

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, May 7, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 304 ~ 1 of 62

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"Compassion isn't about solutions. It's about giving all the love that you've got."

-Cheryl Strayed



Chicken Soup
for the Soul.

Saturday, May 7

10:30 a.m.: Track meet at Eureka.

SEAS Confession: 3:45-4:15 p.m., SEAS Mass: 4:30 p.m.

8 a.m.: City-wide Rummage Sale

8 - MOTHER'S DAY

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.

Emmanuel: Worship/Milestones, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; Bethesda worship, 2 p.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.

Methodist: Conde Worship at 9 a.m., Sunday school at 10 a.m., Groton worship at 11 a.m. (Sunday school sings at Groton service)

St. John's: Bible study, 8 a.m.; Worship, 9 a.m.; Graduation reception, 10 a.m.; Sunday school, 10 a.m.; Zion worship, 11 a.m.

2 p.m.: High School Baseball at Miller (V/JV)

Monday, May 9

Senior Menu: Goulash, green beans, apple crisp, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza.

School Lunch: Pizza crunchers, corn.

6:30 a.m.: Emmanuel Bible Study

10 a.m.: Girls Golf at Olive Grove Golf Course

3:30 p.m.: Junior High Track Meet at Aberdeen Roncalli

7 p.m.: School Board Meeting

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



HELP WANTED!

Groton Store

Part time cashier & part time deli. Deli must be 18 years of age or older. Apply at Ken's in Groton.

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

OPEN: **Recycling Trailer in Groton**
The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

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Marzahn is quadruple winner at Sisseton

Several Groton Area track team members took first place at the Sisseton Track Meet held Friday. Andrew Marzahn was a quadruple winner, winning the 100m dash and was on the winning 400m, 800m and sprint medley relay teams. Jackson Cogley took first in the high jump and Aspen Johnson took first in the triple jump.

Placing second were the boys 3200m relay team, Holden Sippel in the shot put, Faith Traphagen in the 800m run and the girls 800m relay team.

Third place finishers were Colby Dunker in the 300m hurdles, Jackson Cogley in the triple jump, and the girls 3200m relay team.

Boy's Division

Team Points: 1. Lisbon 213.83; 2. Milbank 111.5; 3. Groton Area 106; 4. Redfield 64.67; 5. Florence/Henry 62; 6. Dakota Hills 50; 7. Sargent County 49; 8. Sisseton 44; 9. Wyndmere-Lidgerwood 18; 10. Webster Area 13; 11. Herreid/Selby Area 11

100 Meters: 1. Andrew Marzahn, 11.5; 11. Korbin Kucker, 12.4; 13. Jayden Zak, 12.5

200 Meters: 7. Tate Larson, 24.8; 10. Christian Ehresmann, 25.7; 16. Colby Dunker, 26.6

400 Meters: 5. Ryder Johnson, 58.4; 17. Karsten Jeschke, 1:10.1

800 Meters: 4. Jacob Lewandowski, 2:15.1

110m Hurdles - 39": 5. Caden McInerney, 20.5

300m Hurdles - 36": 3. Colby Dunker, 48.6; 5. Jacob Zak, 50.1; 9. Tristan McGannon, 53.2

4x100 Relay: 1. Kaden Kurtz, Keegan Tracy, Andrew Marzahn, Teylor Diegel, 45.9

4x200 Relay: 1. Kaden Kurtz, Keegan Tracy, Andrew Marzahn, Teylor Diegel, 1:35.7

4x800 Relay: 2. Cole Simon, Jacob Lewandowski, Lane Tietz, Keegan Tracy, 9:48.7

SMR 200-200-400-800m - [2-2-4-8]: 1. Kaden Kurtz, Teylor Diegel, Andrew Marzahn, Cole Simon, 3:59.2

Shot Put - 12lb: 2. Holden Sippel, 40' 0.5; 8. Logan Ringgenberg, 36' 11; 9. Caleb Hanten, 36' 10.5; 14. Kaleb Antonsen, 33' 9.5

Discus - 1.6kg: 7. Caleb Hanten, 99' 6; 10. Logan Ringgenberg, 97' 11; 12. Holden Sippel, 97' 6; 13. Kaleb Antonsen, 90' 6

High Jump: 1. Jackson Cogley, 5' 8

Long Jump: 6. Jacob Zak, 18' 10.25; 11. Ryder Johnson, 17' 5.25; 14. Tate Larson, 16' 4 SR

Triple Jump: 3. Jackson Cogley, 38' 5.75; 6. Jacob Zak, 36' 4.75; 10. Tristan McGannon, 33' 4

Girl's Division

Team Points: 1. Lisbon 157; 2. Milbank 97.5; 3. Redfield 92; 4. Florence/Henry 83.5; 5. Dakota Hills 69; 6. Groton Area 59; 7. Webster Area 56.5; 8. Wyndmere-Lidgerwood 55; 9. Sargent County 43; 10. Sisseton 26.5; 11. Herreid/Selby Area 14.

100 Meters: 13. Karsyn Jangula, 14.4; 15. Brooklyn Hanson, 14.7; 17. Kayla Lehr, 14.9; 24. Riley Leicht, 16.2

200 Meters: 4. Rylee Dunker, 28.6; 8. Karsyn Jangula, 29.6; 10. Brooklyn Hanson, 29.8; 11. Kayla Lehr, 30.0

400 Meters: 8. Brooklyn Hanson, 1:17.1; 9. Sydney Leicht, 1:17.5

800 Meters: 2. Faith Traphagen, 2:35.8 SR

300m Hurdles - 30": 4. Talli Wright, 54.7

4x100 Relay: 5. Jerica Locke, Kennedy Hanson, Aspen Johnson, Laila Roberts, 58.2

4x200 Relay: 2. Jerica Locke, Kennedy Hanson, Aspen Johnson, Laila Roberts, 1:55.2

4x800 Relay: 3. Rylee Dunker, Faith Traphagen, Kella Tracy, Taryn Traphagen, 11:32.7

SMR 200-200-400-800m - [2-2-4-8]: 5. Kayla Lehr, Kella Tracy, Rylee Dunker, Taryn Traphagen, 5:09.3

Shot Put - 4kg: 7. Maddie Bjerke, 29' 5.5; 12. Emma Kutter, 27' 3.5; 13. Faith Flihs, 27' 2

Discus - 1kg: 6. Maddie Bjerke, 84' 11; 13. Faith Flihs, 74' 3 SR; 23. Ashley Johnson, 55' 9; 25. Emma Schinkel, 50' 5

High Jump: 6. Anna Fjeldheim, 4' 5

Long Jump: 6. Aspen Johnson, 14' 4.5, 9. Trista Keith, 13' 3.5, 22. Anna Fjeldheim, 1' 0.5

Triple Jump: 1. Aspen Johnson, 34' 1.75; 11. Emerlee Jones, 27' 10

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Groton Area - Track & Field Top Performers

The Groton Area track team took part in the Milbank Track meet this past week and that allowed for several movements, some up and some down, for the team. The top 24 qualify for the state track meet. Here is where the Tigers are ranked as the performance ratings were released Friday morning.

The Groton Area girls Sprint Medley Relay team slipped from 15th to 17th place as its time remained the same at 4:40.90.

Aspen Johnson slipped two places to 14th place in the triple jump. Her distance remains unchanged at 32-04.

Andrew Marzahn is hanging on to the 24th spot, falling four places with an unchanged time of 11.54 tied with two other athletes in the 100m dash.

Marzahn zipped to 16th place in the 200m dash with a time of 23.74. He ran his first 200m dash at the Milbank meet. His first run in the 400m dash put him in 30th place.

The boys 400m Relay Team's time remained unchanged at 46.24 as their rating slipped to a tie for 18th place. They were in 17th place last week.

The boys 800m Relay Team jumped from 17th place to 14th place by improving their time from 1:37.10 to 1:35.90.

The boys 1600m Relay Team improved its time from 3:47.40 to 3:45.10, but that allowed the team to keep holding on to the 22nd spot.

The boys 3200m Relay Team improved from 22nd to 17th place as they improved their time from 9:07.40 to 8:58.10.

The boys Sprint Medley Relay Team dropped out of the top 24 and fell to 28th with no change in its time of 3:59.70.

Jackson Cogley fell out of the top 24 and even though he improved his distance in the triple jump to 37-2.5, he dropped to 51st place.

The girls 800m Relay Team improved its time from 1:56.40 to 1:54.40, moving up from 24th to 21st place.

The girls 1600m Relay team moved up from 26th to 18th place by improving its time at Milbank from 4:37.20 to 4:28.20.

The girls 3200m Relay Team moved up from 25th to 22nd spot by improving its time from 11:10.10 to 10:50.50.

The girls 400m Relay team has slipped from 27th to 30th as its time remains unchanged and three other teams have moved ahead of Groton's 54.64. The 24th spot has improved from 54.44 to 54.34.

Jackson Cogley dropped four places to 35th in the high jump as his height of 5-6 did not change.

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Missouri River Levels

This Week



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

Northwestern Division, Omaha District
Mainstem and Tributary Reservoir Bulletin
Project Data Date/Time: 05-07-2022 00:00
Last Updated Date/Time: 05-07-2022 07:35



Project	Project Information				Current Data					Occupied Storage		
	Elevations (ft)		Cumulative Stor (ac-ft)		Elev (ft)	Daily Elev Change (ft)	Storage (ac-ft)	Inflow (cfs)	Release (cfs)	MP (%)	FC (ac-ft)	FC (%)
	MP	FC	MP	FC								
Missouri River Mainstem Projects												
Fort Peck Dam	2234.0	2250.0	14,788,340	18,462,840	2222.62	0.06	12,538,000	5,000	5,800	84.8	0	0.0
Garrison Dam	1837.5	1854.0	17,744,640	23,451,300	1828.28	0.08	15,091,000	21,000	14,400	85.0	0	0.0
Oahe Dam	1607.5	1620.0	18,667,635	22,982,900	1595.19	0.00	15,153,000	21,000	14,800	81.2	0	0.0
Big Bend Dam	1420.0	1423.0	1,631,474	1,810,414	1420.89	-0.01	1,677,000	16,000	17,700	100.0	45,526	25.4
Fort Randall Dam	1350.0	1375.0	3,000,732	5,293,473	1356.88	0.12	3,566,000	20,000	15,300	100.0	565,268	24.7
Gavins Point Dam	1204.5	1210.0	295,406	428,033	1206.85	0.00	348,000	20,000	19,100	100.0	52,594	39.7
System Totals	--	--	56,128,227	72,428,960	--	--	48,373,000	--	--	86.2	0	0.0

Last Week



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

Northwestern Division, Omaha District
Mainstem and Tributary Reservoir Bulletin
Project Data Date/Time: 04-30-2022 00:00
Last Updated Date/Time: 04-30-2022 07:35



Project	Project Information				Current Data					Occupied Storage		
	Elevations (ft)		Cumulative Stor (ac-ft)		Elev (ft)	Daily Elev Change (ft)	Storage (ac-ft)	Inflow (cfs)	Release (cfs)	MP (%)	FC (ac-ft)	FC (%)
	MP	FC	MP	FC								
Missouri River Mainstem Projects												
Fort Peck Dam	2234.0	2250.0	14,788,340	18,462,840	2222.63	0.03	12,546,000	6,000	6,100	84.8	0	0.0
Garrison Dam	1837.5	1854.0	17,744,640	23,451,300	1828.10	0.18	14,998,000	27,000	14,500	84.5	0	0.0
Oahe Dam	1607.5	1620.0	18,667,635	22,982,900	1595.40	0.31	15,203,000	70,000	27,300	81.4	0	0.0
Big Bend Dam	1420.0	1423.0	1,631,474	1,810,414	1420.66	-0.03	1,669,000	34,000	30,500	100.0	37,526	21.0
Fort Randall Dam	1350.0	1375.0	3,000,732	5,293,473	1355.63	0.54	M	M	21,500	M	M	M
Gavins Point Dam	1204.5	1210.0	295,406	428,033	1206.38	0.04	M	M	24,700	M	M	M
System Totals	--	--	56,128,227	72,428,960	--	--	M	--	--	M	M	M

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Weber Landscaping Greenhouse

204 N State St., Groton

Opening
for the
season
on Friday,
May 6th!



New products!
New Planters!



We have tons
of hanging
baskets,
vegetables,
annuals,
garden seeds,
gift cards and
much. much
more!



Livingston
garden seeds!!!!

Hours: M-F 10-6, Sat 10-4, Sun 12-4
Look for the green flags! Questions? Call 605-380-6587

THE PANTRY



Opening May 9th at the Groton Community Center

Mondays: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Tuesdays: 4 p.m. to 8 p.m

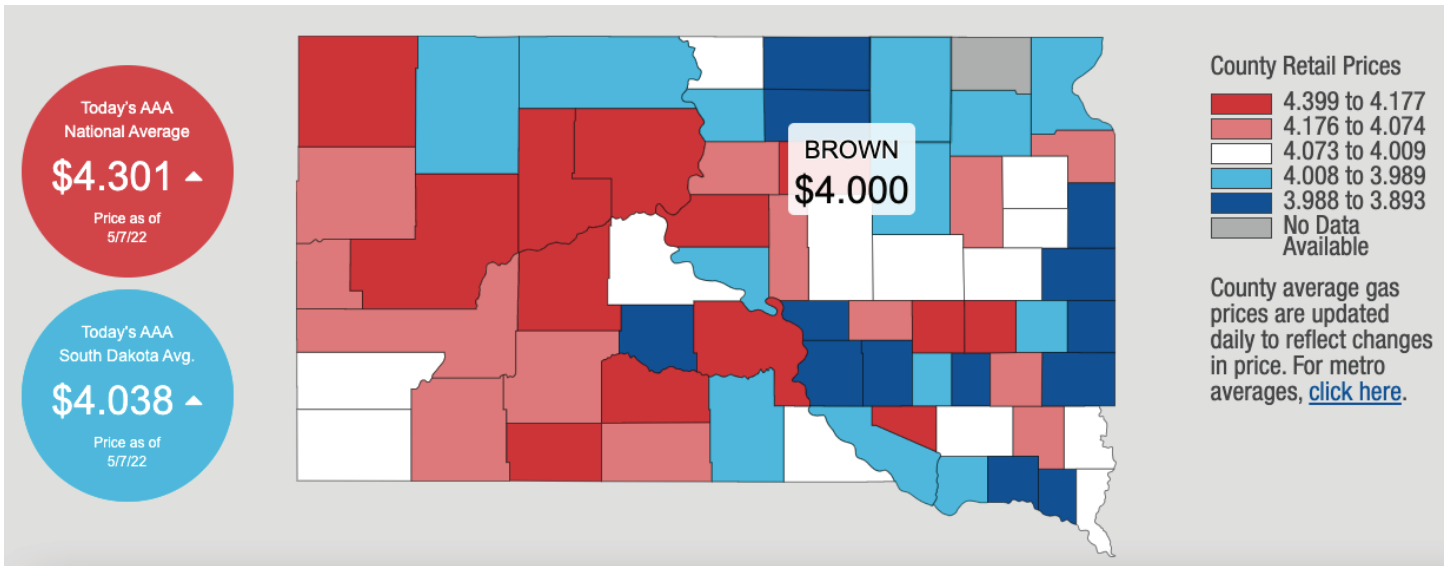
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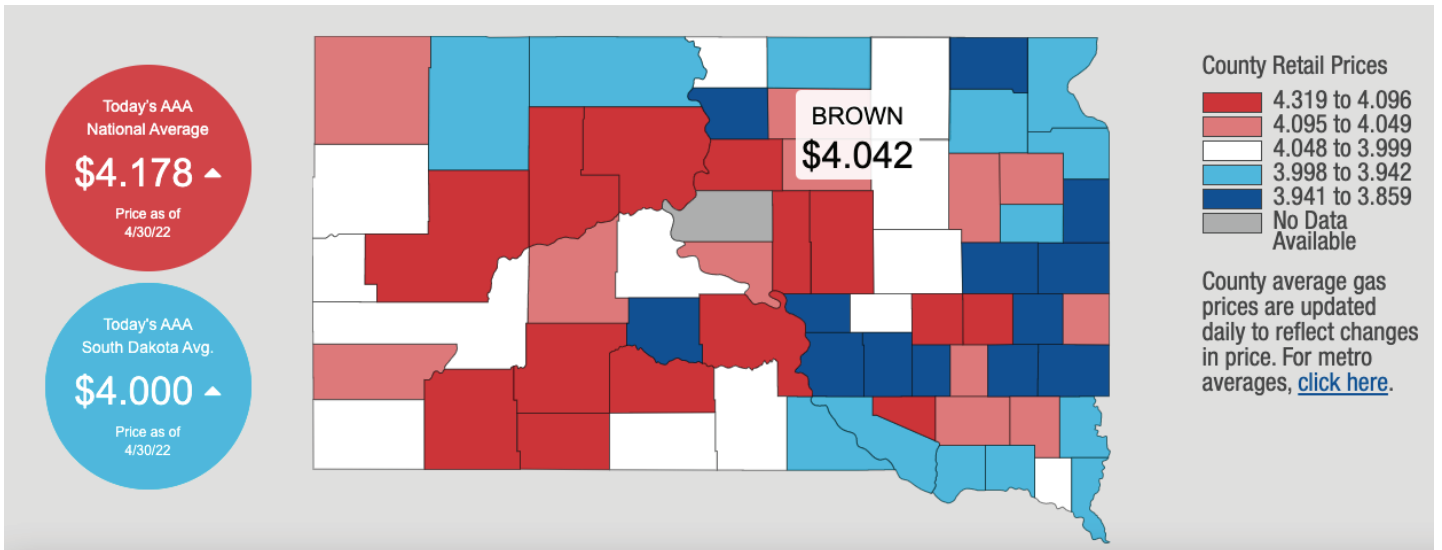
South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$4.038	\$4.168	\$4.538	\$5.363
Yesterday Avg.	\$4.030	\$4.140	\$4.518	\$5.349
Week Ago Avg.	\$4.000	\$4.101	\$4.480	\$5.119
Month Ago Avg.	\$3.884	\$3.979	\$4.372	\$4.825
Year Ago Avg.	\$2.878	\$2.972	\$3.306	\$3.071

This Week



Last Week



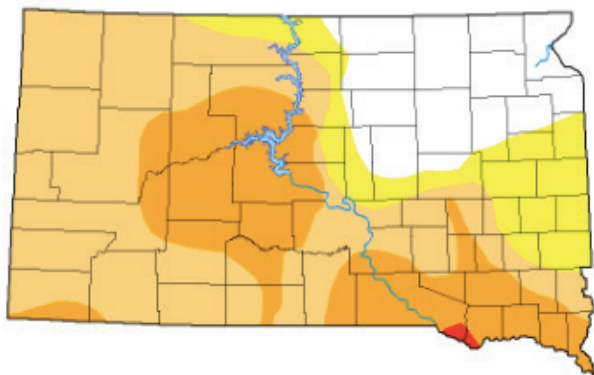
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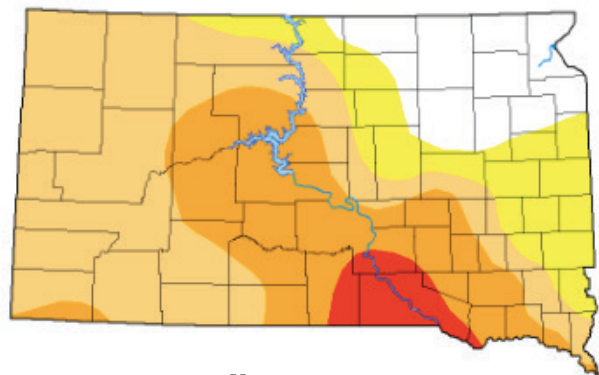
Drought Classification



Drought Monitor



May 3



April 26

On this week's map, widespread improvements were made in South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas in response to significant rainfall accumulations that helped to improve soil moisture levels and boosted streamflow levels. Rainfall totals for the week ranged from 2 to 8+ inches with the highest totals observed in central South Dakota, eastern and central Nebraska, and northern Kansas. However, some drought-stricken areas of the region, including extreme southeastern South Dakota, northeastern Nebraska, and central Kansas, largely missed out on this week's storms. In the eastern plains of Montana, improving conditions (precipitation, soil moisture) led to reduction in areas of Severe Drought (D2) and Extreme Drought (D3). However, it should be noted that recent improvements in eastern Montana are not uniform and many areas are still coping with the impacts (agricultural) of the longer-term drought situation. Average temperatures were below normal across the northern half of the region, with negative departures ranging from 2 to 10+ deg F below normal and the greatest departures observed in eastern portions of the Dakotas. In the southern half of the region, average temperatures were 2 to 8 deg F above normal.

