

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Saturday, June 18

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

10 a.m.: Firemen's Triathlon (Trap shoot, golf, bowling)

U12 at Webster

At 10:30 Clark vs Groton

At 12 Groton vs Webster

**Cancelled:** Jr. Legion at Milbank Tourney

Jr. Teeners at Milbank Tourney

9:00. Webster v Milbank

10:45. Webster v Groton

12:30 Groton v Britton

2:15 Webster v Britton

4:00. Milbank v Groton

5:45. Milbank v Britton

June 19 - FATHER'S DAY

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

June 20 - JUNETEENTH HOLIDAY

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

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

Ladies Invitational Golf Tourney at Olive Grove

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

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



5:30 p.m.: Legion at Northville, 1 game

7 p.m.: Jr. Legion at Northville, 1 game

5:30 p.m.: U12 hosts Britton, Nelson Field, DH

5:30 p.m.: U10 at Britton, DH (B/W)

5:30 p.m.: U8 at Britton, DH (R/W)

6 p.m.: U8 SB hosts Doland, 1 game

7 p.m.: U10 SB hosts Doland, 1 game

5 p.m.: T-Ball Gold hosts Doland

June 21

Elementary Library Open 9-11 (Reading time 10 a.m.)

Senior Menu: Hot Turkey combination, mashed potatoes with gravy, 7-layer salad, apple sauce, cookie.

5:30 p.m.: U12 vs. Jacobson in Aberdeen, north complex, DH

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## Energy Alert

Next week is expected to bring extreme high temperatures across the Midwest.

In the MISO (Midcontinent Independent System Operator) footprint, current load forecasts are near or exceed all-time peaks. MISO is planning Conservative Operations and Hot Weather Alerts for the entire MISO footprint Monday through Thursday next week.

The Southwest Power Pool, which serves Heartland and includes the City of Groton, may also possibly set an all time peak next week. While no official conservative operations are planned in their footprint, the situation could change.

With that said, customers are encouraged to use energy conservatively during this time. We will be apprised if the situation changes. For now, please focus on using energy conservatively.

## Miller Central Speedway races for June 18 canceled.

By Butch Knouse

Due to the predicted extreme heat, the races have been canceled. The Tri-State Late Models were scheduled and they are working on a new date.

Saturday June 25 will be the WISSOTA Race of Champions qualifiers, with the feature winners in the five WISSOTA divisions getting into the WISSOTA Race of Champions in Fergus Falls, MN this September. Starting time is 7:00 PM.

## Education experts: South Dakota teachers deserve trust and respect, not continued criticism

Kylie Carlson

South Dakota News Watch

With outside political forces adding new stress to South Dakota schools and teachers, a panel of four education experts stressed the importance of restoring trust in professional educators to do their jobs well and focus more on teaching than worrying about potential criticism from beyond the classroom.

The hourlong discussion generally debunked claims that public school teachers and administrators in South Dakota are indoctrinating students to think a certain way, and stressed the importance of treating teacher with respect and providing them with some autonomy in the classroom to reach students from a wide variety of backgrounds. Panelists agreed that across South Dakota, and especially among some of the most outspoken critics of public education, there is a general lack of understanding of what is happening in South Dakota classrooms and the overall good intentions and actions of classroom teachers.

The panel noted that the new stress on teachers is making an ongoing teachers shortage worse in South Dakota. In spring of 2022, the state had more than 500 open teacher positions, far more than in a typical year.

The recent shift to negative attention toward classroom content has left veteran teachers uneasy, but the next generation of educators in South Dakota may be feeling the most disenfranchised, panelist said. Many experienced teachers are retiring early or changing careers and recent teaching graduates are eschewing South Dakota for other states where pay is better and the political stress is lower.

The online panel discussion was hosted by South Dakota News Watch via Zoom and Facebook Live as part of a special report on the increasing influence of politics in public education. Featured panelists were Augustana education professor Sharon Andrews, retired Parker High School teacher Phil Bjorneberg, Rapid City school board member-elect Michael Birkeland, and Jim Holbeck, board development director for the Associated School Boards of South Dakota. The discussion, the most recent segment in News Watch's ongoing "South Dakota Matters" series of polls and panel discussions, was held June 16 and is available for viewing on the South Dakota News Watch Facebook page.

Panelists said that many individuals feel that they are qualified to have a voice in guiding classroom education, curriculum and teaching standards without having the necessary experience or training of



The image is a screenshot of a video recording for a panel discussion. On the left side, there is a logo for South Dakota News Watch, which consists of a stylized torch icon above the text "SOUTH DAKOTA NEWS WATCH". Below this, there is a banner for "SOUTH DAKOTA MATTERS A SERIES OF ONLINE DISCUSSIONS". On the right side, there is a section titled "Featuring Our Expert Panel" with four entries, each featuring a small portrait photo of a panelist and their name and title:

- Sharon Andrews**, education professor at Augustana Univ
- Phil Bjorneberg**, retired teacher, Parker High School
- Michael Birkeland**, member-elect of Rapid City school board
- Jim Holbeck**, board development director, Associated School Boards of South Dakota

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professionals in the classroom.

"I've been in schools consistently for the last four decades and teachers are just trying to do what they have a passion to do and what they've been trained to do," said Andrews. "I don't see this indoctrination or know these agendas."

Birkeland also highlighted a disconnect he has seen between some parents and teachers. Many parents trust their own children's teachers, having seen what they're doing in their classrooms, but remain skeptical about teachers overall. Birkeland said that finding ways to show what teachers are doing in their classrooms in a more public way may be a key to helping bridge the gap between educators and parents and reduce the tension felt in some districts.

Putting more faith in trained teachers to do their jobs according to school standards is also very important, said Andrews.

"[Educators] know what to do. We know a lot about how learning happens. We know a lot about how to teach with a multicultural, inclusive stance but still acknowledge diversity. Just doing that alone is enough for teachers, let alone that we have some hidden agenda that we're trying to indoctrinate our students."

While the uproar over what is being taught is relatively new, Holbeck said that there have been no major changes in how school curriculum has been developed and implemented in recent years. Much of the K-12 curricula in South Dakota are designed around textbooks picked by the school or by curriculum directors charged with ensuring their school system is teaching by cohesive guidelines, Holbeck said. He feels that the issues with what is being taught can be traced back to disagreements between political parties.

"[Educators are] out there trying to show both sides of things, but I'm afraid sometimes today there's people who don't want to hear both sides, they want to hear their side," said Holbeck. He also stressed the importance for voters to learn about the positions and values of the candidates running for positions influencing education at the local and state levels prior to elections.

The panel agreed that encouraging current and future educators to stay in the field and thrive in their jobs will play a role in ensuring quality public education for students.

Andrews said she has seen some students get discouraged about the profession because of the political and financial issues the state is experiencing, but she seen more continue to be energetic and demonstrate their enthusiasm to influence and teach younger generations. She hopes to continue to encourage young educators to continue their paths and careers into South Dakota classrooms.

The panelists said more open communication about all the good things happening in public schools may tamp down some of the criticism and political pressure. They also urged teachers to support one another and strengthen camaraderie in the profession as a way to help teacher get through the difficult early years and remain in the profession long term.

To watch a tape of the panel discussion, go to [sdnewswatch.org](http://sdnewswatch.org) and click on the link provided with the article.

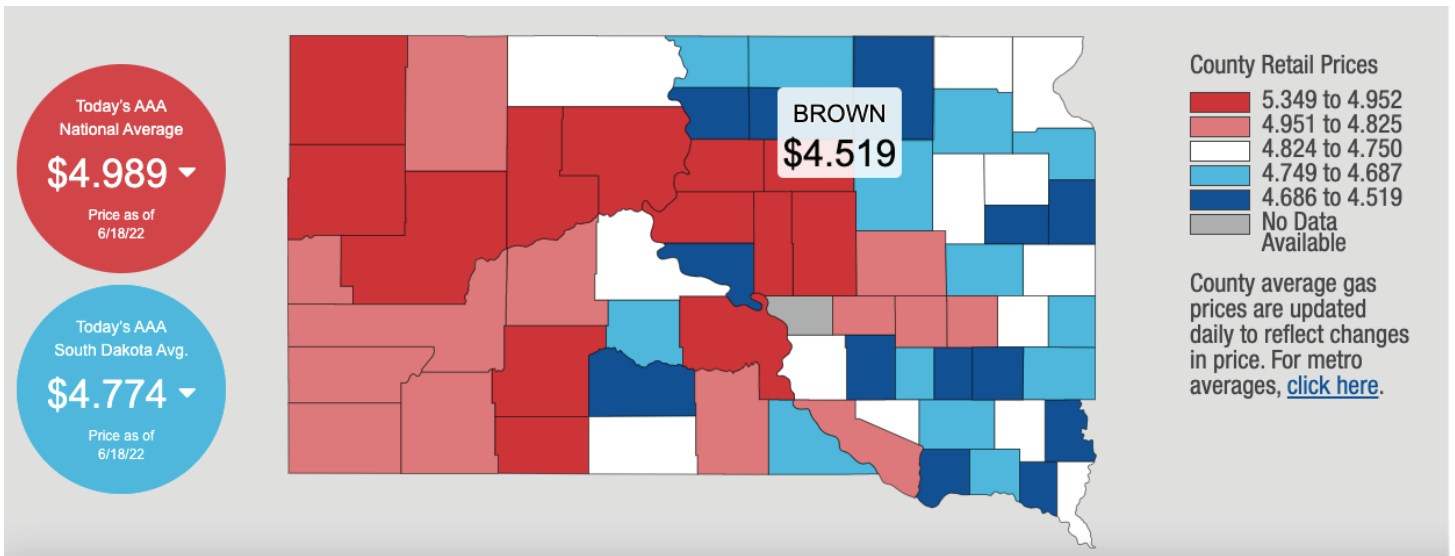
# Broton Daily Independent

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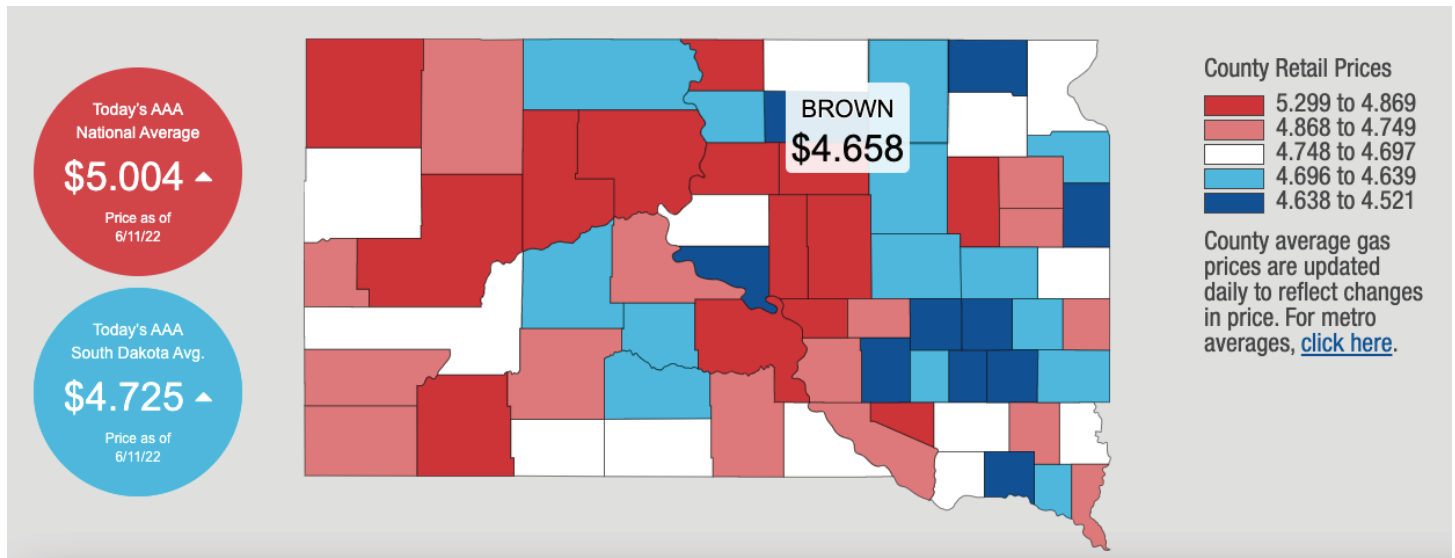
## South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$4.774	\$4.915	\$5.366	\$5.383
Yesterday Avg.	\$4.789	\$4.909	\$5.346	\$5.377
Week Ago Avg.	\$4.725	\$4.840	\$5.241	\$5.334
Month Ago Avg.	\$4.186	\$4.292	\$4.676	\$5.333
Year Ago Avg.	\$2.948	\$3.034	\$3.378	\$3.118

### This Week



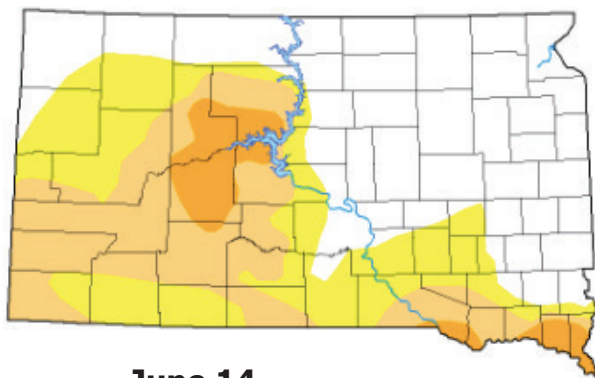
### Last Week



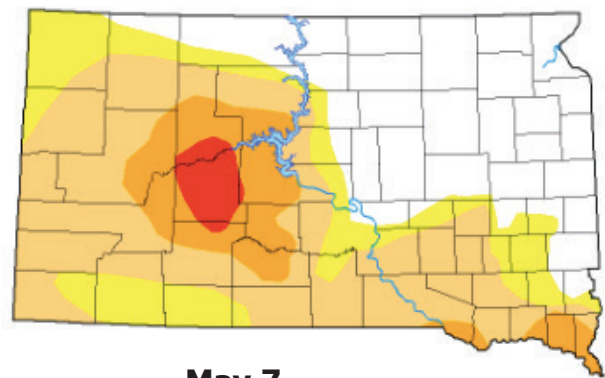
## Drought Classification



## Drought Monitor



June 14



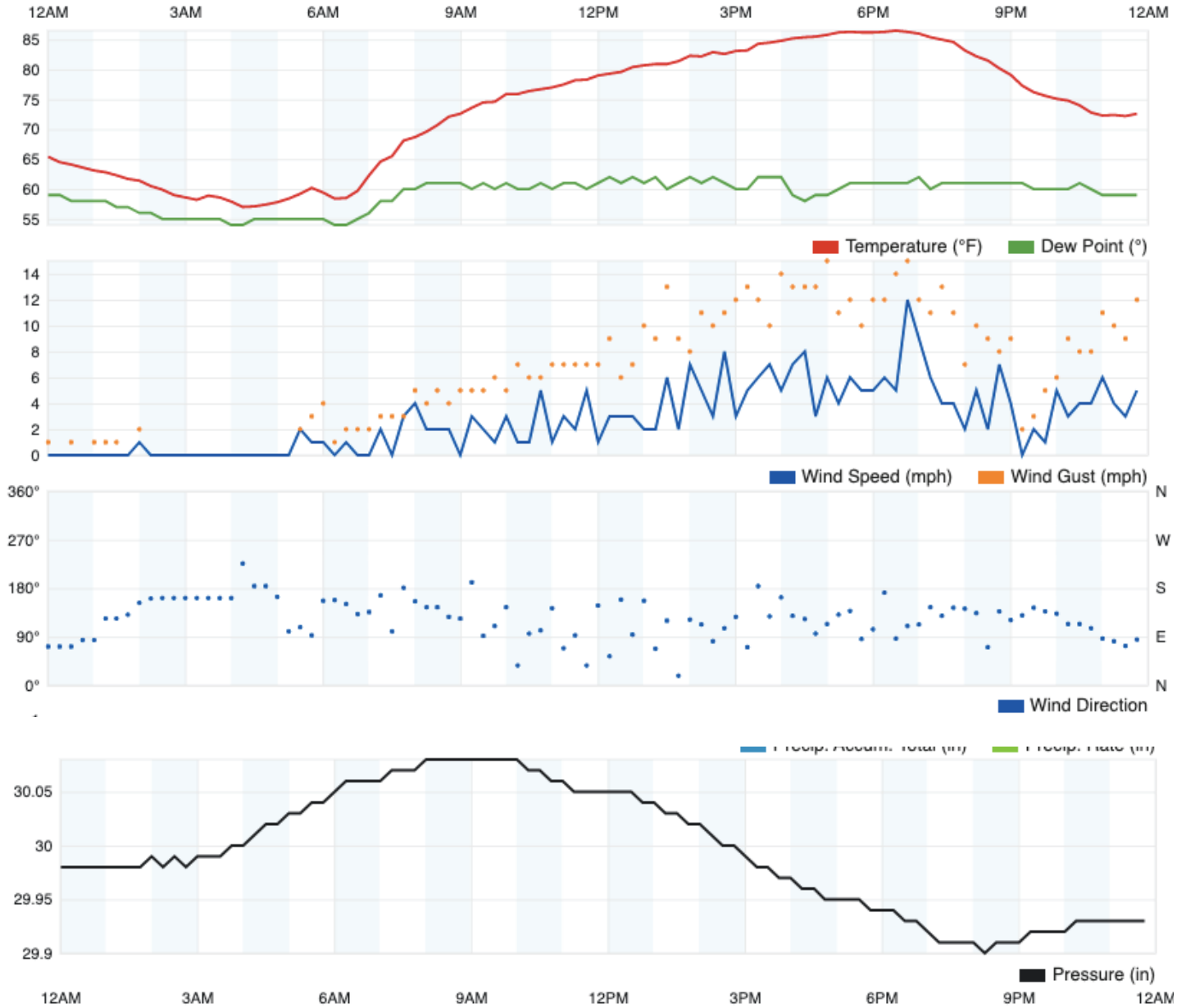
May 7

Much of the High Plains Region has seen beneficial rainfall and temperatures averaging near to below-normal over the past 30 days. However, above-normal temperatures finally crept in this week, as temperatures ran more than 3°F above-normal for much of the region. Despite the above-normal temperatures, precipitation was also above-average for many locations, warranting broad 1-category improvements in the drought depiction where more than 1 inch 7-day surpluses were observed and where longer-term deficits were appreciably diminished. Only areas in southwestern Colorado and just east of the Front Range in Wyoming experienced some degradation, as temperature anomalies were highest in those areas (6°F to 9°F above-normal). Also, high winds have helped to exacerbate ongoing drought in those locations.

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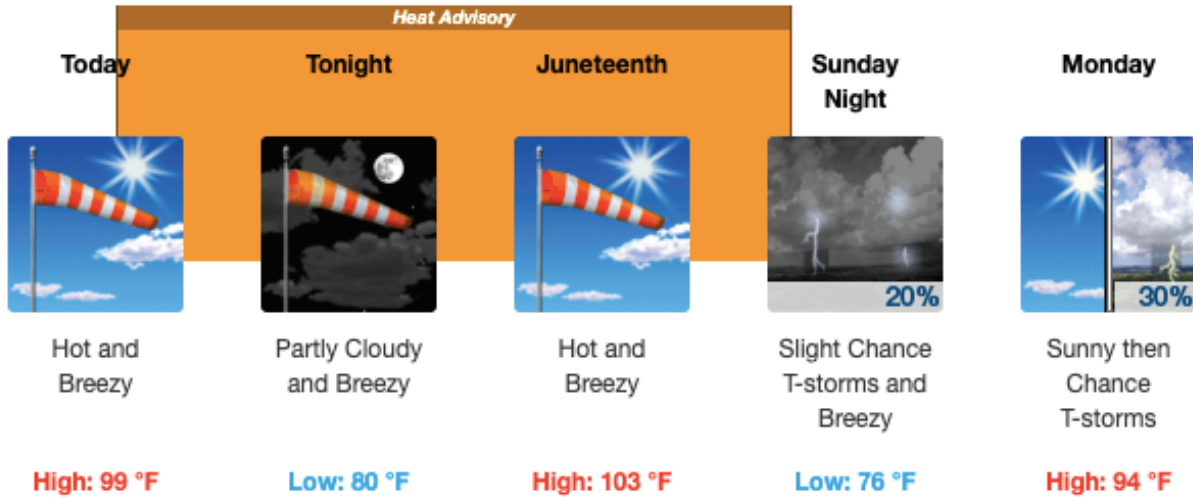
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

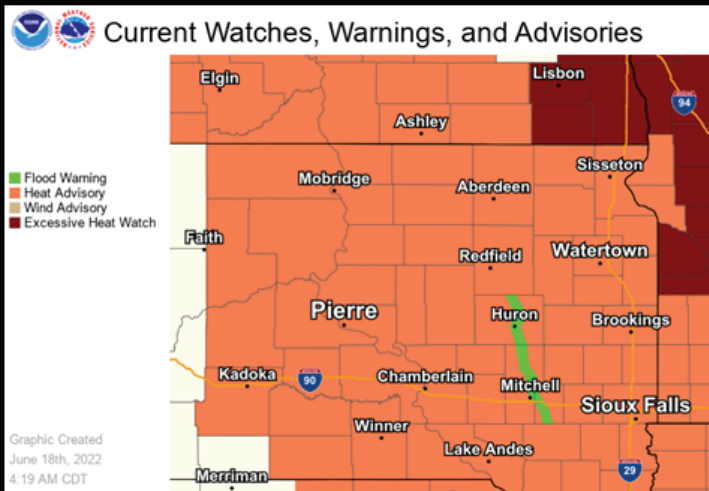


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**Very Hot and Humid This Weekend**



	Maximum Heat Index Forecast												Maximum
	6/18 Sat			6/19 Sun			6/20 Mon						
	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am		12pm	6pm	
Aberdeen	88	106	105	88	98	111	109	87	92	96	92	111	
Britton	85	97	96	87	96	106	104	88	92	97	93	106	
Eagle Butte	85	97	96	81	86	96	95	72	75	79	79	97	
Eureka	86	99	98	83	93	102	101	76	85	87	84	102	
Gettysburg	86	97	97	82	91	101	99	75	79	86	83	101	
Kennebec	90	101	100	81	93	103	101	78	85	91	88	103	
McIntosh	85	96	97	77	88	95	93	72	75	78	77	97	
Milbank	82	97	97	86	98	107	104	89	97	100	99	107	
Miller	90	100	99	83	94	105	100	83	89	93	90	105	
Mobridge	89	102	102	83	93	102	100	75	82	86	83	102	
Murdo	87	98	98	81	90	100	96	74	81	85	84	100	
Pierre	88	102	101	84	93	105	100	77	83	87	85	105	
Redfield	87	103	100	86	99	109	105	86	91	97	92	109	
Sisseton	83	100	99	86	99	109	106	91	95	99	97	109	
Watertown	82	97	96	85	94	103	99	87	92	97	94	103	
Webster	79	94	94	83	92	100	98	85	89	93	90	100	
Wheaton	81	94	94	79	97	108	106	89	95	99	96	108	

\*Table values in °F  
 \*\*Created: 3 am CDT Sat 6/18/2022  
 \*\*\*Values are maximums over the period beginning at the time shown.

Very hot and humid conditions will occur this weekend. Daytime highs in the 90s to around 103 degrees can be expected both today and Sunday. Heat indices will exceed 105 degrees at times Sunday afternoon.



