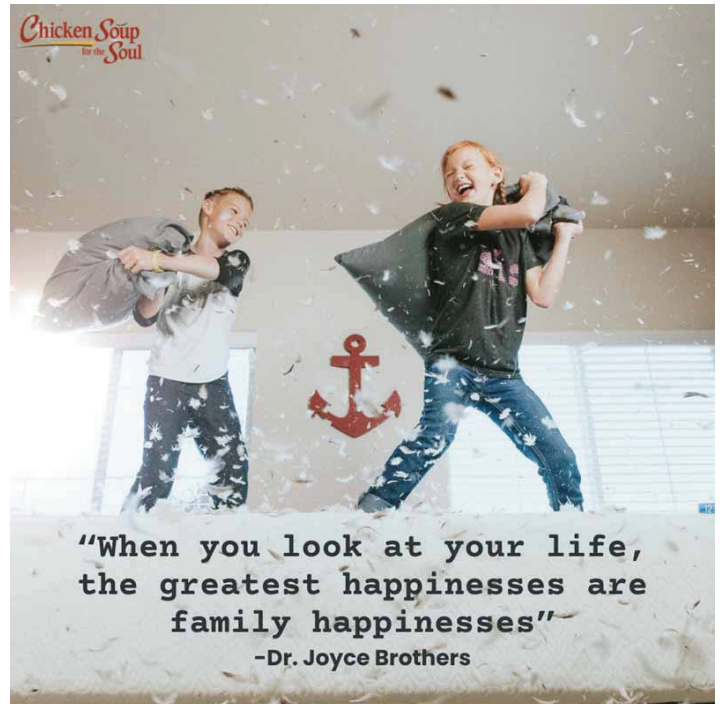


# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 1 of 68

## 1- Upcoming Events

- 1- Ken's Food Fair Help Wanted
- 2- Three Groton relay teams take first at NEC Meet
- 3- Tornado wrecks havoc in Castlewood
- 4- Social Security Delivers the Most Popular Baby Names in South Dakota for 2021
- 5- New Leanin' Tree Graduation Cards at the GDI
- 6- Weber Landscaping Ad
- 6- The Pantry ad
- 7- Jumbo Graduation Cards
- 8- Graduation Balloons
- 9- Weather Pages
- 14- Daily Devotional
- 15- 2022 Community Events
- 16- Subscription Form
- 17- News from the Associated Press



## **Friday, May 13**

Senior Menu: BBQ beef sandwich, potato salad, carrots and peas, seasonal fresh fruit.

School Breakfast: Waffles.

School Lunch: Hot dogs, chips.

**Cancelled:** Elementary Track and Field Day

7 p.m.: All School Play at GHS Gym

## **Saturday, May 14**

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

## **Sunday, May 15**

2 p.m.: GHS Graduation

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 with communion, 9 a.m.; Avantara worship, 3 p.m. (Choir to help); Choir, 7 p.m.

Methodist: Communion Sunday: Conde Worship at 9 a.m., Groton worship at 11 a.m.

St. John's: Bible Study, 8 a.m.; Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Zion worship, 11 a.m.

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

## **Monday, May 16**

Senior Menu: Chicken Alfredo, broccoli, spinach salad, mandarin oranges, bread stick.

School Breakfast: Oatmeal with toppings.

School Lunch: Mac and cheese, cooked carrots.

6:30 a.m.: Emmanuel Bible Study

10 a.m.: NEC GIRLS Golf at Moccasin Creek CC

10 a.m.: JH Track Meet at Hamlin

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

**Ken's** **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.**

## **OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton**

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

© 2022 Groton Daily Independent

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 2 of 68

## Three Groton relay teams take first at NEC Meet

The boys 400m Relay team and the girls 1600m Relay Team and 3200m Relay Team were Northeast Conference Champions at the track meet held Thursday in Britton. Runner-up honors went to Jackson Cogley in the high jump, Aspen Johnson in the triple jump and the girls sprint medley relay team.

### Boy's Division

**Team Scores:** 1. Milbank 198, 2. Webster Area 115, 3. Aberdeen Roncalli 79, 4. Hamlin 77, 5. Groton Area 71, 6. Deuel 58, 7. Clark/Willow Lake 55.5, 8. Britton-Hecla 35.5, 9. Sisseton 26, 10. Redfield 22, 11. Tiospa Zina 1

**100 Meters:** 3. Andrew Marzahn, 11.74

**100 Meters Varsity - Prelims** 2. Andrew Marzahn, 11.63; 17. Korbin Kucker, 12.49; 23. Jayden Zak, 12.91

**200 Meters:** 5. Andrew Marzahn, 23.86; 10. Ryder Johnson, 25.22; 13. Korbin Kucker, 25.80

**400 Meters:** 9. Ryder Johnson, 58.37; 11. Christian Ehresmann, 1:00.19; 15. Tate Larson, 1:02.11

**800 Meters:** 5. Jacob Lewandowski, 2:20.44; 8. Tristan McGannon, 2:27.99; 9. Braxton Imrie, 2:41.65

**1600 Meters:** 12. Tristan McGannon, 5:26.27; 16. Jayden Schwan, 5:54.22; 17. Braxton Imrie, 6:17.39

**110m Hurdles - 39":** 7. Caden McInerney, 20.86

**110m Hurdles - 39" Prelims:** 7. Caden McInerney, 20.90

**300m Hurdles - 36":** 8. Colby Dunker, 48.78; 10. Caden McInerney, 50.85

**4x100 Relay:** 1. (Andrew Marzahn, Keegan Tracy, Kaden Kurtz, Teylor Diegel) 45.86

**4x200 Relay:** 8. (Ryder Johnson, Lane Tietz, Korbin Kucker, Colby Dunker), 1:41.61

**4x400 Relay:** 3. Kaden Kurtz, Cole Simon, Keegan Tracy, Teylor Diegel), 3:43.21

**4x800 Relay:** 3. Cole Simon, Keegan Tracy, Lane Tietz, Jacob Lewandowski), 9:07.84

**SMR 200-200-400-800m - [2-2-4-8]:** 3. Kaden Kurtz, Teylor Diegel, Andrew Marzahn, Cole Simon, 3:58.61

**Shot Put - 12lb:** 5. Holden Sippel, 40-10.50; 8. Caleb Hanten, 39-02.25; 10. Logan Ringgenberg, 36-08.25

**Discus - 1.6kg:** 6. Caleb Hanten, 115-11; 7. Holden Sippel, 115-05; 8. Logan Ringgenberg, 112-10

**High Jump:** 2. Jackson Cogley, 5-09.00

**Long Jump:** 7. Jacob Zak, 18-01.75; 13. Ryder Johnson, 16-10.00; 14. Tate Larson, 16-08.50

**Triple Jump:** 6. Jackson Cogley, 37-03.50; 9. Jacob Zak, 36-00.25; 15. Tristan McGannon, 31-09.00

### Girl's Division

**Team Scores:** 1. Milbank 178.5, 2. Aberdeen Roncalli 157, 3. Groton Area 70.5, 4. Webster Area 68, 5. Clark/Willow Lake 56, 6. Hamlin 54, 7. Redfield 52, 8. Deuel 41, 9. Britton-Hecla 28, 10. Sisseton 18

**100 Meters Varsity - Prelims:** 14. Karsyn Jangula, 14.60; 17. Brooklyn Hansen, 14.97; 18. Kayla Lehr, 15.11

**200 Meters:** 7. Rylee Dunker, 28.84; 14. Karsyn Jangula, 30.08; 16. Brooklyn Hansen, 30.51

**400 Meters:** 16. Sydney Leicht, 1:17.53

**800 Meters:** 5. Taryn Traphagen, 2:51.68

**100m Hurdles - 33":** 5. Talli Wright, 18.94

**100m Hurdles - 33" Varsity - Prelims:** 6. Talli Wright, 19.13

**300m Hurdles - 30":** 11. Talli Wright, 1:01.21

**4x100 Relay:** 7. (Kayla Lehr, Karsyn Jangula, Kella Tracy, Brooklyn Hansen), 57.37

**4x200 Relay:** 8. (Jerica Locke, Kennedy Hansen, Rylee Dunker, Laila Roberts), 2:02.27

**4x400 Relay:** 1. (Jerica Locke, Kennedy Hansen, Kella Tracy, Laila Roberts), 4:24.42

**4x800 Relay:** 1. (Kella Tracy, Faith Traphagen, Taryn Traphagen, Rylee Dunker, 10:36.27

**SMR 200-200-400-800m - [2-2-4-8]:** 2. (Laila Roberts, Kennedy Hansen, Jerica Locke, Faith Traphagen), 4:38.83

**Shot Put - 4kg:** 5. Maddie Bjerke, 30-09.50 SR; 7. Emma Kutter, 30-03.50; 9. Faith Fliehs, 27-11.00

**Discus - 1kg:** 6. Maddie Bjerke, 90-06; 19. Faith Fliehs, 66-01; 26. Emma Kutter, 46-06

**High Jump:** 3. Emerlee Jones, 4-05.00; 9. Anna Fjeldheim, 4-03.00

**Long Jump:** 3. Aspen Johnson, 15-04.50; 8. Anna Fjeldheim, 13-06.00

**Triple Jump:** 2. Aspen Johnson, 32-11.50; 10. Anna Fjeldheim, 27-07.25; 14. Emerlee Jones, 26-05.50

## Tornado wrecks havoc in Castlewood



**A tornado swept through Castlewood causing major damage and destruction in the South Dakota city.** (Photo from Chris Schmidt video posted on Facebook)



I've spent 31 years here in this school building and am simply heartbroken! I had a student lose her entire house while she was in the basement. One of my longtime coworkers who retired last year lost her house. The devastation is simply awful! Thank goodness it happened two hours AFTER school got out! Still in shock!

- Nancy Appl's comments and photos posted on Facebook



## Social Security Delivers the Most Popular Baby Names in South Dakota for 2021

The Social Security Administration today announced the most popular baby names in South Dakota for 2021. Henry and Evelyn topped the list.

The top five boys and girls names for 2021 in South Dakota were:

Boys:

- 1) Henry
- 2) Oliver
- 3) Theodore
- 4) Hudson
- 5) Asher

Girls:

- 1) Evelyn
- 2) Emma
- 3) Charlotte
- 4) Amelia
- 5) Ava

The agency announced last week that Olivia and Liam were the most popular baby names in the U.S. How does South Dakota compare to the rest of the country? Check out Social Security's website -- [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)-- to see the top national baby names for 2021.

Acting Commissioner Kilolo Kijakazi encourages everyone to enjoy the baby names list and, while online, create a my Social Security account at [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount). my Social Security, born ten years ago this month, is a personalized online account that people can use beginning in their working years and continuing while receiving Social Security benefits.

Over the decade, more than 69 million people have signed up and benefited from the many secure and convenient self-service options. People who set up their my Social Security account have access to additional personalized services. They can request a replacement Social Security card online if they meet certain requirements. If they already receive Social Security benefits, they can start or change direct deposit online, request a replacement SSA-1099, and if they need proof of their benefits, they can print or download a current Benefit Verification Letter from their account.

People not yet receiving benefits can use their online account to get a personalized Social Security Statement, which provides their earnings information as well as estimates of their future benefits. The portal also includes a retirement estimator and links to information about other online services, such as applications for retirement, disability, and Medicare benefits.

The agency began compiling the baby name list in 1997, with names dating back to 1880. At the time of a child's birth, parents supply the name to the agency when applying for a child's Social Security card, thus making Social Security America's source for the most popular baby names.

In addition to each state's top baby names (and names for U.S. territories), Social Security's website has a list of the 1,000 most popular boys and girls names for 2021.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 5 of 68



## New Leanin' Tree Graduation Cards at the GDI

We have a new selection of Leanin' Tree graduation cards at the Groton Daily Independent office. And don't forget, we also have the Jumbo cards and a nice selection of balloons.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 6 of 68

*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**

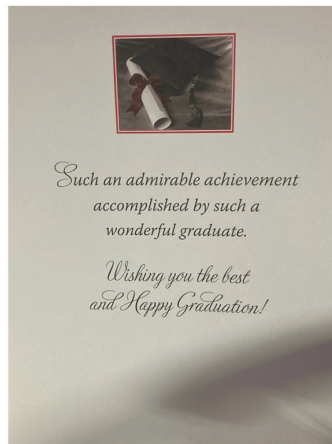
# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 7 of 68

## Jumbo Graduation Cards

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

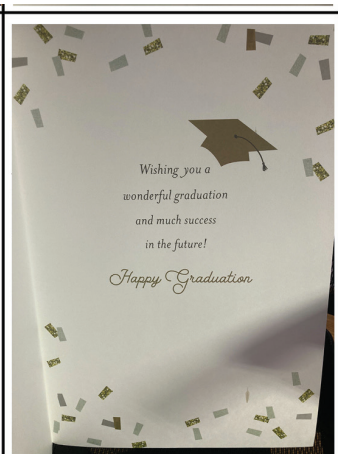
Can now be ordered on-line at [397news.com](http://397news.com) - Link on Black Bar  
Or Call/Text Paul at 605-397-7460 or Tina at 605-397-7285  
to reserve your card(s)



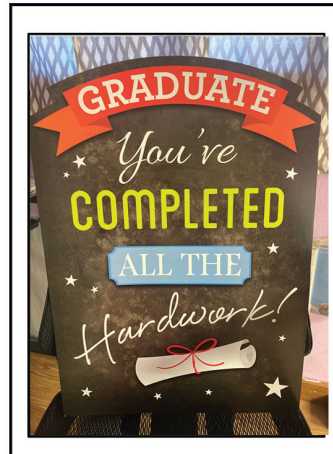
**50-9903-C**  
**\$7.99**



**50-9666-C**  
**\$7.99**



**50-10977JM-C**  
**\$7.99**



**50-9360-C**  
**\$7.99**

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 8 of 68



- NEWS
- LIVE
- FIT
- CLEAN
- RENT

15 N Main St., Groton  
PO Box 34, Groton, SD  
57445-0034

www.397news.com  
Call/Text Paul: 605/397-7460  
Call/Text Tina: 605/397-7285  
paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Scan Code Below for  
More Details



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"



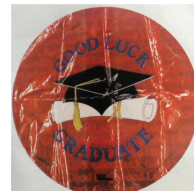
#14 - \$5



#15 - \$5



#16 - \$5



#17 - \$5



#18 - \$5



#19 - \$5



#20 - \$5

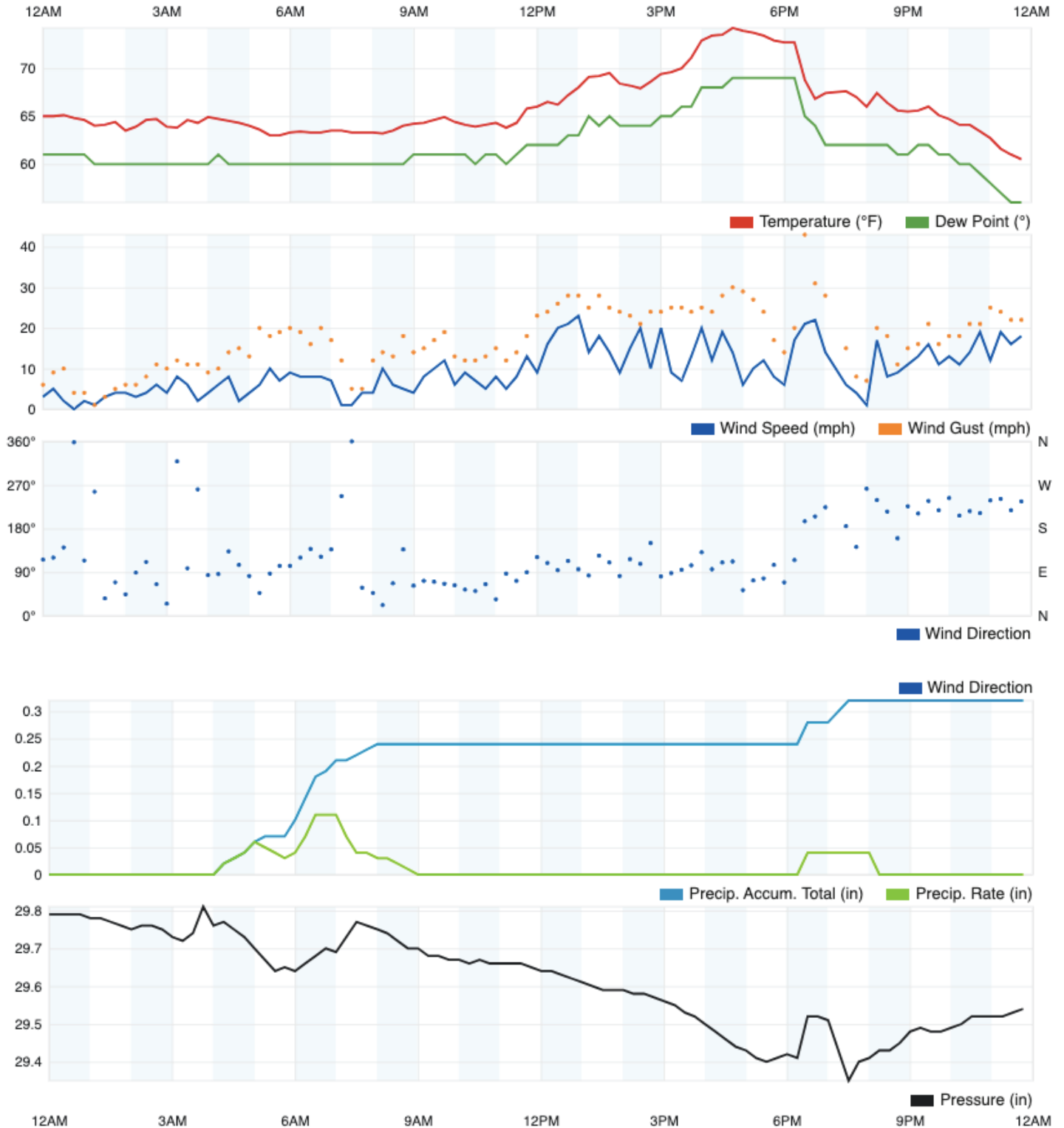
We have many other balloons available as well. We now offer locker pickup in the laundromat so you can pick up your order ANY TIME once the order is completed!



# Groton Daily Independent

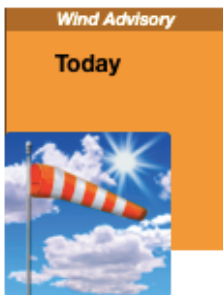
Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 9 of 68

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



# Broton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 10 of 68



Mostly Sunny and Breezy

High: 70 °F



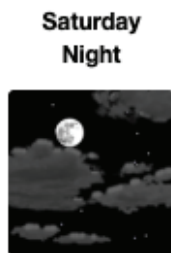
Mostly Clear and Breezy then Partly Cloudy

Low: 46 °F



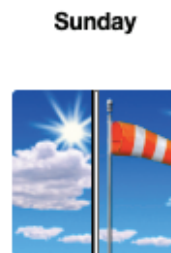
Mostly Sunny then Sunny and Breezy

High: 66 °F



Partly Cloudy

Low: 46 °F



Mostly Sunny then Sunny and Breezy

High: 70 °F

## Friday



**Strong to Breezy winds**  
Isolated Showers and Thunderstorms  
over central South Dakota

**HIGHS: around 70°**

## Saturday



Breezy over northern portions of SD

**HIGHS: 60s**

National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD



[weather.gov/abr](http://weather.gov/abr)

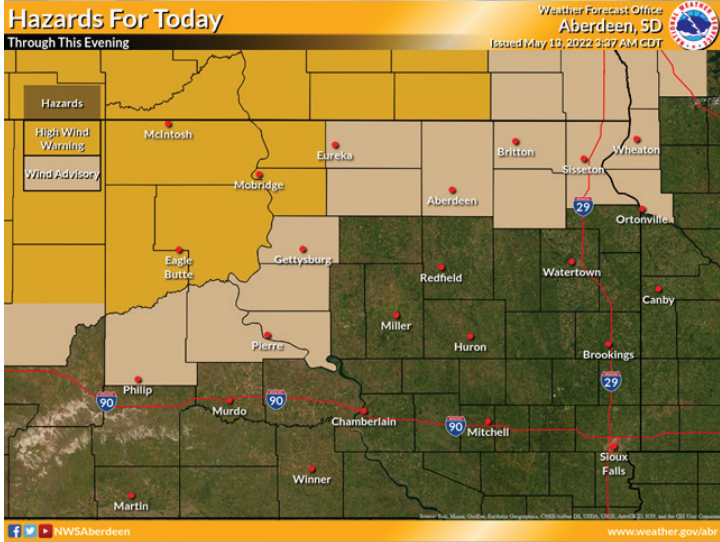
5/12/2022 10:58 PM

Other than isolated showers and thunderstorms over mainly central South Dakota, dry weather should continue through the day Monday. Expect highs around 70 degrees on Friday, and in the 60s Saturday.

# Broton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 11 of 68

## Windy Conditions Today and This Evening



	Maximum Wind Gust Forecast												Maximum			
	5/13 Fri						5/14 Sat									
	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	
Aberdeen	38	41	43	45	45	35	18	17	15	24	32	32	32	28	17	45
Britton	31	41	44	45	44	36	21	16	14	21	31	35	35	30	20	45
Eagle Butte	47	45	56	60	49	36	25	23	25	30	35	35	33	28	15	60
Eureka	48	51	52	58	53	43	21	18	21	28	36	38	37	30	17	58
Gettysburg	41	41	46	48	46	33	20	17	18	26	36	38	37	29	17	48
Kennebec	24	29	36	37	37	30	16	17	16	21	25	28	29	24	14	37
McIntosh	60	58	56	58	59	46	26	24	26	33	39	41	41	35	22	60
Milbank	30	32	32	35	35	26	14	10	13	15	21	25	25	16		35
Miller	31	32	38	41	39	28	15	13	14	21	28	31	32	24	14	41
Mobridge	45	43	45	47	46	37	20	18	21	24	31	33	33	29	17	47
Murdo	33	33	39	40	38	31	20	20	18	25	29	30	30	24	14	40
Pierre	30	32	39	43	38	29	15	13	14	21	26	30	31	28	14	43
Redfield	29	33	39	44	41	29	15	13	13	22	29	33	32	26	14	44
Sisseton	39	36	39	41	40	30	17	14	15	18	28	30	30	25	18	41
Watertown	29	33	35	37	37	29	15	14	14	17	25	29	30	25	16	37
Webster	31	38	41	44	44	35	18	17	15	22	30	36	36	29	20	44
Wheaton	25	31	35	36	35	26	15	13	13	15	22	26	25	23	15	36

High Wind Warnings and Wind Advisories are in effect through this evening for parts of our coverage area. Breezy to windy conditions expected across the area for today through this evening as the low pressure system continues to push north. Wind gusts up to 60 mph possible, mainly in our northwestern counties. Winds will decrease overnight with and increase through the day on Saturday.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 12 of 68

## Today in Weather History

May 13, 2005: Runoff from heavy rain resulted in minor flooding along the White River from south of Belvidere to Oacoma, affecting mainly agricultural land along the river. The river rose over its banks and flooded U.S. Highway 83 south of Murdo for a short time. No property damage was reported.

1930 - A man was killed when caught in an open field during a hailstorm northwest of Lubbock TX. It was the first, and perhaps the only, authentic death by hail in U.S. weather records. (David Ludlum)

1980: An F3 tornado ripped directly through the center of Kalamazoo, Michigan, killing five people, injuring 79, leaving 1,200 homeless and causing \$50 million in damage. The tornado passed directly over the American Bank, where a barograph reported a pressure drop of 0.59 inches.