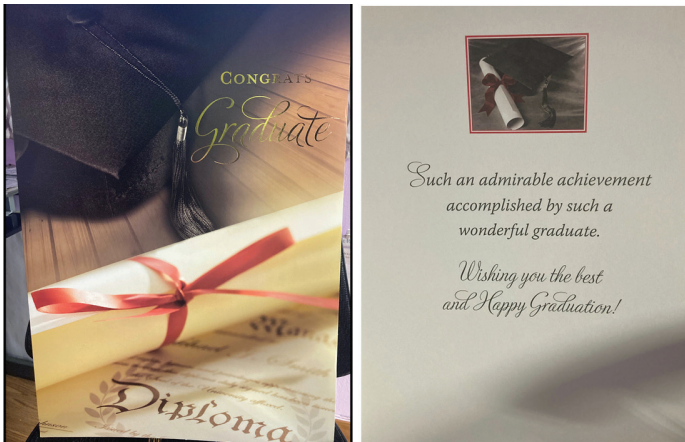
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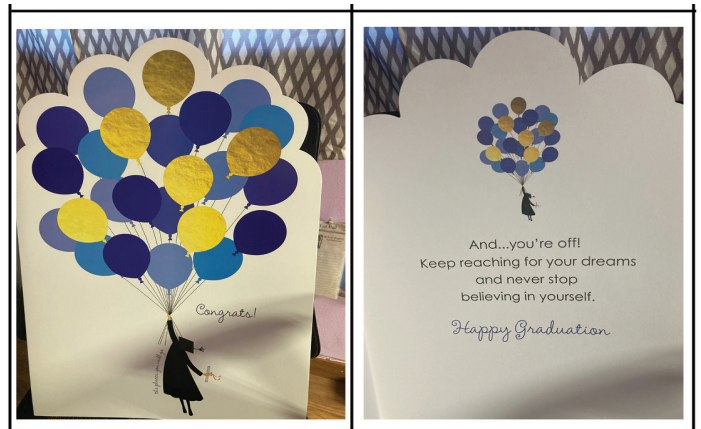
Jumbo Graduation Cards

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

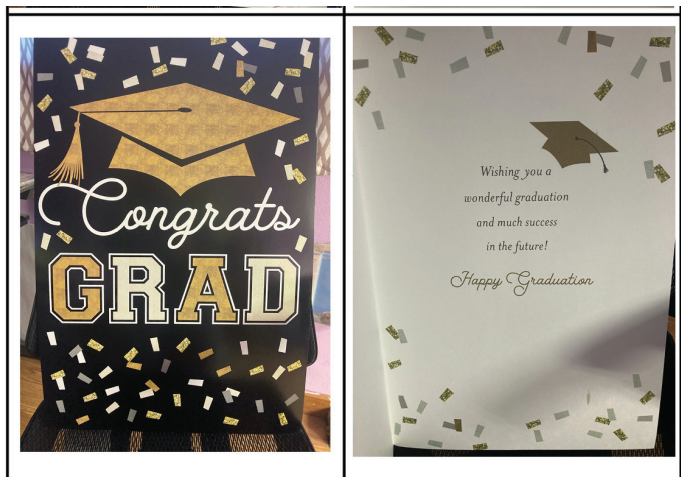
Can now be ordered on-line at 397news.com - Link on Black Bar
Or Call/Text Paul at 605-397-7460 or Tina at 605-397-7285
to reserve your card(s)



50-9903-C
\$7.99



50-9666-C
\$7.99



50-10977JM-C
\$7.99



50-9360-C
\$7.99

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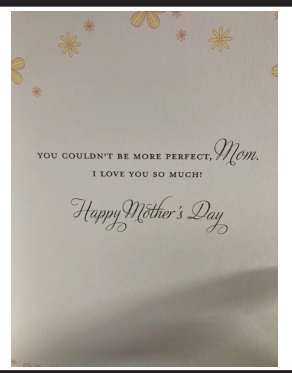
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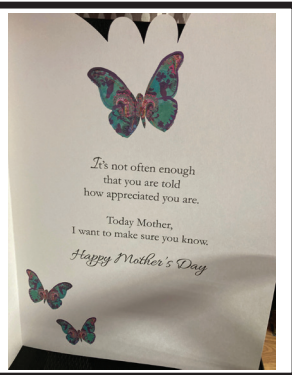
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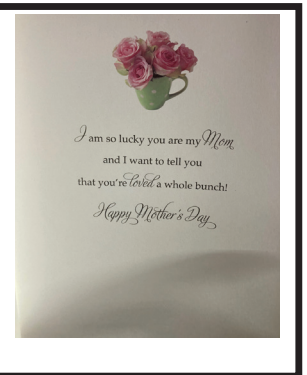
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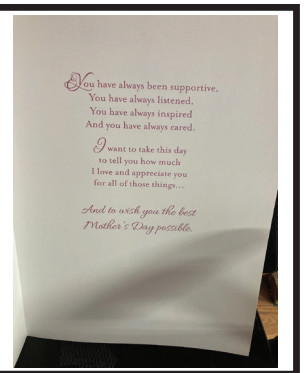
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- NEWS
- LIVE
- FIT
- CLEAN
- RENT

Scan Code Below for More Details



15 N Main St., Groton
PO Box 34, Groton, SD
57445-0034
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Call/Text Paul: 605/397-7460
Call/Text Tina: 605/397-7285
paperpaul@grotonsd.net



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"



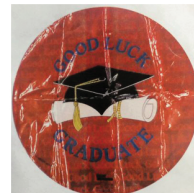
#14 - \$5



#15 - \$5



#16 - \$5



#17 - \$5



#18 - \$5



#19 - \$5



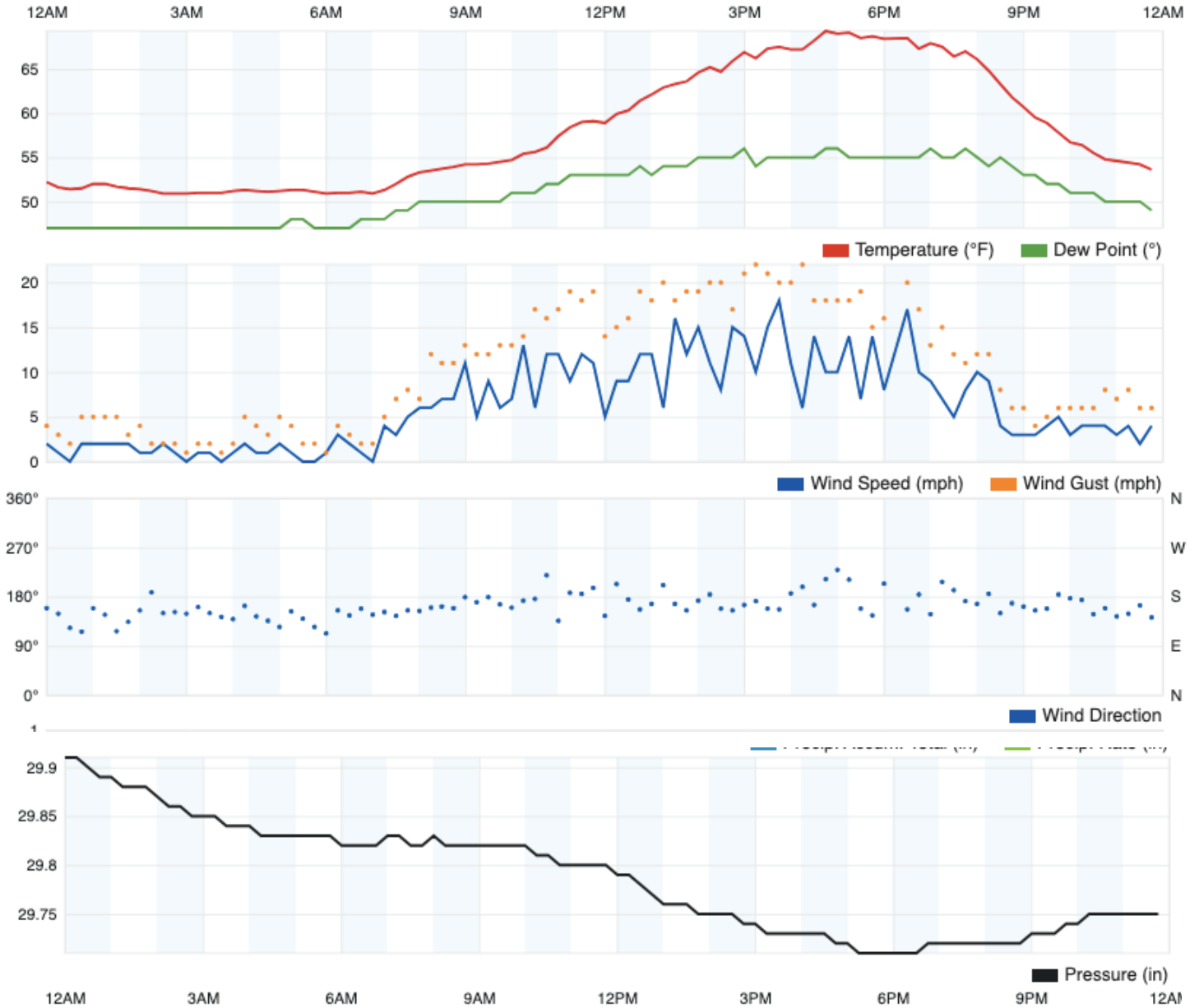
#20 - \$5

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!

Groton Daily Independent




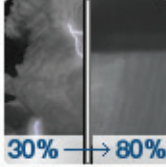
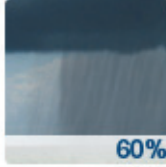
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
				
Partly Sunny and Breezy	T-storms and Breezy	T-storms Likely then Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms then Heavy Rain	Showers Likely and Breezy
High: 75 °F	Low: 53 °F	High: 70 °F	Low: 52 °F	High: 65 °F



Marginal Severe Risk Today/Tonight

May 7, 2022
3:25 AM

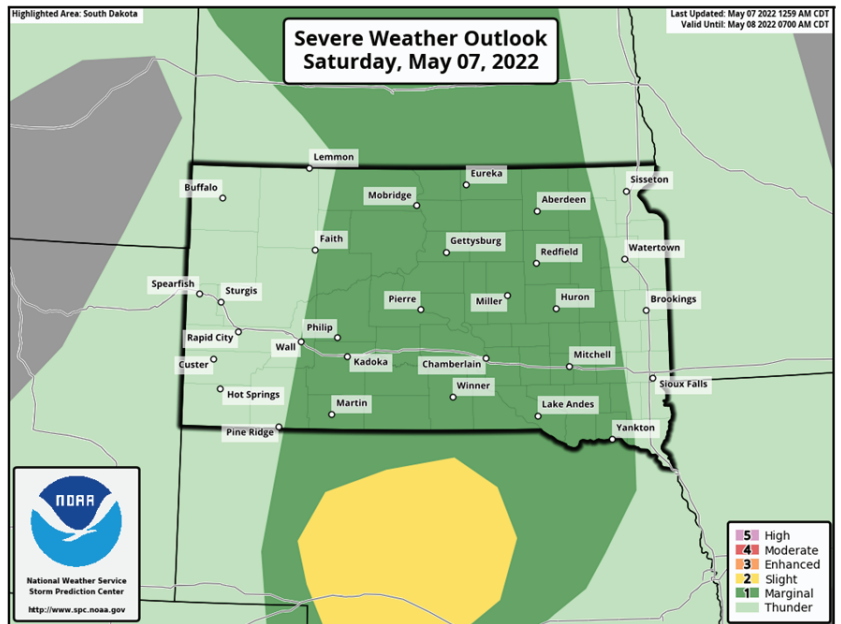
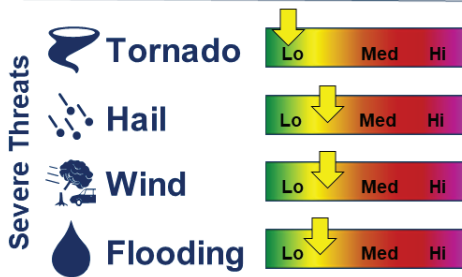
Overview

Isolated severe storms are possible late this afternoon & evening for NC/NE South Dakota

Actions



Be weather aware and ready to act. Have multiple ways to receive warning information!



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Isolated severe storms are possible late this afternoon and evening across the region. Hail and wind are the main threats. #sdwx #mnwx

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Rain Chances/Timing through Sunday

May 7, 2022
3:36 AM

Probability of Precipitation Forecast

	5/7 Sat								5/8 Sun								5/9 Mon	
	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am		
Aberdeen	0	1	3	8	11	60	84	84	72	72	20	26	26	31	31	80		
Britton	1	0	2	5	10	37	91	92	92	75	41	41	35	35	29	81		
Eagle Butte	1	6	9	17	42	35	41	41	19	15	11	31	31	46	46	71		
Eureka	0	0	3	8	40	49	60	60	50	28	14	24	24	35	35	74		
Gettysburg	1	2	4	5	39	56	62	62	50	42	9	24	24	48	48	80		
Kennebec	1	2	2	3	20	53	77	77	58	42	6	30	30	62	62	81		
McIntosh	1	3	6	21	41	28	19	17	26	26	11	20	20	28	28	59		
Milbank	2	1	1	Showers and thunderstorms are likely late this afternoon and evening over the forecast area. #sdwx #mnwx								93	51	51	25	25	23	81
Miller	0	1	3	6	17	58	51	40	38	24	17	12	17	17	47	47	84	
Mobridge	1	1	3	7	58	51	40	38	24	17	12	22	22	36	36	71		
Murdo	1	2	3	8	37	45	60	60	39	23	7	39	39	74	74	82		
Pierre	1	2	3	6	30	49	61	61	39	25	5	26	26	61	61	82		
Redfield	0	0	2	5	13	62	91	91	85	69	17	19	19	35	35	83		
Watertown		0	1	2	5	24	66	92	93	93	32	32	18	22	22	79		
Webster	1	0	1	4	7	30	73	92	92	85	30	30	24	24	24	81		
Wheaton	2	2	1	1	5	21	53	91	91	89	57	57	27	27	21	80		



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Showers and thunderstorms are likely late this afternoon and evening over the forecast area. #sdwx #mnwx

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Today in Weather History

May 7, 1896: A strong, estimated F3 tornado moved northeast from 12 miles SSW of Clark to 3 miles west of Watertown, to beyond Lake Kampeska. It was estimated to be on the ground for a distance of 30 miles. Near the start of the path, a woman was killed, and ten people were injured in one home. Parts of a house were found up to two miles away. The tornado also leveled barns near Watertown.

1840 - A powerful tornado wrecked many boats at the Natchez Landing in Mississippi, then plowed through the city on the bluff. The tornado killed 317 persons, and caused a million dollars damage. The force of the storm caused houses to burst open. The tornado was the most deadly and destructive in early American history. (David Ludlum)

1964 - The temperature at White Mountain 2, located in California, dipped to 15 degrees below zero to set a record for May for the continental U.S. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thirty-one cities in the western U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Highs of 93 degrees at Portland OR and San Jose CA were the warmest of record for so early in the season. The high of 92 degrees at Quillayute WA was a record for the month of May. The temperature at Sacramento CA hit 105 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - A powerful storm in the north central U.S. produced up to three feet of snow in the Bighorn Mountains of Wyoming and the mountains of south central Montana. Up to five inches of rain drenched central Montana in less than 24 hours, and flash flooding in Wyoming caused a million dollars damage. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thirty-two cities in the central and eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, and 24 hour snowfall totals of 7.2 inches at Buffalo NY and 10.7 inches at Rochester NY were records for the month of May. While northerly winds ushered unseasonably cold air into the eastern U.S., temperatures warmed rapidly in the Great Plains Region, reaching the 90s in Kansas. The temperature at Manhattan KS soared from a low of 30 degrees to a high of 88 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Gale force winds lashed the northern and central Pacific coast. A wind gust of 52 mph at Eureka CA established a record for the month of May. Strong winds over northeastern Colorado, associated with a fast moving Pacific cold front, gusted to 63 mph at Peetz. Snow developed over the northwest mountains of Wyoming late in the day, and Yellowstone National Park was whitened with 6 to 14 inches. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1993: Serious flooding occurred in central Oklahoma following torrential rain and hail on this date through the 8th. Rainfall amounts on this date were generally around one inch. Oklahoma City, OK then recorded 6.64 inches of rain on the 8th, the third greatest daily rainfall amount ever observed in the city. Extensive flooding resulted, which killed four people, and the fire department had to rescue 183 others. More than 2,000 homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed. Damages were estimated at \$8 million.

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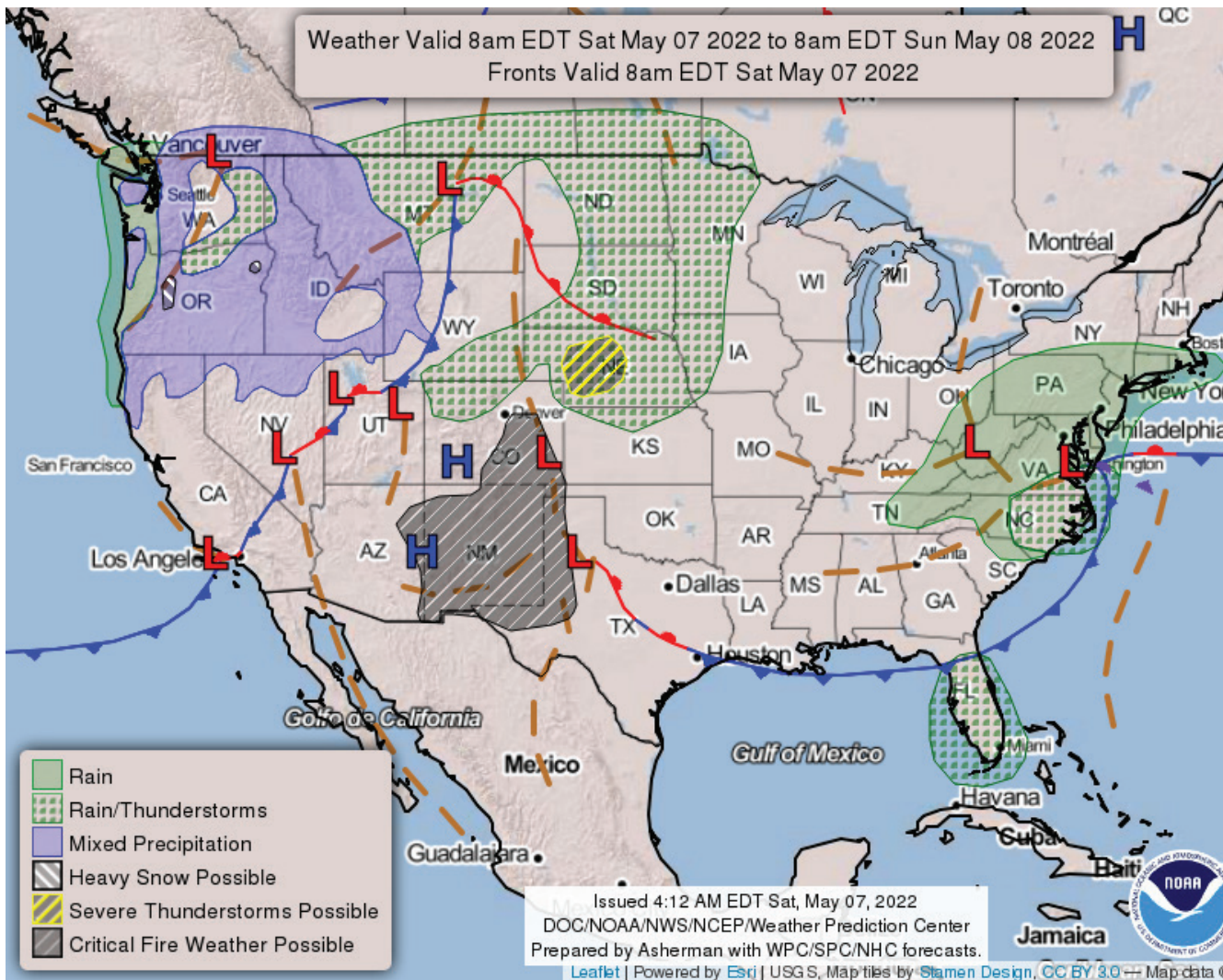
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 70 °F at 4:39 PM
Low Temp: 51 °F at 2:35 AM
Wind: 22 mph at 3:11 PM
Precip: 0.00

Day length: 14 hours, 38 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 94 in 1928
Record Low: 24 in 2019
Average High: 67°F
Average Low: 40°F
Average Precip in May.: 0.76
Precip to date in May.: 0.02
Average Precip to date: 4.73
Precip Year to Date: 6.52
Sunset Tonight: 8:48:03 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:08:28 AM



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GOD'S BRIDGE

Mr. Rushing was a great Sunday school teacher who had a real gift to get his eighth-grade boys' class involved in the lesson. One Sunday, he decided to ask a question to get them involved in the lesson. "If gold stood for good deeds and grey for bad deeds what color would you be?"

"I'd be streaky," answered Ron. "I've done a bunch of things that are really bad. As a matter of fact, I would probably end up looking kind of blurry."

No doubt all of us end up looking rather "blurry." We all fall short when measured against God's definition of "good."

God is holy, and we are unholy - or "sinful." There is a great space between the righteous Creator - God - and guilty sinners - "us." We may try to build a bridge of good works and kind deeds from where we are to where God is. But sooner or later the works and deeds would fall short of the gate into heaven, and we would find ourselves "out there" dangling in space. In words that are clear and impossible to misunderstand the Psalmist wrote, "For no one living is righteous before You."

But God built a bridge from where we are to where He is. It is called "the cross of Calvary." It's where His Son hung on a cross one day until He was dead. Then, He was laid in a tomb until His Father brought Him back to life. And it is this "bridge" - this cross of Calvary - that we "cross" by faith alone.

Any person at any time from any place can cross this Bridge of Faith and be cleansed of sin and made righteous.

Prayer: It seems impossible, Father, that all we have to do is to reach out, grasp Your hand and cross that Bridge. But, You never refuse any of us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Do not bring your servant into judgment, for no one living is righteous before you. Psalm 143:2b

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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 Friday:

Mega Millions

16-21-33-52-70, Mega Ball: 10, Megaplier: 2

(sixteen, twenty-one, thirty-three, fifty-two, seventy; Mega Ball: ten; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$70 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$51 million

South Dakota farmers optimistic about commodity prices

LAKE PRESTON, S.D. (AP) — Farmers in South Dakota says there's a reason for optimism as they head out to their fields to plant crops this spring.

Commodity markets are up 62% over the 10-year average.

Wayne Soren raises crops and cattle near Lake Preston.

"This is probably one of the most exciting seasons to begin in, in quite some time because the prices of crops are so high," Soren tells South Dakota Public Broadcasting.

Although he's optimistic as he drives his planter into his corn field, the third-generation farmer also has concerns, mainly about dry conditions.

"That's one of the dark clouds that sits above. Are we going to get enough rain to grow a crop this year?" Soren says.

Soren is not alone in his concern. According to U.S. Drought Monitor data, 71% of South Dakota was in drought conditions at the end of April.

But recent rain provided some relief.

"We got a large rain. Probably the biggest rain we've had in two years. Dams are completely full over the last three days. Yeah, we're pretty much at max for soil moisture at the moment. I would say we got almost four inches... I was cautiously optimistic last time and I am wholly optimistic at the moment," said Kimball farmer Adam Schindler.

Following the late-April rainstorms, the May 5th U.S. Drought Monitor data shows 69% of the state remains in drought conditions.

France's Macron inaugurated for second five-year term

By SYLVIE CORBET Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — President Emmanuel Macron was inaugurated for a second term on Saturday, vowing to first take action to avoid any further escalation of Russia's war in Ukraine before going on to focus on promoting France and Europe on the world stage.

Macron was reelected for five years on April 24 in a runoff that saw him beat out far-right rival Marine Le Pen.

"The time ahead will be that of resolute action for France and for Europe," Macron said. He promised to "first take action to avoid any escalation following Russia's aggression in Ukraine."

Macron vowed to "take action relentlessly with a goal, which is to be a more independent nation, to live better and to build our own French and European responses to the century's challenges."

Macron also promised to find a "fair method" to govern the country and ease social tensions by making the government and parliament work together with unions, associations and other people from the political, economic, social and cultural world.

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For a president at ease speaking for hours on end, Macron's speech was surprisingly short — and handwritten. But afterwards, he took his time to shake hands, exchange cheek kisses and chat individually with scores of guests.

While he presided over strict lockdowns and coronavirus vaccine mandates as the pandemic swept through France, most restrictions have now been lifted and there was no sign of masks or social distancing at the inauguration.

The event seemed unusually child-friendly for French presidential ceremonies, with several dignitaries bringing their children — and at least two in baby strollers. Macron, 44, has no children of his own but has step-children and grandchildren, some of whom were there.

About 500 guests were invited to the ceremony. They came primarily from the world of politics, though also included actors, health care workers, military officers and former Presidents Francois Hollande and Nicolas Sarkozy. Most of those who received a coveted invite to the event were white men in suits, despite a growing push for diversity in French politics.

At his arrival in the reception hall of the Elysee, Macron winked at his wife, Brigitte Macron.

The president of the Constitutional Council read out the results of the election and Macron was given the necklace of Grand Master of the Legion of Honor, France's highest distinction, before making his speech.

He then went to the gardens of the Elysee palace and listened to 21 cannon shots being fired from the Invalides plaza to mark the event, in line with tradition.

Macron also reviewed the military. Troops present at the ceremony included part of the crew of the Monge, the French navy's second-biggest ship that is key to France's nuclear deterrent. It was notably used for the tests of France's nuclear-capable submarine-launched M51 missiles.