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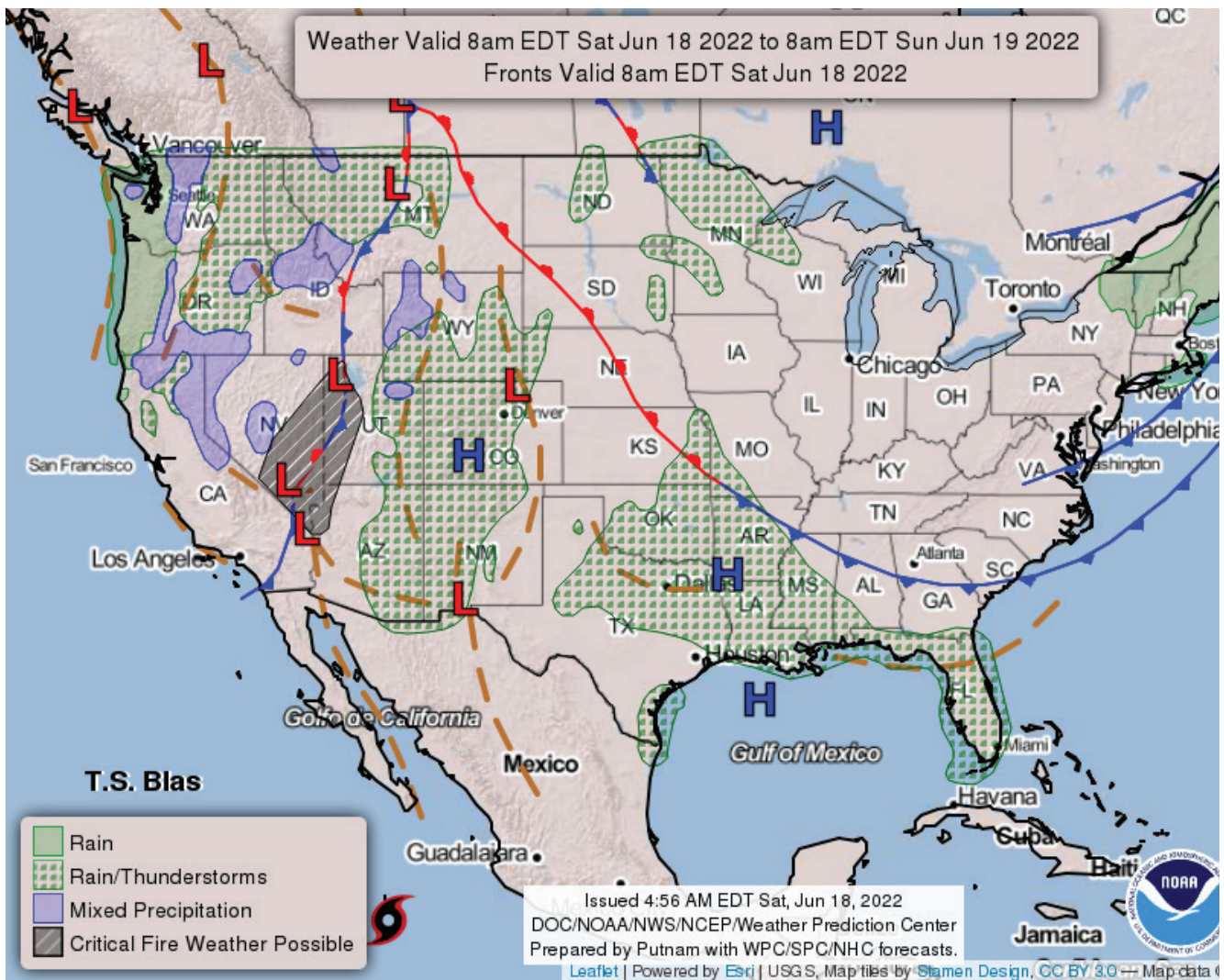
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 87 °F at 6:19 PM**  
**Low Temp: 57 °F at 4:22 AM**  
**Wind: 17 mph at 4:05 PM**  
**Precip: 0.00**

Day length: 15 hours, 44 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 108 in 1933  
Record Low: 38 in 1902  
Average High: 81°F  
Average Low: 56°F  
Average Precip in June.: 2.16  
Precip to date in June.: 0.10  
Average Precip to date: 9.41  
Precip Year to Date: 11.26  
Sunset Tonight: 9:25:37 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:41:44 AM



## Today in Weather History

June 18, 1964: A tornado moved from SSW to NNE damaging three farmsteads between Hoven to 8 NNW of Bowdle. This tornado was estimated to have F2 strength. An estimated five inches of rain fell in three hours near Bowdle causing soil erosion just before the tornado hit.

Another storm moved from south to north and intensified as it moved northward. Winds between 50 and 100 mph were reported. The highest damage was in McPherson County where an estimated 2 million dollars in crop damage occurred. Heavy rain was also observed on this day. Some storm total rainfall includes; 6.73 inches in Eureka, 4.28 in Roscoe, 3.75 in Leola, 2.68 in Shelby, 2.45 in Britton, and 2.31 inches in Ipswich.

June 18, 1991: Large hail up to 2 inches in diameter broke windows and produced widespread tree damage in Watertown and vicinity. Extensive damage was caused to surrounding soybean and corn fields. Approximately 25,000 acres of crops were destroyed. Thunderstorm winds of 55 mph uprooted trees and downed power lines primarily on the Revillo area. Trees fell on cars, and an apartment complex was damaged.

1875 - A severe coastal storm (or possible hurricane) struck the Atlantic coast from Cape Cod to Nova Scotia. Eastport ME reported wind gusts to 57 mph. (David Ludlum)

1958 - Hailstones up to four inches in diameter killed livestock as a storm passed from Joliet to Belfry in Carbon County MT. (The Weather Channel)

1970 - Wind and rain, and hail up to seven inches deep, caused more than five million dollars damage at Oberlin KS. (The Weather Channel)

1972: Hurricane Agnes was one of the most massive June hurricanes on record. The system strengthened into a tropical storm during the night of the 15th and a hurricane on the 18th as it moved northward in the Gulf of Mexico.

1987 - It was a hot day in the Upper Great Lakes Region. Nine cities in Michigan and Wisconsin reported record high temperatures for the date. The high of 90 degrees at Marquette, MI, marked their third straight day of record heat. Severe thunderstorm in the Northern and Central High Plains Region spawned half a dozen tornadoes in Wyoming and Colorado. Wheatridge, CO, was deluged with 2.5 inches of rain in one hour. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Severe thunderstorms in eastern North Dakota and northern Minnesota produced hail three inches in diameter and spawned four tornadoes in Steele County. Thunderstorms also produced wind gusts to 80 mph at Clearbrook MN. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Unseasonably hot weather prevailed in the southwestern U.S. In Arizona, afternoon highs of 103 degrees at Winslow, 113 degrees at Tucson, and 115 degrees at Phoenix were records for the date. (The National Weather Summary)

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## The Sound Of The Trumpets

An old Jewish legend claims that each day in heaven begins with the ringing sound that comes from a trumpet.

After Lucifer, once the son of the morning, had fallen from heaven, he was asked, "What do you miss most?" After a moment's thought, he said, "The trumpets that sound in the morning." The legend continues that the reason the trumpet sounded was to call people together to thank God for His love and mercy, grace and goodness.

Sadly, the "trumpet of thanksgiving" is absent from the lives of far too many Christians. The sounds of glory and gratitude have been replaced with groans of gloom and grief, greed and godless living.

But we are urged in Psalm 150: to "Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet." Trumpets were used in Jewish ceremonies to remind worshipers of the greatness, glory, and goodness of God and to praise and thank Him.

Perhaps it would be a good idea if each church had a trumpet player to begin each worship service. Perhaps the sound of a well-played trumpet might remind us to "bow down" before our Creator and give Him thanks for His many blessings - the ones we are aware of and those who fall on us unannounced and unrecognized.

Giving thanks is an important part of life - especially in the life of a Christian. All that we have or will have, all that we are or will become is not accidental. Everything in our lives comes from the grace of God. And not to thank Him is to insult Him. In ourselves, we have no worth. We only have worth in, through, and by God's grace.

Prayer: God, give us grateful hearts - hearts filled with gratitude for Your love, grace, mercy, salvation, and hope! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Today's Bible Verse: Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet. Psalm 150:3

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## 2022 Community Events

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

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## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

### Subscription Form

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## News from the Associated Press

### SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Friday:

Mega Millions

20-36-53-56-69, Mega Ball: 16, Megaplier: 2

(twenty, thirty-six, fifty-three, fifty-six, sixty-nine; Mega Ball: sixteen; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$290,000,000

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: 279,000,000

### Two Noem staffers will move to campaign reelection work

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Two members of Gov. Kristi Noem's administration are taking a leave of absence to work on her reelection campaign.

Communications director Ian Fury and director of operations Ben Koisti will be moving to paid positions on Noem's campaign beginning on June 24, Fury said in an email to state employees Friday.

"I wanted to update you all on some changes that are coming to the Governor's communications team. Starting on June 24, I will be taking a leave of absence from state government through Veteran's Day (Nov. 11). As you are doubtless aware, Governor Noem is in the midst of her reelection campaign, and I will be working on that end for the time being," Fury wrote.

Fury indicated that he and Koisti plan to return to the administration if Noem is reelected. Fury clarified that although he and Koisti will be paid by the campaign, their leave from state government will be unpaid.

Department of Public Safety spokesman Tony Mangan will fill in for Fury during his absence.

Another member of Noem's communications staff is also leaving. Jordan Overturf is moving back to Texas to be closer to family. His last day with the administration will be July 5.

Noem is being challenged in her reelection campaign by Rep. Jamie Smith, the Democratic nominee for governor from Sioux Falls who currently serves as House minority leader.

### 18 dead in India, Bangladesh floods; millions without homes

By JULHAS ALAM and WASBIR HUSSAIN Associated Press

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — At least 18 people have died as massive floods ravaged northeastern India and Bangladesh, leaving millions of homes underwater and severing transport links, authorities said Saturday.

In India's Assam state, at least nine people were killed in the floods and 2 million saw their homes submerged, according to the state disaster management agency.

Lightning in parts of neighboring Bangladesh meanwhile killed nine people on Friday.

Both countries have asked their militaries for help as more flooding looms with rains expected to continue over the weekend.

The Brahmaputra, one of Asia's largest rivers, breached its mud embankments, inundating 3,000 villages and croplands in 28 of Assam's 33 districts.

"We expect moderate to heavy rainfall in several parts of Assam till Sunday. The volume of rainfall has been unprecedented," said Sanjay O'Neil, an official at the meteorological station in Gauhati, Assam's capital.

Several train services were canceled in India amid the incessant downpour over the past five days. In southern Assam's Haflong town, the railway station was underwater and flooded rivers deposited mud and silt along the rail tracks.

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India's army has been mobilized to assist disaster response agencies in rescuing stranded people and providing food and other essentials. Soldiers used speedboats and inflatable rafts to navigate through submerged areas.

In Bangladesh, districts near the Indian border have been worst affected.

Water levels in all major rivers across the country were rising, according to the flood forecasting and warning center in Dhaka, the capital. The country has about 130 rivers.

The center said the flood situation is likely to deteriorate in the worst-hit Sunamganj and Sylhet districts in the northeastern region as well as in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Nilphamari and Rangpur districts in northern Bangladesh.

Flight operations at Osmani International Airport in Sylhet have been suspended for three days as floodwaters have almost reached the runway, according to Hafiz Ahmed, the airport manager.

Last month, a pre-monsoon flash flood, triggered by a rush of water from upstream in India's northeastern states, hit Bangladesh's northern and northeastern regions, destroying crops and damaging homes and roads. The country was just starting to recover when fresh rains flooded the same areas again this week.

Bangladesh, a nation of 160 million people, is low-lying and faces threats from natural disasters such as floods and cyclones, made worse by climate change. According to the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, about 17% of people in Bangladesh would need to be relocated over the next decade or so if global warming persists at the present rate.

## **EXPLAINER: How did Russia-Ukraine war trigger a food crisis?**

By KELVIN CHAN and PAUL WISEMAN AP Business Writers

LONDON (AP) — Russian hostilities in Ukraine are preventing grain from leaving the "breadbasket of the world" and making food more expensive across the globe, threatening to worsen shortages, hunger and political instability in developing countries.

Together, Russia and Ukraine export nearly a third of the world's wheat and barley, more than 70% of its sunflower oil and are big suppliers of corn. Russia is the top global fertilizer producer.

World food prices were already climbing, and the war made things worse, preventing some 20 million tons of Ukrainian grain from getting to the Middle East, North Africa and parts of Asia.

Weeks of negotiations on safe corridors to get grain out of Ukraine's Black Sea ports have made little progress, with urgency rising as the summer harvest season arrives.

"This needs to happen in the next couple of months (or) it's going to be horrific," said Anna Nagurney, who studies crisis management at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and is on the board of the Kyiv School of Economics.

She says 400 million people worldwide rely on Ukrainian food supplies. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization projects up to 181 million people in 41 countries could face food crisis or worse levels of hunger this year.

Here's a look at the global food crisis:

### **WHAT'S THE SITUATION?**

Typically, 90% of wheat and other grain from Ukraine's fields are shipped to world markets by sea but have been held up by Russian blockades of the Black Sea coast.

Some grain is being rerouted through Europe by rail, road and river, but the amount is a drop in the bucket compared with sea routes. The shipments also are backed up because Ukraine's rail gauges don't match those of its neighbors to the west.

Ukraine's deputy agriculture minister, Markian Dmytrasevych, asked European Union lawmakers for help exporting more grain, including expanding the use of a Romanian port on the Black Sea, building more cargo terminals on the Danube River and cutting red tape for freight crossing at the Polish border.

But that means food is even farther from those that need it.

"Now you have to go all the way around Europe to come back into the Mediterranean. It really has added an incredible amount of cost to Ukrainian grain," said Joseph Glauber, senior research fellow at

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the International Food Policy Research Institute in Washington.

Ukraine has only been able to export 1.5 million to 2 million tons of grain a month since the war, down from more than 6 million tons, said Glauber, a former chief economist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Russian grain isn't getting out, either. Moscow argues that Western sanctions on its banking and shipping industries make it impossible for Russia to export food and fertilizer and are scaring off foreign shipping companies from carrying it. Russian officials insist sanctions be lifted to get grain to global markets.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and other Western leaders say, however, that sanctions don't touch food.

## WHAT ARE THE SIDES SAYING?

Ukraine has accused Russia of shelling agricultural infrastructure, burning fields, stealing grain and trying to sell it to Syria after Lebanon and Egypt refused to buy it. Satellite images taken in late May by Maxar Technologies show Russian-flagged ships in a port in Crimea being loaded with grain and then days later docked in Syria with their hatches open.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says Russia has provoked a global food crisis. The West agrees, with officials like European Council President Charles Michel and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken saying Russia is weaponizing food.

Russia says exports can resume once Ukraine removes mines in the Black Sea and arriving ships can be checked for weapons.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov promised that Moscow would not "abuse" its naval advantage and would "take all necessary steps to ensure that the ships can leave there freely."

Ukrainian and Western officials doubt the pledge. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said this week that it may be possible to create secure corridors without the need to clear sea mines because the location of the explosive devices are known.

But other questions would still remain, such as whether insurers would provide coverage for ships.

Dmytrasevych told the EU agriculture ministers this week that the only solution is defeating Russia and unblocking ports: "No other temporary measures, such as humanitarian corridors, will address the issue."

## HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Food prices were rising before the invasion, stemming from factors including bad weather and poor harvests cutting supplies, while global demand rebounded strongly from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Glauber cited poor wheat harvests last year in the United States and Canada and a drought that hurt soybean yields in Brazil. Also exacerbated by climate change, the Horn of Africa is facing one of its worst droughts in four decades, while a record-shattering heat wave in India in March reduced wheat yields.

That, along with soaring costs for fuel and fertilizer, has prevented other big grain-producing countries from filling in the gaps.

## WHO'S HARDEST HIT?

Ukraine and Russia mainly export staples to developing countries that are most vulnerable to cost hikes and shortages.

Countries like Somalia, Libya, Lebanon, Egypt and Sudan are heavily reliant on wheat, corn and sunflower oil from the two warring nations.

"The burden is being shouldered by the very poor," Glauber said. "That's a humanitarian crisis, no question."

Beside the threat of hunger, spiraling food prices risk political instability in such countries. They were one of the causes of the Arab Spring, and there are worries of a repeat.

The governments of developing countries must either let food prices rise or subsidize costs, Glauber said. A moderately prosperous country like Egypt, the world's top wheat importer, can afford to absorb higher food costs, he said.

"For poor countries like Yemen or countries in the Horn of Africa — they're really going to need humanitarian aid," he said.

Starvation and famine are stalking that part of Africa. Prices for staples like wheat and cooking oil in



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some cases are more than doubling, while millions of livestock that families use for milk and meat have died. In Sudan and Yemen, the Russia-Ukraine conflict came on top of years of domestic crises.

UNICEF warned about an "explosion of child deaths" if the world focuses only on the war in Ukraine and doesn't act. U.N. agencies estimated that more than 200,000 people in Somalia face "catastrophic hunger and starvation," roughly 18 million Sudanese could experience acute hunger by September and 19 million Yemenis face food insecurity this year.

Wheat prices have risen in some of those countries by as much as 750%.

"Generally, everything has become expensive. Be it water, be it food, it's almost becoming quite impossible," Justus Liku, a food security adviser with the aid group CARE, said after visiting Somalia recently.

Liku said a vendor selling cooked food had "no vegetables or animal products. No milk, no meat. The shopkeeper was telling us she's just there for the sake of being there."

In Lebanon, bakeries that used to have many types of flat bread now only sell basic white pita bread to conserve flour.

## WHAT'S BEING DONE?

For weeks, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has been trying to secure an agreement to unblock Russian exports of grain and fertilizer and allow Ukraine to ship commodities from the key port of Odesa. But progress has been slow.

A vast amount of grain is stuck in Ukrainian silos or on farms in the meantime. And there's more coming — Ukraine's harvest of winter wheat is getting underway soon, putting more stress on storage facilities even as some fields are likely to go unharvested and because of the fighting.

Serhiy Hrebtsov can't sell the mountain of grain at his farm in the Donbas region because transport links have been cut off. Scarce buyers mean prices are so low that farming is unsustainable.

"There are some options to sell, but it is like just throwing it away," he said.

U.S. President Joe Biden says he's working with European partners on a plan to build temporary silos on Ukraine's borders, including with Poland, a solution that would also address the different rail gauges between Ukraine and Europe.

The idea is that grain can be transferred into the silos, and then "into cars in Europe and get it out to the ocean and get it across the world. But it's taking time," he said in a speech Tuesday.

Dmytrasevych said Ukraine's grain storage capacity has been reduced by 15 million to 60 million tons after Russian troops destroyed silos or occupied sites in the south and east.

## WHAT'S COSTING MORE?

World production of wheat, rice and other grains is expected to reach 2.78 billion tons in 2022, down 16 million tons from the previous year — the first decline in four years, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization said.

Wheat prices are up 45% in the first three months of the year compared with the previous year, according to the FAO's wheat price index. Vegetable oil has jumped 41%, while sugar, meat, milk and fish prices also have risen by double digits.

The increases are fueling faster inflation worldwide, making groceries more expensive and raising costs for restaurant owners, who have been forced to increase prices.

Some countries are reacting by trying to protect domestic supplies. India has restricted sugar and wheat exports, while Malaysia halted exports of live chickens, alarming Singapore, which gets a third of its poultry from its neighbor.

The International Food Policy Research Institute says if food shortages grow more acute as the war drags on, that could lead to more export restrictions that further push up prices.

Another threat is scarce and costly fertilizer, meaning fields could be less productive as farmers skimp, said Steve Mathews of Gro Intelligence, an agriculture data and analytics company.

There are especially big shortfalls of two of the main chemicals in fertilizer, of which Russia is a big supplier.

"If we continue to have the shortage of potassium and phosphate that we have right now, we will see

falling yields," Mathews said. "No question about it in the coming years."

## Russia frees captive medic who filmed Mariupol's horror

By VASILISA STEPANENKO and LORI HINNANT Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — A celebrated Ukrainian medic whose footage was smuggled out of the besieged city of Mariupol by an Associated Press team was freed by Russian forces on Friday, three months after she was taken captive on the streets of the city.

Yuliia Paievska is known in Ukraine as Taira, a nickname she chose in the World of Warcraft video game. Using a body camera, she recorded 256 gigabytes of her team's efforts over two weeks to save the wounded, including both Russian and Ukrainian soldiers.

She transferred the clips to an Associated Press team, the last international journalists in the Ukrainian city of Mariupol, one of whom fled with it embedded in a tampon on March 15. Taira and a colleague were taken prisoner by Russian forces on March 16, the same day a Russian airstrike hit a theater in the city center, killing around 600 people, according to an Associated Press investigation.

"It was such a great sense of relief. Those sound like such ordinary words, and I don't even know what to say," her husband, Vadim Puzanov, told The Associated Press late Friday, breathing deeply to contain his emotion. Puzanov said he spoke by phone with Taira, who was en route to a Kyiv hospital, and feared for her health.

Initially the family had kept quiet, hoping negotiations would take their course. But The Associated Press spoke with him before releasing the smuggled videos, which ultimately had millions of viewers around the world, including on some of the biggest networks in Europe and the United States. Puzanov expressed gratitude for the coverage, which showed Taira was trying to save Russian soldiers as well as Ukrainian civilians.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced Taira's release in a national address.

"I'm grateful to everyone who worked for this result. Taira is already home. We will keep working to free everyone," he said.

Hundreds of prominent Ukrainians have been kidnapped or captured, including local officials, journalists, activists and human rights defenders.

Russia portrayed Taira as working for the nationalist Azov Battalion, in line with Moscow's narrative that it is attempting to "denazify" Ukraine. But the AP found no such evidence, and friends and colleagues said she had no links to Azov, which made a last stand in a Mariupol steel plant before hundreds of its fighters were captured or killed.

The footage itself is a visceral testament to her efforts to save the wounded on both sides.

A clip recorded on March 10 shows two Russian soldiers taken roughly out of an ambulance by a Ukrainian soldier. One is in a wheelchair. The other is on his knees, hands bound behind his back, with an obvious leg injury. Their eyes are covered by winter hats, and they wear white armbands.

A Ukrainian soldier curses at one of them. "Calm down, calm down," Taira tells him.

A woman asks her, "Are you going to treat the Russians?"

"They will not be as kind to us," she replies. "But I couldn't do otherwise. They are prisoners of war."

Taira was a member of the Ukraine Invictus Games for military veterans, where she was set to compete in archery and swimming. Invictus said she was a military medic from 2018 to 2020 but had since been demobilized.

She received the body camera in 2021 to film for a Netflix documentary series on inspirational figures being produced by Britain's Prince Harry, who founded the Invictus Games. But when Russian forces invaded, she used it to shoot scenes of injured civilians and soldiers instead.

## Brazil Indigenous expert was 'bigger target' in recent years

By MAURICIO SAVARESE and FABIANO MAISONNAVE Associated Press

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SAO PAULO (AP) — Before disappearing in Brazil's Amazon rainforest, Bruno Pereira was laying the groundwork for a mammoth undertaking: a 350-kilometer (217-mile) trail marking the southwestern border of the Javari Valley Indigenous territory, an area the size of Portugal.

The purpose of the trail is to prevent cattle farmers from encroaching on Javari territory — and it was just the latest effort by Pereira to help Indigenous people protect their natural resources and traditional lifestyles.

While Pereira had long pursued these goals as an expert at the Brazilian Indigenous affairs agency, known as FUNAI, he worked in recent years as a consultant to the Javari Valley's Indigenous organization. That's because after Jair Bolsonaro became Brazil's president in 2019, FUNAI began taking a more hands-off approach toward protecting Indigenous land and people — and the government unapologetically promoted development over environmental protection.

Deeply frustrated, Pereira left the agency and embarked on a more independent -- and dangerous -- path. He was last seen alive on June 5 on a boat in the Itaqui river, along with British freelance journalist Dom Phillips, near an area bordering Peru and Colombia. On Wednesday, a fisherman confessed to killing Pereira, 41, and Phillips, 57, and took police to a site where human remains were recovered; some remains were identified Friday as belonging to Phillips, others are believed to belong to Pereira.