1981 - A tornado 450 yards in width destroyed ninety percent of Emberson TX. People did not see a tornado, but rather a wall of debris. Homes were leveled, a man in a bathtub was hurled a quarter of a mile, and a 1500 pound recreational vehicle was hurled 500 yards. Miraculously no deaths occurred in the tornado. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A cold front brought an end to the early season warm spell in the north central U.S., but not before the temperature at Sioux City IA soared to a record warm 95 degrees. Strong southwesterly winds ahead of the cold front gusted to 52 mph at Marais MI. Evening thunderstorms produced golf ball size hail at Rockford MN, and wind gusts to 75 mph at Belmond IA. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Strong winds along a cold front ushering cold air into the northwestern U.S. gusted to 69 mph at Myton UT. Temperatures warmed into the 80s ahead of the cold front, as far north as Montana. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing along a warm front produced severe weather in the Southern Plains Region during the afternoon and night. A thunderstorm at Killeen TX produced wind gusts to 95 mph damaging 200 helicopters at Fort Hood causing nearly 500 million dollars damage. Another thunderstorm produced softball size hail at Hodges TX. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front spawned ten tornadoes from eastern Wyoming to northern Kansas, including seven in western Nebraska. Thunderstorms forming ahead of a cold front in the eastern U.S. spawned five tornadoes from northeastern North Carolina to southern Pennsylvania. Thunderstorms over southeast Louisiana deluged the New Orleans area with four to eight inches of rain between 7 AM and Noon. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1995: This outbreak produced tornadoes extending from the Mississippi River near Burlington, Iowa, to the west of Bloomington, Illinois. Two violent tornadoes, each ranked at F4 intensity, were reported. The first tornado traveled 60 miles from near Fort Madison, Iowa, to the southeast of Galesburg, Illinois producing over \$10 million damage. The town of Raritan, Illinois was hit the hardest. The second violent tornado traveled 7 miles across Fulton County from Ipava to Lewistown, Illinois producing \$6 million damage. Another strong tornado took a 25-mile path across parts of Fulton, Mason, and Tazewell Counties. The storms also produced softball-size hail south and northwest of Macomb in Illinois. Five men were injured in Lawrence County, Indiana when lightning struck one of them and traveled to the other four. There were 184 reports of severe weather, including over three dozen tornadoes.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 13 of 68

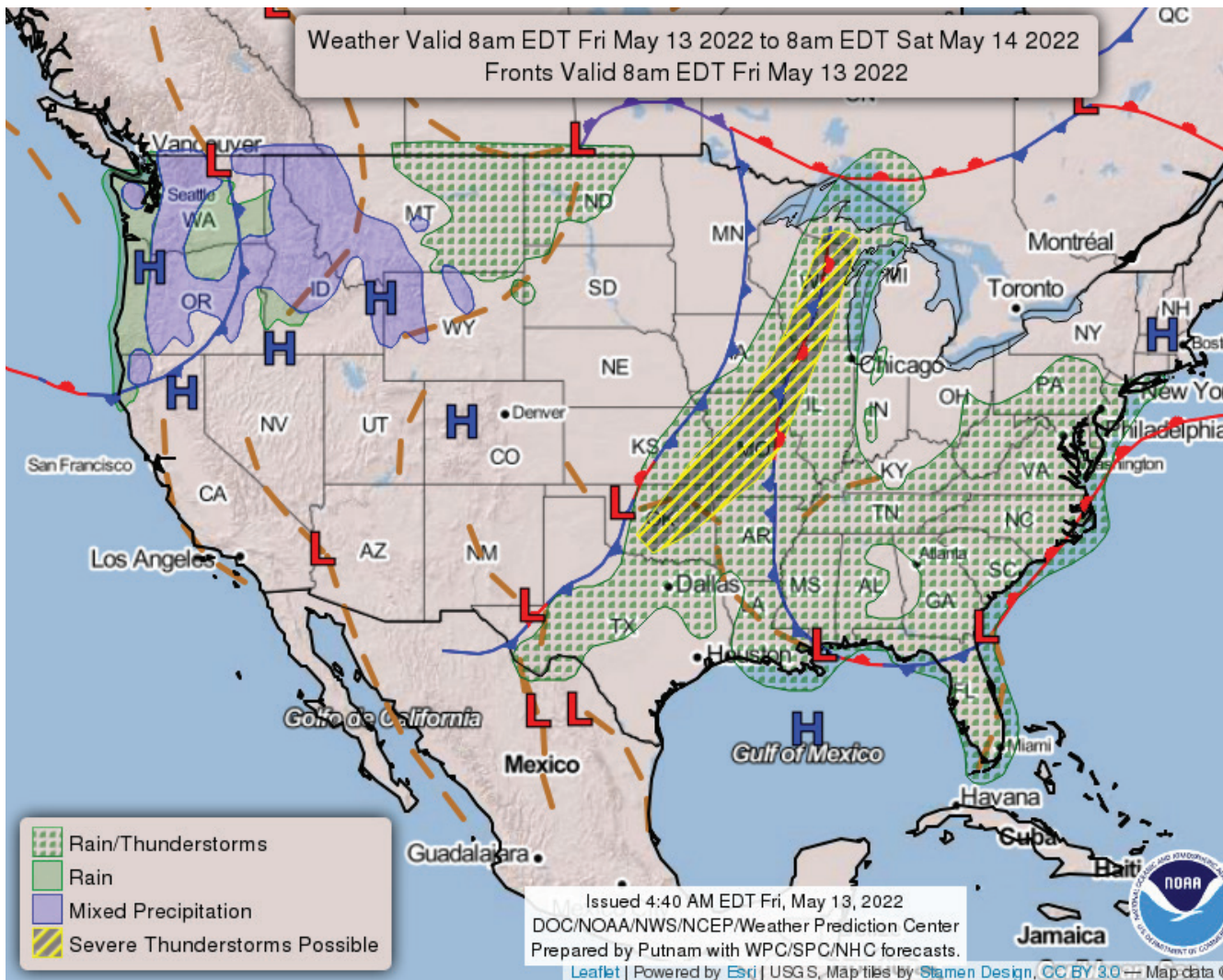
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 74 °F at 4:40 PM**  
**Low Temp: 60 °F at 11:52 PM**  
**Wind: 43 mph at 6:24 PM**  
**Precip: 0.32**

Day length: 14 hours, 53 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 97 in 1932  
Record Low: 24 in 1899  
Average High: 69°F  
Average Low: 43°F  
Average Precip in May.: 1.43  
Precip to date in May.: 2.40  
Average Precip to date: 5.40  
Precip Year to Date: 8.90  
Sunset Tonight: 8:55:21 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:00:57 AM



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 14 of 68



## WHAT'S WRONG WITH BEING HAPPY?

A friend sitting next to me in church one Sunday commented, "Larry, if you turn around and look at the people here this morning, it looks as if they all have stomach aches, toothaches, facing a prison term or are here under duress."

I didn't have to turn around and look. I noticed it when I walked into the sanctuary. Someone once said to me that "Of all the groups of people in the world, Christians seem to be the most unhappy. They seem to be joyless and miserable. If being a Christian is so terrible, why don't they give up their faith and try something else?"

Some Christians are like a person with a headache: They don't want relief, but it hurts to keep it. Can we expect others to want to become Christians if we appear to be miserable and hopeless? Things are bad without Christ. Why invite Him into our lives if things will only get worse?

"Blessed - or happy - are the people whose God is the Lord." To experience the fullness that the Lord has to give us requires that we surrender our lives to Him and become dependent on Him for everything. Some who profess to be people of God do not experience the blessings of God - or are not happy in their Christian faith - because they try to live the "half-life." Half a "conversion" is like half a lifeboat: it won't save you!

Happiness, or God's best blessings, will not come to the half-hearted Christian. Caleb had the secret: "I wholly followed the Lord." What a difference it will make. Try it!

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to "give it up" and surrender all that we are and all that we have to You and enjoy life! Help us to show our joy in You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Blessed is the people of whom this is true; blessed is the people whose God is the Lord. Psalm 144:15b

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 15 of 68

## 2022 Community Events

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

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 16 of 68

## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

### Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

- Black & White ..... \$48.99/year
- Colored ..... \$79.88/year
- Colored ..... \$42.60/6 months
- E-Weekly\* ..... \$31.95/year

\* The E-Weekly is a PDF file emailed to you each week. It does not grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to [paperpaul@grotonsd.net](mailto:paperpaul@grotonsd.net)

## Groton Daily Independent

[www.397news.com](http://www.397news.com)

### Subscription Form

This option will grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

- 1 Month ..... \$15.98
- 3 Months ..... \$26.63
- 6 Months ..... \$31.95
- 9 Months ..... \$42.60
- 12 Months ..... \$53.25

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

The following will be used for your log-in information.

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Password \_\_\_\_\_

Pay with Paypal. Type the following into your browser window:

[paypal.me/paperpaul](https://paypal.me/paperpaul)





## News from the Associated Press

### Storm chasers face host of dangers beyond severe weather

By TODD RICHMOND Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — The deaths of four storm chasers in car crashes over the last two weeks have underscored the dangers of pursuing severe weather events as more people clog back roads and highways searching for a glimpse of a lightning bolt or tornado, meteorologists and chasers say.

Martha Llanos Rodriguez of Mexico City died Wednesday when a semitrailer plowed into her vehicle from behind on Interstate 90 in southwestern Minnesota. The car's driver, Diego Campos, told the Minneapolis Star Tribune that he and Rodriguez and two other weather experts had been chasing violent weather and were hit after he stopped for downed power lines on the road.

More people are hopping into their cars and racing off after storms, jamming up roads, running stop signs and paying more attention to the sky than traffic, said Marshall Shepherd, director of the atmospheric sciences program at the University of Georgia.

"There is such a volume of chasers out there on some storms sometimes that it creates potential traffic and other hazards," Shepherd said. "Seeing storms within their natural context has scientific and broader value so I am not anti-chasing, however, there are elements that have become a little wild, wild West-ish."

Popularized in the 1996 movie "Twister," storm chasing involves pursuing severe weather events such as electrical storms and tornadoes, often in cars or on foot.

Some are researchers looking to gather data, such as verifying computer models predicting storm behavior. Some are looking to get in touch with nature. Others are photographers. And still others are just looking for a rush, said Greg Tripoli, an atmospheric and oceanic sciences professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison who taught a class on storm chasing.

"Seeing a tornado is a life-changing experience," Tripoli said. "You want to see one instead of just talking about them. It's really just one of the excitements of life. You've got to take chances and go out there and go after your passions. It's no different from rock-climbing or deep-sea diving."

The storms themselves present dangers to inexperienced chasers who get too close. They can get hit by debris, struck by lightning or worse. Tripoli said he decided to stop teaching his storm chaser class and taking students into the field in the early 1990s after university officials stopped insuring the trips.

Nature isn't the only threat. Storm chasers spend long hours on the road traveling from state to state like long-haul truckers, inviting fatigue. When they catch up to the storms, they can often keep their eyes on the skies instead of the road, sometimes with deadly consequences. Tripoli said he would warn students in his storm chaser class that the most likely way they would get hurt is in a car crash.

Three University of Oklahoma students were killed on April 30 after traveling to Kansas to chase a tornado. According to the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, the students' car hydroplaned on the interstate in Tonkawa, about 85 miles (137 kilometers) north of Oklahoma City. They slid off and back onto the interstate before a semitrailer hit them.

The University of Oklahoma has a policy stating that anyone who chases storms does so at their own risk and that storm chasing isn't part of the school's meteorology curriculum.

The mother of one of the students, 19-year-old Gavin Short of Grayslake, Illinois, told WMAQ-TV that her son loved to chase storms.

"He loved it, and we were so happy for him," Beth Short said. "And it just, this is just the worst nightmare for us and two other sets of parents."

Chaser traffic jams are becoming more common, said Kelton Halbert, a University of Wisconsin atmospheric and oceanic sciences doctoral student. He said he's been chasing storms since he was 16 because he wants to feel closer to nature's beauty and verify his forecast modeling, mostly by taking video of storms' behavior.

"Unless you're with one of these research institutions, storm chasers don't have the ability to collect a

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 18 of 68

lot of hard data," he said. "For most ... it's the beauty, it's the photography and then obviously the thrill seekers and adrenaline seekers. You can have people tailgating you, people in the middle of the road. If you're in Texas, Oklahoma or Kansas on a high-risk day, yeah, you can see hundreds of them. Given the recent couple weeks, I've definitely felt more apprehensive. It brings back to the forefront that every time you do this you're taking a risk."

Wednesday's storm in the Upper Midwest left tens of thousands of homes and businesses without power into Thursday. More potentially severe weather was forecast into Thursday evening that could bring hail, high winds and tornadoes from the Dakotas and Minnesota into other parts of the Midwest, the Storm Prediction Center said.

## **Report: Trump officials, meat companies knew workers at risk**

By JOSH FUNK Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the meat processing industry worked closely with political appointees in the Trump administration to stave off health restrictions and keep slaughterhouses open even as the virus spread rapidly among workers, according to a congressional report released Thursday.

The report by the House's Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis said meat companies pushed to keep their plants open even though they knew workers were at high risk of catching the coronavirus. The lobbying led to health and labor officials watering down their recommendations for the industry and culminated in an executive order President Donald Trump issued in spring 2020 designating meat plants as critical infrastructure that needed to remain open.

Democratic Rep. Jim Clyburn, who leads the subcommittee, said U.S. Department of Agriculture officials and the industry prioritized production and profits over the health of workers and communities as at least 59,000 workers caught the virus and 269 died.

"The shameful conduct of corporate executives pursuing profit at any cost during a crisis and government officials eager to do their bidding regardless of resulting harm to the public must never be repeated," Clyburn said.

Former Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, who now leads the University System of Georgia, declined to comment Thursday. A spokesman for the university system said Perdue is focused on "serving the students of Georgia."

The report is based on communications among industry executives, lobbyists and USDA officials and other documents the committee received from government agencies, Tyson Foods, Smithfield Foods, JBS, Cargill, National Beef, Hormel and other companies. Those firms control 85% of the beef market and 70% of pork production nationwide.

The North American Meat Institute trade group said the report distorts the truth and ignores the steps companies took as they spent billions to retool plants and purchase protective gear for workers.

"The House Select Committee has done the nation a disservice," the trade group's President and CEO Julie Anna Potts said. "The Committee could have tried to learn what the industry did to stop the spread of COVID among meat and poultry workers, reducing positive cases associated with the industry while cases were surging across the country. Instead, the Committee uses 20/20 hindsight and cherry picks data to support a narrative that is completely unrepresentative of the early days of an unprecedented national emergency."

A major union that represents workers at the processing plants condemned the way the Trump administration helped the industry.

"We only wish that the Trump Administration cared as much about the lives of working people as it did about meat, pork and poultry products, when we wanted poultry plants to shut down for deep cleaning and to save workers' lives," said Stuart Appelbaum, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union.

The report said meat companies were slow to take measures to protect workers from the virus and

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 19 of 68

pushed to make government recommendations to require masks to be worn, install dividers between work stations and encourage social distancing in their plants optional.

But JBS spokeswoman Nikki Richardson said the company "did everything possible to ensure the safety of our people who kept our critical food supply chain running."

Tyson Foods spokesman Gary Mickelson echoed that sentiment and said Tyson has worked closely with both the Trump and Biden administrations, along with state and local officials, to respond to the pandemic's challenges.

Smithfield spokesman Jim Monroe said the industry reacted quickly, and Smithfield has spent more than \$900 million so far to protect workers. He said it was appropriate for meat companies to share their concerns with government officials as the pandemic unfolded.

But the report cited a message that a Koch Foods executive sent a lobbyist in the spring of 2020 that said the industry shouldn't do more than screen employees' temperatures at the door of plants. The lobbyist agreed and said, "Now to get rid of those pesky health departments!"

To that end, the report said USDA officials — at the behest of meat companies — tried to use Trump's executive order to stop state and local health officials from ordering plant shutdowns.

Even with those efforts, U.S. meat production fell to about 60% of normal during spring 2020 because a number of major plants were forced to temporarily close for deep cleaning, widespread testing and safety upgrades, or operated at slower speeds because of worker shortages. Companies closed plants in consultation with health officials after outbreaks were confirmed.

"Throughout the pandemic we've worked hard to maintain safe and consistent operations. At the same time, we have not hesitated to temporarily idle or reduce capacity at processing plants when we determined it necessary to do so," Cargill spokesman Daniel Sullivan said.

Documents the companies provided to the committee showed that meat companies pushed hard for the executive order partly because they believed it would help shield them from liability if workers got sick or died — something a federal appeals court later rejected in a lawsuit against Tyson over worker deaths at an Iowa plant. Emails show the companies themselves submitted a draft of the executive order to the administration days before it was issued.

Early on in the pandemic, meat companies knew the virus was spreading rapidly among their workers because infection rates were much higher in the plants and their surrounding communities. The report said that in April 2020, a doctor at a hospital near a JBS plant in Cactus, Texas, told the company and government officials in an email that there was clearly a major outbreak at the plant because every COVID-19 patient at the hospital either worked there or was related to a worker. "Your employees will get sick and may die if this factory remains open," the doctor warned.

The report also highlighted the way meat companies aggressively pushed back against safety recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. That led to the final guidance including language that effectively made the rules optional because it said the recommendations should be done "if feasible" or "where possible."

## Appeals court hears allegations of special needs abuse

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — Some Aberdeen School District employees have made their case before the 8th District appeals court that a lawsuit by parents of five special education student should not proceed to trial.

The appeals court heard the case Wednesday. The parents allege a teacher subjected their children to physical restraint, seclusion as punishment and unnecessary use of force, among other offenses. The plaintiffs say the teacher's supervisors ignored their complaints.

The students are all non-verbal, some with autism, some have physical disabilities.

Allegations include that the children's teacher confined the students in a small windowless room, that she grabbed students by the arms and jerked them around, that she pushed one boy into a YMCA pool, that she forcibly stripped another boy to get him ready for swimming, South Dakota Public Broadcasting reported.

Zachary Peterson, an attorney for the defendants, told the three-judge appeals panel that there's no evidence the children were physically or psychologically harmed.

But the attorney for the parents and students said otherwise.

Margaret O'Sullivan Kane told the judges that the children were not able to speak for themselves, and the abuse they suffered would not be tolerated by students who could speak up. She said school administrators had the opportunity to put a stop to the abuse but chose to look the other way.

The federal circuit judge presiding over the case issued an order last October and held that the case could continue to a jury. The employees appealed.

## **For some people, religious leaders might be most effective at communicating the importance of COVID-19 vaccination**

Filip Viskupič South Dakota State University

Eds: This story was supplied by The Conversation for AP customers. The Associated Press does not guarantee the content.

Filip Viskupič, South Dakota State University and David Wiltse, South Dakota State University

(THE CONVERSATION) Vaccinating a substantial portion of society has been found to be the best way to bring the COVID-19 pandemic under control, but the pace of vaccination has slowed down since the vaccines were first made available to the public in December 2020. As of May 2022, only 66% of the eligible population in the United States was fully vaccinated, even as vaccines were going unused around the country.

Some groups, such as political conservatives, rural residents and evangelical Christians, are less likely to get vaccinated. Low vaccination rates could lead to more deaths and prolong the pandemic.

Experts believe that effective public health messages are needed to encourage people to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. People are more likely to follow advice if it comes from someone they can trust.

As political scientists, we found in our recent study that religious leaders are more effective messengers than medical and political leaders.

Religious leaders and COVID-19 messaging

In April 2021, we surveyed 709 unvaccinated registered voters in South Dakota, a state with a large proportion of Republican voters, rural residents and evangelical Christians.

We wanted to find out whether public health messaging from three different types of leaders – political leaders, medical leaders or religious leaders – might increase the willingness of the unvaccinated population to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. We also wanted to find out which messenger would be most successful in delivering this message.

As a part of the survey, we conducted what social scientists call a "survey experiment," which is similar to experiments that scientists conduct in laboratories. Participants were randomly assigned into one of four groups: three treatment groups and one control group.

Participants in each of the treatment groups received an identical message encouraging COVID-19 vaccination. This message came either from a political leader, medical leader or a religious leader from South Dakota.

For scientific validity, participants in the fourth group read a short message unrelated to the COVID-19 pandemic (similar to a placebo in a clinical trial). Afterward, all participants answered the same question about their vaccination intentions.

We found that of the three messengers, only the religious messenger succeeded in pushing the interest of the unvaccinated toward getting the shot. Compared to the participants in the control group, those who received a message from the religious leader showed a 12% greater likelihood of getting vaccinated. We also saw that messaging from a religious leader increased evangelical Christians' interest in getting vaccinated by 14% compared with those in the control group.

Conversely, we found that the same message delivered by both the medical and political leaders failed to persuade the unvaccinated population to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. When we asked every respondent

about their interest in learning more about the vaccines, we found a backlash against the medical messenger. Compared with the control group, respondents who received an encouragement from the medical messenger were 9% less likely to seek out information about vaccines.

A reason for cautious optimism?

The good news of our study is that attitudes toward vaccination are not set and the vaccine-hesitant are responsive to certain kinds of encouragements.

Our findings are in line with existing studies that showed the high levels of trust clergy enjoy in the society. For example, a Pew survey conducted last year reported that over 60% of congregants have at least "a fair amount" of confidence in their religious leaders to provide guidance about getting a COVID-19 vaccine. The Pew survey also found that the congregants' confidence in state and local elected officials as well as news media was lower – at 50% and 41%, respectively. A scientific study found that a religious message from an evangelical leader led more evangelicals to see wearing face masks as important.

Discouragingly, we found that messaging from medical leaders had little to no effect. Our data shows that this is largely attributed to the politicization of the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, public health authorities in particular have become part of the political skirmish surrounding vaccination.

For example, Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and chief medical adviser to the president, and other scientists have been repeatedly criticized by several Republican politicians, including former President Donald Trump. It is likely that many among those who are unvaccinated may not heed scientists' advice about COVID-19 vaccines.

Overall, the findings of our study should be interpreted as cautious optimism. COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy is challenging to overcome, but we argue that there are ways to break through some of the hesitancy and skepticism.

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. The Conversation is wholly responsible for the content.

## Climate change a major factor in fatal South Africa floods

By WANJOHI KABUKURU Associated Press

MOMBASA, Kenya (AP) — The fatal floods that wreaked havoc in South Africa in mid-April this year have been attributed to human-caused climate change, a rapid analysis published Friday by a team of leading international scientists said.

The study by the World Weather Attribution group analyzed both historical and emerging sets of weather data relating to the catastrophic rainfall last month, which triggered massive landslides in South Africa's Eastern Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal provinces, and concluded that climate change was a contributing factor to the scale of the damage.

"Human-induced climate change contributed largely to this extreme weather event," Izidine Pinto, a climate analyst at the University of Cape Town and part of the group that conducted the analysis, said. "We need to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a new reality where floods and heatwaves are more intense and damaging."

The scientists said that extreme rainfall episodes like those in April can now be expected about every twenty years, doubling the number of extreme weather events in the region if human-caused climate change had not been a factor. Rainfall is also expected to be about 4 to 8% heavier, the report said.

The floods resulted in the deaths of more than 400 people and severely affected 40,000 others, with thousands now homeless or living in shelters and property damages estimated at \$1.5 billion. The floods also led to the shut down of the Port of Durban for several days, disrupting supply chains.

"The flooding of the Port of Durban, where African minerals and crops are shipped worldwide, is also a reminder that there are no borders for climate impacts. What happens in one place can have substantial consequences elsewhere," said Friederike Otto, a climate researcher at Imperial College in London, who wasn't part of the study.

The South African weather service's Vanetia Phakula said that even though the warning systems that

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 22 of 68

are in place to alleviate the most severe impacts on human life issued an early warning on time, the coordination with disaster management agencies had challenges. The report authors noted that those living in marginalized communities or informal settlements were disproportionately affected by the flooding.

Christopher Jack, the deputy director of the Climate System Analysis group at the University of Cape Town, who participated in the study, says the event exposed and magnified the "structural inequalities and vulnerabilities" in the region.

The analysis used long-established and peer-reviewed climate models to account for various levels of sea surface temperatures and global wind circulation among other factors. The results are consistent with accepted links between increased greenhouse gas emissions and greater rainfall intensity, the scientists said. As the atmosphere warms, it's able to hold more water, making heavy rainfall more likely.

Earlier this year, as the floods were devastating South Africa, the World Weather Attribution group released another rapid assessment analysis on the intensity of cyclones in southern Africa which concluded that human-caused climate change was also largely to blame.

## Ukraine puts Russian soldier accused of war crime on trial

By OLEKSANDR STASHEVSKYI Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The trial of a Russian soldier accused of killing a Ukrainian civilian opened Friday, the first war crimes trial since Moscow's invasion of its neighbor.

Scores of journalists packed inside a small courtroom in the Ukrainian capital where the suspect appeared in a small glass cage for the start of a trial that has drawn international attention amid accusations of repeated atrocities by Russian forces.

Sgt. Vadim Shyshimarin, 21, is accused of shooting a 62-year-old Ukrainian man in the head in the north-eastern village of Chupakhivka. He could get up to life in prison.

The killing occurred in the early days of the war, when Russian tanks advancing on Kyiv were unexpectedly routed and tank crew retreated.

Shyshimarin, a member of a tank unit that was captured by Ukrainian forces, admitted that he shot the civilian in a video posted by the Security Service of Ukraine.

"I was ordered to shoot," said Shyshimarin, of the killing on Feb. 28. "I shot one (round) at him. He falls. And we kept on going."

Shyshimarin's video statement is "one of the first confessions of the enemy invaders," according to the Ukrainian security service.

The trial comes as Russia's campaign to take Ukraine's east slowly grinds on — but its invasion has resulted in widespread repercussions beyond the battlefield.

Two and a half months after Russia's invasion of Ukraine sent a shiver of fear through Moscow's neighbors, Finland's president and prime minister announced Thursday that the Nordic country should apply right away for membership in NATO, the military defense pact founded in part to counter the Soviet Union.

