

Groton Daily Independent

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Jul 15-17

U10 State Tourney in Salem

July 18

6 p.m.: Jr. Legion hosts Frederick, DH

July 19-21

Legion Regions at Redfield

July 22-24

Jr. Teeners State Tourney at Hayti

July 23-24

Jr. Legion Region

July 29-Aug. 2

State Legion at Gregory

August 5-7: State Jr. Legion at Clark

**"YOU CAN'T BUY HAPPINESS,
BUT YOU CAN BUY
ICE CREAM, AND THAT
IS PRETTY MUCH THE
SAME THING."**

Author Unknown



Chicken Soup
for the Soul

Thursday, Aug. 4

First allowable day of football practice

Monday, Aug. 8

First allowable day of boys golf practice

Thursday, Aug. 11

First allowable day of volleyball and cross country practice

Death Notice: Arlys Kluess

Arlys Kluess, 70, of Groton passed away July 16, 2022 at Avera St. Lukes Hospital, Aberdeen. Services are pending with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

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

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

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With Pierce On The Mound, Groton Legion Post #39 Shuts Out NE SD Webster Legion Post 40 Legion

Pierce Kettering threw a shutout to lead Groton Legion Post #39 past NE SD Webster Legion Post 40 Legion 11-0 on Thursday.

Groton Legion Post #39 got things moving in the first inning, when Cole Simon drew a walk, scoring one run.

Groton Legion Post #39 scored five runs in the fourth inning. Simon, Bradin Althoff, and Tate Larson all drove in runs in the frame.

One bright spot for NE SD Webster Legion Post 40 Legion was a single by Matt Mount in the third inning. Kettering was the winning pitcher for Groton Legion Post #39. The pitcher lasted five innings, allowing two hits and zero runs while striking out four.

Brent Snaza took the loss for NE SD Webster Legion Post 40 Legion. The bulldog lasted three innings, allowing two hits and eight runs.

Jackson Cogley, Kettering, Althoff, and Larson each managed one hit to lead Groton Legion Post #39. Groton Legion Post #39 tore up the base paths, as two players stole at least two bases. Cade Larson led the way with two.

Groton Post 39 Jr Legion Takes 6-2 Victory Over NE SD Webster Legion Post 40 Legion

Groton Post 39 Jr Legion wins contest against NE SD Webster Legion Post 40 Legion, 6-2

In the first inning, NE SD Webster Legion Post 40 Legion got their offense started when Samuel Nelson was hit by a pitch, driving in a run.

Groton Post 39 Jr Legion pulled away for good with two runs in the third inning. In the third Groton Post 39 Jr Legion scored on a stolen base during Colby Dunker's at bat. Then Dunker singled and Logan Ringgenberg singled on the first pitch of the at bat, scoring one run.

Groton Post 39 Jr Legion scored three runs in the fourth inning. The offensive onslaught by Groton Post 39 Jr Legion was led by Caden McInerney, Braxton Imrie, and Bradin Althoff, all sending runners across the plate with RBIs in the inning.

Ringgenberg was the winning pitcher for Groton Post 39 Jr Legion. Ringgenberg went five innings, allowing two runs on three hits and striking out four.

Matt Mount took the loss for NE SD Webster Legion Post 40 Legion. The hurler surrendered three runs on four hits over three innings, striking out one.

Korbin Kucker, Althoff, Ringgenberg, Dunker, McInerney, and Teylor Diegel each managed one hit to lead Groton Post 39 Jr Legion. Groton Post 39 Jr Legion didn't commit a single error in the field. Dillon Abeln had four chances in the field, the most on the team.

NE SD Webster Legion Post 40 Legion didn't commit a single error in the field. Jared Schimmel had the most chances in the field with six.

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Groton Post 39 Jr Legion Loses Lead Early in Defeat

Groton Post 39 Jr Legion fell behind early and couldn't come back in a 7-5 loss to Smittys Junior Legion 2022 on Saturday. Smittys Junior Legion 2022 scored on a single by Grant Beyer in the first inning, a walk by Cooper Eisenbeisz in the second inning, and a walk by Jackson Welke in the second inning.

Groton Post 39 Jr Legion lost despite out-hitting Smittys Junior Legion 2022 eight to seven.

After Groton Post 39 Jr Legion scored one run in the top of the fifth, Smittys Junior Legion 2022 answered with one of their own. Groton Post 39 Jr Legion scored when Ryan Groeblichhoff doubled on the first pitch of the at bat, scoring one run. Smittys Junior Legion 2022 then answered when Welke singled on the first pitch of the at bat, scoring one run.

Smittys Junior Legion 2022 pulled away for good with three runs in the second inning. In the second Eisenbeisz drew a walk, scoring one run and Welke drew a walk, scoring one run.

Donnie Soderlund was the winning pitcher for Smittys Junior Legion 2022. Soderlund allowed four hits and one run over four innings, striking out three and walking zero.

Korbin Kucker took the loss for Groton Post 39 Jr Legion. The pitcher surrendered six runs on three hits over two and a third innings.

Thomas Stickelmyer started the game for Smittys Junior Legion 2022. The hurler surrendered four runs on four hits over three innings, striking out one.

Groeblichhoff went 3-for-3 at the plate to lead Groton Post 39 Jr Legion in hits. Groton Post 39 Jr Legion was sure-handed in the field and didn't commit a single error. Teylor Diegel had the most chances in the field with four.

Smittys Junior Legion 2022 had seven hits in the game. Beyer, Soderlund, and Welke each had multiple hits for Smittys Junior Legion 2022.

Groton Jr Legion Stymied by Smittys Junior Legion, Lose 14-4

Saturday was a long day for Groton Post 39 Jr Legion, falling to Smittys Junior Legion 2022 14-4.

Groton Post 39 Jr Legion opened up scoring in the first inning. Jackson Welke threw a wild pitch allowing one run across the plate for Groton Post 39 Jr Legion.

Smittys Junior Legion 2022 pulled away for good with 11 runs in the third inning. In the third Brevin Flihs induced Grant Beyer to hit into a fielder's choice, but one run scored, an error scored one run for Smittys Junior Legion 2022, Talan Duttenhoeffer drew a walk, scoring one run, Charlie Phillips drew a walk, scoring one run, Jared Klootwyk drew a walk, scoring one run, Cooper Eisenbeisz singled on the first pitch of the at bat, scoring one run, Welke singled on a 3-2 count, scoring three runs, and Caden McInerney induced Lance Siefken to hit into a fielder's choice, but one run scored.

Welke toed the rubber for Smittys Junior Legion 2022. The ace surrendered four runs on four hits over six innings, striking out three.

Flihs was on the hill for Groton Post 39 Jr Legion. Flihs allowed one hit and four runs over two and a third innings, striking out one. McInerney threw three innings in relief.

Ryan Groeblichhoff led Groton Post 39 Jr Legion with two hits in three at bats.

Smittys Junior Legion 2022 tallied seven hits in the game. Eisenbeisz and Jacob Weishaar all had multiple hits for Smittys Junior Legion 2022. Eisenbeisz went 3-for-3 at the plate to lead Smittys Junior Legion 2022 in hits.

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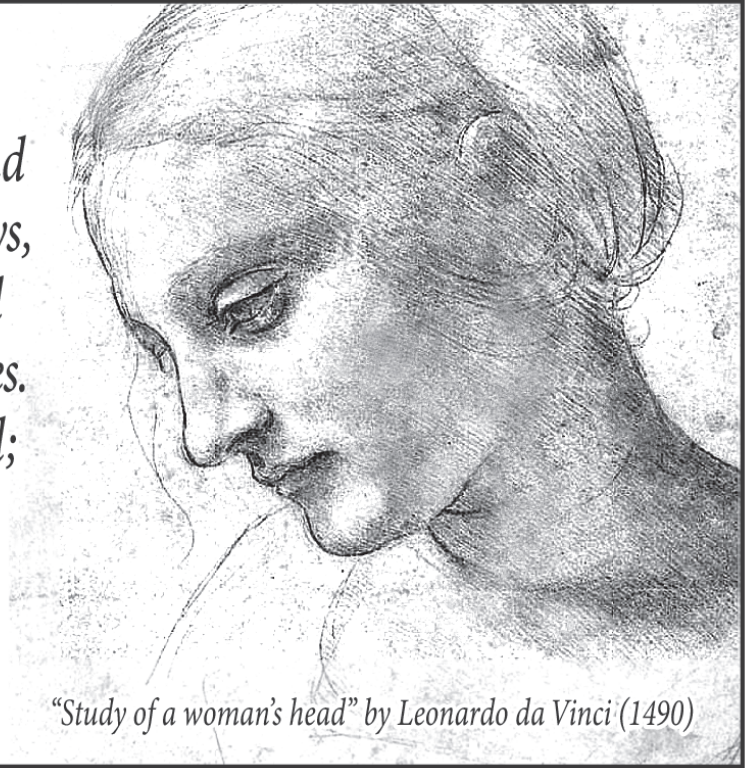
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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

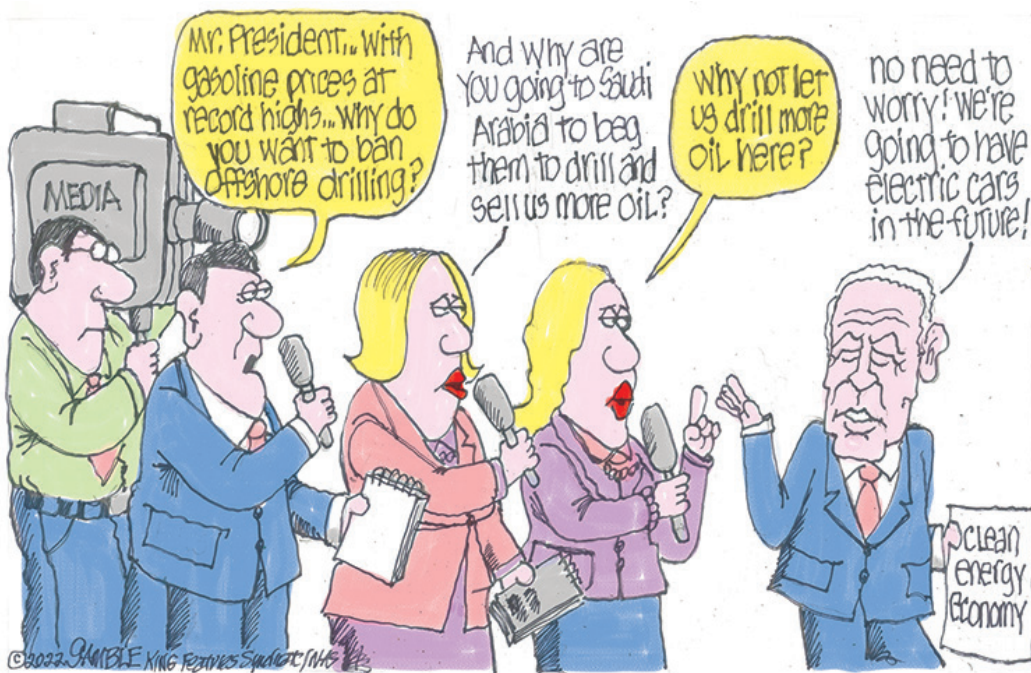
Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies. Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

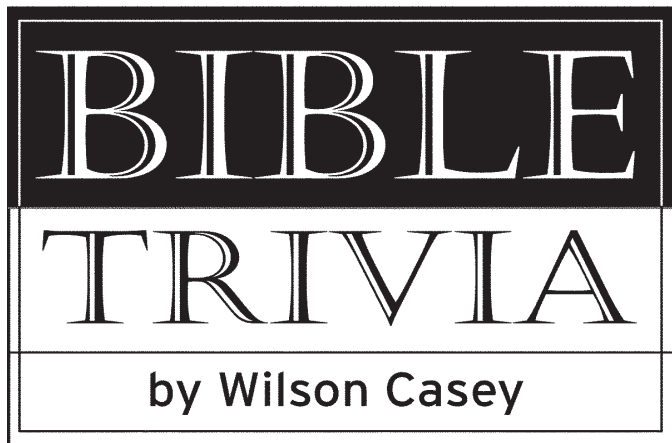
PSALMS 34:12-14



"Study of a woman's head" by Leonardo da Vinci (1490)

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Peanut Butter and Banana Smoothie

Skip the ice-cream shop. Blend these two great tastes together right in your own kitchen and save yourself money and calories.

1 1/2 cups cold fat-free milk

1 cup (1 medium) diced ripe banana

2 tablespoons reduced-fat peanut butter

1/2 cup sugar- and fat-free vanilla ice cream

In a blender container, combine milk, banana and peanut butter. Cover and process on BLEND for 30 seconds. Add ice cream. Re-cover and process on BLEND for 15 seconds or until mixture is smooth. Serve at once. Serves 2 (1 1/4 cups).

