must fill out a form ahead of time and bring it to a police station. Up to 7% of people voted by proxy in the last presidential election five years ago. French people living abroad vote in embassies or consulates.

Local authorities can organize vans or buses to pick up older people from nursing homes to bring them to voting stations, and prisons set up voting stations inside their facilities.

HOW ARE THE BALLOTS COUNTED?

Volunteers count the ballots one by one, by hand. Officials then use state-run software to register and report results.

But legally only the paper counts. If a result is challenged, the paper ballots are recounted manually.

For towns using machines, the results are registered locally and then reported to the Interior Ministry, which oversees elections. The ministry said it received no reports of irregularities involving voting machines in the first-round vote on April 10.

WHAT ABOUT COVID-19?

Most pandemic restrictions have been lifted in the country. The number of cases is significantly lower than earlier this year, but there are still more than 80,000 new confirmed infections each day.

People who test positive for the virus can go to the polls. They are strongly advised to wear a mask and follow other health guidelines.

Voters can wash their hands at polling stations, which also have hand sanitizer available. Equipment is to be frequently cleaned. Each voting station lets fresh air in for at least 10 minutes every hour.

Long-serving Utah US Senator Orrin Hatch dies at age 88

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Orrin G. Hatch, the longest-serving Republican senator in history who was a fixture in Utah politics for more than four decades, died Saturday at age 88.

His death was announced in a statement from his foundation, which did not specify a cause.

A staunch conservative on most economic and social issues, he also teamed with Democrats several times during his long career on issues ranging from stem cell research to rights for people with disabilities to expanding children's health insurance. He also formed friendships across the aisle, particularly with the late Democratic Sen. Edward M. Kennedy.

Hatch also championed GOP issues like abortion limits and helped shape the U.S. Supreme Court, including defending Justice Clarence Thomas against sexual harassment allegations during confirmation hearings.

He later became an ally of Republican President Donald Trump, using his role as chairman of the powerful Senate Finance Committee to get a major rewrite of the U.S. tax codes to the president's desk. In return, Trump helped Hatch deliver on a key issue for Republicans in Utah with a contentious move to drastically downsize two national monuments that had been declared by past presidents.

Hatch retired in 2019. Through Trump had encouraged him to run again, the longtime senator would have faced a tough primary battle and had promised to retire. Hatch instead stepped aside and encouraged Republican Mitt Romney, a critic of the former president, to run to replace him.

"Few men have made their mark on the Senate as he did," Romney wrote in a tribute to his friend and predecessor, praising his "vision and legislative accomplishment." Utah's Sen. Mike Lee, for his part, called

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Hatch "a friend, a mentor and an example to me and countless others."

Senate Minority leader Mitch McConnell, a Republican from Kentucky, praised Hatch's legislative acumen. "Orrin's decades of leadership drove an unending catalog of major legislative accomplishments and landmark confirmations," McConnell said in a statement. "He entered the Senate as a young principled conservative in the 1970s when the modern conservative movement was in its infancy. He held to his principles his whole career, and applied them to issues like the historic 2017 tax reform law and the work of the Judiciary Committee to the enormous benefit of our country."

Hatch was also noted for his side career as a singer and recording artist of music with themes of his religious faith, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

He is survived by his wife, Elaine, and their six children.

Hatch came to the Senate after a 1976 election win and went on to become the longest-serving senator in Utah history, winning a seventh term in 2012. He became the Senate president pro tempore in 2015 when Republicans took control of the Senate. The position made him third in the line of presidential succession behind then-Vice President Joe Biden and the Speaker of the House. His tenure places him as the longest GOP senator, behind several Democrats.

One issue Hatch returned to over the course of his career was limiting or outlawing abortion, a position that put him at the center of one of the nation's most controversial issues. He was the author of a variety of "Hatch amendments" to the Constitution aimed at diminishing the availability of abortions.

In 1991, he became known as one of Thomas's most vocal defenders against sexual harassment allegations from law professor Anita Hill. Hatch read aloud at the confirmation hearings from "The Exorcist," and he suggested that Hill stole details from the book.

While unquestionably conservative, there were times Hatch differed from many of his conservative colleagues — including then-President George W. Bush when Hatch pushed for federal funding of embryonic stem cell research.

In 1997, Hatch joined Kennedy in sponsoring a \$24 billion program for states to provide health insurance to the children of low-income parents who don't qualify for Medicaid.

"He exemplified a generation of lawmakers brought up on the principles of comity and compromise, and he embodied those principles better than anyone," said Hatch Foundation chairman A. Scott Anderson in a statement. "In a nation divided, Orrin Hatch helped show us a better way by forging meaningful friendships on both sides of the aisle. Today, more than ever, we would do well to follow his example."

Hatch also helped usher through legislation toughening child pornography laws and making illegally downloading music a prosecutable crime.

For Hatch, the music-download issue was a personal one. A member of the faith widely known as Mormon, he frequently wrote religious songs and recorded music in his spare time as a way to relax from the stresses of life in Washington. Hatch earned about \$39,000 in royalties from his songs in 2005.

One of his songs, "Unspoken," went platinum after appearing on "WOW Hits 2005," a compilation of Christian pop music.

In 2000, Hatch sought the Republican nomination for president, saying he had more experience in Washington than his opponents and that he could work with Democrats. Hatch readily acknowledged that winning would be a long shot. He withdrew from the race after only winning 1 percent of the vote in the Iowa caucuses and then endorsed George W. Bush.

He became a strong opponent of President Barack Obama's 2009 health care law after pulling out of early bipartisan talks on the legislation. At one point, he said of the legislation: "It is 2,074 pages long. It is enough to make you barf."

Hatch faced a tough re-election battle from a conservative candidate in 2012, two years after a tea party wave carried longtime Utah Republican Sen. Bob Bennett out of office. Both Bennett and Hatch voted in favor of a 2008 bank bailout that rankled those on the far right.

Hatch poured about \$10 million into his 2012 race and worked to build support among tea party conservatives.

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Hatch was used to playing tough — he learned to box as a child in Pittsburgh to fend off the attacks of older, larger students. Unafraid to fight, he said he always made a point to quickly become friends with those he had arguments with.

When Hatch announced he would not seek re-election in 2018, he said “every good fighter knows when to hang up the gloves.”

After moving to Utah in the early 1970s, Hatch — a former bishop in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — ran for his first public office in 1976 and narrowly upset Democratic Sen. Frank Moss.

In 1982, he held off challenger Ted Wilson, the Democratic mayor of Salt Lake City, to win a second term by a solid margin.

He was never seriously challenged again.

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His six children are Brent, Marcia, Scott, Kimberly, Alysa and Jess.

Tatum, Brown lead Celtics to 109-103 win, 3-0 lead over Nets

By BRIAN MAHONEY AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The stoppers are suffocating the scorers.

And as Boston was finishing another shutdown effort against Kevin Durant and the Nets, a loud “Let’s Go Celtics! Let’s Go Celtics!” chant broke out from the many fans in green who had seats in Barclays Center.

There wasn’t much for the home fans to cheer about as the Nets face a team that just won’t let them get anything going.

“More of the same,” Celtics coach Ime Udoka said. “We’re making it tough.”

Jayson Tatum scored 39 points, Jaylen Brown had 23 and Boston took a 3-0 lead over Brooklyn with a 109-103 victory Saturday night.

Again making things difficult on Durant and Kyrie Irving, the Celtics put themselves in position to sweep their way into the second round with a victory Monday night in Brooklyn.

The Celtics forced 21 turnovers that led to 37 points. Tatum had six of their 13 steals.

“My message is, nobody plays harder than we do,” Tatum said.

Durant took only 11 shots, finishing with 16 points, eight rebounds and eight assists. Irving was 6 for 17, missing all seven 3-pointers, and also had 16 points for the Nets, who have to decide if they will give Ben Simmons his debut Monday in an elimination game.

Boston’s defense against the Nets’ firepower was supposed to make this a can’t-miss series, even though it matches a No. 2 seed against a No. 7.

But it’s been mostly all Celtics since Tatum’s basket at the buzzer gave them a victory in Game 1. Durant and Irving combined for just one basket in the second half of Game 2, never had much impact in this one and might get only one more chance.

“We know what it is,” Durant said. “I don’t think no speech or anything will do at this part of the year. You know what it is. We’re down 3-0. We got another game on Monday. Just come out and play.”