The symbol can be seen as a show of force at times when France is deeply involved in efforts to stop Russia's war against Ukraine, including via sending truck-mounted cannons and other heavy weapons.

Macron's second term will formally start on May 14.

Russia holds dress rehearsal for Victory Day parade

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia held a dress rehearsal on Saturday for the military parade to commemorate Victory Day on May 9, when the country marks the defeat of Nazi Germany during World War II.

This year's Victory Day, which falls on Monday, won't just honor a conflict that ended 77 years ago. Many Russians will be thinking about the thousands of troops in neighboring Ukraine. Signs of support for the military have grown across the country since Feb. 24, with the letter "Z" appearing on billboards and signs in the streets and subways, and on television and social media.

On Saturday, an RS-24 Yars intercontinental ballistic missile rolled through Red Square as part of the rehearsal in Moscow, with warplanes and helicopters flying overhead, troops marching in formation and self-propelled artillery vehicles rumbling past.

Ukraine's scientists continue work as kind of 'resistance'

By CHRISTINA LARSON AP Science Writer

Anton Vlaschenko often hears shelling outside his office in Ukraine's second-largest city of Kharkiv, not far from the front lines of the war. He sometimes even sees smoke rising from Russian tanks hit by missiles.

But the 40-year-old zoologist continues his work, dissecting and labeling bat tissue, as he probes the disease ecology of the flying mammals. When news of the war overwhelms him, he says, it helps to have something familiar to do with his hands.

He also sees it as an act of defiance.

"Our staying in Ukraine, our continuing to work — it's some kind of resistance of Russian invasion," Vlaschenko said via Zoom, a barrage of shelling audible in the background. "The people together in Ukraine are ready to fight, not only with guns. We don't want to lose our country."

His resolve isn't unique. Like other Ukrainians whose labors aren't essential to the war effort, the scientists and academics want to continue their important work where they can.

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A common refrain is that they want to stay connected to their scholarly community, which provides a shard of normalcy amid the chaos and violence, and “keep the light of Ukrainian science and humanities alive,” said Yevheniia Polishchuk, who teaches at Kyiv National Economic University.

As vice chair of the Young Scientists Council at Ukraine’s Ministry of Education and Science, Polishchuk organized an online survey of academics to assess their situation and needs after the Feb. 24 invasion. An estimated 4,000 to 6,000 scholars had left Ukraine by early April — mostly women with families — but about 100,000 stayed.

Most who went abroad wound up in Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe, getting temporary positions at European institutions. Some scientists have received grants from the Polish Academy of Sciences, U.S. National Academy of Sciences, and other organizations. Polishchuk, now in Krakow with her children and husband, is a visiting professor at a university for May and June but says she hopes to return to Kyiv when fighting stops.

“We don’t want the war to result in a brain drain from Ukraine,” she said.

While Ukrainian scholars are appealing to international scientific bodies for assistance — including remote work opportunities and access to journals, datasets, archives and other materials — there is also a will to prevent the war from permanently sapping talent and momentum from the country’s academic and professional ranks, which will be needed to rebuild after fighting stops.

“Most of our scholars do not want to move abroad permanently; they want to stay in Ukraine,” Polishchuk said.

Shortly after the war began, Ivan Slyusarev, a 34-year-old astronomer, helped the director of Kharkiv National University’s observatory move computers, monitors and other materials into the basement, which had sheltered equipment and historical artifacts when Nazi forces occupied the city during World War II.

The observatory’s main telescope is located in a field in Russia-occupied territory, about 70 kilometers (43 miles) from Kharkiv on the road to Donetsk. Slyusarev said he doesn’t know its condition, but thinks Ukrainian forces blew up a nearby bridge to stop the Russian advance.

He is relying on scientists outside Ukraine to continue his work. Astronomers in the Czech Republic have sent him observational data from their telescope so he can keep analyzing the properties of metallic asteroids. He also can see data from a small robotic telescope in Spain’s Canary Islands. He operates mostly from a home office on the outskirts of Kharkiv.

Slyusarev, who says he became an astronomer because of “romantic” ideas about the stars, finds refuge in scientific discovery. Astronomy “produces only positive news” and is a welcome respite from daily life, he said.

“It’s very important in wartime,” he added.

After the war started, theoretical physicist and astronomer Oleksiy Golubov left Kharkiv to join his parents in Batkiv, a village in western Ukraine.

Although the buildings of the Kharkiv Institute of Physics and Technology were “bombed and shelled and virtually destroyed,” Golubov said, the school continues to offer some remote classes. He has been keeping in touch with students online — in Kharkiv, in western Ukraine and in Poland and Germany.

The 36-year-old scientist is also a coordinator and trainer for the Ukrainian students preparing to compete in the International Physicists Tournament, a competition for tackling unsolved physics problems that is being held in Colombia this month. The students, who had been training online, met this week in Lviv for the first time — following train journeys delayed by the war.

“We still want to take part and prove that even inconveniences like war can’t stop us from doing good science and having a good education,” he said.

Golubov, who was turned down from joining the military because of a paralyzed hand, submitted a paper in March to the journal *Astronomy and Astrophysics* and wrote in the acknowledgements, “We are grateful to Ukrainians who are fighting to stop the war so that we can safely finish the revision of this article.”

Some scholars, like Ivan Patrilyak, dean of the history department at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, have enlisted. Eighteen months ago, he was hosting a speaker series on the legacy of World

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War II and lecturing about the Holocaust. Now, he's with a territorial defense unit in Kyiv.

Igor Lyman, a historian at the State Pedagogical University in Berdyansk, had to flee when Russian forces occupied the port city early in the war. Before leaving, he had seen the troops break into dormitories to interrogate students and order administrators to teach in Russian, rather than Ukrainian, and use a Moscow-approved curriculum. He said the directors "refused and resigned."

He later settled in a camp for internally displaced persons at Chernivtsi National University, living in a dormitory with academics from Kyiv, Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Kherson and other cities.

"Each of these families has its own terrible story of war," he wrote in an email. "And everyone, like me, dreams of our victory and coming back home."

He said the Russian forces "are doing everything they can to impose their propaganda."

Vlaschenko, the Kharkiv zoologist, wanted to protect 20 bats in his care from the shelling, so he carried them to his home, a walk of about an hour. It also helped to preserve his valuable research, which couldn't be easily replaced, even if buildings and labs can be rebuilt after the war.

"All the people who decided to stay in Kharkiv agreed to play this dangerous and potentially deadly lottery," he said, "because you never know in what areas a new rocket or new shell would hit."

As he scrambles to record data and safeguard his rare samples, he sees it as part of his mission — "not only for us, but also for science in general."

Palestinians facing eviction by Israel vow to stay on land

By IMAD ISSEID Associated Press

JINBA, West Bank (AP) — Everything here is makeshift, a result of decades of uncertainty. Homes are made from tin and plastic sheets, water is trucked in and power is obtained from batteries or a few solar panels.

The lives of thousands of Palestinians in a cluster of Bedouin communities in the southern West Bank have been on hold for more than four decades, ever since the land they cultivated and lived on was declared a military firing and training zone by Israel.

Since that decision in early 1981, residents of the Masafer Yatta region have weathered demolitions, property seizures, restrictions, disruptions of food and water supplies as well as the lingering threat of expulsion.

That threat grew significantly this week after Israel's Supreme Court upheld a long-standing expulsion order against eight of the 12 Palestinian hamlets forming Masafer Yatta — potentially leaving at least 1,000 people homeless.

On Friday, some residents said they are determined to stay on the land.

The verdict came after a more than two-decade-long legal struggle by Palestinians to remain in their homes. Israel has argued that the residents only use the area for seasonal agriculture and that they had been offered a compromise that would have given them occasional access to the land.

The Palestinians say that if implemented, the ruling opens the way for the eviction of all the 12 communities that have a population of 4,000 people, mostly Bedouins who rely on animal herding and a traditional form of desert agriculture.

The residents of Jinba, one of the hamlets, said Friday that they have opposed any compromise because they have lived in the area long before Israel occupied the West Bank in the 1967 Middle East war.

Issa Abu Eram was born in a cave in the rugged mountainous terrain 48 years ago and has endured a tough life because building is banned here.

In the winter, he and his family members live in a cave. In the summer, they stay in caravans near the cave. His goats are a source of income, and on Friday, he had laid out dozens of balls of hardened goat milk yogurt on the roof of a shack to dry.

He said his children grew up with the threat of expulsion hanging over them. They are attending a makeshift school in Jinba, with the oldest son now in 12th grade.

"He did not live in any other place except Jinba. How are you going to convince him ... to live somewhere

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else?" he said.

The Palestinian leadership on Friday condemned the Israeli Supreme Court ruling, which was handed down on Wednesday — when most of Israel was shut down for the country's Independence Day.

Nabil Abu Rdeneh, a spokesman for President Mahmoud Abbas, said the removal order "amounts to forced displacement and ethnic cleansing, in violation of international law and relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions."

Also on Friday, Israel's interior minister said Israel is set to advance plans for the construction of 4,000 settler homes in the occupied West Bank. If approved, it would be the biggest advancement of settlement plans since the Biden administration took office.

The White House is opposed to settlement growth because it further erodes the possibility of an eventual two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The West Bank has been under Israeli military rule for nearly 55 years. Masafer Yatta is in the 60% of the territory where the Palestinian Authority is prohibited from operating. The Palestinians want the West Bank to form the main part of their future state.

Jewish settlers have established outposts in the area that are not officially authorized by Israel but are protected by the military. Last fall, dozens of settlers attacked a village in the area, and a 4-year-old boy was hospitalized after being struck in the head with a stone.

For now, the families say they have only one choice left: to stay and stick to their land.

"I don't have an alternative and they cannot remove me," said farmer Khalid al-Jabarin, standing outside a goat shed. "The entire government of Israel can't remove me. We will not leave ... we will not get out of here because we are the inhabitants of the land."

Referring to West Bank settlers who came from other countries, he said: "Why would they bring a replacement from South Africa to live in the high mountains, in our land, and replace us, and remove us, why?"

Evacuation efforts go on at sprawling Ukrainian steel mill

By ELENA BECATOROS and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

ZAPORIZHZHIA, Ukraine (AP) — Rescuers were seeking to evacuate more civilians from tunnels beneath a sprawling steel mill in Mariupol as Ukrainian fighters make their last stand to prevent Moscow's complete takeover of the strategically important port city.

Dozens of people were evacuated Friday from the Azovstal plant and handed over to representatives of the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross, Russian and Ukrainian officials said. The Russian military said the group of 50 included 11 children.

Russian officials and Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said the evacuation efforts would continue into the weekend. The latest evacuees followed roughly 500 other civilians who got out of the plant and city in recent days.

The fight for the last Ukrainian stronghold in a city reduced to ruins by the Russian onslaught appeared increasingly desperate. And there was growing speculation that President Vladimir Putin wants to finish the battle for Mariupol so he can present a triumph to the Russian people in time for Monday's Victory Day, the biggest patriotic holiday on the Russian calendar.

As the holiday commemorating the Soviet Union's World War II victory over Nazi Germany approached, cities across Ukraine prepared for an expected increase in Russian attacks, and officials urged residents to heed air raid warnings.

"These symbolic dates are to the Russian aggressor like red to a bull," said Ukraine's first deputy interior minister, Yevhen Yenin. "While the entire civilized world remembers the victims of terrible wars on these days, the Russian Federation wants parades and is preparing to dance over bones in Mariupol."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy also reminded people not to go into forests that were recently under Russian occupation because of the many land mines and trip wires that remain.

A Russian missile on Saturday destroyed a Ukrainian national museum dedicated to the life and work of an 18th-century philosopher, the local council said. It posted photographs on Facebook showing the

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Gregory Skovoroda museum engulfed in flames.

As an indication of his importance to Ukraine's cultural heritage, Skovoroda's likeness adorns a Ukrainian banknote.

The museum in Skovorodynivka lies near the Russian border in the Kharkiv region where fighting has been fierce.

By Russia's most recent estimate, roughly 2,000 Ukrainian fighters are holed up in the vast maze of tunnels and bunkers under the Azovstal steelworks. They have repeatedly refused to surrender. Ukrainian officials said before Friday's evacuations that a few hundred civilians were also trapped there, and fears for their safety have increased as the battle has grown fiercer in recent days.

Kateryna Prokopenko, whose husband, Denys Prokopenko, commands the Azov Regiment troops inside the plant, issued a desperate plea to also spare the fighters. She said they would be willing to go to a third country to wait out the war but would never surrender to Russia because that would mean "filtration camps, prison, torture and death."

If nothing is done to save her husband and his men, they will "stand to the end without surrender," she told The Associated Press on Friday.

Zelenskyy said "influential states" are involved in efforts to rescue the soldiers, although he did not mention any by name.

"We are also working on diplomatic options to save our troops who are still at Azovstal," he said in his nightly video address.

U.N. officials have been tight-lipped about the civilian evacuation efforts, but it seemed likely that the latest evacuees would be taken to Zaporizhzhia, a Ukrainian-controlled city about 140 miles (230 kilometers) northwest of Mariupol where others who escaped the port city were brought.

Some of the plant's previous evacuees spoke to the AP about the horrors of being surrounded by death in the moldy, underground bunker with little food and water, poor medical care and diminishing hope. Some said they felt guilty for leaving others behind.

"They need our help badly. We need to get them out," said 31-year-old Serhii Kuzmenko, who fled with his wife, 8-year-old daughter and four others from their bunker, where 30 others were left behind.

Fighters defending the plant said Friday on the Telegram messaging app that Russian troops had fired on an evacuation vehicle on the plant's grounds, killing one soldier.

Moscow did not immediately acknowledge renewed fighting there Friday.

While they pounded away at the plant, Russian forces struggled to make significant gains elsewhere, 10 weeks into a devastating war that has killed thousands of people, forced millions to flee the country and flattened large swaths of cities.

Ukrainian officials said the risk of massive shelling increased ahead of Victory Day. Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said authorities would reinforce street patrols in the capital. Ukraine's southern Odesa region, which was the target of two missile attacks Friday, was to adopt a curfew.

The Ukrainian military's general staff said that its forces repelled 11 attacks in the Donbas region and destroyed tanks and armored vehicles, further frustrating Putin's ambitions after his abortive attempt to seize Kyiv. Russia made no acknowledgement of the losses.

The Ukrainian army also said it made progress in the northeastern Kharkiv region, recapturing five villages and part of a sixth. Meanwhile, one person was reported dead and three more were wounded Friday as a result of Russian shelling in Lyman, a city in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region.

Russia took control of the rest of Mariupol after bombarding it for two months. Ahead of Victory Day, municipal workers and volunteers cleaned up what remains of the city, which had a prewar population of more than 400,000. Perhaps 100,000 civilians remain there despite severe shortages of food, water, electricity and heat. Bulldozers scooped up debris, and people swept streets against a backdrop of hollowed-out buildings. Russian flags were hoisted.

The fall of Mariupol would deprive Ukraine of a vital port. It would also allow Russia to establish a land corridor to the Crimean Peninsula, which it seized from Ukraine in 2014, and free some Russian troops to fight elsewhere in the Donbas, the eastern industrial region that the Kremlin says is now its chief objective.

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The city's capture also holds symbolic value since it has been the scene of some of the worst suffering of the war and a surprisingly fierce resistance.

Unprecedented gusts expected to fan wildfires in New Mexico

By SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN Associated Press

Weather conditions described as potentially historic were on tap for New Mexico on Saturday and for the next several days as hundreds of firefighters and a fleet of airplanes and helicopters worked feverishly to bolster lines around the largest fire burning in the U.S.

Many families already have been left homeless and thousands of residents have evacuated due to flames that have charred large swaths of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in northeastern New Mexico.

Residents on the fringes of the shifting fire front were holding out hope that all the work done over recent days to clear brush, install sprinklers, run hose lines and use bulldozers to scrape lines will keep the fire from reaching the small city of Las Vegas and other villages to the north and south.

"There's uncertainty and there's fear about how the winds are going to affect the fire from day to day," said Elmo Baca, chairman of the Las Vegas Community Foundation. "Once the people are evacuated out of an area, they can't go back, so they're just stuck worrying."

The blaze has blackened more than 262 square miles (678 square kilometers) over the last few weeks.

The start of the conflagration has been traced in part to a preventive fire initiated by the U.S. Forest Service in early April to reduce flammable vegetation. The blaze escaped control, merging with another wildfire of unknown origin.

Nationwide, close to 2,000 square miles (5,180 square kilometers) have burned so far this year, with 2018 being the last time this much fire had been reported across the country, according to the National Interagency Fire Center. And predictions for the rest of the spring do not bode well for the West, where long-term drought and warmer temperatures brought on by climate change have combined to worsen the threat of wildfire.

Forested areas in southern New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado also saw an early start with blazes forcing evacuations and destroying homes last month.

Incident Commander Dave Bales said firefighters working in northeastern New Mexico have been focused on protecting homes and other structures that hold generations of sacred memories.

"It's hard when I see so many people displaced," he said, noting that many hugs have been shared around town.

The crews have seen extreme wind events before that usually last a day, maybe two. But Bales said this event could last five or more days with gusts topping 50 to 60 mph (80 to 96 kph). He also warned that flames could be carried up to a mile away.

"This is an extreme wind event that is unprecedented," Bales said.

Another large wildfire burning in New Mexico was within 5 miles (8 kilometers) of Los Alamos National Laboratory, one of the nation's key facilities for nuclear research and future production of plutonium components for nuclear weapons.

Crews have burned vegetation ahead of the fire in an effort to reduce its intensity and the potential for spot fires. At the lab, water tankers, a helicopter and heavy equipment are in position and firefighters will patrol the perimeter if flames gets closer.

Some nuclear watchdog groups and environmentalists have raised concerns about containers of nuclear waste on lab property. That includes six shipments of 109 containers awaiting transport to the federal government's underground waste repository, state officials said.

Lab officials said Friday that radiological and other potentially hazardous materials are stored in containers engineered and tested to withstand extreme environments, including heat from fire.

Abortion rights may rest on governor's races in some states

By STEVE PEOPLES, MARC LEVY and JEFF AMY Associated Press

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HARISBURG, Pa. (AP) — All four leading Republicans in Pennsylvania's governor's race have vowed to ban abortion if given the chance.

In Georgia, one top Republican candidate for governor wants to outlaw all abortions. The sitting Republican governor is backed by the anti-abortion lobby, but refuses to clarify his position. And in Michigan, all but one of the five leading Republicans running for governor oppose abortion even in cases of rape or incest.

The fight for Congress often dominates midterm elections, but the revelation this week that the Supreme Court may soon overturn its landmark Roe v. Wade decision has thrust candidates for governor — and their positions on abortion — into the forefront of the 2022 campaign. Some states, including Pennsylvania and Georgia, have primary elections this month, but the ultimate fight won't be decided until the November general election.

In a handful of battleground states with Republican-controlled state legislatures, every GOP candidate for governor supports severe abortion restrictions, if not a complete ban with no exceptions. That's prompting urgent warnings from Democrats that women's access to abortion in some states may rest almost entirely on which party wins the governor's race this fall.

"This is an issue that is now front and center in this governor's race," said Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro, his state's presumed Democratic nominee for governor. "The battle will be in the states."

Thirteen deep-red states have so-called "trigger laws" that would ban abortion almost immediately if Roe is overturned, but the future of abortion access is less certain across several other more moderate states with Republican-controlled legislatures: Arizona, Georgia, Florida, Michigan, Ohio, Texas and Wisconsin, among them.

In almost every case, GOP legislatures have already approved restrictive abortion laws, including so-called "heartbeat" bills that would outlaw abortions before most women know they're pregnant. Some legislation is tied up in the courts, while others have yet to move through Republican legislatures. But if Roe falls, such laws — or more restrictive bans — could only be stopped by a veto from a Democratic governor or Democrat-backed court challenge, if at all.

Some states, including Michigan, Wisconsin and Texas, have decades-old abortion bans predating Roe that would presumably take effect almost immediately after a formal Supreme Court reversal of the case. But even in those states, Democratic governors would have an opportunity to fight the change in their state courts.

That's what Michigan's Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer is doing as she prepares for a challenging reelection this fall.

Anticipating that Roe would be overturned or weakened, Whitmer asked the Michigan Supreme Court last month to declare a state constitutional right to abortion and to strike down a near-total abortion ban that would go back into effect if Roe is overruled. The law, which dates to the 1800s, has an exception when the woman's life is at risk, but not for cases of rape and incest.

"I'm using every tool at my disposal. I'm going to fight like hell to protect this right for women in the state of Michigan," Whitmer said this week. "Regardless of what happens with SCOTUS, we have an opportunity in Michigan."

The situation is different in Pennsylvania and Georgia, where there is no outright ban on the books, but Republican candidates for governor have indicated they would support a full ban if given the chance. Most refused to clarify their positions in recent days when asked directly by The Associated Press.

Pennsylvania law currently allows abortions during the first 24 weeks of pregnancy. But all four leading Republican candidates for governor have told the Pro-Life Coalition of Pennsylvania, in questionnaire responses, that they support "legal protection for all pre-born children from abortion" — in other words, banning an abortion of any diagnosed pregnancy, according to Mike McMonagle, the organization's president.

Two of the Pennsylvania Republicans, Bill McSwain and Lou Barletta, said they support exceptions for rape, incest or to protect the life of the mother. The other two, Doug Mastriano and Dave White, said they support no exceptions.

Only White agreed to discuss his position in an AP interview this week. The others declined interview requests and didn't answer specific written questions.

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White said he would sign legislation banning all abortions with no exceptions for rape, incest or the life of the mother if given the chance. He noted that he's ninth of 14 children from a Catholic family in which his parents taught him the "blessing of every child that comes into this world."

In a televised debate last week, Mastriano said he supports banning abortion from conception, with no exceptions. He called abortion "the No. 1 issue" and pointed to the "heartbeat" bill that he has sponsored, which effectively bans abortion at six weeks.

Anticipating that Mastriano may emerge from the GOP's May 17 primary election, Shapiro has begun running attack ads against the Republican state senator this week highlighting his plans to "outlaw abortion."

"They are wildly out of touch with where Pennsylvanians are," Shapiro said in an interview of his would-be Republican challengers. "This issue boils down to whether or not we're going to build a Pennsylvania where freedom is respected."

Polling shows relatively few Americans want to see Roe overturned.

In 2020, AP VoteCast found that 69% of voters in the presidential election said the Supreme Court should leave the Roe v. Wade decision as is; just 29% said the court should overturn the decision. In general, AP-NORC polling finds a majority of the public favors abortion being legal in most or all cases.

In Georgia, Democrat Stacey Abrams will face the winner of the state's May 24 GOP primary, which pits incumbent Republican Gov. Brian Kemp against the Donald Trump-backed former Sen. David Perdue.

Kemp has declined to clarify his position on abortion in recent days. His office ignored direct questions asking whether he would support a complete abortion ban. An anti-abortion group that has endorsed Kemp rallied Friday to celebrate a possible Roe reversal. Speakers vowed to defend Georgia's ban on abortions after fetal cardiac activity is detected. Tied up in courts now, it could take effect with a Supreme Court ruling.