"You (Russia) caused this. Look in the mirror," said Finnish President Sauli Niinisto.

Finland's Parliament still has to weigh in, but the announcement means it is all but certain to apply — and gain admission. The process could take months to complete. Sweden, likewise, is considering putting itself under NATO's protection.

That would represent a major change in Europe's security landscape: Sweden has avoided military alliances for more than 200 years, while Finland adopted neutrality after its defeat by the Soviets in World War II.

The Kremlin warned it may take retaliatory "military-technical" steps.

Public opinion in both nations shifted dramatically in favor of NATO membership after the invasion, which stirred fears in countries along Russia's flank that they could be next.

Such an expansion of the alliance would leave Russia surrounded by NATO countries in the Baltic Sea and the Arctic and would amount to a stinging setback for Russian President Vladimir Putin. He had hoped to divide and roll back NATO in Europe but is instead seeing the opposite happen.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg has said the alliance would welcome Finland and Sweden with

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 23 of 68

open arms.

NATO's funneling of weapons and other military support to Ukraine has been critical to Kyiv's surprising ability to stymie the invasion, and the Kremlin warned anew that the aid could lead to direct conflict between NATO and Russia.

"There is always a risk of such conflict turning into a full-scale nuclear war, a scenario that will be catastrophic for all," said Dmitry Medvedev, deputy head of Russia's Security Council.

On the ground, Britain's Defense Ministry said Friday that Russia has not made any significant advances despite concentrating forces in the Donbas after withdrawing troops from other areas.

British military officials said Russia lost "significant" elements of at least one battalion tactical group — about 1,000 troops — and equipment that were used to quickly deploy a makeshift floating bridge while trying to cross the Siverskyi Donets River west of Severodonetsk.

"Conducting river crossings in a contested environment is a highly risky maneuver and speaks to the pressure the Russian commanders are under to make progress in their operations in eastern Ukraine," the ministry said in its daily intelligence update.

As the fighting and Russian strikes persisted, teachers were trying to restore some sense of normalcy after the war shuttered Ukraine's schools and devastated the lives of millions of children. In Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, lessons are being given in a subway station used as a bomb shelter that has become home for many families.

"It helps to support them mentally. Because now there is a war, and many lost their homes ... some people's parents are fighting now," said teacher Valeriy Leiko. In part thanks to the lessons, he said, "they feel that someone loves them."

Primary school-age children joined Leiko around a table for history and art lessons in the subway station, where children's drawings now line the walls.

An older student, Anna Fedoryaka, was monitoring lectures on Ukrainian literature being given by Kharkiv professor Mykhailo Spodarets online from his basement.

Internet connections were a problem, Fedoryaka said. And, "it is hard to concentrate when you have to do your homework with explosions by your window."

At least two civilians were killed on the outskirts of Kharkiv on Thursday, authorities said. The attacks also damaged a building housing a humanitarian aid unit, municipal offices and hospital facilities, Vyacheslav Zadorenko, the mayor of the suburban town of Derhachi, wrote in a Telegram post.

None of the sites "had anything to do with military infrastructure," Zadorenko said.

The Ukrainian military chief for the eastern Luhansk region said Friday that Russian forces opened fire 31 times on residential areas the day before, destroying dozens of homes, notably in Hirske and Popasnianska villages, and a bridge in Rubizhne.

Russia's advance in the Donbas has been slow, but its forces have gained some ground and taken some villages.

In other developments, Ukrainian officials said their forces took out another Russian ship in the Black Sea, though there was no confirmation from Russia and no casualties were reported.

The Vsevolod Bobrov logistics ship was badly damaged but not thought to have sunk when it was struck while trying to deliver an anti-aircraft system to Snake Island, said Oleksiy Arestovych, an adviser to the Ukrainian president.

In April, the Ukrainian military sank the Moskva cruiser, the flagship of Russia's Black Sea fleet. In March it destroyed the landing ship Saratov.

Ukraine said Russian forces fired artillery and grenade launchers at Ukrainian troops around Zaporizhzhia, which has been a refuge for civilians fleeing Mariupol, and attacked in the Chernihiv and Sumy regions to the north.

The Ukrainian military also said Russian forces were transferring additional artillery units to border areas near Chernihiv, where overnight strikes killed at least three people. It said that Russian troops fired rockets at a school and student dormitory in Novhorod-Siversky and that some other buildings, including private

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 24 of 68

homes, were also damaged.

In his evening address to the nation, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy condemned the assaults. "Of course, the Russian state is in such a state that any education only gets in its way," he said. "But what can be achieved by destroying Ukrainian schools? All Russian commanders who give such orders are simply sick and incurable."

The southern port of Mariupol has largely been reduced to smoking rubble with little food, water or medicine, or what the mayor called a "medieval ghetto." Ukrainian fighters there continued to hold out at the Azovstal steel plant, the last stronghold of resistance in the city.

Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said negotiations were underway with Russia to win the release of 38 severely wounded Ukrainian defenders from the plant. She said Ukraine hoped to exchange them for 38 "significant" Russian prisoners of war.

## UAE's long-ailing leader Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed has died

The United Arab Emirates' long-ailing ruler, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, died Friday, the government's state-run news agency announced in a brief statement. He was 73.

The UAE's Ministry of Presidential Affairs announced a 40-day period of mourning and a three-day suspension of work in all ministries and the private sector beginning Friday, including flags to be flown at half-staff.

He had long ceased having involvement in day-to-day affairs of ruling the country, with his brother, Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed, seen as the de-factor ruler. There was no immediate announcement about a successor, although Mohammed bin Zayed is in line to inherit the top post.

Sheikh Khalifa, who has rarely been seen in official photos or at public events for years, succeeded his father and the UAE's founder Sheikh Zayed in 2004. He suffered a stroke a decade later, keeping him largely out of public sight ever since.

The world's tallest tower in the UAE's emirate of Dubai is named the Burj Khalifa after the late ruler, whose oil-rich emirate helped bail Dubai out during a financial crisis.

## Biden looks to nudge ASEAN leaders to speak out on Russia

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden is looking to nudge southeast Asian leaders to be more outspoken about Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but the issue continues to be a delicate one for many members of the region's 10-country alliance with deep ties to Moscow.

Biden welcomed leaders from Association of Southeast Asian Nations to the White House on Thursday night for an intimate dinner to kick off the two-day summit, the first meeting of the group to be held in Washington in its 45-year history.

The White House is also trying to demonstrate that it is stepping up in the Pacific even as the administration has been focused on the war in Ukraine. It announced that the United States would commit to more than \$150 million in new projects to bolster Southeast Asia's climate, maritime and public health infrastructure.

But Biden knows that finding consensus with ASEAN members on the Russian invasion could prove to be difficult.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki on Thursday said Ukraine would be on the agenda for the leaders' talks, but she couldn't make a prediction on whether the group would touch on the Russian invasion in the summit's communique.

"I will say that a number of the ASEAN participants have been important partners in calling out the aggressive action of Russia," she said, and "in participating and in supporting sanctions and, certainly, abiding by them."

Some ASEAN members -- Vietnam, Myanmar, and Laos — for years have depended on Russia for military hardware. With the exception of Singapore -- the only member of the 10-member group to impose direct sanctions against Moscow -- the alliance has avoided criticizing President Vladimir Putin or Russia's



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 25 of 68

prosecution of the war.

Indonesia has been guarded in its public comments on invasion and, as has the Philippines, made clear it won't impose sanctions against Russia. Thailand joined a United Nations vote against the invasion of Ukraine, but has maintained a position of neutrality in the war.

Leaders were scheduled to hold formal talks at the State Department on Friday, and Biden was scheduled to address the group.

The ASEAN nations include Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The top leaders from ASEAN member Myanmar were barred from attending, while outgoing Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte dispatched Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. to represent his government.

The summit comes before Biden's trip next week to South Korea and Japan — his first visit to Asia as president. He'll hold talks with those two countries' leaders and also meet during the trip with leaders from the Indo-Pacific strategic alliance known as the Quad, made up of Australia, India, Japan and the U.S.

Biden has tried to put greater focus on improving relations with Pacific nations in the early going of his presidency, viewing a rising China as the most threatening economic and national security adversary to the United States.

But his attempt at recalibrating U.S. foreign policy has been complicated by the most serious fighting in Europe since World War II.

The new U.S. investment in ASEAN nations announced at the start of the summit on Thursday includes \$40 million for clean energy infrastructure, \$60 million for a new regional maritime initiative and \$6 million to accelerate digital development in the region.

The White House also announced that Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies will launch a privately funded institute for rising leaders from ASEAN nations that will bring mid-career public sector officials to the United States for leadership training.

ASEAN has barred Myanmar — in crisis since the army ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021 — from sending all but nongovernmental leaders to ASEAN meetings.

The Biden administration condemned the military coup that led to the ouster of Suu Kyi. She was convicted by a military court last month of corruption and sentenced to five years in prison in the first of several corruption cases against her. Suu Kyi has denied the charges.

Kurt Campbell, coordinator for Indo-Pacific Affairs on the White House National Security Council, said the administration expects the private talks will be "direct, polite, but maybe a little bit uncomfortable at times" as the U.S. and ASEAN members are not on the same page on all issues.

He added the administration wants to see the group "play a more deeply engaged role in the critical diplomacy about next steps" in Myanmar.

## Sri Lankan power family falls from grace as economy tanks

By DAVID RISING and KRUTIKA PATHI Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — With one brother president, another prime minister and three more family members cabinet ministers, it appeared that the Rajapaksa clan had consolidated its grip on power in Sri Lanka after decades in and out of government.

But as a national debt crisis spirals out of control, with pandemic woes and rising food and fuel costs due to the war in Ukraine compounding problems from years of dubious economic decisions, their dynasty is crumbling.

The three Rajapaksas resigned their cabinet posts in April, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa stepped down on Monday, angry protesters attacked the family's home this week and President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has not been seen outside his heavily guarded compound.

But the family is not going down without a fight, ordering troops to shoot protesters causing injury to people or property, instituting a nationwide curfew and allegedly encouraging mobs of their supporters

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 26 of 68

to fight in the streets with anti-government demonstrators.

In his first speech to the nation in some two months, Gotabaya Rajapaksa on Wednesday said he would return more power to Parliament — by rolling back an amendment he implemented to buttress the all-powerful executive presidential system. On Thursday he appointed a new prime minister — of no relation.

But it might be too little, too late to put an end to the nationwide protests calling for the ouster of the president, the last Rajapaksa still clinging to national office.

"This is a crisis very much of his making. He did not create the crisis from the beginning, but the Rajapaksas have come to epitomize the failings in our structure of government with their nepotism, their corruption and their human rights violations," said Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, executive director of the Center for Policy Alternatives think tank in Colombo.

With soaring prices, fuel and food shortages and lengthy power cuts, Sri Lankans have been protesting for weeks, calling for both the Rajapaksas to step down. Violence erupted Monday after Rajapaksa supporters clashed with protesters in a dramatic turn that saw Mahinda resign. Nine people were killed and more than 200 injured.

Angry protesters attacked the family's ancestral home in the Hambantota area, and Mahinda has been forced to take refuge on a heavily fortified naval base.

With his atypically conciliatory speech Wednesday, it is clear Gotabaya has been "badly shaken by the protests," said Dayan Jayatileka, a former diplomat who served as Sri Lanka's representative to the United Nations during Mahinda Rajapaksa's presidency.

Still, it may be too early to count him out, Jayatileka said, noting that Gotabaya had changed tack to sound "flexible and pragmatic."

"Gotabaya has a dualistic personality — one side of that personality that the country has seen is this unilateralist, quite insensitive ex-military man," Jayatileka said. "But there's another side — somewhat more rational. But the more rational side was on a very long vacation."

The Rajapaksa family has been involved in Sri Lankan politics for decades, with the focus most recently on Mahinda, the president's older brother.

While Gotabaya pursued a military career and rose through the ranks, Mahinda focused on politics and was elected president in 2005. Gotabaya, who by then had retired from the military and immigrated to the United States, returned to become defense secretary.

The two won enormous support among their fellow Sinhalese Buddhists for ending the country's 26-year civil war with ethnic Tamil rebels in 2009 and Mahinda was re-elected to a second term in 2010.

About 70% of Sri Lanka's 22 million people are Buddhists, mainly ethnic Sinhalese. Hindus, mainly ethnic Tamils, make up 12.6% of the population, while another 9.7% are Muslim and 7.6% are Christian.

Minority groups and international observers accused the military of targeting civilians in the war and killing rebels and civilians who surrendered in the final days. According to a U.N. report, about 40,000 Tamil civilians were killed in the final months of fighting alone.

Mahinda pushed through a constitutional change to allow him to run for a third presidential term and called elections early in 2015 to press what he saw as an advantage, but was defeated in an upset by Maithripala Sirisena, who garnered support from minorities with his reformist platform and push for reconciliation.

Mahinda Rajapaksa then unsuccessfully sought to become prime minister, and it appeared that the luster of the Rajapaksa name had worn off.

But with Sirisena's coalition government already plagued with infighting and dysfunction, on Easter Sunday in 2019 Islamic extremists targeted Christian churches and luxury hotels in coordinated suicide attacks, killing hundreds of people.

Amid allegations the Sirisena government had not acted on intelligence information, and a wave of Buddhist nationalism, Gotabaya Rajapaksa swept to power in a landslide later that year.

"The bombs catapulted him to victory in the 2019 election," Jayatileka said. "The feeling was we need Gotabaya, we need his military experience."

He appointed Mahinda as prime minister and added two other brothers and a nephew to his cabinet. In 2020 he pushed through a constitutional amendment strengthening the power of his office at the expense

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 27 of 68

of Parliament.

By the time Gotabaya took office, Sri Lanka was already in an economic slump triggered by a drop in tourism after the bombings and a slew of foreign debt from infrastructure projects, many bankrolled by Chinese money and commissioned by Mahinda.

In one notorious case, Mahinda borrowed deeply from China to build a port in Hambantota, the family's home region.

Unable to make its debt payments on the project, Sri Lanka was forced to hand the facility and thousands of acres of land around it to Beijing for 99 years — giving China a key foothold directly opposite regional rival India's coastline.

With the economy already teetering, Gotabaya pushed through the largest tax cuts in Sri Lankan history, which sparked a quick backlash, with creditors downgrading the country's ratings, blocking it from borrowing more money as foreign exchange reserves nosedived.

The pandemic hit soon after, again battering tourism, a prime source of foreign currency. A poorly executed ban on importing chemical fertilizers in April 2021 made things worse by driving prices up before Gotabaya was forced to repeal it.

Compounding the problems this year, the Ukraine war has increased food and oil prices globally. The central bank said inflation was at 30% in April, with food prices up nearly 50%.

With the economy today in tatters, protests have come from all sectors of society, with even Sinhalese Buddhists joining in.

"There is public vilification of the Rajapaksa now and that's a notable change to what we were seeing previously," said Bhavani Fonseka, a senior researcher at the Colombo-based Center for Policy Alternatives.

There is a "real genuine anger among the people that it's the Rajapaksas who have led to this crisis."

Still, Jayatilleka suggested if Gotabaya can appoint a new cabinet that enjoys popular support, he may be able to cling to office.

"If he stitches together a government that looks somewhat new — not as top heavy with the Rajapaksas as it was stuffed full of them — that may have more success," he said.

But Saravanamuttu said it was too late for a comeback.

"His constituency has turned against him and therefore he has no real power base left in the country," he said.

"The monks are turning against him and also sections of the military because ordinary soldiers and their families are also suffering. Word from the street is that he has to go."

## **N. Korea reports 6 deaths after admitting COVID-19 outbreak**

By KIM TONG-HYUNG and HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Six people have died and 350,000 have been treated for a fever that has spread "explosively" across North Korea, state media said Friday, a day after the country acknowledged a COVID-19 outbreak for the first time in the pandemic.

North Korea likely doesn't have sufficient COVID-19 tests and said it didn't know the cause of the mass fevers. But a big coronavirus outbreak could be devastating in a country with a broken health care system and an unvaccinated, malnourished population.

The North's Korean Central News Agency said of the 350,000 people who developed fevers since late April, 162,200 have recovered. It said 18,000 people were newly found with fever symptoms on Thursday alone, and 187,800 are being isolated for treatment.

One of the six people who died was infected with the omicron variant, KCNA said. But it wasn't immediately clear how many of the total illnesses were COVID-19.

North Korea imposed a lockdown Thursday after acknowledging its first COVID-19 cases. Those reports said tests from an unspecified number of people came back positive for the omicron variant.

It's unusual for isolated North Korea to admit to the outbreak of any infectious disease, let alone one as menacing as COVID-19, as it's intensely proud and sensitive to outside perception about its self-described

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 28 of 68

“socialist utopia.”

While North Korean leader Kim Jong Un had occasionally been candid about his worsening economy and other problems, he had repeatedly expressed confidence about pandemic response and wasn't seen wearing a mask in public until Thursday.

State TV showed Kim wearing a mask as he entered what the broadcast described as the country's headquarters of its pandemic response, which appeared to be Pyongyang's landmark Koryo Hotel. He took off the mask and smoked a cigarette while talking with officials.

KCNA said Kim criticized officials for failing to prevent “a vulnerable point in the epidemic prevention system.” He said the outbreak was centered around the capital, Pyongyang, and stressed all work and residential units should be isolated from one another while residents should be provided every convenience during the lockdown.

“It is the most important challenge and supreme tasks facing our party to reverse the immediate public health crisis situation at an early date, restore the stability of epidemic prevention and protect the health and wellbeing of our people,” KCNA quoted Kim as saying.

The spread of the virus may have been accelerated by a massive military parade on April 25, where Kim gave a speech and showcased his army and weaponry in front of tens of thousands of people.

Cheong Seong-Chang, an analyst at South Korea's Sejong Institute, said the pace of the fever's spread suggests the crisis could last months and possibly into 2023, causing major disruption in the poorly equipped country.

According to the latest figures from the World Health Organization, North Korea reported to the U.N. agency that it tested 64,207 people for COVID-19 in 2020 through March 22 this year, a small number that may indicate insufficient tests for a population of 26 million.

North Korea also lacks vaccines, COVID-19 antiviral pills and has likely very few intensive care units to treat serious cases, which may cause higher death rates than other nations, experts say.

The North last year shunned millions of shots offered by the U.N.-backed COVAX distribution program, including doses of AstraZeneca and China's Sinovac vaccines, possibly because of questions about their effectiveness and unwillingness to accept monitoring requirements. The country lacks the extreme-cold storage systems that are required for mRNA vaccines like Pfizer and Moderna, which have shown higher rates of preventing infection, serious illness and death even against newer variants like omicron.

The office of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, who took office Tuesday, said his government is willing to provide medical supplies and hopes to talk to the North about specific plans. It said the North hasn't yet asked for its help.

Cha Deok-cheol, a spokesperson in South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs, said Seoul doesn't immediately have an estimate on the number of vaccine doses it could offer to North Korea.

Inter-Korean relations have deteriorated over the past three years as larger nuclear negotiations remain stalled since they broke down over disagreements about U.S.-led sanctions and the North's disarmament steps.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said Beijing was ready to offer North Korea help but said he had no information about any such request being made. Asked whether China would be evacuating its nationals from North Korea, Zhao said Beijing will closely monitor the situation and maintain communication with the North to ensure the health and safety of Chinese citizens there.

North Korea's claim of a perfect record in keeping out the virus for 2 1/2 years was widely doubted. But its extremely strict border closure, large-scale quarantines and propaganda that stressed anti-virus controls as a matter of “national existence” may have staved off a huge outbreak until now.

Hours after confirming the outbreak, North Korea launched three short-range ballistic missiles toward the sea in an apparent display of strength. It was the North's 16th round of missile launches this year as it aims to pressure the United States to accept the idea of the country as a nuclear power. It's also eager to negotiate sanctions relief and other concessions from a position of strength.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 29 of 68

There are also indications that North Korea is restoring tunnels at a nuclear testing ground that was last active in 2017 in possible preparations to resume nuclear tests, which U.S. and South Korean officials say could happen as early as this month.

Citing North Korea's shunning of the COVAX vaccines, White House press secretary Jen Psaki said the United States supported international aid efforts but doesn't plan to share its vaccine supplies with the North.

"We do continue to support international efforts aimed at the provision of critical humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable North Koreans, and this is, of course, a broader part of the DPRK continuing to exploit its own citizens by not accepting this type of aid," Psaki said Thursday in Washington, using the initials of North Korea's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

"It's not just vaccines. It's also a range of humanitarian assistance that could very much help the people and the country and instead they divert resources to build their unlawful nuclear and ballistic missiles programs."

## Allies of Marcos Jr. set to dominate Philippine Congress

By JIM GOMEZ Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Allies of Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the presumptive next president of the Philippines, appear set to dominate both chambers of Congress, further alarming activists after the late dictator son's apparent election victory restored his family to the seat of power.

Ongoing counts from Monday's vote show they're set to capture most of the 300-seat House of Representatives and half of the 24-seat Senate that was up for election, and likely their top leaderships. Their family members and siblings have been also proclaimed winners in local posts, reflecting the strong grip of political dynasties on the Southeast Asian democracy despite a constitutional prohibition that was never enforced.

"It's going to be problematic because an opposition is very much needed in a democracy," said Jean Franco, a political science professor at the state-run University of the Philippines. "There has to be alternative ideas and there has to be monitoring of what the executive is doing, otherwise, we will be like North Korea."

The electoral triumph of Marcos Jr. and his allies is an astonishing reversal of the army-backed but largely peaceful "People Power" revolt in 1986 that forced his father out of office following years of massive human rights atrocities and plunder that his son never acknowledged.

Marcos Jr. had more than 31 million votes in the unofficial count in what's projected to be one of the strongest majority mandates for a Philippine president in decades. His vice-presidential running mate and daughter of the outgoing populist leader, Sara Duterte, appeared to have also won with a massive margin.

U.S. President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping were among the world leaders who have congratulated them on their huge victory and the relatively smooth conduct of the elections. The separately elected president and vice president are set to take office on June 30 for a single, six-year term after Congress confirms the results.

"It's like a storm surge, a tsunami in Congress for the opposition," left-wing House Rep. Carlos Zarate, whose nine-year term ends in June, told The Associated Press. "The challenge for the broad opposition is not to concede but to press the fight for good governance, accountability and democracy wherever it takes."

The small fraction of a left-wing opposition bloc would likely be trimmed further in the incoming Congress largely due to a military campaign to link it to communist guerrillas, Zarate said.

Hundreds of students and anti-Marcos activists protested alleged election fraud, including the breakdown of many voting machines, but riot troops blocked them from getting close to a main vote-counting center in metropolitan Manila. Vice President Leni Robredo, a human rights lawyer who has not conceded defeat as Marcos Jr.'s closest challenger, was expected to lead a thanksgiving rally later Friday with her followers.

Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, a cousin of Marcos Jr., has been endorsed as House speaker by his party. Another possible candidate is Romualdez's ally and former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 30 of 68

brokered the alliance of Marcos Jr. and Sara Duterte.

Only one opposition candidate, Sen. Risa Hontiveros, would likely make it to the new slate in the Senate. Aside from deciding the fate of the president's legislative agenda and budget proposal, Congress is a crucial oversight that investigates major government anomalies and decides on impeachment complaints. A new anti-terror bill opposed by human rights groups, for example, easily passed in both chambers that were dominated by allies of President Rodrigo Duterte.

Court cases and legal issues still hound the late dictator's family, including payment of a huge estate tax, a 2018 corruption conviction of his widow, Imelda Marcos, which is on appeal, and full compensation of thousands of victims of torture, detentions, disappearances and other atrocities committed in the martial-law era when he was in power.

A brutal anti-drug crackdown launched by Duterte, which killed thousands of mostly petty drug suspects, has sparked an investigation by the International Criminal Court as potential crimes against humanity. The outgoing leader, who is known for his brash language, has said he would likely face more criminal complaints when he steps down on June 30.

Monday's elections assured the political longevity of both the Marcoses and the Dutertes. A son of the presumptive president, Sandro Marcos, was elected to the House as a representative of their northern home province of Ilocos Norte and several relatives captured provincial posts.

Sara Duterte's brother, Sebastian Duterte, would succeed her as mayor of southern Davao city. Another brother, Paulo Duterte, has been reelected to another congressional term.

Philippine elections have long been dominated by politicians belonging to the same bloodlines. At least 250 political families have monopolized power across the country, although such dynasties are prohibited under the constitution. Congress — long controlled by members of powerful clans targeted by the constitutional ban — has failed to pass the law needed to define and enforce the provision.

Duterte, the outgoing president, carved a political name starting in the 1980s as a longtime Davao mayor with his extra-tough campaign against criminality. It left hundreds of drug suspects dead and presaged similar killings on a wider scale that would follow him when he rose to the presidency in 2016 on an audacious but failed campaign promise to eradicate illegal drugs and corruption in three to six months.