Boston led most of the way before the Nets cut it to three with just over a minute remaining in the third quarter. But Marcus Smart scored on a follow shot, made a jumper in transition before Brown got a steal and dunk to make it 81-72 going to the fourth.

Brown kept the Nets at bay from there, repeatedly finding a 1-on-1 matchup and driving to the basket. He set up Tatum for a 3-pointer in the corner after the Nets had gotten back within four, then made a jumper before Tatum converted a three-point play that made it 96-84 with 6:25 to play.

The Celtics got center Robert Williams back after missing nearly a month with torn cartilage in his left knee, making their defense even stronger.

Bruce Brown was the Nets player who could really solve it, scoring a career playoff-high 26 points.

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"We're not being forceful in our actions. We're second-guessing ourselves a little bit. Throwing a lot of passes that are second thoughts. They're too good a team for us to do that," Nets coach Steve Nash said.

Durant was only 13 for 41 (31.7%) in the two games in Boston with 12 turnovers, and the Nets' only real hope was if he could regain his form back home.

He made a 3-ponter on his first shot attempt after going 0 for 10 in the second half in Game 2, but he could never consistently find room to shoot while committing five more turnovers and looking far off the player who came in third all-time in the playoffs with 29.4 points per game.

"He's had a a hard time getting it going," Jaylen Brown said. "We want to keep it that way because we know what he can do."

The Celtics limited Durant to just two shots and led 30-25 after one quarter, then got seven straight points by reserve guard Payton Pritchard to open the second and push the lead to 37-25. Boston was still ahead by eight with under 1 1/2 minutes left in the half, but the Nets scored seven straight and it was 53-50 at the break.

TIP-INS

Celtics: Smart scored 14 points. ... Williams had two points and two rebounds in 16 minutes off the bench in his first game since March 27 after missing final seven games of the regular season.

Nets: Patty Mills was honored before the start for being voted the winner of the NBA's Sportsmanship Award on Friday. ... Blake Griffin played for the first time in the series, scoring eight points. ... Director Spike Lee, a longtime Knicks fan, was at the game wearing a Brooklyn Dodgers jersey and hat.

SIMMONS STATUS

Nash said Simmons scrimmaged 3-on-3 Saturday morning and had no setbacks. He said it's possible Simmons plays in Game 4 but cautioned that given his long layoff, with his herniated disk at the end of it, that there was more to consider than if Simmons felt good after his workouts.

"There's a lot of bigger picture, bigger context to how he's feeling, how able he would be to adapt to the environment," Nash said. "It's a little different than playing a game that's stashed away in the middle of the regular season, so I think that there's a few factors at play here to evaluate when he's ready to play."

Long-serving Utah US Senator Orrin Hatch dies at age 88

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Orrin G. Hatch, the longest-serving Republican senator in history who was a fixture in Utah politics for more than four decades, died Saturday at age 88.

His death was announced in a statement from his foundation, which did not specify a cause.

A staunch conservative on most economic and social issues, he also teamed with Democrats several times during his long career on issues ranging from stem cell research to rights for people with disabilities to expanding children's health insurance. He also formed friendships across the aisle, particularly with the late Democratic Sen. Edward M. Kennedy.

Hatch also championed GOP issues like abortion limits and helped shape the U.S. Supreme Court, including defending Justice Clarence Thomas against sexual harassment allegations during confirmation hearings.

He later became an ally of Republican President Donald Trump, using his role as chairman of the powerful Senate Finance Committee to get a major rewrite of the U.S. tax codes to the president's desk. In return, Trump helped Hatch deliver on a key issue for Republicans in Utah with a contentious move to drastically downsize two national monuments that had been declared by past presidents.

Hatch retired in 2019. Through Trump had encouraged him to run again, the longtime senator would have faced a tough primary battle and had promised to retire. Hatch instead stepped aside and encouraged Republican Mitt Romney, a critic of the former president, to run to replace him.

"Few men have made their mark on the Senate as he did," Romney wrote in a tribute to his friend and predecessor, praising his "vision and legislative accomplishment." Utah's Sen. Mike Lee, for his part, called Hatch "a friend, a mentor and an example to me and countless others."

Senate Minority leader Mitch McConnell, a Republican from Kentucky, praised Hatch's legislative acumen.

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"Orrin's decades of leadership drove an unending catalog of major legislative accomplishments and landmark confirmations," McConnell said in a statement. "He entered the Senate as a young principled conservative in the 1970s when the modern conservative movement was in its infancy. He held to his principles his whole career, and applied them to issues like the historic 2017 tax reform law and the work of the Judiciary Committee to the enormous benefit of our country."

Hatch was also noted for his side career as a singer and recording artist of music with themes of his religious faith, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

He is survived by his wife, Elaine, and their six children.

Hatch came to the Senate after a 1976 election win and went on to become the longest-serving senator in Utah history, winning a seventh term in 2012. He became the Senate president pro tempore in 2015 when Republicans took control of the Senate. The position made him third in the line of presidential succession behind then-Vice President Joe Biden and the Speaker of the House. His tenure places him as the longest GOP senator, behind several Democrats.

One issue Hatch returned to over the course of his career was limiting or outlawing abortion, a position that put him at the center of one of the nation's most controversial issues. He was the author of a variety of "Hatch amendments" to the Constitution aimed at diminishing the availability of abortions.

In 1991, he became known as one of Thomas's most vocal defenders against sexual harassment allegations from law professor Anita Hill. Hatch read aloud at the confirmation hearings from "The Exorcist," and he suggested that Hill stole details from the book.

While unquestionably conservative, there were times Hatch differed from many of his conservative colleagues — including then-President George W. Bush when Hatch pushed for federal funding of embryonic stem cell research.

In 1997, Hatch joined Kennedy in sponsoring a \$24 billion program for states to provide health insurance to the children of low-income parents who don't qualify for Medicaid.

"He exemplified a generation of lawmakers brought up on the principles of comity and compromise, and he embodied those principles better than anyone," said Hatch Foundation chairman A. Scott Anderson in a statement. "In a nation divided, Orrin Hatch helped show us a better way by forging meaningful friendships on both sides of the aisle. Today, more than ever, we would do well to follow his example."

Hatch also helped usher through legislation toughening child pornography laws and making illegally downloading music a prosecutable crime.

For Hatch, the music-download issue was a personal one. A member of the faith widely known as Mormon, he frequently wrote religious songs and recorded music in his spare time as a way to relax from the stresses of life in Washington. Hatch earned about \$39,000 in royalties from his songs in 2005.

One of his songs, "Unspoken," went platinum after appearing on "WOW Hits 2005," a compilation of Christian pop music.

In 2000, Hatch sought the Republican nomination for president, saying he had more experience in Washington than his opponents and that he could work with Democrats. Hatch readily acknowledged that winning would be a long shot. He withdrew from the race after only winning 1 percent of the vote in the Iowa caucuses and then endorsed George W. Bush.

He became a strong opponent of President Barack Obama's 2009 health care law after pulling out of early bipartisan talks on the legislation. At one point, he said of the legislation: "It is 2,074 pages long. It is enough to make you barf."

Hatch faced a tough re-election battle from a conservative candidate in 2012, two years after a tea party wave carried longtime Utah Republican Sen. Bob Bennett out of office. Both Bennett and Hatch voted in favor of a 2008 bank bailout that rankled those on the far right.

Hatch poured about \$10 million into his 2012 race and worked to build support among tea party conservatives.

Hatch was used to playing tough — he learned to box as a child in Pittsburgh to fend off the attacks of older, larger students. Unafraid to fight, he said he always made a point to quickly become friends with

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those he had arguments with.

When Hatch announced he would not seek re-election in 2018, he said "every good fighter knows when to hang up the gloves."

After moving to Utah in the early 1970s, Hatch — a former bishop in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — ran for his first public office in 1976 and narrowly upset Democratic Sen. Frank Moss.

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Tigers' Cabrera gets 3,000th hit; 33rd player to reach mark

DETROIT (AP) — Tigers star Miguel Cabrera delivered the 3,000th hit of his decorated career Saturday, becoming the 33rd major leaguer to reach the mark and the first player from Venezuela to accomplish the feat.