* Each serving equals: 258 calories, 6g fat, 13g protein, 38g carb., 216mg sodium, 3g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Fruit, 1 Fat-Free Milk, 1/2 Meat, 1/2 Fat, 1/2 Carb.

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1. Is the book of Zechariah in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. In 2 Peter 3:3, what shall come in the last days walking after their own lusts? *Politicians, Scoffers, Fools, Serpents*

3. What was the hometown village of Jeremiah, a biblical book author? *Anathoth, Neapolis, Patara, Sodom*

4. From Genesis 14, what city was Melchizedek the king of? *Nineveh, Salem, Jericho, Rome*

5. In Matthew 27, what position of authority did Pontius Pilate hold? *Doctor, Governor, Saint, Pharaoh*

6. From Genesis 4:9, who asked, "Am I my brother's keeper"? *Joseph, Cain, Abel, Seth*

ANSWERS: 1) Old; 2) Scoffers; 3) Anathoth; 4) Salem; 5) Governor; 6) Cain

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

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FLASH GORDON By JIM KEEFE
7-10

HAVING PINNED ITS QUARRY, THE SIGHTLESS MONSTROSITY MOVES IN FOR THE KILL!

BLAM

SKREE SKREEE

GRAB HOLD... WHO...?!

...WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE!

TO BE CONT'D

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

BECAUSE THE RAISED REAR PORTION OF THE CUP OFFERS MORE OF A BACKSTOP, ALWAYS BE BOLD ON SHORT UPHILL PUTTS.

I'LL USUALLY TRY TO COUNTER A SLIGHT BREAK WITH SHEER SPEED.

BECAUSE THE CUP OFFERS LESS OF A BACKSTOP, YOU'RE USUALLY BETTER OFF TRYING TO "DIE" THE BALL INTO THE FRONT OF THE HOLE GOING DOWNHILL - PARTICULARLY IF YOU DON'T WANT AN EVEN LONGER PUTT COMING BACK!

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EKG Test Result May Be a Sign of Heart Block

DEAR DR. ROACH: I recently had an EKG that showed first degree heart block and "inferior infarct, age undetermined." What does that mean? What should I do to make sure it doesn't get worse? I will be seeing a cardiologist in a few months to get an exercise stress echo. What is that? -- C.P.

ANSWER: The EKG uses the electrical activity in the heart to give important information about the structure and function of the heart. Although it is a very useful test, it isn't perfect.

"First degree heart block" just means that the electrical impulse in the heart is a little slow. By itself, it is not concerning, but it does suggest there is a risk of other heart problems, such as second or third degree heart block. These sometimes do need treatment (a pacemaker). It's something to keep an eye on, but it's possible to have first degree heart block for decades without progression.

An "infarct" is a heart attack. The EKG has characteristic findings of heart attack, which can be localized to a particular part of the heart. In your case, that is the bottom part of the heart, which is supplied by the right coronary artery. This type of heart attack is often complicated by first degree heart block, which may explain why you have that result.

A stress test looks for damage to the heart, and especially looks to see if part of the heart is at risk for another heart attack. With a stress echocardiogram, the heart is "stressed" by exercise or by medication to speed it up, and the movement of the heart is carefully examined by sound waves. This test can help determine whether you really did have a heart attack and whether you need treatment to help prevent another one.

Many people who have had a heart attack never knew it. Either they had no symptoms, or they thought it was something else, such as stomach upset (heart attacks in the inferior part of the heart often feel like stomach problems). But if you have had a heart attack, then certain medicines, such as aspirin, beta blockers and statin drugs, are very helpful in preventing another. If the stress echo is worrisome, the cardiologist may recommend an angiogram, which is the best test we have at identifying parts of the heart at risk for heart attack. It also allows the doctors sometimes to open up blockages in the arteries.

DEAR DR. ROACH: My cardiologist just started me on rosuvastatin (Crestor). What's the best time of day to take this medicine? -- J.M.

ANSWER: The majority of cholesterol synthesis in the body happens at nighttime, so for statin drugs that don't last very long in the body, it's better to take them at night. This is particularly true with fluvastatin (Lescol), lovastatin (Mevacor) and simvastatin (Zocor).

The other statin drugs last so long in the body, it doesn't really matter what time of the day you take them, although it's best to take them the same time every day.

Many people take high blood pressure medicines along with a statin, and studies suggest improved outcomes taking blood pressure medicines at night, so it is better for many people to take all of their medicines at the same time for convenience.

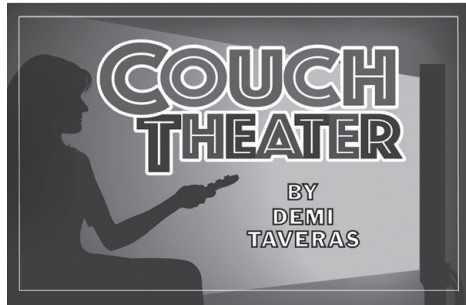
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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"The Sea Beast" (PG) -- There once was a time when sea beasts would reach the shores of civilization, putting many people in grave danger. It was only until sea beast hunter Jacob Holland, and many other warriors, swore to protect people from the frightening monsters and push them far away from the shores. When a little girl named Maisie comes face-to-face with the legendary sea beast hunter, she secretly stows away on Jacob's ship, determined to help him fight monsters. Upon finding her on board, Jacob cannot seem to get rid of this headstrong little girl, or even fully protect her as he wishes to, as she throws him into the craziest adventure of his life yet. (Netflix)



Promo for "Don't Make Me Go"

Courtesy of Amazon Prime

"The Bob's Burgers Movie" (PG-13) -- After being delayed for almost two years, the film adaptation of the beloved "Bob's Burgers" series has now reached streaming platforms for fans to enjoy at home. Taking place as summer begins, a sinkhole opens up right in front of the Belcher family's burger restaurant, threatening the destruction of their establishment. However, Louise does some poking around and uncovers a skeleton within the sinkhole. The landlord responsible for fixing the sinkhole, Calvin Fiscoeder, is assumed to be the killer and gets arrested -- falsely, according to the Belchers, leading the chaotic family of five into a mayhem-filled goose chase to figure out the true killer and fix the sinkhole before it's too late. (HBO Max/Hulu)

"Don't Make Me Go" (R) -- Single father Max is on a learning curve with his teenage daughter, Wally, who has reached the age all parents dread -- the age when it's nearly impossible to tear a teenager away from their phone or their friends. But Max receives terrible news that he has a terminal illness, with the only form of treatment being a very risky surgery. Unsure of how to tell Wally, Max decides to take her on a road trip for the rest of her summer break, with the intent of teaching her as much as he can and spending as much time with her as possible. This movie's an instant tear-jerker, so have your tissues handy. (Amazon Prime)

"Minamata" (R) -- Based on the book of the same name by Aileen Mioko Smith, "Minamata" is an incredibly profound film that focuses on the effects of mercury poisoning that occurred in Minamata, Japan. In 1971, W. Eugene Smith, a photographer for "Life," is on another work assignment when he gets approached with the task of photographing the terrible effects that mercury poisoning had on the citizens of Minamata. Since the story was covered up by the company responsible for the pollution leading to these effects, Smith realizes that his photos are the only way to bring justice to the victims and tell their stories. Johnny Depp stars as W. Eugene Smith in "Minamata," out now. (Hulu)

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1. How did Gary U.S. Bonds get his name?
2. Which artist wrote and released "You'll Lose a Good Thing"?
3. How and when was Usher discovered?
4. Name the song that was pieced together with lyrics from a Cossack folk song ("Koloda-Duda") and an Irish melody.
5. Name the song that contains these lyrics: "With each beat of my heart, for every day we are apart, I'll hunger for every wasted hour."

Answers

1. Born Gary Anderson, his promo records were sent to radio stations in papers sleeves with the words "Buy U.S. Bonds" printed on them.

2. Blues singer Barbara Lynn, in 1962. Her version was used in the "Hairspray" film in 1988. Freddy Fender released his own cover in 1975.

3. Usher (born Usher Raymond IV) competed in a "Star Search" singing competition at the age of 13 and was quickly hustled to an audition with a record producer who signed Usher on the spot. His first album, however, was put on hold when his voice changed.

4. "Where Have All the Flowers Gone," by Pete Seeger in 1955.

5. "I'm Gonna Make You Love Me," by Dee Dee Warwick, in 1966. A notable later cover was done by a collaboration between the Supremes and the Temptations in 1968.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{Wagner}



"He deliberately got a hearing aid so he could turn me off!"

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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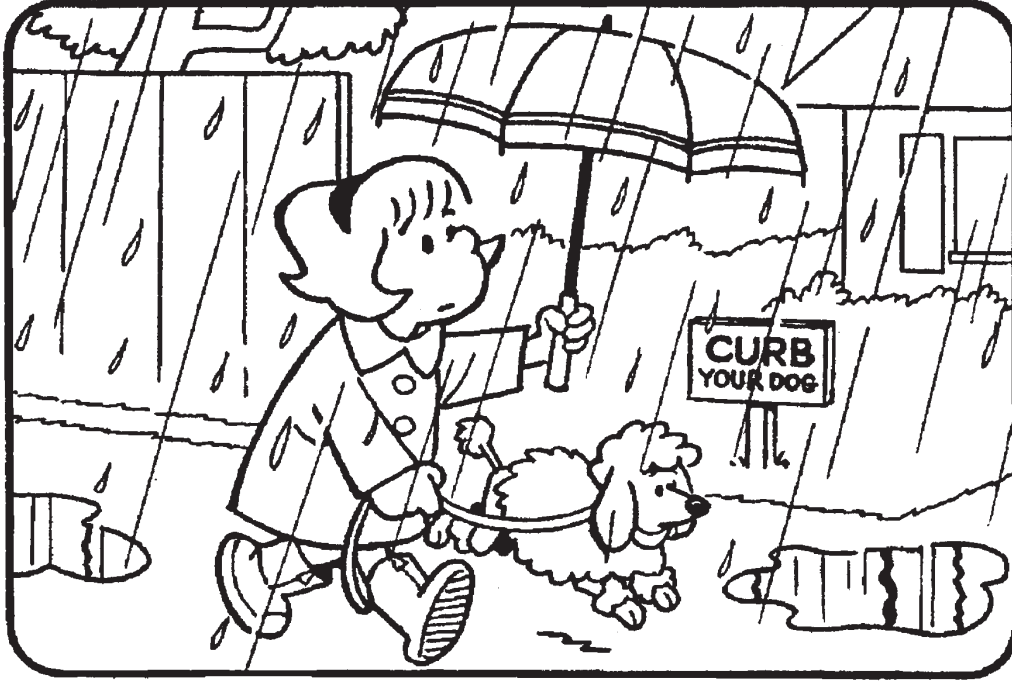
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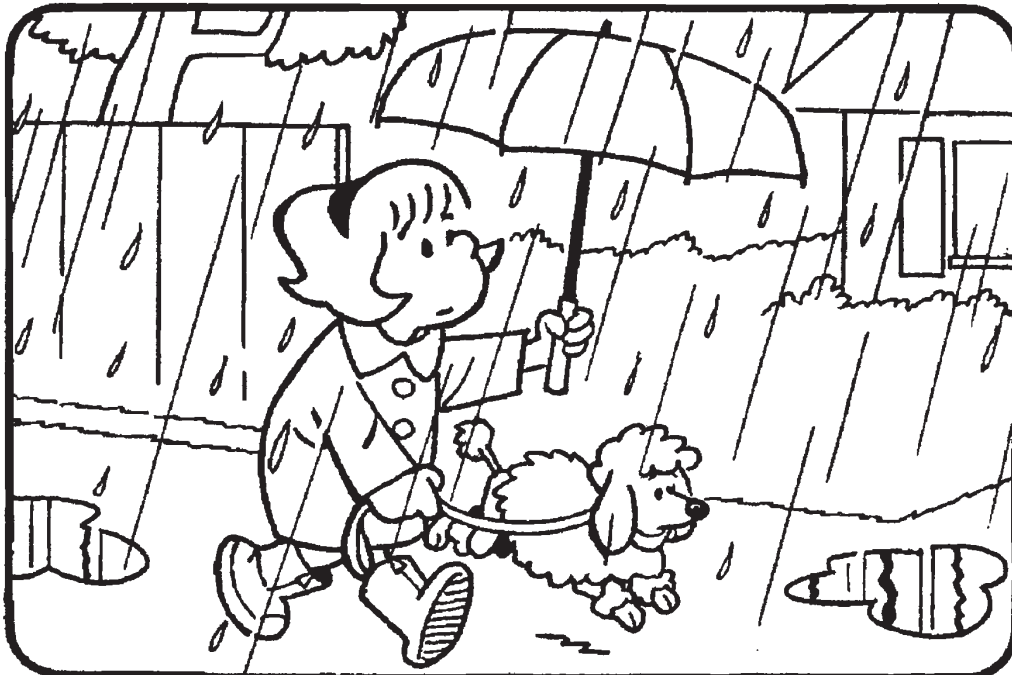
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Fence is shorter. 2. Raincoat is different. 3. Leash is shorter. 4. Stripe is missing. 5. Sign is missing. 6. Puddle is smaller.