Pereira spoke several times with The Associated Press over the past 18 months, and he talked about his decision to leave FUNAI, which he felt had become a hindrance to his work. After Bolsonaro came to power, the agency was stacked with loyalists and people who lacked experience in Indigenous affairs, he said.

"There's no use in me being there as long as these policemen and army generals are calling the shots," he said by phone in November. "I can't do my work under them."

As a technical consultant for the Javari Valley's association of Indigenous people, or Univaja, Pereira helped the group develop a surveillance program to reduce illegal fishing and hunting in a remote region belonging to 6,300 people from seven different ethnic groups, many of whom have had little to no contact with the outside world. He and three other non-Indigenous people trained Indigenous patrollers to use drones and other technology to spot illegal activity, photograph it and submit evidence to authorities.

"When it came to helping the Indigenous peoples, he did everything he could," said Jader Marubo, former president of Univaja. "He gave his life for us."

Like Pereira, Ricardo Rao was an Indigenous expert at FUNAI who, in 2019, prepared a dossier detailing illegal logging in Indigenous lands of Maranhao state. But fearful of being so outspoken under the new regime, he fled to Norway.

"I asked Norway for asylum, because I knew the men I was accusing would have access to my name and would kill me, just like what happened with Bruno," Rao said.

Bolsonaro has repeatedly advocated tapping the vast riches of Indigenous lands, particularly their mineral resources, and integrating Indigenous people into society. He has pledged not to grant any further Indigenous land protections, and in April said he would defy a Supreme Court decision, if necessary. Those positions directly opposed Pereira's hopes for the Javari Valley.

Before taking leave, Pereira was removed as head of FUNAI's division for isolated and recently contacted tribes. That move came shortly after he commanded an operation that expelled hundreds of illegal gold prospectors from an Indigenous territory in Roraima state. His position was soon filled by a former Evangelical missionary with an anthropology background. The choice generated outcry because some missionary groups have openly tried to contact and convert tribes, whose voluntary isolation is protected by Brazilian law.

Key colleagues of Pereira's at FUNAI either followed his lead and took leave, or were shuffled to bureaucratic positions far from the demarcation of protected lands, according to a recent report from the Institute of Socioeconomic Studies think tank and the nonprofit Associated Indigenists, which includes current and former FUNAI staff.

"Of FUNAI's 39 regional coordination offices, only two are headed by FUNAI staffers," the report says. "Seventeen military men, three policemen, two federal policemen and six professionals with no prior

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connection with public administration have been named" under Bolsonaro.

The 173-page report published Monday says many of the agency's experts have been fired, unfairly investigated or discredited by its leaders while trying to protect Indigenous people.

In response to AP questions about the report's allegations, FUNAI said in an emailed statement that it operates "with strict obedience to current legislation" and doesn't persecute its officers.

On the day they went missing, Pereira and Phillips slept at an outpost at the entrance of the main clandestine route into the territory, without passing by the Indigenous agency's permanent base at its entrance, locals told the AP.

Two Indigenous patrollers told the AP the pair had been transporting mobile phones from the surveillance project with photos of places where illegal fishermen had been. Authorities have said that an illicit fishing network is a focus of the police investigation into the killings.

Pereira wasn't the first person connected with FUNAI to be killed in the region. In 2019, an active FUNAI agent, Maxciel Pereira dos Santos, was shot to death as he drove his motorcycle through the city of Tabatinga. He had been threatened for his work against illegal fishermen before he was gunned down. That crime remains unsolved.

Pereira's killing will not stop the Javari territory's border demarcation project from moving ahead, said Manoel Chorimpa, an Univaja member involved in the project. And in another sign that Pereira's work will endure, Indigenous patrollers' surveillance efforts have begun leading to the investigation, arrest and prosecution of law-breakers.

Before his career at FUNAI, Pereira worked as a journalist. But his passion for Indigenous affairs and languages — he spoke four — led him to switch careers. His anthropologist wife, Beatriz Matos, encouraged him in his work, even though it meant long stretches away from their home in Atalaia do Norte, and their children. More recently, they were living in Brazil's capital, Brasilia.

The Indigenous people of the region have mourned Pereira as a partner, and an old photo widely shared on social media in recent days shows a group of them gathered behind Pereira, shirtless, as he shows them something on his laptop. A child leans gently onto his shoulder.

In a statement on Thursday, FUNAI mourned Pereira's death and praised his work: "The public servant leaves an enormous legacy for the isolated Indigenous people's protection. He became one of the country's top specialists in this issue and worked with highest commitment."

Before the bodies were found, however, FUNAI had issued a statement implying Pereira violated procedure by overstaying his authorization inside the Javari territory. It prompted FUNAI's rank-and-file to strike, claiming that the agency had libeled Pereira and demanding its president be fired. A court on Thursday ordered FUNAI to retract its statement that is "incompatible with the reality of the facts" and cease discrediting Pereira.

Rubens Valente, a journalist who has covered the Amazon for decades, said Pereira's work became inherently riskier once he felt it necessary to work independently.

"Fish thieves saw Bruno as a fragile person, without the status and power that FUNAI gave him in the region where he was FUNAI coordinator for five years," Valente said. "When the criminals noticed Bruno was weak, he became an even bigger target."

## At Westminster dog show, new focus on veterinarians' welfare

By JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The dogs get the spotlight, but the upcoming Westminster Kennel Club show is also illuminating a human issue: veterinarians' mental health.

In conjunction with a first-time Veterinarian of the Year award that will be presented on the show's final day Wednesday, the club is giving \$10,000 to a charity focused on veterinary professionals' psychological welfare.

It's new emotional territory for the 145-year-old event at a point when the coronavirus pandemic, and a

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changing culture, have bared the internal struggles of people from schoolchildren to health care workers to college athletes and professional sports stars.

For veterinarians, too, the pandemic added new strains — wrung-out clients, soaring caseloads and more — and amplified longstanding ones.

“We love what we do, and there’s a certain mystique about working with animals — a lot of people think we play with puppies all day long. But there’s a lot behind this,” said American Veterinary Medicine Association President José Arce of San Juan, Puerto Rico. He hopes Westminster’s award will educate people about vets’ wellbeing.

The show begins with an agility competition Saturday and continues Monday through Wednesday, with the best in show prize awarded live on Fox Sports’ FS1 channel Wednesday night. For the first time, some action will also appear on the Spanish-language FOX Deportes.

Nearly 3,500 canines — the most since the 1970s — are expected at the historic Lyndhurst estate in Tarrytown, New York, show co-chairman David Haddock said. The 200-plus breeds and varieties include two newcomers, the mudi and the Russian toy.

It’s the second year in a row that pandemic concerns shifted the United States’ most storied dog show to its June date and suburban outdoor venue, rather than New York City’s Madison Square Garden in winter.

Westminster has given scholarships to veterinary students since 1987, but the new award recognizes a practicing vet. Inaugural winner Dr. Joseph Rossi has treated many show dogs at North Penn Animal Hospital in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, and his and his wife’s Norwich terrier Dolores won the breed at Westminster in 2020.

Co-sponsored by pet insurer Trupanion, the honor comes with a contribution to MightyVet, which offers mentors, courses and other support on topics including work-life balance, handling tough conversations with clients and looking for signs that colleagues might be in serious distress.

“We want to make sure that our animals are taken care of, but to do that, we need to make sure that our vets are taken care of,” Westminster spokesperson Gail Miller Bisher said.

Concerns and research about burnout, depression and suicidality among veterinarians have percolated for decades in the field.

But the issue got wider attention after a 2019 study in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medicine Association showed that a higher proportion of deaths due to suicide among U.S. veterinarians than in the general population. Various other occupations have above-average suicide rates, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

As in human medicine, veterinarians feel the strain of handling emergencies, caring for the sick — and, often, starting out a career with six-figure student debt.

Veterinary doctors, however, also confront the responsibility of advising pet owners about euthanasia and carrying it out.

There are emotionally painful, ethically trying moments when people can’t let go of a suffering pet — or, conversely, can’t afford treatment that could be life-saving. (Some charities and veterinary facilities provide financial help.) Even when euthanasia isn’t under discussion, there are the challenges of communicating with anguished pet owners and coming to terms with cases that don’t go as hoped.

“As the veterinarian, it hits us hard,” Rossi said. “We love animals, and that’s why we do this.”

In an average week, several veterinarians or other staffers seek out one-on-one guidance for a problem — job-related or not — from veterinary social worker Judith Harbour, who also works with pet owners at the Schwarzman Animal Medical Center in New York.

Veterinarians need to be able to move from crisis to crisis at AMC, which treats more than 50,000 animals a year and has a 24-7 emergency room and highly specialized care.

“But then there needs to be a time when the difficult experiences are dealt with,” says Harbour. She aims to help vets and other staffers talk through those experiences “in a productive way that’s not just a venting session.”

She advises them to focus on their inner motivations and values, be kind to themselves and remember that that many situations don’t have perfect solutions.

The American Veterinary Medicine Association also offers help, ranging from free suicide prevention training to a "workplace wellbeing certificate" program that engages entire veterinary practices in learning about such subjects as giving feedback, navigating conflict and fostering diversity and inclusion.

The pet-owning public has a role to play, too, Arce says.

"We understand how passionate people are about their pets and the health of their pets, but treating your veterinarian roughly because you're under stress, because your pet is ill, is not the way to go," he said.

"We're trying to help you with everything we can."

## Efforts spotlight slave who inspired beach name, local tale

By PHILIP MARCELO Associated Press

BEVERLY, Mass. (AP) — An enslaved Black man, the tall tale he inspired and the beach that now bears his name are the focus of new efforts to recognize the role of slavery along Massachusetts' picturesque North Shore.

As the story goes, Robin Mingo was promised freedom by his white master if the tide ever receded enough for him to walk out onto a rocky outcropping off what is now known as Mingo Beach. Depending on the telling, Mingo either completed the challenge and was emancipated, drowned tragically or lived out his days in bondage without ever seeing the rare tidal event.

"It shows how much power slave owners had over their slaves," said Katerina Pintone, a 19-year-old rising sophomore at Endicott College, where Mingo Beach is located. "That one man could have this much control over another man's life."

This past semester, Pintone and other Endicott students researched the local legend as part of a public history course and suggested ways to memorialize Mingo and his namesake beach. Their ideas ranged from a heritage trail to a smartphone app and even a boat tour highlighting Mingo's story and the popular tourist region's slave ties.

Professor Elizabeth Matelski, who taught the course, is also doing research for a book on Mingo and working with other historians on a project mapping North Shore locations like Mingo Beach that are historically significant to people of color. Meanwhile Endicott, a private coed school, says it's in discussions with city officials to formally register the beach as a historic landmark.

Matelski hopes the efforts spark broader discussions about the often overlooked role of slavery in New England.

"Most people who walk by that particular stretch of beach have absolutely no idea about this history," she said.

Abby Battis, an associate director at Historic Beverly, the city's historical society, agreed. Battis said she never heard Mingo's story growing up in the seaside city, which is often overshadowed by its more famous neighbors — Salem, site of the infamous witch trials, and Gloucester, the historic fishing port.

"We need to stop telling the old, dead white guy stories," she said. "There's so much more to Beverly's history."

The historical society is doing its part to create a fuller picture of the city's role in slavery, Battis added. The organization launched a virtual exhibit in 2019 featuring the stories of those enslaved in Beverly, a coastal city about 25 miles (40 kilometers) north of Boston that dates to the 1600s.

Mingo is not among those highlighted in "Set at Liberty," but the society has identified at least 100 enslaved people and more than 200 local ships involved in the slave trade as part of its ongoing work.

It's a "common myth" that slavery either never existed or was inherently different in New England than other places, says Beth Bower, a local historian on the board of Historic Beverly.

Historical records show New Englanders clearly imported enslaved Africans for all the tasks that made the young colony possible, from farming and fishing to building ships, she said.

And while history credits Massachusetts with being among the first states to abolish slavery in 1783, there is growing evidence that slavery persisted in the state into the early 1800s before gradually disap-

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pearing, Bower said.

President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, but it took more than two years for Black slaves in Galveston, Texas to receive word of their freedom. That day, June 19, 1865, is now known as Juneteenth, which is being celebrated as an official federal holiday for the first time Sunday.

Matelski said she first heard of Mingo's tale in the summer of 2020, during the height of the protests that followed the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

A Michigan native, she said she was immediately struck by the story's potential to speak to the present as the nation reckons with its racist past.

Mingo's tale is all the more significant considering he was married to a free Indigenous woman, and his enslaver descended from the original founders of Beverly, Matelski said.

"It's so deeply rooted in Beverly history and in the New England experience," she said. "There's just a lot of different threads happening there."

Part of Matelski's focus going forward will be separating myth from fact.

In the most popular telling, for example, Mingo achieves his feat and earns his emancipation, only to die later that year.

But local records suggest the real-life Mingo lived into his 80s, was baptized, raised a daughter and even acquired land in town before dying in 1748.

Matelski believes the Mingo legend has its roots in the stories abolitionists popularized in order to underscore the "casual cruelty" of the slave industry they fiercely opposed.

Such slave narratives typically centered on the harsh reality of southern plantation life and the extraordinary perils some slaves endured to escape to freedom, making Mingo's tale a uniquely New England take on the genre, she said.

"What we know right now is a puzzle piece," Matelski said. "As a historian, you're like a cold case detective, trying to create as complete a picture as you can of this really important story that hasn't been told."

## Iowa doors swing open for Republicans eyeing White House run

By THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa (AP) — The polls were closed in Iowa for less than 48 hours when South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott was shaking hands and posing for pictures with eastern Iowa Republicans at a Cedar Rapids country club last week.

Scott, one of the many Republicans testing their presidential ambitions, hardly has the state to himself.

At least a half-dozen GOP presidential prospects are planning Iowa visits this summer, forays that are advertised as promoting candidates and the state Republican organization ahead of the fall midterm elections. But in reality, the trips are about building relationships and learning the political geography in the state scheduled to launch the campaign for the party's 2024 nomination.

While potential presidential candidates have dipped into Iowa for more than a year, the next round of visits marks a new phase of the ritual. With Iowa's June 7 primary out of the way, Republicans eyeing the White House can step up their travel and not worry about stepping into the state's intraparty rivalries.

"Now that it's done, it's full-bore," state GOP Chairman Jeff Kauffman said. "It's unfettered."

Beyond Scott, former United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley is expected to visit late this month, and plans to campaign with as many Iowa congressional Republican candidates as she can in a little more than two days.

Haley, who is also the former governor of South Carolina, another early-voting state in the presidential calendar, plans to begin her trip in eastern Iowa on June 29 with first-term Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks. She'll also headline a state GOP fundraiser in Dubuque.

Working from the Mississippi Valley westward, she plans to keynote a fundraiser for Gov. Kim Reynolds. Haley will also campaign with Zach Nunn, chosen to face two-term Democratic Rep. Cindy Axne, who is among the most vulnerable House members this year. Haley's still-fluid schedule also includes attending Rep. Randy Feenstra's annual fundraiser in GOP-heavy western Iowa.

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Arkansas Sen. Tom Cotton, who visited several times in 2021, is expected the first week in July to speak at the county GOP dinner in Story County in central Iowa.

Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who has visited Iowa more often than any GOP prospect, is working out details for a late summer return, aides said, likely timed to the Iowa State Fair in August, a storied draw for would-be candidates.

Pompeo did endorse Nunn before the primary, a nod to their shared military experience, Pompeo aides said.

The plans also come in light of the Republican National Committee's unanimous decision in April to open the 2024 presidential selection sequence in Iowa, a question still hanging over Iowa Democrats.

In 2020, a smartphone app designed to calculate and report the Democratic caucuses results failed, prompting a telephone backlog that prevented the party from reporting final results for nearly a week after the Feb. 3 contest. The Associated Press announced it was unable to declare a winner after irregularities and inconsistencies marred the results.

Stripped of their automatic special status in April, Iowa Democrats are trying to salvage their leadoff spot with a plan to allow early participation by mail and streamline the sometimes time-consuming process.

With Joe Biden in the White House, Democrats with White House ambitions have largely kept their distance from Iowa.

Sen. Bernie Sanders, the Vermont independent who won the 2016 caucuses and was the final candidate to drop from the 2020 Democratic contest, was in southeastern Iowa Friday to rally support for United Auto Workers striking at a CNH agricultural machinery plant. Sanders' plans, which also included a stop in southeastern Wisconsin, sparked questions about whether the 80-year-old has a third White House bid in mind. He has said he wouldn't challenge Biden if the president sought reelection, and Sanders advisers said there had been no stated changes in his plans.

On the GOP side, Scott's return was not only timely. It reflected the dual aims of these early appearances, part introduction and part demonstration of support for the local party.

The 56-year-old sketched his childhood as one influenced by grandparents who helped raise him. Of his grandfather, Scott said, "For a guy who picked cotton in the 1920s, he lived long enough to watch me pick out a seat in the United States Congress."

Sprinkled with lighthearted contrasts of his Southern home and Midwestern hosts, Scott also wasted no time noting he had contributed money from his campaign fundraising account to Iowa Republican candidates, including targeted eastern Iowa GOP House freshmen members Miller-Meeks and Ashley Hinson.

"It's going to take us all pulling together," he told a table of about 10 eating barbecue sandwiches, as he worked the dining room before the event.

Even before Scott's arrival, former Vice President Mike Pence was on the phone that day to Chairman Kauffman and Steve Scheffler, Iowa's Republican National Committeeman, to talk about the primaries and the summer ahead, they said.

Pence was planning a summer trip to Iowa, though the date was not yet confirmed, a senior aide to the former vice president said.

Notably missing from the Iowa travel schedule is Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, among the most often mentioned rising national Republican figures in conversations with Iowa party activists this year. DeSantis' priority is running for reelection this year, aides said.

"I love DeSantis," said Emma Aquino-Nemecek, a Linn County Republican Central Committee member who attended the Tim Scott event. "Can you imagine if he comes? He would pack the place."

DeSantis got within shouting distance of Iowa in September, when he helped headline a fundraiser for Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts, but he did not cross the Missouri River to touch Iowa soil.

Even more notably missing from the summer schedule so far is former President Donald Trump, who staged a massive rally in Des Moines last year at the Iowa state fairgrounds, and has endorsed several Iowa Republicans.

Kauffman said he had not heard from Trump's team. Likewise, Iowa operatives for Trump did not return



messages.

Still, Trump sent signals to Iowa Republicans by paying for print ads in the program circulated at the Iowa Republican Party's state convention Saturday, as did Scott, Pompeo and Florida Sen. Rick Scott.

Scheffler said non-Trump Republicans may feel emboldened in light of Georgia Republicans' resounding rejection in last month's primary elections of the former president's endorsed candidate for governor.

Gov. Brian Kemp won the GOP primary comfortably over David Perdue, whom the former president endorsed after Trump narrowly lost Georgia in the 2020 presidential election, claiming without evidence the results were invalid due to rampant voter fraud.

The speed bump for Trump's influence in the primary elections could signal to other 2024 prospects that the former president is not invincible, Scheffler said.

"If Trump keeps making these endorsements and they go south, like he did in Georgia, who knows?" Scheffler said.

## Jan. 6 witnesses push Trump stalwarts back to rabbit hole

By DAVID KLEPPER Associated Press

One by one, several of Donald Trump's former top advisers have told a special House committee investigating his role in the Jan. 6 insurrection that they didn't believe his lies about the 2020 election, and that the former president knew he lost to Joe Biden.

But instead of convincing Trump's most stalwart supporters, testimony from former attorney general Bill Barr and Trump's daughter Ivanka about the election and the attack on the U.S. Capitol is prompting many of them to simply reassert their views that the former president was correct in his false claim of victory.

Barr's testimony that Trump was repeatedly told there was no election fraud? He was paid off by a voting machine company, according to one false claim that went viral this week. Ivanka Trump saying she didn't believe Trump either? It's all part of Trump's grand plan to confuse his enemies and save America.

The claims again demonstrate how deeply rooted Trump's false narrative about the election has become. "It's cognitive dissonance," said Jennifer Stromer-Galley, a Syracuse University professor who has studied how Trump used social media and advertising to mobilize his base. "If you believe what Trump says, and now Bill Barr and Trump's own daughter are saying these other things, it creates a crack, and people have to fill it."

The lawmakers leading the hearings into the deadly attack on the U.S. Capitol said one of their goals is to show how Trump repeatedly lied to his supporters in an effort to hold onto power and subvert American democracy.

"President Trump invested millions of dollars of campaign funds purposely spreading false information, running ads he knew were false, and convincing millions of Americans that the election was corrupt and he was the true president," said Rep. Liz Cheney, R-Wyo., the panel's vice chair. "As you will see, this misinformation campaign provoked the violence on January 6th."

For those who accept Trump's baseless claims, Barr's testimony was especially jarring. In his interview with investigators, he detailed Trump's many absurd allegations about the election 2020, calling them "bogus" and "idiotic."

Barr told the committee when he talked with Trump, "there was never an indication of interest in what the actual facts were."

"He's become detached from reality if he really believes this stuff," Barr said.

Following his testimony, many Trump supporters using sites like Reddit, GETTR and Telegram blasted Barr as a turncoat and noted that he's disputed Trump's election claims before.

But many others began grasping for alternative explanations for this testimony.

"I'm still hoping Barr is playing a role," one poster said on a Telegram channel popular with Trump supporters.

One post that spread widely this week suggested Barr was paid by Dominion Voting Systems, a company targeted by Trump and his supporters with baseless claims of vote rigging. "From 2009 to 2018, DOMIN-

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ION PAID BARR \$1.2 million in cash and granted him another \$1.1 million in stock awards, according to SEC filings. (No wonder Barr can't find any voter fraud!)," the post read.

Wrong Dominion. Barr was paid by Dominion Energy, a publicly traded company headquartered in Richmond, Virginia, that provides power and heat to customers in several mid-Atlantic states.

Unlike Barr, Ivanka Trump has remained intensely popular with many Trump supporters and is seen by many as her father's potential successor. That may be why so many had to find an alternative explanation for why she told Congress she didn't accept her father's claims.

Jordan Sather, a leading proponent of the QAnon theory, claims both Barr and Ivanka Trump lied during their testimony on Trump's orders, part of an elaborate scheme to defeat Trump's enemies by confusing Congress and the American public.

"I can just imagine Donald Trump telling Ivanka: 'Hey, go to this hearing, say these things. Screw with their heads,'" Sather said last week on his online show.

Some Trump supporters dismissed Ivanka Trump's testimony entirely by questioning whether any of it was real. That's another common refrain seen on far-right message boards. Many posters say they don't even believe the hearings are happening, but are a Hollywood production starring stand-ins for the former president's daughter and others.

"She looks different in a big way," one poster asked on Telegram. "CGI?"

## Jury convicts Seattle woman in massive Capital One hack

By GENE JOHNSON Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — A federal jury on Friday convicted a former Seattle tech worker of several charges related to a massive hack of Capital One bank and other companies in 2019.

Paige Thompson, 36, a former Amazon software engineer who used the online handle "erratic," obtained the personal information of more than 100 million people — a data breach that prompted Capital One to reach a tentative \$190 million settlement with affected customers. The Treasury Department also fined the company \$80 million for failing to protect the data.

Following a seven-day trial, the Seattle jury found her guilty of wire fraud, unauthorized access to a protected computer and damaging a protected computer. The jury acquitted her of other charges, including access device fraud and aggravated identity theft.

Thompson's attorneys argued that she struggled with mental health issues, never intended to profit from the data she obtained, and said in court papers "there is no credible or direct evidence that a single person's identity was misused."

Federal prosecutors said she didn't just steal the data, but also planted software on servers she unlawfully accessed to steal computing power to mine cryptocurrency.

"Far from being an ethical hacker trying to help companies with their computer security, she exploited mistakes to steal valuable data and sought to enrich herself," Seattle U.S. Attorney Nick Brown said in a news release.