Still an imposing presence at 39, Cabrera made history by grounding an opposite-field single to right through the shift in the first inning of Detroit's game against Colorado.

Cabrera immediately raised his right arm as he headed toward first base. The crowd of 37,566 at Comerica Park gave him a rousing ovation and chanted "Miggy! Miggy!" while fireworks were shot off from beyond the center field fence.

"I was like, 'Get it done today,'" Cabrera said.

The milestone hit came on a 1-1 pitch from Antonio Senzatela, a fellow Venezuelan, in the first game of a day-night doubleheader. Rockies shortstop José Iglesias, who played with Cabrera on the Tigers, came over to give his former teammate a big hug.

By then, all the Tigers were streaming from the dugout to greet the newest member of baseball's elite 3,000-hit club. Moments later, Cabrera went behind home plate to embrace his mother, wife, son and daughter on the field.

"I'm happy I hit it here. I'm happy for the people of Detroit to see it. Hopefully I can get more hits here," Cabrera said.

Cabrera soon returned to first base, but he didn't stay there for long. He scored on a three-run homer by 22-year-old rookie Spencer Torkelson, who is touted as the next big thing in Detroit and has taken over as the Tigers' regular first baseman with Cabrera now in the role of designated hitter.

When the inning ended, the scoreboard flashed "Congratulations Miggy." Cabrera emerged from the dugout for a curtain call, waving to fans who had been rewarded with the highlight they came to see.

Cabrera, however, wasn't quite done. He added a two-run single in the sixth, exited for a pinch-runner and drew another huge cheer. The Tigers went on to win 13-0.

Cabrera kept moving up the chart with a bloop single in the first inning of the nightcap, which the Rockies won 3-2. He finished the day with 3,002 career hits.

A two-time AL MVP, a Triple Crown winner and an 11-time All-Star with four batting titles, Miggy's place among the Major League Baseball greats already was assured long before this afternoon in Detroit.

As a 20-year-old rookie, Cabrera helped the Florida Marlins win the 2003 World Series championship. All these years later, stamping his name onto the 3,000-hit list had a nice ring, too.

And it'll certainly look good on a plaque in Cooperstown someday.

Cabrera became just the seventh player with 500 home runs and 3,000 hits. He joined an exclusive club with Hank Aaron, Willie Mays, Eddie Murray, Rafael Palmeiro, Albert Pujols and Alex Rodriguez.

Last August in Toronto, Cabrera connected for his 500th homer. He's at 502 in his 20th season.

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Cabrera is the seventh Latino player to make the 3,000 chart. Hitting the mark tied him with the late Roberto Clemente, and hit No. 3,001 moved Cabrera ahead of the Pirates Hall of Famer.

Pujols was the previous player to reach 3,000 hits, doing it in 2018. He was at 3,308 going into Saturday and, at 42 with St. Louis, has said this is his final season.

The next hitter to reach 3,000? Hard to say.

Robinson Canó trailed Cabrera on the active list with 2,630 going into Saturday and is 39 years old. Yadier Molina, also 39, followed at 2,116.

Among younger players, Jose Altuve (32) has 1,783 and Freddie Freeman (32) had 1,722. Mike Trout (30) was at 1,428.

Cabrera got three hits Wednesday to get to 2,999, then struck out in his final at-bat of the night. He went 0 for 3 Thursday and was intentionally walked his final time up against the Yankees, drawing loud boos and chants from Detroit fans.

The hallowed hit remained on deck when Friday night's game against Colorado was rained out.

Cabrera was the third player to get his 3,000th hit while with Detroit, joining late Hall of Famers Ty Cobb and Al Kaline.

"Al is one of my heroes. It's really sad he couldn't see it because he would always talk about this moment. Hopefully, somewhere right now he's happy and smiling," Cabrera said.

While age has diminished his power to clear any fence and smash opposite-field shots to right-center, Cabrera has enjoyed a monster career at the plate.

Cabrera became the first major leaguer in 45 years to win the Triple Crown by leading the league in batting average, home runs and RBIs in 2012. That year, he won his first of two straight MVP awards and helped Detroit reach the World Series, during a stretch that included four straight division championships.

"He is one of the great right-handed hitters ever," Yankees manager and former Marlins teammate Aaron Boone said this week.

"And 3,000 hits, 500 homers, that's obviously rarefied air. He's done it, you know, in bigger ballparks his entire career, between Florida and here also. You know, he's an all-timer. He's in that, probably inner circle, of even the Hall of Fame. It's been a special career," Boone said.

Cabrera boosted his total most often against James Shields, getting 27 hits against the former Tampa Bay, Chicago White Sox, Kansas City and San Diego pitcher.

Detroit acquired Cabrera in a trade with the Marlins in 2007, with Dontrelle Willis also going to the Tigers in a deal for Andrew Miller and Cameron Maybin. Cabrera had 842 hits at the time.

The swap came a year after the Tigers lost the World Series to St. Louis, in the hope that Cabrera would help them win the championship for the first time since 1984.

The Tigers, though, never won it all with their superstar. Detroit was swept by San Francisco in the 2012 World Series and spent a decade in a rebuilding mode that bottomed out with 310 losses between 2017-19.

After Cabrera was an All-Star for the 11th time in 2016, his production declined and Detroit's rate of success did as well.

The Tigers made bold moves in the offseason in a quest to be relevant with Cabrera serving as a draw to bring fans to the ballpark and to hit about one ball per game into the outfield grass with savvy swings after crushing baseballs with incredible force earlier in his career.

A top prospect in the minors, Cabrera made his big league debut in June 2003. He announced his presence to the whole baseball world that October.

Brushed back by a couple of heaters from Yankee ace Roger Clemens, Cabrera came back to launch a home run off the Rocket in helping the Marlins win the World Series.

Cabrera is almost twice as old now and is still a kid at heart, recently taking the grounds crew's three-wheel bicycle for a ride during batting practice.

And, one of the game's all-time greats can still get a base hit against some of the world's best pitchers.

Fires hit Southwest, New Mexico's season 'dangerously early'

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By PAUL DAVENPORT and CEDAR ATTANASIO Associated Press

New Mexico faces a long and potentially devastating wildfire season, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham said Saturday, as Southwestern wildfires cause destruction and force people from their homes.

Hundreds of structures were lost in a growing number of wind-driven blazes across drought-stricken New Mexico, Lujan Grisham said Saturday.

Over 20 active wildfires were burning in at least 16 of the state's 33 counties, in the wake of winds that gusted up to 90 mph (145 kph) on Friday, Lujan said during a briefing streamed online. "So half the state has a fire issue."

With so many fires burning in April, well before the normal May or June start of the wildfire season, "our risk season is incredibly and dangerously early," Lujan Grisham said.

Wildfire has become a year-round threat in the West given changing conditions that include earlier snowmelt and rain coming later in the fall, scientist have said. The problems have been exacerbated by decades of fire suppression and poor management along with a more than 20-year megadrought that studies link to human-caused climate change.

New Mexico as of Saturday had the most major wildfires burning of any state, though neighboring Arizona also had large fires that included one that burned 30 homes near Flagstaff on Tuesday.

Winds and temperatures in New Mexico diminished Saturday but remained strong enough to still fan fires, and dozens of evacuation orders remained in place.

Over 200 structures have burned, Lujan Grisham said, not providing specifics on locations or the numbers of homes included in that count.

With fires still burning and charred areas too dangerous to enter, "it's not safe for you or us to have a complete assessment to date," she said, indicating that the number of lost structures would rise.

She appealed to residents to refrain from using fireworks or burning trash and to evacuate when fire warnings are issued. "You need to leave. The risks are too great," she said.

The largest blazes were concentrated in northern New Mexico, where two major fires merged and numerous villages were threatened by advancing flames as residents heeded calls to leave.

Maggie Mulligan said Friday her dogs could sense the panic while she and her husband packed them up, agonized over having to leave horses behind and fled a fast-moving wildfire barreling toward their home.

"We don't know what's next," she said. "We don't know if we can go back to the horses."

Mulligan and her husband, Bill Gombas, 67, were among the anxious residents who hurriedly evacuated their homes Friday ahead of ominous wildfires fueled by tinder-dry conditions and ferocious winds.

The merged fires burned some structures but no figures were available, said fire information officer Mike Johnson. "They were able to save some structures and we know we lost other structures that we weren't able to defend."