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* "I finally got a new car, and there's no cassette player in it. I have a pretty large library of music on tapes, so I was a little bummed. My wife got me a little device that looks like an old Walkman, and it hooks up to the computer. I can convert my cassettes to digital songs, which I can burn onto CDs. It would cost hundreds of dollars to re-buy all that music, and there are some tapes that I couldn't replace even if I had the money, so this is great." -- C.C. in Ohio

* "I love old books, and there are always a few I am looking for that are out of print. It seems like when I get inside a used-book store, I forget everything. So I made a card that I keep in my wallet and on it I list all the authors or titles I am after. This way, I have it handy all the time." -- C.D. in Florida

* Apricots are a relative of the peach, and they can be ripened just like a peach can -- in a paper bag on the counter. They should be refrigerated when ripe.

* "I went to a tag sale and purchased a set of really cute flowerpots for barely anything. I like them so much that I am using them inside my house. They are holding utensils in the kitchen, and remotes and other odds and ends in the living room. They are great!" -- S.I. in Texas

* Laundry baskets can be your best friends when decluttering the house. Go from room to room collecting the clutter in a laundry basket, then bring it to a central location to sort and redistribute items that belong in each room.

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

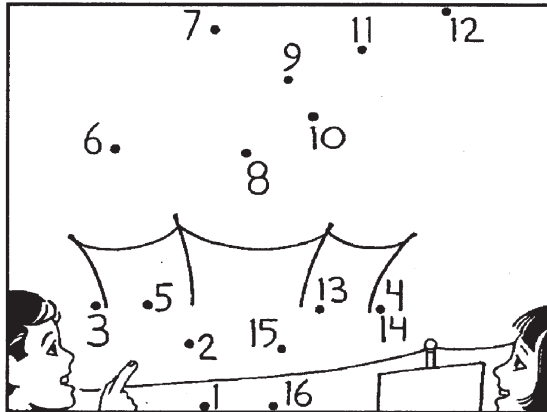
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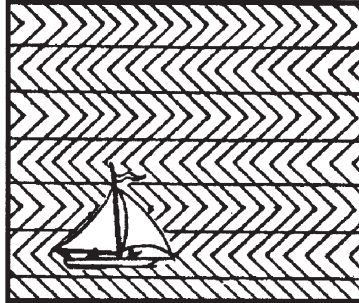
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Junior Whirl

by Hal Kaufman



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BOUNDING MAIN EYE-BEFUDDLER

IT'S been shown time and time again that we can't always believe what we see. In the sailing scene at left, for instance, it would seem that each of the parallel horizontal lines veers either up or down.

But, if you sight these lines at eye level from the side, you will find that all are straight and parallel.

This is an adaptation of one of the oldest and cleverest of optical illusions.

LIGHT SHOW! Here it is again, lighting up the sky. What is that? Draw lines dot to dot to complete the picture.

ROLL CALL! Answer quickly, if you can: In calling the roll alphabetically, which U.S. states are first and last? Limit: 30 sec.

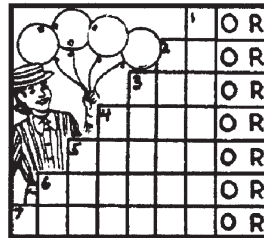
Alabama is first, Wyoming is last.

THIS, that, OR the other thing could be one of the seven terms to be placed in the diagram shown. Let's see how quickly you can identify these words from the following definitions:

1. Opposite of against.
2. Norse god of war and thunder.
3. Important city official.
4. Stepped-up enthusiasm.
5. Bullfight principal.
6. School passageway, for example.
7. Crocodile's big-mouthed cousin.

Time limit: Two minutes.

1. For. 2. Thor. 3. Mayor. 4. Fervor. 5. Matador. 6. Corridor. 7. Alligator.

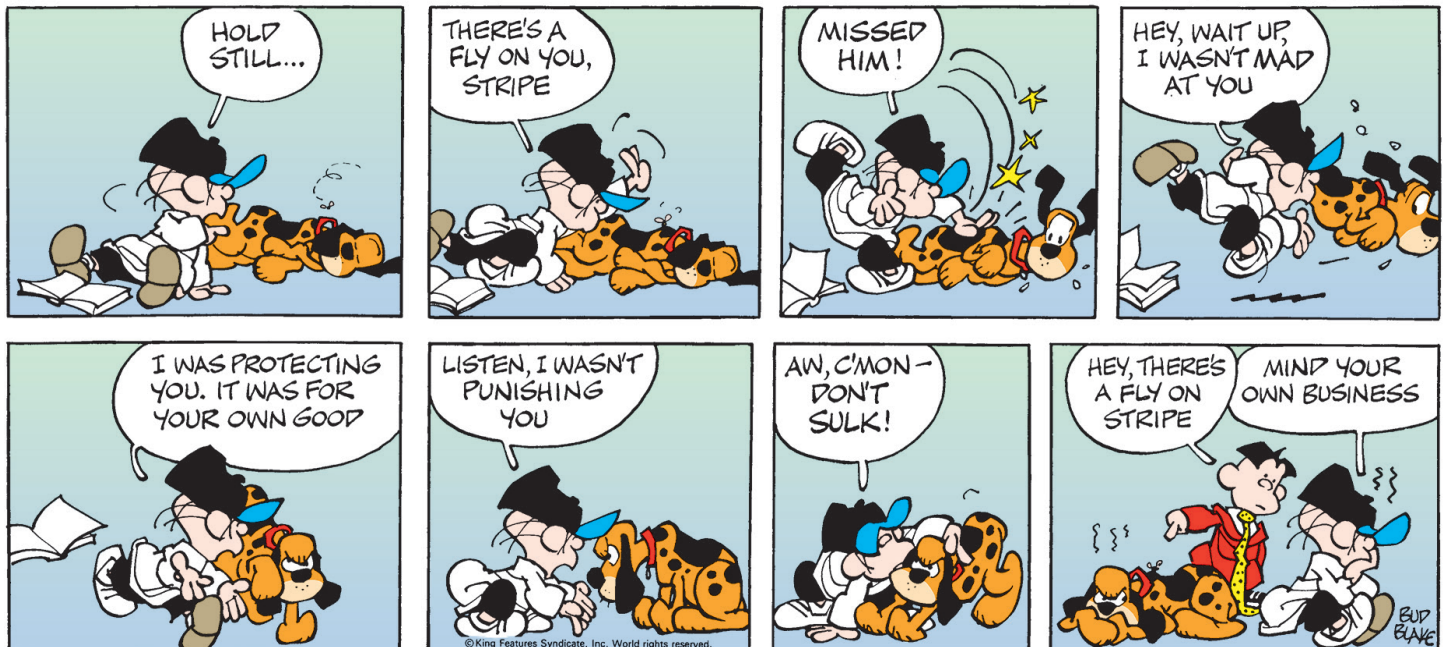


GAME TIME! The Olympic Games trace back to ancient Greece. Yet, the 1996 event commemorates an historic 100th year. Of what significance was the year 1896?

Competition ceased in 394 A.D., were resumed in 1896, the initial year of modern games.

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Baseball's Ripken
- 4 Glacial
- 7 Mrs. Flintstone
- 12 Baton Rouge sch.
- 13 Extinct New Zealand bird
- 14 Figure of speech
- 15 " — show-time!"
- 16 Parthenon locale
- 18 "The A-Team" actor
- 19 Le — (French news-paper)
- 20 Pear type
- 22 Sugary suffix
- 23 Actress Tyne
- 27 Director Howard
- 29 Cut up, as a pizza
- 31 Metric measure
- 34 Desert haven
- 35 Tam topper
- 37 "Ray Donovan" actor Voight
- 38 Money maven Orman
- 39 Vichy water
- 41 Latin love
- 45 Shadow
- 47 Mimic
- 48 Marvland's

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

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 22 Sugary suffix | capital | leader | 30 Privy |
| 23 Actress Tyne | 52 Composer Rorem | 5 Butterfly pro-tector | 31 Vinyl records |
| 27 Director Howard | 53 Got wind of | 6 Tales | 32 Debtor's letters |
| 29 Cut up, as a pizza | 54 Kreskin's claim | 7 Use a sponge | 33 Celeb gossip site |
| 31 Metric measure | 55 Big D.C. lobby | 8 Altar promise | 36 Office note |
| 34 Desert haven | 56 Authority | 9 Dogpatch adjective | 37 Legal expert |
| 35 Tam topper | 57 ACLU issues | 10 Miss Piggy's pronoun | 40 More skilled |
| 37 "Ray Donovan" actor Voight | 58 Small batteries | 11 Early hrs. | 42 Food from heaven |
| 38 Money maven Orman | | 17 Rhyming tributes | 43 Verdi work |
| 39 Vichy water | DOWN | 21 Thin pancake | 44 — a beet |
| 41 Latin love | 1 Scale | 23 Hunting goddess | 45 High hairstyle |
| 45 Shadow | 2 Houston player | 24 Rm. coolers | 46 Nile vipers |
| 47 Mimic | 3 Has an intense craving | 25 Island garland | 48 Spa sounds |
| 48 Marvland's | 4 Mosaue | 26 QB's gains | 49 PBS funder |
| | | 28 Spanish oold | 50 Opposing vote |
| | | | 51 MGM motto start |

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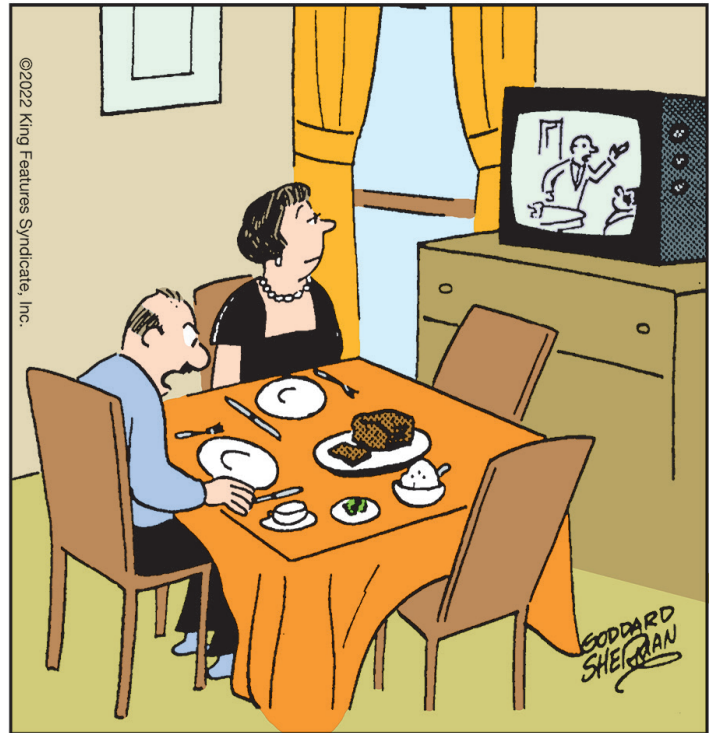
— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

C	A	L		I	C	Y		W	I	L	M	A	
L	S	U		M	O	A		I	D	I	O	M	
I	T	S		A	C	R	O	P	O	L	I	S	
M	R	T		M	O	N	D	E					
B	O	S	C		O	S	E		D	A	L	Y	
			R	O	N			S	L	I	C	E	D
L	I	T	E	R				O	A	S	I	S	
P	O	M	P	O	M			J	O	N			
S	U	Z	E		E	A	U		A	M	O	R	
				U	M	B	R	A		A	P	E	
A	N	N	A	P	O	L	I	S		N	E	D	
H	E	A	R	D		E	S	P		N	R	A	
S	A	Y	S	O		R	T	S		A	A	S	

LAFF - A - DAY



"I noticed the meat loaf is a re-run too!"