## Facility for disabled on Ukraine front line mulls evacuation

By ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

TAVRIISKE, Ukraine (AP) — There's dancing in the garden, and ball games. A soft wind blows, cooling the spring sunshine. But there is an ominous accompaniment to the music and laughter: the unmistakable dull thud of not-so-distant artillery fire.

Still, the ball game goes on without interruption at the facility for mentally and physically disabled people in the village of Tavriiske, near the front line in Ukraine's war. But it's yet another reminder of the dilemma the staff face: Do they evacuate the facility, and how can it be done with minimum disruption to the residents, some of whom have very severe disabilities and others for whom changes in environment can be disorientating and highly stressful.

Then there's the issue of where to go, and how. With around 425 residents, it is the largest such facility in Ukraine's southeastern Zaporizhzhia region. Finding suitable accommodation elsewhere is far from easy, said director Oleksandr Starosvitskyi. Various options are being explored, including moving 250 residents to a regional psychiatric hospital, where beds are being prepared, and possibly also using a former orphanage.

Several meetings with regional authorities have already been held, and another is pending. But for Starosvitskyi, it is clear what should be done.

"This facility needs to be evacuated right away," he said, stressing that its residents include many elderly and severely disabled people who cannot be moved easily or quickly. It would take about two days to get everyone out, depending how many transportation facilities are provided, he said.

Orikhiv, a neighboring village about 10 kilometers (six miles) to the south, is frequently shelled by Russian forces who invaded Ukraine in late February, and the war's front line runs just beyond it. The southern

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 31 of 68

part of the Zaporizhzhia region is now in Russian forces' hands.

Starosvitskyi believes Tavriiske won't be overrun. But the facility is still far too close to the front line for comfort. On Tuesday, a shell landed in the village for the first time. It fell in a field, causing no damage or injuries, and Starosvitskyi barely blinked at the sound of the explosion. But it was a stark reminder of just how close the war is.

Most of the facility's residents are people who do not have families, but the relatives of those who do have been contacted and their consent sought for a potential evacuation, Starosvitskyi said. All have agreed.

While they await, staff have run air raid drills with those residents able to participate, taking them down to the bomb shelter. To those who can't understand what's going on, they've explained away the sounds of war as thunder.

The institution is spread among several buildings in the village. Before the war, one of the sections housing around 150 people would hold lively disco dances twice a week. "They all participated, they loved it," said deputy director Liudmyla Melnyk.

But that stopped when the war started, for safety reasons. "We have really big loudspeakers, and we want to be able to hear what's going on" in case they need to seek shelter, Melnyk explained. Now much smaller dances are held, with fewer people and the volume turned down.

"It's scary to live under such a situation," she said. "I never thought that in my lifetime I would live through a war."

Other signs of the troubles beyond the institution's walls have seeped in too. Among the brightly colored residents' artwork decorating the spotless hallways is a poster about mine awareness. Some of the residents are knitting and sewing socks and other handicrafts for Ukraine's soldiers.

But in general, staff try to ensure the conflict encroaches as little as possible, and much of daily life is unchanged. There are fiercely contested ping-pong games to play and drawing classes to attend, art projects to work on, pets to feed and the institution's well-tended gardens to care for.

Some residents, however, understand what is happening.

"I'm a bit afraid," said 19-year-old Maksym, who has cerebral palsy. "I would like this war to finish as soon as possible."

Before the conflict, there was a chance he would begin studies under a program recommended by volunteers.

"I had a dream to be an actor," said Maksym, who didn't want to give his last name. He loves action movies, especially those with Jackie Chan and Bruce Lee, and has a pair of weights neatly laid out on his wheeled walking aid to help him work on his upper body strength.

But "everything changed" with the war, he said. "I wanted to go and study, I even planned it many times, and now I can't go anywhere."

Across the road another section houses mainly elderly people who cannot move from their beds. For them, accessing a bomb shelter is not an option.

"There is no possibility for that, not for these people," Starosvitskyi said. "They need to be evacuated. This is the only way to save them."

Borys Dudchenko, a disabled former soldier in the Soviet army, said he had "some fear, but everything else is OK." Sitting in the garden with the sound of artillery in the background, he said he thought it best to evacuate.

But not all residents agreed.

One young woman who loves to play ping-pong and teach dance moves she learns on the internet to other residents, said she did not want to leave.

"I don't want to move anywhere," said Katya, who only gave her first name.

Inevitably, any evacuation would greatly affect the staff too, most of whom live locally. More than 200 people worked at the facility before the war, although about 100 people have left, the director said.

In his 18 years working at the institution, Starosvitskyi, a soft-spoken man with twinkling blue eyes, never thought he would have to protect his residents from war.

"Never, I could never even imagine this," he said.

## Lebanon vote seen as last chance in crisis-plagued nation

By ZEINA KARAM Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — In households across Lebanon, it's likely that one or more family members are planning to emigrate — if they can get a passport. Demand is high but the bankrupt government has not paid the company contracted to issue or renew the documents.

Lebanese spend their days at the banks, waiting to see what meager amounts they will be allowed to withdraw for the month. They install batteries and solar panels at great cost so their family can survive the humid summer months without electricity from the grid.

They hunt for medicine and fuel, and worry about securing the next meal for their kids.

It's an economic meltdown and Sunday's parliament elections are seen as a last chance to reverse course and punish the current crop of politicians who have driven the Mediterranean nation into the ground.

Instead, a widespread sense of apathy and pessimism prevails, with most observers agreeing the vote is unlikely to make much difference.

"Who should I vote for? Those who stole my money, plundered the country and exploded Beirut? Or those nobodies who cannot agree on anything?" said Samir Fahd, a schoolteacher whose once comfortable income of about \$3,400 a month is now worth the equivalent of \$200.

On election day, he will stay at home, he says.

The vote is the first since Lebanon's implosion started in October 2019, triggering widespread anti-government protests against a corrupt ruling class that has been in place since the country's 15-year civil war ended in 1990.

It is also the first election since the August 2020 massive explosion at Beirut's port that killed more than 200 people, injured thousands and destroyed parts of Lebanon's capital. The blast, widely blamed on negligence, was set off by hundreds of tons of poorly stored ammonium nitrate that ignited in a port warehouse after a fire broke out at the facility.

Nearly two years later, there are still no answers as to what caused the highly explosive material to ignite, or why it had been stored there for years. A judicial investigation has been suspended for months, amid a deluge of legal challenges by politicians seeking to block the probe.

Today, huge billboards and posters of candidates line the highway along the still-wrecked harbor — a jarring sign how political parties still throw money around while the country is bankrupt. At least two of the politicians wanted in connection with the blast investigation are running for parliament.

Michel Murr, son of a former defense minister and grandson of a longtime powerful member of parliament and minister, is also running for a seat in the assembly — though he acknowledged the seeming futility of the election. He said he didn't release an electoral program because he did not want to "deceive people by telling them I will do this and that" — promises he might not be able to keep.

"It seems almost impossible to imagine Lebanon voting for more of the same — and yet that appears to be the likeliest outcome," wrote Sam Heller, a Beirut-based analyst and fellow at Century International.

Fahd, the schoolteacher, believes it is futile to expect change in a system based on sectarianism and large-scale patronage that he said is "administered by an entrenched mafia."

"Elections don't change anything, it's all a joke and they are all coming back whether we like it or not," said the 54-year-old.

While he's staying home, he said other members of his family plan to vote for the Christian Lebanese Forces, a right-wing Christian party from the civil war believed to be receiving financial backing from Saudi Arabia.

Some believe the party is the most most capable of standing up to the Shiite Hezbollah group, which dominates politics in Lebanon. Hezbollah holds the current parliamentary majority along with its allies, including the Lebanese Forces' rival Christian faction founded by President Michel Aoun.

Heavily armed and backed by Iran, Hezbollah is expected to retain or possibly boost that majority in



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 33 of 68

Sunday's vote, likely benefiting from a vacuum on the Sunni leadership scene after former Prime Minister Saad Hariri bowed out of politics last year.

Many have traditionally chosen candidates based on family, sectarian or regional ties, and are wary of newcomers they fear would be powerless to stand up to entrenched politicians.

Lebanese parties have long relied on a system that encourages voters to cast ballots in return for favors and individual benefits. Political parties offer protection, assistance, medical services and other needs — if you vote for them.

"They have the material resources they need to dispense patronage and mobilize voters. And those voters, amid Lebanon's economic collapse, are likely even more dependent on politicians' clientelist largesse to survive," Heller wrote.

Many argue that people should vote for anyone outside the current ruling clique if there is to be any hope for change and recovery in Lebanon.

"What more should they do to us before we all vote against them??" posted Paul Naggear, father of one of the youngest victims of the Beirut port blast.

Lebanon's demise has been staggering. In just two and a half years, the majority of the once middle-income population has been plunged into poverty, the national currency collapsed, and foreign reserves have run dry. The World Bank has described the crisis as among the world's worst in over a century.

Tens of thousands have left the country, including nurses, professors, doctors and engineers. Last month, dozens of people drowned at sea after a boat carrying about 60 migrants capsized off the coast.

"Today the country stands as a 'failing state,'" Olivier De Schutter, the U.N.'s special rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, said in a report published this week, after he visited Lebanon. He added that the country's "political leadership is completely out of touch with reality."

Many people say they are sick of the political class but don't see an alternative.

"People are in survival mode and that concern takes precedence over any other concern," said Maha Yahya, director of the Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center. There is no serious opposition capable of drawing a roadmap for deliverance.

"This might explain why many will vote for the same political class," she said, adding that the election may bring some changes in some parliamentary seats — but not the kind of change people really need.

Some of the newly formed political advocacy groups have been trying to convince people to believe in the process and vote.

"It's not a very difficult choice, we are dying a slow death," said Diana Meneem, a candidate from the Kulluna Irada advocacy group, speaking on a recent podcast. "This time, give someone new a chance."

## No sea serpents, mobsters but Tahoe trash divers strike gold

By SCOTT SONNER Associated Press

STATELINE, Nev. (AP) — They found no trace of a mythical sea monster, no sign of mobsters in cement shoes or long-lost treasure chests.

But scuba divers who spent a year cleaning up Lake Tahoe's entire 72-mile (115-kilometer) shoreline have come away with what they hope will prove much more valuable: tons and tons of trash.

In addition to removing 25,000 pounds (11,339 kilograms) of underwater litter since last May, divers and volunteers have been meticulously sorting and logging the types and GPS locations of the waste.

The dozens of dives that concluded this week were part of a first-of-its-kind effort to learn more about the source and potential harm caused by plastics and other pollutants in the storied alpine lake on the California-Nevada line.

It's also taken organizers on a journey through the history, folklore and development of the lake atop the Sierra Nevada that holds enough water to cover all of California 14 inches (36 centimeters) deep.

The Washoe Tribe fished the turquoise-blue Tahoe for centuries before westward expansion in the mid-1800s brought railroads, timber barons and eventually Gatsby-like decadence to what became a playground for the rich and famous.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 34 of 68

Tahoe's first casino was built in 1902 by Elias J. "Lucky" Baldwin, who owned a big chunk of east Los Angeles and built the prominent Santa Anita horse track in 1907. Massive lakefront estates followed for decades, including one used for the filming of "Godfather II."

Cleanup organizers say one of the things locals ask most is whether they've found any gangsters' remains near the north shore. That's where Frank Sinatra lost his gaming license for allegedly fraternizing with organized crime bosses at his Cal-Neva hotel-casino in the 1960s.

The recovered debris mostly has consisted of things like bottles, tires, fishing gear and sunglasses.

But Colin West, founder of the nonprofit environmental group that launched the project, Clean Up the Lake, said there have been some surprises.

Divers think they spotted shipwreck planks near Dead Man's Point, where tribal tales tell of a Loch-Ness-Monster-like creature — later dubbed "Tahoe Tessie"— living beneath Cave Rock.

They've also turned up a few "No Littering" signs, engine blocks, lamp posts, a diamond ring and "those funny, fake plastic owls that sit on boats to scare off birds," West said.

"It's shocking to see how much trash has accumulated under what appears to be such a pristine lake," said Matt Levitt, founder and CEO of Tahoe Blue Vodka, which has contributed \$100,000 to the cleanup.

His businesses is among many — including hotels, casinos and ski resorts — dependent on the 15 million-plus people who visit annually to soak up the view Mark Twain described in "Roughing It" in 1872 as the "fairest picture the whole earth affords."

"It is our economic engine," Levitt said.

And while most contributors and volunteers were motivated primarily to help beautify the lake, it's what happens once the litter is piled ashore that excites scientists.

Shoreline cleanups have occurred across the nation for years, from Arizona to the Great Lakes, Pennsylvania and Florida. But that litter goes into recycle bins and garbage bags for disposal.

Each piece from 189 separate Tahoe dives to depths of 25 feet (8 meters) was charted by GPS and meticulously divided into categories including plastic, metal and cloth.

Plastics are key because international research increasingly shows some types can break down into smaller pieces known as microplastics.

Scientists are still studying the extent and human harm from the tiny bits. But the National Academy of Sciences said in December the U.S. — the world's top plastics-waste producer — should reduce plastics production because so much winds up in oceans and waterways.

Zoe Harrold, a biochemist, led scientists at the Desert Research Institute in Reno that first documented microplastics in Tahoe in 2019. She was the lead author of Clean Up the Lake's 2021 report on a 6-mile (10-kilometer) pilot project.

"If left in place, the ongoing degradation of submerged litter, particularly plastic and rubber, will continue to slowly release microplastics and leachates into Lake Tahoe's azure waters," Harrold wrote.

The cleanup comes a half-century after scientists started measuring Tahoe's waning clarity as the basin began to experience explosive growth.

Most credit, or blame, completion of the interstate system for the 1960 Winter Olympics near Tahoe City. The first ever televised, it introduced the world to the lake surrounded by snow-covered peaks.

From 1960-80, Tahoe's population grew from 10,000 to 50,000 — 90,000 in the summer, the U.S. Geological Survey said. Peak days now approach 300,000.

"The majority of what we're pulling out is a result of basically just the human impact of recreating, living and building a community here in the Lake Tahoe region," West said.

His group plans dives this year at other Sierra lakes, including June Lake east of Yosemite National Park, and will expand future Tahoe searches to deeper depths.

The non-profit Tahoe Fund, which also helped raise \$100,000 for the cleanup effort, is commissioning artists to create a sculpture made from Tahoe's trash at an events center being built in Stateline, on the lake's south shore.

"Our hope is that it will inspire greater environmental stewardship and remind those who love Lake Tahoe that it's up to all of us to take care of it," Tahoe Fund CEO Amy Berry said.

## The AP Interview: US 'vulnerable' to COVID without new shots

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House COVID-19 coordinator Dr. Ashish Jha has issued a dire warning that the U.S. will be increasingly vulnerable to the coronavirus this fall and winter if Congress doesn't swiftly approve new funding for more vaccines and treatments.

In an Associated Press interview Thursday, Jha said Americans' immune protection from the virus is waning, the virus is adapting to be more contagious and booster doses for most people will be necessary — with the potential for enhanced protection from a new generation of shots.

His warning came as the White House said there could be up to 100 million infections from the virus later this year — and as President Joe Biden somberly ordered flags to half-staff to mark 1 million deaths.

"As we get to the fall, we are all going to have a lot more vulnerability to a virus that has a lot more immune escape than even it does today and certainly than it did six months ago," Jha said. "That leaves a lot of us vulnerable."

Jha predicted that the next generation of vaccines, which are likely to be targeted at the currently prevailing omicron strain, "are going to provide a much, much higher degree of protection against the virus that we will encounter in the fall and winter." But he warned that the U.S. is at risk of losing its place in line to other countries if Congress doesn't act in the next several weeks.

Speaking of a need to provide vaccination assistance to other nations, Jha cast the urgency in terms of the benefits to Americans, even if they never travel overseas.

"All of these variants were first identified outside of the United States," he said. "If the goal is to protect the American people, we have got to make sure the world is vaccinated. I mean, there's just no 'domestic-only' approach here."

His comments came after he and Biden addressed the second global COVID-19 vaccination summit and pressed for the international community not to get complacent in addressing the pandemic.

Here in the U.S., Biden requested \$22.5 billion in emergency funding for the virus response in March, but the money has been held up, first by sticker-shock in Congress and now amid wrangling over expiring pandemic-era migrant restrictions at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Jha said he's been making the case to lawmakers for additional funding for weeks, calling it a "very pared down request" and "the bare minimum that we need to get through this fall and winter without large loss of life."

The Food and Drug Administration is to meet in June to determine the specific strains of the virus that the fall vaccines will target, and Jha said it takes two to three months for manufacturers to develop them. Right now the U.S. has run out of federal COVID-19 response funding to place new orders of vaccines.

"If we had the resources we'd be there having those conversations today," said Jha. "The window is really closing on us if we want to be in the front of the line."

"I would say we're really kind of at that deadline and waiting much longer just puts us further back of the line," he added. "If we're willing to be in the back of the line and get our vaccines in the spring, we have plenty of time. But then we'll have missed the entire fall and winter. That's not an acceptable outcome, I think, for the American people."

Jha, who took over the job of coordinating the federal government's response to the virus a month ago, called the marking of 1 million American pandemic deaths a "somber" day.

"Every one of those deaths tragic, so many of them preventable," he said.

While acknowledging that "getting to zero is going to be a challenge," Jha said most deaths from the virus now are preventable, with vaccinations and boosters, and with effective therapeutics, The challenge is often making sure that they are available to people when they need them.

"We have so many capabilities and we've got to deploy them at full speed and at full capacity to make sure that nobody dies from this disease," he said.

Jha said there is "no viable alternative path" right now than to have the U.S. government take the lead

in securing COVID-19 vaccines and treatments, rather than allowing the commercial market deal with procurement as with other medical treatments. He cited the global mismatch between supply and demand.

"We have to have the US government still playing an active role," he said. "That role will change over time. But right now that's still critical."

"One of the things that we've been talking to Congress about is these tools are great — but only if you have them, only if you can use them," Jha said. "And without support from Congress it can be very hard to continue to protect the American people."

On an international subject, he addressed China's "zero COVID" policy, which has led to dramatic lockdowns in some of China's largest cities, disrupting everyday life and contributing to global supply chain issues.

"I don't think it makes sense," Jha said. He emphasized that U.S. strategy is "very different," with a focus on preventing serious illness and death.

"To me, that is a much more sustainable long-form management strategy," he said. "I think China's going to find it hard to continue this for the long haul."

## Madison Cawthorn tries to survive primary as slip-ups mount

By GARY D. ROBERTSON Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — U.S. Rep. Madison Cawthorn's prominent role as the youngest pro-Donald Trump agitator in Congress can rub people on the right and the left the wrong way in his North Carolina district.

That's made the 26-year-old culture warrior a social media political celebrity and successful fundraiser. He's near the top of the list of the former president's most vocal allies on Capitol Hill.

But a series of unforced political and personal errors has brought both the force of big-name state Republicans and traditional enemies to bear against Cawthorn's reelection bid. Some blunders have been headline-grabbing, like one that rankled GOP colleagues who believe he insinuated they were holding orgies and snorting cocaine. Others have been salacious, like recently released videos showing him in sexually suggestive poses.

But at home, the most consequential may have been when he decided to run for a different U.S. House seat, only to return to the mountainous 11th Congressional District that he now represents when redistricting litigation shifted the lines again.

The two top Republican leaders in the General Assembly have thrown their support to a Cawthorn rival — state Sen. Chuck Edwards, one of seven challengers in the May 17 primary. With Trump winning North Carolina twice and endorsing Cawthorn this year, his reelection in a Republican-leaning seat in a strong GOP year would have seemed likely.

Now, after just one term in office, the upstart congressman faces a tough primary challenge, with a difficult general election fight if he survives.

"I don't know what has happened to him, but I do know this: The people of western North Carolina have not been represented in Washington, D.C.," said Michele Woodhouse, who was once a Cawthorn ally but is now running against him.

U.S. Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C., endorsed Edwards in the race in late March, saying, "Cawthorn has fallen well short of the most basic standards western North Carolina expects from their representatives." A super PAC aligned with Tillis is taking the unusual action of spending \$1.5 million in the district on mailers and TV ads, one of which calls Cawthorn a "reckless embarrassment" and "dishonest disaster."

Cawthorn is fighting back, accusing the Washington establishment and Tillis of trying to shut him down.

"I have never folded in Washington and the swamp hates me for it," he says in an ad. "They want someone who will make backroom deals to sell out our values and someone who will abandon America First principles."

The 11th District field became crowded with well-known or well-funded challengers after Cawthorn decided in the fall to run in another district closer to Charlotte under boundaries retooled during redistricting that would have made his path to reelection much easier.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 37 of 68

But the statewide House map was struck down by state courts, and its reshaping ultimately forced Cawthorn in late February to return to what is largely the 11th District he currently represents. Meanwhile, Edwards, Woodhouse and other Republicans had been running there for months.

"It's clear that his interest was to move somewhere else and seek a political career someplace else after we, including myself in this district, worked to get him elected," Edwards said in an interview. "He turned his back on us."

Cawthorn's campaign said he wasn't available for an interview. Campaign spokesperson Luke Ball wrote in an email that the congressman is "focused on moving forward, uniting the NC-11 GOP, and winning the November election, not relitigating the redistricting process."

Cawthorn infuriated his fellow Republicans in Congress when he alleged on a podcast that he had been invited to an orgy in Washington and that he had seen leaders in the movement to end drug addiction use cocaine. House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy reprimanded him publicly for the remarks.

He's been stopped by police three times since October — two in which he was cited for speeding and one for driving with a revoked license. He's been caught with guns at airport checkpoints twice in the past year, including two weeks ago. He called Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy a "thug" after Russia invaded the country.

"It was analogous to ripping Santa Claus on Christmas Eve," said Chris Cooper, a Western Carolina University political science professor.

In a nearly eight-minute video posted on social media last week, Cawthorn apologized for speeding and acknowledged that carrying a gun through airport security was a mistake: "I have to own this one."

But he pushed back against other allegations made in news articles, calling them "outlandish." And he later described two videos depicting him in sexually suggestive poses as part of a "drip campaign" by his enemies to flood the district with negative stories in the race's final days.

"I was being crass with a friend, trying to be funny," he tweeted about one video. "We were acting foolish, and joking, that's it. I'm NOT backing down."

In 2020, many conservatives saw Cawthorn as a rising star who could bring young people into the party. He turned 25 — the constitutionally mandated minimum age to serve in the House — during the campaign.

Cawthorn, who uses a wheelchair after being partially paralyzed from a car accident as a teenager, vaulted to prominence by winning a primary runoff for the seat being vacated by Mark Meadows, Trump's chief of staff. Both Meadows and Trump had endorsed Cawthorn's primary rival, but the former president soon became an ally.

"I love him because he's never controversial," Trump joked at a rally last month with Cawthorn. "There's no controversy. But you know what? He loves this country. He loves this state and I'll tell you, he is respected all over the place. He's got a big voice."

Some constituents believe he's more interested in inflaming the culture wars or striking a pose on Instagram than helping the district.

Dairy farmer Bradley Johnston, 59, an unaffiliated voter from Henderson County, said Cawthorn seemed like a "smart young man" who "we all thought would go to Washington and represent the values that we liked."

"He just, in my opinion, has not conducted himself in the ways that he's going to be able to be much of a representative down the road," Johnston said. Registered independents can vote in the GOP primary, and Johnston is supporting hotel operator Bruce O'Connell.

Early in-person voting ends Saturday. If the top vote-getter after Tuesday doesn't receive more than 30% of the votes cast, the two leading candidates will go to a July runoff. In the six-candidate Democratic primary, minister and LGBTQ activist Jasmine Beach-Ferrara has been the top fundraiser.

Even if Cawthorn wins the primary, he's not yet fully avoided a formal challenge of his candidacy by voters who say he should be disqualified over his involvement in the "Stop the Steal" rally that preceded the Jan. 6 Capitol insurrection.

Cawthorn got a federal judge to block the state board of elections from examining the challenge. That ruling is on appeal.

While the 11th District, which stretches 160 miles from east of Asheville to the north Georgia border, is a haven for retirees, it could be new voters who decide the race.

"Madison is a very flashy person and a character himself," said Brian Penland, 22, of Franklin, a Western Carolina University student who declined to give his preference in the race. "Whether people like him or not ... he is here and he has made his stamp in western North Carolina. And the rest of it is up to the voters."

## Russian threats push Finland toward joining NATO alliance

By OLEKSANDR STASHEVSKYI Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Finland's leaders Thursday came out in favor of applying to join NATO, and Sweden could do the same within days, in a historic realignment on the continent 2 1/2 months after Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine sent a shiver of fear through Moscow's neighbors.

The Kremlin reacted by warning it will be forced to take retaliatory "military-technical" steps.

On the ground, meanwhile, Russian forces pounded areas in central, northern and eastern Ukraine, including the last pocket of resistance in Mariupol, as part its offensive to take the industrial Donbas region, while Ukraine recaptured some towns and villages in the northeast.