Wind-blown clouds of dust and plumes of smoke obscured the skies near the fires, said Jesus Romero, assistant county manager for San Miguel County. "All the ugliness that spring in New Mexico brings — that's what they're dealing in."

An estimated 500 homes in San Miguel were in rural areas of Mora and San Miguel counties covered by evacuation orders or warning notices, Romero said.

Elsewhere in the region, the fire danger in the Denver area on Friday was the highest it had been in over a decade, according to the National Weather Service, because of unseasonable temperatures in the 80s combined with strong winds and very dry conditions.

Lena Atencio and her husband, whose family has lived in the nearby Rociada area for five generations, got out Friday as winds kicked up. She said most people were taking the threat seriously.

"As a community, as a whole, everybody is just pulling together to support each other and just take care of the things we need to now. And then at that point, it's in God's hands," she said as the wind howled miles away in the community of Las Vegas, New Mexico, where evacuees were gathering.

Areas ordered Saturday to evacuate because of another large fire still growing in northern New Mexico included Philmont Scout Ranch. Meanwhile, the nearby town of Cimarron remained on notice for possible

evacuation, according to Colfax County officials.

The scout ranch, owned and operated by the Boy Scouts of America, attracts thousands of summer visitors, but officials said no scouts were on the property and staff were previously evacuated because of poor air quality.

The Flagstaff-area fire also burned numerous other buildings when the flames blew through rural neighborhoods Tuesday.

A shift in wind had crews working Saturday to keep the fire from moving up mountain slopes or toward homes in rural neighborhoods near areas that burned Tuesday, fire information officer Dick Fleishman said. "It has got us a little concerned."

Explosion at illegal oil refinery in Nigeria kills over 50

By CHINEDU ASADU Associated Press

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — More than 50 people were killed and many injured when an explosion rocked an illegal oil refinery in southeastern Nigeria, state officials and police said Saturday.

The death toll may be more than 100, according to a report in the Lagos-based Punch newspaper. The fire was reported to have spread to nearby properties.

The fire broke out Friday night and quickly spread to two fuel storage areas at the illegal crude oil refinery, causing the complex to be "engulfed by fire which spread rapidly" within the area, said Declan Emelumba, the Imo State commissioner for information.

The immediate cause of the explosion and the extent of the deaths, injuries and damage were being investigated, Emelumba said.

Multiple videos posted on social media showed a gruesome scene, with people's charred remains reduced to skeletons and cinders. The Associated Press was unable to independently verify them.

"A lot of people died. The people who died are all illegal operators," said Michael Abattam, spokesman of the Imo State Police Command.

The Imo state government was looking for the owner of the refinery where the explosion occurred and declared him a wanted individual, an official said.

Illegal refineries are common in Nigeria, where shady business operators often avoid regulations and taxes by setting up refineries in remote areas, out of sight of authorities.

Nigeria is Africa's largest producer of crude oil but it has very few official refineries and as a result most gasoline and other fuels are imported, creating an opening for the illegal refinery operators.

The practice is so widespread that it is affecting crude oil production in the oil-rich Niger Delta region.

Overdoses, not COVID-19, drive spike in LA homeless deaths

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Nearly 2,000 homeless people died in Los Angeles County during the first year of the pandemic, an increase of 56% from the previous year, driven mainly by drug overdoses, authorities said.

The findings released Friday in a report from the county's Department of Public Health showed that despite initial fears, the virus itself was not the main culprit in deaths among California's largest-in-the-nation unhoused population. But it did cut people off from mental health and substance abuse treatment after services were drastically reduced to prevent the spread of the virus.

Between April 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021, the county recorded 1,988 deaths of homeless people, up from 1,271 deaths during the same period a year earlier, the report said.

During both of those years, drug overdoses were the leading cause of death but increased by 78% during the pandemic's first year. In the pre-pandemic year, the Department of Public Health reported 402 fatal overdoses. In the year after the outbreak, the number nearly doubled to 715, the report said.

The report found that 179 homeless people died from COVID-19 during the pandemic's first year.

"The findings in this report reflect a true state of emergency," said First District Supervisor Hilda L. Solis said in a statement. "In a civil society, it is unacceptable for any of us to not be profoundly disturbed by

the shocking needs documented in this year's homeless mortality report."

A study of San Francisco homeless deaths released last month showed similar findings: Between March 2020 and March 2021, there were 331 homeless deaths recorded in San Francisco, more than twice the number of any previous year, with the leading cause of death being drug overdose, according to a study conducted by the University of California San Francisco and the city's Department of Public Health.

Los Angeles County is home to the Skid Row neighborhood, notorious for poverty and drugs and where LA's homeless population was once largely confined. Now, rows of tents, cardboard shelters, battered RVs and makeshift plywood structures are familiar sights throughout the nation's second-most populous city.

Cities and states across the country are grappling with growing homelessness, as well as mental health crises. California has the largest unhoused population in the country, estimated at 161,000 with nearly a quarter of that number suffering from severe mental illness, according to a 2020 count of homeless people required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The pandemic likely exacerbated an already growing drug and overdose problem, driven by the prevalence of fentanyl, authorities said. Methamphetamine was involved in the majority of deaths, at 75%, roughly the same as the previous year. But the involvement of fentanyl in overdose deaths nearly doubled to 45%, the report said.

"The COVID-19 pandemic's impact on people experiencing homelessness has clearly extended beyond the immediate effects of this new and deadly virus," said Los Angeles Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer. "The pandemic has exacerbated stressors already burdening this vulnerable population."

Young, Latino and Black people experiencing homelessness drove the increases in fatal overdoses, the report said.

Coronary heart disease was the second leading cause of death in the first year of the pandemic, accounting for 309 deaths and an increase of almost 30% from the previous year, the report said.

Split verdict in first-ever Air Force general military trial

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio (AP) — An Air Force major general in Ohio has been convicted by a military judge of one of three specifications of abusive sexual contact in the first-ever military trial of an Air Force general.

The charge faced by Maj. Gen. William Cooley during the weeklong court-martial at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio had three specifications, one alleging a forcible kiss and two alleging forcible touching in 2018. Cooley was convicted Saturday of the forcible kissing specification but acquitted of the other two.

Officials said the verdict marks the first court-martial trial and conviction of a general officer in the Air Force's 75-year history.

A former commander of Air Force Research Laboratory, Cooley was charged with abusive sexual contact in an encounter with a woman who gave him a ride after a backyard barbecue in New Mexico nearly four years ago. Officials said the woman is a civilian who is not a Department of Defense employee.

Cooley was to be sentenced Monday morning and could face as much as seven years in jail as well as loss of rank, pay and benefits.

Cooley had the option of a trial by court member jurors or by military judge, and chose to have the case heard by the judge.

"Today marks the first time an Air Force general officer has been held responsible for his heinous actions," the woman's attorney Ryan Guilds, said in a statement, the Dayton Daily News reported. "... Hopefully, this will not be as difficult for the next survivor."

Cooley was fired from his research laboratory position in January 2020 after an Air Force investigation and has worked in an administrative job since then. A message seeking comment was left for his attorney Saturday.

"This case clearly demonstrates the commitment of Air Force leaders to fully investigate the facts and hold Airmen of any rank accountable for their actions when they fail to uphold Air Force standards," Col. Eric Mejia, staff judge advocate for Air Force Materiel Command, said in a statement.

County grants approval for Amazon's helix-shaped HQ tower

By MATTHEW BARAKAT Associated Press

FALLS CHURCH, Va. (AP) — The Arlington County Board gave unanimous approval Saturday to Amazon's plans to build a unique, helix-shaped tower as the centerpiece of its emerging second headquarters in northern Virginia.

Amazon announced the plans in February 2021 for the eye-catching, 350-foot tower to anchor the second phase of its redevelopment plans. The new office towers will support a second headquarters for Amazon that is expected to welcome more than 25,000 workers when it's complete.

The helix is one of several office towers granted approval, but the helix stands out. The spiral design features a walkable ramp wrapping around the building with trees and greenery planted to resemble a mountain hike.

Amazon has said the building is designed to help people connect to nature, and the outdoor mountain climb will be open to the public on weekends.

Since then, the plans have gone through the famously thorough review process of Arlington County, including numerous public hearings. Earlier this month, the county planning commission voted 9-0 to support the project.