Out on a Limb

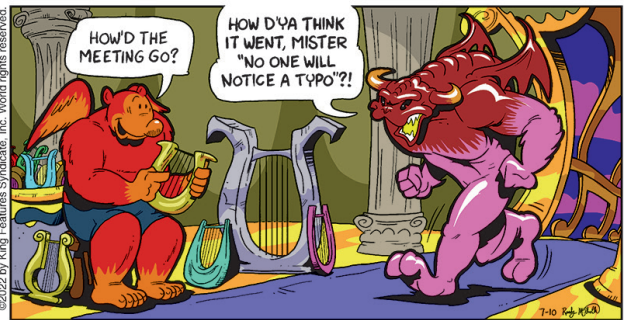
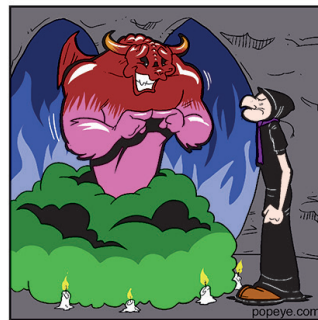
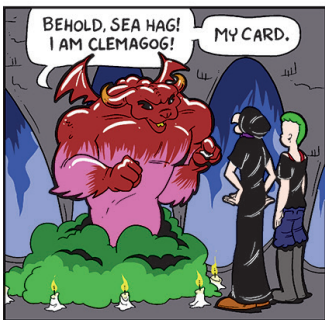
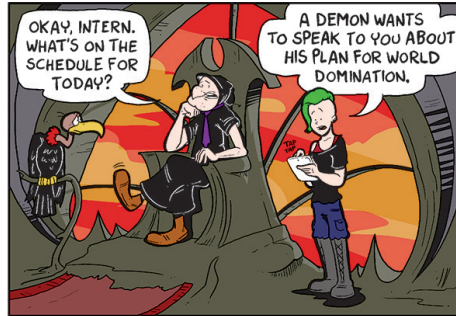
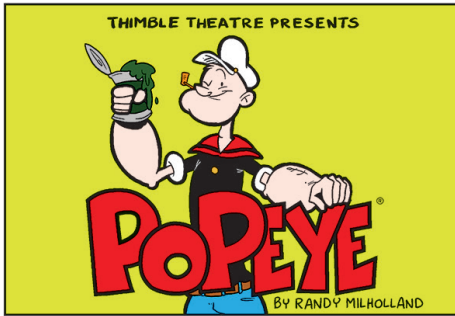
by Gary Kopervas

BIRTHDAY PICNIC
FOR A BABY BOOMER:



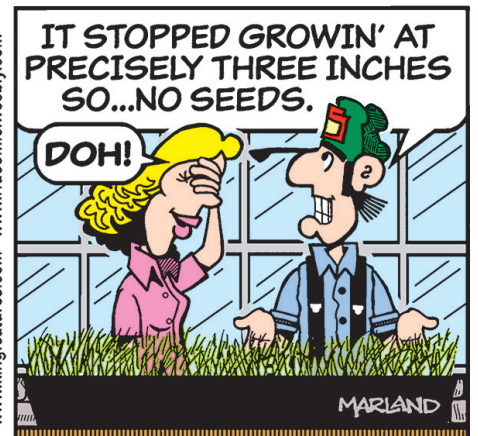
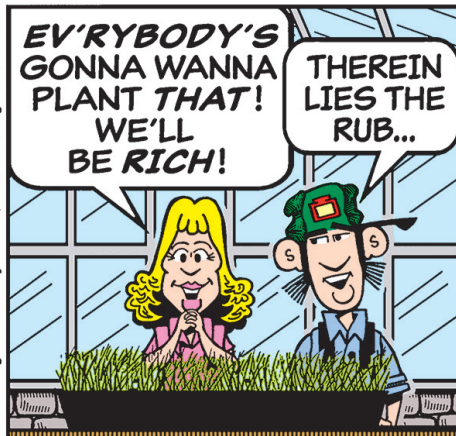
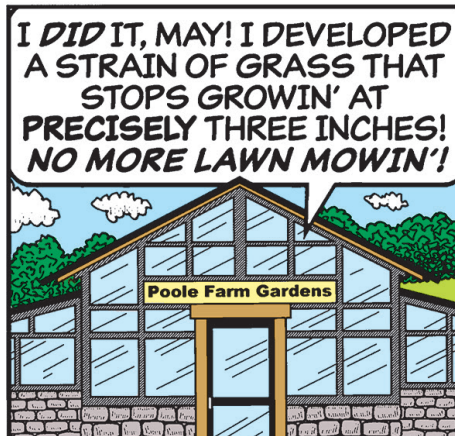
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R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



Groton Daily Independent

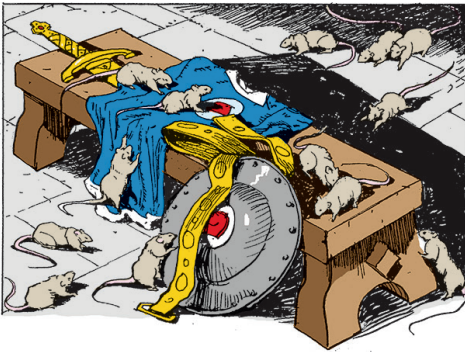
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DRACO DEMANDS A DUEL TO THE DEATH WITH VAL. GALAHAD SIGHS: "IT IS DRACO'S RIGHT. SO GRANTED."

Hal Foster's
Prince Valiant
BY GIANNI AND SCHULTZ

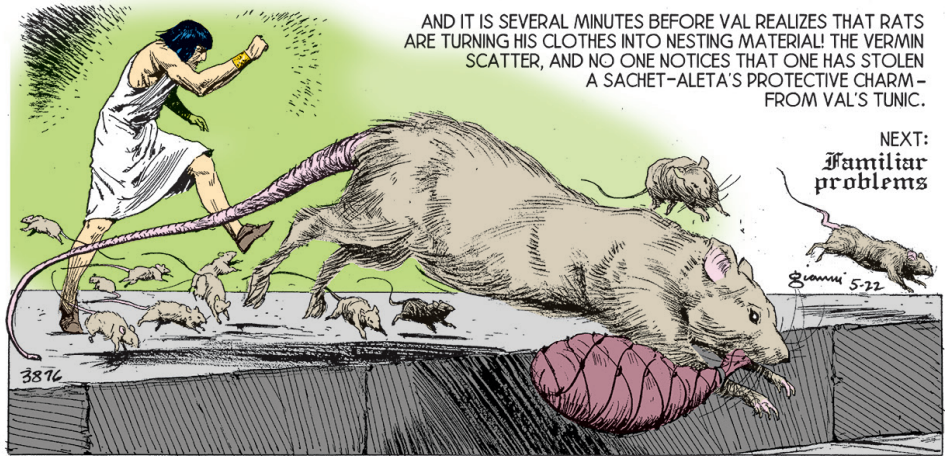
"DRACO IS SUICIDAL," WHISPERS GAWAIN. "VAL IS MUCH THE SUPERIOR WARRIOR!" BUT BUKOTA IS CAUTIOUS: "DRACO'S WIFE TIPS THE SCALES."

WITH THE CONTEST RULES SET, VAL'S NEXT STOP IS THE ARMORY, WHERE HE, LIKE DRACO, MUST BE OUTFITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH CAMELOT'S CHALLENGE TRADITION.



THE PRINCE STRIPS AND LAYS HIS TUNIC AND GEAR TO THE SIDE. SILENT SHAPES STEAL UNNOTICED FROM THE BUILDING'S SHADOWS...

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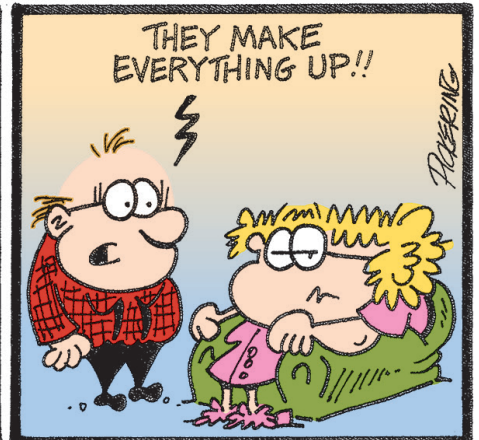
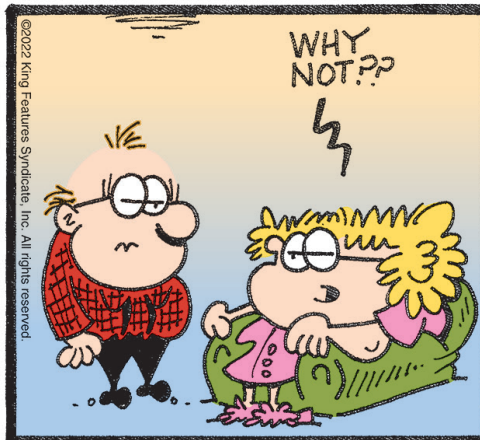
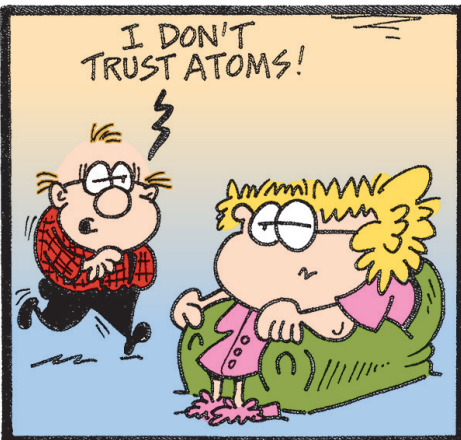
AND IT IS SEVERAL MINUTES BEFORE VAL REALIZES THAT RATS ARE TURNING HIS CLOTHES INTO NESTING MATERIAL! THE VERMIN SCATTER, AND NO ONE NOTICES THAT ONE HAS STOLEN A SACHET-ALETA'S PROTECTIVE CHARM-FROM VAL'S TUNIC.

NEXT:
Familiar problems

Gianni 5-22

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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PICKERING

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Discounts on Phone and Internet

Have you heard of Lifeline? Started many years ago to help low-income individuals with their phone costs, it's been expanded to include internet at home, offering a \$9.25 monthly discount.

That \$9.25 savings doesn't sound like much, but if you're like me, nowadays, you're converting every dollar saved into food. That \$9.25, for example, could turn into a loaf of bread and a gallon of milk, or even a pound of ground beef, a package of hamburgers buns and most of a can of beans.

You'll need to qualify for Lifeline. One way you do that is if you (or anyone in your household) receive benefits from Supplemental Security Income, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, veterans pensions, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Medicaid and others, or through having verifiable low income. (You'll need paperwork to prove it.)

You can sign up in a number of ways, such as by mail or online at nv.fcc.gov/lifeline. Scroll through the information on that page. Call 800-234-9473 for more information or to ask that an application be sent to you by mail.

But there's more. In addition, if you qualify for Lifeline, you likely also qualify for an even bigger assistance: the Affordable Connectivity Program. ACP is new and can give you a \$30 monthly discount on your internet. Once you're in the Lifeline program, call your internet provider and enroll in ACP with them. There's no need to fill out another application.

There are hundreds of internet providers that are part of the program, including some big names like Xfinity, AT&T and Spectrum. In some cases, that \$30 gets you internet without you having to pay anything additional. In other words, free internet. Get the details from your internet provider.

For a list of providers by state, go to www.fcc.gov/affordable-connectivity-program-providers. Get more information on the Affordable Connectivity Program at www.fcc.gov/acp or call 877-384-2575.

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1. What Ball State Cardinals basketball standout was selected 11th overall by the Detroit Pistons in the 1998 NBA Draft, but had his rights traded to the Portland Trail Blazers?

2. Name the boxing referee who served two terms as a Nevada district court judge and had a courtroom TV show in syndication from 1998 to 2001.

3. In 2021, competitive eating legend Joey Chestnut broke his own record at the Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest by consuming how many hot dogs and buns (HDBs) in 10 minutes?

4. What international multisport event, first held in 1930, was conceived as a competition among territories of the British Empire?

5. What golf ball, developed by MacGregor Golf in the 1980s for use on small island courses, weighed half as much and flew half as far as a standard golf ball?

6. Ohio State Buckeyes defensive tackle Dan "Big Daddy" Wilkinson was chosen first overall in the 1994 NFL Draft by what team?