Perdue wants Kemp to call for a special legislative session to approve an abortion ban if the Supreme Court officially overturns Roe, a ruling expected in late June or early July.

"Georgia voters deserve to know where their governor stands on this issue," Perdue said on Thursday. "You are either going to fight for the sanctity of life or you're not."

On the Democratic side, Abrams touted herself as a defender of abortion rights in a speech this week to Emily's List, a political action committee that donates to Democratic women candidates who support abortion rights.

"The abomination of that leaked opinion is coming to find every one of us, and we've got to be ready to fight back," Abrams said, according to a recording provided by her campaign. "This is about our dignity and our freedom. This is about our health and our welfare. This is about our future and our lives, and we have the right to be angry."

The issue could help Abrams — and Democrats in other states — win more votes among college educated white voters, who have been the most frequent swing voters in recent years.

Like a growing number of Democratic candidates elsewhere, Abrams also warned that a Supreme Court that overturns Roe v. Wade could threaten other precedents, including Griswold v. Connecticut, a 1965 decision that struck down restrictions on contraception, and Brown v. Board of Education, the 1954 decision that outlawed racial segregation in schools.

"This is a question of whether equality in America depends on geography and zip code and DNA," Abrams said.

Dozens more civilians rescued from Ukrainian steel plant

By ELENA BECATOROS and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

ZAPORIZHZHIA, Ukraine (AP) — Dozens more civilians were rescued Friday from the tunnels under the besieged steel mill where Ukrainian fighters in Mariupol have been making their last stand to prevent Moscow's complete takeover of the strategically important port city.

Russian and Ukrainian officials said 50 people were evacuated from the Azovstal plant and handed over

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to representatives of the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The Russian military said the group included 11 children.

Russian officials and Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said evacuation efforts would continue Saturday. The latest evacuees were in addition to roughly 500 other civilians who got out of the plant and city in recent days.

The fight for the last Ukrainian stronghold in a city reduced to ruins by the Russian onslaught appeared increasingly desperate amid growing speculation that President Vladimir Putin wants to finish the battle for Mariupol so he can present a triumph to the Russian people in time for Monday's Victory Day, the biggest patriotic holiday on the Russian calendar.

As the holiday commemorating the Soviet Union's World War II victory over Nazi Germany approached, cities across Ukraine prepared for an expected increase in Russian attacks, and officials urged residents to heed air raid warnings.

"These symbolic dates are to the Russian aggressor like red to a bull," said Ukraine's first deputy interior minister, Yevhen Yenin. "While the entire civilized world remembers the victims of terrible wars on these days, the Russian Federation wants parades and is preparing to dance over bones in Mariupol."

By Russia's most recent estimate, roughly 2,000 Ukrainian fighters are holed up in the vast maze of tunnels and bunkers beneath the Azovstal steelworks, and they have repeatedly refused to surrender. Ukrainian officials said before Friday's evacuations that a few hundred civilians were also trapped there, and fears for their safety have increased as the battle has grown fiercer in recent days.

Kateryna Prokopenko, whose husband, Denys Prokopenko, commands the Azov Regiment troops inside the plant, issued a desperate plea to also spare the fighters. She said they would be willing to go to a third country to wait out the war but would never surrender to Russia because that would mean "filtration camps, prison, torture and death."

If nothing is done to save her husband and his men, they will "stand to the end without surrender," she told The Associated Press on Friday.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said "influential states" are involved in efforts to rescue the soldiers, although he did not mention any by name.

"We are also working on diplomatic options to save our troops who are still at Azovstal," he said in his nightly video address.

U.N. officials have been tight-lipped about the civilian evacuation efforts, but it seemed likely that the latest evacuees would be taken to Zaporizhzhia, a Ukrainian-controlled city about 140 miles (230 kilometers) northwest of Mariupol where others who escaped the port city were brought.

Some of the plant's previous evacuees spoke to the AP about the horrors of being surrounded by death in the moldy, underground bunker with little food and water, poor medical care and diminishing hope. Some said they felt guilty for leaving others behind.

"People literally rot like our jackets did," said 31-year-old Serhii Kuzmenko, who fled with his wife, 8-year-old daughter and four others from their bunker, where 30 others were left behind. "They need our help badly. We need to get them out."

Fighters defending the plant said Friday on the Telegram messaging app that Russian troops had fired on an evacuation vehicle on the plant's grounds. They said the car was moving toward civilians when it was hit by shelling, and that one soldier was killed and six were wounded.

Moscow did not immediately acknowledge renewed fighting there Friday.

Russia took control of the rest of Mariupol after bombarding it for two months. Ahead of Victory Day, municipal workers and volunteers cleaned up what remains of the city, which had a prewar population of more than 400,000. Perhaps 100,000 civilians remain there with scarce supplies of food, water electricity and heat. Bulldozers scooped up debris, and people swept streets against a backdrop of hollowed-out buildings. Russian flags were hoisted.

The fall of Mariupol would deprive Ukraine of a vital port. It would also allow Russia to establish a land corridor to the Crimean Peninsula, which it seized from Ukraine in 2014, and free some Russian troops to fight elsewhere in the Donbas, the eastern industrial region that the Kremlin says is now its chief objective.

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Its capture also holds symbolic value since the city has been the scene of some of the worst suffering of the war and a surprisingly fierce resistance.

While they pounded away at the plant, Russian forces struggled to make significant gains elsewhere, 10 weeks into a devastating war that has killed thousands of people, forced millions to flee the country and flattened large swaths of cities.

Ukrainian officials said the risk of massive shelling increased ahead of Victory Day. Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said authorities would reinforce street patrols in the capital. A curfew was going into effect in Ukraine's southern Odesa region, which was the target of two missile attacks Friday.

The Ukrainian military's general staff said Friday that its forces repelled 11 attacks in the Donbas region and destroyed tanks and armored vehicles, further frustrating Putin's ambitions after his abortive attempt to seize Kyiv. Russia made no acknowledgement of the losses.

The Ukrainian army also said it made progress in the northeastern Kharkiv region, recapturing five villages and part of a sixth. Meanwhile, one person was reported dead and three more were wounded Friday as a result of Russian shelling in Lyman, a city in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region.

In other developments Friday:

— A Ukrainian army brigade said it used an American Switchblade "suicide" drone against Russian forces in what was likely Ukraine's first recorded use of such weapon in combat.

— U.S. President Joe Biden authorized the shipment of another \$150 million in military assistance for Ukraine for artillery rounds and radar systems. Biden said the latest spending means his administration has "nearly exhausted" what Congress authorized for Ukraine in March. He called on lawmakers to swiftly approve a more than \$33 billion spending package that will last through September.

— The Ukrainian governor of the eastern Luhansk region said residents of the city of Kreminna were being terrorized by Russian troops trying to cross the Seversky Donets River. Serhiy Haidai accused Russian troops of checking phones and "forcibly disappearing Ukrainian patriots." His statements could not be immediately verified.

— Haidia also said more than 15,000 people remain in Severodonetsk, a city in the Luhansk region that's seen as a key Russian target. He said he believes most residents wish to remain even though "entire blocks of houses are on fire."

— The small village of Nekhoteevk, in Russia's southern Belgorod region bordering Ukraine, was being evacuated due to shelling from Ukrainian territory, according to the regional governor, Vyacheslav Gladkov. His claims could not be immediately verified.

Latest 'Jeopardy!' mega-champ's win streak snapped at 23

NEW YORK (AP) — The latest long-time champ on "Jeopardy!" has seen her winning streak end at 23 — by a single dollar.

Mattea Roach, a tutor from Toronto, earned \$560,983 during her run on the game show. She's has one of the five longest winning streaks in "Jeopardy!" history, but didn't come close to Ken Jennings' record of 74 consecutive wins.

Danielle Maurer, a marketing manager from Peachtree Corners, Georgia, beat Roach on Friday's show by a margin of \$15,600 to \$15,599.

Unlike her second-to-last match, Roach went into the final question with the lead Friday. But the Final Jeopardy question was about the name of Atlanta's airport, right near where Maurer lived.

The category was USA, and the clue was: "These two mayors gave their names to a facility built on the site of an old racetrack owned by Coca-Cola magnate Asa Candler."

The correct response was: "Who are William Hartsfield and Maynard Jackson?"

Roach was wrong, Maurer was right, and she bet enough to win.

"It feels still kind of like a dream," Roach said. "I really came down here hoping to maybe win one game and so I still can't believe it. You know, it's strange, obviously I didn't come through in the last one, but I still feel so happy and so lucky to have had this experience."

Roach will return to compete in the game show's Tournament of Champions this fall. Among her challengers will be Matt Amodio and Amy Schneider, who are also in the "Jeopardy!" top five of longest winning streaks for their work this year.

Rangers locate climber's body on Alaska's Denali

By MARK THIESSEN Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — National park rangers in Alaska on Friday located the body of the year's first registered climber on North America's tallest peak.

Because it's so early in the climbing season, Matthias Rimml, a 35-year-old professional mountain guide from Tirol, Austria, was alone on the upper part of Denali, a 20,310-foot (6,190-meter) mountain about 240 miles (386 kilometers) north of Anchorage. The climbing season usually runs from May through mid-July.

Other climbers and rangers are camped below the 14,000-foot (4,267-meter) level.

Rimml hadn't been considered overdue compared to his planned return date and food and fuel supply, according to Denali National Park and Preserve officials. However, a friend who had been receiving periodic check-ins from Rimml contacted mountaineering rangers Tuesday after not receiving a call for days, officials said in a statement.

Park officials said Rimml was already acclimated to the altitude because of recent climbs. He had planned to climb Denali "alpine style," or traveling fast with light gear. His goal was to make the summit in five days even though he carried enough fuel and food to last 10 days.

The average Denali expedition is 17 to 21 days for a round trip, with climbers making the summit on day 12 or 13, according to the National Park Service.

Rimml began his climb April 27 from the Kahiltna Glacier base camp at 7,200 feet (2,194 meters), officials said.

His last known call to his friend was on April 30, when he reported he was tired but not in distress. Rimml reported his location as just below Denali Pass, at 18,200 feet (5,547 meters) elevation on the West Buttress, the most popular route for Denali climbers.

On Wednesday, a pilot and mountaineering ranger in a National Park Service helicopter looked for Rimml. Intermittent clouds didn't allow a thorough search, but they did not see any signs of him.

They saw his tent at 14,000 feet (4,267 meters) but didn't observe any recent activity, the statement said. High winds and poor weather prevented the helicopter from landing at the campsite, but the helicopter returned Thursday when weather was better. Rangers confirmed Rimml hadn't returned to the tent.

Clouds prevented the helicopter from flying above 17,200 feet (5,243 meters) on Thursday, but park spokesperson Maureen Gualtieri told The Associated Press a helicopter with two rangers aboard took off Friday morning from Talkeetna, the nearest community, to resume the search.

Rimml's body was spotted in the fall zone below Denali Pass during the aerial search, park officials said Friday evening in a statement.

Rimml likely fell on the steep traverse between Denali Pass at 18,200 feet (5,547 meters) and the 17,200-foot (5,243-meter) plateau, a notoriously treacherous stretch of the West Buttress route, officials said. Thirteen climbers, including Rimml, have died in falls along that traverse, the majority occurring on the descent, the statement said.

Recovery efforts will not be attempted until an national park ranger patrol is acclimated to the high altitude.

Weather conditions on the mountain have been cold, which park officials say is normal this time of the year. Daytime highs have been around minus 25 degrees Fahrenheit (-3.89 degrees celsius) with winds at the two base camps registering up to 30 mph (48 kph). Five inches (13 centimeters) of new snow have fallen in the past week on the upper mountain.

On the website for his guide business, Rimml said he always has been close to mountains and nature.

He trained as a carpenter after receiving his high school diploma. In 2015, after he completed military service, Rimml switched to being a freelance ski instructor in Austria and outside Europe.

He became a professional mountain guide in 2015, the fourth generation of his family to do so, his biography states. His specialty was long, technically difficult combined tours.

Feds accuse Starbucks of unfair labor practices in Buffalo

Associated Press undefined

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Federal labor officials filed a sweeping complaint Friday accusing Starbucks of unfair labor practices at its stores in Buffalo, New York, including retaliation against pro-union employees.

The National Labor Relations Board's Buffalo regional director outlined a host of labor law violations in a filing seeking reinstatement and backpay for the employees.

There's been a wave of unionization drives at Starbucks stores nationwide, with the first union votes coming in December at three stores in Buffalo.

The coffee chain called the allegations "false" and vowed to fight them at an upcoming hearing.

"Starbucks does not agree that the claims have merit, and the complaint's issuance does not constitute a finding by the NLRB," spokesman Reggie Borges wrote in an email. "It is the beginning of a litigation process that permits both sides to be heard and to present evidence."

Starbucks Workers United, the group behind the unionization effort, said the complaint "confirms the extent and depravity of Starbucks' conduct in Western New York for the better part of a year."

"Starbucks is finally being held accountable for the union-busting rampage they went on," Danny Rojas, a fired shift supervisor, said in a statement. "Starbucks needs to understand that it is morally corrupt to retaliate against union leaders, and I am looking forward to the NLRB forcing Starbucks to make this moment right."

Last month, federal labor officials asked a judge to force Starbucks to reinstate three union activists at its Phoenix location, alleging the coffee giant engaged in unfair labor practices.

As of this week, workers at more than 250 U.S. stores have filed petitions with the labor board to hold union elections, labor organizers say. At least 50 of those stores have voted to unionize with Workers United, a branch of the Service Employees International Union.

Starbucks reported Tuesday that its sales climbed to record levels in its fiscal second quarter but noted it faced higher employment costs, which set to grow even higher in the coming months as the company introduces new pay raises and other benefits.

However, workers who have voted to unionize or stores that have petitioned to hold a union election won't be eligible for those additional wage hikes and benefits.

Starbucks Workers United has said it filed charges with the labor board against Starbucks on Tuesday. The group alleges the company is violating labor law by threatening to exclude unionized stores from receiving the new benefits.

In abortion fight, conservatives push to end all exceptions

By REBECCA BOONE and JOHN HANNA Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — Angela Housley was halfway through her pregnancy when she learned the fetus was developing without parts of its brain and skull and would likely die within hours or days of birth, if it survived that long.

The news came during her 20-week ultrasound.

"The technician got a really horrible look on her face," Housley said. "And we got the really sad news that our baby was anencephalic."

It was 1992 and abortion was legal in Idaho, though she had to dodge anti-abortion protesters outside the Boise hospital after the procedure. If the same scenario were to happen later this year, she would likely be forced to carry to term.

That's because Idaho, which bans abortion after six weeks, is one of at least 22 states with laws banning abortion before the 15th week, many of them lacking exceptions for fetal viability, rape or incest, or

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even the health of the woman. Several of those bans would take effect if the U.S. Supreme Court issues a ruling overturning the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, as a leaked draft of the opinion suggests.

Such exceptions were once regularly included in even the most conservative anti-abortion proposals. But as the battle over abortion access heats up, experts on both sides of the issue say the exceptions were a temporary stepping stone intended to make anti-abortion laws more palatable.

Many of the current abortion bans are designed as "trigger laws," automatically going into effect if the high court overturns the nationwide right to abortion. That ruling is expected to be released by late June or early July.

Alabama and Oklahoma have enacted bans with no exceptions. Alabama's 2019 law is blocked in federal court but could be reinstated based on the Supreme Court's ruling. The Republican sponsors envisioned the legislation as a vehicle to challenge Roe in court, and said they could add rape and incest exceptions later if Roe is overturned.

"They're basically using people — in this particular situation, women — as collateral damage," said Democratic Rep. Chris England, the chairman of the Alabama Democratic Party. "In the debate, we tried to talk reasonably to them and say, 'What happens if you win? This is the law, You're not going to have the opportunity to change it before people get hurt.'"

Several other states, including Arizona, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, South Dakota, Tennessee and Texas, also have bans or trigger laws in place that lack exceptions for rape or incest, according to the Guttmacher Institute and Associated Press reporting.

Idaho and Utah have exceptions for rape or incest, but require the pregnant woman to first file a police report and then prove to the abortion provider the report was made. Only about a third of sexual assaults are reported to police, according to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network.

Texas and Idaho allow exceptions for "medical emergencies" but leave that interpretation up to physicians, making some critics fear doctors will wait to intervene until a woman is near death.

Public support for total abortion bans appears to be low, based on a Pew Research Center survey released Friday and conducted in March. The survey showed that just 8% of U.S. adults think abortion should be illegal in all cases with no exceptions, and that 61% of adults say abortion should be legal in most or all circumstances. Surveys consistently show that many Americans have nuanced attitudes around the legality of abortion depending on the stage of pregnancy, circumstances of conception and health of the mother or fetus.

Arkansas has two near-total abortion bans — a trigger law from 2019 and one passed last year that is blocked in federal court. Neither have exceptions for rape or incest, though they do allow abortions to save the woman's life. The state also never repealed its pre-1973 total abortion ban with no restrictions.

Republicans in the state were split on the issue last year, with Gov. Asa Hutchinson and Sen. Missy Irvin expressing reservations about the lack of protections for sexual assault survivors.

"Do you know how many young girls are on suicide watch because they were raped, because they were a victim of incest?" asked Irvin, who ultimately voted for last year's bill.

The sponsor of last year's ban, Republican Sen. Jason Rapert, defended the lack of exemptions, saying it still allowed the use of emergency contraception.

Elizabeth Nash, a state policy analyst for the abortion-rights supporting Guttmacher Institute, said that of 86 pending proposals for abortion restrictions this year, only a few — including one each in Idaho, New Jersey and West Virginia — include rape and incest exceptions.

The exceptions were always "incredibly limited," she said. "You might think these exceptions are helpful. But in fact they're so restricted, they're very hard to use."

Troy Newman, president of the national anti-abortion group Operation Rescue, said exceptions to abortion restrictions for rape and incest and to protect a pregnant woman's life in the past have been "thrown in there to appease some centrists."

Newman said his group, based in Wichita, Kansas, opposes rape and incest exceptions. Their rationale: "Don't punish the baby for the crime of the father."

The Ohio Legislature is weighing a trigger law that lacks sexual assault exceptions. During a hearing

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last month, the bill's GOP sponsor, Rep. Jean Schmidt, caused controversy when she called pregnancy resulting from rape "an opportunity" for the rape victim to "make a determination about what she's going to do to help that life be a productive human being."

She was responding to a question from Democratic Rep. Rich Brown, who asked if a 13-year-old impregnated during a rape would be forced to carry to term.

Rape "emotionally scars the individual," Schmidt conceded, "but if a baby is created, it is a human life."

Democratic Rep. Tavia Galonski countered that pregnancy is often traumatic and dangerous on its own, adding: "To then force a survivor of rape to carry a pregnancy to term and go through childbirth is utterly vile and only adds to the trauma they have already suffered."

In South Carolina, supporters of a 2021 abortion ban added exceptions for rape and incest because it was the only way to get the law passed. During debate, Republican Sen. Richard Cash argued against the exceptions.

"Punish the rapist ... but it doesn't belong on the baby," he said.

Democratic Sen. Mia McLeod responded that it was obvious Cash had never been raped.

"Well, I have. You're looking at a sexual assault survivor," she said, adding that requiring rape victims to carry babies to term could lead them to desperate measures, including dangerous illegal abortions or suicide.

"I'm just asking that the men in this body give the women and girls of this state" a choice, McLeod said.

New Hampshire has banned abortion after 24 weeks of gestation except for when the woman's health is threatened, though the state will soon add an exception for fatal fetal anomalies. The Republican-led legislature has rejected attempts to add rape and incest exceptions.

Republican Rep. Beth Folsom, who said in January that she is a rape survivor, argued the exceptions aren't necessary because rape victims carefully track their menstrual cycles and wouldn't wait 24 weeks to seek an abortion. An incest exception wasn't needed, she added, because "that aggressor is going to make sure that young girl or woman has an abortion before anyone finds out."

Mallory Schwarz, executive director of Pro-Choice Missouri, expressed concern that provisions in laws like the one in Texas that allow abortions past six weeks in medical emergencies, will require doctors to wait until a patient appears to be dying to perform an abortion.

"Any of those kind of pieces that are left up to interpretation are generally going to have a broad chilling effect on providers who don't want to jeopardize their career and livelihood and practice and ability to care for other patients," Schwarz said.

Many bans outlaw abortion after six weeks, when vaginal ultrasounds can first detect electrical activity in embryonic cells that may later become the heart. Proponents call them "heartbeat laws," arguing that cardiac activity is a reliable indicator of life.

In Idaho, Housley has repeatedly testified against the state's abortion bans in the Legislature, but said the lawmakers were uninterested in hearing about her experience.

"My baby had a heartbeat, but that's not the only thing a baby needs," said Housley. Anti-abortion politicians "are not at all interested in the reality of this issue. They've hijacked this discussion, and that's why we are where we are."

Daunte Wright's mother detained after recording traffic stop

BROOKLYN CENTER, Minn. (AP) — The mother of Daunte Wright, who was fatally shot by a suburban Minneapolis police officer, said she was injured while she was briefly detained by one of the same department's officers after she stopped to record an arrest of a person during a traffic stop.

Katie Wright said Thursday she was worried about what the Brooklyn Center officers might do to the person being handcuffed when she pulled over on Wednesday night. In April 2021, her 20-year-old son, who was Black, was killed during a traffic stop by Kim Potter, a white officer who said she confused her handgun for her Taser.

"All I was doing was my civic duty to pull over and make sure that those babies got home safe to their

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families because I don't want what happened to me to happen to any other families," Wright said.

It's legal for citizens to film police in Minnesota as long as they don't interfere with officers, according to the state's ACLU chapter. The Associated Press left a message Friday asking whether the officer involved would face discipline.

Brooklyn Center police released body camera video that shows an officer crossing several lanes of traffic on Highway 252 and asking Wright for her driver's license. Wright refused, telling the officer she didn't need to show him her license because she hadn't been pulled over.

The officer then pulled her out of her vehicle, took her phone and placed it on the roof of her car before leading her toward a grassy median while holding her arm behind her back. Wright said the officer grabbed her so forcefully that he injured her wrist.

Wright told him her name and said "you guys killed my son. I'm going to videotape them," gesturing to the other officers. The officer told Wright he would send her a ticket in the mail and both returned to their vehicles.

Brooklyn Center police union President Chuck Valleau praised the officer for what he called a "professional response and restraint during the incident."

Along with the video, the Brooklyn Center police department released a statement that said the footage was released "in an effort to promote public safety and dispel widespread rumor or unrest."

Potter shot Daunte Wright as former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin's trial was getting underway last year in the killing of George Floyd and tensions were high in the area. Wright's death sparked several nights of protests in Brooklyn Center and revived painful memories of the sometimes violent unrest that erupted after Floyd's death in May 2020.

Potter, who resigned following the shooting, was convicted in December of manslaughter and sentenced this year to two years in prison.

Sheriff: Car linked to Alabama escapee, jail worker found

By JAY REEVES Associated Press

The getaway vehicle used by a man wanted for murder in Alabama and the jail official suspected of helping him escape after a "jailhouse romance" was found in an impound lot in Tennessee, where it sat for nearly a week before authorities realized they had it, officials said Friday.