On Saturday, the County Board voted 5-0 to approve the plans. They also include park space and will accommodate a community high school, along with ground level retail.

Amazon has said it hopes to complete the project in 2025.

Because skyscrapers are banned in the District of Columbia, and the Amazon buildings will be among the tallest in Arlington County, from some vantage points the helix will dominate the region's skyline like no building other than the Washington Monument.

Feds: Starbucks engaged in unfair labor practices in Phoenix

PHOENIX (AP) — Federal labor officials have asked a judge to force Starbucks Corp. to reinstate three union activists at its Phoenix location, alleging that the coffee giant engaged in unfair labor practices, documents show.

The National Labor Relations Board's Phoenix regional director, in a filing Friday in U.S. District Court in Arizona, sought an injunction that would make Starbucks hire back its three employees — who were three of four members of the union organizing committee.

The NLRB's petition is the latest blow to the coffee chain as locations nationwide seek to unionize. Workers at the flagship Seattle location voted Thursday to form a union, as did baristas in Colorado on Friday.

In Phoenix, federal labor officials allege that Starbucks retaliated after it learned of employees there seeking to unionize.

"Among other things, Starbucks disciplined, suspended, and discharged one employee, constructively discharged another, and placed a third on an unpaid leave of absence after revoking recently granted accommodations," the filing states.

A Starbucks spokesperson said Saturday that the company disagreed with the labor board's accusations and noted an investigation found the employees violated policies and, in some cases, state law.

After the Seattle location's vote, Reggie Borges, a Starbucks spokesman, said "we will respect the process and will bargain in good faith. We hope that the union does the same."

Virginia AG ends effort to prosecute Park Police officers

By MATTHEW BARAKAT Associated Press

FALLS CHURCH, Va. (AP) — Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares has dropped an effort to prosecute two U.S. Park Police officers who fatally shot an unarmed motorist back in 2017.

The Attorney General's Office filed a motion Friday with the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond

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withdrawing the appeal in the shooting of Bijan Ghaisar, 25, of McLean.

Miyares' decision ends a nearly five-year legal saga in which Ghaisar's family, police reform advocates and some members of Congress sought to see officers Lucas Vinyard and Alejandro Amaya face criminal charges for shooting Ghaisar after a stop-and-go chase on the George Washington Memorial Parkway in November 2017.

The FBI investigated the shooting for two years, but federal prosecutors ultimately opted against filing charges.

At that point, Fairfax County Commonwealth's Attorney Steve Descano, who had recently been elected on a police accountability platform, filed manslaughter charges against the officers in state court. Descano was supported by then-Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring, a Democrat.

The manslaughter charges set off a tug-of-war between state and federal officials over who had jurisdiction. The police officers' lawyers successfully had the case removed to federal court.

Last year, U.S. District Court Judge Claude Hilton in Alexandria dismissed the prosecution, ruling that the officers' actions were "necessary and proper" in the context of the chase.

Herring and Descano appealed Hilton's ruling in October, but Herring in November lost his re-election bid to Miyares, a Republican.

Miyares and Descano have feuded openly for months, with Miyares accusing Descano of being soft on crime and refusing to support police. Descano has accused Miyares of trying to meddle in local affairs and undermine him and other reform-minded prosecutors in northern Virginia.

In a statement, Miyares said and others in his office reviewed the evidence and ultimately concluded that Hilton's ruling was correct and should not be appealed.

"I will not perpetuate the continued prosecution of two officers who were doing what they were trained to do under tremendously difficult circumstances," he said.

At a press conference Saturday, Ghaisar's mother, Kelly Ghaisar, said she is outraged and disgusted by the decision and holding out hope the appeals court will refuse to allow Miyares to drop the appeal.

"I am here to plead with anyone who can hear me — please do not dismiss this case," she said.

State Sen. Scott Surovell, a Democrat who lives a few blocks from where Ghaisar has shot and who has supported the family's effort to have the officers prosecuted, spoke at the press conference and said Miyares filed his notice late on a Friday to avoid calling attention to what he had done.

"As news of this gets out, people will be highly disturbed," he said.

Descano said he's "heartbroken" by the decision but holds out hope that U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland will reconsider the decision made during the Trump administration not to bring its own charges.

"For Attorney General Miyares to not even allow this case to be heard in the Fourth Circuit for purely political reasons is shameful - especially considering all of his rhetoric about supporting victims," Descano said.

U.S. Rep. Don Beyer, D-Va., whose district encompasses the location of the chase and shootin, called Miyares' decision "misguided" Saturday.

"Giving officers a get-out-of-jail-free card for a fatal shooting after a grand jury indictment for involuntary manslaughter and reckless use of a firearm cannot help but undermine trust in law enforcement in the community," Beyer said in a statement. "This is not how you support the police."

Ghaisar was fatally shot after authorities say he left the scene of an accident on the parkway, outside the nation's capital, and led officers on a stop-and-go chase.

Dashcam video released by Fairfax County Police, which played a supporting role in the chase, shows the pursuit starting on the parkway, then continuing into a residential neighborhood. It shows the car driven by Ghaisar stopping twice during the chase, and officers approaching the car with guns drawn. In both cases, Ghaisar drives off.

At the third and final stop, the officers again approach with guns drawn, and Amaya stands in front of the driver's door. When the car starts to move, Amaya opens fire. Seconds later, when the car begins moving again, both Amaya and Vinyard fire multiple shots.

Miyares' decision ends the criminal prosecution, but Ghaisar's family has filed a civil suit that has been on hold while a criminal case was being pursued.

Sanctions hit Russian economy, although Putin says otherwise

By KEN SWEET and FATIMA HUSSEIN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Nearly two months into the Russian-Ukraine war, the Kremlin has taken extraordinary steps to blunt an economic counteroffensive from the West. While Russia can claim some symbolic victories, the full impact of Western sanctions is starting to be felt in very real ways.

As the West moved to cut off Russia's access to its foreign reserves, limit imports of key technologies and take other restrictive actions, the Kremlin launched some drastic measures to protect the economy. Those included hiking interest rates to as high as 20%, instituting capital controls and forcing Russian business to convert their profits into rubles.

As a result, the value of the ruble has recovered after an initial plunge, and last week the central bank reversed part of its interest rate increase. Russian President Vladimir Putin felt emboldened and proclaimed — evoking World War II imagery — that the country had withstood the West's "blitz" of sanctions.

"The government wants to paint a picture that things are not as bad as they actually are," said Michael Alexeev, an economics professor at Indiana University who has studied Russia's economy in its transition after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

A closer look, however, shows that the sanctions are taking a bite out of Russia's economy:

— The country is enduring its worst bout of inflation in two decades. Rosstat, the state's economic statistics agency, said inflation last month hit 17.3%, the highest level since 2002. By comparison, the International Monetary Fund expects consumer prices in developing countries to rise 8.7% this year, up from 5.9% last year.

— Some Russian companies have been forced to shut down. Several reports say a tank manufacturer had to stop production due to a lack of parts. U.S. officials point to the closing of Lada auto plants — a brand made by the Russian company Avtovaz and majority-owned by French automaker Renault — as a sign of sanctions having an effect.

— Moscow's mayor says the city is looking at 200,000 job losses from foreign companies shutting down operations. More than 300 companies have pulled out, and international supply chains have largely shut down after container company Maersk, UPS, DHL and other transportation firms exited Russia.

— Russia is facing a historic default on its bonds, which will likely freeze the country out of the debt markets for years.

Meanwhile, Treasury officials and most economists urge patience, saying that sanctions take months to have their full effect. If Russia can't get appropriate amounts of capital, parts or supplies over time, that will cause even more factories and businesses to shut down, leading to higher unemployment.

It took nearly an entire year after Russia was sanctioned for seizing Ukraine's Crimea peninsula in 2014 for its economic data to show signs of distress, such as higher inflation, a decline in industrial production and a slowdown in economic growth.

"The things that we should be looking for to see if the sanctions are working are, frankly, not easy to see yet," said David Feldman, a professor of economics at William & Mary in Virginia. "We'll be looking for the price of goods, the quantity of goods they are producing and the quality of goods. The last being the hardest to see and probably the last to appear."