7. What product was originally patented and sold under the name ChemGrass in 1965?



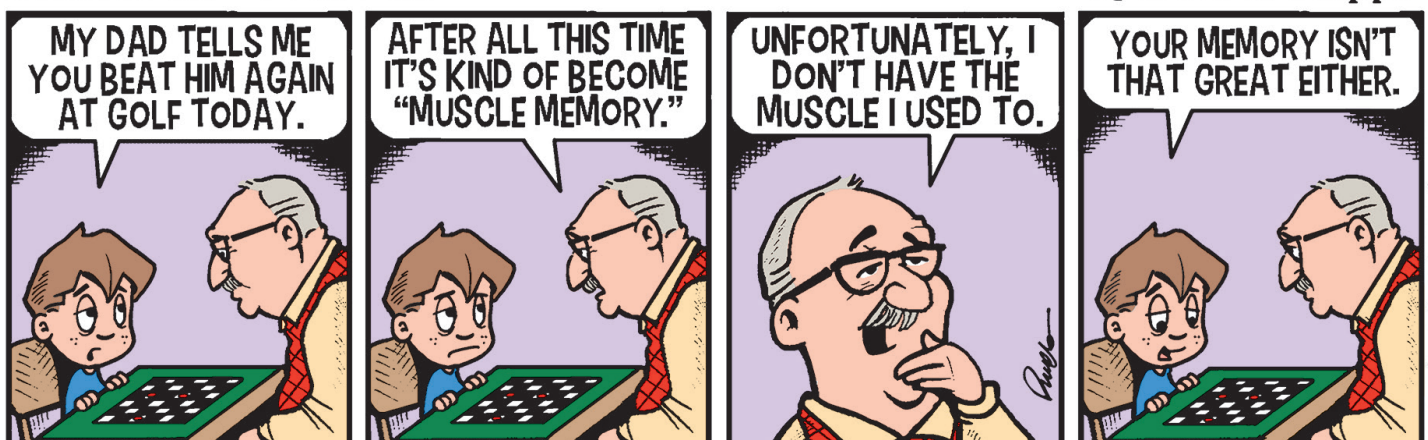
by Ryan A. Berenz

Answers

1. Bonzi Wells.
 2. Mills Lane.
 3. 76.
 4. The Commonwealth Games.
 5. The Cayman ball.
 6. The Cincinnati Bengals.
 7. AstroTurf.
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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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How to Get a Pet Cleanup Station in Your Neighborhood

DEAR PAW'S corner: The sidewalks of my small town are often littered with dog waste. There is a town ordinance requiring owners to pick up after their dogs, but it's clearly not being enforced. I read that installing pet waste stations throughout the community can greatly reduce this problem. How do I convince the town to do this? -- Gloria G. in Ohio

Dear Gloria: Dog waste stations, which provide small plastic or compostable waste pickup bags and a covered can to dispose of poo, can not only improve the sidewalks in your town, it can improve water quality in local streams and lakes. Runoff

from piles of dog poop add nitrogen and phosphorus to nearby water systems, depleting oxygen and endangering aquatic life.

You can help fix this by calling attention to the problem and getting community support for pet pickup stations.

1. Contact your local municipality. Find out how to put forward a pet waste proposal. Sometimes one is on the table already; learn how you can join an ongoing effort to get approval for pet waste stations.
2. Install a pet pickup bag dispenser. If local ordinances allow it, set up a waste bag dispenser at the edge of your yard or driveway.
3. Enlist others in the cause. The best allies in this initiative are other responsible dog owners who you meet walking their dogs. Start a conversation, then a Facebook group, then an in-person meeting. The more stakeholders in the initiative, the faster it can happen.
4. Be prepared for pushback. You'll have to answer questions like: How will the town pay for these stations? Who will maintain them? Are there other property or HOA issues to consider?

It may take time, but with a little research and some positive conversations with neighbors, your town's dog poo problem could soon be a thing of the past.

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

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

* "Americanha" is a word used by Nigerians to refer to folks who visit the U.S. and then put on American airs when they return.

* The Supreme Court has its own private basketball court.

* You thought it was hard to get into Harvard University? Try getting hired by Walmart! The former institution's admittance rate of 4.5% still beats that of the store chain, which has an employee acceptance rate of just 2.6%.

* Lake Superior State University in Michigan offers a unicorn hunting license.

* An art collector once paid \$10,000 for a "non-visible" sculpture created by actor James Franco. What did she get for her moolah? Well, since the artwork was billed as an "endless tank of oxygen," we'd say ... air, which most of us can find a lot cheaper.

* And speaking of frugality -- a man wore 60 shirts and nine pairs of jeans on an 11.5-hour flight from China to Africa because he didn't want to pay the extra baggage fee.

* Cows moo with regional accents.

* The town of Dorset, Minnesota, elects a new mayor every two years by drawing names from a hat, and in 2015, that honor went to 3-year-old Robert Tufts. His laudable motto: "Being nice and no poop talk."

* According to a 2014 study published by the Los Angeles Times, one in nine Americans, or 11% of the population, thinks HTML is actually a disease.

* Britain's Secret Intelligence Service once hacked an al-Qaida website and replaced bomb instructions with a cupcake recipe.

Thought for the Day: "Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts." -- Rachel Carson

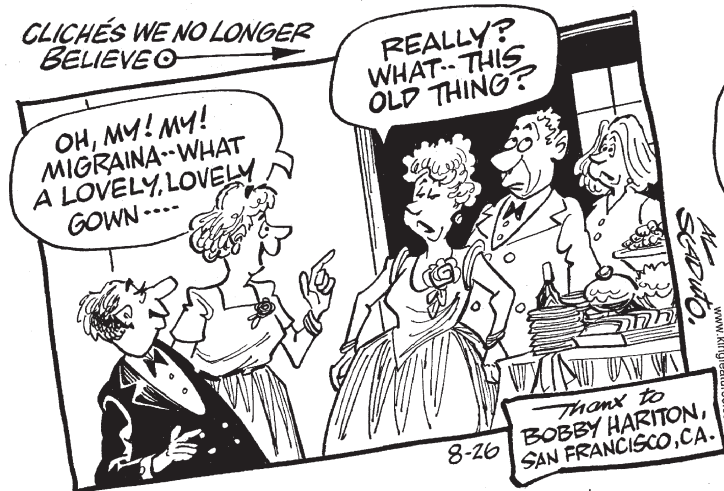
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THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

BY AL SCADUTO



Over a million Americans need emergency treatment for bug bites and stings every year, and treatment costs and lost wages can run into the billions. Avoid bees, mosquitoes, ticks, yellow jackets, wasps, hornets, kissing bugs, spiders, bed bugs, ants and scorpions, and do not tease them or try to catch them. Keep cold compresses, antihistamines and pain relievers handy, and also be prepared for an emergency room trip should more severe reactions develop. -Brenda Weaver

Source: www.lawnstarter.com

Doing It on Your Own



by Freddy Groves

The headline of this column could actually be "What to do when your local veterans group doesn't step up to help other veterans."

Because, yeah, it happens.

Mostly it's for compelling reasons -- the members might be older (I saw an unofficial citation showing that the average age of American Legion members is their late 60s). For the Veterans of Foreign Wars, it was early 70s. I believe it. Or post membership might have dwindled to the point where there are many on the roster but only a few who actually show up for

meetings. But if you're faced with this situation and you want to focus on helping other veterans, there are a few things you can do on your own or with some likeminded buddies.

If your veterans group is willing to part with money to help other veterans, take the cash. Make suggestions and get their votes on how it should be spent.

Start with Voluntary Services at the local Veterans Affairs medical center. They can always use donations of money and time. In one calendar year, volunteers toted up 2.6 million hours. Parking lot shuttle driver, office assistant, book cart, dining room companion, mail delivery to wards, transportation van driver ... the possibilities are many.

Even outside the VA world, you have options to help needy veterans and their families. You can do grocery shopping for elderly or infirm veterans, mow lawns, corral skilled carpenters and tradesmen to do home repairs, do taxes if you're a CPA and even match companies with unemployed veterans.

Make inquiries at homeless shelters that serve a lot of veterans and ask what help you can provide. It might be as simple as washing dishes. It might be delivering cases of food from their supplier. You might be playing checkers after lunch or handing out dry socks.

Whatever you do, however small, to help another veteran, can make a difference. You don't need to be part of a group to do it.

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Wishing Well®

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E	D	N	E	G	A	H	E	O	T	P	E	E

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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1. TELEVISION: Which "Star Wars" character did Tina Fey dress as in the sitcom "30 Rock" to avoid jury duty?
2. GEOGRAPHY: What is the largest desert in Africa?
3. HISTORY: Who was the first American to win a Nobel Prize?
4. ANATOMY: Where in the body is blood produced?
5. MOVIES: Which movie features a theme song titled "Dueling Banjos"?
6. U.S. STATES: Which state was the first to make same-sex marriage legal?
7. SCIENCE: Where did the first manned spacecraft land on the moon?
8. LITERATURE: Which 20th-century Southern novel features a character named Frankie Addams?
9. MUSIC: What is the first movie that featured the singer Elvis?
10. AD SLOGANS: Which company's slogan once was "At the corner of happy and healthy"?

Answers

1. Princess Leia
2. The Sahara
3. President Theodore Roosevelt, Peace Prize
4. Bone marrow
5. "Deliverance"
6. Massachusetts
7. Sea of Tranquility
8. "The Member of the Wedding"
9. "Love Me Tender," 1956
10. Walgreens

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Visiting Mothers and Their Newborn Children in Our State Prisons: Hope for the Future

In my four years as Governor, I have focused on finding ways that our programs can positively impact the next generation. This goes beyond reading about what state government does—I go out and see these programs for myself so I can understand exactly what we can do to improve them.

This week, I visited the mother-baby unit at the women's prison in Pierre. This simple trip did my heart good—it showed me that we are making a difference in these women's lives.

When Kellie Wasko, our new Secretary of Corrections, joined my cabinet earlier this year, South Dakota was one of only nine states to have a mother-baby program for incarcerated women who find themselves carrying a child. But we definitely had room to improve. I charged Kellie, who is a mother like me, with making this program bigger and better, and I saw the results of her great work this week.

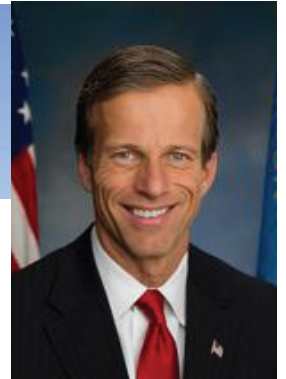
Now, incarcerated mothers can bond with their babies for 30 months after birth. Most of the women who participate in this program will have served their sentences by the time those 30 months are up. Because of the changes we've made, they will re-enter their communities with a strong relationship with their children and motivation to stay on the right path. Thanks to our Governor's House program, a separate home on the prison grounds set aside especially for these women and their children, these new mothers have a safe place to stay and form a community with each other, too. We also provide educational, mental, and physical support as they start their parenting journeys.

As state leaders, we must offer these women the support they need to turn their lives around. To be sure, these women made mistakes. But their babies—born during their mothers' incarceration—did nothing wrong. They deserve the best start to their early childhood. And their mothers deserve a measure of forgiveness as they repay their debt to society. That is part of what it means to be pro-life.

Several of the mothers I visited told me of the impact this program was having on them and of their desire to leave prison with their new child at the end of their sentence and never return. That is the ultimate goal for these women: leave prison and return home to raise a healthy child in their community as a productive member of our society.

I will continue to advocate for the necessary facility and security upgrades to keep our prisons safe and effective. We have made progress on that score in the last year, and we will continue to do so as time goes on. I know, after visiting our mother-child program in Pierre, that under Secretary Wasko's leadership, we are on the right track.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Democrats' Prescription for Record-High Inflation: Spend More and Raise Taxes

Inflation is at its highest level since November 1981 – a staggering 9.1 percent. The last time it was this high, Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark had recently been released. Everywhere South Dakotans look, they're facing price increases. On average, inflation is costing the average household \$718 per month, or more than \$8,600 over the next year. That is an unsustainable financial burden for families and small businesses. And on top of all this, real average hourly earnings are currently declining at the fastest pace in 40 years.

A growing number of Americans are digging into their savings to make ends meet, and others are relying on things like credit cards or visits to food banks. Yet, even as inflation continues to climb and affect families and businesses across the state, Washington Democrats are preparing to double down on the same kind of irresponsible government expansion they've already committed to with a partisan, multi-trillion-dollar tax-and-spending bill.

At its most basic level, inflation is created when there are too many dollars chasing too few of goods in the economy. Democrats helped trigger this ongoing inflation problem last year when they decided to pour trillions of unnecessary government dollars into the economy – despite being warned by me and many others that their partisan \$1.9 trillion spending bill would stoke inflation. At this point, after months of record-high prices, the logical solution would be to stop all of this wasteful spending. Unfortunately, Democrats still believe that flooding the economy with more government dollars will help fix the inflation crisis. Newsflash: It will only make things worse.