Wire fraud is punishable by up to 20 years in prison, while the other charges can bring a five-year maximum. U.S. District Judge Robert Lasnik is scheduled to sentence Thompson in September.

In interviews with The Associated Press following her arrest, friends and associates described Thompson as a skilled programmer and software architect whose career and behavior — oversharing in chat groups, frequent profanity, expressions of gender-identity distress and emotional ups and downs — mirrored her online handle.

At one point, two former roommates obtained a protection order against her, saying she had been stalking and harassing them.

Thompson joined Amazon in 2015 to work at Amazon Web Services, a division that hosted the Capital One data she accessed. She left that job the next year.

Some friends said they believed the unemployed Thompson — destitute and, by her own account, grappling with serious depression — believed the hack could bring her attention, respect and a new job.

"She wanted data, she wanted money and she wanted to brag," assistant U.S. attorney Andrew Friedman told the jury, according to the news release.

## Gunman kills 3 seniors over potluck dinner at Alabama church

By JAY REEVES and KIM CHANDLER Associated Press

VESTAVIA HILLS, Ala. (AP) — The 70-year-old visitor had previously attended some services at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church before police say he showed up for a potluck dinner, pulled out a handgun and fatally shot three of the elderly participants, one of whom died in his wife's arms as she whispered words of love in his ear.

Church members were spared further violence Thursday evening when one of them rushed the gunman, struck him with a chair and held him until police arrived, a former pastor said. The suspect, Robert Findlay Smith, was charged with capital murder Friday, the Jefferson County district attorney announced.

The baffling violence in a wealthy suburb of Birmingham stunned a community known for its family-centered lifestyle. It also deepened the unease in a nation still reeling from recent slaughter wrought by gunmen who attacked a Texas school, a New York grocery store and another church in California.

"Why would a guy who's been around for a while suddenly decide he would go to a supper and kill somebody?" said the Rev. Doug Carpenter, St. Stephen's pastor for three decades before he retired in 2005. "It doesn't make sense."

All three shooting victims were members attending a monthly dinner at the church, said Carpenter, who still attends Sunday services there but wasn't present Thursday night. A Facebook post referred to the gathering as a "Boomers Potluck."

Carpenter said one victim's wife and other witnesses recounted what had happened. They said a man who introduced himself only as "Mr. Smith" sat at a table by himself — as he'd done while visiting a previous church dinner.

"People tried to speak to him and he was kind of distant and very much a loner," Carpenter told The Associated Press by telephone.

At Thursday's dinner, church member Walter Bartlett Rainey invited the visitor to join his table, Carpenter said, but the man declined. He said Rainey's wife noticed the visitor wasn't eating.

"Linda Rainey said he didn't have any food and she offered to fix a plate for him, and he turned that down," said Carpenter.

Soon afterward, Carpenter said, the man drew his gun and opened fire — shooting Walter Rainey and two other church members. Carpenter said another member, a man in his 70s, grabbed a chair and charged the gunman.

"He hit him with a folding chair, wrestling him to the ground, took the gun from him and hit him in the head with his own gun," Carpenter said.

Church members held the suspect until police arrived, police Capt. Shane Ware said. A police mugshot showed Smith with a blackened left eye and cuts to his nose and forehead.

"The person that subdued the suspect, in my opinion, was a hero," Ware told a news conference Friday, saying that act was "extremely critical in saving lives."

Rainey, 84, died at the scene. His wife of six decades wasn't harmed.

"We are all grateful that she was spared and that he died in her arms while she murmured words of comfort and love into his ears," Rainey's family said in a statement.

Police said Sarah Yeager, 75, of Pelham, died soon afterward at a hospital, and an 84-year-old woman died Friday. Police didn't release her name, citing the family's request for privacy.

Ware said Smith and the three victims were all white. He said police are investigating what motivated the suspect, who occasionally attended services at the church. Authorities executed a search warrant Friday at Smith's home, less than 3 miles (5 kilometers) away.

Records from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives show Smith is a licensed gun dealer whose business is listed at his home address. Court records show Smith filed a lawsuit in 2008

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against Samford University, a private university in metro Birmingham, alleging campus security wrongly detained him and accused him of impersonating a police officer.

Vestavia Hills Mayor Ashley Curry told reporters his "close-knit, resilient, loving community" was rocked by "this senseless act of violence." It's home to nearly 40,000 residents, most of them white, including many businesspeople, doctors and lawyers who work in Birmingham.

The church's pastor, the Rev. John Burruss, said in a Facebook post that he was in Greece on a pilgrimage and trying to get back.

The Rev. Rebecca Bridges, the associate rector, led an online prayer service on the church's Facebook page Friday morning. She prayed not only for the victims and church members who witnessed the shooting, but also "for the person who perpetrated the shooting."

"We pray that you will work in that person's heart," Bridges said. "And we pray that you will help us to forgive."

Bridges, currently in London, alluded to other recent mass shootings as she prayed that "our culture will change and that our laws will change in ways that will protect all of us."

Thursday's shooting happened just over a month after one person was killed and five injured when a man opened fire on Taiwanese parishioners at a Southern California church. It also came nearly seven years to the day after an avowed white supremacist killed nine people during Bible study at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

A message posted by St. Stephens said it would hold Sunday services, adding: "We will gather at the Table that has taught so many that love is always breaking through in this world, no matter what we experience, whether it be doubt, anger, loss, grief, or death — but yet also joy and life."

## Bill Cosby civil trial jury must start deliberations over

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP) — After two days of deliberations in which they reached verdicts on nearly all of the questions put before them, jurors in a civil trial who were deciding on sexual abuse allegations against Bill Cosby will have to start from scratch on Monday.

By the end of the court day Friday, the Los Angeles County jury had come to agreement on whether Cosby had sexually assaulted plaintiff Judy Huth at the Playboy Mansion when she was 16 in 1975, and whether Huth deserved any damages. In all they had answered eight of nine questions on their verdict form, all but one that asked whether Cosby acted in a way that should require punitive damages.

Judge Craig Karlan, who had promised one juror when she agreed to serve that she could leave after Friday for a prior commitment, decided over the objections of Cosby's attorneys to accept and read the verdict on the questions the jury had answered. But he had to change course when deputies at the Santa Monica Courthouse appeared and required him to clear the courtroom. The courthouse has a required closure time of 4:30 p.m. because of no budget for deputies' overtime

Karlan refused to require the departing juror, who had been chosen as foreperson, to return on Monday, so jurors will have to begin again with an alternate in her place.

"I won't go back on my word," Karlan said.

It was a bizarre ending to a strange day of jury deliberations. It began with a note to the judge about what he called a "personality issue" between two of the jurors that was making their work difficult.

After calling them to the courtroom and getting them to agree that every juror would be heard in discussions, the jurors resumed, but had a steady flurry of questions on issues with their verdict form that the judge and attorneys had to discuss and answer. One question was on how to calculate damages.

After the lunch break, Cosby lawyer Jennifer Bonjean moved for a mistrial because of a photo taken by a member of Cosby's team that showed a juror standing in close proximity to a Cosby accuser who had been sitting in the audience and watching the trial.

Karlan said the photo didn't indicate any conversation had happened, and quickly dismissed the mistrial motion, getting assurances from the juror in question, then the entire jury, that no one had discussed

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the case with them.

The accuser, Los Angeles artist Lily Bernard, who has filed her own lawsuit against Cosby in New Jersey, denied speaking to any jurors.

"I never spoke to any juror, ever," Bernard told the judge from her seat in the courtroom. "I would never do anything to jeopardize this case. I don't even look at them."

Karlan fought to get past the hurdles and have jurors deliberate as long as possible, and kept lawyers, reporters and court staff in the courtroom ready to bolt as soon as a verdict was read, but it was fruitless in the end.

Jurors had begun deliberating on Thursday morning after a two-week trial.

Cosby, 84, who was freed from prison when his Pennsylvania criminal conviction was thrown out nearly a year ago, did not attend. He denied any sexual contact with Huth in a clip from a 2015 video deposition shown to jurors. The denial has been repeated throughout the trial by his spokesman and his attorney.

In contentious closing arguments, Bonjean urged the jurors to look past the public allegations against Cosby and consider only the trial evidence, which she said did not come close to proving Huth's case.

Huth's attorney Nathan Goldberg told jurors Cosby had to be held accountable for the harm he had done to his client.

The Associated Press does not normally name people who say they have been sexually abused, unless they come forward publicly, as Huth and Bernard each have.

## Screams, threats as New Mexico counties certify vote

By SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN and MORGAN LEE Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — A standoff over the security of voting machines between a Republican-leaning county in New Mexico and Democratic state officials that threatened to erupt into a wider political crisis was defused Friday after local commissioners voted to certify their election results.

The move by the Otero County commission reversed an earlier decision against certifying results of the June 7 primary because of unspecified concerns with Dominion voting systems, a target of widespread conspiracy theories since the 2020 presidential election.

The two commissioners who voted in favor said they had been threatened with prosecution by the state attorney general and had no choice under the law — but criticized their position as being little more than rubber stamps.

Commissioner Couy Griffin was the lone dissenting vote, but acknowledged that he had no basis for questioning the results of the election. He dialed in to the meeting because he was in Washington, D.C., where hours before he had been sentenced for entering restricted U.S. Capitol grounds during the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection.

"My vote to remain a 'no' isn't based on any evidence. It's not based on any facts," Griffin said, nevertheless requesting a hand recount of ballots. "It's only based on my gut feeling and my own intuition."

The Otero elections clerk earlier told The Associated Press that the primary had gone off without a hitch and that the results had been confirmed afterward: "It was a great election," said Robyn Holmes, a Republican.

Democratic Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver, who had appealed to the state Supreme Court to intervene, expressed relief at the Otero County decision and called it a "shame that the commission pushed our state to the brink of a crisis by their actions."

The showdown provided a stark example of the chaos that election experts across the U.S. have warned about as those who promote the lie that former President Donald Trump was cheated out of reelection seek to populate election offices across the country and the usually low-profile boards that certify the results. Conspiracy theories mixing with misinformation has produced a volatile stew that has reduced confidence in elections, led to threats against election officials and created fears of violence in future elections.

The passions were on full display Friday, the final day for New Mexico's 33 counties to certify their pri-

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mary results. The last six counties to certify all voted to do so, but it was not without outbursts of fury from some of those attending the meetings.

In one politically conservative county, angry residents greeted their three commissioners with screams and vitriol as they met to consider certification. As the visibly frustrated Torrance County commissioners indicated they were going to vote to certify their election, the audience shouted "Shame on you," "cowards and traitors," and "Who elected you?"

The commissioners pleaded with the audience for patience and said concerns about alleged election vulnerabilities eventually would be addressed.

"The time and place to fight this battle is not by canvassing this election," Chairman Ryan Schwebach told the crowd in Torrance County.

In another county, a commission chairman pounded a gavel frantically and ordered law enforcement to clear livid protesters from the room. The 4-1 vote to certify the election by a Republican-dominated commission in Sandoval County was nearly drowned out by jeers of opposition in a divided audience.

Commissioner Jay Block — a failed Republican primary candidate for governor in the June 7 vote — noted his opposition to hoots of approval and applause.

"It is imperative that we are presented with a complete set of facts" about the election, Block said.

There is no evidence of widespread fraud or manipulation of voting equipment that could have affected the outcome of the 2020 presidential election, and no such fraud has surfaced in this year's midterms.

To underscore the accuracy of election results, another Sandoval County commissioner read to the audience the findings of an audit that compared the votes recorded by the county's tabulating machines in 2020 with a sampling of the actual paper ballots. The difference was just a fraction of 1% in the races for president, U.S. Senate and other offices — "almost insignificant," Republican commissioner David Heil said.

Certifying elections by typically under-the-radar local commissions has been a routine ministerial task for decades that has become politicized ever since Trump sought to undermine the process following his loss to Joe Biden in the 2020 election.

Otero County thrust the issue into the spotlight this week when its commission said it would not certify the local results from the primary because of concerns over Dominion voting systems, even though there was no evidence of problems. Had they stuck to their guns, the commissioners potentially would have disenfranchised more than 7,300 voters in a county that voted heavily for Trump in 2020.

New Mexico's primary ballot included races at all levels — including Congress, governor, attorney general and a long list of local offices. Those races would not be official until all counties certified.

The developments in New Mexico can be traced to far-right conspiracy theories over voting machines that have spread across the country over the past two years. Various Trump allies have claimed that Dominion voting systems had somehow been manipulated as part of an elaborate scheme to steal the election, which Biden won.

Dominion has filed several defamation lawsuits, including against Fox News, and in a statement earlier this week said the action by the Otero County commissioners was "yet another example of how lies about Dominion have damaged our company and diminished the public's faith in elections."

Election officials outside New Mexico are taking notice. The secretary of state's office said Friday it has been flooded with calls from officials concerned that certification controversies will become a new front in the attacks on democratic norms and could affect future elections, especially in 2024.

## Montana governor under fire for vacationing during flood

By MATTHEW BROWN and AMY BETH HANSON Associated Press

RED LODGE, Mont. (AP) — As punishing floods tore through Yellowstone National Park and neighboring Montana communities, the state's governor was nowhere to be seen.

In the immediate aftermath, the state issued a disaster declaration attributed to the Republican governor, but for some reason it carried the lieutenant governor's signature.

It wasn't until Wednesday — more than 48 hours after the flood hit the state — that Gov. Greg Gian-

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forte's office acknowledged he was out of the country, though it wouldn't say exactly where he was, citing unspecified security concerns.

Gianforte finally returned on Thursday night from what his office said was a vacation with his wife in Italy. But he found himself facing a torrent of criticism for not hurrying home sooner and for not telling the public his whereabouts during the emergency.

"In a moment of unprecedented disaster and economic uncertainty, Gianforte purposefully kept Montanans in the dark about where he was and who was actually in charge," said Sheila Hogan, executive director of the Montana Democratic Party.

Gianforte, 61, is a tech mogul elected governor two years ago. He made headlines when he body-slammed a reporter the day before winning a seat in Congress in a 2017 special election. He initially misled investigators about the attack but eventually pleaded guilty to misdemeanor assault.

While Gianforte was away, Montana's lieutenant governor served as acting governor. And in Gianforte's defense, his office said he was briefed regularly about the flooding, which caused widespread damage to small communities in the southern part of the state and had threatened to cut off fresh water to Billings, the state's largest city.

But Gianforte's critics seized on his mysterious disappearance and started the mocking social media hashtag #WhereIsGreg. Montanans and others traded wisecracks about Gianforte and the Appalachian Trail — a reference to former South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford, who disappeared in 2009 and had his staff tell reporters he was hiking the Appalachian Trail while he was actually having a tryst with his lover in Argentina.

Montana reporters started asking more questions after noticing Lt. Gov. Kristen Juras' signature on the flood-disaster declaration.

"Truthfully, it speaks for itself. It just does," Democratic U.S. Sen. Jon Tester of Montana said of the governor's AWOL status as he toured flood damage in Red Lodge on Friday. "When you're in public service, there are things that take precedent, and this is pretty important."

Gianforte finally toured the flood zone Friday but didn't address his absence. He instead encouraged visitors to still come to the Yellowstone region.

"Here's a very simple message for people that have planned trips to Yellowstone Park: We're open. You've got to come. There's so much to do in Montana," he said. "The vitality of our communities depend on it, and your families need what we have in Montana."

The floods washed away roads, bridges and houses and closed all of Yellowstone, threatening some of the communities on the park's outskirts that depend heavily on tourists visiting one of America's most beloved natural attractions.

Yellowstone officials said they could reopen the southern end of the park as soon as next week, offering visitors a chance to see Old Faithful and other attractions. But the northern entrances in Montana, which lead to the wildlife-rich Lamar Valley and Tower Fall, could be closed all summer, if not longer.

Scott Miller, a commissioner in Carbon County, where flooding heavily damaged the town of Red Lodge and other areas, said Friday that he had been able to contact the governor by phone when he needed to and that the state did not neglect any duties.

"The fact that the governor has been on vacation — there's been no hiccups," Miller said. "That's why you have people in your cabinet."

In Red Lodge, Tester hesitated to criticize the governor, acknowledging he was in Washington this week working on a bill for veterans.

"Some could say, 'Jon, why didn't you come back Tuesday or Wednesday?'" Tester said. "These are hard situations. I don't know what his circumstances were. ... I've got a decent working relationship with the governor and want to continue that."

## SpaceX reported to fire employees critical of CEO Elon Musk

HAWTHORNE, Calif. (AP) — SpaceX, the rocket ship company run by Tesla CEO Elon Musk, has fired

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several employees involved in an open letter that blasted the colorful billionaire for his behavior, according to media reports.

The reports published Friday cited an email from Gwynne Shotwell, SpaceX's president, saying the company had terminated employees who put together and circulated the letter. The letter writers denounced Musk for actions that they said are a "frequent source of distraction and embarrassment for us, particularly in recent weeks."

The New York Times was the first outlet to report the purge, based on information from three employees familiar with the situation. The employees were not named.

It's unclear how many SpaceX workers lost their jobs, but Shotwell left no doubt that the company believed they had crossed an unacceptable line.

"The letter, solicitations and general process made employees feel uncomfortable, intimidated and bullied, and/or angry because the letter pressured them to sign onto something that did not reflect their views," Shotwell wrote in her email, according to the Times. "We have too much critical work to accomplish and no need for this kind of overreaching activism."

The firings occurred Thursday — the same day Musk addressed Twitter employees for the first time about his \$44 billion deal to add that social media service to his business empire. The purchase is in limbo while Musk tries to determine whether Twitter has been concealing the number of fake accounts on its platform.

As the Twitter drama unfolded, another report emerged that Musk had paid \$250,000 to a flight attendant to quash a potential sexual harassment lawsuit against him. Musk denied the sexual harassment allegations, and Shotwell last month sent out an email to SpaceX employees saying she believed the accusations were false.

In recent weeks, Musk has also crudely mocked the looks of Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates on Twitter and posted a poop emoji during an online discussion with Twitter CEO Parag Agrawal.

The open letter from SpaceX employees criticizing Musk asserted that some of his tweets sent out to his 98 million followers cast the company in a poor light.

"As our CEO and most prominent spokesperson, Elon is seen as the face of SpaceX — every tweet that Elon sends is a de facto public statement by the company," the open letter said. "It is critical to make clear to our teams and to our potential talent pool that his messaging does not reflect our work, our mission, or our values."

## Trump lashes out at Jan. 6 committee as he teases 2024 run

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Making his first public appearance since the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection began its hearings laying bare his desperate attempts to subvert democracy and remain in power, former President Donald Trump on Friday lashed out at the committee as he continued to tease his plans for a third presidential run.

Speaking to religious conservatives at a sprawling resort near the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville, Trump blasted the committee's efforts as a "theatrical production of partisan political fiction" and insisted he had done nothing wrong.

"What you're seeing is a complete and total lie. It's a complete and total fraud," he told the Faith and Freedom Coalition's "Road to Majority" conference. He dismissed the harrowing video footage and searing testimony presented by the committee — including first-hand accounts from senior aides and family members — as having been selectively edited. And he downplayed the insurrection as "a simple protest that got out hand."

Trump's appearance at an event long known as a testing ground for presidential hopefuls comes as he has been actively weighing when he might formally launch another White House campaign. The debate, according to people familiar with the discussions, centers on whether to make a formal announcement later this summer or fall or, in accordance with tradition, wait until after the November midterm elections.

While allies insist he has yet to make a final decision about his plans, Trump for months has been broad-



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casting his intentions, and continued to tease them Friday.

"One of the most urgent tasks facing the next Republican president — I wonder who that will be," Trump said at one point, prompting a standing ovation and chants of "USA!"

"Would anybody like me to run for president?" he asked the crowd, unleashing more cheers.

Ralph Reed, chair of the Faith and Freedom Coalition, said that, for now, "We don't know whether or not he will run, although certainly given his speech, I think he wanted to let everybody know that that is his plan."

Trump has spent the past year and a half holding rallies, delivering speeches and using his endorsements to exact revenge and further shape the party in his image. But some supporters say the former president, who has decamped from his Florida Mar-a-Lago club to Bedminster, New Jersey, for the summer, is also growing impatient.

While he has relished his role as a party kingmaker — with candidates all but begging for his endorsement and racking up large tabs at fundraisers in his ballrooms — Trump also misses the days when he was actually king, especially as he watches Democratic President Joe Biden struggle with low approval ratings and soaring inflation.

"I think a lot of Trump's future plans are directly based on Biden, and I think the more Biden continues to stumble on the world stage and on the domestic stage, people forget about the downside, the dark side of Trump's presidency," said Bryan Lanza, a GOP strategist and former Trump campaign official.

An announcement in the near future could complicate efforts by other ambitious Republicans to mount their own campaigns. Former South Carolina governor Nikki Haley, who was ambassador to the United Nations under Trump, for instance, has said she wouldn't run against him.

And there also are concerns that a near-term announcement could hurt Republicans going into the final stretch of a midterm congressional campaign that appears increasingly favorable to the party. A Trump candidacy could unite otherwise despondent Democratic voters, reviving the energy that lifted the party in the 2018 and 2020 campaigns.

Republicans want the November election to be framed as a referendum on the first two years of Biden's presidency. They don't want anything, including Trump, to throw them off that trajectory.

Regardless of his decision, the aura of inevitability that Trump sought to create from the moment he left the White House has been punctured. A long list of other Republicans have been laying the groundwork for their own potential campaigns and some have made clear that a Trump candidacy would have little influence on their own decisions.

They include Trump's former vice president, Mike Pence, who has been hailed by the Jan. 6 committee as someone who put the national interest ahead of his own political considerations.

Eyeing a White House bid, Pence is maintaining a brisk political schedule focused on drawing attention to Democratic vulnerabilities. But his challenges were put into stark relief Friday, as Trump continued to blast him for failing to go along with his scheme to overturn the results of the 2020 election.

While he denied ever calling Pence a wimp, Trump railed against his former vice president Friday, saying, "Mike did not have the courage to act." That drew applause from a crowd that Pence, himself an Evangelical Christian, has spoken before numerous times.

Reed, who described himself as "a dear friend" of Pence, declined to comment on the rift, but said Pence had been invited to appear at the conference. "If Mike Pence wanted to come and wanted to offer a rejoinder to these folks, he could have done it," he said.

Beyond Pence, other possible candidates including Texas Sen. Ted Cruz and former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie have also indicated their decisions do not rest on Trump's. And others are making moves, including Trump's former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Florida Sen. Rick Scott and South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, who were all appearing at the conference, and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who is seen by many loyal Trump supporters as the future of his movement.

Though it's increasingly clear that Trump wouldn't march to the GOP nomination unchallenged, a large field of candidates could still work to his advantage. The dynamic is beginning to resemble the 2016

campaign, when Trump faced a large and unwieldy group of candidates who split the anti-Trump vote.

"We're going to be in pretty uncharted waters," said Reed. "So I would tend to think that that will not be the same kind of primary as, say, '16 was. It would seem to me that he'd be potentially stronger in that primary by having been a former president and having had this record. ... On the other hand, it is not 2020. He's going to have a primary. And he won't be the incumbent president. And depending on who chooses to run, it's going to be different for him, too. He's going to have to make case to those voters."

Indeed, despite the audience cheers, many of those attending the conference voiced skepticism about a third Trump run.

"I don't know. The jury's still out with me," said Jonathan Goodwin, a minister who works as a Faith and Freedom organizer in South Carolina. "I like him, but I think he shot himself in the foot too many times"

Goodwin said he "definitely" had his own concerns about the 2020 election but didn't support how Trump had handled the situation. "I think he should have bowed out gracefully," he said, "whether it was rigged or not."

Illinois conservative Pam Roehl, who arrived at the conference Friday wearing a red Trump baseball cap and "Trump 2020" necklace, said she still supports the former president, but increasingly finds herself in the minority among friends who have moved on, discarding their bumper stickers and embracing DeSantis.