Sheriff Rick Singleton of Lauderdale County, Alabama, told a news conference the Ford Edge with distinctive burnt orange paint was found on a roadside and towed the same day that Casey White, charged with murder, and former assistant corrections director Vicky White disappeared. The vehicle was found in a rural area off Interstate 65 about 100 miles (about 160 kilometers) from the jail in Florence, Alabama.

Authorities in Williamson County, Tennessee, realized they had the vehicle Thursday night, which was hours after U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland said the two, who aren't related, are "regarded as extremely dangerous," and the U.S. Marshals Service has taken over leading the search.

Officials have said they hoped Casey White's size — 6-foot-9 and 340 pounds — would help lead to his capture since it's hard for him to be inconspicuous. He also has identifiable white supremacist tattoos. He and Vicky White appeared to have had a "jailhouse romance" before his escape, Singleton said.

"They found the car before we even knew they were gone," said Singleton. Some of Vicky White's belongings were found in the vehicle, which someone had attempted to spray paint, he said.

The tow truck driver who hauled the vehicle to a lot likely saw news coverage about the escape and notified police in Tennessee, Singleton said.

"There's no fault or blame on anyone," he said.

The Williamson County Sheriff's Office said the vehicle had been found in Bethesda and there was no indication the two remained in the area.

A nationwide manhunt has been ongoing since the pair disappeared April 29. Casey White was awaiting trial in a capital murder case and Vicky White was assistant director of corrections for Lauderdale County. She appears to have helped him plan and execute the escape, Singleton said.

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Authorities are now trying to determine whether any vehicles had been reported missing in the area where the car was found, he said.

"We're sort of back to square one with a vehicle description," said Singleton, adding at one point: "We're behind where we'd like to be."

The two likely had mechanical problems with the car and left it where it was found in a remote area, said Singleton. The sheriff said he was worried for the safety of his former employee because Casey White is "volatile" and could turn on her at any time.

No weapons were found in the car, indicating that the two are still armed, said Singleton. "My gut is telling me they are obviously on the run," he said.

On the day the pair disappeared, Vicky White, 56, told her coworkers that the 38-year-old inmate needed to go to the courthouse for a mental health evaluation. She was escorting the inmate alone — a violation of the sheriff's office policy. When she did not answer her phone or return in the afternoon, authorities realized the pair had gone missing. Authorities eventually learned that the evaluation was never scheduled and was just a charade to allow Vicky White to sneak Casey White out of the jail without suspicion.

The two left in a patrol car, which was found abandoned nearby in a parking lot where investigators believe Vicky White had parked a getaway car.

In the past week, authorities have learned that Vicky White purchased an array of weapons, including an AR-15 rifle in January and a shotgun two weeks before the escape. They also believe she has a 9 mm handgun with her and have received reports she may also have a .45 caliber handgun, a federal marshal said.

Federal investigators believe they had been planning the escape for at least several months. The Marshals Service and the sheriff's office have interviewed a slew of associates, family members and others who knew both Casey White and Vicky White and have received numerous tips in the investigation. But despite their best efforts, investigators have not come up with any solid leads to locate them.

The Marshals Service is offering up to a \$10,000 reward for information leading to Casey White's capture and a \$5,000 reward for information leading to Vicky White. Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey added a reward of \$5,000 each for the two.

"Both Casey White and Vicky White pose a major threat to the public, and they must be apprehended," she said in a statement.

Casey White was being held at the jail on capital murder charges in the 2015 death of Connie Ridgeway. He confessed to the slaying in 2020 while in state prison for other crimes. He's been linked to home invasions, car jackings and was also involved in a police chase, Keely said.

Stocks end rocky week with their 5th straight weekly decline

By STAN CHOE and ALEX VEIGA AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — A turbulent week on Wall Street ended Friday with more losses and the stock market's fifth straight weekly decline.

The latest pullback came as investors balanced a strong U.S. jobs report against worries the Federal Reserve may cause a recession in its drive to halt inflation.

The S&P 500 ended with a loss of 0.6%, having come back partway from a bigger loss of 1.9%. Roughly 70% of the companies in the benchmark index fell. Technology stocks weighed down the index the most.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.3%, while the Nasdaq slid 1.4%. Both indexes also pared some of their losses from earlier in the day.

Investors focused on new data Friday showing U.S. employers continue to hire rapidly, and workers are getting relatively big raises, though short of inflation. The market's reaction reflects concerns among investors that the strong numbers would keep the Fed on track for sharp and steady increases in interest rates to corral inflation, analysts said.

The S&P 500 fell 23.53 points to 4,123.34. The Dow dropped 98.60 points to 32,899.37. The Nasdaq fell

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173.03 points to 12,144.66.

Smaller companies fell more than the broader market. The Russell 2000 slid 31.58 points, or 1.7%, to 1,839.56.

Friday's choppy trading followed even wilder gyrations earlier this week, as all kinds of markets, from bonds to cryptocurrencies, grapple with a new market order where the Federal Reserve is aggressively moving to yank supports for the economy put in place through the pandemic.

The Fed is hoping to raise rates and slow the economy enough to snuff out the highest inflation in four decades, but it risks choking off growth if it goes too far or too quickly. The Fed raised its key short-term interest rate this week by a half a percentage point, the largest such increase since 2000. It also said more increases that size are likely on the way.

Not only do higher interest rates tap the brakes on the economy by making it more expensive to borrow, they also put downward pressure on prices of all kinds of investments. Beyond interest rates and inflation, the war in Ukraine and the continuing COVID-19 pandemic are also weighing on markets.

Stocks nevertheless zoomed higher Wednesday afternoon, after latching onto a sliver of hope from Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell's comments following the latest rate increase. He said the Fed was not "actively considering" an even bigger jump of 0.75 percentage points at its next meeting, something markets had seen as a near certainty.

Jubilance was the market's instant reaction, with the S&P 500 soaring 3% for its best day in nearly two years. It sobered up the next day, though, amid recognition that the Fed is still set to raise rates aggressively in its battle against inflation. The S&P 500 on Thursday lost all its prior day's gains, plus a bit more, in one of its worst days since the early 2020 slump caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

That may be why stocks faltered Friday, after data showed hiring is still strong and pressure remains high on companies to raise pay for workers.

"These data do not change the outlook for Fed policy; the rates trajectory remains upward in the near term," Rubeela Farooqi, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics, wrote in a note.

Many of the factors driving inflation higher could linger well into 2022, said Sameer Samana, senior global market strategist at Wells Fargo Investment Institute. The latest swings in the markets could mean investors are getting closer to better adjusting for the Fed's aggressive policy shift, Samana said.

"Powell's conference didn't change anything; there's still plenty of inflation," he said. "You're probably getting to point where the Fed at least won't be as much of a market driver."

Treasury yields also swung sharply following the release of the jobs report.

The yield on the two-year Treasury, which moves with expectations for Fed policy, initially shot as high as 2.77% earlier in the morning. But it then slipped to 2.70%, down from 2.71% late Thursday.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury leaped toward 3.13% shortly after the data's release, slipped a bit then climbed to 3.14% by late afternoon. That's still close to its highest level since 2018 and more than double where it started 2022, at just 1.51%.

The swings came as economists pointed to some possible signs of peaking within the jobs market, which may be an early signal inflation is set to moderate. That could ultimately mean less pressure on the Federal Reserve to raise rates so forcefully.

While workers' wages were 5.5% higher in April than a year earlier, in line with economists' expectations, the growth in average hourly pay from March levels was slightly below forecasts. Slower wage gains are discouraging for workers, but investors see them meaning less upward pressure on inflation.

BlackRock's chief investment officer of global fixed income, Rick Rieder, pointed to surveys showing companies' ability to hire becoming easier and other signs that some slack may be building in the red-hot job market.

"That raises the question of whether the Fed may slow its tightening process at some point over the coming months as a result of these expected trends, but while that's possible recent data won't provide markets much comfort of that happening anytime soon," Rieder said in a report.

For now, expectations of rising interest rates have been hitting high-growth stocks in particular.

Much of that is because many of them are seen as the most expensive following years of leading the

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market. Many tech-oriented stocks have been among the market's biggest losers this year, including Netflix, Nvidia and Facebook's parent company Meta Platforms.

Nearly half the Nasdaq stocks were recently down by at least 50% from their 52-week highs, according to a BofA Global Research report from chief investment strategist Michael Hartnett.

'We're so sorry': Mariupol plant evacuees feel relief, grief

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

ZAPORIZHZHIA, Ukraine (AP) — When the moist concrete walls deep below ground and the mold and the cold and the weeks without fresh fruit or vegetables became too much to bear, some in the bunker underneath Elina Tsybulchenko's office decided to visit the sky.

They made their way, through darkness lit by flashlights and lamps powered by car batteries, to a treasured spot in the bombed Azovstal steel plant, the last Ukrainian holdout in the ruined city of Mariupol. There, they could look up and see a sliver of blue or smoky gray. It was like peering from the bottom of a well. For those who could not, or dared not, climb to the surface, it was as distant as peace.

But seeing the sky meant hope. It was enough to make Elina's adult daughter, Tetyana, cry.

The Tsybulchenko family was among the first to emerge from the steel plant in a tense, days-long evacuation negotiated by the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross with the governments of Russia, which now controls Mariupol, and Ukraine, which wants the city back. A brief cease-fire allowed more than 100 civilians to flee the plant.

They arrived safely in the southern Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia this week. There, they described for The Associated Press their two months at the center of hell, and their escape.

Hundreds of civilians and Ukrainian fighters remain trapped at the plant and Russian forces have pushed their way inside. The seizure of Mariupol is expected to play a central role in Moscow's celebration on May 9 of Victory Day, historically marking the end of World War II.

In the earliest days of Russia's invasion Tsybulchenko, 54, was shocked by the bombardment of her city. Like many residents with memories of civil defense drills, she knew the steel plant had the only real bunkers in town. When she, her husband Serhii, her daughter and her son-in-law Ihor Trotsak decided to hole up in the one under her office, she assumed they would stay a few days.

"We didn't even take toothbrushes," Elina said. But a few days turned into 60.

They had brought only their documents, three blankets, two dogs and fruit carried in a basket they used for Orthodox Easter. They didn't think they would mark the holiday there weeks later.

The steel plant has a maze of more than 30 bunkers and tunnels spread out over its 11 square kilometers (4 miles), and each bunker was its own world. Evacuees had little or no communication with those elsewhere in the plant; they would eventually meet on the buses to Zaporizhzhia and compare experiences.

Their isolation complicates estimates of the number of civilians and Ukrainian fighters who remain. A few hundred civilians are still trapped, the Ukrainian side said this week, including more than 20 children. Another evacuation effort was reported underway Friday.

The number of those surviving underground threatens to drop every day. Some evacuees recalled watching in horror as the wounded succumbed to their injuries while first aid supplies, even clean water, ran short or ran out.

"People literally rot like our jackets did," said 31-year-old Serhii Kuzmenko. The weary foreman at the plant fled along with his wife, 8-year-old daughter and four others from their bunker; 30 were left behind. "They need our help badly," he said. "We need to get them out."

In another bunker, the Tsybulchenko family lived among 56 people, including 14 children ages 4 to 17. They survived by dividing among themselves the bare rations that fighters brought down — tinned meat, porridge, crackers, salt, sugar, water. There was not enough to go around.

The family's old cocker spaniel suffered, shivering and staring at them with wide eyes. The dog had to die, they decided. It was an act of mercy. They asked a soldier for sleeping pills, but he said the dog might survive and suffer more.

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"Let me shoot it," he said.

The dog was given a hurried burial above ground amid the shelling; rubble and scrap metal were placed atop it, to protect it from other, starving pets.

There was little comfort. The bunker shook from bombardment. "We went to bed like this every night and thought, 'Will we survive?'" Elina said.

The Tsybulchenkos and others slept on benches padded with the uniforms of steel plant workers. For toilets, they used buckets. When the bombardment became too heavy to empty the buckets upstairs, they used plastic bags. To pass the time, people made up board games or played cards. One carved bits of wood into toys.

A room in the bunker became a playground for the children. People found markers and paper and held an arts and crafts contest, with the children drawing what they would like to see the most. They drew nature and the sun. As Easter approached in late April, they drew Easter eggs and bunnies.

The drawings were posted on walls that dripped with moisture. Dank-smelling mold crept from the corners and migrated to clothing and blankets. The only way to keep something dry was to wear it. Even after evacuation and after their first proper showers in months, the Tsybulchenkos worried they smelled of mold.

While they tried to collect rainwater, they often used sanitizer to clean themselves and their dishes, to the point where Elina's hands showed an allergic reaction. In the early days, she went up to her office and brought down lotion, deodorant and a few other personal items she had left there.

Then it became too dangerous to go above. Half the building, including her office, collapsed in the bombardment.

Again and again over the two months, people in the bunker would hear word of possible evacuations from Mariupol, only to learn they had failed. When news arrived of the U.N.-negotiated evacuation, there was skepticism and fear. But the planning began with decisions on who should leave first.

Others said the Tsybulchenkos should go because Elina's cramped legs had started to blacken and give her trouble. "But there are small children here, and they should go," she said. The others insisted. They assumed the evacuation would continue in the days ahead and take everyone, even the fighters. Some hesitated, wanting to see whether the first evacuation was a success.

A small girl staying behind, Violeta, took a marker and drew a flower, a heart and "Good luck" on Elina's arm. The bunker residents had shortened the girl's name to Leta, or "sunlight."

Everyone in the bunker agreed to meet to celebrate at a cafe in Zaporizhzhia when the evacuation was complete.

"We're so sorry," the Tsybulchenkos told the others as they started toward the surface.

"Don't worry," they replied. "We'll follow."

Elina didn't recognize her workshop. The roof had been blown away. Walls were in ruins. The ground was pocked with craters and strewn with unexploded shells.

As they emerged from an opening in the rubble, the family and other evacuees blinked. After two months, the sunlight hurt their eyes.

It was quiet. The Russian bombardment, for once, had stopped.

"The weather was brilliant," said Ivane Bochorishvili, the U.N. deputy humanitarian chief in Ukraine, who approached the plant to await the evacuees. "The one when you are waiting for the perfect storm, like the blue sky."

A dangerous stretch lay ahead. A railway bridge near the plant was the receiving point for evacuees. The waiting buses were another kilometer away.

For the evacuation, the Russians had tried to retrieve the mines they had planted. But the machine hadn't detected everything, Bochorishvili said.

As he and a colleague approached in their vehicle, the Russians shouted from hundreds of meters away -- "Don't move!" The U.N. workers were told to get out and go back carefully to the last checkpoint on foot. The de-mining machine was brought in again. Eight more mines were found.

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Ukrainian soldiers walked ahead and behind the evacuees as they finally emerged, making sure the column of people placed their feet safely.

"Thank God we didn't see any bodies along the way," Elina said. The Russians had removed them.

Twenty-one people emerged the first day. The rest came out the next. As the second group met the first, "there were all these hugs and kisses. They'd been in Azovstal but hadn't seen each other, didn't know what happened to each other," said Osnat Lubrani, U.N. humanitarian coordinator in Ukraine.

The buses set off through a ruined city. Makeshift graves lined the streets. People held their heads in grief and disbelief or hugged each other. "These people are going to have longtime nightmares," said Esteban Sacco, the U.N. official responsible for the first leg of the bus journey to safety.

And yet they could still see signs of life. It was market day. There were people walking or biking, even children. Some peered through windows of bombed-out buildings.

The evacuees were still far from safe. The buses at first headed not west toward Ukrainian-held territory but east toward Russia. Even the U.N. staffers at first thought they were going there, Sacco said.

In a camp at Bezimenne, near the border, the evacuees said they faced pressure from the Russians to go to their side. The Russians even tried to board the buses, saying they wanted to offer the children candy, but they were kept out.

A Russian priest asked evacuees why they were going to Zaporizhzhia. "Ukraine will cease to exist very soon," Elina Tsybulchenko recalled him saying.

The evacuees were questioned and searched, even stripped at times to check for military-style tattoos. Some Russians were polite, said Ihor, Elina's son-in-law. Others were mocking or insulting, especially if he slipped and spoke Ukrainian instead of Russian. "Why are you speaking a foreign language?" they asked.

The buses turned west for the slow route toward Zaporizhzhia and safety. "We always had this fear," Ihor said. "We knew we could've ended up going to Russia."

As the convoy slowly arced around Mariupol, they could see faraway flashes as the Russian bombardment resumed. Two civilian women at the steel plant were killed and 10 civilians wounded, said Sviatoslav Palamar, deputy commander of Ukraine's Azov Regiment there.

Ukrainian authorities said Russian forces pushed into the plant's perimeter with "heavy, bloody battles."

The evacuees had entered their bunkers in winter. They emerged to a black-and-gray landscape, a grotesque spring. Only after passing through no man's land did Elina notice green and yellow fields again.

They entered Ukrainian-held territory after a harrowing, final stretch of more than 20 checkpoints.

Ukrainian officials had urged residents of Russian-controlled communities to climb aboard the convoy along the way. But in the end, the buses were not allowed to take them. Elina and other evacuees cried as they passed people standing near the road, waiting in vain.

"We really felt shame," Elina said. "We never stopped."

Jill Biden brings thanks, ketchup to US troops in Romania

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

MIHAIL KOGALNICEANU AIR BASE, Romania (AP) — Delivering good cheer — and gallons of ketchup — Jill Biden on Friday thanked U.S. troops deployed to Romania for serving as a check against Russian aggression as she opened a two-country European trip to learn about the refugee crisis caused by Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

The U.S. first lady flew overnight from Washington and landed just in time to help serve dinner at Romania's Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base near the Black Sea and about 60 miles (100 kilometers) from the border with Ukraine. The base is temporarily home to about 1,600 of the several thousand troops President Joe Biden deployed to Eastern Europe in the leadup to the Russia-Ukraine war.

In the food line, Jill Biden dished up macaroni and cheese and baked potatoes — and encouraged fatigue-clad troops to have some greens, too — before she greeted groups of them as they ate at round tables in the dining hall. They cheered when she revealed she came bearing ketchup, which was in short supply on the base.

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"I know it's hard on your families," she told one servicemember, referencing her own experience when her son Beau Biden deployed to Iraq.

At another location on the base, the first lady joined Staff Sgt. Sharon Rogers to read the children's book "Night Catch" on videotape for Rogers' son, Nathan, who lives in Texas. Biden thanked the boy for serving his country, too.

"When your mom serves, the family serves, too, so thank you for your service," she told Nathan. She and Rogers embraced and Biden wished her a happy Mother's Day.

Before leaving the base and flying to Bucharest, Romania's capital, the first lady posed with troops who represent her home state through their service in the Delaware Army National Guard. She handed them a souvenir coin she designed, the first time she'd given away copies of the coin.

For weeks, the first lady has been transfixed by the news coming out of Ukraine, by the bombings and scenes of "parents weeping over their children's broken bodies in the streets," as she said in a recent speech. She's now using her second solo overseas trip to experience the crisis for herself by visiting Romania and Slovakia.

"It's so important to the president and to me that the Ukrainian people know that we stand with them," Biden told reporters Thursday night before she departed Washington.

NATO allies Romania and Slovakia border Ukraine and have taken in some of the millions of mostly women and children who fled after Russia invaded Ukraine in late February, triggering Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II.

Biden is also using the trip to highlight issues she promotes at home, including support for U.S. service members, education and the welfare of children.

The centerpiece of the trip comes Sunday — Mother's Day — when the mother of three meets with displaced Ukrainians who sought refuge across the border in Slovakia.

Her daughter, Ashley Biden, had planned to accompany her, but backed out Thursday after learning that she was a close contact of someone who tested positive for COVID-19, said Michael LaRosa, the first lady's spokesperson. Ashley Biden tested negative, he said.

The first lady also will meet during the trip with humanitarian aid workers, educators, government officials and U.S. embassy personnel, the White House said.

Nearly 6 million Ukrainians, mostly women and children, have fled their country since Russia's invasion, according to the U.N. refugee agency. Hundreds of thousands have resettled in next-door countries, like Romania and Slovakia, or have gone elsewhere in Europe to rebuild their lives.

Biden has long shown an interest in the plight of refugees around the world.

In 2011, when her husband was vice president, she traveled to drought-stricken east Africa to visit with Somali famine refugees at the Dadaab camp in Kenya. In 2017, she visited refugees in Chios, Greece, as part of work by the aid organization Save The Children, on whose board she served.

Some refugee advocates said Biden's trip will send the message that the United States takes seriously its humanitarian commitment to the Ukrainian people.

"Every first lady has a far-reaching platform to raise awareness and this trip will be an important tool for mobilizing additional support for those forced to flee their homeland," said Krish O'Mara Vignarajah, president and CEO of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and formerly a policy director to first lady Michelle Obama.

Biden's trip follows other U.S. government representatives visiting Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, to meet with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, including House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

President Biden visited Ukrainian refugees in March during a stop in Poland, the closest he's been to Ukraine during the war. The White House says there are no plans for him to visit Kyiv.

Jill Biden continues her trip Saturday in Bucharest with briefings on the humanitarian efforts, meeting with Romanian first lady Carmen Iohannis and touring a school where Ukrainian refugee students are enrolled. The first lady is a community college English professor.

On Sunday in Slovakia, Biden will visit a city-operated refugee center and a public school in Kosice that

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also hosts Ukrainian refugee students to participate in Mother's Day events with Ukrainian and Slovakian mothers and children. She'll also visit the Slovakia-Ukraine border crossing in Vysne Nemecke, Slovakia.

The White House declined to comment on whether she will cross the border and enter Ukraine.

Monday brings a meeting with Slovakian President Zuzana Caputova, the country's first female president, before Biden heads back to Washington.

EXPLAINER: More pressure on the Fed from April jobs report

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Reporter

WASHINGTON (AP) — Friday's jobs report for April provided mixed signals on the economic issue most on the minds of Americans: Chronically high inflation.

On the one hand, the proportion of people either working or looking for work slipped in April after a string of increases. Having fewer people in the workforce means employers need to raise pay to try to fill a record-high number of open jobs. Companies typically then pass on those higher labor costs to consumers in the form of higher prices.

On the other hand, average hourly pay increases slowed last month and have weakened over the past three months, a trend that could ease inflationary pressures.

The offsetting trends come as the Federal Reserve has accelerated its fight against inflation, which has surged to a four-decade high. This week, the Fed raised its key interest rate by a half-percentage point — its most aggressive move since 2000 — and signaled further large rate hikes to come. Higher rates can slow borrowing and spending but also risk causing a recession.

How inflation and the economy evolve in the coming months will be key to whether the Fed can succeed in slowing price increases without torpedoing growth.

Friday's report from the Labor Department showed that employers added 428,000 jobs in April, the 12th straight month of 400,000 or more gains. The unemployment rate was unchanged at 3.6%, just a tenth above its pre-pandemic level, the lowest rate in 50 years.

Here are five takeaways from the jobs report:

SMALLER LABOR FORCE COMPLICATES FED'S JOB

The proportion of Americans who are either working or hunting for a job fell in April to 62.2% from 62.4% after three months of increases. April's decline, though just one month, ended a trend toward rising numbers of job seekers. Fewer workers and higher pay could make inflation harder to restrain.