The first war-crimes trial of a Russian soldier since the start of the conflict is set to open Friday in Kyiv. A 21-year-old captured member of a tank unit is accused of shooting to death a civilian on a bicycle during the opening week of the war.

Finland's president and prime minister announced that the Nordic country should apply right away for membership in NATO, the military defense pact founded in part to counter the Soviet Union.

"You (Russia) caused this. Look in the mirror," Finnish President Sauli Niinisto said this week.

While the country's Parliament still has to weigh in, the announcement means Finland is all but certain to apply — and gain admission — though the process could take months to complete. Sweden, likewise, is considering putting itself under NATO's protection.

That would represent a major change in Europe's security landscape: Sweden has avoided military alliances for more than 200 years, while Finland adopted neutrality after its defeat by the Soviets in World War II.

Public opinion in both nations shifted dramatically in favor of NATO membership after the invasion, which stirred fears in countries along Russia's flank that they could be next.

Such an expansion of the alliance would leave Russia surrounded by NATO countries in the Baltic Sea and the Arctic and would amount to a stinging setback for Putin, who had hoped to divide and roll back NATO in Europe but is instead seeing the opposite happen.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg has said the alliance would welcome Finland and Sweden with open arms.

Russia's Foreign Ministry warned that Moscow "will be forced to take retaliatory steps of military-technical and other characteristics in order to counter the emerging threats to its national security."

NATO's funneling of weapons and other military support to Ukraine already has been critical to Kyiv's surprising success in stymieing the invasion, and the Kremlin warned anew in chilling terms Thursday that the aid could lead to direct conflict between NATO and Russia.

"There is always a risk of such conflict turning into a full-scale nuclear war, a scenario that will be catastrophic for all," said Dmitry Medvedev, deputy head of Russia's Security Council.

While Russia's advance in the Donbas has been slow, its forces have gained some ground and taken some villages.

Four civilians were killed Thursday in three communities in the Donetsk region, which is part of the Donbas, the regional governor reported.

Britain's Defense Ministry said Russia's focus on the Donbas has left its remaining troops around the northeastern city of Kharkiv vulnerable to counterattack from Ukrainian forces, which recaptured several towns and villages around the city.

Russian strikes Thursday killed at least two civilians on the outskirts of Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, local authorities said.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 39 of 68

The attacks also damaged a building housing a humanitarian aid unit, municipal offices and hospital facilities, Vyacheslav Zadorenko, the mayor of the suburban town of Derhachi, wrote in a Telegram post.

None of the sites "had anything to do with military infrastructure," Zadorenko said.

Fighting across the east has driven many thousands of Ukrainians from their homes.

"It is terrible there now. We were leaving under missiles," said Tatiana Kravstova, who left the town of Siversk with her 8-year-old son Artiom on a bus headed for the central city of Dnipro. "I don't know where they were aiming, but they were pointing at civilians."

Ukraine also said Russian forces had fired artillery and grenade launchers at Ukrainian troops around Zaporizhzhia, which has been a refuge for civilians fleeing Mariupol, and attacked in the Chernihiv and Sumy regions to the north.

Overnight airstrikes near Chernihiv, in northern Ukraine, killed at least three people, Ukraine's military said. It said that Russian troops fired rockets at a school and student dormitory in Novhorod-Siversky and that some other buildings, including private homes, were also damaged.

In his evening address to the nation, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy condemned the assaults.

"Of course, the Russian state is in such a state that any education only gets in its way," he said. "But what can be achieved by destroying Ukrainian schools? All Russian commanders who give such orders are simply sick and incurable."

Noting that Thursday is International Nurses Day, Zelenskyy said the Russian military had damaged 570 medical facilities since the invasion began on Feb. 24 and fully destroyed 101 hospitals.

Twelve Russian missiles struck an oil refinery and other infrastructure in the central Ukrainian industrial hub of Kremenchuk on Thursday, the region's acting governor, Dmytro Lunin, wrote in a Telegram post. In early April, he said, the refinery, which had been the last fully functional one in Ukraine at the time, was knocked offline by an attack.

In the southern port of Mariupol, which has largely been reduced to smoking rubble with little food, water or medicine, or what the mayor called a "medieval ghetto," Ukrainian fighters continued to hold out at the Azovstal steel plant, the last stronghold of resistance in the city.

Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said negotiations were underway with Russia to win the release of 38 severely wounded Ukrainian defenders from the plant. She said Ukraine hoped to exchange them for 38 "significant" Russian prisoners of war.

## Parents swap, sell baby formula as Biden focuses on shortage

By JOSH BOAK and PAT EATON-ROBB Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden stepped up his administration's response to a nationwide baby formula shortage Thursday that has forced frenzied parents into online groups to swap and sell to each other to keep their babies fed.

The president discussed with executives from Gerber and Reckitt how they could increase production and how his administration could help, and talked with leaders from Walmart and Target about how to restock shelves and address regional disparities in access to formula, the White House said.

The administration plans to monitor possible price gouging and work with trading partners in Mexico, Chile, Ireland and the Netherlands on imports, even though 98% of baby formula is domestically made.

The problem is the result of supply chain disruptions and a safety recall, and has had a cascade of effects: Retailers are limiting what customers can buy, and doctors and health workers are urging parents to contact food banks or physicians' offices, in addition to warning against watering down formula to stretch supplies or using online DIY recipes.

The shortage is weighing particularly on lower-income families after the recall by formula maker Abbott, stemming from contamination concerns. The recall wiped out many brands covered by WIC, a federal program like food stamps that serves women, infants and children, though the program now permits brand substitutes. The Biden administration is working with states to make it easier for WIC recipients to buy different sizes of formula that their benefits might not currently cover.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 40 of 68

About half of infant formula nationwide is purchased by participants using WIC benefits, according to the White House.

Clara Hinton, 30, of Hartford, Connecticut, is among that group. She has a 10-month-old daughter, Pa-tiennce, who has an allergy that requires a special formula.

Hinton, who has no car, has been taking the bus to the suburbs, going from town to town, and finally found some of the proper formula at a box store in West Hartford. But she said the store refused to take her WIC card, not the first time that has happened.

Hinton said her baby recently ran out of formula from an already opened can she got from a friend.

"She has no formula," she said. "I just put her on regular milk. What do I do? Her pediatrician made it clear I'm not supposed to be doing that, but what do I do?"

In Utah, fellow WIC card holder Elizabeth Amador has been going store-to-store every day after she finishes work at a call center in Salt Lake City in desperate search of one particular formula her 9-month-old daughter needs. She recently was down to only one can, but had four cans on Thursday. She said she won't stop her cumbersome daily routine until she knows the shortage is over.

"It sucks, you know because of high gas prices," Amador said. "We're having to drive everywhere to find formula. It's stressing."

Some parents are also using social media to bridge supply gaps.

Ashley Maddox, a 31-year-old mother of two from San Diego, started a Facebook group on Wednesday after failing to find formula for her 5-month-old son, Cole, at the commissary on the Navy base.

"I connected with a gal in my group and she had seven cans of the formula I need that were just sitting in her house that her baby didn't need anymore," she said. "So I drove out, it was about a 20-minute drive and picked it up and paid her. It was a miracle."

She said there was already a stigma attached to being a non-breastfeeding mom and that the group has become supportive. "To not be able to have that formula, it's scary," she said.

Jennifer Kersey, 36 of Cheshire, Connecticut, said she was down to her last can of formula for her 7-month-old son, Blake Kersey Jr., before someone saw her post on a Facebook group and came by with a few sample cans. She said she and others in the group are helping each other, finding stores that might have the formula in stock and getting it to mothers who need it.

"At first I was starting to panic," she said. "But, I'm a believer in the Lord, so I said, 'God, I know you're going to provide for me' and I just started reaching out to people, 'Hey do you have this formula?'"

Kimberly Anderson, 34, of Hartford County, Maryland, said her 7 1/2-month-old son takes a prescription formula that has been nearly impossible to find locally. She turned to social media and said people in Utah and Boston found the formula, which she paid to have shipped.

"They say it takes a village to raise a baby," she said. "Little did I know my village spans the entire U.S. as I ping friends, family for their zip codes so I can check their local Walmarts to have them ship directly to me."

Shortages of basic goods have been a problem since the start of the coronavirus pandemic. Access to medical supplies, computer chips, household appliances, cars and other goods has been hurt by closed factories and outbreaks of the virus, as well as storms and other climate-related events.

Parents desperately searching for infant formula on retailer websites such as Amazon and Google are being served up with products intended for toddlers, including powdered toddler goat milk and plant-based milk powders.

One banner ad across Amazon offers "organic non GMO formula for babies & toddlers," but a closer inspection of the product's image shows that it is only intended for children over 12 months. Other ads for toddler milk appear on Amazon's website on pages for out-of-stock infant formula.

Toddler milk cans often closely resemble that of infant formula, but the ingredients are distinct, with toddler milks sometimes boasting more sugar, calories, said Frances Fleming-Milici, UConn's Director of Marketing Initiatives at the Rudd Center who has studied toddler milk packaging. Toddler milk also does not follow FDA standards for formula.

"It's not like you're buying a pair of shoes. This is a little bit more serious," Fleming-Milici said. "It's serv-



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 41 of 68

ing up something that you should not be giving to your child.”

Dr. Navneet Hundal, a pediatric gastroenterologist at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, said she and other pediatricians have been grappling with the formula shortage for months. Formula companies have stopped giving out samples that she could pass on to parents, she said. She advises new parents to talk to their pediatricians to see if there are other brands of formula that they can safely give their newborns.

“This is ruling our clinical practices right now,” she said.

A safety recall compounded the challenges.

The Food and Drug Administration warned consumers on Feb. 17 to avoid some powdered baby formula products from a Sturgis, Michigan, facility run by Abbott Nutrition, which then initiated a voluntary recall. According to findings released in March by federal safety inspectors, Abbott failed to maintain sanitary conditions and procedures at the plant.

The FDA launched its investigation after four babies became sick with a rare bacterial infection after consuming formula manufactured at the plant. All four were hospitalized and two died. Chicago-based Abbott said in a statement, “there is no evidence to link our formulas to these infant illnesses.” Samples of the bacteria collected from the infants did not match those found in the company’s factory, Abbott noted.

Abbott said that pending FDA approval, “we could restart the site within two weeks.” The company would begin by first producing EleCare, Alimentum and metabolic formulas and then start production of Similac and other formulas. Once production began, it would take six to eight weeks for the baby formula to be available on shelves.

On Tuesday, the FDA said it was working with U.S. manufacturers to increase their output and streamline paperwork to allow more imports.

“We recognize that this is certainly a challenge for people across the country, something the president is very focused on and we’re going to do everything we can to cut red tape and take steps to increase supply,” White House press secretary Jen Psaki told reporters.

Meanwhile, the shortage got politicized Thursday as Republicans including Texas Gov. Greg Abbott criticized the Biden administration for providing baby formula to babies in detention at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Biden, in a Thursday letter to the Federal Trade Commission, pressed the independent agency to “bring all of the Commission’s tools to bear” to investigate and act in response to reports of fraud or price gouging as a result of the supply disruptions.

“It is unacceptable for families to lose time and spend hundreds of dollars more because of price gougers’ actions,” he wrote to FTC Chair Lina Khan.

## **The AP Interview: US ‘vulnerable’ to COVID without new shots**

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House COVID-19 coordinator Dr. Ashish Jha issued a dire warning Thursday that the U.S. will be increasingly vulnerable to the coronavirus this fall and winter if Congress doesn’t swiftly approve new funding for more vaccines and treatments.

In an Associated Press interview, Jha said Americans’ immune protection from the virus is waning, the virus is adapting to be more contagious and booster doses for most people will be necessary — with the potential for enhanced protection from a new generation of shots.

His warning came as the White House said there could be up to 100 million infections from the virus later this year — and as President Joe Biden somberly ordered flags to half-staff to mark 1 million deaths.

“As we get to the fall, we are all going to have a lot more vulnerability to a virus that has a lot more immune escape than even it does today and certainly than it did six months ago,” Jha said. “That leaves a lot of us vulnerable.”

Jha predicted that the next generation of vaccines, which are likely to be targeted at the currently prevailing omicron strain, “are going to provide a much, much higher degree of protection against the virus that we will encounter in the fall and winter.” But he warned that the U.S. is at risk of losing its place in line to other countries if Congress doesn’t act in the next several weeks.

Speaking of a need to provide vaccination assistance to other nations, Jha cast the urgency in terms of

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 42 of 68

the benefits to Americans, even if they never travel overseas.

"All of these variants were first identified outside of the United States," he said. "If the goal is to protect the American people, we have got to make sure the world is vaccinated. I mean, there's just no domestic-only approach here."

His comments came after he and Biden addressed the second global COVID-19 vaccination summit and pressed for the international community not to get complacent in addressing the pandemic.

Here in the U.S., Biden requested \$22.5 billion in emergency funding for the virus response in March, but the money has been held up, first by sticker-shock in Congress and now amid wrangling over expiring pandemic-era migrant restrictions at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Jha said he's been making the case to lawmakers for additional funding for weeks, calling it a "very pared down request" and "the bare minimum that we need to get through this fall and winter without large loss of life."

The Food and Drug Administration is to meet in June to determine the specific strains of the virus that the fall vaccines will target, and Jha said it takes two to three months for manufacturers to develop them. Right now the U.S. has run out of federal COVID-19 response funding to place new orders of vaccines.

"If we had the resources we'd be there having those conversations today," said Jha. "The window is really closing on us if we want to be in the front of the line."

"I would say we're really kind of at that deadline and waiting much longer just puts us further back of the line," he added. "If we're willing to be in the back of the line and get our vaccines in the spring, we have plenty of time. But then we'll have missed the entire fall and winter. That's not an acceptable outcome, I think, for the American people."

Jha, who took over the job of coordinating the federal government's response to the virus a month ago, called the marking of 1 million American pandemic deaths a "somber" day.

"Every one of those deaths tragic, so many of them preventable," he said.

While acknowledging that "getting to zero is going to be a challenge," Jha said most deaths from the virus now are preventable, with vaccinations and boosters, and with effective therapeutics, The challenge is often making sure that they are available to people when they need them.

"We have so many capabilities and we've got to deploy them at full speed and at full capacity to make sure that nobody dies from this disease," he said.

Jha said there is "no viable alternative path" right now than to have the U.S. government take the lead in securing COVID-19 vaccines and treatments, rather than allowing the commercial market deal with procurement as with other medical treatments. He cited the global mismatch between supply and demand.

"We have to have the US government still playing an active role," he said. "That role will change over time. But right now that's still critical."

"One of the things that we've been talking to Congress about is these tools are great — but only if you have them, only if you can use them," Jha said. "And without support from Congress it can be very hard to continue to protect the American people."

On an international subject, he addressed China's "zero COVID" policy, which has led to dramatic lockdowns in some of China's largest cities, disrupting everyday life and contributing to global supply chain issues.

"I don't think it makes sense," Jha said. He emphasized that U.S. strategy is "very different," with a focus on preventing serious illness and death.

"To me, that is a much more sustainable long-form management strategy," he said. "I think China's going to find it hard to continue this for the long haul."

## US reckoning with role in Native American boarding schools

By FELICIA FONSECA Associated Press

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — Deb Haaland is pushing the U.S. government to reckon with its role in Native American boarding schools like no other Cabinet secretary could — backed by personal experience, a

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 43 of 68

struggle with losing her own Native language and a broader community that has felt the devastating impacts.

The agency she oversees — the Interior Department — released a first-of-its-kind report this week that named the 408 schools the federal government supported to strip Native Americans of their cultures and identities. At least 500 children died at some of the schools, but that number is expected to reach into the thousands or tens of thousands as more research is done.

“We are uniquely positioned to assist in the effort to undercover the dark history of these institutions that have haunted our families for too long,” she said Wednesday during a news conference. “As a pueblo woman, it is my responsibility and, frankly, it’s my legacy.”

The U.S. government hasn’t been open to investigating itself to uncover the truth about boarding schools that operated from the late 18th century to the late 1960s. It’s possible now because people who know first-hand the persistent trauma caused by the boarding school system are positioned in the U.S. government.

Still, the work to uncover the truth and create a path for healing will rely on having financial resources in Indian Country, which the federal government has chronically underfunded.

Tribes will have to navigate federal laws on repatriation to take Native children who died and are buried at former boarding school sites home, if desired, and might have no recourse to access burial sites on private land. The causes of death included disease, accidental injuries and abuse.

Boarding school survivors also might be hesitant to recount the painful past and trust a government whose policies were to eradicate tribes and, later, assimilate them under the veil of education. Some have welcomed the opportunity to share their stories for the first time.

Haaland, the first and only Native American Cabinet secretary, has the support of President Joe Biden to investigate further. Congress has provided the Interior Department with \$7 million for its work on the next phase of the report, which will focus on burial sites, and identifying Native children and their ages. Haaland also said a year-long tour would seek to gather stories of boarding school survivors for an oral history collection.

A bill that’s previously been introduced in Congress to create a truth and healing commission on boarding schools got its first hearing Thursday. It’s sponsored by two Native American U.S. representatives — Democrat Sharice Davids of Kansas, who is Ho-Chunk, and Republican Tom Cole of Oklahoma, who is Chickasaw.

“Working with the Interior, knowing that there are representatives in the federal government who understand these experiences not just on a historical record but deep within their selves, their own personal stories, really makes a difference,” said Deborah Parker, chief executive of the National Native American Boarding Schools Healing Coalition and a member of the Tulalip Tribes.

More than two decades ago, Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Kevin Gover issued an apology for the emotional, psychological, physical and spiritual violence committed against children at the off-reservation schools. Then in 2009, President Barack Obama quietly signed off on an apology of sorts for “violence, maltreatment and neglect inflicted on Native Peoples by citizens of the United States.” The language was buried deep in a multibillion-dollar defense spending bill.

The proposed commission would have a broader scope than the Interior’s investigation to seek records with subpoena power. It would make recommendations to the federal government within five years of its passage, possible in the U.S. House but more difficult in the U.S. Senate.

Starting with the Indian Civilization Act of 1819, the U.S. enacted laws and policies to establish and support Native American Boarding Schools. The goal was to civilize Native Americans, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians. Religious and private institutions often received federal funding and were willing partners.

Capt. Richard Henry Pratt described the essence of the federal boarding schools in a speech he gave in 1892 where he said, “Kill the Indian and save the man.”

Minnesota resident Mitch Walking Elk ran away multiple times from boarding schools he attended in the late 1950s and early ‘60s because “my spirit knew it wasn’t a good place for me,” he said.

Boarding schools aren’t the only thing that has led him to distrust the federal government, even as it seems willing to uncover the past. In 1864, Walking Elk’s ancestors from the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes were

attacked in the Sand Creek Massacre. At least 200 people were killed, and victims' bodies were mutilated.

"I have reservations about what's going on right now because I don't trust them," said Walking Elk. "If Deb Haaland makes too many waves, the far right, the extremists will manufacture something to put the brakes on this."

Boarding school survivor Ramona Klein testified before Congress on Thursday, describing seeing her mother cry as her children got on a big, green bus for boarding school, being scrubbed with a stiff brush once there, and sleeping under a scratchy wool Army blanket. She put on a large rubber hand when she spoke of being touched at the school at night "like no child's body should be touched."

"Being in that boarding school was the loneliest time of my life," said Klein, a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa in North Dakota. "It has made it difficult for me to trust other people, including the people on this committee, with my emotions, my thoughts, my dreams and my physical being. And how could that not be the result?"

Republican Rep. Jay Obernolte of California said Congress would need to consider the financial investment in the proposed commission and whether those who serve would do so as a public service or be compensated.

"I'm not opposed to investing substantial taxpayer resources in this commission, but I think we need to be explicit about what those resources are," he said Thursday.

## Senate confirms Powell for 2nd term as Fed fights inflation

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate on Thursday confirmed Jerome Powell for a second four-year term as Federal Reserve chair, giving bipartisan backing to Powell's high-stakes efforts to curb the highest inflation in four decades.

The 80-19 vote reflected broad support in Congress for the Fed's drive to combat surging prices through a series of sharp interest rate hikes that could extend well into next year. The Fed's goal is to slow borrowing and spending enough to ease the inflation pressures.

Since February, when his first term expired, Powell had been leading the central bank in a temporary capacity.

He faces a difficult and risky task in trying to quell inflation without weakening the economy so much as to cause a recession. The job market remains robust and has strengthened to a point that Powell has said is "unsustainably hot" and contributing to an overheating economy.

Spiking prices across the economy have caused pain for millions of Americans whose wages aren't keeping up with the cost of such necessities as food, gas and rent. And the prospect of steadily higher interest rates has unsettled the financial markets, with stock prices having tumbled for weeks.

In an interview with NPR's "Marketplace" later Thursday, Powell acknowledged that the Fed's ability to successfully slow the economy and reduce inflation without causing a recession — a so-called "soft landing" — depends on "factors that we don't control," such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine and slowing growth in China.

That contrasts with previous, more-confident statements by Powell, including just last week when he said, "we have a good chance to have a soft or soft-ish landing."

Powell's support Thursday in the Senate was roughly in line with what he received four years ago, after he was first nominated as Chair by President Donald Trump. At that time, the Senate voted 84-13 to confirm him.

To some degree, Powell's support in Congress reflects the blame that most Republicans assign to President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion COVID relief package — rather than to the Fed's ultra-low rates — for causing high inflation. Many economists, including those who have served in previous Democratic administrations, agree that Biden's legislation played a role in accelerating prices.

Powell's confirmation comes as many economists have sharply criticized the Fed for waiting too long to respond to worsening inflation, making its task harder and riskier.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 45 of 68

Prices first spiked a year ago, after Americans ramped up their spending once vaccines were administered and COVID restrictions began to decline. The surge in demand caught many businesses unprepared and short on supplies, causing prices for goods like cars, furniture and appliances to soar — if consumers could even find them. High inflation has since spread to most of the rest of the economy, including rents and such other services as hotel rooms, restaurant meals and medical care.

For months, Powell repeated his view that inflation was merely “transitory” and would soon ease as supply bottlenecks were resolved. The Fed continued buying Treasury and mortgage bonds until March, when prices had soared 8.5% compared with a year earlier. The bond purchases were intended to keep long-term loan rates down. It was only two months ago that the central bank raised its benchmark rate from near zero to a range of 0.25% to 0.5%.

“They could have started to wind down (bond purchases) earlier, started to tighten monetary policy sooner, especially once this strong data started to come in,” said Kristin Forbes, an economist at MIT’s Sloan School of Management and a former member of the Bank of England’s monetary policy committee.

Powell and other officials have since acknowledged that the Fed could have started dialing back its stimulus earlier. They suggest, though, that most economists outside the Fed also initially thought high inflation would prove short-lived.

“Hindsight says we should have moved earlier,” Powell acknowledged during a Senate hearing in early March.

The Fed’s view that inflation mostly reflected supply shocks that would soon fade “turned out to be wrong,” Powell conceded, “not maybe conceptually wrong, but it’s just taking so much longer for the supply side to heal than we thought.”

Christopher Waller, a member of the Fed’s board, said last week that the central bank was partly thrown off by reports last August and September suggesting that the job market was weakening. Slower hiring would have made it harder for workers to secure sizable pay raises and so would have helped keep inflation in check.

But those hiring reports, and the three that followed, were later revised higher by a total of about 1.5 million jobs, Waller said, underscoring the extraordinarily high demand for labor that has also sharply raised wages.

“If we knew then what we know now, I believe (Fed policymakers) would have accelerated tapering (of bond purchases) and raised rates sooner,” Waller said Friday. “But no one knew, and that’s the nature of making monetary policy in real time.”

The Senate has already confirmed three of Biden’s other picks for the Fed’s Board of Governors: Lael Brainard, who is now vice chair, and Lisa Cook and Philip Jefferson. All three will vote on the central bank’s interest rate decisions and financial regulatory policies.

Cook and Jefferson are both Black, meaning that the Fed’s board now has two Black members for the first time in its 108-year history. Cook, an economics and international relations professor at Michigan State, will be the first Black woman to serve on the board.

Biden has also nominated Michael Barr, a former Treasury Department official who helped draft the 2010 Dodd-Frank financial regulation law, to be the Fed’s top banking regulator and fill the last open spot on the seven-member board. Sen. Sherrod Brown, the Ohio Democrat who is chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, said Thursday that his committee would hold a hearing on Barr’s nomination next week.

In the past, politicians have often objected to higher interest rates out of fear that they would cause job losses. The chronically high inflation of the 1970s has been attributed, in part, to political pressure that led the Fed to forgo steep rate hikes under Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon.

Powell himself endured harsh criticism by Trump when the Fed raised rates in 2017 and 2018 after the unemployment rate had reached a half-century low of 3.5%. Powell reversed some of those hikes in 2019, after the economy had slowed in the aftermath of Trump’s tariffs on Chinese imports.