"They're like kind of: 'Get with the program. Why aren't you backing DeSantis?'" she said.

## California pair charged with smuggling drugs to 5 states

By DON THOMPSON Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — A Northern California pair not only smuggled drugs to five other states but repeatedly impersonated federal law enforcement officers as part of the nationwide scheme, a U.S. grand jury alleged this week.

A federal grand jury in Sacramento on Thursday indicted Quinten Giovanni Moody, also known as Christano Rossi, 37, and Myra Boleche Minks, 46, on charges of drug trafficking, impersonating federal law enforcement officials, mail fraud, aggravated identity theft, and obstruction of justice.

They used couriers, airline employees and a shipping company to send California-grown marijuana to Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, Nevada and Texas from 2017 into this year, prosecutors said. Pot purchased for \$1,500 per pound in California in 2017 would be sold for \$2,600 per pound in Georgia, according to an FBI affidavit.

And from last year until this spring, they said Minks repeatedly posed as various federal agents in attempts to learn about or disrupt the investigation. She also posed as an airline employee in an attempt to persuade other employees to let a courier complete a drug delivery, the affidavit says.

Officials are seeking to arrest Minks and did not know of an attorney who could speak on her behalf.

On six different occasions, they allege Minks variously pretended to be a Drug Enforcement Administration special agent; an assistant U.S. attorney; an FBI special agent; an employee of the U.S. Secret Service; and an employee of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The ruses included posing as the DEA agent in what the affidavit said was an attempt to get inside information from the investigation into an April 2020 shootout between two vehicles on an interstate highway in Oakland, California, that left one victim dead.

Investigators recovered nearly \$375,000 in cash packed in two suitcases from the dead man's vehicle.

The pair is also alleged to have submitted fake federal search warrants to a phone company in a bid to get location information for a cellphone, and to have given two different tow truck companies fake federal court orders in repeated attempts to retrieve two of Moody's vehicles from a secure parking lot at the FBI's Atlanta Field Office.

Finally, the pair, along with a co-defendant, Jessica Tang of Sacramento, are alleged to have used identities stolen from unsuspecting individuals to file unemployment insurance claims, prompting the California Employment Development Department to disburse more than \$120,000.

"Ms. Tang is a 48-year-old mother without a record. And then she met Myra Minks and now she's in-

dicted," said Tang's attorney, Thomas A. Johnson.

The multiple charges carry varying maximum sentences, including up to 20 years in prison on the conspiracy and mail fraud charges.

Moody's attorney, Adam Gasner, said his client will plead not guilty and maintains his innocence.

"We ask there not be a rush to judgment and that Mr. Moody be allowed to defend himself in court and to avail himself to due process of law," Gasner said in an email.

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## Ukraine gets possible path to EU, aid pledges from Britain

By DAVID KEYTON, JOHN LEICESTER and EFREM LUKATSKY Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The European Union's executive arm recommended putting Ukraine on a path to membership Friday, a symbolic boost for a country fending off a Russian onslaught that is killing civilians,

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flattening cities and threatening its very survival.

In another show of Western support, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson met with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv to offer continued aid and military training.

The European allies' latest embrace of Ukraine marked another setback for Russian President Vladimir Putin, who launched his war nearly four months ago, hoping to pull his ex-Soviet neighbor away from the West and back into Russia's sphere of influence.

At Russia's showpiece economic forum in St. Petersburg on Friday, Putin said Moscow "has nothing against" Ukraine joining the EU, because it "isn't a military organization, a political organization like NATO." He also reprised his usual defense of the war, alleging it was necessary to protect people in parts of eastern Ukraine controlled by Moscow-backed rebels and to ensure Russia's own security.

Johnson's trip to Kyiv followed one Thursday by the leaders of Germany, France, Italy and Romania, who pledged to support Ukraine without asking it to make any territorial concessions to Russia.

"We are with you to give you the strategic endurance that you will need," Johnson said on his second visit to the country since the Feb. 24 start of the war. Although he did not detail the aid, he said Britain would lead a program that could train up to 10,000 Ukrainian soldiers every 120 days in an unspecified location outside the country.

The training program could "change the equation of this war," he said. Ukraine has been taking heavy casualties in fighting in the east.

"I completely understand why you and your people can make no compromise with Putin because if Ukraine is suffering, if the Ukrainian troops are suffering, then I have to tell you that all the evidence is that Putin's troops are under acute pressure themselves and they are taking heavy casualties," he said. "Their expenditure of munitions, of shells and other weaponry, is colossal."

Since his April visit, "the Ukrainian grit, determination and resilience is stronger than ever, and I know that unbreakable resolve will long outlive the vain ambitions of President Putin," he said.

Johnson said the U.K. will work to intensify the sanctions on Russia. He praised the resilience of Ukrainians and how "life is coming back to the streets" of Kyiv, but noted that "only a couple of hours away, a barbaric assault continues. Towns and villages are being reduced to rubble."

Zelenskyy gave Johnson a tour of a monastery where they lit candles and the British leader received an icon. They placed flowers at an outdoor memorial wall displaying photos of soldiers who fell in fighting in 2014, viewed an exhibit of damaged, rusting Russian weapons, and greeted cheering crowds.

"We have a common view of the movement toward Ukraine's victory. I'm grateful for the powerful support!" Zelenskyy said on Telegram.

The possibility of membership in the EU, created to safeguard peace on the continent and serve as a model for the rule of law and prosperity, fulfills a wish of Zelenskyy and his Western-looking citizens.

The European Commission's recommendation that Ukraine become a candidate for membership will be discussed by leaders of the 27-nation bloc next week in Brussels. The war has increased pressure on EU governments to fast-track Ukraine's candidacy, but the process is expected to take years, and EU members remain divided over how quickly and fully to welcome new members.

Political and military support from Western countries has been key to Ukraine's surprising success against larger and better-equipped Russian forces. Zelenskyy has also clamored for additional immediate support in the form of more and better weapons to turn the tide in the industrial east, known as the Donbas.

In St. Petersburg, Putin decried the sanctions imposed on Russia by the U.S. and its allies as "insane and, I would say, reckless."

"The calculation was understandable: to impudently, with a swoop, crush the Russian economy by destroying business chains, forcing the withdrawal of Western companies from the Russian market, freezing domestic assets, hitting industry, finance, and the people's standard of living. It didn't work," he said.

Russia has pressed its offensive in the east, leaving desperate residents worried about their future.

"We are old people, we do not have a place to go. Where will I go?" asked Vira Miedientseva, an elderly resident grappling with the aftermath of an attack Thursday in Lysychansk, just across the river from

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Sievierodonetsk, where a key battle is raging.

In other developments Friday:

— Zelenskyy announced that Russia has freed Yuliia Paievska, a celebrated Ukrainian medic who used a body camera to record her work in Mariupol while the port city was under Russian siege. Paievska, known in Ukraine as Taira, got the clips to an Associated Press team on March 15, the day before she was captured by Russian troops. Zelenskyy said Paievska is “already home.” He said Ukraine will continue working to free all those held by the Russians.

— Russian state television showed video of two U.S. military veterans who went missing last week while fighting in Ukraine, confirming that the men were taken captive and raising fears about their fate. Alex Druke and Andy Huynh, both from Alabama, were believed to be the first Americans captured by Russian forces since the war began.

— The Ukrainian navy claimed it destroyed a Russian boat carrying air defense systems to a strategic island in the Black Sea. The navy said on social media that the Vasily Bekh was used to transport ammunition, weapons and personnel to Snake Island, which is vital for protecting sea lanes out of the key port of Odesa.

— A group of volunteers called the “IT Army of Ukraine” said it carried out a cyberattack that delayed Putin’s St. Petersburg speech. The group was convened by Ukraine after the invasion to launch cyberattacks against Russian targets. It said it carried out a distributed denial-of-service attack, which leverages networks of zombie computers to flood websites with junk traffic, rendering them unreachable.

— The war’s disruption to exports of grain and other crops from Ukraine that feed the world has captured global attention and sent bread prices soaring across the world. But the production of other, more niche foodstuffs has also been impacted, including for a Ukrainian snail farmer.

— The organizer of the Eurovision Song Contest said it will start talks with the BBC on possibly holding next year’s event in the U.K. after concluding it can’t be held in Ukraine. The Ukrainian band Kalush Orchestra won the 2022 contest, buoying Ukrainian spirits. The event is traditionally staged by the previous year’s winner.

Russian forces have switched their focus to the Donbas after a series of setbacks early in the war, including the failure to seize Ukraine’s capital. The Ukrainian military said Moscow’s troops kept up relentless attacks on Sloviansk and Sievierodonetsk, the focus of recent fighting. The military claimed Ukrainian forces pushed Russian fighters out of the village of Bohorodychne, north of Sloviansk.

Russia and its allies say they have taken about half of Donetsk and nearly all of Luhansk — the two regions that make up the Donbas. Sievierodonetsk and surrounding villages are in the last pocket of Luhansk region still in Ukrainian hands.

“The Russians are pouring fire on the city,” said Luhansk Gov. Serhiy Haidai. “It’s getting harder and harder for us to fight in Sievierodonetsk, because the Russians outnumber us in artillery and manpower, and it’s very difficult for us to resist this barrage of fire.”

The constant shelling made it impossible for 568 people, including 38 children, sheltering in the Azot chemical plant in the city to escape, he said. Russian forces have destroyed all three bridges leading from the city, but Haidai said it still had not been fully blocked off.

Moscow’s envoy for Russia-backed separatists who control much of the territory around Sievierodonetsk said an evacuation from the Azot plant still could take place. Rodion Miroshnik of the self-proclaimed Luhansk’s People’s Republic said on social media that Russian troops and separatists are “ready to consider options for opening a humanitarian corridor for the exit of civilians, but subject to strict adherence to the cease-fire.”

Earlier this week, Miroshnik accused Kyiv of trying to disrupt civilian evacuations from Azot, a claim vigorously denied by Ukrainian officials.

## Russian TV shows videos of 2 US vets captured in Ukraine

Russian state television showed video Friday of two U.S. military veterans who went missing last week while fighting in Ukraine, confirming that the men were taken captive and raising fears about their fate.

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Alex Druke and Andy Huynh, both from Alabama, were believed to be the first Americans captured by Russian forces since the war began on Feb. 24.

Druke, speaking into the camera from what appeared to be an office, sent a message to his mother, concluding with a quick wink.

"Mom, I just want to let you know that I'm alive and I hope to be back home as soon as I can be. So, love Diesel for me. Love you." Diesel is his dog, a mastiff.

His aunt, Dianna Shaw, said the video included both a key word and a gesture that Druke and his mother had set up during one of his two tours in Iraq so she would know that it was indeed him and that he was OK.

Druke, who served in the U.S. Army, and Huynh, who served in the U.S. Marines, went missing after their group came under heavy fire in the northeastern Kharkiv region on June 9.

Citing Druke, the RT television report said the Americans became separated from the others and once it was safe they set off through the woods, ending up in a village where they were approached by a Russian patrol and surrendered.

RT, which broadcasts in English, said they were being held by Russian-backed separatist forces in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine.

Three other foreigners fighting for Ukraine, two Britons and a Moroccan man, were sentenced to death by a court run by separatists in Donetsk, which is in the Donbas.

The U.S. has insisted that anyone captured should be considered a prisoner of war and protected by guarantees of humane treatment and fair trials. But the Russian military has said it considers foreigners fighting with Ukraine to be mercenaries and claims they are not protected as combatants under the Geneva Conventions.

A reporter for the Russian state television network VGTRK recorded short clips of the two men speaking Russian and saying, "I am against war."

There has been no official confirmation from the U.S. or Russian government that the Americans were being held.

The State Department said earlier this week that it was looking into reports that Russian or Russian-backed forces had captured two American citizens. It also reiterated its warning that Americans should not be going to Ukraine to fight, a message repeated Friday by President Joe Biden.

Asked about the missing Americans before the Russian videos appeared, Biden said he had been briefed on the situation but provided no further details.

"I don't know where they are and I want to be clear: Americans should not be going to Ukraine," Biden said. "I'll say it again, Americans should not be going to Ukraine."

## **Brazil police: Remains found those of British journalist**

By FABIANO MAISONNAVE Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Federal police said Friday that human remains found in Brazil's remote Amazon have been identified as belonging to British journalist Dom Phillips, who went missing almost two weeks ago along with a Brazilian Indigenous expert in a case that drew world attention.

Additional remains found at the site near the city of Atalaia do Norte have not yet been identified but are expected to belong to Indigenous expert Bruno Pereira, 41. The pair were last seen June 5 on their boat on the Itaquai river, near the entrance of the Javari Valley Indigenous Territory, which borders Peru and Colombia.

"The confirmation (of Phillips' remains) was made based on dental examinations and anthropological forensics," Federal Police said in a statement. "Work is ongoing for a complete identification of the remains so we can determine the cause of death, and also the dynamics of the crime and the hiding of the bodies."

The remains were found Wednesday after fisherman Amarildo da Costa de Oliveira, nicknamed Pelado, confessed he killed Phillips, 57, and Pereira, and led police to the site where the remains were found. He told officers he used a firearm to commit the crime.

Police also arrested Pelado's brother, fisherman Oseney da Costa de Oliveira.

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The remains had arrived in the capital city of Brasilia on Thursday for forensics to work.

The area where Phillips and Pereira went missing has seen violent conflicts between fishermen, poachers, and government agents.

Federal police said others may have participated in the crime but that organized criminal groups did not appear to be involved.

UNIVAJA, the local Indigenous association for whom Pereira was working, criticized that conclusion. It said in a statement the investigation had not considered the existence of a criminal organization financing illegal fishing and poaching in the Javari Valley Indigenous Territory.

"That was why Bruno Pereira became one of the main targets of this criminal group, as well as other UNIVAJA members who received death threats," the statement said.

President Jair Bolsonaro, a frequent critic of journalists and Indigenous experts, has drawn criticism that the government didn't get involved fast enough. Earlier, he criticized Phillips in an interview, saying without evidence that locals in the area where he went missing didn't like him and that he should have been more careful in the region.

His main adversary in October's election, former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, said in a statement that the killings "are directly related to the dismantling of public policies of protection to Indigenous peoples. "It is also related to the current administration's stimulus to violence," said da Silva, who leads in opinion polls.

The efforts to find the pair were started by Indigenous peoples in the region.

Indigenous people who were with Pereira and Phillips have said that Pelado brandished a rifle at them on the day before the pair disappeared.

Official search teams concentrated their efforts around a spot in the Itaquai river where a tarp from the boat used by the missing men was found. Authorities began scouring the area and discovered a backpack, laptop and other personal belongings submerged underwater Sunday.

Authorities have said a main line of the police investigation into the disappearances has pointed to an international network that pays poor fishermen to fish illegally in the Javari Valley reserve, which is Brazil's second-largest Indigenous territory.

Pereira, who previously led the local bureau of the federal Indigenous agency, known as FUNAI, took part in several operations against illegal fishing. In such operations, as a rule the fishing gear is seized or destroyed, while the fishermen are fined and briefly detained. Only the Indigenous can legally fish in their territories.

While some police, the mayor and others in the region link the pair's disappearances to the "fish mafia," federal police have not ruled out other lines of investigation, such as drug trafficking.

The case has put a global magnifying glass on violence in the Amazon.

Earlier on Friday, U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price said Phillips and Pereira were "murdered for supporting conservation of the rainforest and native peoples there."

"We call for accountability and justice — we must collectively strengthen efforts to protect environmental defenders and journalists," Price said.

Protests calling for justice for Phillips and Pereira are scheduled to take place in several Brazilian cities over the weekend.

## Starving California pelicans released after rehabilitation

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. (AP) — A dozen of the hundreds of brown pelicans found starving on the Southern California coast were released Friday after rehabilitation at a wildlife center.

The pelicans were returned to the wild at Corona del Mar State Beach after treatment at the Wetlands and Wildlife Care Center in Huntington Beach. They were among about 70 that have been brought to the center since mid-May, said Dr. Elizabeth Wood, the facility's veterinarian.

"They were all brought in in a state of emaciation," Wood said. "They were basically starving."

The birds were not showing any signs of obvious disease and they tested negative for disease, she said.

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"So basically it just seems like a mass starvation event. They were found all over the beaches — emaciated, anemic, dehydrated and with the feathers not waterproofed anymore," Wood said.

The birds, however, responded well to basic care, including fluids and large amounts of fish, she said.

"We don't have a clear answer as to what caused this," Wood said.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife said last month that hundreds of starving pelicans had been admitted to wildlife rehabilitation facilities since about May 13, and many died shortly after their arrival at facilities. The department similarly found no indications of disease or unusual parasites.

It's not known if the starvation event is over, but Wood said the intake of birds has declined dramatically over the last week or so.

The 12 birds released Friday will serve as a "sentinel group" to see how they fare before additional birds are released. All were banded so that wildlife experts can identify them if they end up on beaches in distress again.

Rehabilitating each pelican costs about \$45 a day, Wood said.

Brown pelicans are an important part of the Pacific Coast ecosystem, feeding on northern anchovy, Pacific sardine and mackerel.

The impact of the pesticide DDT, which caused eggshell thinning, led to the listing of California brown pelicans as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act in 1970. After DDT was banned, the species recovered and was removed from the U.S. endangered list in 2009. It remains protected under state law.

Wood said anyone encountering a sick pelican should call wildlife experts and not touch it.

## From dry to deluge, how heavy snow, rain flooded Yellowstone

By MICHAEL PHILLIS, SETH BORENSTEIN and BRITTANY PETERSON undefined

RED LODGE, Montana (AP) — Just three months ago, the Yellowstone region like most of the West was dragging through an extended drought with little snow in the mountains and wildfire scars in Red Lodge from a year ago when the area was hit by 105-degree Fahrenheit (40.5 Celsius) heat and fire.

Rivers and creeks this week raged with water much higher and faster than even the rare benchmark 500 year flood. Weather-whiplashed residents and government officials raced to save homes, roads and businesses.

Mostly natural fleeting forces with some connections to long-term climate change combined to trigger the switch from drought to deluge, scientists said.

It was a textbook case of "weather weirding," said Red Lodge resident and National Snow and Ice Data Center deputy lead scientist Twila Moon. Her cropped hair was up in a sweat band and she was covered head to toe in mud from helping residents clear out flooded areas.

But these were conditions unique to the northern interior West, scientists say. Most of the West doesn't have much snow and will keep struggling with drought.

In the Yellowstone area, after a winter with light snow, it finally accumulated a couple of months ago, wet and cold, likely thanks to the natural weather event La Nina, building the snowpack in the mountains to above normal levels. Snow fell so hard on Memorial Day weekend people had to abandon camping gear and get out of the park while they could, said Tom Osborne, a hydrologist who has spent decades in the area.

Things looked good. The drought wasn't quite busted — in fact Thursday's national drought monitor still puts 84% of Montana under unusually dry or full-fledged drought conditions — but it was better. Then came too much of a moist thing. Heavy rains poured in thanks to a water-laden atmosphere turbocharged by warmer than normal Pacific water. And when it poured, it melted. The equivalent of nine inches (23 centimeters) of rain flowed down Montana mountain slopes in some places. Half or more was from the melting snow, scientists said.

All the rivers and streams reacted the same: "They shot up to levels far beyond anything ever recorded," Osborne said. "Hydrologists know that there's nothing that causes higher magnitude flooding in the West



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more so than a rain-on-snow event.”

One gage on the Stillwater River near Absarokee, where Osborne lives, normally flows at 7,000 cubic feet (200 cubic meters) per second during a moderate flood and races at 12,400 cubic feet (350 cubic meters) per second in a 100-year flood, he said. A once-in-500-year flood would mean water raging at 14,400 cubic feet (410 cubic meters) per second. Preliminary numbers show that on Monday, it crested at 23,700 cubic feet (670 cubic meters) per second, the equivalent of stacking three moderate floods on top of each other, according to Osborne.

“A lot of these roads had existed for decades and had not seen any sort of flood damage like what we saw,” said Lance VandenBoogart, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

The storm’s bullseye hit the eastern end of mountainous Custer Gallatin National Forest, dumping five inches of rain in some spots.

La Nina conditions occur when parts of the equatorial Pacific ocean cool, changing global weather patterns. While La Nina can dry out the U.S. Southwest, it can increase snow and rain in other more north-westerly parts of the country and may have helped pack more snow in Yellowstone’s mountain peaks, according to Upmanu Lall, the director of the Columbia Water Center at Columbia University.

And while Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana had bigger snowpacks from a cold, wet spring, areas south of that were extremely dry with anemic to missing late spring snows, said UCLA climate scientist and western weather expert Daniel Swain.

Then an “atmospheric river” — long flowing regions in the sky that move large amounts of water — entered the area and dumped rain on the snow at a time when the weather was warm. That rain came in from over the northern Pacific where the water and air was unusually warm and warmer air holds more rain due to basic physics, said Swain. That’s a small climate change connection, he said.

Over the long-term, climate change is reducing snowpack in the West, according to Guillaume Mauger, a research scientist at the University of Washington Climate Impacts Group.

“With climate change, we expect less snow and we expect the melt season to be shorter,” said Mauger. But the spring didn’t follow that long-term pattern.

“What is extraordinary is the combination of that high snowpack that got built up in April, May, together with this rainfall event and the warmer conditions,” Lall said. “That’s where the flooding is coming from.”

Lall said an atmospheric river that brought in moisture from the Pacific “is a little bit harder” to link to climate change.

La Nina may have played a role in several ways. While there have been La Ninas like this one throughout the past “we’ve never seen in human history persistent La Nina events with global temperatures this warm before. That is a unique combination,” Swain said. “We already know that La Nina increases the risk of floods in some places. It increases the amount of active weather in some places. And then you have warmer oceans and a warmer atmosphere that can supercharge those.”

“So you really can’t just say it’s one thing or the other,” Swain said. “It really is both. It’s the natural and the unnatural together.”

A year ago, Montana climate scientists created the Greater Yellowstone Climate Assessment and it warned of rain-and-snow events like this, said report co-lead author Cathy Whitlock, an Earth sciences professor at Montana State University.

But the real life flooding disaster was far worse, she said.

“Who could predict houses going into the rivers and bridges being destroyed,” Whitlock said. “It’s so much worse than you imagine. And it’s partly because the infrastructure is not set up for extreme climate events.”

## California bill would reduce single-use plastic products 25%

By KATHLEEN RONAYNE Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — An ambitious California proposal aims to reduce plastic production for single-use products like shampoo bottles and food wrappers by 25% starting next decade, part of an

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effort to rein in pollution from the ubiquitous material.

A bill introduced late Thursday aims to bring environmental and business groups together to avoid a similar ballot measure slated to go before voters in November. But at least two of the ballot measure's three proponents aren't yet on board.

Democratic Sen. Ben Allen, the bill's author, said that if passed the proposal would make California a leader in reducing plastic waste by focusing on eliminating plastic at the source, not just recycling it once produced.

"The truth is we just need less crap out there — less plastic out there in general," Allen said Friday.

Plastics have long been a target of environmental groups. Most plastic is not recycled and millions of tons are polluting the world's oceans, hurting wildlife and showing up in drinking water. Various efforts are underway to rein in such pollution, with states attempting to reduce the use of plastic grocery bags, straws and other products. This month the federal government said it will phase out the sale of single-use plastics like water bottles at national parks.

Under the bill, the 25% reduction in plastic from single-use products would start in 2032. It would apply to producers of products like laundry detergent, toothpaste and food wrappings, as well as companies like Amazon that package products for mailing. They would have to replace the plastic with other materials, reduce their packaging or market the products as reusable and make it easy for consumers to do so. It wouldn't apply to water or other beverage bottles, which are regulated by different recycling laws.

Beyond plastic, producers of all single-use products, even those made of paper or glass, would need to ensure that 65% are recycled by 2032. It's estimated that less than 10% of plastic in the United States is recycled now.