"If the supply (of workers) is not picking up, then those wage pressures are not going to be easing," said Peter Hooper, Deutsche Bank's global head of economic research. "And that means the Fed is going to have to do more" — that is, keep raising its key short-term rate, which would mean more expensive borrowing across the economy.

WAGES GROWING MORE SLOWLY

Average hourly pay rose 10 cents to \$31.85 in April, a decent gain and a solid 5.5% higher than a year ago. Still, that pace is well below the latest year-over-year inflation rate of 8.5%. As a result, most Americans are losing purchasing power even as their pay rises.

That said, wage gains appear to be cooling, which could help reduce inflation. April's average wage increase of 0.3% was below the March rise of 0.5%. And over the past three months, hourly pay has grown 0.9%, the slowest three-month pace in a year.

Higher wages are of course good for workers. But if they rise too fast, without an increase in worker productivity, it tends to accelerate inflation. Slower wage growth, on the other hand, can be more sustainable because it helps hold down inflation and allows the Fed to implement fewer rate hikes.

STRONG HIRING MAY BE COOLING

In Friday's jobs report were other signs, aside from wages, that job growth might be slowing a bit after a year of robust gains. One indicator of where the labor market may be headed is the number of temporary workers being hired. Typically, employers use temporary employees to handle rising demand until they can find the permanent workers they need.

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In both March and April, the number of temporary jobs was unchanged, after increases in January and February. Such a pullback may suggest that employers are seeing somewhat less need for workers.

And overall hiring, while strong, has been easing slightly. Employers have added an average of 523,000 jobs over the past three months, down from a three-month average of 549,000 in March and 602,000 in February.

Finally, the government revised down its estimate of job gains for February and March by a combined 39,000. That's a relatively small number that doesn't really change the overall picture. But revisions can signal which direction the economy is headed, and nearly all the revisions in previous months had been positive.

A slowdown is somewhat inevitable given the pace of rapid hiring and the limited supply of workers and may simply signal a shift to smaller, but more sustainable, gains.

"We couldn't maintain the same pace as the past year," said Aaron Sojourner, a labor economist at the University of Minnesota. "We do have to slow down."

BLACK AMERICANS SEE SOLID GAINS

In April, the gap between Black and white workers narrowed, with more Black Americans looking for and finding work, while the number of white people in the workforce declined. Racial employment gaps have been steadily narrowing since the pandemic recession struck.

Unemployment for African Americans dropped to 5.9%, down from 6.2% in March. For white workers, it was unchanged at 3.2%. And the proportion of Black Americans who either have a job or are seeking one rose to 62.3%, above the rate for white Americans at 61.9%. The white rate has declined in recent years in part because of retirements.

Though the figures are volatile from month to month, this is only the second time that Black workers have topped white ones in labor force participation since 1972, after having first done so in June.

MEN FARE WORSE THAN WOMEN

Women initially took bigger hits in the workforce than men after the pandemic slammed the economy, in part because industries with many female workers — retail, health care, restaurants — shed many millions of jobs. Some women also quit or stopped looking for work as schools closed and implemented online learning.

Since then, things have evened out a bit. In April, the unemployment rate for men rose from 3.6% to 3.8%. For women, it dipped from 3.6% to 3.5%.

Men are still more likely to be in the workforce. But their participation rate has risen less in the past year than women's has. Men's participation rate rose four-tenths of a point to 68%. Women's has risen six-tenths to 56.7%.

Fire-ravaged New Mexico villages cling to faith, 'querencia'

By FELICIA FONSECA Associated Press

Eileen Celestina Garcia raced down the mountain that overlooks her parents' ranch home in northern New Mexico where friends and family have gathered for decades and where she has sat countless times among the stillness of the Ponderosa pines.

A wildfire was raging and Garcia knew she had just minutes to reach her parents and ensure they evacuated in time. Her hands grazed the trees as she spoke to them, thinking the least she could do is offer them gratitude and prayer in case they weren't there when she returned.

"You're trying not to panic — maybe it's not real — just asking for miracles, asking for it not to affect our valley and stop," she said.

Like many New Mexico families, Garcia's is deep-rooted not only in the land but in their Catholic faith. As the largest wildfire burning in the U.S. marches across the high alpine forests and grasslands of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, many in its path have pleaded with God for intervention in the form of rain and calm winds, and protection for their neighbors and beloved landscape.

They've invoked St. Florian, the patron saint of firefighters, the Virgin Mary as the blessed mother and the various patron saints of scattered villages. The fire has marched for several weeks across more than

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262 square miles (678 square kilometers), destroying dozens of homes and forcing thousands of families to evacuate.

Favorable winds recently helped firefighters, but conditions are expected to worsen over the weekend, with consecutive days of red flag warnings. Forecasters warned of potentially historic conditions.

"There's not going to be any letup in these winds," said John Pendergrast, an air resource adviser on the fire.

During trying times, the largely Hispanic working-class neighborhoods here also rely on community and the lessons of those who came before them. Simply put, it's *querencia* — a love of home or attachment to a place.

Some described fleeing the wildfire and imagining the faces of their neighbors in the lush valleys who they've helped with baling hay, fixing cars or harvesting firewood.

"One of my neighbors described it as seeing the mountains around us burn is really like seeing a loved one burn," said Fidel Trujillo, whose family evacuated from the tiny town of Mora. "And I don't think that's any kind of exaggeration."

Religion is infused in homes across the mountains, where crosses hang above many doors. Elected officials and fire managers frequently credited prayer when winds calmed enough to allow firefighters to get a better handle on the blaze. They prayed even more when things got tough. Some started novenas, or nine-day prayers, and encouraged family and friends to join in.

The preservation of faith in this region was somewhat out of necessity. The Spanish settled the area centuries ago, but the Catholic Church as an institution was far away. Even now, deacons and priests rotate among the mission churches for Mass or to perform sacraments. People like Trujillo and his wife serve as *mayordomos*, or caretakers of those churches.

Also layered on the landscape are historic Spanish land grants, large ranches, traditional irrigation systems known as *acequias*, and *moradas*, which are meeting spaces for a religious brotherhood known as *penitentes*.

Prayer is intertwined in everything, Trujillo says, something that was passed down through generations. His dad has marked spots along hiking trails with crosses as a reminder to "pause, pray and give thanks," Trujillo said.

By the grace of God, he said, his father-in-law's ranch house in El Carmen survived the fire, and so did his childhood home in Ledoux. He's unsure about his current residence in Mora amid a valley prized for its Christmas trees.

"Sometimes when things are beyond your control, you have to lean on that faith," Trujillo said. "That's what faith is."

For many New Mexicans, regardless of where they live, the pull back home is strong.

Felicia Ortiz, president of the Nevada board of education, recently bought 36 acres (14.5 hectares) behind one of the mission churches to maintain roots in New Mexico. The land burned, but she's hopeful some trees remain.

Nearby at her childhood home in Rociada, she remembers stomping on the dirt to make adobe bricks and peeling logs her family harvested to build a barn. She and her sister skated on a frozen pond in the yard and sledged down the hills. They watched the full moon rise over a tree next to their playhouse as her dad played "Bad Moon Rising" on vinyl.

Flames destroyed the house.

"I look at the pictures, and it looks like something out of a horror movie," Ortiz said. "The tree that I had a swing on, it's just a stick. The big piñon tree where we picked piñon, it's like palitos (little sticks) now."

Las Vegas Mayor Louie Trujillo called northern New Mexicans physically, emotionally and spiritually strong — "a breed of our own." Many residents invoked the teachings and resilient spirits of their ancestors when offering up their homes to evacuees, feeding them, rescuing animals and starting fundraisers.

Garcia and her 9-year-old son, Leoncio, took refuge during the coronavirus pandemic at her parents' ranch in Sapello and haven't left. It's where her family milked cows and made cheese to sell to neighbors. It's where she sat among the trees overlooking the valley and dreamt about going to college and helping

her family.

More recently, the trees gave her the solace she needed to write a chapter in a book about female trailblazers.

When fleeing, she grabbed pictures of relatives and a bag with religious items that she carried on a 100-mile (160-kilometer) pilgrimage she organized and walked for 10 years.

"If our ranch and our trees are still there, what I keep seeing is an opportunity to offer space for healing for folks to come and sit with the trees that they've lost," she said.

What they wore: Amish Country exhibit spotlights sex abuse

By PETER SMITH Associated Press

LEOLA, Pa. (AP) — Clotheslines with billowing linens and long dresses are a common sight on the off-grid farms of Pennsylvania's Lancaster County, home to the nation's largest Amish settlement. For many tourists they're as iconic a part of Amish Country's bucolic scenery as the rural lanes and wooden bridges.

But for two days in late April, a clothesline with a different purpose was strung in a small indoor exhibit here. Hanging from it were 13 outfits representing the trauma of sexual assault suffered by members of the Amish, Mennonite and similar groups, a reminder that the modest attire they require, particularly of women and girls, is no protection.

Each garment on display was either the actual one a survivor wore at the time they were assaulted or a replica assembled by volunteers to match the strict dress codes of the survivor's childhood church.

One was a long-sleeve, periwinkle blue Amish dress with a simple stand collar. The accompanying sign said, "Survivor Age: 4 years old."

Next to it was a 5-year-old's heavy coat, hat and long, hunter green dress, displayed above sturdy black shoes. "I was never safe and I was a child. He was an adult," a sign quoted the survivor as saying. "No one helped me when I told them he hurt me."

There was also an infant's onesie.

"You feel rage when you get a tiny little outfit in the mail," said Ruth Ann Brubaker of Wayne County, Ohio, who helped put the exhibit together. "I didn't know I could be so angry. Then you start crying."

The clothes on display represented various branches of the conservative Anabaptist tradition, which include Amish, Mennonite, Brethren and Charity. Often referred to as the Plain churches, they emphasize separation from mainstream society, church discipline, forgiveness and modest dress, including head coverings for women.

It was part of a larger conference on awareness of sexual abuse in the Plain churches held April 29-30 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church in Leola and sponsored by two advocacy organizations: A Better Way, based in Zanesville, Ohio, and Safe Communities, of Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Hope Anne Dueck, the executive director of A Better Way and one of the exhibit's organizers, said many survivors report being told things such as "If you had been wearing your head covering, then you probably wouldn't have been assaulted," or "You couldn't have been dressed modestly enough."

"And as a survivor myself," Dueck said, "I knew that that was not the truth."

"You can be harmed no matter what you're wearing," she said. Those who contributed to the exhibit "were wearing what their parents and the church prescribed, and wearing them correctly, and were still assaulted."

The exhibit was based on similar ones that have been staged at college campuses and elsewhere in recent years called "What Were You Wearing?" They show a wide range of attire with the aim of shattering the myth that sexual assault can be blamed on what a victim had on.

Current and former members of plain-dressing religious communities — not just the Anabaptists but others such as Holiness, an offshoot of Methodism with an emphasis on piety — agreed last year that it was time to hold their own version.

"At the end of the day, it was never about the clothes," said Mary Byler, a survivor of child sexual abuse in the Amish communities where she grew up. Byler, who founded the Colorado-based group The Misfit

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Amish to bridge cultural gaps between the Amish and the wider society, helped to organize the exhibit.

"I hope it helps survivors know that they're not alone," she said.

Survivors were invited to submit their outfits or descriptions of them. All but one provided children's attire, mostly girls and one boy, reflecting their age when they were assaulted. The lone adult outfit belonged to a woman who was raped by her husband shortly after giving birth, Dueck said.

Organizers plan to have high-quality photos made of the clothes to display online and in future exhibits.

Plain church leaders have acknowledged in recent years that sexual abuse is a problem in their communities and have held seminars to raise awareness.

But advocates say they need to do more, and that some leaders continue to treat abuse cases as matters of church discipline rather than as crimes to be reported to civil authorities.

Dozens of offenders from Plain church affiliations have been convicted of sexually abusing children in the past two decades, according to a review of court files in several states. Several church leaders have been convicted for failing to report abuse, including an Amish bishop in Lancaster County in 2020.

Researchers and organizers at the conference said they are surveying current and former Plain community members to gather concrete data on what they believe is a pervasive problem.

But the display made a powerful statement on its own, said Darlene Shirk, a Mennonite from Lancaster County.

"We talk about statistics ... but when you have something physical here, and because the dress is from the Plain community, it shouts, 'Look, this is happening in our community!'" she said.

Advocates say that in the male-led Plain churches, where forgiveness is taught as a paramount virtue, people are often pressured to reconcile with their abusers or their children's abusers.

Byler said that in the 18 years since she reported her sexual assaults to civil authorities, she has heard more stories of abuse in the Plain churches than she can count. Survivors are often isolated from their communities and met with "very victim-blaming statements," she said.

"Child sexual assault and sexual assault is something that happens ... inside of communities from every walk and way of life," Byler said.

US added 428,000 jobs in April despite surging inflation

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — America's employers added 428,000 jobs in April, extending a streak of solid hiring that has defied punishing inflation, chronic supply shortages, the Russian war against Ukraine and much higher borrowing costs.

Friday's jobs report from the Labor Department showed that last month's hiring kept the unemployment rate at 3.6%, just above the lowest level in a half-century.

The economy's hiring gains have been strikingly consistent in the face of the worst inflation in four decades. Employers have added at least 400,000 jobs for 12 straight months.

At the same time, the April job growth, along with steady wage gains, will fuel consumer spending and likely keep the Federal Reserve on track to raise borrowing rates sharply to fight inflation. The U.S. stock market slumped again Friday on concern that the strength of the job market will keep wages and inflation high and lead to increasingly heavy borrowing costs for consumers and businesses. Higher loan rates could, in turn, weigh down corporate profits.

"With labor market conditions still this strong — including very rapid wage growth — we doubt that the Fed is going to abandon its hawkish plans," said Paul Ashworth, chief U.S. economist at Capital Economics.

The latest employment figures did contain a few cautionary notes about the job market. The government revised down its estimate of job gains for February and March by a combined 39,000.

And the number of people in the labor force declined in April by 363,000, the first drop since September. Their exit slightly reduced the proportion of Americans who are either working or looking for work from 62.4% to 62.2%. Many industries have been slowed by labor shortages. The nation remains 1.2 million jobs shy of the number it had in early 2020, just before the pandemic hammered the economy.

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"We need those people back," said Beth Ann Bovino, chief U.S. economist at S&P Global.

Bovino noted that some Americans are remaining on the sidelines of the workforce out of lingering concerns about COVID-19 or because of difficulty finding affordable daycare for unvaccinated children.

In the meantime, employers keep handing out pay raises. Hourly wages rose 0.3% from March to April and 5.5% from a year ago. Prices, though, are rising faster than pay is.

"Yes, we saw a bump in wages," Bovino said. But with inflation at 40-year highs "people are still squeezed."

Across industries last month, hiring was widespread. Factories added 55,000 jobs, the most since last July. Warehouses and transportation companies added 52,000, restaurants and bars 44,000, health care 41,000, finance 35,000, retailers 29,000 and hotels 22,000. Construction companies, which have been slowed by shortages of labor and supplies, added just 2,000.

Yet it's unclear how long the jobs boom will continue. The Fed this week raised its key rate by a half-percentage point — its most aggressive move since 2000 — and signaled further large rate hikes to come. As the Fed's rate hikes take effect, it will become increasingly expensive to spend and hire.

In addition, the vast economic aid that the government had been supplying to households has expired. And Russia's invasion of Ukraine has helped accelerate inflation and clouded the economic outlook. Some economists warn of a growing risk of recession.

For now, the resilience of the job market is particularly striking when set against the backdrop of galloping price increases and rising borrowing costs. This week, the Labor Department provided further evidence that the job market is still booming. It reported that only 1.38 million Americans were collecting traditional unemployment benefits, the fewest since 1970. And it said that employers posted a record-high 11.5 million job openings in March and that layoffs remained well below pre-pandemic levels.

What's more, the economy now has, on average, two available jobs for every unemployed person. That's the highest such proportion on record.

And in yet another sign that workers are enjoying unusual leverage in the job market, a record 4.5 million people quit their jobs in March, evidently confident that they could find a better opportunity elsewhere.

Chronic shortages of goods, supplies and workers have contributed to skyrocketing price increases — the highest inflation rate in 40 years. Russia's invasion of Ukraine in late February dramatically worsened the financial landscape, sending global oil and gas prices skyward and severely clouding the national and global economic picture.

The Fed, which most economists say was much too slow to recognize the inflation threat, is now raising rates aggressively. Its goal is a notoriously difficult one: a so-called soft landing.

"Trying to slow the economy just enough, without causing a recession," said Rubeela Farooqi, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics. "Their track record on that is not particularly good."

Giacomo Santangelo of the jobs research firm Monster is among economists who say they think a recession is coming. Even so, Santangelo said, the Fed "doesn't have much of a choice" other than raising rates to combat the inflation spike.

For now, many business people, especially in industries like retail and hospitality, are still struggling with a tight labor market.

David Culhane is one of them. Since opening the White Mountain Tavern in Lincoln, New Hampshire, in August 2020, Culhane has raised his hourly starting wage from \$12 to \$15. Yet he still can't bring his employee count up to the 15 he needs. He worries that he won't have enough people to handle the summer tourist season.

His labor shortages are costly. With a full staff, Culhane could serve many more customers that he can now. In the meantime, food and electricity prices are rising.

In response, Culhane has had to raise the prices of some menu items by up to 50%. He now prices his 8-ounce steak with truffle parmesan fries and asparagus at \$25, up from \$17.

In his view, he has no choice.

"As (inflation) gets higher, and if we don't adjust to that," he said, "we are not going to make it."

To fully achieve the staff levels they need, some companies may have to do more than raise pay.

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"Employers and business leaders will need to go above and beyond salary increases to win the war for talent," said Karen Fichuk, CEO of the staffing company Randstad North America. "That will mean responding to new cultural norms and generational differences."

Many young people, she said, want jobs that provide an attractive work-life balance, prioritize diversity and offer the opportunity to make a positive difference in society.

Among those taking advantage of more flexible work arrangements is Grace Rosenback of Mountainair, New Mexico. The freedom to work from home — a necessity during the pandemic — has proved to be a blessing for Rosenback.

After undergoing a heart transplant in 2019, Rosenback, now 49, had to stop working for a year. A designer of presentations for marketing firms and other companies, she is working remotely for a contractor and hopes to land a full-time job with the client company once the four-month contract expires.

The business world, she said, "has pretty much accepted that everyone can be remote."

'Roe' under threat, California leans in as abortion refuge

By ADAM BEAM Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California Democrats have accelerated their plan to make the nation's most populous state a sanctuary for women seeking abortions, propelled by the release this week of an early draft of a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that has ignited a surge of activism among the state's vast network of providers and advocacy groups.

The draft — which could change when a final ruling is issued, likely next month — would end nearly 50 years of federal abortion protections. Just hours after a leaked copy was published, Gov. Gavin Newsom and the state's top legislative leaders said they would seek voter approval to make abortions a constitutional right in California, a move designed to shield the state from future court rulings and a potential federal abortion ban should Republicans win control of Congress.

On Thursday, Democrats in the state Legislature fast-tracked a bill that would block other states' laws from imposing civil or criminal penalties on people who provide or aid abortions in California, setting up another likely prolonged legal fight over state sovereignty.

The California Legislative Women's Caucus has asked Newsom for \$20 million to help pay for women from other states where abortion would be outlawed to come to California for the procedure — a sum the governor could announce in his revised budget proposal next week.

In just 48 hours after the draft ruling became public, California's only statewide nonprofit that helps women travel to and within the state to get abortions raised \$25,000 — a quarter of its normal annual spending — while fielding a flood of calls from people volunteering to give free rides or a place to stay to women looking to end their pregnancies.

For Madilynne Hoffman, California's preparations are comforting. The 22-year-old mother of two ended her pregnancy in December at an abortion clinic in the state's Central Valley.

When she returned to a different clinic later for birth control, she said a protester followed her to her car. That experience, coupled with the draft court ruling, prompted her to look for volunteer opportunities at clinics.

"That's really saddening to think that women have to fight for their bodies," she said. "It should just be an automatic right."

California's legislative efforts represent the opening salvos in the next phase of the abortion rights battle, which will play out among state governments that are left to make and enforce their own rules if the federal protections are abolished. Already, Republican-led states like Oklahoma and Idaho have passed more restrictive abortion laws in anticipation of the court's ruling.

Democratic-led states like California, meanwhile, are passing laws to expand abortion access.

The Democrats who control all levers of power in state government have written 13 bills that would authorize more medical providers to perform abortions, create scholarships for reproductive care doctors, block other states from accessing some California medical records, and create a fund for taxpayer money

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to help pay for women in states where abortion is illegal to come to California to get the procedure. A measure that makes abortions cheaper by banning co-pays and deductibles has already been signed into law.

Meanwhile, abortion providers are busy hiring more doctors and adding space to receive a predicted surge in patients. Planned Parenthood Mar Monte, the nation's largest Planned Parenthood affiliate, is renovating and building new facilities in Oakland, San Jose, Fresno, Visalia and Reno, Nevada. When they're finished, it will boost their capacity from 200 to 500 patients per week.

"We've been preparing for it for over a year — and honestly since November 2016," when Republican Donald Trump was elected president, said Andrew Adams, Planned Parenthood Mar Monte's chief of staff and head of strategic communications.

Anti-abortion advocates are getting ready, too, by bolstering staffing and support at crisis pregnancy centers. These centers, which often locate near abortion clinics and are religiously affiliated, seek to convince women to forego abortion for adoption or other options.

Some of these centers in conservative states receive tens of millions of dollars in public money. California has been hostile to these centers, passing a law requiring them to tell clients about abortion services. The U.S. Supreme Court struck down that law in 2018.

"We believe that is the way people of faith and the pro-life community can really help to put our money where our mouth is," said Jonathan Keller, president and CEO of the California Family Council, which opposes abortion. "No woman should ever feel like abortion is the best option for them."

While abortion has been legal in every state, it's not easily accessible everywhere, especially for people who live in poor or rural areas. Across the country, nearly 100 "abortion funds" exist to help these women pay for things like travel, lodging and child care they need to make their appointments.

Since Monday, a national digital fundraising platform for these groups has raised about \$1 million, according to Sierra Harris, deputy director of network strategy for the National Network of Abortion Funds.

California has one statewide abortion fund, known as Access Reproductive Justice. The group helps roughly 500 women each year, about a third whom come from other states, according to Executive Director Jessica Pinckney. Each woman gets an average of \$300 to \$400 in assistance.

That doesn't pay for everything. To fill the gaps, the group relies on a set of 50 core volunteers who stand ready to give rides, places to stay and extra cash. Those volunteers include Harris, who lives in Oakland.

Since the pandemic, most of the assistance Harris gives is cash. The mother of two small children, Harris recalled a time when she pitched in to buy another woman a plane ticket so she could travel to get an abortion. The woman was also a mother, and later sent Harris a card calling her an "angel."

The woman said her help made it possible for her "to parent the child I have," Harris said. "I think about that all the time."

Andrew, Harry and Meghan won't appear on Jubilee balcony

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Buckingham Palace on Friday answered one of the biggest remaining questions about Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee celebrations: saying that Prince Andrew, Prince Harry and Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, won't be on the palace balcony when the monarch greets the public on June 2.