Transparency into how sanctions are affecting the Russian economy is limited, largely because of the extraordinary lengths the Kremlin has taken to prop it up. In addition, its largest sector — oil and gas — is largely unencumbered due to European, Chinese and Indian reliance on Russian energy.

Benjamin Hilgenstock and Elina Ribakova, economists with the Institute of International Finance, estimated in a report released last month that if the European Union, Britain and the U.S. were to ban Russian oil and natural gas, the Russian economy could contract more than 20% this year. Current projections forecast a 15% contraction.

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While the EU has agreed to ban Russian coal by August and is discussing sanctions on oil, there's been no consensus among its 27 nations so far about halting oil and natural gas. The European Union is far more reliant on Russian supplies than Britain and the U.S., which have banned or are phasing out Russian oil. In the meantime, Russia gets \$850 million a day from Europe for its oil and gas.

The U.S. and its allies have argued that they have tried to tailor sanctions to affect Russia's ability to wage war and financially hit those in the highest echelons of government, while leaving everyday Russians largely unaffected.

But Russians have noticed a spike in prices. Residents of one Moscow suburb said 19-liter jugs of drinking water they regularly order have become nearly 35% more expensive than before. In supermarkets and stores in their area, the price for 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) of sugar has risen 77%; some vegetables cost 30% to 50% more.

Local news sites in different Russian regions in recent weeks have reported that multiple stores are shuttered in malls after Western companies and brands halted operations or pulled out of Russia, including Starbucks, McDonald's and Apple.

The Kremlin and its allies on social media have repeatedly pointed to the recovery of Russia's ruble as a sign that Western sanctions aren't working. The ruble crashed to around 150 to the dollar in the early days of the war but recovered to around 80 to the dollar, about where it was before the invasion. A gauge of weekly inflation by Rosstat has shown inflation slowing, but that is not surprising after the central bank raised interest rates as quickly as it did.

Russia's central bank had doubled its benchmark interest rate to support the ruble's plunging value and stop bank runs. It dropped the rate to 17% from 20% this month and signaled it might lower it further.

This isn't the first time Russia has thrown its full force behind defending the ruble's value as a symbol of resistance against the West. Throughout the 1970s and '80s, the Soviet Union had an official exchange rate of one ruble equaling about \$1.35, whereas the black-market exchange rate was closer to four rubles to the dollar. The Russian debt crisis of the late 1990s also was caused partially by the Kremlin's active defense of the currency's value.

U.S. Treasury officials have dismissed the significance of the ruble's recovery.

"The Russian economy is really reeling from the sanctions that we put in place," Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said, adding that the ruble's value has been artificially inflated by central bank intervention.

If and how Russia wins the economic war will come down to whether the Kremlin can drive division in the West, causing the sanctions to become patchy and less effective. At the same time, Russia will have time to develop alternatives for goods it can no longer access, a concept known as import substitution.

Looking back at the 2014 sanctions, the Congressional Research Service said in January that the impact on Russia was modest only because the U.S. effectively acted alone. This time, there are multiple international actors.

But Alexeev, the Indiana University professor, sees one glaring gap.

"As long as Russia can continue to sell oil and gas, they will muddle through this," he said.

Tour boat with 26 aboard missing in frigid Japan waters

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — A tour boat with 26 people aboard was missing in the frigid waters of northern Japan on Saturday, hours after sending a distress call that it was sinking, the coast guard said.

No survivors have been found after more than 10 hours of intense search involving six patrol boats, five aircraft and divers. The coast guard said it will continue the search through the night.

The 19-ton Kazu 1 made an emergency call in early afternoon, saying the ship's bow had flooded and it was beginning to sink and tilt while traveling off the western coast of Shiretoko Peninsula in the northern island of Hokkaido, the coast guard said.

The tour boat has since lost contact, according to the coast guard. It said the boat was carrying 24 passengers, including two children, and two crew.

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Average April sea temperatures in Shiretoko National Park are just above freezing.

An official of the vessel's operator, Shiretoko Pleasure Cruise, said he could not comment as he had to respond to calls from worried families of the passengers.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who was attending a two-day water summit in Kumamoto in southern Japan, was canceling his program for Sunday and was set to return to Tokyo to deal with the missing boat, the NHK public broadcaster reported.

High waves and strong winds were observed in the area around noon, according to a local fisheries cooperative. Japanese media reports said fishing boats had returned to port before noon because of the bad weather.

NHK said there was a warning for high waves of up to 3 meters (9 feet) high.

Yoshihiko Yamada, a Tokai University marine science professor, said the boat was likely to have run aground after it was tossed around in high waves and damaged, flooded and probably sank. A tour boat of that size usually does not carry a life boat, and passengers possibly could not jump out of a rapidly sinking vessel with its windows probably closed to shield them from strong winds.

In an interview with the TBS television, Yamada said there is also a slight possibility that the boat might have been hit by a whale.

The cold temperature and strong wind could cause hypothermia and put the passengers in severe conditions for survival, according to Jun Abe, vice chairman of the Society of Water Rescue and Survival Research. "It's a very severe condition especially when they are wet," Abe told TBS.

According to the operator's website, the tour takes about three hours and offers a scenic view of the western coast of the peninsula, including the nature and animals such as whales, dolphins and the brown bear. The national park is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site and is famous as the southernmost region to see drifting sea ice.

Rio's Carnival parade returns after long pandemic hiatus

By DAVID BILLER and MAURICIO SAVARESE Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Colorful floats and flamboyant dancers are delighting tens of thousands jammed into Rio de Janeiro's iconic Sambadrome, putting on a delayed Carnival celebration after the pandemic halted the dazzling displays.

Rio de Janeiro's top samba schools began strutting their stuff late Friday, which was the first evening of the two-night spectacle.

Ketula Melo, 38, a muse in the Imperatriz Leopoldinense school dressed as the Iemanja deity of Afro-Brazilian religions, was thrilled to be back at the Sambadrome.

"These two years were horrible. Now we can be happy again," Melo said as she was about to enter Friday night wearing a black and white costume made of shells that barely covered her body.

Rio's Sambadrome has been home to the parade since the 1980s, and is a symbol of Brazil's Carnival festivities. During the pandemic, it was a shelter for more than 400 homeless people and also served as a vaccination station.

Brazil confirmed its first cases of the coronavirus in mid-March 2020, just after that year's Carnival festivities came to an end. The 2021 edition was swiftly cancelled due to the rise of the delta variant. More than 663,000 people have died from COVID-19 in Brazil, the second highest of any country in the world, according to Our World in Data, an online research site.

Entire communities rally around the competing samba schools, whose shows are not only a source of pride but also employment since preparations require countless seamstresses, welders, costume designers and more. There are months of rehearsals for dancers and drummers, so participants can learn the tune and the lyrics for their school's song. The pandemic upended these samba schools' way of life for two years.

Sao Paulo also kicked off its Carnival parade Friday evening. Both cities' parades usually take place in February or March, but their mayors in January jointly announced they were postponing Carnival by two months due to concerns about the proliferation of the omicron variant.

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The number of COVID-19 cases and deaths has plunged since then, and more than three-quarters of Brazilians are fully vaccinated, according to the country's health ministry. Local authorities have allowed soccer matches with full attendance since March.

Rio authorities said earlier this week those attending the parade would have to show proof of vaccination, but media reports showed that attendees had no trouble getting tickets or entering the Sambadrome without showing the required documents.

A seat in the bleachers cost about \$50, and the most expensive seats can cost more than \$1,260. Going out in one of the samba schools costs a lot for tourists, but it is often free for people who are involved with the parade all year round, like 66-year-old Juciara do Nascimento Santos. She was among the revelers starting this year's parade with the Imperatriz Leopoldinense samba school.

"We had to take care of ourselves during this time so we could be here today celebrating life," said Santos, who has paraded with Imperatriz Leopoldinense since 1984. This time she was in the section of the baianas, often reserved for the oldest women of each samba school. Many of these samba schools reported they lost many of their baianas to the virus.

For those unwilling to shell out for the price of admission, there were street parties across Rio — despite City Hall denying authorization for them to take place, citing insufficient time to prepare. Some organizers couldn't care less, arguing that celebrating Carnival wasn't contingent on authorities' consent, and parties hit the streets in force.

'Golden Girls' shows little age at inaugural fan convention

By TERRY TANG Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — TV shows about sci-fi or comic book fare usually inspire fan conventions — not a sitcom about four women of a certain age living together in Florida.