Makers of single-use products would have to join "producer responsibility organizations" that would implement the rules with state oversight. The organizations would have to collect \$500 million annually for a state plastic pollution mitigation fund. Producers that don't follow the rules could be fined \$50,000 a day.

The legislation was the product of long negotiations between Allen's office, environmental and business groups. Allen said he doesn't expect the plastics industry to support the bill. But he hopes they won't lobby against it because it may be more acceptable than the ballot measure and would mean they don't have to spend money trying to defeat it.

"While California businesses both large and small face a maze of environmental regulations as a result of this bill, we believe that this proposal ensures long term policy certainty around recycling and packaging," Jennifer Barrera, president of the California Chamber of Commerce, said in a statement.

Still, there was no immediate commitment from backers of the ballot measure to withdraw it. Ballot measures can be removed until June 30, meaning the bill would need to win quick passage.

"We will pull the initiative if/when the bill that the Governor signs merits the sacrifice. Not a day sooner. We are nowhere close to that," Linda Escalante of the Natural Resources Defense Council and a proponent of the measure said in a statement.

Caryl Hart, vice chair of the California Coastal Commission, and Michael Sangiacomo, former president of the waste management company Recology, are the other two backers of the ballot measure. Sangiacomo said in a statement the legislation doesn't do enough for him to support pulling the ballot measure. He didn't elaborate further.

The ballot measure requires a 25% cut in plastic production, but starting two years earlier. It would ban the use of Styrofoam and similar products by food vendors. The legislation wouldn't do that; instead it would require 20% of such products to be recycled. Anja Brandon, U.S. Plastics Policy Analyst at the Ocean Conservancy, said that amounts to a "de facto ban" because the material can't be recycled.

The ballot measure puts more regulatory power in the hands of the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery and puts a 1-cent fee on all single-use plastic products. The measure's proponents say the legislation gives the industry too much power to regulate itself.

The Ocean Conservancy is one of the environmental groups backing the bill. Brandon called it the strongest plastics legislation in the country. Her organization estimated the bill would reduce plastic in

the state by 23 million tons over 10 years.

"Walk down a grocery aisle, anything you see (that's plastic) is going to be affected by this," she said.

## **FDA authorizes 1st COVID-19 shots for infants, preschoolers**

By LINDSEY TANNER AP Medical Writer

U.S. regulators on Friday authorized the first COVID-19 shots for infants and preschoolers, paving the way for vaccinations to begin next week.

The Food and Drug Administration's action follows its advisory panel's unanimous recommendation for the shots from Moderna and Pfizer. That means U.S. kids under 5 — roughly 18 million youngsters — are eligible for the shots. The nation's vaccination campaign began about 1 1/2 years ago with older adults, the hardest hit during the coronavirus pandemic.

There's one step left: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends how to use vaccines. Its independent advisers began debating the two-dose Moderna and the three-dose Pfizer vaccines on Friday and will make its recommendation Saturday. A final signoff is expected soon after from CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky.

At a Senate hearing Thursday, Walensky said her staff was working over the Juneteenth federal holiday weekend "because we understand the urgency of this for American parents."

She said pediatric deaths from COVID-19 have been higher than what is generally seen from the flu each year.

"So I actually think we need to protect young children, as well as protect everyone with the vaccine and especially protect elders," she said.

The FDA also authorized Moderna's vaccines for school-aged children and teens; CDC's review is next week. Pfizer's shots had been the only option for those age groups.

For weeks, the Biden administration has been preparing to roll out the vaccines for little kids, with states, tribes, community health centers and pharmacies preordering millions of doses. With FDA's emergency use authorization, manufacturers can begin shipping vaccine across the country. The shots are expected to start early next week but it's not clear how popular they will be.

Without protection for their tots, some families had put off birthday parties, vacations and visits with grandparents.

"Today is a day of huge relief for parents and families across America," President Joe Biden said in a statement.

While young children generally don't get as sick from COVID-19 as older kids and adults, their hospitalizations surged during the omicron wave and FDA's advisers determined that benefits from vaccination outweighed the minimal risks. Studies from Moderna and Pfizer showed side effects, including fever and fatigue, were mostly minor.

White House COVID-19 coordinator Dr. Ashish Jha predicted the pace of vaccinations for kids under 5 to be far slower than it was for older populations and said the administration doesn't have any internal targets for the pace of vaccinations.

"At the end of the day, our goal is very clear: We want to get as many kids vaccinated as possible," Jha told The Associated Press.

In testing, the littlest children developed high levels of virus-fighting antibodies, comparable to what is seen in young adults, the FDA said. Moderna's vaccine was about 40% to 50% effective at preventing infections but there were too few cases during Pfizer's study to give a reliable, exact estimate of effectiveness, the agency said.

"Both of these vaccines have been authorized with science and safety at the forefront of our minds," Dr. Peter Marks, FDA's vaccine chief, said at a news briefing.

Marks said parents should feel comfortable with either vaccine, and should get their kids vaccinated as soon as possible, rather than waiting until fall, when a different virus variant might be circulating. He said adjustments in the vaccines would be made to account for that.

"Whatever vaccine your health care provider, pediatrician has, that's what I would give my child," Marks said.

The two brands use the same technology but there are differences.

Pfizer's vaccine for kids younger than 5 is one-tenth of the adult dose. Three shots are needed: the first two given three weeks apart and the last at least two months later.

Moderna's is two shots, each a quarter of its adult dose, given about four weeks apart for kids under 6. The FDA also authorized a third dose, at least a month after the second shot, for children who have immune conditions that make them more vulnerable to serious illness.

Both vaccines are for children as young as 6 months. Moderna next plans to study its shots for babies as young as 3 months. Pfizer has not finalized plans for shots in younger infants. A dozen countries, including China, already vaccinate kids under 5, with other brands.

Immediately upon hearing of the FDA's decision, Dr. Toma Omofoye, a Houston radiologist, made appointments for her 4-year-old daughter and 3-year-old son. Without the shots, her family has missed out on family gatherings, indoor concerts, even trips to the grocery store, she said. During a recent pharmacy stop, Omofoye said her daughter stared and walked around like it was Disneyland, and thanked her.

"My heart broke in that moment, which is why my heart is so elated now," Omofoye said.

But will other parents be as eager to get their youngest vaccinated? By some estimates, three-quarters of all U.S. children have already been infected. And only about 30% of children aged 5 to 11 have gotten vaccinated since Pfizer's shots opened to them last November.

The FDA officials acknowledged those low rates and said the government is committed to getting more older kids vaccinated and having better success with younger kids.

"It's a real tragedy, when you have something free with so few side effects that prevents deaths and hospitalization," said FDA Commissioner Robert Califf.

Roughly 440 children under age 5 have died from COVID-19, federal data show.

Dr. Beth Ebel of the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle, said the tot-sized vaccines would be especially welcomed by parents with children in day care where outbreaks can sideline parents from jobs, adding to financial strain.

"A lot of people are going to be happy and a lot of grandparents are going to be happy, too, because we've missed those babies who grew up when you weren't able to see them," Ebel said.

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## **Iowa Supreme Court: Abortion not fundamental right in state**

By DAVID PITT Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — The Iowa Supreme Court on Friday cleared the way for lawmakers to severely limit or ban abortion in the state, reversing a decision by the court just four years ago that guaranteed the right to abortion under the Iowa Constitution.

The court, now composed almost entirely of Republican appointees, concluded that a less conservative court wrongly decided abortion is among the fundamental privacy rights guaranteed by the Iowa Constitution and federal law.

Friday's ruling comes amid expectations that the U.S. Supreme Court will overturn the landmark Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion nationwide. If that happens, Iowa lawmakers could ban abortion without completing the lengthy process of amending the state constitution.

The Iowa decision stemmed from a lawsuit filed by abortion providers who challenged a 2020 law that required a 24-hour waiting period before a woman can get an abortion. A judge who struck down the law cited the state high court's 2018 ruling. The judge also concluded that the law violated rules prohibiting passage of bills with more than one subject.

The state Supreme Court action means those seeking an abortion in Iowa must abide by the 24-hour waiting period which means returning to the clinic for a second time, an obstacle that opponents said could place abortion out of reach for some.

"The court's decision today is a devastating and shocking reversal. But abortion remains legal in Iowa and we will continue to fight to challenge the two-appointment, minimum 24-hour mandatory delay law under the undue burden standard that the court declined to overrule today," said ACLU of Iowa Legal Director Rita Bettis Austen.

The court returned the legal battle over the 24-hour wait to district court for further proceedings.

"We definitely have a long fight ahead of us. It's important now more than ever that Iowans engage, and step up, stand up, have their voices heard that they want to retain the fundamental right to abortion care," said Sheena Dooley, spokeswoman for Planned Parenthood North Central States

In its 2018 ruling, decided by a 5-2 vote, the court said "autonomy and dominion over one's body go to the very heart of what it means to be free."

The opinion released Friday and written by Justice Edward Mansfield said the court isn't obligated to abide by precedent, especially in cases evaluating constitutional rights or in cases decided recently.

The reversal reflects a dramatic change in the court's makeup. Gov. Kim Reynolds has named four justices since 2017, and six of the seven people on the court were appointed by Republican governors.

But Mansfield rejected the argument by legal scholars and law professors that said shifting opinions on such important matters within a short period of time feeds into the idea that courts are politicized.

"We do not agree that every state supreme court decision is entitled to some minimum try-out period before it can be challenged," he said.

He said "courts must be free to correct their own mistakes when no one else can."

Reynolds said in a statement that the ruling is a "significant victory in our fight to protect the unborn." She and legislative leaders have not said whether they will call a special session this summer to take up a new abortion law.

Justice Brent Appel, the only Democratic appointee to the court, wrote a dissenting opinion saying "the

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right to reproductive autonomy should not be eviscerated by narrow textualism.”

Chief Justice Susan Christensen also disagreed with overturning the 2018 decision, saying little has changed and that since the Iowa Legislature has begun the process of amending the Iowa Constitution to say abortion is not a fundamental right, the people should decide the issue.

“If the majority truly wants to leave this issue to the will of the people, it should let the people have their say through the ongoing constitutional amendment process,” she said.

If lawmakers approve the amendment next year, a vote could come as soon as 2024.

Reynolds, an outspoken opponent of abortion rights, and Republicans in the Legislature have repeatedly said they hoped the court would overturn the 2018 ruling, and GOP lawmakers gave the governor more control over the panel that chooses nominations for court positions.

The 2018 decision made Iowa the sixth state — with Alaska, Florida, Kansas, Montana and Minnesota — where abortion rights were recognized by the state’s high court.

As in Iowa, Republicans control the Legislatures and governorships in Florida and Montana, where GOP leaders have been stymied from enacting abortion bans that could take effect if the U.S. Supreme Court overturns its 1973 landmark decision and puts decision-making power in state government hands.

In Montana, a challenge to abortion restrictions that could test its high court opinion is before the Supreme Court.

In Iowa, Reynolds has demurred on questions of what exceptions she would accept. She said last month she is “proud of the legislation she signed in 2018,” including the ban on abortions once cardiac activity is detected, as early as six weeks and often before many women know they are pregnant. The measure included exceptions to protect the life of the mother and in pregnancies that result from incest or rape.

Yet more recently, she stopped short of specifying similar exceptions. “I’m not going to set any parameters,” she told reporters.

Iowa Department of Public Health data shows there were 4,058 abortions in Iowa in 2020 — 835 surgical abortions and 3,222 by medication. That was an increase over the previous year when 3,566 abortions were reported. Iowa averaged just under 3,500 abortions a year from 2015 to 2019.

Court documents show Planned Parenthood performs about 95% of Iowa abortions. Surgical and medical abortions may be obtained in clinics in Des Moines and Iowa City. Medication abortions are provided in other clinic locations including Ames, Council Bluffs and Sioux City.

## Alaska officials release new details on milk, sealant mix-up

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — School district officials in Alaska investigating how students at a summer child-care program were served floor sealant instead of milk say the two products were not on the same pallet as first believed.

A number of agencies are involved in the ongoing investigation into Tuesday’s incident at a summer program at a Juneau elementary school in which officials say 12 students and two adults drank the floor sealant.

Juneau School District chief of staff Kristin Bartlett said by email Friday that as the investigation has progressed, school officials “have been able to get clarification on some of the details of what happened.”

The district in a statement late Thursday said it now understands that in the spring of 2021, a pallet of floor sealant was mistakenly delivered to a district food commodity warehouse at the same time as four pallets of shelf stable milk. The warehouse is intended for food items only.

“The pallet of floor sealant remained untouched in storage with other food products until this week,” when the district’s food service contractor “ran short on milk and sent staff to retrieve shelf stable milk,” the statement said.

On Tuesday, three boxes of floor sealant were picked up from the warehouse by the contractor, with one delivered to the summer program, the statement said. The others were delivered to two other schools and remained unopened, according to the statement.

Bartlett said the boxes “were marked with a label that said Seal 341.”

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According to the district statement, a worker with the contractor “took the box of floor sealant and poured its contents into cups to be served at breakfast.” Shortly after breakfast, students “complained of the ‘milk’ tasting bad” and burning their mouths and throats, and it was “quickly discovered” that what was served was a “slightly scented liquid floor sealant resembling milk.”

“Staff immediately directed students to stop consuming the substance and removed it,” the statement said.

Twelve students and two adults each ingested up to three ounces of the floor sealant, the statement said. Poison control was contacted for instructions, but the district said a delay in parental notification was “longer than it should have been” and caused families to learn of the incident from other sources.

Some students were taken by parents for medical treatment, the statement said. As of Wednesday evening, the students “are recovering, and some are fully recovered,” it said.

The district said it is examining its protocols for emergency communications. It said the warehouse was inspected and now contains only food items. The child-care program remains open.

Inspectors with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation are also conducting a more thorough investigation, the statement said.

## Jan. 6 hearings: What we’ve learned, and what’s next

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In its first three hearings, the House panel investigating the Capitol insurrection has laid out the beginnings of its case against former President Donald Trump — that his lies about the 2020 election, and his pressure on his vice president to overturn it, directly led to the violence on Jan. 6, 2021.

The committee’s June hearings — at least two more are scheduled — come after a yearlong probe and more than 1,000 interviews. The panel has featured both live witnesses and video, including from interviews with many of Trump’s closest advisers who tried to dissuade him from his efforts to stay in power. The committee has also showed video from the violent attack that day, some of which had never been seen before.

In methodically laying out their initial findings, members of the nine-member panel say they are trying to remind a weary public of what was at stake that day, and what could have happened if Vice President Mike Pence and others had not rebuffed Trump’s efforts to overturn his defeat. They are also compiling a huge trove of evidence that the Justice Department wants to use in its own investigations.

A rundown of what we’ve learned so far from the public hearings of the select Jan. 6 committee — and what’s next:

### PENCE UNDER PRESSURE

The committee’s Thursday hearing focused on Trump’s pressure on his vice president after all 50 states certified President Joe Biden’s win and courts across the country had rejected his campaign’s attempts to legally challenge the results. As the president ran out of options, he and a small group of allies turned toward the final congressional certification on Jan. 6.

The vice president presides over that session every four years in a ceremonial role. Prodded by a constitutional law professor named John Eastman, Trump pressured Pence to defy the law, and hundreds of years of precedent, by stepping in to object to or delay the count.

Greg Jacob, a counsel to Pence, said the vice president was resolute from the beginning that he would not carry out the plan. “Our review of text, history — and frankly, just common sense — all confirm the vice president’s first instinct on that point, there is no justifiable basis to conclude that the vice president has that kind of authority,” Jacob told the committee in live testimony on Thursday.

But Trump ramped up his pressure in the days before the certification, culminating with a call that aides described as “heated” between the two men on the morning of Jan. 6, a shout out for Pence to “do the right thing” at a huge rally of his supporters that morning and finally with a tweet saying that Pence did not have “courage” as a violent mob was already breaking into the building. The committee chronicled



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that timeline with video interviews from White House aides, clips from Trump's speech and footage of the angry crowd calling for Pence's assassination.

In one video played by the committee, a Trump supporter said he had heard reports that Pence had "caved," and if he did they were going to drag "politicians through the streets." The crowd called for Pence's hanging as they broke into the building.

The panel also filled in new details about Pence's hasty evacuation from the Senate as the rioting started. California Rep. Pete Aguilar, a Democrat on the committee who led Thursday's hearing, told Jacob that the group was at one point only 40 feet from the rioters.

## TRUMP AIDES SPEAK OUT

Though some of Trump's top allies defied subpoenas to testify, the committee spoke to many of his top aides, including several who were in the White House that day and were in meetings in the weeks beforehand as Trump, Eastman and lawyer Rudy Giuliani, among a small group of others, pushed the scheme to overturn Trump's defeat.

The panel played clips of video testimony in which the aides say they disagreed with the plan or tried to talk the president out of it – even though few of them spoke out publicly at the time.

Those efforts to persuade Trump started on election night, when the race was still too close to call and Giuliani pushed the president to declare victory. Trump campaign manager Bill Stepien said in one interview clip played by the panel that he told Trump it was "way too early" to make a prediction like that, but Trump went out to the press room and did it anyway, telling reporters that the early results were "a fraud on the American public" and that "frankly, we did win this election."

The committee has also shown video from testimony by Trump's daughter, Ivanka Trump, and her husband, Jared Kushner. In a clip played from her interview earlier this year, Ivanka Trump told the panel that her father's call with Pence the morning of Jan. 6 was "pretty heated" and had "a different tone than I had heard him take with the vice president before." Others described vulgarities they said the president used.

The committee has not released the full transcripts of the interviews.

## NO EVIDENCE OF FRAUD

In Monday's second hearing, the panel showed evidence that Trump's claims of widespread fraud in the election were false. While election officials across the country certified the results and courts rejected Trump's many lawsuits, the president and his allies repeatedly maintained that it was true.

The committee used video clips of testimony from former Attorney General Bill Barr, who resigned after telling the president his claims were "bullshit." Barr said he had looked into the allegations and found no evidence that any of them were true. He described his interactions with the president as he tried to convince him of the facts, telling the panel that Trump was becoming "detached from reality."

In-person witnesses at the committee's hearing on Monday talked about Trump and Giuliani's pressure to try to overturn the results in their states. BJay Pak, a former U.S. attorney in Atlanta who resigned as Trump pressured Georgia officials, said his office investigated Giuliani's "reckless" claims about fraud in the state and found them to be "simply untrue."

## WHAT'S NEXT

The committee has two additional hearings scheduled this month, and more are expected. A hearing on Tuesday is expected to focus on state officials who were contacted by Trump and the White House as he tried to overturn the results. Additional hearings will look at Trump's pressure on the Justice Department to declare the election "corrupt" and on what was happening inside the White House as the violence unfolded.

After the hearings, the investigation will continue. The panel expects to issue final reports by the end of the year. Investigators still haven't said whether they will try to call Pence or Trump to testify, either privately or publicly.

## SHARING TRANSCRIPTS

The Justice Department has ramped up its own investigation, and has asked the Jan. 6 panel to provide transcripts from its 1,000 interviews. The committee has so far declined, but said it is engaged in a "cooperative process" with the department.

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"We believe accountability is important and won't be an obstacle to the department's prosecution," committee spokesman Tim Mulvey said in a statement on Friday.

In a letter Wednesday, the Justice Department said the panel was complicating its investigations by not sharing,

"It is now readily apparent that the interviews the Select Committee conducted are not just potentially relevant to our overall criminal investigations, but are likely relevant to specific prosecutions that have already commenced," federal prosecutors wrote to Tim Heaphy, chief investigative counsel for the committee.

Mississippi Rep. Bennie Thompson, the chairman of the Jan. 6 panel, told reporters Thursday that lawmakers will formally respond to the prosecutors. But, he added, "We're not going to stop what we're doing to share information that we've gotten so far with the Department of Justice."

## Wallowing in Watergate 50 years later: A political quiz

By MIKE FEINSILBER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — For half a century, every major Washington scandal started with some form of this question: Is this another Watergate?

Watergate spawned an all-purpose suffix. If "gate" were appended to misdeeds it was controversy of first rank.

Watergate brought down a president. It reordered American politics, at least for a time. It begot far-reaching reforms, many now eroded. It seeded ever greater mistrust in government.

Until a June night 50 years ago, Watergate meant little more than an apartment complex, an office building and a bandshell at the edge of the Potomac where military bands played the music of John Philip Sousa on warm summer evenings.

Then, in the Watergate office building, where the Democratic National Committee maintained its headquarters, came a burglary. Then a cover-up. Then the unravelling of a presidency. "Watergate" forever stands for political corruption and the shaming of Richard M. Nixon.

Nixon tried to dismiss it all. "Let others wallow in Watergate," he said in the Rose Garden in July 1973. "We are going to do our job." That didn't work.

On the 50th anniversary of the events that precipitated Nixon's downfall, acknowledged just as a Watergate-style inquiry is investigating another former president, here's a quiz to see how well you know the story.

Wallow away.

THE SCANDAL IN 60 SECONDS

On June 17, 1972, Democratic Party headquarters in the Watergate office building in Washington, D.C., were entered by burglars wearing (1) ----- gloves. Their pockets were stuffed with (2) ----- bills. They were arrested and subsequently identified with Nixon's reelection committee, known by the acronym CREEP, which stood for (3) -----.

The president's press secretary called it a (4) ----- burglary attempt. But two reporters for (5) ----- dug around and established a link between the burglars and the White House.

Six days after the burglary, the Republican president agreed with a plan to cover up White House involvement. Seven men pleaded guilty or were convicted of the burglary and one of them, (6) -----, made demands of the White House for hush money.

Nixon was told it could cost (7) ----- . Some of the participants in the cover-up became afraid and talked to (8) ----- . A Senate committee began an investigation, and it was revealed that Nixon secretly recorded all his conversations in the White House.

Thus began a legal tug-of-war involving the White House, the Senate and the courts for the tapes. When Prosecutor Archibald Cox pressed too hard, Nixon ordered him (9) ----- in what became known as the (10) -----.

Finally, the Supreme Court ordered Nixon to yield the tapes. A House committee recommended that he be (11) -----, and it looked like that would happen when Nixon (12) ----- . He flew off to his villa

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in (13) -----, California. (14) ----- became president and later pardoned Nixon.

## ANSWERS

1. surgical
2. \$100
3. Committee for the Re-election of the President, often referred to as Committee to Re-elect the President
4. third-rate
5. The Washington Post
6. E. Howard Hunt
7. \$ 1 million
8. federal prosecutors
9. fired
10. Saturday Night Massacre
11. impeached
12. resigned
13. San Clemente
14. Gerald R. Ford

## WATERGATE DATES

The true Watergate connoisseur needs only a date to recall a significant event. The Watergate break-in was on June 17, 1972. Richard Nixon was pardoned Sept. 8, 1974. Now it's up to you to arrange the following events in chronological order and then pair them with the dates on which they occurred.

## EVENTS:

1. Nixon resigns after announcing his decision the night before.
2. The Saturday Night Massacre.
3. Testimony before the Senate Watergate Committee reveals that all of Nixon's White House conversations were taped.
4. Nixon aides H.R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman resign. Presidential counsel John Dean is fired.
5. Seven men are indicted for the Watergate break-in.
6. The Supreme Court rules Nixon must give up tapes that are needed as evidence in the trial of his aides.
7. Nixon and H.R. Haldeman discuss Watergate. Later, prosecutors find an 18-minute gap in the tape of that conversation.
8. The Committee on the Judiciary in the House of Representatives votes 27 to 11 to recommend Nixon's impeachment.

## DATES:

- A. June 20, 1972
- B. Sept. 15, 1972
- C. April 30, 1973
- D. July 16, 1973
- E. Oct. 20, 1973
- F. July 24, 1974
- G. July 27, 1974
- H. Aug. 9, 1974

## ANSWERS

1. H.
2. E.
3. D.
4. C.
5. B.
6. F.

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7. A.

8. G.

## BREAKING THE WATERGATE CODE

Here are some words that cropped up often in Watergate.

Pick the right meaning (more than one may be correct).