The balcony appearance is a centerpiece moment of many royal celebrations, with the royal family smiling and waving to fans at home and millions watching on television around the world. But the build-up to the ceremonies marking Elizabeth's 70 years on the throne have been dogged by questions about whether Andrew, Harry and Meghan would be in such a public spotlight amid a sex scandal and family tensions.

The queen has now settled the matter, decreeing that only working members of the royal family will join her on the balcony to watch a Royal Air Force fly-past after the traditional military review known as Trooping the Color.

"After careful consideration, the queen has decided this year's traditional Trooping the Color balcony appearance on Thursday 2nd June will be limited to Her Majesty and those members of the royal family who are currently undertaking official public duties on behalf of the queen," the palace said.

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The decision comes amid a debate over Andrew's status after he reached a multimillion pound settlement with a woman who accused him of sexual exploitation. Andrew stepped away from royal duties and was stripped of his honorary military titles amid the scandal caused by the allegations and his links to the late convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. Still, Britain's media has been awash with reports that Andrew wanted a public role in the Jubilee after he settled the lawsuit.

Harry also kept open the possibility of a balcony appearance in an interview with NBC last month, though he said "security issues and everything else" might complicate such a decision. Harry and Meghan, also known as the duke and duchess of Sussex, stepped away from frontline royal duties and moved to California in 2020. They are locked in a legal battle with Britain's Home Office over security arrangements when they travel to the U.K.

As plans for the Jubilee began to take shape, Harry and Meghan announced Friday they would travel to the U.K. for the festivities.

"Prince Harry and Meghan, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, are excited and honored to attend the queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations this June with their children," a spokesperson for the couple said.

While Andrew and the Sussexes won't join the queen on the balcony, as members of the royal family they would be free to attend other events, a palace source said, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with palace policies.

The queen's decision means that she will be accompanied on the balcony by three of her four children and their spouses: Prince Charles and Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall; Princess Anne and retired Vice Admiral Timothy Laurence; and Prince Edward and Sophie, the Countess of Wessex.

Prince William, Harry's older brother, and his wife, Catherine, the Duchess of Cambridge, will also be on the balcony with their three children, George, Charlotte and Louis. William is second in line to the throne after his father Charles.

Motherhood deferred: US median age for giving birth hits 30

By MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

For Allyson Jacobs, life in her 20s and 30s was about focusing on her career in health care and enjoying the social scene in New York City. It wasn't until she turned 40 that she and her husband started trying to have children. They had a son when she was 42.

Over the past three decades, that has become increasingly common in the U.S., as birthrates have declined for women in their 20s and jumped for women in their late 30s and early 40s, according to a new report from the U.S. Census Bureau. The trend has pushed the median age of U.S. women giving birth from 27 to 30, the highest on record.

As an older parent celebrating Mother's Day on Sunday, Jacobs feels she has more resources for her son, 9, than she would have had in her 20s.

"There's definitely more wisdom, definitely more patience," said Jacobs, 52, who is a patients' services administrator at a hospital. "Because we are older, we had the money to hire a nanny. We might not have been able to afford that if we were younger."

While fertility rates dropped from 1990 to 2019 overall, the decline was regarded as rather stable compared to previous eras. But the age at which women had babies shifted. Fertility rates declined by almost 43% for women between ages 20 and 24 and by more than 22% for women between 25 and 29. At the same time, they increased by more than 67% for women between 35 and 39, and by more than 132% for women between 40 and 44, according to the Census Bureau analysis based on National Center for Health Statistics data.

Decisions by college-educated women to invest in their education and careers so they could be better off financially when they had children, as well as the desire by working-class women to wait until they were more financially secure, have contributed to the shift toward older motherhood, said Philip Cohen, a University of Maryland sociologist.

In the past, parents often relied on their children for income — putting them to work in the fields, for

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example, when the economy was more farm-based. But over the last century or more in the U.S., parents have become more invested in their children's futures, providing more support while they go to school and enter young adulthood, he said.

"Having children later mostly puts women in a better position," Cohen said. "They have more resources, more education. The things we demand of people to be good parents are easier to supply when you are older."

Lani Trezzi, 48, and her husband had their first child, a son, when she was 38, and a daughter followed three years later. Even though she had been with her husband since she was 23, she felt no urgency to have children. That changed in her late 30s, once she'd reached a comfortable spot in her career as an executive for a retail company.

"It was just an age when I felt confident all around in the many areas of my life," said Trezzi, who lives in New Jersey, outside New York City. "I didn't have the confidence then that I have now."

Over the last three decades, the largest increases in the median age at which U.S. women give birth have been among foreign-born women, going from ages 27 to 32, and Black women, going from ages 24 to 28, according to the Census Bureau.

With foreign-born women, Cohen said he wasn't quite sure why the median age increased over time, but it likely was a "complicated story" having to do with their circumstances or reasons for coming to the U.S.

For Black women, pursuing an education and career played roles.

"Black women have been pursuing higher education at higher rates," said Raegan McDonald-Mosley, an obstetrician and gynecologist, who is CEO of Power to Decide, which works to reduce teen pregnancies and unwanted births. "Black women are becoming really engaged in their education and that is an incentive to delay childbearing."

Since unintended pregnancies are highest among teens and women in their 20s, and more of their pregnancies end in abortion compared to older women, ending Roe v. Wade would likely shift the start of childbearing earlier on average, in a reverse of the trend of the past three decades, "although the magnitude is unknown," said Laura Lindberg, principal research scientist at the Guttmacher Institute, a research group that supports abortion rights.

"The burden will fall disproportionately on women of color, Black women, people without documentation, people living in rural areas, people in the South — where there are a lot of Black women — and in the Midwest," said McDonald-Mosley, who also has served previously as chief medical officer of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

Motherhood also has been coming later in developed countries in Europe and Asia. In the U.S., it could contribute to the nation's population slowdown since the ability to have children tends to decrease with age, said Kate Choi, a family demographer at Western University in London, Ontario.

In areas of the U.S. where the population isn't replacing itself with births, and where immigration is low, population decline can create labor shortages, higher labor costs and a labor force that is supporting retirees, she said.

"Such changes will put significant pressure on programs aimed at supporting seniors like Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare," Choi said. "Workers may have to pay higher taxes to support the growing numbers of the retired population."

Although the data in the Census Bureau report stops in 2019, the pandemic over the past two years has put off motherhood even further for many women, with U.S. birth rates in 2020 dropping 4% in the largest single-year decrease in nearly 50 years. Choi said there appears to have been a bit of a rebound in the second half of 2021 to levels similar to 2019, but more data is needed to determine if this is a return to a "normal" decline.

During the pandemic, some women at the end of their reproductive years may have given up on becoming parents or having more children because of economic uncertainties and greater health risks for pregnant women who get the virus, she said.

"These women may have missed their window to have children," Choi said. "Some parents of young chil-

dren may have decided to forego the second ... birth because they were overwhelmed with the additional child-caring demands that emerged during the pandemic, such as the need to homeschool their children.”

Builders hurt protected areas in climate-weary Puerto Rico

By DÁNICA COTO Associated Press

SALINAS, Puerto Rico (AP) — Jacqueline Vázquez was sitting on the couch when her phone rang.

She had just returned from a government office where she filed a complaint about illegal construction in an ecological reserve. The reserve is dedicated to one of the island’s largest mangrove forests near her neighborhood in southern Puerto Rico.

“What the hell were you doing in Natural Resources?” a man’s voice bellowed through her phone.

Vázquez took it as a threat, one of several that community leaders like her have received as outraged Puerto Ricans demand answers from their public officials. Lax oversight, dwindling budgets, and permits illegally issued by the government have led to an increase in construction in protected areas and regions, some of them prone to flooding or landslides.

The ongoing probe into homes built illegally in Puerto Rico’s second largest estuary, where officials say more than 3,600 mangrove trees were cut, has led to public hearings, the launch of a criminal investigation by Puerto Rico’s Justice Department and to scrutiny of similar cases. Environmentalists warn these cases are leaving the U.S. territory even more vulnerable to climate change amid wetter and more intense hurricane seasons.

“This is one of the biggest environmental crimes I’ve seen,” Rep. Jesús Manuel Ortiz said during an April 27 public hearing on the issue. “It’s outrageous. A crime is being committed right in front of everyone.”

Homes of concrete block complete with fences, pools and even a dock have been illegally built inside the Jobos Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. The reserve has protected nearly 2,900 acres of mangrove forest surrounded by waters in varying shades of turquoise. It is home to the critically endangered hawksbill sea turtle and the vulnerable West Indian manatee, among other species.

Activists and some public employees say they are frustrated and feel alone in their fight as they accuse Puerto Rico’s Department of Natural Resources and other agencies of not doing their jobs.

When a legislator during one public hearing asked the director of the Jobos Bay reserve who exactly had failed in their duties by allowing the illegal construction, she answered, “The entire system.”

The reserve director, Aixa Pabón, also accused the Department of Natural Resources of being negligent and questioned why Puerto Rico’s Planning Board was absent, saying “ineptitude, negligence (and) sluggishness” prevails in certain government agencies. Her voice broke at times, and she said she feared personal and professional backlash for testifying: “But the truth sets me free, and God is with me.”

Last month the secretary of the natural resources department resigned. He told a local radio station that some employees investigating the illegal construction were receiving death threats.

Neither the Department of Natural Resources nor Puerto Rico’s Planning Board, which is responsible for inspecting all authorized permits, responded to requests for comment.

The themes of public land and climate vulnerability are playing out in another high profile case in the popular surfing town of Rincon in western Puerto Rico. In February, a judge reversed a permit issued by the government that authorized the Sun and Beach condominium to rebuild a pool, jacuzzi and other recreational areas destroyed by Hurricane Maria in September 2017.

“The proposed construction,” the court said, would “privatize an asset in the maritime-terrestrial public domain.”

The judge also noted that 2% of the property in the case is protected land where no urban development should have been permitted, and 12% is located in a coastal area with a high risk for flooding.

The testimony in that case included an employee of the environment division of Puerto Rico’s Permit Management Office who acknowledged he intervened directly to speed up the now-cancelled permit. He also said that a friend and business partner of his was a consultant on the project, but said his action was justified because the permit officer assigned to the case was doing the evaluation incorrectly.

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The judge ruled that the land is public after the island's Planning Board found the government granted the permit in violation of local laws. However, that case is still in court, and residents fear developers will illegally restart reconstruction. Critically endangered sea turtles have nested there in the past.

In both of these cases, the illegal construction came to light after concerned residents launched protests and demanded accountability from government agencies.

"We feel that the fight here is never-ending. It is very, very frustrating," said Mónica Timothée Vega, a civil attorney. At the request of a friend, she also is fighting another proposed development in a wetland in the northeast coastal town of Luquillo.

That case is pending in court, with Timothée accusing Puerto Rico's Permit Management Office of granting nine extensions and three renewals to developers when by law, it can only award three extensions and one renewal per case.

Timothée also said one neighbor requested public documents related to the case in January and was only able to obtain them after she and her brother, who is also working on the case, went to court.

"Why does the community need to have attorneys to obtain documents?" she asked. Their frustration heightened, she said, when previously available documents online at the Permit Management Office began to disappear as she and her brother dug into the case.

Pedro Cardona Roig, an architect, planner and former vice president of Puerto Rico's Planning Board, said the same thing is happening to him as he investigates on his own what occurred in Salinas, where Jobos Bay is located. He said of the 16 documents he previously perused online, only a handful remain.

Gabriel Hernández, secretary for the Permit Management Office, told The Associated Press that his agency struggles, with a limited staff, to address a recent surge of fake permits that show names, addresses and even official plot maps illegally changed.

"The number keeps going up every day," he said, adding that planning employees have now identified more than 100 fake permits. At least eight of those were permits to connect utilities to the illegal homes in Jobos Bay. He stressed that his agency never authorized any permits there.

"People sometimes do whatever they want," he said.

According to Puerto Rico's Water and Sewage Authority, at least 60 customers now have connections in Jobos Bay. The island's Electric Power Authority has referred nearly 50 people to Puerto Rico's Justice Department over illegal connections.

Hernández at the permit office said he has ordered his employees to use judgment and be careful when reviewing a petition involving a natural reserve or a protected area.

"Some might have slipped through, but it's not the norm," he said.

Illegal coastal development is of great concern for activists on an island where more than half the population of 3.2 million people lives near the ocean. Mangroves protect the shore from storm surge during hurricanes. Corals do that too, but they have been dying in part due to sediment runoff. A warming planet means that hurricanes carry more rain, have more energy and intensify faster.

"The mangroves are like the person who stands there enduring all that may come," said Vázquez, the community leader. "It's like a wall, saving us."

A growing number of legislators favor an island-wide investigation into illegal construction taking place in protected areas. Activists also are pushing for approval of a complete moratorium on coastal construction, a proposal that Gov. Pedro Pierluisi has called "excessive." However, he said a moratorium could be applied in areas suffering from erosion or other climate change effects.

The department's interim secretary announced April 27 it is preparing to file eviction orders against 12 people accused of living illegally in Jobos Bay and requested a court order to demolish the homes. Officials said the occupants would be responsible for paying at least \$4 million in environmental damages and accused the group of taking advantage of the pandemic and the aftermath of Hurricane Maria to build and expand structures.

Despite the looming court battle over protection at Jobos Bay, activists and attorneys remain wary. They note that the Natural Resources Ranger Corps has only seven members to oversee the area that includes Jobos Bay instead of the federally recommended 12. When the Corps issued \$250,000 in fines to those

unlawfully occupying the land, the government reduced the fines to \$3,000. The rangers themselves also were served with a cease-and-desist letter from the squatters.

"You can imagine how we felt," Sgt. Ángel Colón told legislators at a public hearing. "It was like a bucket of cold water."

Vázquez, the community leader of Las Mareas in the town of Salinas, knows the feeling.

The complaint she filed in 2019 is stalled at Puerto Rico's Department of Natural Resources. Officials say they need more information. The complaint over misuse of land is one of more than 100 filed by people across Puerto Rico awaiting action since 2019.

Associated Press climate and environmental coverage receives support from several private foundations. See more about AP's climate initiative here. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Nearly 1 million COVID-19 deaths: A look at the US numbers

By CARLA K. JOHNSON and NICKY FORSTER Associated Press

Doug Lambrecht was among the first of the nearly 1 million Americans to die from COVID-19. His demographic profile — an older white male with chronic health problems — mirrors the faces of many who would be lost over the next two years.

The 71-year-old retired physician was recovering from a fall at a nursing home near Seattle when the new coronavirus swept through in early 2020. He died March 1, an early victim in a devastating outbreak that gave a first glimpse of the price older Americans would pay.

The pandemic has generated gigabytes of data that make clear which U.S. groups have been hit the hardest. More than 700,000 people 65 and older died. Men died at higher rates than women.

White people made up most of the deaths overall, yet an unequal burden fell on Black, Hispanic and Native American people considering the younger average age of minority communities. Racial gaps narrowed between surges then widened again with each new wave.

With 1 million deaths in sight, Doug's son Nathan Lambrecht reflected on the toll.

"I'm afraid that as the numbers get bigger, people are going to care less and less," he said. "I just hope people who didn't know them and didn't have the same sort of loss in their lives due to COVID, I just hope that they don't forget and they remember to care."

ELDERS HIT HARD

Three out of every four deaths were people 65 and older, according to U.S. data analyzed by The Associated Press.

About 255,000 people 85 and older died; 257,000 were 75 to 84 years old; and about 229,000 were 65 to 74.

"A million things went wrong and most of them were preventable," said elder care expert Charlene Harrington of the University of California, San Francisco. Harrington, 80, hopes the lessons of the pandemic lead U.S. health officials to adopt minimum staffing requirements for nursing homes, "then maybe I can retire."

SPOUSES LEFT BEHIND

In nearly every 10-year age group, more men have died from COVID-19 than women.

Men have shorter life expectancies than women, so it's not surprising that the only age group where deaths in women outpaced those in men is the oldest: 85 and older.

For some families who lost breadwinners, economic hardships have added to their grief, said Rima Samman, who coordinates a COVID-19 memorial project that began as a tribute to her brother, Rami, who died in May 2020 at age 40.

"A widow is losing her home, or she's losing the car she drove the kids to school with, because her husband died," Samman said. "Little by little, you're getting pulled down from middle class to lower class."

RACE, ETHNICITY AND AGE

White people made up 65% of the total deaths, the largest proportion of any race by far.

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This isn't that surprising because there are more white people in the U.S. than any other race. American Indians, Pacific Islanders and Black people had higher death rates when looking at COVID-19 deaths per capita.

Death rates per capita still leave out a characteristic that is crucial to understanding which groups were disproportionately affected — COVID-19 is more deadly for the elderly.

In the U.S. there are many more elderly white people than elderly people of other races. To evaluate which race has been disproportionately affected, it's necessary to adjust the per-capita death rate, calculating the rates as if each race had the same age breakdown.

After the share of COVID-19 deaths are age-adjusted in this way, we can compare that with the race's share of the total population. If the age-adjusted share of COVID-19 deaths is higher than the share of the U.S. population, that race has been disproportionately affected.

When considering age, it's apparent that Black, Hispanic, Pacific Islander and Native American people suffered disproportionately more from COVID-19 deaths than other groups in the U.S.

Looking at deaths per capita, Mississippi had the highest rate of any state.

"We've lost so many people to COVID," said Joyee Washington, a community health educator in Hattiesburg. "The hard thing in Mississippi was having to grieve with no time to heal. You're facing trauma after trauma after trauma. ... Normal is gone as far as I'm concerned."

Communities pulled together. Churches set up testing sites, school buses took meals to students when classrooms were closed, her city's mayor used social media to provide reliable information. "Even in the midst of turmoil you can still find joy, you can still find light," she said. "The possibilities are there if you look for them."

Native Americans experienced higher death rates than all other groups during two waves of the pandemic. For Mary Francis, a 41-year-old Navajo woman from Page, Arizona, the deaths reinforce a long-held value of self-sufficiency.

"It goes back to the teachings of our elders," said Francis, who helps get vaccines and care packages to Navajo and Hopi families. "Try to be self-sufficient, how to take care of ourselves and how to not rely so much on the government (and) other sources that may or may not have our interests at heart."

RURAL VS URBAN

The surge that began in late 2020 was particularly rough for rural America.

Americans living in rural areas have been less likely to get vaccinated than city dwellers, more likely to be infected and more likely to die.

"I've had multiple people in my ambulance, in their 80s and dying," said paramedic Mark Kennedy in Nauvoo, Illinois. "Some did die, and when you ask if they've been vaccinated, they say, 'I don't trust it.'"

Surges swamped the thin resources of rural hospitals. During the delta surge, Kennedy transferred patients to hospitals in Springfield, which is 130 miles away, and Chicago, 270 miles away.

"Every day you had multiple transfers three and four hours away in full protective gear," Kennedy said.

The recent omicron wave felt even harder to David Schreiner, CEO of Katherine Shaw Bethea Hospital in Dixon, Illinois.

"In the first wave, there were signs throughout the community about our health care heroes. ... People loved us the first time around," Schreiner said. But by this past winter, people had COVID-19 fatigue.

"Our people have been through so much. And then we would get a patient or a family member who would come to the hospital and refuse to put a mask on," Schreiner said. "It's a little bit hard to take."

How does it f-e-e-e-e-I? Bob Dylan museum opening in Tulsa

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Elvis Costello, Patti Smith and Mavis Staples will be among the dignitaries expected in Tulsa, Oklahoma, this weekend for the opening of the Bob Dylan Center, the museum and archive celebrating the Nobel laureate's work.

Dylan himself won't be among them, unless he surprises everyone.

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The center's subject and namesake has an open invitation to come anytime, although his absence seems perfectly in character, said Steven Jenkins, the center's director. Oddly, Dylan was just in Tulsa three weeks ago for a date on his concert tour, sandwiched in between Oklahoma City and Little Rock, Arkansas. He didn't ask for a look around.

"I don't want to put words in his mouth," Jenkins said. "I can only guess at his reasoning. Maybe he would find it embarrassing."

It's certainly unusual for a living figure — Dylan is due to turn 81 on May 24 — to have a museum devoted to him, but such is the shadow he has cast over popular music since his emergence in the early 1960s. He's still working, performing onstage in a show devoted primarily to his most recent material.

And he's still pushing the envelope. "Murder Most Foul," Dylan's nearly 17-minute rumination on the Kennedy assassination and celebrity, is as quietly stunning as "Like a Rolling Stone" was nearly a half-century ago, even if he's no longer at the center of popular culture.

The center offers an immersive film experience, performance space, a studio where visitors can play producer and "mix" different elements of instrumentation in Dylan's songs and a curated tour where people can take a musical journey through the stages of his career. The archive has more than 100,000 items, many accessed only by scholars through appointment.

Museum creators said they wanted to build an experience both for casual visitors who might not know much of Dylan's work and for the truly fanatical — the skimmers, the swimmers and the divers, said designer Alan Maskin of the firm Olson Kundig.

The museum hopes to celebrate the creative process in general, and at opening will have an exhibit of the work of photographer Jerry Schatzberg, whose 1965 image of Dylan is emblazoned on the building's three-story facade.

Since Dylan's still creating, "we're going to continue to play catch-up" with him, Jenkins said.

So for a figure who was born and raised in Minnesota, came of musical age in New York and now lives in California, how does a museum devoted to his life's work end up in Oklahoma?

He's never seemed the nostalgic type, but Dylan recognized early that his work could have historical interest and value, Jenkins said. Together with his team, he put aside boxes full of artifacts, including photos, rare recordings and handwritten lyrics that show how his songs went through revisions and rewrites.

With use of those lyrics, two of the early displays will focus on how the songs "Jokerman" and "Tangled Up in Blue" took shape — the latter with lyrics so elastic that Dylan was still changing verses after the song had been released.

Dylan sold his archive in 2016 to the Tulsa-based George Kaiser Family Foundation, which also operates the Woody Guthrie Center — a museum that celebrates one of Dylan's musical heroes and is only steps away from the new Dylan center.

Dylan likes the Guthrie museum, and also appreciates Tulsa's rich holdings of Native American art, Jenkins said. Much of that is on display at another new facility, the Gilcrease Museum, which is also the world's largest holding of art of the American West.

"I think it's going to be a true tourist draw to Tulsa for all the right reasons," said Tulsa Mayor G. T. Bynum. "This is one of the great musicians in the history of humankind and everyone who wants to study his career and see the evolution of his talent will be drawn to it."

Bynum hopes that it also encourages others who may someday want to put their archives on display, and make Tulsa a center for the study of modern American music.

Dylan designed and built a 16-foot-high metal sculpture that will be displayed at the entrance to the museum. Otherwise, he had nothing to do with the museum's design and declined, through a spokesman, to offer a comment about the opening.

"If Bob were telling us what we could or couldn't do, it would have felt like a vanity project, in a way," Maskin said. "It was a tremendous relief not to have to satisfy Bob Dylan."

Still, it's safe to assume the lines of communication are open if necessary: Jenkins, the center's director, is the brother of Larry Jenkins, Dylan's long-time media representative.