This week, Biden said that while he would respect the Fed’s independence, he supported its efforts to raise borrowing rates, which have already caused the costs of mortgages, auto loans and business bor-

rowing to surge.

## **Powell: 'Soft' economic landing may be out of Fed's control**

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, fresh off winning Senate confirmation for a second term earlier in the day, acknowledged for the first time Thursday that high inflation and economic weakness overseas could thwart his efforts to avoid causing a recession.

For weeks, Powell has portrayed the Fed's drive to raise interest rates as consistent with a so-called "soft landing" for the economy. Under that scenario, the Fed would manage to tighten borrowing costs enough to cool the economy and curb inflation without going so far as to tip the economy into recession.

But in an interview on NPR's "Marketplace," Powell conceded that that balancing act — which many economists have said they doubt the Fed can achieve — could be undercut by economic slowdowns in Europe and China.

"The question whether we can execute a soft landing or not — it may actually depend on factors that we don't control," the Fed chair said. "There are huge events, geopolitical events going on around the world, that are going to play a very important role in the economy in the next year or so."

Such comments reflect less confidence in avoiding a recession than Powell has previously conveyed. Just last week, he said at a news conference: "I think we have a good chance to have a soft or softish landing or outcome."

On Thursday, he said that slowing inflation to the Fed's 2% annual target — from its current 6.6%, according to the central bank's preferred measure — "will also include some pain, but ultimately the most painful thing would be if we were to fail to deal with it and inflation were to get entrenched in the economy at high levels."

Europe's economies are suffering from high inflation, exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the resulting spike in natural gas and oil prices. Europe has been far more dependent on Russian energy supplies than the United States has been.

China's strict COVID lockdown policies have shut down ports, hindering exports and slowing consumer spending in cities like Shanghai, where millions of Chinese have been largely restricted to their homes for weeks.

In his interview with NPR, Powell also seemed to suggest that the Fed would at least consider raising its benchmark rate by an extremely large three-quarters of a point if inflation failed to show signs of easing in the coming months. Last week, the stock market initially soared when Powell appeared to take a three-quarter-point rate hike off the table.

After repeating his comment from last week that half-point hikes were likely at each of the next two Fed meetings, in June and July, Powell added Thursday: "If things come in better than we expect, then we're prepared to do less. If they come in worse than when we expect, then we're prepared to do more."

When asked if "do more" meant a three-quarter point hike, Powell said: "You've seen this committee adapt to the incoming data and the evolving outlook. And that's what we'll continue to do."

## **U.S. civil rights enforcers warn employers against biased AI**

By MATT O'BRIEN AP Technology Writer

The federal government said Thursday that artificial intelligence technology to screen new job candidates or monitor worker productivity can unfairly discriminate against people with disabilities, sending a warning to employers that the commonly used hiring tools could violate civil rights laws.

The U.S. Justice Department and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission jointly issued guidance to employers to take care before using popular algorithmic tools meant to streamline the work of evaluating employees and job prospects — but which could also potentially run afoul of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"We are sounding an alarm regarding the dangers tied to blind reliance on AI and other technologies

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 47 of 68

that we are seeing increasingly used by employers," Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the department's Civil Rights Division told reporters Thursday. "The use of AI is compounding the longstanding discrimination that jobseekers with disabilities face."

Among the examples given of popular work-related AI tools were resume scanners, employee monitoring software that ranks workers based on keystrokes, game-like online tests to assess job skills and video interviewing software that measures a person's speech patterns or facial expressions.

Such technology could potentially screen out people with speech impediments, severe arthritis that slows typing or a range of other physical or mental impairments, the officials said.

Tools built to automatically analyze workplace behavior can also overlook on-the-job accommodations — such as a quiet workstation for someone with post-traumatic stress disorder or more frequent breaks for a pregnancy-related disability — that enable employees to modify their work conditions to perform their jobs successfully.

Experts have long warned that AI-based recruitment tools — while often pitched as a way of eliminating human bias — can actually entrench bias if they're taking cues from industries where racial and gender disparities are already prevalent.

The move to crack down on the harms they can bring to people with disabilities reflects a broader push by President Joe Biden's administration to foster positive advancements in AI technology while reining in opaque and largely unregulated AI tools that are being used to make important decisions about people's lives.

"We totally recognize that there's enormous potential to streamline things," said Charlotte Burrows, chair of the EEOC, which is responsible for enforcing laws against workplace discrimination. "But we cannot let these tools become a high-tech path to discrimination."

A scholar who has researched bias in AI hiring tools said holding employers accountable for the tools they use is a "great first step," but added that more work is needed to rein in the vendors that make these tools. Doing so would likely be a job for another agency, such as the Federal Trade Commission, said Ifeoma Ajunwa, a University of North Carolina law professor and founding director of its AI Decision-Making Research Program.

"There is now a recognition of how these tools, which are usually deployed as an anti-bias intervention, might actually result in more bias — while also obfuscating it," Ajunwa said.

A Utah company that runs one of the best-known AI-based hiring tools — video interviewing service HireVue — said Thursday that it welcomes the new effort to educate workers, employers and vendors and highlighted its own work in studying how autistic applicants perform on its skills assessments.

"We agree with the EEOC and DOJ that employers should have accommodations for candidates with disabilities, including the ability to request an alternate path by which to be assessed," said the statement from HireVue CEO Anthony Reynolds.

## **EXPLAINER: What's behind the baby formula shortage?**

By MATTHEW PERRONE AP Health Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Many parents are hunting for infant formula because of a combination of short- and long-term problems that has hit most of the biggest U.S. brands.

Millions of babies in the U.S. rely on formula, which is the only source of nutrition recommended for infants who aren't exclusively breastfed.

Here's a look at what's behind the problem and what parents can do:

### **WHY IS THERE A SHORTAGE?**

Ongoing supply disruptions have combined with a recent safety recall to leave many pharmacy and supermarket shelves bare.

The problems began last year as the COVID-19 pandemic led to disruptions in labor, transportation and raw materials — economy-wide issues that didn't spare the formula industry. Inventory was further squeezed by parents stockpiling during COVID-19 lockdowns.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 48 of 68

Then in February, Abbott Nutrition recalled several major brands of powdered formula and shut down its Sturgis, Michigan, factory when federal officials began investigating four babies who suffered bacterial infections after consuming formula from the facility.

Abbott is one of only a handful of companies that produce the vast majority of the U.S. formula supply, so their recall wiped out a large segment of the market.

## WHAT IS IN BABY FORMULA?

Most formulas contain protein from cow's milk that's been altered to be easier to digest and enhanced with extra nutrients needed for growth and development. The Food and Drug Administration sets specific nutritional requirements, including minimum amounts of protein, fat, calcium and a number of vitamins. Formula makers achieve those levels by adding various sugars, oils and minerals.

The formulas are designed to mimic breast milk, though studies have repeatedly shown better health outcomes for babies who are breastfed.

## WHY CAN'T ALL MOTHERS RELY ON BREAST MILK?

Health professionals recommend exclusively breastfeeding babies until they are 6 months old. But federal figures show that only 1 in 4 are relying solely on breast milk at that age.

Mothers face a number of challenges to long-term breastfeeding, including returning to work and finding the time and equipment needed to pump breast milk. About 60% of mothers stop breastfeeding sooner than they had planned, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

State and federal laws have been enacted to encourage breastfeeding by requiring break time and accommodations for mothers of infants.

Rates of breastfeeding have consistently been lower among Black babies than other groups. About three quarters of Black babies are breast fed in infancy, below the national average of 84%, according to the CDC.

## WHAT SHOULD PARENTS DO IF THEY ARE HAVING TROUBLE FINDING FORMULA?

Talk with your pediatrician or call a local food bank to see if they can help locate some options. Experts also recommend checking with smaller stores and pharmacies, which may still have supplies when larger stores run out.

Most regular baby formulas contain the same basic ingredients and nutrients, so parents shouldn't hesitate to buy a different brand if they're having trouble finding their regular one.

Some infants require specialty formulas due to allergies, digestive problems and other medical conditions. Parents should talk to their doctor if they can't find those products, which manufacturers usually distribute through pharmacies and clinics.

Families that qualify for WIC — a federal program similar to food stamps that pays for about half the formula used in the U.S. — can also contact their local agency.

Health officials also warn against buying formula via social media websites or outside of conventional retailers because they could be counterfeit.

## WHY ARE PARENTS TOLD NOT TO USE MAKE-YOUR-OWN FORMULA RECIPES ONLINE?

Many do-it-yourself formula recipes are made from cow's milk and granular sugar that may be difficult for young babies to digest. They also lack the specific vitamins and proteins found in breastmilk and FDA-approved formulas that are needed for basic nutrition.

"Particularly for small babies, many of these formulas and mixtures that are found online don't contain even the most basic nutrient mixes that babies need to survive," said Dr. Steven Abrams, a pediatrician at the University of Texas, Austin.

Abrams also stressed that parents should never dilute infant formula.

## WHAT ARE RETAILERS DOING TO KEEP FORMULA IN STOCK?

Several national chains have limited the number of containers customers can purchase in stores and online. For CVS and Walgreens, the limit is three per customer. Target limits purchases to four per person when buying online.

Amazon said Thursday it is working to keep the products available on its website and monitoring third-party sellers for price-gouging.



"If we identify a price that violates our policy, we remove the offer and take appropriate action with the seller," a company spokesperson said in a statement.

#### WHEN ARE SUPPLIES LIKELY TO IMPROVE?

Health regulators recently announced several steps designed to boost supply, including allowing faster importation of formula made overseas. Typically, 98% of baby formula consumed in the U.S. is made domestically, according to federal officials.

The FDA is working with Abbott to fix the violations that triggered the shutdown of its Michigan plant, which produces Similac, EleCare and several other leading powdered formulas.

The company says its products have not been directly linked to the bacterial infections in children, pointing out that genetic samples collected from its factory did not match those found in several infants who got sick.

The Chicago-based company said this week that, pending FDA approval, it could restart manufacturing at its plant within two weeks. After that it would take another six to eight weeks before new products hit store shelves.

But even then, experts caution that many of the industrywide issues will continue to restrain supplies.

"This is going to be a problem and it's not going away for at least a period of several months," Abrams said.

## Surfside families still want answers despite settlement

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON and TERRY SPENCER SURFSIDE, Fla.

Gathered at a ceremony Thursday to honor the 98 people who died in a Florida condominium collapse last summer, some of the victims' family members said they are too deep in mourning to contemplate the nearly \$1 billion settlement their attorneys negotiated on their behalf.

Families and local officials gathered at the chain-link fence surrounding the vacant lot where Champlain Towers South once stood for the unveiling of temporary banners adorned with the victims' names and ages under the heading "Fathers, Mothers, Sons, Daughters, Brothers, Sisters."

The ceremony took place a day after the surprise announcement that a \$997 million settlement had been reached in the families' lawsuit against local officials, the developers of an adjacent building and others whom they hold responsible for the collapse of the 40-year-old, 12-story beachside building during the early hours of June 24.

For Ronit Felszer Naibryf, whose 21-year-old son Ilan Naibryf was killed in the collapse, it feels like she lost a limb with his death, so it is impossible to fathom the settlement.

"I am still processing that loss," Naibryf said. "Everything else is a little bit of noise."

Pablo Rodriguez, who lost his mother and grandmother in the collapse, said the settlement was the best result the families could hope for legally.

"The speed with which this was resolved was pleasantly surprising," he said. "My biggest concern is that there isn't any accountability and the legislature hasn't done anything to remediate the situation."

Most of the Champlain Towers South collapsed suddenly about 1:20 a.m. June 24 as most of its residents slept. Only three people survived the initial collapse. No other survivors were found despite the around-the-clock efforts of rescuers who dug through a 40-foot (12-meter) pile of rubble for two weeks. Another three dozen people were in the portion of the building that remained standing.

The condominium's residents and visitors formed a melting pot: Orthodox Jews, Latin Americans, Israelis, Europeans and snowbirds from the Northeast.

Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, who visited the site daily during the search, said Thursday's ceremony and the banners were to assure "we forever remember and honor the lives lost."

Newly elected Surfside Mayor Shlomo Danzinger said the idea for the signs came to him when he was driving past the site with his teenage daughter, who had been in the area during the collapse and got stuck in a dust cloud. Danzinger said she confided that driving by the area always makes her sad.

"We wanted to make sure that people driving by or walking by will see those names and will remember

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 50 of 68

what happened," he said. A permanent memorial is planned.

The speed and size of the proposed \$997 million settlement stunned even Circuit Court Judge Michael Hanzman, who is presiding over the lawsuit, when it was announced at a hearing Wednesday.

"It's fantastic," Hanzman said during the hearing. "This is a recovery that is far in excess of what I had anticipated."

In comparison, the families of the 3,000 victims of 9/11 split \$7 billion. The settlement still requires final approval and will grow after the building's lot is sold at auction later this month. An opening bid of \$120 million has already been filed.

Harley S. Tropin, who represents the Champlain Towers families, credited the judge for setting the conditions that led to the lawsuit's speedy conclusion. Rather than let the suit take four or five years, as is typical in such cases, Hanzman made it clear this case would go to trial quickly if the sides couldn't settle.

"That put enormous pressure on everyone — the plaintiffs and defendants," Tropin said Thursday. "This tragedy was unique and I think the defendants along with everyone in the courtroom wanted to see if there was a reasonable way to provide some closure."

Specifics of the settlement or how it will be distributed have not been released. Defendants include developers, builders and others involved in the Eighty Seven Park Condo, the luxury building erected five years ago just south of Champlain South; the company that provided alarms and safety systems for Champlain South, which allegedly failed to alert the residents; and the town of Surfside.

Residents of Champlain South and victims' families have blamed vibrations caused by the construction of Eighty Seven Park Condo for weakening the structural wall that supported their building's pool deck. The deck's collapse on June 24 started the cascade of structural failures that ended with the building's partial collapse seven minutes later.

The developers of Eighty Seven Park insist their building was constructed safely and played no part in the collapse. Their attorney, Michael Thomas, said in a statement that their participation in the settlement is not an admission of culpability.

"Our clients' insurers made a business decision to contribute to the overall settlement of this litigation in order to resolve claims against them and avoid the time, expense, and inconvenience of litigation," Thomas wrote. "The design, development, and construction of Eighty Seven Park in no way caused or contributed to the collapse of Champlain Towers South."

The National Institute of Standards and Technology is investigating the cause of the collapse, a process that is expected to take years. Shoddy construction techniques used in the early 1980s when Champlain Towers South was built and a possible lack of proper maintenance by its condo association over the years are two other areas being explored.

Pablo Langesfeld, who lost his 26-year-old daughter, Nicole, said he will not even begin to experience emotional closure until that investigation is complete.

Even then, closure might not happen, but it "is going to be closer when we know who's at fault," he said.

## North Korea confirms 1st COVID outbreak, Kim orders lockdown

By KIM TONG-HYUNG and HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea imposed a nationwide lockdown Thursday to control its first acknowledged COVID-19 outbreak after holding for more than two years to a widely doubted claim of a perfect record keeping out the virus that has spread to nearly every place in the world.

The outbreak forced leader Kim Jong Un to wear a mask in public, likely for the first time since the start of the pandemic, but the scale of transmissions inside North Korea wasn't immediately known.

A failure to slow infections could have serious consequences because the country has a poor health care system and its 26 million people are believed to be mostly unvaccinated. Some experts say North Korea, by its rare admission of an outbreak, may be seeking outside aid.

However, hours after North Korea confirmed the outbreak, South Korea's military said it detected the North had fired three suspected ballistic missiles toward the sea. It was its 16th round of missile launches

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 51 of 68

this year — brinkmanship aimed at forcing the United States to accept North Korea as a nuclear power and negotiate sanctions relief and other concessions from a position of strength.

The official Korean Central News Agency said tests of virus samples collected Sunday from an unspecified number of people with fevers in the capital, Pyongyang, confirmed they were infected with the omicron variant.

In response, Kim called at a ruling party Politburo meeting for a thorough lockdown of cities and counties and said workplaces should be isolated by units to block the virus from spreading. He urged health workers to step up disinfection efforts at workplaces and homes and mobilize reserve medical supplies.

Kim said it was crucial to control transmissions and eliminate the infection source as fast as possible, while also easing inconveniences to the public caused by the virus controls. He insisted the country will overcome the outbreak because its government and people are “united as one.”

Despite the elevated virus response, Kim ordered officials to push ahead with scheduled construction, agricultural development and other state projects while bolstering the country’s defense posture to avoid any security vacuum.

North Korea’s state TV showed Kim and other senior officials wearing masks as they entered a meeting room, although Kim removed his mask to speak into a set of microphones. Still photos distributed by KNCA showed Kim unmasked and sitting at the head of a table where all other officials remained masked.

South Korea’s Unification Ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs, couldn’t immediately confirm whether it was the first time state media showed Kim wearing a mask since the start of the pandemic. Kim has previously spoken to huge crowds without a mask as he praised the country’s earlier pandemic response, and his decision to be seen with a mask could be aimed at raising public vigilance.

North Korea, which has maintained strict anti-virus controls at its borders for more than two years, didn’t provide further details about its new lockdown. But an Associated Press photographer on the South Korean side of the border saw dozens of people working in fields or walking on footpaths at a North Korean border town — an indication the lockdown doesn’t require people to stay home, or it exempts farm work.

The measures described in state media and Kim’s declaration that economic goals should still be met could indicate that North Korea is focusing more on restricting travel and supplies between regions, analyst Cheong Seong-Chang at South Korea’s Sejong Institute said.

North Korea’s government has shunned vaccines offered by the U.N.-backed COVAX distribution program, possibly because they have international monitoring requirements.

Seoul’s Unification Ministry said South Korea is willing to provide medical assistance and other help to North Korea based on humanitarian considerations. Relations between the Koreas have deteriorated since 2019 amid a stalemate in nuclear negotiations and the North’s increasingly provocative weapons tests.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said Beijing is offering North Korea help in dealing with the outbreak. North Korea has reportedly rejected previous Chinese offers of domestically developed vaccines.

Kim Sin-gon, a professor at Seoul’s Korea University College of Medicine, said North Korea is likely signaling its willingness to receive outside vaccines, but wants many more doses than offered by COVAX to inoculate its entire population multiple times. He said North Korea would also want COVID-19 medicines and medical equipment shipments that are banned by U.N. sanctions.

Omicron spreads much more easily than earlier variants of the coronavirus, and its fatality and hospitalization rates are high among unvaccinated older people or those with existing health problems. That means the outbreak could cause “a serious situation” because North Korea lacks medical equipment and medicine to treat virus patients and many of its people are not well-nourished, Kim Sin-gon said.

Ahn Kyung-su, head of DPRKHEALTH.ORG, a website focusing on health issues in North Korea, said North Korea’s admission of the outbreak is likely designed to press its people harder to guard against the virus as China, which shares a long, porous border with the North, has placed many of its cities under lockdown over virus concerns.

North Korea will also likely stress lockdowns, although the experience of China’s “zero-COVID” policy

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 52 of 68

suggests that approach doesn't work against the fast-moving omicron variant, said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor of international studies at Seoul's Ewha Womans University.

"For Pyongyang to publicly admit omicron cases, the public health situation must be serious," Easley said.

North Korea's previous coronavirus-free claim had been disputed by many foreign experts. But South Korean officials have said North Korea had likely avoided a huge outbreak, in part because it instituted strict virus controls almost from the start of the pandemic.

Early in 2020 — before the coronavirus spread around the world — North Korea took severe steps to keep out the virus and described them as a matter of "national existence." It all but halted cross-border traffic and trade for two years, and is believed to have ordered troops to shoot on sight any trespassers who crossed its borders.

The extreme border closures further shocked an economy already damaged by decades of mismanagement and U.S.-led sanctions over its nuclear weapons and missile program, pushing Kim to perhaps the toughest moment of his rule since he took power in 2011.

North Korea had been one of the last places in the world without an acknowledged COVID-19 case after the virus first detected in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in late 2019 spread to every continent including Antarctica. Turkmenistan, a similarly secretive and authoritarian nation in Central Asia, has reported no cases to the World Health Organization, though its claim also is widely doubted by outside experts.

In recent months, some Pacific island nations that kept the virus out by their geographic isolation have recorded outbreaks. Only tiny Tuvalu, with a population around 12,000, has escaped the virus so far, while a few other nations — Nauru, Micronesia and Marshall Islands — have stopped cases at their borders and avoided community outbreaks.

North Korea's outbreak comes as China — its close ally and trading partner — battles its biggest outbreak of the pandemic.

In January, North Korea tentatively reopened railroad freight traffic between its border town of Sinuiju and China's Dandong for the first time in two years, but China halted the trade last month due to an outbreak in Liaoning province, which borders North Korea.

## Kentucky Derby winner Rich Strike not running in Preakness

By STEPHEN WHYNO AP Sports Writer

Rich Strike will not run in the Preakness after his major upset to win the Kentucky Derby, keeping horse racing from having a Triple Crown winner for a fourth consecutive year.

Owner Rich Dawson made the stunning announcement Thursday, 10 days before the race in Maryland.

Dawson said he and trainer Eric Reed agreed to stick with the initial plan for Rich Strike and rest him for five weeks. Rich Strike, at 80-1, was the biggest long shot to win the Derby in more than a century. Only Donerail in 1913 paid more to win.

The plan now is to have Rich Strike ready to run in the Belmont Stakes in New York on June 11. Dawson said it was wise for the colt to get extra rest and not face a short, two-week turnaround at Pimlico.

"It's very, very tempting to alter our course and run in the Preakness at Pimlico, which would be a great honor for all our group," Dawson said in a news release. "However, after much discussion and consideration ... we are going to stay with our plan of what's best for Ritchie.

"We thank the wonderful Preakness and Pimlico folks that have reached out and very much appreciate the invite."

Reed did not immediately respond to a message from The Associated Press seeking comment.

Rich Strike was not expected to be the morning-line favorite for the Preakness, with Derby runner-up Epicenter and Kentucky Oaks winner Secret Oath set to be part of the field. He could have been the first Derby winner not to go off as the Preakness favorite at post time since 2012 when I'll Have Another won the first two legs of the Triple Crown.

With Rich Strike's surprise withdrawal, the Preakness will go on without the official Derby champion for the second time in four years. Country House and disqualified winner Maximum Security skipped the race

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 53 of 68

in 2019.

Bob Baffert-trained Medina Spirit finished third in the 2021 Preakness after testing positive following the Derby for a substance not allowed on race day. Mandaloun, who was elevated to the 2021 Derby win long after Medina Spirit tested positive, did not run in the Preakness last year.

Rich Strike's incredible charge past the leaders down the stretch at Churchill Downs after being initially left out of the Derby field became one of the biggest upsets in sports. The owners, trainer Reed and jockey Sonny Leon had all never won the race.

Adding to the impressive tale, Rich Strike had won only once before and had been claimed for \$30,000 — pennies in racing and unlikely for Derby-caliber horses.

Neither Reed nor the Maryland Jockey Club immediately responded to messages from the AP seeking comment.

With Rich Strike pointing to the Belmont, the Preakness appears to be a wide-open race among horses back from the Derby, potentially including Zandon and fourth-place finisher Simplification. Trainer Chad Brown, who saddles Zandon, is also expected to enter Early Voting.

Horse racing has had two recent Triple Crown winners: American Pharoah in 2015 and Justify in 2018. Each was trained by Baffert, who is currently serving a suspension in Kentucky for medication violations that is being observed in Maryland and elsewhere. Baffert transferred Derby horses Taiba and Messier to former assistant Tim Yakteen.

Neither is expected to run in the Preakness.

Longtime Baffert friend D. Wayne Lukas confirmed Wednesday that filly Secret Oath would run in the Preakness and decided to pick a different race next Saturday for Ethereal Road — the horse that was scratched to make room in the Derby for Rich Strike. \_\_\_\_

## FIFA takes on EA Sports video game in soccer's new rivalry

By ROB HARRIS AP Global Soccer Writer

LONDON (AP) — The name "FIFA" can bring to mind images of the World Cup and soccer's greatest players, like Pele, Zinedine Zidane or Lionel Messi. The acronym for the sport's governing body may also remind some of shameless bribery and corruption.

For many, though, it's the video game that is synonymous with FIFA.

For three decades, the Switzerland-based soccer body has enjoyed a flourishing, mutually beneficial relationship with EA Sports. The annual edition of the video game, alongside related products, has raked in billions of dollars and has proven to be so lucrative that FIFA thinks it can be making even more on its own.

FIFA severed the licensing deal partnership with Electronic Arts Inc. on Tuesday, making FIFA23 the last new EA game with the involvement of both sides.

They are now becoming opponents.

EA will continue to make soccer games with best players and biggest teams, they will just be stripped of the FIFA brand and instead called EA Sports FC.