But sisters Hillary Wasicek, 37, and Melissa Gluck, 43, took this weekend's inaugural "The Golden Girls" convention at Chicago's Navy Pier to heart. Both women, who flew from California, spent Friday in elaborate cosplay as the characters of Dorothy and Blanche. The series has always held a special place for them because of its themes of friends becoming family and inclusiveness. Dressing up in wigs and all, which they previously did on a "Golden Girls" cruise, just enhances the convention experience.

"It's a fun expression of showing respect and appreciation for something you admire. It just makes you feel more a part of it," said Wasicek, who plans to don a different costume every day. "We just met so many people and heard so many stories. It's like 'These are my people.'"

For Gluck, meeting other "Golden Girls" buffs gives her "a greater appreciation of the show itself. Now, I've gotten my son and husband into it."

Golden-Con: Thank You For Being a Fan, which lasts through Sunday, is giving those who adored the NBC sitcom a chance to come together. More than 2,000 attendees are expected to converge. The show, which ran from 1985-1992, starred Bea Arthur, Rue McClanahan, Estelle Getty and Betty White — the last remaining "Golden Girl" who died at age 99 in December. It was revered for showing their characters, who shared a house in Miami, dealing with issues later in life like ageism, sex and LGBTQ rights.

Like any "con," there are panels and Q&As with people who guest-starred or worked behind the scenes. There is a vendors market with booths carrying "Golden Girls" themed candles, masks, T-shirts and other merch. Fans can snap photos in a recreation of the kitchen where the "girls" always ate cheesecake as well as a giant replica of Sophia's trademark purse. There are also two separate drag queen groups scheduled to perform tributes.

Among the guests are actress Bonnie Bartlett, known for roles on "St. Elsewhere" and "Boy Meets World" (both alongside her husband, actor William Daniels). She is notable for playing a stuck-up new friend of Dorothy's in a third-season episode. The two-time Emmy winner, 92, however, did not turn her nose up at the idea of a fan convention.

"I was running around chasing after Betty Grable and people like that," Bartlett said. "I was a big fan when I was a kid. So I understand this. My husband doesn't understand it but I do."

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Stan Zimmerman, a TV producer whose second writing job was on the first season, never imagined mingling with fans nearly 40 years later. Being in an industry where popularity is fickle, he's not taking it for granted.

"So I've seen the trajectory of the popularity, but nothing like what is happening now," Zimmerman said. "It's so cool to see young people that obviously were not even born when we wrote it know every line."

This "Golden Girls" extravaganza was originally just supposed to be a bar trivia night. Zack Hudson, who works in social services for seniors and is a "hard-core fan," approached Brad Balof, his friend and fellow fan about staging an event back in November. They ended up planning to book a community center but then interest outside of the state and even the U.S. intensified.

"All we did was make one announcement on social media," Hudson said. "It just kind of escalated from there. So we pivoted a little bit to welcome as many people as we can. And we're here now."

Hudson, Balof, a nightclub manager, and Balof's brother Brendan, who lives in Phoenix and has event planning experience, organized a small army of volunteers and staff. The entire group has been juggling their regular jobs and convention planning for the past several months. Hudson tracked down all the talent for the panels. While they secured some sponsorships, the bulk of Golden-Con's funding comes from ticket sales.

They believe interest was also heightened because "Golden Girls' devotees were looking for an outlet to continue grieving White. So there is one booth with hundreds of notecards for fans to write about their favorite memories involving the show or what it did for them.

"This is a chance to pay that much (respect) to a show that they loved and actresses that made it shine," Brad Balof said. "One thing that does help the show remain timeless is that there's enough humor that is not dependent on a specific situation, political or geographic ... It's just funny."

Israel closes crossing to Gaza workers after rockets

By JOSEPH KRAUSS and FARES AKRAM Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel said Saturday that it would close its border crossing to thousands of Gaza workers after a series of rockets were fired from the territory ruled by the militant Hamas group in recent days.

The Palestinians denounced the move as "collective punishment" of the impoverished territory's 2 million residents, who have lived under an Israeli-Egyptian blockade since Hamas seized power from rival Palestinian forces nearly 15 years ago.

The rocket fire came amid near-daily clashes at a flashpoint Jerusalem holy site over the past week, with Palestinians hurling stones and fireworks and Israeli police entering the compound and firing rubber-coated bullets and stun grenades.

The violence in Jerusalem, and a string of deadly attacks inside Israel and raids across the occupied West Bank, have raised fears of another war between Israel and Hamas like the one that broke out under similar circumstances last year.

Israel said Palestinian militants fired two rockets late Friday, with one landing in an open area inside Israel and the other falling inside Gaza. Palestinian media reported that two Gaza residents were wounded by the rocket that fell short. There was no immediate comment from health officials.

Another rocket was fired from Gaza early Saturday, but the military did not say where it landed. There were no reports of casualties or damage.

The Israeli military body that coordinates civilian affairs in Gaza said the crossing used by workers would not be re-opened on Sunday, the start of the work week. "The re-opening of the crossing will be decided accordingly with a security assessment," it said in a statement.

In recent months, Israel had issued thousands of work permits to Palestinians from Gaza, which has been under a crippling Israeli and Egyptian blockade since Hamas seized power from rival Palestinian forces nearly 15 years ago.

Israel portrayed the move as a goodwill gesture in order to maintain calm, but the permits — which can be revoked at any time — also give it a strong form of leverage over Palestinians. Israel grants permits to some 12,000 Palestinians in Gaza and over 100,000 to Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, mostly for

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work in construction and other menial jobs.

The Gaza workers union said the closure was “collective punishment” and would hurt the already suffering economy, where unemployment hovers around 50%. It said the timing of the closure, just before the Eid al-Fitr holiday marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan, would compound the pain for families struggling to make ends meet.

Sami Amassi, the head of the union, said the permits themselves were meant to “exploit” the workers for political purposes, rather than improve their lives.

Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem said the move “aims at tightening the siege and is a form of aggression that we cannot accept.”

“This will not succeed. The police of collective punishment against the Palestinians has always proven to fail,” he told The Associated Press.

Israel captured east Jerusalem — which includes major holy sites sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims — along with the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in the 1967 war. The Palestinians want all three territories to form their future state.

Israel annexed east Jerusalem in a move not recognized internationally, and has built Jewish settlements across the occupied West Bank that now house nearly 500,000 settlers alongside nearly 3 million Palestinians. There have been no substantive peace talks in more than a decade.

The violence in Jerusalem has been centered on the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest site in Islam. Jews consider the hilltop on which it is built to be their holiest site, and refer to it as the Temple Mount because it was the location of two Jewish temples in antiquity.

The site lies at the emotional heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and clashes there have often ignited violence elsewhere.

EXPLAINER: How South Carolina execution firing squad works

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — It’s unknown how long a stay will hold off the execution of Richard Bernard Moore — South Carolina’s first-ever inmate to be put to death by a firing squad — as his attorneys pursue legal challenges.

But the issuance of Moore’s death warrant, initially planned to be carried out April 29, has renewed interest in how a state puts in motion its plans to shoot an inmate to death. The method is employed in only a handful of states and has not been used in the U.S. in more than a decade.

South Carolina just instituted the firing squad option last year, giving condemned inmates the choice between that and electrocution, prompted by an inability to procure lethal injection drugs.

In choosing the firing squad, the 57-year-old Moore said he didn’t concede that either method was legal or constitutional but that he more strongly opposed death by electrocution and only opted for the firing squad because he was required to make a choice.

Moore drew the death sentence for the 1999 killing of convenience store clerk James Mahoney in Spartanburg. Planning to rob the store for money to support his cocaine habit, investigators have said that Mahoney pulled a gun, which Moore was able to wrestle away and use to shoot the clerk.

A May 13 execution date has also been set for another inmate, Brad Sigmon, although a state judge is examining his legal argument that both electrocution and the firing squad are “barbaric” methods of killing.

Only three executions in the United States have been carried out by firing squad since 1976, according to the Washington-based nonprofit Death Penalty Information Center. Moore’s would mark the first since Ronnie Lee Gardner’s 2010 execution by a five-person firing squad in Utah.

WHEN DID THIS PROCESS BEGIN?