Like a zombie, the Democrats' Build Back Better tax-and-spending spree just keeps coming back from the dead. Democrats are planning to raise taxes by a trillion dollars. A substantial part of that tax increase would come in the form of new taxes on small businesses – individually and family-owned businesses, or what are often called pass-through businesses. In South Dakota, pass-throughs, such as sole proprietorships, S corporations, and partnerships, employ an estimated 68 percent of the private sector. Nationwide, more than 90 percent of American businesses are pass-throughs, and these businesses employ tens of millions of Americans.

Right now, business owners are struggling with the high cost of everything from inputs to electricity. I recently read a comment from one small business owner in South Dakota, who noted that "it's hard when you're working so hard but you're not making money. [...] we are right there right now." If Democrats have their way, life for small business owners – and their employees – is going to get even harder. Raising taxes on businesses would lead to a combination of lower wages for workers, lower returns for business owners, and higher prices for goods and services. It would also make it more challenging for small business owners to reinvest in and grow their businesses.

The Democrats' proposed tax hikes and the resulting economic impacts are not going to be limited to small businesses, nor are they going to be limited to families bringing home more than \$400,000 – despite the fact that the president has repeatedly pledged not to raise taxes on families making less than that. A recent analysis by the nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation showed that lower- and middle-income taxpayers will face significant hits from the Democrats' proposed tax hikes, and more than half of taxpayers earning between \$100,000 and \$200,000 would see a tax hike next year, as well as a quarter of taxpayers making between \$75,000 and \$100,000.

Raising taxes on small businesses, including pass-throughs in South Dakota and across the country, is a reckless approach to the economy. I am at a loss to understand any legitimate reason why Democrats would be contemplating increasing the tax burden on small businesses and middle-income Americans during an inflation crisis. American families are already suffering, and they should not have to deal with the economic consequences of yet another ill-advised piece of Democrat legislation.

I will continue to fight on behalf of South Dakota families and small businesses to stop this irresponsible and partisan tax-and-spending spree from becoming law.

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CONGRESSMAN

DUSTY JOHNSON

Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



Rising Inflationary Pressure

June's inflation report showed a 9.1% increase from a year ago. At this point, most of us are seeing the higher prices for almost everything we purchase. These prices are making it harder for individuals and families to make ends meet, and have created dilemmas for construction projects, police departments, and school districts.

Record high fuel prices have imposed unexpected costs on police departments who have to fill up the gas tanks of their patrol cars. To combat these expenses, some police chiefs have asked their department to conduct stationary patrols of neighborhoods instead of driving around to conserve gas. Highway patrols, police departments, and Sheriff's offices have all seen their fuel costs increase by as much as 50% or more since early 2021. They have adjusted how many patrol cars are out, what types of vehicles are on the road, and how far their routes are.

Meanwhile school districts are juggling increased food costs, energy, tech, school supplies, and transportation costs for bus routes. Adjusting bus routes and rates for contractors are a couple ways these increased expenses have been mitigated but finding ways to escape the burden that inflation has proven to be difficult.

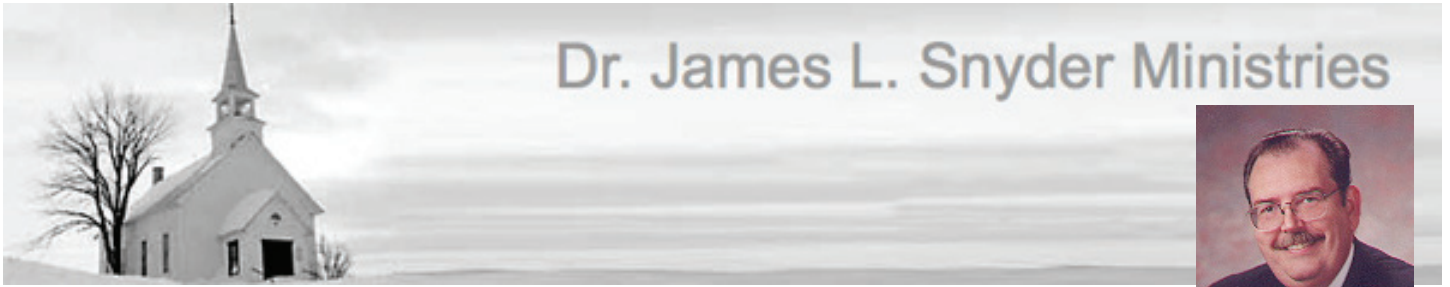
I participated in a roundtable on Thursday with my colleagues from the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to discuss inflation's impact on infrastructure and transportation costs. A hot topic of the conversation was President Biden's infrastructure bill. Because of massive spending on other Administration priorities, this bill will not create the level of impact on our nation's infrastructure as Biden had hoped due to the rising cost of supplies and the eroding value of the dollar. But the answer is not spending more money.

Inflationary pressure from poor decisions in Washington weighs on almost every aspect of America's economy.

We need practical solutions that abide by the laws of supply and demand. Solutions like my bill, the Ocean Shipping Reform Act, year-round E15, and increasing domestic energy production will ease the burden of inflation over time—for police departments, schools, infrastructure projects, and American citizens.

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Fool Me Once and You Will Be the Fool

Recently, the A/C company we use came and did their yearly inspection. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage took them around to the places that needed inspection. Everything turned out to be quite well and no problems.

That got me thinking of what happened many years ago with another company that did our A/C work. At the time, we didn't know any company in that industry so we had to take some company that we did not know that much about, which is usually not a good idea.

The first company thought they knew exactly what they would do and how they would do it. They had no idea they had to deal with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. They were in for a lesson in customer service.

I remember the first day they arrived, I introduced them to my wife and told them that she would oversee this inspection. One guy laughed as he looked at me, and then looked at the other guy; both laughed and said, "This is our expertise. We'll take charge right here."

That was when I had an opportunity to laugh. I knew what was coming, and I also knew they had no idea what was coming.

My job was to turn the situation over to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and then excuse myself to my office. Then, of course, I ensured I was within listening distance of what would happen.

My wife said, "If you follow me, I will take you to where you need to begin."

The one guy laughed and said, "Ma'am, you don't know what you're doing; this is our job, we'll take it from here."

It was all I could do to keep from laughing hysterically out loud.

"This is my house, and you will do exactly as I say." Then, with both hands on her hips, she gave them her infamous stare.

The only thing I regretted was not recording this for future entertainment. These guys thought they could boss her around because The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage was a woman. The only thing I could think of was these guys were bachelors. Only a bachelor could entertain such a crazy idea.

"Okay," my wife said, "you either come where I tell you or get out of my house." She said it in such a way that even those two stooges understood exactly what she was saying.

She then took them to the first place to check the A/C unit, very solemnly following her to the first point.

They checked it out, and then she took them to the rest of those points for their inspection.

Then they told my wife they needed to go out to their truck and put together their estimate of our A/C inspection.

They were outside for about half an hour, then came in with their estimate and handed it to my wife. She looked at it, then looked back at them and said, "What is this all about?"

"Those are the things," the one guy said very seriously, "that need to be replaced on your unit."

I don't quite remember, but I think it was over \$1,000 that they had added up.

Unfortunately for them, they thought their job was done.

"I do not think any of this is necessary." She said very seriously.

They looked at her and were not smiling. One of them said, "Ma'am, what do you mean?"

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"All this stuff you want to replace is unnecessary for our unit." She paused for a while and then said, "There is nothing wrong with our A/C unit. This is just a yearly checkup that we already paid."

They looked at each other, and then looked back at my wife not knowing what to say.

She looked at the estimate sheet they gave her and said, "Which one of these items needs to be replaced?"

Then she said, "This A/C unit is only a year old. There is no reason that any of it needs to be replaced within a year."

They really didn't have much to say at this point because they were beginning to see who they were up against.

"We'll take this to our manager for him to look at, and he will get back to you tomorrow."

They picked up their tools and escaped the parsonage as quickly as possible. Actually, they were escaping The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage to be truthful.

I must say it was one of my better days, and I enjoyed every moment of it almost as much as an Apple Fritter. But, as far as I remember, that manager never got back to us about all the stuff they wanted to replace in our A/C unit.

My wife found another company to service our A/C unit. It took her a while to find a company that she could trust. Finally she did.

As I was reflecting on all of this I couldn't help but think of what Solomon said in, Proverbs 18:2-3 – "A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself. When the wicked cometh, then cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach."

I have found myself acting like a fool in many regards but I have tried to discipline myself in getting away from those foolish ideas. With God's help, I have been delighting in understanding. I'm not there yet, but I am progressing day by day.

EARTHTALK ™



Oil companies have made big strides when it comes to embracing clean energy, but they're still holding up the transition to a greener future. Credit: Pexels.com.

Dear EarthTalk: Are oil companies actually taking steps to cut emissions overall or are their claims mostly just “greenwashing”?

– J.B.S., Waukesha, WI

It's no secret that the climate crisis is intensifying and the world is looking for solutions. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stated in its latest report that we are facing a “code red” for humanity if we are unable to make substantive changes. According to the IPCC we must cut our carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in half by 2030 in order to secure a livable future. Even though there has been a push for emissions reduction, global emissions are not showing signs of declining.

As top contributors of pollution, oil companies are under a microscope. In response to increased pressure, many have begun to make promises that they are working towards being part of the solution. The scientific journal PLOS One reports that major oil companies are using terms like “climate,” “low-carbon” and “transition” more frequently in their reports and claim that they are striving to go “carbon neutral.”

Carbon neutral is as much of an oxymoron as there can be when applied to oil companies, which begs the question: How do they plan to accomplish this goal? One way they are trying to achieve net-zero emissions is by investing in nature-based carbon credits. Essentially, they are pledging money to plant trees that absorb the CO₂ equivalent of the output of their company.

While this solution seems simple enough, common criticisms of oil companies' responses are that net-zero promises are solely based on facility operations and not on the fuel sales themselves; additionally, oil companies have continued to invest in more acreage for the express purpose of extracting more oil—thereby showing their true priorities. Researchers at Tohoku University and Kyoto University conclude that transitioning to clean energy is not occurring because investments and actions by oil companies simply do not match the public promises they are making.

It's important to understand that nature-based credits come with complications. It takes years for trees to mature so it's often unclear how much CO₂ they'll absorb. In addition, the lifespan of these trees is not a guarantee either: With increasingly warm and dry conditions, there is an increased likelihood that these trees could die due to drought or fire, in which case the carbon offset becomes worthless.

So, are oil companies simply greenwashing? Some have made minor efforts but it is not nearly enough. That being said, it is important to know how we as individuals can still make a difference. Divesting from oil companies will help reduce the amount of money going towards these polluters. Even if you are not giving money directly to oil companies, your money can indirectly exacerbate the problem. Doing your due diligence to make sure that your bank is not funding oil companies along with other investments in your portfolio can make a world of difference. Reallocating money to make sure you are investing in a clean energy future will help to take the fate of our planet out of the hands of big oil companies.