In addition to a dinner to celebrate the opening this weekend, Costello, Smith and Staples will all perform separate concerts at Cain's Ballroom. Costello was asked to program a jukebox that will be on display at the

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museum and, within a day, submitted his suggestions for 160 Dylan songs and covers, Steven Jenkins said. The Bob Dylan Center is open to the public on May 10.

Maskin has no expectation that Dylan will ever see the designer's work. Still, he indulges himself in a fantasy of a slow summer day, a security guard dozing in the corner, and someone slipping in wearing black jeans, sunglasses and a familiar mop of hair to wander among the displays.

"To be honest, I don't think that's going to happen," he said. "I think he's interested in the work he's doing, and not the work he's done."

Morning jolt? Swiss find cocaine stash amid coffee bean bags

GENEVA (AP) — Swiss police say an investigation is underway after workers at a Nespresso warehouse in western Switzerland found 500 kilograms (over 1,100 pounds) of cocaine, with a street value of \$50 million, as they unloaded coffee beans that had arrived by train.

Regional police in Fribourg said late Thursday they were alerted Monday by the company to the discovery at the facility in the town of Romont and immediately set up a "broad security perimeter" around it with a large deployment of officers. Customs and border control agents were called in.

Early indications were that the shipment turned up in five containers that had arrived by sea from Brazil before being transferred onto a train, authorities said.

"The cocaine seized has an 80% degree of purity and its market value is estimated at more than 50 million francs," the police said, adding that the stash appeared "destined for the European market."

On Friday, the European Union's law enforcement agency Europol and the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction reported that cocaine availability in Europe "is probably at an all-time high."

Switzerland is not an EU member but is part of the Schengen zone that allows for visa-free travel among many European countries.

The monitoring center said it estimates the EU cocaine retail market was worth at least 10.5 billion euros (\$11.1 billion) in 2020, while cautioning that the figure was likely to underestimate the true size of the market.

It said the largest quantities of cocaine are seized in Belgian, Dutch and Spanish ports, but increasing amounts are turning up at ports elsewhere "suggesting that trafficking groups are extending their activities to ports where cocaine interdiction measures may be perceived as less intensive."

Swiss food and drinks giant Nestle, which owns Nespresso, sought to reassure customers that "all our products are safe to consume."

"We have strict quality controls in place for green coffee arriving at our warehouses right up to the finished product," the Vevey, Switzerland-based company said in a statement emailed to The Associated Press. "The substance in question did not come into contact with any of our products or production equipment used to make our products."

Nestle said it could not provide more details because of the ongoing police investigation.

America's love affair with the lawn is getting messy

By JULIA RUBIN Associated Press

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. (AP) — LeighAnn Ferrara is transforming her small suburban yard from grass bordered by a few shrubs into an anti-lawn — a patchwork of flower beds, vegetables and fruit trees.

It didn't happen all at once, says the mother of two young kids. "We started smothering small sections of the lawn each year with cardboard and mulch and planting them, and by now the front yard is probably three-quarters planting beds," she says. "Every year we do more."

Her perennials and native plants require less upkeep and water than turf grass does. And she doesn't need herbicides or pesticides — she's not aiming for emerald perfection.

For generations, the lawn — that neat, green, weed-less carpet of grass — has dominated American yards. It still does. But a surge of gardeners, landscapers and homeowners worried about the environment now see it as an anachronism, even a threat.

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Like Ferrara, they're chipping away at it.

"America is unique in its fixation on the monoculture lawn," says Dennis Liu, vice president of education at the E.O. Wilson Biodiversity Foundation in Durham, North Carolina. "Our English inheritance is our own little tidy green space."

Now, drought, crashing insect populations and other environmental problems are highlighting -- in different ways, in different places -- the need for more kinds of plants in spaces large and small.

Some people are experimenting with more "eco-friendly" lawns, seed mixes you can buy with native grasses that aren't as thirsty or finicky. Others are mowing less and tolerating old foes like dandelions and clover. Still others are trying to replace lawns, entirely or bit by bit, with garden beds including pollinator-friendly and edible plants.

It all leads to a more relaxed, wilder-looking yard.

"The more you can make your little piece that you're a steward of go with nature's flow, the better off everyone is," says Liu.

In states with water shortages, many homeowners long ago swapped out turf grass for less-thirsty options, including succulents and gravel.

Elsewhere, the pandemic has speeded the trend away from lawns. Gardening exploded as a hobby, and many non-gardeners spent more time at home, paying more attention to the natural world around them.

Municipalities across the country are handing out lawn signs with "healthy yard" bragging rights to homeowners who forgo lawn chemicals or mow less often. Many towns are slapping regulations on common tools like gas-powered leaf blowers and mowers, mostly because of noise.

"For people interested in gardening, a lot have come to the realization it can't just be ornamental anymore. It has to serve some other purpose, whether food, habitat ... pack in as many uses as you can," says Alicia Holloway, a University of Georgia Extension agent in Barrow County. "It's a shift in thought, in aesthetics."

Monrovia, a major grower of plants for nurseries and other outlets, has seen lots of interest in a "Garden of Abundance" trend -- a more "alive-looking" yard with a variety of plants, says company trend watcher Katie Tamony. She says it's a way of thinking about your yard "as not just being yours, but part of a more beautiful, larger world that we're trying to create."

Plants that attract pollinators were the category most sought-after in a survey of Monrovia's customers, she said.

And yet. The lawn isn't disappearing anytime soon.

Many homeowners associations still have rules about keeping yards manicured. And lawn services tend to be geared toward maintaining grassy expanses.

Andrew Bray, vice president of government relations for the National Association of Landscape Professionals, a trade group, says lawns are still the mainstream choice. People want neat outdoor spaces for relaxing, playing and entertaining.

He says his group supports the goal of making lawn care more environmentally friendly, but believes some recent ordinances, like those against gas-powered blowers and mowers, have created a "fraught political environment." He says electric alternatives to those tools aren't feasible yet for the big lawns that professionals handle.

The landscapers' trade group set up a new public platform this year, Voices for Healthy Green Spaces, to present its side of things. "Whether people want to have a large yard, plant a forest of trees in their backyard, or want a meadow and unstructured plantings," all are green options, he said.

Those concerned that grass lawns fall short in helping pollinators and other species face another problem. "A lot of people don't want bees -- there's fear of nature," says Holloway, the Georgia extension agent. "I think that's changing, but it still has a long way to go."

Replacing grass also takes patience. "One of the best parts of my job is site visits. I go to backyards that people have been working on for 20, 30 years, and it's helped me get over the mindset that everything has to be done all at once. It really takes time" to create a yard that's got plantings, rather than just lawn,

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Holloway says.

And it's hard to overcome tradition and neighborhood expectations. A lawn "looks tidy, and it's easy to keep doing what you're doing," Liu says. But "once you've established the new equilibrium, it's easier, it pays all these benefits."

Some neighbors might see a yard without a lawn "and think, there's the crazy person," he says. "But a lot of people will just think it's so cool."

NOT REAL NEWS: A look at what didn't happen this week

By The Associated Press undefined

A roundup of some of the most popular but completely untrue stories and visuals of the week. None of these are legit, even though they were shared widely on social media. The Associated Press checked them out. Here are the facts:

Posts misrepresent outdated UK guidance on COVID-19 vaccines

CLAIM: A document shows that Pfizer currently recommends against receiving its COVID-19 vaccine during pregnancy and while breastfeeding.

THE FACTS: The document was published by U.K. health officials in late 2020 upon first authorization of the shot, and the same document has since been revised in line with current recommendations that say the vaccine is safe and recommended for both groups. Social media users misrepresented the outdated regulatory document. "I'm sure it'll be all over the mainstream news that Pfizer has now declared their COVID vaccines unsafe for pregnancy and breastfeeding after the government coerced and mandated thousands of pregnant women into having one," one widely shared tweet stated. The post included a screenshot of a document that said, "pregnancy should be excluded before vaccination," and "COVID-19 mRNA Vaccine BNT162b2 should not be used during breast-feeding." The photo did not include the document title, date, where it came from or other identifying details. A review shows the information came from a 2020 version of a document called "Regulation 174 Information For UK Healthcare Professionals" that was publicly available when COVID-19 vaccines were first rolled out. Britain authorized Pfizer's shot for emergency use on Dec. 2, 2020. Regulation 174 allows for the approval of a medicine or vaccine in a public health emergency with sufficient data on safety, quality and effectiveness, according to Chofamba Sithole, a spokesperson for the U.K. Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. The document was published by the agency as early as Dec. 8, 2020, an archived version shows. The guidance was updated on Dec. 31, 2020, to offer the vaccine to females of reproductive age without the need to provide a negative pregnancy test, and to high-risk pregnant women, said Dr. Victoria Male, a lecturer in reproductive immunology at Imperial College London. That can be seen in another archived version of the document from Jan. 3, 2021. The recommendation was updated again in April 2021 to allow all pregnant women to get the COVID vaccine. The current version of the document says "animal studies do not indicate direct or indirect harmful effects with respect to pregnancy." About breastfeeding, it says, "it is unknown whether the COVID-19 mRNA Vaccine BNT162b2 is excreted in human milk." The updates were made as additional safety data and evidence became available demonstrating the vaccine's safety for such groups. "This was our assessment at the time of approval for the vaccine," Sithole wrote in an email, referencing the 2020 version of the document. "Since then new data which has come to light (both non-clinical and post-authorisation 'real world' data) supports the updated advice on vaccinating those who are pregnant and breastfeeding." Keanna Ghazvini, a spokesperson for Pfizer, declined to comment on the specific documents being shared on social media but pointed to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and World Health Organization guidance that says any of the currently authorized COVID-19 vaccines can be administered to pregnant or lactating women. The respective guidelines both state that experts believe COVID-19 vaccines are unlikely to pose a risk to pregnant women or fetuses. Sithole said U.K. data also supports international findings. "There is also no current evidence that COVID-19 vaccination while breastfeeding causes any harm to breastfed children or affects the ability to breastfeed," the

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spokesperson added.

— Associated Press writers Sophia Tulp in Atlanta and Angelo Fichera in Philadelphia contributed this report.

Bill Gates owns a lot of American farmland, but not the majority

CLAIM: Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates owns the majority of America's farmland and the investment firm BlackRock holds the majority of single family houses in the country.

THE FACTS: The billionaire tech mogul and philanthropist has amassed nearly 270,000 acres of farmland across the country, but that's still a relatively small slice of the nation's nearly 900 million total farm acres. BlackRock also does not own the majority of the country's 80 million single-family homes. As Elon Musk's bid to purchase Twitter has grabbed headlines in recent days, some prominent voices have taken to social media to claim that some other significant acquisitions by deep-pocketed individuals and corporations have largely flown under the radar. "Bill Gates is buying up the majority of American farmland and BlackRock is buying the majority of single family houses but I'm supposed to believe the biggest threat to us is Elon Musk buying Twitter?" read one representative tweet that's been liked or shared on the platform more than 250,000 times. The Microsoft co-founder is considered the largest private owner of farmland in the country with some 269,000 acres across dozens of states, according to last year's edition of the Land Report 100, an annual survey of the nation's largest landowners. But a Gates spokesperson said in a statement that the claim that he's bought the majority of the nation's farmland is false, pointing to a U.S. Department of Agriculture report from February that showed there were more than 895 million total acres of farmland in the country last year. That means Gates, whose net worth is estimated at some \$134 billion according to Forbes' annual ranking of the richest people in the country, owns less than one percent of the nation's total farmland. So while the tech mogul certainly owns a large constellation of farms, it's nowhere close to the majority nationwide. Gates, in an Ask Me Anything session on Reddit last year, said his "investment group" was behind the purchases, and suggested it was linked to seed and biofuel development. BlackRock, meanwhile, is not the owner of the majority of single family houses in the country. There are more than 85 million single-family homes in the country, and only around 15 million of those are rentals, according to the latest American Housing Survey by the Census Bureau. Of those rentals, less than a third are owned by non-individual investors, according to a 2022 report by Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies. In emails, BlackRock spokesman Christopher Beattie told The Associated Press that the firm primarily invests in retail, office buildings, hotels and apartment complexes, rather than single-family homes, but he declined to provide a breakdown. The company also posted on Twitter to reject the false narrative. "We've never been one of the big institutional buyers of single family homes," BlackRock said in response to one tweet. The firm is a shareholder in Dallas-based Invitation Homes, which owns nearly 80,000 single-family rentals nationwide. That makes Invitation Homes the largest operator of single-family rental homes in the country, but still represents a tiny fraction of all such homes. BlackRock also suggested it was being confused for the similarly-named investment management firm Blackstone, which until recently owned Invitation Homes. Adding to the confusion, Blackstone was once a major investor in BlackRock, but sold off its stake in the 1990s.

— Associated Press writer Philip Marcelo in Boston contributed this report.

Video shows tanks being moved for military exercise in Finland

CLAIM: Video shows Finland moving military equipment toward its eastern border with Russia.

THE FACTS: The video shows a train in Finland transporting tanks from the city of Tampere to the village of Niinisalo for a two-week military exercise called "Arrow 22," the Finnish Army confirmed to The Associated Press. Multiple social media users on Wednesday shared the video of tanks being moved by rail, incorrectly stating that the video showed Finland shifting the equipment closer to the Russian border. The two countries share a border that stretches about 830 miles (1,336 kilometers.) "Media reports that Finland has begun an active transfer of equipment to the borders with Russia," a Facebook user sharing

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the video falsely stated. The video circulated widely on Twitter, Facebook and Telegram with the false information. But the train was on its way to Niinisalo, which is in the opposite direction from Russia. A geolocation search confirms that the video was filmed in Tampere. "I can confirm that the video is really about tanks being moved to the exercise Arrow," Eriikka Mannila, chief of public affairs with the Finnish Army confirmed in an email. More than 3,000 people will be part of the biannual military exercise that runs from May 2 to May 13. Visiting forces from the U.K., Latvia, Estonia and the U.S. will also participate. Col. Rainer Kuosmanen, commander of the country's Armoured Brigade, also shared photos of the tanks on Twitter on May 2. "A video has been circulating online claiming to show tanks being moved to Finland's borders. This is not true," Finnish Defense Forces tweeted on Wednesday. "The tanks were being moved to the army mechanised exercise Arrow 22. The exercise takes place in Niinisalo and Säkylä." Russia's attack on Ukraine led both Finland and Sweden to send assault rifles and anti-tank weapons to Kyiv, breaking their policy of not providing arms to countries at war, the AP has reported.

— Associated Press writer Arijeta Lajka in New York contributed this report.

Hong Kong protest video is from 2019, not 2022

CLAIM: Video shows people in Hong Kong "rebellious against the COVID police state by cutting down and destroying security cameras."

THE FACTS: Despite suggestions that the video is current, it shows protesters, some holding umbrellas, downing a "smart lamppost" in August 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic. "Hong Kong: people are cutting down facial recognition towers," a widely shared tweet of the video reads. Another tweet sharing the video claims: "Hong Kong is rebellious against the COVID police state by cutting down and destroying security cameras." Footage of the same events can be seen in 2019 social media posts and in a still image captured by The Associated Press on Aug. 24, 2019. As the AP reported that day, protesters took to the streets to demand the removal of the lampposts over worries that they could contain high-tech cameras and facial recognition software used for surveillance by Chinese authorities. The same video was misrepresented in 2020 posts that claimed protesters were tearing down a 5G pole and falsely implied that 5G was responsible for the coronavirus. It was filmed near a large shopping mall in Hong Kong called MegaBox. In Hong Kong, the rising costs of China's strict "zero COVID" strategy have sparked a backlash, the AP has reported. Hong Kong reopened beaches and pools and relaxed other pandemic restrictions on Thursday.

Asian Games in China postponed because of spread of COVID-19

By STEPHEN WADE AP Sports Writer

Less than three months after Beijing hosted the Winter Olympics and Paralympics, the Olympic Council of Asia said Friday that this year's Asian Games in China are being postponed because of concerns about the spreading omicron variant of COVID-19 in the country.

The OCA said it had not picked new dates but said they would be announced "in the near future" after talks with local organizers and the Chinese Olympic Committee.

The OCA statement said local organizers were "very well prepared to deliver the games on time despite the global challenges. However, the decision was taken by all the stakeholders after carefully considering the pandemic situation and the size of the games."

The postponement reflects a growing concern among the Chinese leadership about rapidly spreading outbreaks from Shanghai to Beijing in an important political year. The ruling Communist Party is holding a major meeting this fall and doesn't want any signs of instability, pandemic-related or not.

China is staying with a "zero-COVID" strategy of lockdowns and other restrictions despite the economic costs and the fact that many other countries around the world are loosening up and trying to live with the virus.

China's state-run television also reported the Asian Games postponement in a brief statement, but did not specify anything about rescheduling.

The Asian Games were to take place from Sept. 10-25 in the eastern city of Hangzhou and would involve

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more than 11,000 athletes — more than the typical Summer Olympics. The last edition was in 2018 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The World University Games, another major multi-sport event, have also been postponed, organizers said Friday. They were scheduled for last year but were postponed until 2022. They were to take place this year from June 26-July 7 in the western city of Chengdu. About 6,000 athletes were believed to be involved.

The Switzerland-based International University Sports Federation, which runs the games, said they would be held in 2023 but gave no date or details.

“Continued uncertainty over conditions has made rescheduling the sensible choice,” FISU president Leonz Eder said in a statement.

Both events were expected to take place using the “closed-loop” system that was in place for the Beijing Olympics and Paralympics. It kept athletes and media isolated from the general population of Beijing and required daily tests and frequent temperature checks for everyone involved.

The Winter Olympics were a relatively small event with only 2,900 athletes. The Winter Paralympics had about 700.

The spread of the omicron variant in Shanghai and Beijing seems to have made holding both events impossible, even though just a few weeks ago organizers said both events would go ahead. Much of Shanghai — a finance, manufacturing and shipping hub — has been locked down, disrupting people’s lives and dealing a blow to the economy.

The OCA also announced that the Asian Youth Games, which were scheduled for Dec. 20-28 in Shantou, China, would be canceled. The youth games, which had already been postponed once, will next be held in 2025 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Two international track meets scheduled to be held in China this year were also called off.

The Diamond League meets in Shanghai and Shenzhen were taken off the calendar “due to travel restrictions and strict quarantine requirements currently in place for entry into China,” organizers said in a statement.

Organizers said a substitute event will be held in Chorzow, Poland, on Aug. 6.

The strict “zero-COVID” policy has been closely identified with President Xi Jinping, the head of the ruling Communist Party, and was strongly reaffirmed at a meeting of the party’s all-powerful Politburo Standing Committee on Thursday.

“Relaxation will undoubtedly lead to massive numbers of infections, critical cases and deaths, seriously impacting economic and social development and people’s lives and health,” the the official Xinhua News Agency said in its summary of the meeting’s conclusions.

The meeting “stressed the importance of unswervingly adhering to the dynamic zero-COVID policy and resolutely fighting any attempts to distort, question or dismiss China’s anti-COVID policy.”

China on Friday reported a total of 4,628 new COVID-19 cases, the vast majority of them asymptomatic and detected in Shanghai, China’s largest city which lies about 177 kilometers (110 miles) east of Hangzhou.

Today in History: May 7, Germany’s surrender

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, May 7, the 127th day of 2022. There are 238 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On May 7, 1945, Germany signed an unconditional surrender at Allied headquarters in Rheims (rams), France, ending its role in World War II.

On this date:

In 1889, the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore opened its doors.

In 1915, a German U-boat torpedoed and sank the British liner RMS Lusitania off the southern coast of Ireland, killing 1,198 people, including 128 Americans, out of the nearly 2,000 on board.

In 1928, the minimum voting age for British women was lowered from 30 to 21 — the same age as men.

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In 1939, Germany and Italy announced a military and political alliance known as the Rome-Berlin Axis.
In 1941, Glenn Miller and His Orchestra recorded "Chattanooga Choo Choo" for RCA Victor.
In 1954, the 55-day Battle of Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam ended with Vietnamese insurgents overrunning French forces.

In 1963, the United States launched the Telstar 2 communications satellite.

In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford formally declared an end to the "Vietnam era." In Ho Chi Minh City — formerly Saigon — the Viet Cong celebrated its takeover.

In 1977, Seattle Slew won the Kentucky Derby, the first of his Triple Crown victories.

In 2010, a BP-chartered vessel lowered a 100-ton concrete-and-steel vault onto the ruptured Deepwater Horizon well in an unprecedented, and ultimately unsuccessful, attempt to stop most of the gushing crude fouling the sea.

In 2019, two students opened fire inside a charter school in a Denver suburb not far from Columbine High School, killing a fellow student, 18-year-old Kendrick Castillo, who authorities said had charged at the shooters to protect classmates. (Both attackers would be sentenced to life in prison; one who was 16 at the time of the shooting could be eligible for parole after about 20 years.)

In 2020, Georgia authorities arrested a white father and son and charged them with murder in the February shooting death of Ahmaud Arbery, a Black man they had pursued in a truck after spotting him running in their neighborhood near the port city of Brunswick. (The two men and a third white man would be convicted of murder in state court, and hate crimes in federal court.)

Ten years ago: Vladimir Putin took the oath of office as Russia's president for the next six years in a brief but regal Kremlin ceremony. Education Secretary Arne Duncan broke ranks with the White House, stating his unequivocal support for same-sex marriage a day after Vice President Joe Biden said on NBC that he was "absolutely comfortable" with gay couples marrying. (Two days later, President Barack Obama declared his support for same-sex marriage, a position he had previously stopped short of embracing.)

Five years ago: French voters elected independent centrist Emmanuel Macron, 39, as the country's youngest president, delivering a resounding victory to the pro-European former investment banker and dashing the populist dream of far-right rival Marine Le Pen.

One year ago: A federal grand jury indicted the four former Minneapolis police officers involved in George Floyd's arrest and death, accusing them of willfully violating the constitutional rights of the Black man as he was restrained face-down on the pavement, gasping for air. (Derek Chauvin, who was convicted of murder in state court, pleaded guilty in the federal case; the three others were convicted in February 2022 and also await sentencing.) Palestinian worshippers clashed with Israeli police at the famed Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem's Old City as weeks-long tensions between Israel and the Palestinians soared; as many as 53 people were injured in the violence. State officials announced that California's population had declined in 2020 for the first time since they began measuring it. Tawny Kitaen, who appeared in rock music videos during the heyday of MTV and starred opposite Tom Hanks in the 1984 comedy "Bachelor Party," died at her California home at 59.

Today's Birthdays: R&B singer Thelma Houston is 79. Actor Robin Strasser is 77. Singer-songwriter Bill Danoff is 76. Rock musician Bill Kreutzmann (Grateful Dead) is 76. Former Utah Gov. Gary Herbert is 75. Rock musician Prairie Prince is 72. Movie writer-director Amy Heckerling is 70. Actor Michael E. Knight is 63. Rock musician Phil Campbell (Motorhead) is 61. Rock singer-musician Chris O'Connor (Primitive Radio Gods) is 57. Actor Traci Lords is 54. Actor Morocco Omari is 52. Singer Eagle-Eye Cherry is 51. Actor Breckin Meyer is 48. Rock musician Matt Helders (Arctic Monkeys) is 36. Actor-comedian Aidy Bryant is 35. Actor Taylor Abrahamse is 31. Actor Alexander Ludwig is 30. Actor Dylan Gelula is 28.