Confusingly, perhaps, FIFA24 should also be on the shelves next year because the soccer body is determined to go ahead with its own launch.

EA has already begun to highlight its advantages over the FIFA game, given it has the rights to show 19,000 players from more than 700 teams in more than 30 leagues playing in 100 stadiums. Manchester United, Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain will still be there, along with their best players.

"That is the only place that you can have an authentic, famous and fully representative football experience," David Jackson, vice president of brand for EA SPORTS FIFA, told The Associated Press. "I do think that there is an element of potential confusion in the marketplace."

The hyperbole from FIFA is already trying to undercut EA's marketing by claiming it is in talks with multiple rival gaming companies and has plans to enter the metaverse.

"I can assure you," FIFA President Gianni Infantino said, "that the only authentic, real game that has the FIFA name will be the best one available for gamers and football fans."

How that will be achieved is far from clear, although FIFA does hold the rights to the biggest soccer

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 54 of 68

show on earth. The World Cup will disappear from the EA game.

"The FIFA name is the only global, original title," Infantino said. "FIFA 23, FIFA 24, FIFA 25 and FIFA 26, and so on — the constant is the FIFA name and it will remain forever and remain the best."

That kind of bombastic talk puts pressure on FIFA to deliver on Infantino's vision for a game that usurps the EA franchise despite not having the rights to feature leagues such as the Premier League — and the teams that play in them.

"New entrants would face a steep licensing curve to compete with EA," said Andrew Marok, an analyst covering the digital media sector at investment bank Raymond James.

Soccer gaming is big business for EA. The annual report issued this week showed revenue of \$6.19 billion.

"We've just had our biggest year — ever — for EA SPORTS FIFA games," EA Sports CEO Andrew Wilson told investors on Wednesday, a day after it was announced the FIFA deal would cease at the end of the year.

A huge part of the revenue comes from the Ultimate Team mode, where customers buy extra content in EA sports games. That generated \$1.623 billion in 2021.

"We have historically derived a significant portion of our net revenue from sales related to our largest and most popular game, FIFA, annualized versions of which are consistently one of the best-selling games in the marketplace," EA told investors.

Brand loyalty will be key starting next year. Will gamers stay with EA's rebranded product or jump to the rival being launched by FIFA?

It's already a competitive market with eFootball, the former Pro Evolution Soccer game produced by Japanese firm Konami. That game has a partnership with Manchester United, though the record 20-time English champions will still feature in EA's game through a Premier League agreement.

EA has already warned its investors of the risks to its soccer gaming business from rivals.

"Any events or circumstances that negatively impact our FIFA franchise, such as product or service quality, other products that take a portion of consumer spending and time, the delay or cancellation of a product or service launch, increased competition for key licenses, or real or perceived security risks, could negatively impact our financial results to a disproportionate extent," EA said in its annual report.

EA should get an edge over FIFA by retaining its 300 license partners, 30 leagues and federations, 700 teams and 19,000 athletes, JPMorgan analyst David Karnovsky said in a client note.

"While it's difficult to think there won't be at least some impact from the brand shift to sales, the \$150 million available from the absence of a license fee to FIFA provides ample room for marketing to drive awareness around EA Sports FC," Karnovsky wrote.

Untangling itself from the world of soccer politics has its benefits for EA. Tensions between regional confederations have led to European body UEFA and South American counterpart CONMEBOL circumventing FIFA to launch their own meeting of champions. The debut of the Finalissima will see Italy and Argentina meet at Wembley Stadium in London on June 1. It would seem incongruous for EA to promote its FIFA game at the match.

"What name would we put on a perimeter board in a UEFA-CONMEBOL event? It's really tough for us to put FIFA on there," said Jackson, EA's vice president of brand. "What has previously been a springboard for our brand, and an accelerant to it many years ago, has just become less valuable to us over time."

EA might just have saved the FIFA brand as well. The fond association with the video game by so many fans has balanced against the toxicity of Sepp Blatter-era organization after the opening of sprawling criminal investigations into soccer corruption in 2015.

"If you ask a young football fan what FIFA is, they're more likely to say a video game than they are the global governing body, but that value lives with us, I believe," Jackson said. "We are the predominant voice in the world of football from an interactive entertainment perspective, and we don't see a world where that changes."

## Astronomers capture 1st image of Milky Way's huge black hole

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 55 of 68

WASHINGTON (AP) — The world's first image of the chaotic supermassive black hole at the center of our Milky Way galaxy doesn't portray a voracious cosmic destroyer but what astronomers Thursday called a "gentle giant" on a near-starvation diet.

Astronomers believe nearly all galaxies, including our own, have these giant black holes at their bustling and crowded center, where light and matter cannot escape, making it extremely hard to get images of them. Light gets bent and twisted around by gravity as it gets sucked into the abyss along with superheated gas and dust.

The colorized image unveiled Thursday is from an international consortium behind the Event Horizon Telescope, a collection of eight synchronized radio telescopes around the world. Getting a good image was a challenge; previous efforts found the black hole too jumpy.

"It burbled and gurgled as we looked at it," the University of Arizona's Feryal Ozel said.

She described it as a "gentle giant" while announcing the breakthrough along with other astronomers involved in the project. The picture also confirms Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity: The black hole is precisely the size that Einstein's equations dictate. It is about the size of the orbit of Mercury around our sun.

Black holes gobble up galactic material but Ozel said this one is "eating very little." It's the equivalent to a person eating a single grain of rice over millions of years, another astronomer said.

"Pictures of black holes are the hardest thing to think about," said astronomer Andrea Ghez of the University of California, Los Angeles. She wasn't part of the telescope team but earned a Nobel Prize for the discovery of the Milky Way's black hole in the 1990s.

She said the image of "my baby" is exactly how it should be — an eerie-looking orange-red ring with utter blackness in the middle.

Scientists had expected the Milky Way's black hole to be more violent, especially since the only other image from another galaxy shows a far bigger and more active black hole.

"It is the cowardly lion of black holes," said project scientist Geoffrey C. Bower of Taiwan's Academia Sinica Institute of Astronomy and Astrophysics.

Because the black hole "is on a starvation diet" so little material is falling into the center, and that allows astronomers to gaze deeper, Bower said.

The Milky Way black hole is called Sagittarius A (with an asterisk denoting star). It's near the border of Sagittarius and Scorpius constellations and is 4 million times more massive than our sun. Bower said it is probably more typical of what's at the center of most galaxies, "just sitting there doing very little."

It is incredibly hot, trillions of degrees, Ozel said.

The same telescope group released the first black hole image in 2019. The picture was from a galaxy 53 million light-years away that is 1,500 times bigger than the one in our galaxy. The Milky Way black hole is much closer, about 27,000 light-years away. A light year is 5.9 trillion miles (9.5 trillion kilometers).

To get the picture, the eight telescopes had to coordinate so closely "in a process similar to everyone shaking hands with everyone else in the room," said astronomer Vincent Fish of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Astronomers worked with data collected in 2017 to get the new images. The next step is a movie of one of those two black holes, maybe both, Fish said.

The project cost nearly \$60 million with \$28 million coming from the U.S. National Science Foundation.

Even though it is quieter than expected, the center of the Milky Way is an important place to study, Ghez said.

It's "like an urban downtown, everything is more extreme. It's crowded. Things move fast," Ghez said in an interview. "We live out in the suburbs (in a spiral arm of the galaxy). Things are calm out here."

## Report: Trump officials, meat companies knew workers at risk

By JOSH FUNK Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the meat processing industry

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 56 of 68

worked closely with political appointees in the Trump administration to stave off health restrictions and keep slaughterhouses open even as the virus spread rapidly among workers, according to a congressional report released Thursday.

The report by the House's Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis said meat companies pushed to keep their plants open even though they knew workers were at high risk of catching the coronavirus. The lobbying led to health and labor officials watering down their recommendations for the industry and culminated in an executive order President Donald Trump issued in spring 2020 designating meat plants as critical infrastructure that needed to remain open.

Democratic Rep. Jim Clyburn, who leads the subcommittee, said U.S. Department of Agriculture officials and the industry prioritized production and profits over the health of workers and communities as at least 59,000 workers caught the virus and 269 died.

"The shameful conduct of corporate executives pursuing profit at any cost during a crisis and government officials eager to do their bidding regardless of resulting harm to the public must never be repeated," Clyburn said.

Former Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, who now leads the University System of Georgia, declined to comment Thursday. A spokesman for the university system said Perdue is focused on "serving the students of Georgia."

The report is based on communications among industry executives, lobbyists and USDA officials and other documents the committee received from government agencies, Tyson Foods, Smithfield Foods, JBS, Cargill, National Beef, Hormel and other companies. Those firms control 85% of the beef market and 70% of pork production nationwide.

The North American Meat Institute trade group said the report distorts the truth and ignores the steps companies took as they spent billions to retool plants and purchase protective gear for workers.

"The House Select Committee has done the nation a disservice," the trade group's President and CEO Julie Anna Potts said. "The Committee could have tried to learn what the industry did to stop the spread of COVID among meat and poultry workers, reducing positive cases associated with the industry while cases were surging across the country. Instead, the Committee uses 20/20 hindsight and cherry picks data to support a narrative that is completely unrepresentative of the early days of an unprecedented national emergency."

A major union that represents workers at the processing plants condemned the way the Trump administration helped the industry.

"We only wish that the Trump Administration cared as much about the lives of working people as it did about meat, pork and poultry products, when we wanted poultry plants to shut down for deep cleaning and to save workers' lives," said Stuart Appelbaum, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union.

The report said meat companies were slow to take measures to protect workers from the virus and pushed to make government recommendations to require masks to be worn, install dividers between work stations and encourage social distancing in their plants optional.

But JBS spokeswoman Nikki Richardson said the company "did everything possible to ensure the safety of our people who kept our critical food supply chain running."

Tyson Foods spokesman Gary Mickelson echoed that sentiment and said Tyson has worked closely with both the Trump and Biden administrations, along with state and local officials, to respond to the pandemic's challenges.

Smithfield spokesman Jim Monroe said the industry reacted quickly, and Smithfield has spent more than \$900 million so far to protect workers. He said it was appropriate for meat companies to share their concerns with government officials as the pandemic unfolded.

But the report cited a message that a Koch Foods executive sent a lobbyist in the spring of 2020 that said the industry shouldn't do more than screen employees' temperatures at the door of plants. The lobbyist agreed and said, "Now to get rid of those pesky health departments!"

To that end, the report said USDA officials — at the behest of meat companies — tried to use Trump's



executive order to stop state and local health officials from ordering plant shutdowns.

Even with those efforts, U.S. meat production fell to about 60% of normal during spring 2020 because a number of major plants were forced to temporarily close for deep cleaning, widespread testing and safety upgrades, or operated at slower speeds because of worker shortages. Companies closed plants in consultation with health officials after outbreaks were confirmed.

"Throughout the pandemic we've worked hard to maintain safe and consistent operations. At the same time, we have not hesitated to temporarily idle or reduce capacity at processing plants when we determined it necessary to do so," Cargill spokesman Daniel Sullivan said.

Documents the companies provided to the committee showed that meat companies pushed hard for the executive order partly because they believed it would help shield them from liability if workers got sick or died — something a federal appeals court later rejected in a lawsuit against Tyson over worker deaths at an Iowa plant. Emails show the companies themselves submitted a draft of the executive order to the administration days before it was issued.

Early on in the pandemic, meat companies knew the virus was spreading rapidly among their workers because infection rates were much higher in the plants and their surrounding communities. The report said that in April 2020, a doctor at a hospital near a JBS plant in Cactus, Texas, told the company and government officials in an email that there was clearly a major outbreak at the plant because every COVID-19 patient at the hospital either worked there or was related to a worker. "Your employees will get sick and may die if this factory remains open," the doctor warned.

The report also highlighted the way meat companies aggressively pushed back against safety recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. That led to the final guidance including language that effectively made the rules optional because it said the recommendations should be done "if feasible" or "where possible."

## Scientists grow plants in lunar dirt, next stop moon

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — For the first time, scientists have grown plants in soil from the moon collected by NASA's Apollo astronauts.

Researchers had no idea if anything would sprout in the harsh moon dirt and wanted to see if it could be used to grow food by the next generation of lunar explorers. The results stunned them.

"Holy cow. Plants actually grow in lunar stuff. Are you kidding me?" said Robert Ferl of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Ferl and his colleagues planted thale cress in moon soil returned by Apollo 11's Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin, and other moonwalkers. The good news: All of the seeds sprouted.

The downside was that after the first week, the coarseness and other properties of the lunar soil stressed the small, flowering weeds so much that they grew more slowly than seedlings planted in fake moon dirt from Earth. Most of the moon plants ended up stunted.

Results were published Thursday in *Communications Biology*.

The longer the soil was exposed to punishing cosmic radiation and solar wind on the moon, the worse the plants seemed to do. The Apollo 11 samples — exposed a couple billion years longer to the elements because of the Sea of Tranquility's older surface — were the least conducive for growth, according to scientists.

"This is a big step forward to know that you can grow plants," said Simon Gilroy, a space plant biologist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, who had no role in the study. "The real next step is to go and do it on the surface of the moon."

Moon dirt is full of tiny, glass fragments from micrometeorite impacts that got everywhere in the Apollo lunar landers and wore down the moonwalkers' spacesuits.

One solution might be to use younger geologic spots on the moon, like lava flows, for digging up planting soil. The environment also could be tweaked, altering the nutrient mixture or adjusting the artificial lighting,

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 58 of 68

Only 842 pounds (382 kilograms) of moon rocks and soil were brought back by six Apollo crews. Some of the earliest moon dust was sprinkled on plants under quarantine with the Apollo astronauts in Houston after returning from the moon.

Most of the lunar stash remained locked away, forcing researchers to experiment with simulated soil made of volcanic ash on Earth. NASA finally doled out 12 grams to the University of Florida researchers early last year, and the long-awaited planting took place last May in a lab.

NASA said the timing for such an experiment was finally right, with the space agency looking to put astronauts back on the moon in a few years.

The ideal situation would be for future astronauts to tap into the endless supply of available local dirt for indoor planting versus setting up a hydroponic, or all-water, system, scientists said.

"The fact that anything grew means that we have a really good starting point, and now the question is how do we optimize and improve," said Sharmila Bhattacharya, NASA's program scientist for space biology,

The Florida scientists hope to recycle their lunar soil later this year, planting more thale cress before possibly moving on to other vegetation.

## Iran raises prices of food staples, stirring panic and anger

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran abruptly raised prices as much as 300% for a variety of staples such as cooking oil, chicken, eggs and milk on Thursday. Scores of alarmed Iranians waited in long lines to snatch up bundles of food and emptied supermarket shelves across the country in the hours before the price hike took effect.

Panicked shoppers raided stores and stuffed basic goods into large plastic bags, according to footage shared widely on social media. Lines in Tehran snaked out of grocery stores late Wednesday. On Thursday, Iran's currency dropped to a low of 300,000 rial to the dollar.

Internet disruptions were reported across Iran as the government braced for possible unrest, advocacy group NetBlocks.org said. Protests appeared to spring up in the remote and impoverished south, according to videos shared online. The Associated Press could not verify their authenticity but the footage corresponded to reported events.

The scenes revealed not only deep anxiety gripping the country and frustration with Iran's leaders, but also underscored the staggering economic and political challenges facing them.

Food prices across the Middle East have surged due to global supply chain snarls and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which both export many essentials. Iran imports half of its cooking oil from Ukraine, where fighting has kept many farmers from the fields.

Although Iran produces roughly half of its own wheat, it imports much of the rest from Russia. The war has added to inflationary pressures. Smuggling of Iran's highly subsidized bread into neighboring Iraq and Afghanistan has spiked as hunger spreads across the region.

Drought is already ravaging Iran's economy. Western sanctions over Iran's nuclear deal have caused additional difficulties. Inflation has soared to nearly 40%, the highest level since 1994. Youth unemployment also remains high. Some 30% of Iranian households are below the poverty line, reports Iran's Statistics Center.

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has promised to create jobs, lift sanctions and rescue the economy, but talks to revive Iran's tattered nuclear deal with world powers remain deadlocked. Iranian families have seen their purchasing power rapidly diminish.

The government is trying to act swiftly to blunt the pain. Authorities have promised to pay every Iranian citizen some \$14 a month to compensate for the price hikes.

The cost of special and artisan breads, such as French baguette and sandwich bread, has multiplied by 10, bakery owners say. But authorities are careful not to touch subsidies on the country's flatbread, which contributes more to the Iranians' daily diet than anything else.

Subsidies, and bread subsidies in particular, remain a highly sensitive issue for Iran, which has been

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 59 of 68

roiled by bread riots throughout its history. In the 1940s, bread shortages triggered mass street protests and a deadly crackdown that brought down then-Premier Ahmad Qavam.

Memories of Iran's fuel price hike three years ago also remain fresh. Widespread protests — the most violent since the creation of the Islamic Republic in 1979 — rocked the country. Hundreds of demonstrators were killed in the crackdown, according to Amnesty International.

But in recent weeks, the government has allowed prices to surge for almost every other staple, including pasta, until Thursday's hike for remaining Iranian dinner table basics.

As Iranians vent about the rising prices of flour, the top trending hashtag on Twitter in recent weeks has been #macaroni — the term Iranians use for all types of pasta.

"I am sure the government does not care about average people," Mina Tehrani, a mother of three told the AP as she browsed a supermarket in Tehran. She stared in shock at a price tag for pasta — now 165,000 rials for a pound, compared to 75,000 rials last month.

Iranians who had forgone meat or dairy to save money have nothing left to cut, complained Tehran resident Hassan Shahbazzadeh.

"Now even macaroni is taken off their dining table," he said.

"This jump in the price of flour has made people crazy," said Saleh, a grocery store worker in Susangerd, a city in the oil-rich southwestern province of Khuzestan, home to an ethnic Arab population that has alleged discrimination and includes a separatist movement.

Saleh said that the price of a sack of 40 kilograms of flour had soared to the equivalent of \$18 from \$2.5 in recent weeks, stoking intense anger in the restive province.

"Many rushed to groceries to buy macaroni and other things for their daily needs," he said, giving only his first name for fear of reprisals.

Tempers have also flared in Iran's parliament.

"The waves of increasing in prices have made people breathless," Kamal Hosseinpour, a lawmaker for the Kurdish area, thundered in a parliament session earlier this week. "Macaroni, bread and cooking oil are the main staples of Iran's weaker people. ... Where are the officials and what are they doing?"

Other lawmakers have directly rebuked hard-line President Raisi.

"The administration is incapable in managing the country's affairs," said Jalil Rahimi Jahanabad, a lawmaker for the Taibad province near Iran's border with Afghanistan.

Supporters of the government have described the price hikes as "necessary economic surgery" — part of a parliament-approved reform package. Some social media users have ridiculed the term, saying officials have removed the patient's heart instead of the tumor.

As outrage over rising inflation surges online, Iranian authorities appear to be bracing for the worst.

Internet monitoring group NetBlocks.org told the AP that it was tracking internet disruptions at a "national scale" that "are likely to impact the public's ability to communicate." Article 19, a global research organization that fights censorship, reported on Thursday that authorities appeared to have shut down almost all internet connectivity in cities across Khuzestan province.

Since the country's 2009 disputed presidential election and the Green Movement protests that drew millions to the streets, Iran has tightened its control over the internet.

Videos have surfaced on social media in recent days of Iranians gathering in the dark in the streets of the southern Khuzestan province, chanting slogans against price hikes and against the country's leaders. Iranian state media has not publicly addressed the protests.

The issue of high prices "is security-related," lawmaker Majid Nasserinejad said ominously. "People cannot tolerate it anymore."

## Crypto comes to Washington. Will the millions buy influence?

By BRIAN SLODYSKO and FATIMA HUSSEIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Erin Houchin braced for the worst when a mysterious, well-financed group started buying television ads last month in her highly competitive southern Indiana congressional race.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 60 of 68

Houchin assumed she would face a negative blitz, like the one that crushed her in 2016 when she ran for the same seat. But, in fact, the opposite happened.

American Dream Federal Action, a super political action committee financed by a cryptocurrency CEO, saturated the district with ads promoting Houchin as a "Trump Tough" conservative who would "stop the socialists in Washington." That push helped secure her victory last week in a Republican primary.

"All you can do is hold your breath," Houchin's longtime consultant, Cam Savage, said upon learning about the ad buy. "It could help you, but the fear is it will end you." He said Houchin had not sought the support and had no ties to the industry other than filling out a candidate survey from a cryptocurrency group.

The impact of the unsolicited help shows how cryptocurrency tycoons are emerging as political power players. They are pouring millions of dollars into primary elections as they try to gain influence over members of Congress, Republican and Democrat, who will write laws governing their industry, as well as other government officials who are crafting regulations.

This year, for the first time, industry executives have flooded money into congressional races, spending \$20 million so far, according to records and interviews.

It's a delicate but deliberate march by companies that by their very nature make money based in part on evading government attention.

In addition to campaign spending, more than \$100 million has been spent lobbying around the issue since 2018 by crypto companies, as well as those who stand to lose if the industry goes mainstream, records show.

Following a well-worn path, they have retained former high-ranking officials such as Max Baucus, a former Democratic senator from Montana who once led the Senate Finance Committee.

The push comes as the Biden administration and Congress not only consider new regulations but also set funding levels for agencies that will oversee the industry.

Officials are considering what consumer protections and financial reporting requirements to put in place and how to crack down on criminals who take advantage of the anonymity offered by cryptocurrency to evade taxes, launder money and commit fraud.

"What do they want? They want no regulation, or they want to help write the regulation. What else is new?" asked Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, an industry critic.

Cryptocurrencies are a digital asset that can be traded over the internet without relying on the global banking system. They have been promoted as a way for those with limited means to build wealth by investing in the next big thing. But they also are highly speculative and often lack transparency, which substantially increases risk.

The price of cryptocurrencies including Bitcoin and Ethereum plunged Thursday, shedding billions in value, while Coinbase, the largest crypto trading platform in the U.S., has lost half its value over the past week.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said Thursday that the turmoil underscores the need for regulation of the largely unregulated industry.

"We've had a real-life demonstration of the risks," she told the House Financial Services Committee.

Jan Santiago, deputy director of Global Anti-Scam, an organization that helps victims of cryptocurrency fraud, said the industry has been reluctant to police bad actors.

"Unless it affects their bottom line or public reputation, I don't think there's any financial incentive for them," he said.

There are signs that crypto is going mainstream. Fidelity Investments, one of the nation's largest providers of retirement accounts, announced earlier this month it will start allowing investors to put bitcoin in their 401(k) accounts.

At the same time, government scrutiny is increasing.

The Securities and Exchange Commission released a plan last week that would nearly double the size of its staff focused on cryptocurrency oversight. Days later, the Justice Department indicted the CEO of a cryptocurrency platform, alleging he orchestrated a "\$62 million global investment fraud scheme," among scores of civil and criminal crypto cases brought by federal authorities. Prosecutors say he promised generous returns but instead absconded with investors' money.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 61 of 68

Members of Congress and the administration have raised concerns that Russian oligarchs could turn to cryptocurrency to evade U.S. sanctions put in place when Russia invaded Ukraine.

But at least one lawmaker has been an active participant in promoting the allure of crypto riches.

Rep. Madison Cawthorn, R-N.C., promoted a new crypto coin called "Let's Go Brandon" — a phrase that has become conservative shorthand for a vulgar insult of President Joe Biden. In one video posted to Twitter, Cawthorn appears alongside the cryptocurrency's founder and emphatically declares, "This is going to the moon, baby," while urging viewers to visit the coin's website and "get on the train."

After an initial spike, it plunged in value and is now worth a small fraction of a penny, as first reported by the Washington Examiner.

Cryptocurrency advocates in Congress acknowledge problems but argue the roughly \$2 trillion industry has matured.

"I'm confident that bitcoin protects consumers," said Sen. Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo., who has invested between \$150,002 and \$350,000 in the currency, according to her financial disclosure. "I'm not confident that all cryptocurrencies protect consumers. In fact, I'm willing to bet that the majority of those are fraudulent."

Others believe concern over cryptocurrency fraud is overhyped.

"It can be an easy conclusion for people to say there's so much fraud in that space," said Ashley Ebersole, a former SEC lawyer. "It makes headlines, but I don't know that it's a greater proportion."

In Washington, Democrats have been far more hawkish than Republicans. "They had me at 'Hello,' so they don't need to lobby me," said Lummis, a Republican. "Democrats are another story."

Many cryptocurrency proponents long opposed regulation. But lobbyists say that is now a settled debate and their current aim is to persuade skeptics not to regulate too aggressively.

Perianne Boring, founder of the Chamber of Digital Commerce, has been lobbying lawmakers and federal agencies since 2017, trying to make the case for developing accounting standards for cryptocurrency and other digital assets and to help crypto businesses become publicly traded companies.