1. "Gemstone" referred to:

- The payoff to the Watergate burglars.
- The radioed signal that the coast was clear for the Watergate burglars.
- The code name for a confidential wiretap operation.

2. "Smoking gun" was:

- The Secret Service code name for Ron Ziegler.
- Nixon's gift to the Shah of Iran.
- The taped conversation that implicated Nixon in the cover-up from the start.
- The code name for Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein's informant.

3. The "Huston Plan" was:

- A proposal for canceling the 1972 election.
- The plan to hold the 1972 GOP convention in Houston.
- The Nixon reelection committee's strategy for winning.
- A proposal for domestic surveillance and break-ins to keep tabs on radicals.

4. The White House plumbers were:

- A White House group formed to investigate leaks.
- A team that consisted of G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt and others.
- A group of men who burglarized the Beverly Hills office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist.
- An undercover team that operated out of Room 16 in the basement of the Old Executive Office Building.

## ANSWERS

1. c.

2. c.

3. d. (The plan was drafted by White House aide Tom Huston.)

4. a, b, c and d.

## WATERGATE MATH

1. How many people were charged with a Watergate-related crime?

- 7
- 25
- 69
- 106

2. How many people pleaded guilty?

- 3
- 13
- 25
- 48

3. How many people were convicted after a trial?

- 4
- 13
- 33
- 42

4. How many people served time?

- 7
- 14
- 25

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- d. 43
- 5. How many people only paid fines?
  - a. 5
  - b. 7
  - c. 16
  - d. 22

## ANSWERS

- 1. c. (69)
- 2. d. (48)
- 3. b. (13)
- 4. c (25)
- 5. d. (22)

## TIME IN THE PEN

The men who went to prison for Watergate crimes served a total of more than 22 years. Of the top five, pick the one who served the longest.

- 1. Burglary mastermind G. Gordon Liddy.
- 2. His chief lieutenant, E. Howard Hunt.
- 3. The attorney general, John N. Mitchell.
- 4. The White House chief of staff, H.R. Haldeman.
- 5. White House domestic adviser John D. Ehrlichman.

## ANSWER

Liddy, convicted in the Watergate burglary, was also convicted in the break-in at the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist, for refusing to testify before a congressional committee and a federal grand jury. He was sentenced to serve a term of six years and eight months to 20 years. His sentence was commuted to a maximum of eight years by President Jimmy Carter, and he actually served 52 months.

## THE PHRASEMAKERS

- 1. Who blamed a "sinister force" for the 18 minute tape gap?
  - a. Alexander Butterfield
  - b. Alexander Haig
  - c. Alexander Knox
- 2. Who is credited with coining the term "modified limited hangout" for partial and innocuous Watergate disclosures intended to satisfy investigators' curiosity?
  - a. John Ehrlichman
  - b. John Dean
  - c. John Mitchell
- 3. Who kept asking, "What did the president know and when did he know it?"
  - a. Howard Hunt
  - b. Howard Smith
  - c. Howard Baker
- 4. Who suggested letting acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray twist "slowly, slowly in the wind?"
  - a. Presidential valet Manolo Sanchez
  - b. Presidential press secretary Ronald Ziegler
  - c. Presidential adviser John Ehrlichman

## ANSWERS

- 1. b. Haig.
- 2. a. Ehrlichman is credited, but he says someone else said it.
- 3. c. Howard Baker.
- 4. c. Ehrlichman, who said he got the phrase from Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World."

## WATERGATE OBJETS D'ART

In this list, find the eight items that have some connection with Watergate. Extra credit if you can re-

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member what the connection is.

1. A bus token.
2. A piece of tape.
3. An audio tape test.
4. A pill bottle with a childproof cap.
5. A black cat.
6. A red wig.
7. A flannel nightgown.
8. An abstract painting in a museum.
9. A black notebook with Howard Hunt's name in it.
10. A jimmied file cabinet in California.
11. A brown paper lunch bag.
12. A flower pot.

## ANSWERS

1. No connection.
2. The tape was used to block the latch in the basement entrance of the Watergate office building.
3. The test was ordered by Judge John Sirica in a failed effort to see what caused the erasure of 18 minutes of crucial taped Watergate conversation between Nixon and H.R. Haldeman.
4. The pill bottle is what Nixon was too undexterous to open, according to Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein's book, "The Final Days."
5. No connection.
6. The wig was part of the disguise that Hunt put on when he flew to Denver to interview Dita Beard, an ITT lobbyist.
7. No connection.
8. No connection.
9. The notebook was found on one of the burglars and started the trail that led eventually to Nixon's involvement.
10. The cabinet in the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist was jimmied by White House agents looking for dirt on Ellsberg.
11. The paper bag served as the inventory sheet on which Secret Service agents kept track of Nixon's secret tapes as they were checked out of their subterranean warren.
12. The flower pot, which had a red flag stuck in it, belonged to Woodward. He would reposition it on his apartment balcony to signal that he needed to contact his anonymous source, Deep Throat.

## ROLL CALL

Here are some people whose names cropped up in Watergate. Match their names with the descriptions.

## NAMES

1. Fred Buzhardt
2. Virgilio Gonzalez
3. George McGovern
4. Rose Mary Woods
5. Fred Thompson
6. Donald Segretti
7. Dwight Chapin
8. Matthew Byrne
9. Henry Petersen
10. Bebe Rebozo
11. Steve Bull
12. Anthony Ulasewicz
13. Charles Colson.

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## DESCRIPTIONS

- A. Nixon's best friend.
- B. Nixon's private secretary, who took blame for 4-5 minutes of the 18-minute tape gap.
- C. He distributed hush money to the Watergate burglars.
- D. The Nixon assistant who cued up tapes for the president to listen to.
- E. A dirty trickster.
- F. The White House aide who recruited the dirty trickster.
- G. Nixon's opponent in the 1972 election.
- H. The assistant attorney general who discussed Watergate with Nixon.
- I. The White House lawyer who discovered the 18 -minute tape gap.
- J. The White House aide who later got religion.
- K. Counsel to the Republican minority on the Senate Watergate Committee; he became a Republican senator from Tennessee.
- L. One of the burglars arrested inside the Watergate.
- M. The federal judge who, while he presided over the Ellsberg-Pentagon Papers trial, was offered the post of FBI director.

## ANSWERS

- 1. I.
- 2. L.
- 3. G.
- 4. B.
- 5. K.
- 6. E.
- 7. F.
- 8. M.
- 9. H.
- 10. A.
- 11. D.
- 12. C.
- 13. J.

## WATERGATE VERITIES: True or False?

- 1. Nixon was named as a Watergate conspirator by a grand jury but was not indicted.
- 2. John Dean borrowed money from a White House safe to pay for his honeymoon.
- 3. Spiro Agnew resigned as vice president because of his involvement in Watergate.
- 4. Nixon and Henry Kissinger knelt in prayer together after the president decided to resign.
- 5. The burglars had broken into Democratic headquarters once before the time they were caught.
- 6. G. Gordon Liddy offered to have himself shot to take the Watergate heat off the White House.
- 7. One of the Watergate burglars was on a CIA retainer when he was arrested.
- 8. Herbert Kalmbach and Richard Kleindienst were lawyers for the Nixon re-election committee.
- 9. The "milk fund" was used to pay off the Watergate burglars.
- 10. Nixon never publicly discussed Watergate until the night he resigned.
- 11. Nixon was the first president to resign his office.

## ANSWERS

- 1. True. The president was one of 18 unindicted co-conspirators.
- 2. True. He borrowed \$ 4,850 and paid it back.
- 3. False. He resigned Oct. 10, 1973, rather than contest charges that he took payoffs while governor of Maryland and as vice president.
- 4. True. In his memoirs, Nixon said, "I asked him to pray with me ... and we knelt."
- 5. True. They had planted some bugs on Memorial Day weekend. One of them didn't work and that's one reason they had come back.

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6. True. It was one of the reasons Nixon and others in the White House considered him to be irrational.
7. True. Eugenio Martinez, an anti-Castro Cuban, was receiving checks regularly.
8. False. Kalmbach was Nixon's personal lawyer and a fund-raiser; Kleindienst followed John Mitchell as attorney general.
9. False. It was made up of contributions from the dairy industry to Nixon's re-election campaign.
10. False. The subject came up at many press conferences and in his public addresses, beginning with a news conference five days after the burglary.

11. True. The first and only.

## THE WIVES OF WATERGATE

Martha Mitchell, Maureen Dean, Pat Nixon and Dorothy Hunt were married to men who, one way or another, were connected to Watergate.

Which one:

1. Sat by while her husband testified for five days in a televised Watergate hearing?
2. Complained that a former FBI man held her down while a doctor drugged her in a California motel by jabbing a needle into her backside?
3. Was killed in a plane crash while carrying \$10,000 in cash?
4. Was known as Thelma Ryan as a girl?

## ANSWERS

1. Mrs. Dean
2. Mrs. Mitchell
3. Mrs. Hunt
4. Mrs. Nixon, whose nickname was Pat.

## TWISTING IN THE WIND

Enough of the creampuff questions. Time to play hardball.

1. The political espionage plan that included the Watergate break-in was presented three times by G. Gordon Liddy to whom before it was approved? Liddy asked first for \$1 million; how much was finally OK'd?
2. Who said he had to carry so much telephone change to make arrangements for delivery of hush money that "I had a bus guy's coin changer?"
3. Name the seven senators on the Senate Watergate Committee and identify their states and parties.
4. Name the chief prosecutor at the original Watergate trial.
5. A lookout was supposed to warn the Watergate burglars if anything went awry. Name the lookout and the hotel across from the Watergate where he was posted.
6. What Watergate character was nicknamed "The Writer" because he had written more than 40 spy novels?
7. Hours after the Watergate burglars were arrested, G. Gordon Liddy failed to persuade Attorney General Richard Kleindienst to intercede to have them released. Where did he find Kleindienst?
8. Who disclosed the existence of the White House taping system?
9. Nixon said he was advised to tape his White House conversations by whom?
10. Who was Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist?
11. Archibald Cox was the first of four special Watergate prosecutors. Who were the others?
12. Where was Richard Nixon:
  - (a) on the day of the Watergate burglary?
  - (b) when he told Haldeman and Ehrlichman they were fired?
  - (c) when Dean told him about the cancer on the presidency?
  - (d) when the Supreme Court ordered him to give up his tapes?
  - (e) when Gerald R. Ford was sworn in as his successor?

## ANSWERS

1. Attorney General John Mitchell; \$250,000.
2. Anthony Ulasewicz.
3. Chairman Sam J. Ervin Jr., D-N.C.; Howard H. Baker Jr., R-Tenn.; Herman E. Talmadge, D-Ga.; Daniel



- K. Inouye, D-Hawaii; Joseph M. Montoya, D-N.M.; Edward J. Gurney, R-Fla.; Lowell P. Weicker, R-Conn.
4. Earl S. Silbert.
  5. Alfred C. Baldwin III, at the Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge.
  6. E. Howard Hunt.
  7. Burning Tree golf course in a Maryland suburb.
  8. Alexander Butterfield.
  9. His predecessor, Lyndon B. Johnson.
  10. Dr. Lewis Fielding of Beverly Hills, Calif.
  11. Leon Jaworski, Henry Ruth and Charles F.C. Ruff
  12. (a) On Grand Cay in the Bahamas; (b) Camp David; (c) In the Oval Office; (d) At his villa in San Clemente, Calif.; (e) Flying home to California.

## Companies weigh in on proposed SEC climate disclosure rule

By SUMAN NAISHADHAM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Securities and Exchange Commission moved closer Friday to a final rule that would dramatically alter what public companies tell shareholders about climate change — both the risks it poses to their operations and their own contributions to the problem.

Public comment on the proposal has now closed, with more than 10,000 comments submitted since March by companies, auditors, trade groups, lawmakers, individuals and others.

Comments ranged from concerns about the costs involved for companies getting up to speed, the SEC's authority to regulate such data and praise that the nation's top financial regulator was moving to make mandatory the reporting of climate-risks data. If enacted, public companies in their annual reports and stock registration statements would have to report their greenhouse-gas emissions. The largest companies would also have to disclose emissions data related to their suppliers and reveal whether their climate-related risks are material to investors.

For example, the SEC's rule would force companies to disclose in annual statements whether climate change is expected to affect more than 1% of a line item and explain how. "That's incredibly granular," said Margaret Peloso, a partner at Vinson & Elkins focused on climate change risk management and environmental litigation. "It's a lot more detailed than many other financial reporting requirements."

Companies would also have to report on the physical impact of storms, drought and higher temperatures brought on by global warming. They would have to explain how extreme weather events affect their finances, lay out plans for reducing climate risks and outline any progress made in meeting climate-related goals.

"It's correcting a market problem... which is that investors don't currently have all the information they need about climate risk in order to make their investment decisions," said Alex Thornton, senior director of tax policy at the Center for American Progress.

But Republicans who oppose the SEC's measure insist climate disclosures should remain voluntary. In May, a group of Republican governors including Texas Governor Greg Abbott and Arizona's Doug Ducey wrote that the rule "forces investors to view companies through the eyes of a vocal set of stakeholders," and added that it would unduly penalize oil and gas companies.

In a March statement, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce called the proposal overly prescriptive, saying that as written, the rule would "limit companies' ability to provide information that shareholders and stakeholders find meaningful."

Auditing firms, trade groups and some lawmakers have repeatedly pointed to the proposal's inclusion of companies' indirect effects on the climate — known as Scope 3 emissions — as a thorny area to report on. Attorneys and auditors say the information could be difficult to obtain for companies with international suppliers or suppliers that are private companies.

"One of the biggest concerns about requiring Scope 3 emissions is the fact that the data is not controlled or possessed by the disclosing company," the Bipartisan Policy Center said. It added that the

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SEC gave "scant reasons for how the benefits of requiring its disclosure outweigh what will likely be an extraordinarily costly process."

But proponents say having detailed information on indirect emissions is critical to understanding how companies affect the climate.

Many public companies already release data on their emissions, as investor interest for such information has risen in recent years. The SEC issued voluntary guidance in 2010 for how companies can report information about climate change. In 2020, more than 90% of S&P 500 companies published sustainability reports, according to the Governance and Accountability Institute.

The SEC's climate disclosure rule would standardize what public companies report. It would also require them to seek independent certification for some reporting, which would provide investors with much more reliable information than what's currently disclosed, environmental attorneys, auditors and climate-data software companies say.

"There's a mega trend of demand for this information," said Tim Mohin, chief sustainability officer of Persefoni, a startup that uses artificial intelligence for carbon accounting. Yet current emissions data that companies report through a patchwork of disclosures is not uniform in quality or timeliness, he said.

"The SEC rule is a major cleanup action," Mohin said. He previously worked in the Environmental Protection Agency and Senate on environmental policy.

Climate activists, sustainable finance proponents and investors have long advocated for mandatory emissions reporting required of all companies. Once finalized, the U.S. would join a growing number of countries including the U.K. and Japan that are requiring large companies to disclose such information. The European Union is finalizing its reporting standards.

But the SEC's proposed rule is far from certain. Opponents, including conservative trade groups, Republican lawmakers and others have questioned whether regulating emissions-related data falls under the SEC's purview. As a result, attorneys say any finalized rule would almost certainly be challenged in court on the question of the commission's jurisdiction.

The SEC estimates staying compliant with the new rule will cost an additional \$420,000 a year on average for small public companies and \$530,000 a year for larger ones. But costs will vary based on how much companies are already disclosing and factors like how much of the accounting can be done in-house, experts say.

Supporters of the rule hope mandated emissions disclosures will force companies to reduce their climate impacts and guide investors away from companies that do not take steps to reduce their emissions. But some commenters have questioned whether investors would be able to make sense of the volume of information being asked.

The accounting firm Deloitte said the level of detail asked in financial disclosures "may risk confusion among investors." But it praised the commission for having based the proposal on the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures, a group established by G20 countries to standardize climate-related financial reporting.

"It's going to be a learning curve for a lot of companies that are going to have to bring new people on board and are going to have to purchase new systems and processes. So that's significant," said Mohin, of climate-accounting startup Persefoni.

If enacted, the SEC's measure would be a victory for President Joe Biden's largely stalled climate agenda, a point agreed upon by critics and supporters alike.

After the commission responds to the comments submitted, it will draft a final rule which will need approval from a majority of the 4-person commission.

"It is a really important piece in how the Biden administration is thinking about climate policy," said Peloso of Vinson & Elkins. She said that would likely motivate the commission to finalize it by the end of the year.

## McCartney marks 80th birthday with Springsteen, 60,000 pals

By DAVID BAUDER AP Entertainment Writer

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — Hard to think of a better way for Paul McCartney to celebrate his

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80th birthday than by singing "Glory Days" onstage with Bruce Springsteen or being serenaded by some 60,000 well-wishers.

That's right, the "cute Beatle" turns 80 on Saturday. It's one of those cultural milestones that bring a sharp intake of breath — has it been THAT long? — along with an appreciation of what he still has to offer.

For it has been more than a half-century now since the Beatles broke up, a realization that hits you like that 1970s-era joke about young people saying, "Paul McCartney was in a band before Wings?"

Like several other members of the "hope I die before I get old" generation, including Bob Dylan, the Rolling Stones and former Beatles mate Ringo Starr, McCartney keeps working, keeps sharing his music from the stage. Another 1960s icon, Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys, is scheduled to play at the Starlight Theatre in Kansas City on his 80th birthday Monday.

"He has a youthful exuberance that is ageless," said Bob Spitz, a Beatles biographer. "There's still some of that 21-year-old boy that shines through in all of his performances."

It would be a cliché — and wrong — to suggest time hasn't taken a toll. The fragility in his voice was evident while singing "Blackbird" on Thursday night at MetLife Stadium, the final night of a brief U.S. tour. He struggled for the high notes in "Here Today," his love letter to John Lennon, who was robbed of a long life by an assassin's bullet.

The skill of a sympathetic band, along with the imagination and voices in the audience, patches over the rough spots.

"Yeah, yeah, right, I've got a birthday coming up," McCartney said, scanning signs in the audience that reminded him. "I'm not trying to ignore it, but..."

The crowd offered a spontaneous "Happy Birthday" serenade, even before Jersey guy Jon Bon Jovi brought out a fistful of balloons during the encore to lead them in another verse.

That other Jersey guy, Springsteen, joined McCartney for the duet on "Glory Days" and a version of "I Wanna Be Your Man." He later popped up to join the guitar duel from "Abbey Road."

For most artists, the appearance of such local royalty would be a hard-to-top moment. Most artists can't immediately whip out "Let it Be" and "Hey Jude" to follow it.

To mark the birthday, Stereogum magazine asked 80 artists to pick their favorite McCartney song, and the choices were remarkable in their breadth — from the pre-Beatles 1958 cut "In Spite of All the Danger" (which McCartney performed at MetLife) to his 2016 collaboration with Rihanna and Kanye West "FourFiveSeconds" (which he didn't).

David Crosby and Dan Auerbach of the Black Keys both chose "Eleanor Rigby." Master showman Wayne Coyne of the Flaming Lips picked "Magical Mystery Tour." Steve Earle selected "Every Night," while Def Leppard's Joe Elliott went against type with the gentle "Little Lamb Dragonfly." Mac DeMarco picked the "Ram" epic, "The Back Seat of My Car."

Many remarked upon the unfairness of having to pick just one.

Stereogum's feature illustrated the varied entry points musicians of different generations have into a living, breathing catalog. For example, it revealed that a largely overlooked album like 1980's "McCartney II" had a far greater impact on developing artists than its reception at the time would have foreshadowed.

On Friday, McCartney's team announced that it was packaging "McCartney II" with his other DIY albums, "McCartney" of 1970 and 2020's "McCartney III," into a boxed set that will go on sale in August.

How vast is the songbook? McCartney performed 38 songs at MetLife, 20 of them Beatles songs, and even managed to miss an entire decade. Remember the 1990s?

With the help of Peter Jackson, who reimagined the "Get Back" sessions for last year's television project, McCartney was able to perform a virtual "duet" with Lennon singing his part of "I've Got a Feeling" from the Apple rooftop concert. McCartney also paid tribute to George Harrison, who died in 2001, with a version of "Something" that began with Paul on a ukulele George gave him and built to a full band version.

Spitz recalled a Beatles-era film clip of Lennon telling an interviewer that he'd be flabbergasted if it lasted more than 10 years. McCartney stood next to him laughing.

Lennon was right about the Beatles as a unit, but not about the music. He couldn't have imagined that in 2022, one adult standing in line to get into MetLife being overheard asking a companion: "Where are

Mom and Dad?"

Advanced birthday be damned, the irrepressibly cheerful McCartney left with a promise when the last firework burst and he walked offstage.

"See you next time."

## **Biden hosts climate meeting amid high gas price pressure**

By SETH BORENSTEIN and CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Equating the oil and gas industry to Big Tobacco, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Friday that "fossil fuel producers and financiers have humanity by the throat." But President Joe Biden wasn't quite itching for a fight.

With both soaring energy prices and a warming planet weighing on the world at the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate, Biden talked about trying to ease the pain of high gas prices while pushing more long-term green policies.

Dismissing the idea of boosting gasoline production, the United Nations' top diplomat threw out traditional diplomatic niceties and bluntly vilified the fossil fuel industry at a virtual session that included oil rich Saudi Arabia, China, Europe and Egypt, which is hosting the next United Nations summit on climate change. It was the first time Guterres compared the energy industry to tobacco interests, saying they use "the same scandalous tactics" to delay action that is good for people and the planet.

Biden reiterated his goal to lower gasoline prices that are averaging a record \$5 a gallon in the U.S. while also shifting away from fossil fuels in order to limit climate change and the risks it presents.

"I'm using every lever available to me to bring down prices for the American people," Biden said. "But the critical point is that these actions are part of our transition to a clean and secure and long-term energy future."

Biden is also expected to visit Saudi Arabia next month. The White House recently praised the kingdom after OPEC+ announced that it would pump more oil to boost the global supply.

Guterres dismissed more drilling, saying "nothing could be more clear or present than the danger of fossil fuel expansion."

"Even in the short-term, fossil fuels don't make political or economic sense," Guterres said.

"Had we invested earlier and massively in renewable energy, we would not find ourselves once again at the mercy of unstable fossil fuel markets," Guterres said. "Let's make sure the war in Ukraine is not used to increase that dependency."

The secretary-general decided to amp up the rhetoric because of successful efforts by the industry to use the war in Ukraine as an excuse to start drilling projects, said a senior U.N. official who spoke on the condition of anonymity due to lack of authority to speak for the agency.

"It is very interesting to see the change in tone from the secretary-general. His language is blunter than any secretary general before him," said Niklas Hohne of the New Climate Institute in Germany. "This comes at a time when we indeed observe a goldrush to new fossil fuel infrastructure... Such expansion is counterproductive to climate policy as it would lock the world into a high greenhouse gas future."

In a statement, the American Petroleum Institute said governments and the industry need to work together: "Rising energy costs worldwide and current geopolitical tensions prove it is more important than ever to ensure continued access to affordable, reliable energy while reducing emissions. As populations grow and economies expand, the world will demand more energy, not less."

Biden's priorities are slashing methane leaks and getting more zero-emission vehicles on the roads.

Biden administration officials, insisting on anonymity to discuss the event, said they expect some of the countries to announce more ambitious climate targets as part of the landmark agreement reached in Paris in 2015.

Biden sounded the alarm on extreme weather events in an Oval Office interview on Thursday with The Associated Press.

"We have more hurricanes and tornadoes and flooding," he said. "People saw what — I took my kids years ago to Yellowstone Park. They call me, 'Daddy did you see what happened at Yellowstone, right?'"

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Well, it's unthinkable. These are 1,000-year kinds of events."

But the Russian invasion of Ukraine has scrambled Biden's climate goals by driving up the cost of gas. Facing political pressure to get prices under control in a midterm election year, the Democratic president has urged U.S. oil refiners to produce more fuel even as companies say they lack the long-term incentives to do so because the administration is accelerating the move to clean energy.