South Carolina — once home to one of the busiest death chambers in the nation — has been unable to carry out any execution since 2011, an involuntary pause that officials have attributed to the state’s inability to procure the trifecta of drugs needed to carry out a lethal injection. Condemned inmates had the choice between injection and electrocution, meaning that opting for the former would in essence leave the state unable to carry out the sentence.

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For several years, lawmakers have mulled adding the firing squad as an option to approved methods, but debate never advanced. Last year, Democratic Sen. Dick Harpootlian and GOP Sen. Greg Hembree, both of whom previously served as prosecutors, again argued in favor of adding the firing squad option.

"The death penalty is going to stay the law here for a while. If it is going to remain, it ought to be humane," Harpootlian said, positing that the firing squad provided a more humane alternative than electrocution, if executions were to continue in the GOP-dominated state.

The measure, which Republican Gov. Henry McMaster signed into law last May, made South Carolina the fourth state in the country to allow use of a firing squad, according to the Washington-based nonprofit Death Penalty Information Center.

HOW IS THE EXECUTION CARRIED OUT?

Since the bill's passage, the South Carolina Department of Corrections worked at retrofitting its existing death chamber in Columbia — where executions by lethal injection and electrocution have been carried out for more than 30 years — to accommodate the needs of a firing squad.

The agency spent \$53,600 in state funding on renovations, including the installation of bullet-resistant glass between the death chamber and witnesses, as well as a metal chair into which the inmate will be strapped. They also cut into the brick wall of the chamber to make an aperture through which the three shooters — all volunteer employees from the Corrections Department — will thread their weapons, all loaded with live ammunition.

The aperture is 15 feet from the condemned, situated in a corner of the room, according to a memo released last month by the prisons agency. While the inmate will be visible to witnesses, officials said that the shooters and their weapons will not.

The electric chair, which officials say cannot be removed from the chamber, will be covered in its spot between the glass wall and the firing squad chair.

After an opportunity to make a final statement, the inmate will be strapped into the chair and a hood placed over his head. An execution team member will place a "small aim point" over the inmate's heart.

After the warden reads the execution order, officials said the team will fire. The agency has not specified what caliber rifles the volunteer shooters will use, nor details of the "certain qualifications" they will be required to have met.

WHO WILL BE THERE TO WITNESS IT?

Aside from the state officials in the chamber to carry out the execution, three media witnesses may attend the execution, as well as three witnesses from the victim's family, according to the Corrections Department.

State law also allows religious and legal counsel for the inmate, as well as representatives from law enforcement and local prosecutors.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTERWARD?

As is standard with all South Carolina executions, a physician will examine the inmate and make a death declaration. A photo released by Corrections officials shows a lipped metal basin underneath the inmate chair, as well as a rectangular box directly behind it, potentially to absorb the gunfire.

Immediately thereafter, the witnesses will be escorted from the room and taken to the Corrections headquarters building, where other media will be gathered.

Out of sight of the witnesses, the inmate's body is removed from the chamber and taken by the Richland County Coroner's Office for an autopsy before being returned to the inmate's family.

Today in History: April 24, hostage rescue mission fails

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, April 24, the 114th day of 2022. There are 251 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 24, 1962, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology achieved the first satellite relay of a televi-

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sion signal, between Camp Parks, California, and Westford, Massachusetts.

On this date:

In 1877, federal troops were ordered out of New Orleans, ending the North's post-Civil War rule in the South.

In 1915, in what's considered the start of the Armenian genocide, the Ottoman Empire began rounding up Armenian political and cultural leaders in Constantinople.

In 1960, rioting erupted in Biloxi, Mississippi, after Black protesters staging a "wade-in" at a whites-only beach were attacked by a crowd of hostile whites.

In 1961, in the wake of the failed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, the White House issued a statement saying that President John F. Kennedy "bears sole responsibility for the events of the past few days."

In 1967, Soviet cosmonaut Vladimir Komarov was killed when his Soyuz 1 spacecraft smashed into the Earth after his parachutes failed to deploy properly during re-entry; he was the first human spaceflight fatality.

In 1980, the United States launched an unsuccessful attempt to free the American hostages in Iran, a mission that resulted in the deaths of eight U.S. servicemen.

In 1990, the space shuttle Discovery blasted off from Cape Canaveral, Florida, carrying the \$1.5 billion Hubble Space Telescope.

In 1995, the final bomb linked to the Unabomber exploded inside the Sacramento, California, offices of a lobbying group for the wood products industry, killing chief lobbyist Gilbert B. Murray. (Theodore Kaczynski was later sentenced to four lifetimes in prison for a series of bombings that killed three men and injured 29 others.)

In 2005, Pope Benedict XVI formally began his stewardship of the Roman Catholic Church; the former Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger said in his installation homily that as pontiff he would listen to the will of God in governing the world's 1.1 billion Catholics.

In 2013, in Bangladesh, a shoddily constructed eight-story commercial building housing garment factories collapsed, killing more than 1,100 people.

In 2019, avowed racist John William King was executed in Texas for the 1998 slaying of James Byrd Jr., who was chained to the back of a truck and dragged along a road outside Jasper, Texas; prosecutors said Byrd was targeted because he was Black.

In 2020, the Food and Drug Administration issued an alert about the dangers of using a malaria drug that President Donald Trump had repeatedly promoted for coronavirus patients. The parent company of Lysol and another disinfectant warned that its products should not be used as an internal treatment for the coronavirus, a day after Trump wondered aloud about that prospect during a White House briefing.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama went after the college vote, telling students at the University of North Carolina that he and first lady Michelle Obama had "been in your shoes" and didn't pay off their student loans until eight years earlier. Republican Mitt Romney swept primaries in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New York.

Five years ago: Two inmates received lethal injections on the same gurney about three hours apart as Arkansas completed the nation's first double execution since 2000, just days after the state ended a nearly 12-year hiatus on administering capital punishment. Astronaut Peggy Whitson broke the U.S. record for most time in space and talked up Mars during a congratulatory call from President Donald Trump to the International Space Station.

One year ago: Flames engulfed the intensive care unit of a Baghdad hospital for coronavirus patients, claiming more than 80 lives and leaving more than 100 others injured. The United States formally declared that the systematic killing and deportation of more than a million Armenians by Ottoman Empire forces in the early 20th century was "genocide," a term that the White House had avoided using for decades for fear of alienating ally Turkey.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Shirley MacLaine is 88. Actor-singer-director Barbra Streisand is 80. Former Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley is 80. Country singer Richard Sterban (The Oak Ridge Boys) is 79. Rock

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musician Doug Clifford (Creedence Clearwater Revival) is 77. R&B singer Ann Peebles is 75. Former Irish Taoiseach (TEE'-shuk) Enda Kenny is 71. Actor-playwright Eric Bogosian is 69. Rock singer-musician Jack Blades (Night Ranger) is 68. Actor Michael O'Keefe is 67. Rock musician David J (Bauhaus) is 65. Actor Glenn Morshower is 63. Rock musician Billy Gould is 59. Actor-comedian Cedric the Entertainer is 58. Actor Djimon Hounsou (JEYE'-mihn OHN'-soo) is 58. Rock musician Patty Schemel is 55. Actor Stacy Haiduk is 54. Rock musician Aaron Comess (Spin Doctors) is 54. Actor Aidan Gillen is 54. Actor Melinda Clarke is 53. Actor Rory McCann is 53. Latin pop singer Alejandro Fernandez is 51. Country-rock musician Brad Morgan (Drive-By Truckers) is 51. Rock musician Brian Marshall (Creed; Alter Bridge) is 49. Actor Derek Luke is 48. Actor-producer Thad Luckinbill is 47. Actor Eric Balfour is 45. Actor Rebecca Mader is 45. Country singer Rebecca Lynn Howard is 43. Country singer Danny Gokey is 42. Actor Reagan Gomez is 42. Actor Austin Nichols is 42. Actor Sasha Barrese is 41. Contemporary Christian musician Jasen Rauch (Red) is 41. Singer Kelly Clarkson is 40. Rock singer-musician Tyson Ritter (The All-American Rejects) is 38. Country singer Carly Pearce is 32. Actor Joe Keery is 30. Actor Jack Quaid is 30. Actor Doc Shaw is 30. Actor Jordan Fisher is 28. Golfer Lydia Ko is 25.