"Because there are no standards, many businesses are hesitant to touch cryptocurrency," said Boring, whose group has spent nearly \$2 million lobbying the federal government.

Some lobbyists are hoping that a wave of campaign spending could help, much of it directed to Democratic primary races.

"Folks in crypto are, all of a sudden, happy to go to political fundraisers," said Kristin Smith, the executive director of the Blockchain Association. Smith's group has spent about \$4 million on lobbying since 2018. "The government could actually come in and really mess it up if we aren't constructively engaging."

So the industry is pushing hard for certain candidates and that has fostered a sense of resentment among some Democrats. In suburban Atlanta, two members of the U.S. House, Democrats Carolyn Bourdeaux and Lucy McBath, are squaring off after their districts were merged during redistricting.

A super PAC called Protect Our Future, financed by Sam Bankman-Fried, the 30-year-old billionaire founder of the cryptocurrency exchange FTX, has spent about \$2 million on ads supporting McBath, highlighting her support of Democratic policy priorities but saying nothing about cryptocurrency.

"They are not doing this out of the goodness of their heart. They are doing this because they want something. And that's to avoid regulation," Bourdeaux said.

FTX and McBath's campaign did not respond to requests for comment. Protect Our Future, which plans to spend at least an additional \$10 million on primary campaigns, said their expenditures have nothing to do with cryptocurrency regulation.

"There are a number of factors that go into our endorsements, including voting history, policy platforms, viability as a candidate, and public service and professional experience," the group's president, Michael Sadowsky, said in a statement.

Crypto super PACs are active in other marquee races, including Pennsylvania's Democratic Senate primary, where a separate crypto group linked to Bankman-Fried spent \$212,000 last week on ads backing John Fetterman, the state's Democratic lieutenant governor who is running for Senate. The ads say Fetterman will not "get schmoozed by lobbyists or bossed around by politicians."

But overall, the spending is on such a scale that it has generated questions about the industry's motives.

"It tells every Democrat that, if you have a primary, they could come in with \$2 million. They are certainly making a point," said Rep. Brad Sherman, D-Calif., a crypto critic who is chairman of the House Financial Services subcommittee tasked with investor protection. "You don't need a good argument in Washington if you got a lot of well-paid lobbyists and a big PAC — you just need some sort of argument."

## Ashley Judd talks about mental health after mother's death

The Associated Press undefined

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP) — Ashley Judd encouraged people to seek help for their mental health and talked about her grieving process after the loss of her mother, country star Naomi Judd.

In an interview aired on "Good Morning America" on Thursday, the movie star said she wanted to address her mother's struggle with depression. Judd said she was with her mother at her home in Tennessee on the day Naomi died on April 30.

Judd also encouraged anyone who was having thoughts of harming themselves to reach out to The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

Naomi Judd died at the age of 76, a day before she was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame with her duo partner and daughter Wynonna Judd. In a statement provided to The Associated Press, the family said they had lost her to "the disease of mental illness."

"When we're talking about mental illness, it's very important, and to be clear and to make the distinction between our loved one and the disease," Judd said in the interview. "It lies. It's savage. And, you know, my mother, our mother, couldn't hang on until she was inducted into the Hall of Fame by her peers. I mean, that is the level of catastrophe of what was going on inside of her because the barrier between — the regard in which they held her couldn't penetrate into her heart. And the lie that the disease told her was so convincing."

Ashley Judd said that her mother shot herself with a gun, but asked for privacy on other details of the death. Naomi Judd wrote openly about her depression and anxiety in her memoir "River of Time" and daughter Ashley said it was because of this that she cherished every moment she spent with her mother.

"I really accepted the love my mother was capable of giving me because I knew she was fragile," Judd said. "So when I walked around the back of their house and came in the kitchen door and she said, 'There's my darling, there's my baby.' And she lit up. I savored those moments."

Naomi and Wynonna Judd scored 14 No. 1 songs in a career that spanned nearly three decades. The red-headed duo combined the traditional Appalachian sounds of bluegrass with polished pop stylings, scoring hit after hit in the 1980s. Wynonna led the duo with her powerful vocals, while Naomi provided harmonies and stylish looks on stage.

The Judds released six studio albums and an EP between 1984 and 1991 and won nine Country Music Association Awards and seven from the Academy of Country Music. They earned a total of five Grammy Awards together on hits like "Why Not Me" and "Give A Little Love," and Naomi earned a sixth Grammy for writing "Love Can Build a Bridge."

## UK warns 'no choice but to act' to change Brexit deal

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain's foreign secretary warned the European Union on Thursday that the U.K. will have "no choice but to act" to revoke parts of a Brexit agreement on Northern Ireland if the EU does not show flexibility.

Post-Brexit arrangements for border and customs checks in Northern Ireland have become "the greatest obstacle" to forming a new government in Belfast, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said during a call with European Commission Vice President Maros Sefcovic.

Border issues between Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom, and EU member Ireland have long posed the thorniest problems in the U.K.'s divorce from the EU.

They resurfaced after the Democratic Unionist Party refused this week to help form a power-sharing

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 63 of 68

government with Irish nationalist party Sinn Fein unless the post-Brexit arrangements were substantially changed or scrapped.

An open Irish border is a key part of the peace process that ended decades of violence in Northern Ireland, which is the only part of the U.K. to share a land border with an EU country. The EU and the U.K. agreed to keep the Irish border free of customs posts and other checks after Brexit, which became final at the end of 2020.

Instead, there are checks on some goods, such as meat and eggs, entering Northern Ireland from elsewhere in the U.K. The Democratic Unionist Party is strongly opposed to the rules, saying the checks have created a barrier that undermines the British identity of its members.

Truss' office said Sefcovic reiterated to her Thursday that "there was no room to expand the EU negotiating mandate or introduce new proposals to reduce the overall level of trade friction."

"The foreign secretary noted this with regret and said the situation in Northern Ireland is a matter of internal peace and security for the United Kingdom," the Foreign Office said in a statement.

"If the EU would not show the requisite flexibility to help solve those issues, then as a responsible government we would have no choice but to act," the statement said.

Tensions over the trade rules, known as the Northern Ireland Protocol, were ramping up even before Northern Ireland held its assembly elections last weekend.

Northern Ireland has been without a functioning government since February, when the DUP's leader at the time, Paul Givan, quit as first minister in protest over the trade rules.

U.K. officials have repeatedly warned they might unilaterally suspend the arrangements if the EU did not agree to major changes.

British media reported that British Prime Minister Boris Johnson could announce next week that his government would legislate to override parts of the Northern Ireland deal.

The Times newspaper reported Thursday that Britain's Attorney General, Suella Braverman, issued advice saying that such a move would be legal because the EU was undermining Northern Ireland's Good Friday peace agreement by creating a trade barrier in the Irish Sea.

Any move by Britain to unilaterally rewrite the rules would bring legal action from the EU that could escalate into a trade war.

"I am convinced that only joint solutions will work. Unilateral action, effectively disapplying an international agreement such as the protocol, is simply not acceptable," Sefcovic, the EU's chief negotiator, said after Thursday's call.

The DUP's leader, Jeffrey Donaldson, said his party would decide whether to nominate a Speaker for the Northern Ireland Assembly on Friday, when the legislature is due to have its first session since last week's elections.

Donaldson has said that the party will not nominate ministers to Northern Ireland's devolved government until the U.K. government acts over the Brexit deal.

According to rules agreed under Northern Ireland's 1998 peace agreement, no functioning government could form unless the largest British unionist party and largest Irish nationalist one come together to share power.

## 'This tears my soul apart': A Ukrainian boy and a killing

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

BUCHA, Ukraine (AP) — As he listened to his father die, the boy lay still on the asphalt. His elbow burned where a bullet had pierced him. His thumb stung from being grazed.

Another killing was in progress on a lonely street in Bucha, the community on the outskirts of Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, where bodies of civilians are still being discovered weeks after Russian soldiers withdrew. Many had been shot in the head.

The 14-year-old Yura Nechyporenko was about to become one of them.

Survivors have described soldiers firing guns near their feet or threatening them with grenades, only to be drawn away by a cooler-headed colleague. But there was no one around to restrain the Russian soldier

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 64 of 68

that day in March when Yura and his father, 47-year-old Ruslan, were biking down a tree-lined street.

They were on their way to visit vulnerable neighbors sheltering in basements and homes without electricity or running water. Their bikes were tied with white fabric, in a sign they traveled in peace.

When the soldier stepped from a dirt path to challenge them, Yura and his father immediately stopped and raised their hands.

"What are you doing?" Yura remembers the soldier asking. The soldier didn't give Yura's father time to answer.

The boy heard two gunshots. His father fell, mouth open, already bleeding.

A shot hit Yura's hand, and he fell, too. Another shot struck his elbow. He closed his eyes.

A final shot was fired.

---

This story is part of an ongoing investigation from The Associated Press and Frontline that includes the War Crimes Watch Ukraine interactive experience and an upcoming documentary.

---

Yura's extraordinary account alleging an attempted killing by Russian soldiers stands out as international justice experts descend on Bucha, a center of the horrors and possible war crimes in Ukraine. More than 1,000 bodies have been found so far in Bucha and other communities around Kyiv. In Bucha alone, 31 children under the age of 18 were killed and 19 wounded, according to local authorities.

"All children were killed or injured deliberately, since the Russian soldiers deliberately shot at evacuating cars that had the signs 'CHILDREN' and white fabric tied to them, and they deliberately shot at the homes of civilians," the chief prosecutor of the Bucha region, Ruslan Kravchenko, told the AP.

The U.N. human rights office says at least 202 children across Ukraine have been killed in Russia's invasion, and believes the real number to be considerably higher. The Ukrainian government's count is 217 children killed and over 390 wounded.

The AP and Frontline, drawing from a variety of sources, have independently documented 21 attacks where children were killed that likely meet the definition of a war crime, ranging from the discovery of a child in a shallow grave in Borodyanka to the bombing of a theater in Mariupol. The total number of child victims in the attacks is unknown, and the accounting represents just a fraction of potential war crimes.

Yura is a teenager growing into himself, spindly and spotted, with dark circles pressed under his eyes. Adulthood has been rushed upon him. As he lies on the floor of his family's home to demonstrate what happened, he shows the healing holes in his elbow.

His mother, Alla, takes deep breaths to calm herself. Yura, sitting up, wraps an arm around her, then puts his head on her shoulder.

On that awful day, Yura survived the attempted killing by the awkward grace of that teenage constant, his gray hoodie. It was shot instead of him, and he felt it move.

Yura lay on the street for minutes afterward, waiting for the soldier to walk away.

Then Yura ran. He reached the kindergarten where his mother worked, and where some residents used the basement as a shelter. They were shocked to see the boy and gave him first aid.

He realized he needed to go home. He returned to the streets, not knowing where the next soldier might be.

When he arrived home, his family called the police. The police said they could do nothing because they didn't control the area, according to the family. The ambulance service said the same.

The police told the family that officers didn't know what to do with the case, according to the boy's uncle, Andriy. A prosecutor's report describes the killing and attempted killing in a few bare sentences, including the loss of a cellphone belonging to Yura's father. He would have been of help now — he'd been a lawyer.

Kravchenko told the AP that they continue to work on Yura's case, and expressed confidence that crimes committed during Russia's invasion of Ukraine can be successfully investigated. Among other things, footage from dozens of surveillance cameras in Bucha is being analyzed, and an identification album of Russian soldiers' faces is being assembled.

In March, the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court announced that investigations into crimes



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 65 of 68

against children in particular will benefit from a new trust fund. Children account for half or more of those affected by conflict, but are often labeled as too vulnerable to testify or as having inaccurate memories, according to Veronique Aubert, the special adviser on crimes involving children to the prosecutor of the ICC.

Yura's case is unusual.

"Prosecutors may want to take up this case because the victim is still alive and can potentially testify," said Ryan Goodman, a law professor at New York University and former special counsel for the U.S. Defense Department. "It may be difficult if not impossible for a defendant to claim they were somehow justified in trying to kill a child."

---

It was left to Yura's family to retrieve his father's body.

They did it the following day. Yura's grandmother, who is in her 70s, pleaded with Russian soldiers to let her approach the body.

With their guns cocked, they let her walk ahead of them. Another soldier in the distance shouted, "Don't come here or we'll kill you." But he didn't fire.

They brought Yura's father home in a wheelbarrow. He was rolled in a carpet and placed on an old wooden door. Amid the sounds of shelling and gunfire, they buried him in the yard behind the woodshed, in one of many makeshift graves hurriedly dug during the monthlong Russian occupation.

Yura and his family left Bucha the next day along a rare evacuation corridor. The wounded boy walked first through the streets, holding a stick tied with a white towel, with a white sling around his arm. The family had to pass the scene of the shooting.

As they walked closer to the evacuation point, Russian soldiers asked where they were going. They asked what had happened to Yura.

"I was shot by a Russian soldier," the boy replied.

At that, his mother was terrified. "I felt everything collapse inside me," she recalled. "I thought they would shoot us all."

She asked the soldiers to let them pass, saying it was getting late. They did.

The family left town that day.

---

The gray hoodie, bloodied at the elbow, is now the centerpiece of the family's search for justice. The top seam of the loose fabric has been sliced. Yura's mother insists that it's evidence and can't be thrown away.

The family returned to Bucha in mid-April, after the Russians withdrew. They dug up Yura's father and buried him again in a local cemetery.

The boy's family continues to play detective, scouring the area of the shooting for further evidence and theorizing on the trajectory of bullets. They question neighbors and analyze holes in a metal fence.

As the family shows the AP the scene, Yura wanders in the grass beside the street, head down, looking for bullet casings. He is confident he could identify the Russian soldier, even though the soldier wore a balaclava over part of his face.

Yura will finish ninth grade this year, once electricity returns and he can resume online classes. Until then, he is volunteering like his father did, visiting older residents.

His mother is thinking of sending him overseas for the sake of his mental health. She needs some distance, too.

"I'm never alone physically, but it's possible to be alone mentally," she said, near tears. "I try to avoid this."

Her son's case is still a faint source of hope. There are courts and these courts will work, she believes. No one should go through what her son did.

Yura fears they already have.

"It's not only me who wants justice," he said. "People in Ukraine are still possibly being tortured and killed even now."

Yura turned 15 on April 12. It was a quiet birthday. His father, a good cook, usually grilled to celebrate it.

On April 25, a day after Orthodox Easter, the family again gathered at the grave to mark 40 days after Ruslan's death, by local custom. Food blessed by a priest in Bucha for Easter — dyed eggs, bread — was

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 66 of 68

laid out along with homemade pickles, chocolate and wine. A plastic bag of food was hung on the wooden cross.

Yura stood apart, quietly lighting a candle and placing it on the grave. Then he pulled a hoodie, a black one, over his head to block the chill.

The boy's uncle, Andriy, watches him closely these days. Yura has always been a good kid, but he's become edgy and restless, moving from one task to another. Andriy fears the trauma of surviving death will catch up with Yura and mourns his nephew's damaged childhood.

"This tears my soul apart," said Andriy, in tears. "What we see is suffering after suffering ... (Russian President Vladimir) Putin just decides to make us suffer, and we do."

## Crypto comes to Washington. Will the millions buy influence?

By BRIAN SLODYSKO and FATIMA HUSSEIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Erin Houchin braced for the worst when a mysterious group started buying television ads last month in her highly competitive southern Indiana congressional race.

Houchin assumed she would face a negative blitz, like the one that crushed her in 2016 when she ran for the same seat. But, in fact, the opposite happened.

American Dream Federal Action, a super political action committee financed by a cryptocurrency CEO, saturated the district with ads promoting Houchin as a "Trump Tough" conservative who would "stop the socialists in Washington." That push helped secure her victory last week in a Republican primary.

"All you can do is hold your breath," Houchin's longtime consultant, Cam Savage, said of when they learned about the ad buy. "It could help you, but the fear is it will end you."

The impact of the unsolicited helps shows how cryptocurrency tycoons are emerging as the new political power players. They are pouring millions of dollars into primary elections as they try to gain influence over members of Congress and other government officials who are crafting regulations.

This year, for the first time, industry executives have spent nearly \$20 million so far, according to records and interviews.

It's a delicate but deliberate march by companies that make money based in part on evading government attention.

More than \$100 million also has been spent lobbying since 2018 by crypto companies, as well as those who potentially stand to lose if the industry goes mainstream, records show.

The push comes as the Biden administration and Congress consider new regulations and set funding levels for agencies that will oversee crypto.

"What do they want? They want no regulation, or they want to help write the regulation. What else is new?" asked Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, an industry critic.

Cryptocurrencies are a digital asset that can be traded over the internet without relying on the global banking system. They've been promoted as a way for those with limited means to build wealth by investing in the next big thing.

But they're also highly speculative and often lack transparency, which substantially increases risk. On Thursday, cryptocurrencies, including Bitcoin and Ethereum, plunged in value.

Jan Santiago, deputy director of Global Anti-Scam, an organization that helps victims of cryptocurrency fraud, said the industry has been reluctant to police bad actors.

"Unless it affects their bottom line or public reputation, I don't think there's any financial incentive for them," he said.

There are signs that crypto is going mainstream. Fidelity Investments, one of the nation's largest providers of retirement accounts, announced earlier this month it will start allowing investors to put Bitcoin in their 401(k) accounts.

And there are indications that the government is increasing scrutiny.

The Securities and Exchange Commission unveiled a plan last week that would nearly double the size of its staff focused on cryptocurrency oversight. Days later, the Justice Department indicted the CEO of a

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 67 of 68

cryptocurrency platform and mining operation, alleging he orchestrated a "\$62 million global investment fraud scheme."

Meanwhile, members of Congress and the administration have raised concerns that Russian oligarchs could turn to cryptocurrency to evade U.S. sanctions put in place when Russia invaded Ukraine.

But at least one lawmaker has been an active participant in promoting the allure of crypto riches.

Rep. Madison Cawthorn, a conservative Republican from North Carolina, touted a new crypto coin in a video posted to social media, emphatically declaring, "This is going to the moon, baby," while urging viewers to visit the coin's website and "get on the train." But after an initial spike, it plunged in value and is now worth a small fraction of a penny.

Cryptocurrency advocates in Congress acknowledge problems but argue the roughly \$2 trillion industry has matured.

"I'm confident that bitcoin protects consumers," said Sen. Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo., who has invested in the currency. "I'm not confident that all cryptocurrencies protect consumers. In fact, I'm willing to bet that the majority of those are fraudulent."

Many cryptocurrency proponents vehemently opposed regulation. But lobbyists say that's now a settled debate and their aim is to convince skeptics not to have too heavy a regulatory hand.

Perianne Boring, founder of the Chamber of Digital Commerce, makes the case for developing accounting standards for the industry to help crypto firms become publicly traded companies.

"Because there are no standards, many businesses are hesitant to touch cryptocurrency," said Boring, whose group has spent nearly \$2 million lobbying the federal government.

Some lobbyists are hoping that a wave of campaign spending could help, much of it directed to Democratic primary races.

"Folks in crypto are, all of a sudden, happy to go to political fundraisers," said Kristin Smith, the executive director of the Blockchain Association. Smith, whose group has spent about \$4 million on lobbying since 2018. She added, "The government could actually come in and really mess it up if we aren't constructively engaging."

That's fostered sense of resentment among some Democrats. In suburban Atlanta, Democratic Reps. Carolyn Bourdeaux and Lucy McBath, are squaring off after their districts were merged during redistricting. A crypto-affiliated super PAC is backing McBath, paying for \$2 million in TV advertising that praises her.

"They are not doing this out of the goodness of their heart. They are doing this because they want something," Bourdeaux said.

A spokesman for the group Protect Our Future said the expenditures have nothing to do with cryptocurrency regulation.

Crypto super PACs are also active in other marquee races, including Pennsylvania's Democratic Senate primary, where \$212,000 was spent last week on ads backing John Fetterman, the state's Democratic lieutenant governor. The ads say Fetterman won't "get schmoozed by lobbyists or bossed around by politicians."

But overall, the spending is on such a scale that it has generated questions about the industry's motives.

"It tells every Democrat that, if you have a primary, they could come in with \$2 million," said Rep. Brad Sherman, D-Calif., chairman of the House Financial Services subcommittee overseeing investor protection. "They are certainly making a point."

## Today in History: May 13, Pope John Paul II shot and wounded

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Friday, May 13, the 133rd day of 2022. There are 232 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 13, 1981, Pope John Paul II was shot and seriously wounded in St. Peter's Square by Turkish assailant Mehmet Ali Agca (MEH'-met AH'-lee AH'-juh).

On this date:

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 13, 2022 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 310 ~ 68 of 68

In 1607, English colonists arrived by ship at the site of what became the Jamestown settlement in Virginia (the colonists went ashore the next day).

In 1914, heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis was born in Lafayette, Alabama.

In 1917, three shepherd children reported seeing a vision of the Virgin Mary near Fatima, Portugal; it was the first of six such apparitions that the children claimed to have witnessed.

In 1940, in his first speech as British prime minister, Winston Churchill told Parliament, "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat."

In 1972, 118 people died after fire broke out at the Sennichi Department Store in Osaka, Japan.

In 1973, in tennis' first so-called "Battle of the Sexes," Bobby Riggs defeated Margaret Court 6-2, 6-1 in Ramona, California. (Billie Jean King soundly defeated Riggs at the Houston Astrodome in September.)

In 1985, a confrontation between Philadelphia authorities and the radical group MOVE ended as police dropped a bomb onto the group's row house, igniting a fire that killed 11 people and destroyed 61 homes.

In 1994, President Bill Clinton nominated federal appeals Judge Stephen G. Breyer to the U.S. Supreme Court to replace retiring Justice Harry A. Blackmun; Breyer went on to win Senate confirmation.

In 2002, President George W. Bush announced that he and Russian President Vladimir Putin (POO'-tih) would sign a treaty to shrink their countries' nuclear arsenals by two-thirds.

In 2016, the Obama administration issued a directive requiring public schools to permit transgender students to use bathrooms and locker rooms consistent with their chosen gender identity.

In 2019, Doris Day, the sunny blond film star and singer who appeared in comedic roles opposite Rock Hudson and Cary Grant in the 1950s and 1960s, died at her California home at the age of 97.

In 2020, the Wisconsin Supreme Court struck down Gov. Tony Evers' coronavirus stay-at-home order, ruling that his administration had overstepped its authority by extending the order for another month.

Ten years ago: The mutilated bodies of 49 people were found near Monterrey, Mexico, apparent victims of a drug cartel. Donald "Duck" Dunn, 70, the bassist who helped create the gritty Memphis soul sound at Stax Records in the 1960s as part of the legendary group Booker T. and the MGs, died in Tokyo while on tour.

Five years ago: Donald Trump used his first commencement address as president to urge graduates of Liberty University, a Christian school in Lynchburg, Virginia, to follow their convictions, prepare to face criticism and relish the opportunity to be an "outsider." Pope Francis, during a Mass in Fatima, Portugal, added two shepherd children to the roster of Catholic saints, honoring siblings Francisco and Jacinta Marto, who reported visions of the Virgin Mary 100 years earlier.

One year ago: Israel said it was massing troops along the Gaza frontier and calling up 9,000 reservists ahead of a possible ground invasion of the Hamas-ruled territory. Communal violence in Israel erupted for a fourth night, with Jewish and Arab mobs clashing in the flashpoint town of Lod. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention eased mask-wearing guidance for fully vaccinated people, allowing them to stop wearing masks outdoors in crowds and in most indoor settings. Prosecutors said an active-duty Marine Corps officer who was seen on camera scuffling with a police officer and helping other members of a pro-Trump mob force their way into the Capitol on Jan. 6 had been charged in the riot; Maj. Christopher Warnagiris was the first active-duty member to be charged in the insurrection.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Buck Taylor is 84. Actor Harvey Keitel is 83. Author Charles Baxter is 75. Actor Zoe Wanamaker is 74. Actor Franklyn Ajaye is 73. Singer Stevie Wonder is 72. Former Ohio Gov. John Kasich (KAY'-sihk) is 70. Actor Leslie Winston is 66. Producer-writer Alan Ball is 65. Basketball Hall of Famer Dennis Rodman is 61. "Late Show" host Stephen Colbert (kohl-BEHR') is 58. Rock musician John Richardson is 58. Actor Tom Verica is 58. Singer Darius Rucker (Hootie and the Blowfish) is 56. Actor Susan Floyd is 54. Actor Brian Geraghty is 47. Actor Samantha Morton is 45. Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., is 45. Former NBA player Mike Bibby is 44. Rock musician Mickey Madden (Maroon 5) is 43. Actor Iwan Rheon is 37. Actor-writer-director Lena Dunham is 36. Actor Robert Pattinson is 36. Actor Candice Accola King is 35. Actor Hunter Parrish is 35. Folk-rock musician Wylie Gelber (Dawes) is 34. NHL defenseman P.K. Subban is 34. Actor Debby Ryan is 29.