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South Dakota COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

1569

Active Cases

3,857
+558

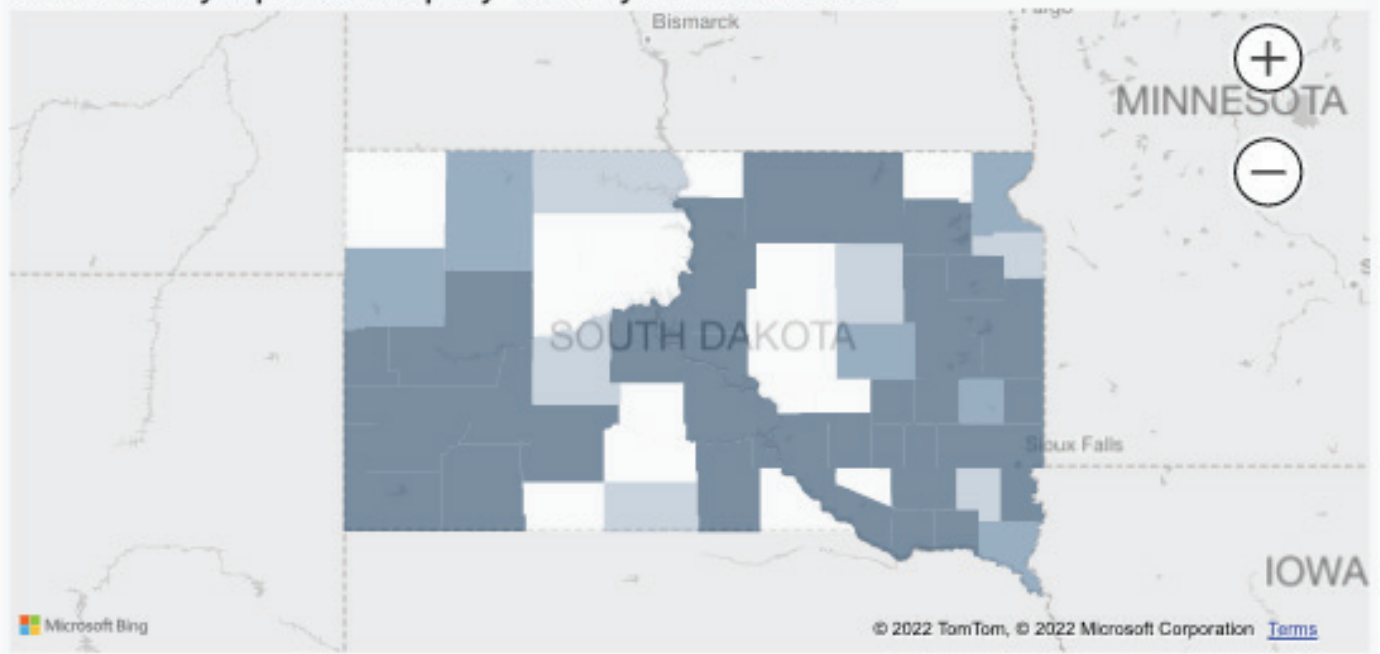
Recovered Cases

240,472

Currently Hospitalized

89

Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread Low Moderate Substantial High

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

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

Total Confirmed and Probable Cases

247,274

Total Tests

2,243,373

Deaths Among Cases

2,945

Ever Hospitalized

11,141

Percent of State Population with at least 1 Dose**

74%

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Brown County COVID-19 Report

New Confirmed and Probable Cases

73

Active Cases

148
+45

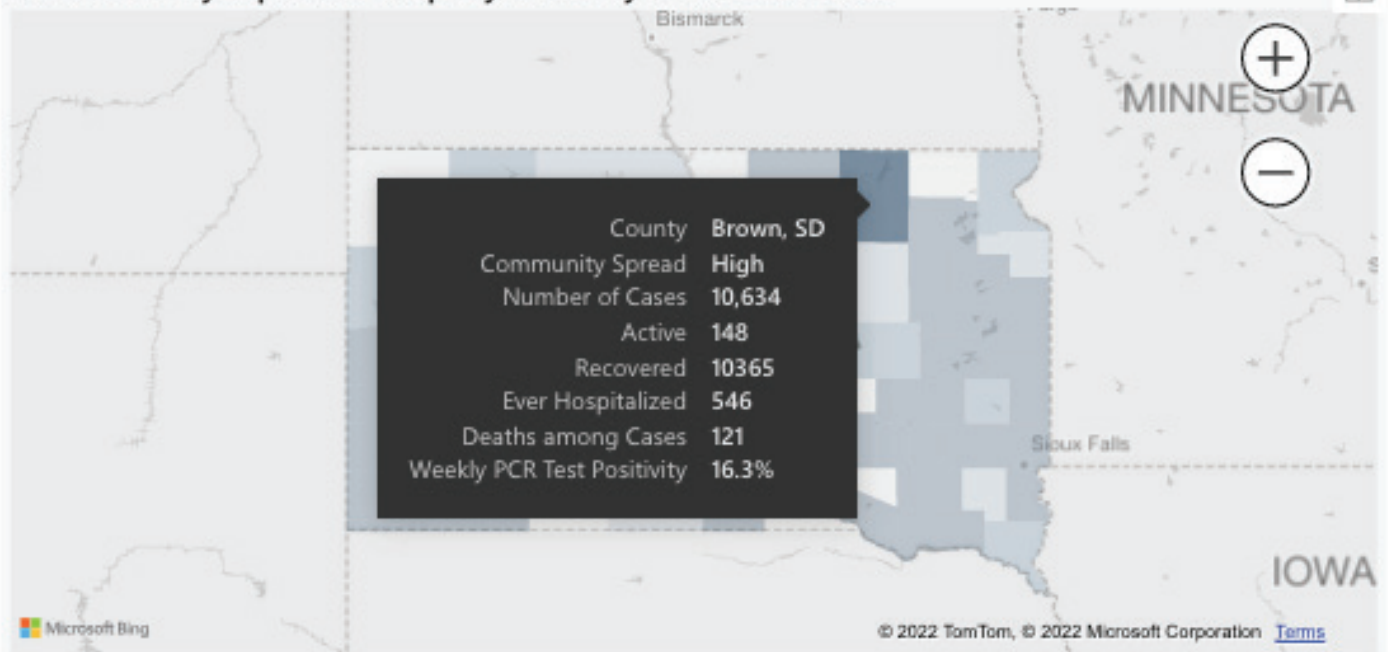
Recovered Cases

10,365

Currently Hospitalized

89

Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread Low Moderate Substantial High

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

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

Total Confirmed and Probable Cases

10,634

Total Tests

107,050

Deaths Among Cases

121

Ever Hospitalized

546

Percent of State Population with at least 1 Dose**

74%

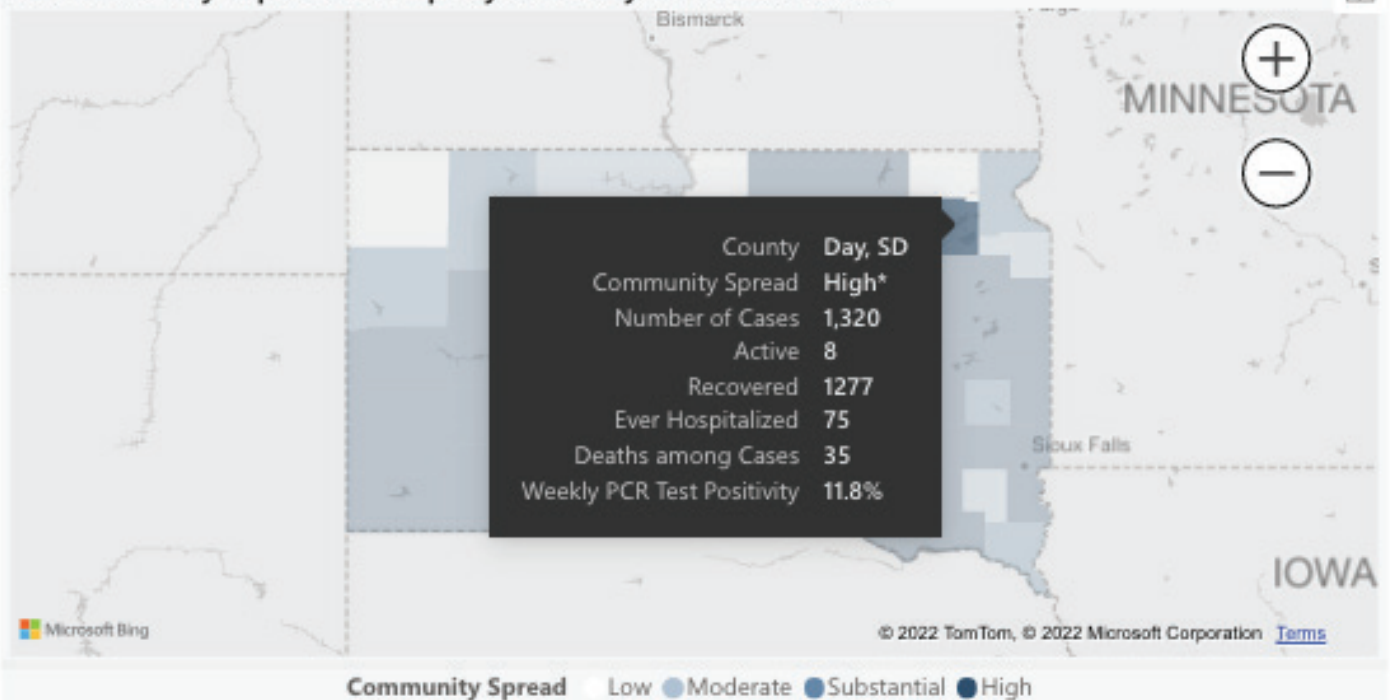
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Day County COVID-19 Report



Community Spread Map by County of Residence



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

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



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Ever Hospitalized

11,141

03/07/2020 - 07/11/2022

Currently Hospitalized

89
+23

VARIANT CASES OF COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

COVID-19 Variant	# of Cases	# of Cases - Last 3 Months
Delta (B.1.617.2 & AY lineages)	1,720	151
Omicron (B.1.1.529 & BA lineages)	1,305	148
Alpha (B.1.1.7)	176	3
Omicron (BA.2)	135	123
Gamma (P.1)	4	1
Beta (B.1.351)	2	2

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Hospitalizations	# of Deaths Among Cases
Male	116,148	5,814	1,610
Female	131,126	5,327	1,335

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range with Years	# of Cases	# of Hospitalizations	# of Deaths Among Cases
0-9 years	16,583	154	3
10-19 years	29,366	174	2
20-29 years	43,043	594	14
30-39 years	41,649	835	53
40-49 years	34,411	974	88
50-59 years	31,705	1,496	226
60-69 years	26,642	2,250	477
70-79 years	14,398	2,375	691
80+ years	9,477	2,289	1,391

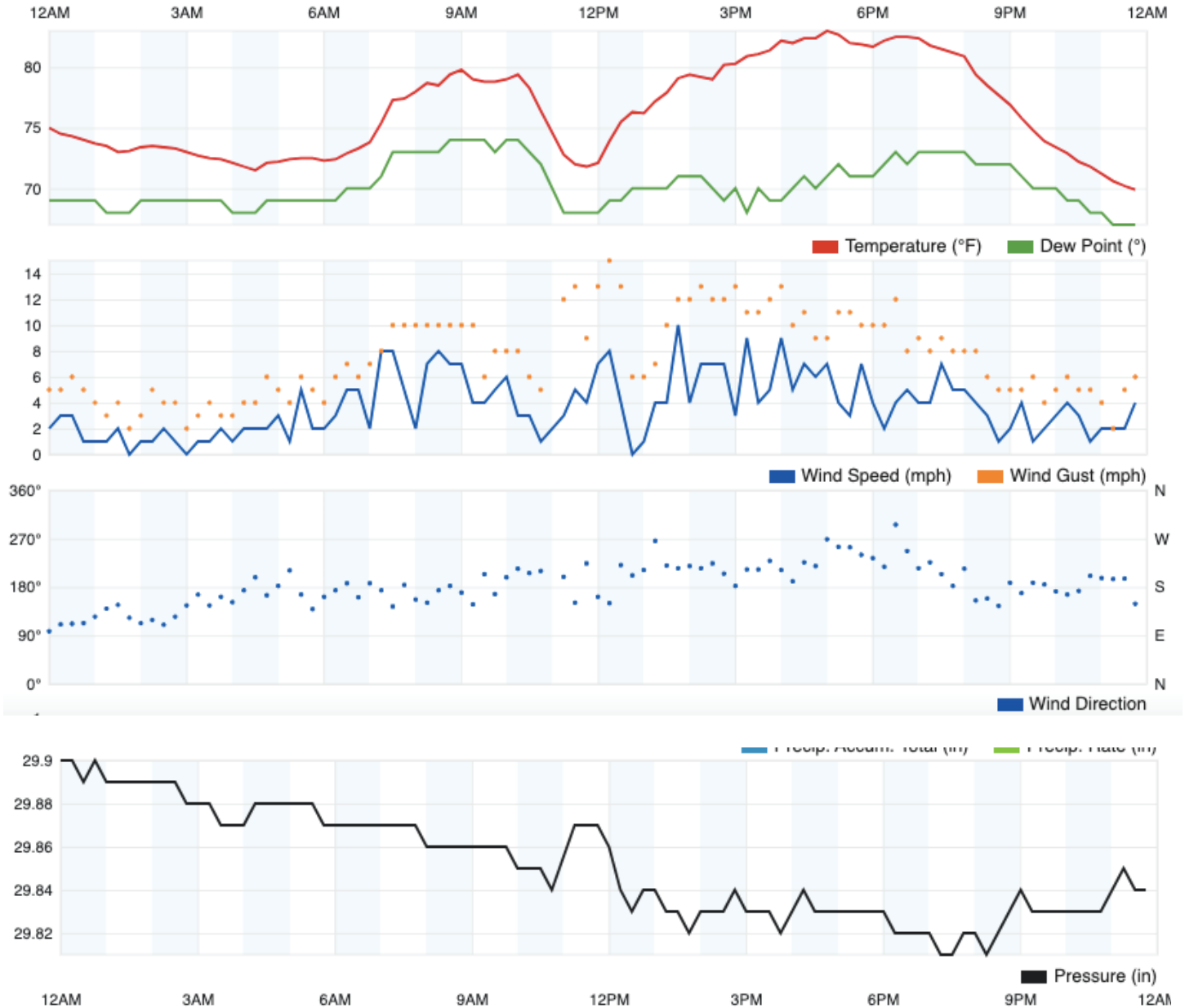
RACE/ETHNICITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Race/Ethnicity	# of Cases	# of Hospitalizations	# of Deaths
Asian / Pacific Islander	3,438	110	20
Black	6,063	209	22
Hispanic	10,576	355	39
Native American	31,135	1,924	445
Other	2,074	59	13
Unknown	4,980	72	20
White	189,008	8,412	2,386