"Well, I say in the short term, do the right thing," Biden said Thursday, stressing his view that energy companies should increase production instead of trying to maximize their profits.

Biden comes to the summit with foreign leaders with far less of the climate ambition and hope he declared at the outset of his presidency, when he vowed to make the United States a leader again on slashing fossil fuel emissions to stave off the worst scenarios of global warming. Republicans and some Democrats since then have stalled and all but killed Biden's most ambitious climate legislation.

While Biden has succeeded in securing funding to boost electric vehicles and some other climate measures, the setbacks have left Biden focused on voluntary pledges and initiatives like those Friday, which can easily be abandoned or reversed by future leaders.

That leaves Guterres, who doesn't have the power or political limitations of Biden, to aim directly at the fossil fuel industry, saying they've "invested heavily in pseudo-science and public relations – with a false narrative to minimize their responsibility for climate change and undermine ambitious climate policies."

Andrew Weaver, a University of Victoria climate scientist and former Canadian legislator, said Guterres' equating the fossil fuel and tobacco industry "is a straight out comparison... "People haven't been accountable for what I would are in some sense some very serious crimes against society."

But Stanford University climate scientist and environment program director Chris Field said Guterres' call to action "as exactly right" but said "we need to make sure that we don't let the focus on fossil fuel companies as bad guys slow progress on solutions."

## Title IX creating opportunities for international athletes

By DANIELLA MATAR and TERESA M. WALKER AP Sports Writers

MILAN (AP) — For Maria Bulanova, it was a matter of surprise — that she could be recruited to the bowling team at Vanderbilt "all the way from Russia."

Like other international athletes playing college sports in the United States, she had little sense of Title IX when she was younger. But the federal law has opened the door for thousands of female athletes from abroad to get an American education and possibly a shot at a life and career in the United States.

"People were surprised that Vanderbilt was able to recruit me all the way from Russia," Bulanova said. "They were like, 'Oh, wow. Their recruiting is really diverse.' Like, 'Wow. They saw you all the way from there.'"

Bulanova was looking to bowl in Europe after finishing her last year of school in Russia. In November 2015, she represented Russia in the World Cup in Las Vegas and bowled well enough that several American colleges wanted her to visit. She visited five colleges in one week in February 2016 before choosing Vanderbilt.

"What really made them stand out is obviously the education. And I was also looking for a good bowling program where I know that we're going to win something, we're going to be in competition for the national championship. So Vanderbilt had both, and that was perfect," said Bulanova, who graduated in 2020 and is now in her second year competing on tour with the Professional Women's Bowling Association. She is also working on a master's degree at St. Francis in New York, where she is an assistant coach.

Bulanova helped Vanderbilt win its second national championship in women's bowling in 2018. There were also two other international players: Kristin Quah of Singapore and Emily Rigney of Australia.

Coach John Williamson started the Vanderbilt bowling program in 2004, building off a club team, and has three national runner-up finishes in addition to the two national championships.

"From a Title IX standpoint, I like to think that we're a success story of it because we're able to take kids from around the U.S., around the globe that wouldn't have had the opportunity to come to Vanderbilt,

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or even thought about going to Vanderbilt, and getting them to come to campus and so they get a world class education," Williamson said.

"They get to compete at a really high level. And they get to do their sport. They get to get their education. They get sort of the best of everything."

Quah was the first of the three to play for Vanderbilt after she reached out to the university by email while playing for the Singapore junior national team. Williamson and an assistant went to the world youth championships in Hong Kong and saw Quah bowl along with Bulanova and Rigney. Quah's first year at Vanderbilt was 2015. Bulanova and Rigney started the following year.

"So basically, like Kristin emailing us, expressing her interest, got us talking to her, which then got us to Hong Kong, which then got us to find Maria," Williamson said.

Bulanova and Quah got scholarships via a direct route, but it can be a more expensive process for others. Several agencies exist to help foreign athletes by putting them in contact with coaches and universities, as well as assisting them through the bureaucratic process once they get accepted.

Deljan Bregasi founded one such agency. Originally from Albania, Bregasi grew up in Italy before moving to study in Miami and then New York on soccer scholarships.

Bregasi set up USA College Sport in 2015 in Boston and said he has helped obtain scholarships for about 300 athletes, charging \$3,200 for the agency's services.

The agency originally focused on helping boys in Italy and Albania get soccer scholarships in the United States before expanding to other sports and female athletes in 2018.

"The girls are those who can have much more opportunity in a certain sense because there is Title IX that, fortunately I'll add, allows them to practice sport with a scholarship, and it's an experience that a girl who plays sport in Italy sadly doesn't have," Bregasi said.

"It's also one of our aims at the moment to focus better on female athletes because it's also, you could say, easier because in Italy women's soccer is growing while the level in volleyball and athletics is very high, and so it's worthwhile for us helping female athletes more because they have a good chance of getting a scholarship, seeing as there's Title IX," Bregasi said.

Serena Frolli, a 17-year-old middle distance runner from Genoa, Italy, used her time during the pandemic lockdown to research colleges herself and to speak to coaches before eventually deciding to use the services of an American agency.

"I have to say that it was quite expensive, but then looking at the scholarship that I got, you can say that it repays the initial costs," Frolli said. "But then they also help you throughout your time at university ... so I liked that, too. And also my mother feels more calm knowing that. She told me, 'Let's do it.'"

Frolli is heading to Northwestern in August to study mechanical engineering on a track scholarship. She knows that will give her more opportunities than if she had remained in Italy.

She has long dreamed of being both an astronaut and a medal-winning athlete. The benefits of Title IX allow her to pursue her double aspirations.

"Why should I choose?" Frolli said. "That's why I'm going to the United States."

Similarly, Aline Krauter and Tze-Han (Heather) Lin left their homelands to play college golf in the U.S., opportunities made possible, in large part, by Title IX.

A superb junior player from Stuttgart, Germany, Krauter had no opportunity to play collegiately in Europe, so she moved to Florida and spent three years at Saddlebrook Prep in Wesley Chapel. She ended up playing four seasons at Stanford, winning the national team championship last month as a senior.

Tze-Han was a top junior player in Taiwan when she was recruited by then first-year Oregon coach Derek Radley. She ended up being the cornerstone of a team that would add two more Taiwanese players and that finished second at this year's national championships.

"The NCAA, having the same number of scholarships for men and women for sure allowed me to play golf and get the full scholarship," said Tze-Han, who finished fifth in the NCAA individual championships. "I don't think I would have gotten that anywhere else in the world."

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## Vince McMahon will step down during WWE misconduct probe

By MICHELLE CHAPMAN AP Business Writer

Vince McMahon is stepping down as CEO and chairman of WWE during an investigation into alleged misconduct involving the longtime leader and public face of the organization.

McMahon will continue to oversee WWE's creative content during the investigation, World Wrestling Entertainment said Friday, and named McMahon's daughter, Stephanie, as interim CEO and chairwoman.

Vince McMahon will appear on its live show "SmackDown" later Friday, WWE said on Twitter after it announced the changes in leadership.

The Wall Street Journal reported Wednesday that WWE was investigating an alleged \$3 million payment from McMahon to a departing female employee following a consensual affair.

"I have pledged my complete cooperation to the investigation by the special committee, and I will do everything possible to support the investigation," McMahon said in a prepared statement Friday. "I have also pledged to accept the findings and outcome of the investigation, whatever they are."

The employee, hired as a paralegal in 2019, has a separation agreement from January that prevents her from discussing her relationship with McMahon or disparaging him, the Journal reported.

The board's investigation, which started in April, found other, older nondisclosure agreements involving claims by former female WWE employees of misconduct by McMahon and John Laurinaitis, the head of talent relations at WWE, the Journal reported.

The WWE is also investigating actions by Laurinaitis.

Outside of the investigation, WWE said Friday that the company and its special committee will work with an independent third-party to perform a comprehensive review of the work environment at the organization.

Vince McMahon has been the leader and most recognizable face at WWE for decades.

When he purchased what was then the World Wrestling Federation, from his father in 1982, wrestling matches took place at small venues and appeared on local cable channels.

WWE matches are now held in professional sports stadiums as the organization has a sizeable overseas following. It has a broadcast partnership with Saudi Arabian media company MBC Group and performs one to two live pay-per-view shows in Saudi Arabia each year.

The organization underwent a seismic transformation under McMahon with events like WrestleMania, a premium live production that draws millions of fervent viewers.

Revenue last year exceeded \$1 billion for the first time and the company has television deals with Fox and NBCUniversal. Last month it announced a multi-year expansion of its original programming partnership with A&E.

WWE stars have become crossover sensations, including Hulk Hogan, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, "Stone Cold" Steve Austin and John Cena.

Stephanie McMahon, who will take over at least temporarily as the leader of WWE, announced last month that she was taking a leave of absence from the most of her responsibilities at the organization. She had been serving as the company's chief brand officer.

Her husband, Paul Levesque, who wrestled under the name Triple H, announced in March that he was retiring from wrestling due to a heart condition. Levesque serves as WWE's executive vice president of strategy and development.

"I have committed to doing everything in my power to help the Special Committee complete its work, including marshaling the cooperation of the entire company to assist in the completion of the investigation and to implement its findings," she said in a statement.

Shares of World Wrestling Entertainment Inc., based in Stamford, Connecticut, slid 3% Friday.

## Costa Rica chaos a warning that ransomware threat remains

By ALAN SUDERMAN and BEN FOX Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Teachers unable to get paychecks. Tax and customs systems paralyzed. Health

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officials unable to access medical records or track the spread of COVID-19. A country's president declaring war against foreign hackers saying they want to overthrow the government.

For two months now, Costa Rica has been reeling from unprecedented ransomware attacks disrupting everyday life in the Central American nation. It's a situation raising questions about the United States' role in protecting friendly nations from cyberattacks when Russian-based criminal gangs are targeting less developed countries in ways that could have major global repercussions.

"Today it's Costa Rica. Tomorrow it could be the Panama Canal," said Belisario Contreras, former manager of the cybersecurity program at the Organization of American States, referring to a major Central American shipping lane that carries a large amount of U.S. import and export traffic.

Last year, cybercriminals launched ransomware attacks in the U.S. that forced the shutdown of an oil pipeline that supplies the East Coast, halted production of the world's largest meat-processing company and compromised a major software company that has thousands of customers around the world.

The Biden administration responded with a whole of government action that included diplomatic, law enforcement and intelligence efforts designed to put pressure on ransomware operators.

Since then, ransomware gangs have shied away from "big-game" targets in the U.S. in pursuit of victims unlikely to provoke a strong response by the U.S.

"They're still prolific, they're making enormous amounts of money, but they're just not in the news everyday," Eleanor Fairford, a deputy director at the UK's National Cyber Security Centre, said at a recent U.S. conference on ransomware.

Tracking trends of ransomware attacks, in which criminals encrypt victims' data and demand payment to return them to normal, is difficult. NCC Group, a UK cybersecurity firm that tracks ransomware attacks, said the number of ransomware incidents per month so far this year has been higher than it was in 2021. The company noted that the ransomware group CLOP, which has aggressively targeted schools and health care organizations, returned to work after effectively shutting down for several months.

But Rob Joyce, the director of cybersecurity at the National Security Agency, has said publicly that there's been a decrease in the number of ransomware attacks since Russia's invasion of Ukraine thanks to increased heightened concerns of cyberattacks and new sanctions that make it harder for Russian-based criminals to move money.

The ransomware gang known as Conti launched the first attack against the Costa Rican government in April and has demanded a \$20 million payout, prompting the newly installed President Chaves Robles to declare a state of emergency as the tax and customs offices, utilities and other services were taken offline. "We're at war and this is not an exaggeration," he said.

Later, a second attack, attributed to a group known as Hive knocked out the public health service and other systems. Information about individual prescriptions are offline and some workers have gone weeks without their paycheck. It's caused significant hardship for people like 33-year-old teacher Alvaro Fallas.

"I live with my parents and brother and they are depending on me," he said.

In Peru, Conti has also attacked the country's intelligence agency. The gang's darkweb extortion site posts purportedly stolen documents with the agency's information, like one document market "secret" that details coca-eradication efforts.

Experts believe developing countries like Costa Rica and Peru will remain particularly ripe targets. These countries have invested in digitizing their economy and systems but don't have as sophisticated defenses as wealthier nations .

Costa Rica has been a longtime stable force in a region often known for upheaval. It has a long established democratic tradition and well-run government services.

Paul Rosenzweig, a former top DHS official and cyber consultant who is now a legal resident of Costa Rica, said the country presents a test case for what exactly the U.S. government owes its friendly and allied governments who fall victim to disruptive ransomware attacks. While an attack on a foreign country may not have any direct impact on U.S. interests, the federal government still has a strong interest in limiting the ways in which ransomware criminals can disrupt the global digital economy, he said.



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"Costa Rica is a perfectly good example because it's the first," Rosenzweig said. "Nobody has seen a government under assault before."

So far, the Biden administration has said little publicly about the situation in Costa Rica. The U.S. has provided some technical assistance through its Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, via an information-sharing program with nations around the world. And the State Department has offered a reward for the arrest of members of Conti.

Eric Goldstein, the executive assistant director for cybersecurity at CISA, said Costa Rica has a computer emergency response team that had an established relationship with counterparts in the U.S. before the incidents. But his agency is expanding its international presence by establishing its first overseas attache position in the U.K. It plans others in as-yet unspecified locations.

"If we think about our role, CISA and the US government, it is intrinsically of course to protect American organizations. But we know intuitively that the same threat actors are using the same vulnerabilities to target victims around the world," he said.

Conti is one of the more prolific ransomware gangs currently operation and has hit over 1,000 targets and received more than \$150 million in payouts in the last two years, per FBI estimates.

At the start of invasion of Ukraine, some of Conti's members pledged on the group's dark web site to "use all our possible resources to strike back at the critical infrastructures of an enemy" if Russia was attacked. Shortly afterward, sensitive chat logs that appear to belong to the gang were leaked online, some of which appeared to show ties between the gang and the Russian government.

Some cyber threat researchers say Conti may be in the middle of a rebranding, and its attack on Costa Rica may be a publicity stunt to provide a plausible story for the group's demise. Ransomware groups that receive lots of media attention often disappear, only for its members to pop back up later operating under a new name.

On its darkweb site, Conti has denied that's the case and continues to post victims' files. The gang's most recent targets include a city parks department in Illinois, a manufacturing company in Oklahoma and food distributor in Chile.

## **FIFA picks 2026 World Cup cities, predicts US 'No 1 sport'**

By RONALD BLUM AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The 16 cities of the first World Cup spread across three nations were revealed, and FIFA President Gianni Infantino made a bold statement summing up the goal of the 2026 tournament, to be played largely in the United States.

"By 2026, soccer — or futbol — will be the No. 1 sport in this part of the world," he proclaimed.

Roughly four years before soccer's showcase comes to the U.S., Mexico and Canada, there already were winners and losers Thursday: Atlanta, Houston, Miami, Philadelphia, Seattle and Kansas City, Missouri, were among the cities picked after missing out on hosting the 1994 tournament.

Baltimore, Cincinnati, Denver, Nashville, Tennessee, and Orlando, Florida, missed the cut.

Eleven U.S. stadiums were taken, all from the NFL. Arlington, Texas; East Rutherford, New Jersey; Foxborough, Massachusetts, and Inglewood and Santa Clara, California, were holdover areas from the 1994 tournament that boosted soccer's American prominence.

Mexico City's Estadio Azteca, which hosted the 1970 and '86 finals, will become the first stadium in three World Cups, selected along with Guadalajara's Estadio Akron and Monterrey's Estadio BBVA.

Toronto's BMO Field and Vancouver, British Columbia's BC Place were picked for Canada's first time hosting, while Edmonton, Alberta's Commonwealth Stadium was dropped.

Following the withdrawal of outmoded FedEx Field in Landover, Maryland, Baltimore's omission means this will be a rare World Cup with no matches in the vicinity of a host's capital.

"You can't imagine a World Cup coming to the U.S., the capital city not taking a major role," said Colin Smith, FIFA's chief competitions and events officer.

Infantino promised a fan fest on Washington's National Mall, and locations across the three nations are

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in play for training sites.

"The story is always who doesn't get chosen," U.S. Soccer Federation President Cindy Parlow Cone said. Infantino's goal of reaching the top of U.S. sports appears to be quite a reach. The NFL averaged 17.1 million viewers for television and digital during its 2021 season, while the 2018 World Cup averaged 5.04 million on U.S. English- and Spanish-language TV.

"You are leading the world in many areas," Infantino said about North America, "the objective must be that you will be leading the world, as well, in the world's No. 1 sport."

"I know it was giggles and laughs," North and Central American and Caribbean Confederation President Victor Montagliani said. "He wasn't joking."

Infantino defended FIFA's financial demands on bidding cities and states, which included sales tax exemptions. He said World Cup revenue supports FIFA's 211 members and 75% could not sustain operations without the money.

"This is something which is definitely a fair compromise, taking into the account the interest of sport and the interests of the host countries," he said.

The 1994 tournament set records with a 3.59 million total attendance and average of 68,991. The capacities of the U.S. stadiums for 2026 are all 60,000 and higher.

"I think this part of the world doesn't realize what will happen here in 2026," Infantino said. "These three countries will be upside down. The world will be invading Canada, Mexico and the United States."

The bid plan selected in 2018 envisioned 60 games in the U.S. for the first 48-nation Cup, including all from the quarterfinals on, and 10 each in Mexico and Canada.

Specific sites for each round will be announced later, and Infantino said world-wide television times will be a factor for the final, which makes the Eastern and Central times zones more likely. FIFA has gradually moved back the kickoff time of the final from 3:30 p.m. EDT to 10 a.m. EDT for this year's tournament, which is 10 p.m. in Beijing.

The U.S. selections included none of the nine stadiums used in 1994. The Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, and Orlando's Camping World Stadium were the only ones remaining in contention, and they were among the sites dropped in negotiations with stadiums and cities that continued until right before the announcement.

New stadiums were selected in five areas used in 1994. AT&T Stadium in Texas instead of Dallas' Cotton Bowl, SoFi Stadium in Inglewood for the Rose Bowl and Levi's Stadium for Stanford Stadium.

Met Life Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, and Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Massachusetts, replaced torn-down sites that were adjacent, Giants Stadium and Foxboro Stadium.

Three U.S. venues have retractable roofs and SoFi has a fixed roof. All of the U.S. stadiums but Miami and Kansas City opened in 2002 or later.

Venues have a broader array of pricey seats than in 1994 — the bid book listed a total of 3,757 luxury suites and 76,317 club seats, even before the opening of SoFi, which hosted this year's Super Bowl.

Eight of the 11 U.S. stadiums have artificial turf and promised to install temporary grass. Dietmar Exler, chief operating officer of AMB Sports & Entertainment, whose NFL Falcons and Major League Soccer team play at Mercedes-Benz, said growing lamps will be used.

"We will study very carefully with FIFA how we can handle and make sure we have the best natural turf available," he said. "That's one of the high priority areas for us to focus on."

Some venues, notably SoFi, cannot currently fit a 68-x-105 meter (75x-115 yard) field and would need renovations to remove seats near sidelines. FIFA made similar demands ahead of 1994 but backed off and allowed some narrower surfaces.

"We have to move out some of the pinch points," Smith said. "It doesn't have any material aspect on capacity."

The Detroit area, where the old Pontiac Silverdome hosted games, was cut in 2018 and Baltimore's M&T Bank Stadium was the capital area's contender after FedEx dropped out in April. Washington's RFK Stadium was used in 1994.

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Chicago, which hosted the 1994 opener at Solider Field, refused to bid, citing FIFA's demands. In contrast to the 1992 site announcement during a news conference, the 2026 announcement was made during a show broadcast from Fox's studio in Manhattan.

"It's grown so much in my lifetime," U.S. star Christian Pulisic said, "and I'm hoping that it can even take that next step."

## Today in History: June 18, first U.S. woman in space

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, June 18, the 169th day of 2022. There are 196 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 18, 1983, astronaut Sally K. Ride became America's first woman in space as she and four colleagues blasted off aboard the space shuttle Challenger on a six-day mission.

On this date:

In 1778, American forces entered Philadelphia as the British withdrew during the Revolutionary War.

In 1812, the War of 1812 began as the United States Congress approved, and President James Madison signed, a declaration of war against Britain.

In 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte met defeat at Waterloo as British and Prussian troops defeated the French in Belgium.

In 1940, during World War II, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill urged his countrymen to conduct themselves in a manner that would prompt future generations to say, "This was their finest hour." Charles de Gaulle delivered a speech on the BBC in which he rallied his countrymen after the fall of France to Nazi Germany.

In 1971, Southwest Airlines began operations, with flights between Dallas and San Antonio, and Dallas and Houston.

In 1979, President Jimmy Carter and Soviet President Leonid I. Brezhnev signed the SALT II strategic arms limitation treaty in Vienna.

In 1986, 25 people were killed when a twin-engine plane and helicopter carrying sightseers collided over the Grand Canyon.

In 1992, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Georgia v. McCollum*, ruled that criminal defendants could not use race as a basis for excluding potential jurors from their trials.

In 2003, baseball Hall-of-Famer Larry Doby, who broke the American League's color barrier in 1947, died in Montclair, New Jersey, at age 79.

In 2010, death row inmate Ronnie Lee Gardner died in a barrage of bullets as Utah carried out its first firing squad execution in 14 years. (Gardner had been sentenced to death for fatally shooting attorney Michael Burdell during a failed escape attempt from a Salt Lake City courthouse.)

In 2011, Clarence Clemons, the saxophone player for the E Street Band who was one of the key influences in Bruce Springsteen's life and music, died in Florida at age 69.

In 2020, the Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision, rejected President Donald Trump's effort to end legal protections for 650,000 young immigrants.

Ten years ago: Former baseball star Roger Clemens was acquitted in Washington, D.C. on all charges that he'd obstructed and lied to Congress when he denied using performance-enhancing drugs. R.A. Dickey became the first major league pitcher in 24 years to throw consecutive one-hitters in the New York Mets' 5-0 victory over the Baltimore Orioles. (The previous pitcher to throw consecutive one-hitters was Dave Stieb for Toronto in September 1988.) Actor Victor Spinetti, 82, died in Wales; he had appeared in three 1960s Beatles films.

Five years ago: Charleena Lyles, a 30-year-old Black mother of four, was shot and killed by two white Seattle police officers after she called 911 to report a burglary; authorities said Lyles had pulled a knife on the officers. Brooks Koepka closed with a 5-under 67 to win the U.S. Open for his first major championship.

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One year ago: Iranians voted in a presidential election that would bring a landslide victory to the country's hard-line judiciary chief, Ebrahim Raisi, the protégé of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei; Raisi had already been sanctioned by the U.S., partly over his involvement in the mass execution of thousands of political prisoners in 1988.

Today's Birthdays: Former Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., is 85. Sir Paul McCartney is 80. Actor Constance McCashin is 75. Actor Linda Thorson is 75. Former Sen. Mike Johanns, R-Neb., is 72. Actor Isabella Rossellini is 70. Actor Carol Kane is 70. Actor Brian Benben is 66. Actor Andrea Evans is 65. Rock singer Alison Moyet is 61. Rock musician Dizzy Reed (Guns N' Roses) is 59. Figure skater Kurt Browning is 56. R&B singer Nathan Morris (Boyz II Men) is 51. Actor Mara Hobel is 51. Singer-songwriter Ray LaMontagne is 49. Rapper Silkk the Shocker is 47. Actor Alana de la Garza is 46. Country singer Blake Shelton is 46. Rock musician Steven Chen (Airborne Toxic Event) is 44. Actor David Giuntoli is 42. Drummer Josh Dun (Twenty One Pilots) is 34. Actor Renee Olstead is 33. Actor Jacob Anderson is 32. Actor Willa Holland is 31.