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



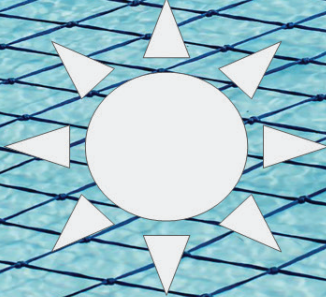

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Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
				
Patchy Dense Fog then Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny then Sunny and Breezy	Slight Chance T-storms	Sunny and Breezy
High: 92 °F	Low: 68 °F	High: 98 °F	Low: 73 °F	High: 88 °F

July 17, 2022
2:01 AM

Pool Weather Incoming



Today
Mostly Sunny. Highs in the 90s

Tonight
Mostly Clear. Lows 60s to near 70°

Monday
Mostly Sunny & Hot. Highs near 100°

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

It is going to turn hotter for the first part of this week, with temperatures near or exceeding 100° on Monday. #sdwx #mnwx

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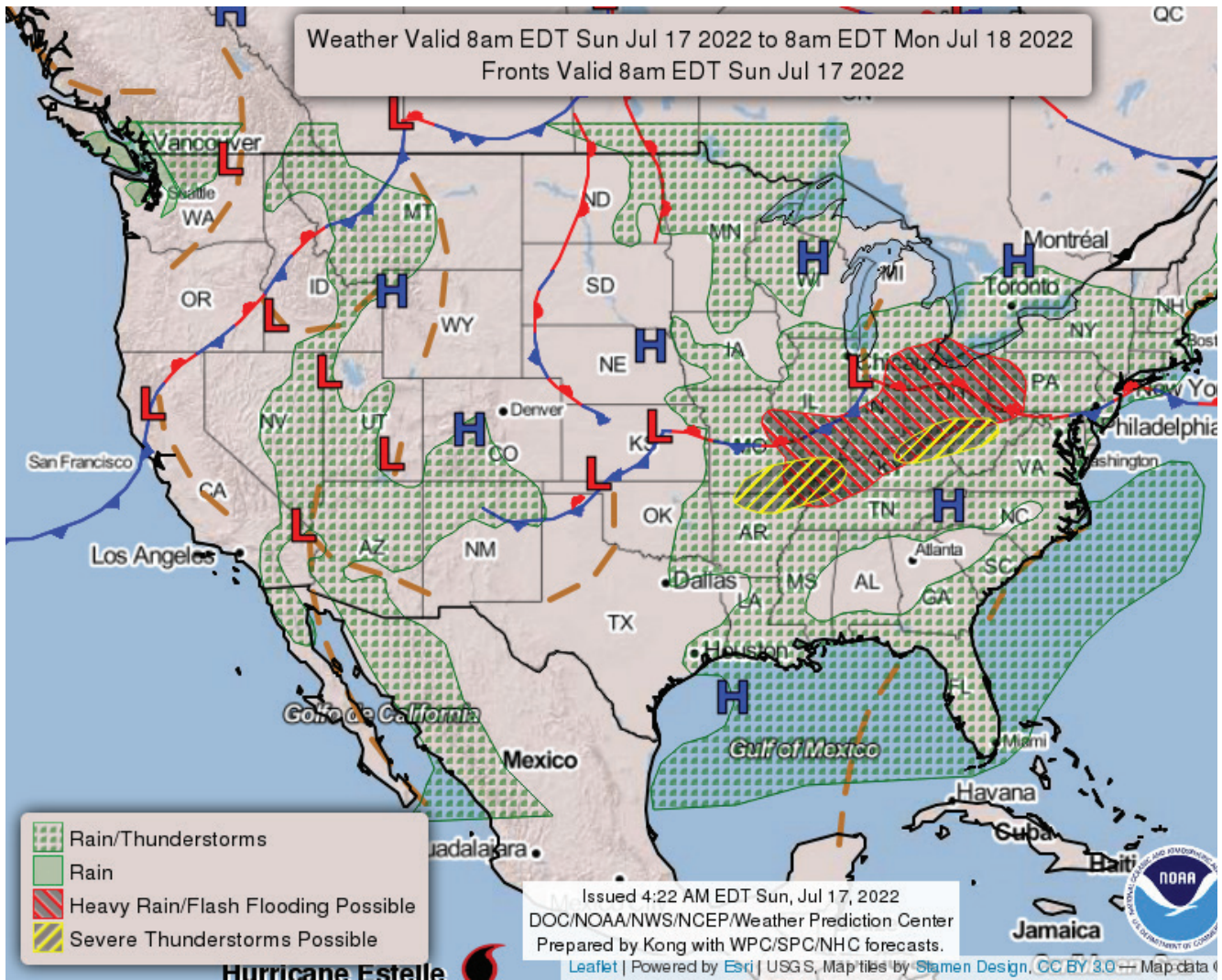
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 83 °F at 4:57 PM
Low Temp: 70 °F at 11:56 PM
Wind: 15 mph at 12:10 PM
Precip: 0.00

Day length: 15 hours, 19 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 111 in 1936
Record Low: 44 in 1895
Average High: 85°F
Average Low: 60°F
Average Precip in July.: 1.90
Precip to date in July.: 2.25
Average Precip to date: 12.91
Precip Year to Date: 13.83
Sunset Tonight: 9:18:13 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:59:58 AM



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Today in Weather History

July 17, 1985: An F1 tornado touched down, ten miles east of Raymond, in Clark County, destroying two cattle sheds and damaged several buildings. A garage was moved off its foundation. Heavy rains, high winds and hail up to 2.75 inches in diameter produced considerable damage to farm buildings between Raymond and Garden City. Rainfall amounts of three to six inches caused additional crop losses from erosion. In the city of Clark, some basement flooding occurred, and water ran across Highway 212 west of Clark. Some storm total rainfall amounts include; 3.77 inches in Clark; 3.15 in Clear Lake; 2.85 in Redfield; and 2.31 inches in 3 miles NE of Raymond. This thunderstorm began near Kennebec, in Lyman County, where winds gusted to 80 mph, and small hail was observed. A few trees were uprooted, and numerous branches were downed. Several car windows were broke from the winds and small hail. A half inch of rain fell in ten minutes, filling ditches. High winds continued into Spink County where extensive damage to a farm estate east of Redfield occurred. Heavy rains of three to five inches caused road and basement flooding. A damage path from wind and hail continued to Clear Lake, to the south of Gary and into Minnesota to the east of Canby. Winds gusted to 70 mph, and hail ranged from one to almost two inches in diameter. In Clear Lake, four businesses were damaged, and power poles were downed. One building had the fiberglass siding and roofing torn off. A second building had a metal roof blown off. Highway 77, south of Clear Lake was impassable due to hail on the ground.

July 17, 1993: Torrential rains of three to seven inches fell in Grant County resulting in the overflow of Lake Farley into the city of Milbank. The dam held, but an emergency dike broke on the evening of the 17th releasing water into residential streets and a trailer court in Milbank. The broken barrier forced the evacuation of at least 200 people. Damage included 120 mobile homes, and 26 houses were affected by floodwaters. Also, a man died when his pickup truck hit a washout on a gravel road south of Milbank and was swept into the floodwaters of a nearby creek.

July 17, 2010: Several supercell thunderstorms moving southeast across the region brought large hail up to softball size along with damaging winds to parts of northeast South Dakota. Numerous homes, vehicles, along with thousands of acres of crops were destroyed. Hail up to the size of softballs occurred near Westport, in Brown County. Golf ball to baseball size hail fell at the National Weather Service office causing damage to several vehicles. The rear window was broken out of one of the vehicles. A supercell thunderstorm was tracking southeast across Clark County produced anywhere from a quarter to baseball size hail along with wind gusts over 70 mph from Crocker to Clark to Naples to Vienna. The large hail and winds caused extensive damage to homes, outbuildings, vehicles, and thousands of acres of crops. Many trees and gardens were also damaged or destroyed by the hail and high winds. The storm entered western Hamlin County. Winds measured at 90 mph in Hayti along with some large hail broke numerous windows out of several homes and vehicles, damaged several roofs, and downed many trees. A concrete silo was also destroyed. The highway shop lost half of its roof along with severe damage to the ceiling of a trucking business in Hayti.

1942: A great flood developed over the Smethport area in Pennsylvania, resulting in an estimated 34.50 inches of rain in just one day, including 30.60 inches in only six hours, setting a world record. The official observing site, Smethport Highway Shed, reported only 13.08 inches for the entire month because the flood consumed the gauge after 6.68" of rain. The total results from the substitution of the officially estimated amount for the amount measured.

1981: Severe thunderstorm winds ripped a 10,000 square foot hole in a 90-foot high pavilion at Sea World in Orlando, FL. The storm panicked a crowd of 550 tourists. One death occurred due to injury and heart attack, and 15 people were injured. The canopy was made of fiberglass and Teflon, designed to withstand 120 mph winds.

1987: Slow moving thunderstorms caused flooding on the Guadalupe River in Texas resulting in tragic loss of life. A bus and van leaving a youth summer camp stalled near the rapidly rising river, just west of the town of Comfort, or about 50 mile northwest of San Antonio. The powerful surge of water swept away 43 persons, mostly teenagers. Ten drowned in the floodwaters. Most of the others were rescued from treetops by helicopter.

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GOD FORGETS NO ONE

Birthdays and anniversaries are special days and times in the lives of most people. We look forward to being remembered when a friend sends a card or letter, phone call or bouquet of flowers, a special meal or perhaps even a cake.

Poor Mrs. Hattie Hollowell spent three years, four months, and sixteen days in a New York jail, and no one seemed to know she was there. Fortunately, someone started an investigation for some reason and in the process discovered her. As a result of the search, she came to be known as "The Forgotten Woman." When asked, a judge blamed the tragedy on the "slipshod work" of an attorney. "Instead of helping her, he hurt her," he said.

The Psalmist wrote that "All creatures look to You to give them their food at the proper time." Our Psalmist wants us to know that our God cares for us and will, at the right time, provide for our every need. But there is a very interesting statement about God and our relationship to Him in this verse that is completed in the following verse: "When You open Your hand they are satisfied with good things."

Notice that "At the proper time," "He will open His hand," and "satisfy us with good things." We are to be completely dependent on God. There is His time, His hand and good things. Often, we try to force the hand of God: We want what we want when we want it. But that is not how He works. He knows what we need and when we need it. We must wait upon Him for what is best for us.

Prayer: Help us Lord, to wait patiently on You, trusting Your love and your heart, knowing that You are doing what is best for us - always. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: All creatures look to You to give them their food at the proper time. When You open Your hand they are satisfied with good things. Psalm 104:27-28

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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
06/20/2022 Ladies Invitational at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration 10am Start
06/25/2022 How can we... "Love Groton"? United Methodist Church 9:30am
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)
07/20/2022 Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar 11am-1pm at the Groton Legion
07/21/2022 Pro Am Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/22/2022 Ferney Open Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start
Moonlight Swim at the Swimming Pool 9-11pm for 9th grade to age 20
07/27/2022 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
No Date Set: 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)
No Date Set: 6th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3:30-5pm
09/11/2022 Couples Sunflower Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10 a.m.
09/02-04: Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
10/01/2022 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
10/07/2022 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
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
No Date Set: Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-12pm
01/29/2023 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)

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News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

17-24-26-29-31

(seventeen, twenty-four, twenty-six, twenty-nine, thirty-one)

Estimated jackpot: \$119,000

Lotto America

07-11-28-30-49, Star Ball: 1, ASB: 2

(seven, eleven, twenty-eight, thirty, forty-nine; Star Ball: one; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$17,160,000

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: 530,000,000

Powerball

03-18-23-32-57, Powerball: 21, Power Play: 2

(three, eighteen, twenty-three, thirty-two, fifty-seven; Powerball: twenty-one; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$89,000,000

Missouri swimmer likely infected with amoeba in Iowa dies

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — A Missouri resident who was infected with a rare brain-eating amoeba that likely happened after swimming in a southwestern Iowa lake has died, health officials said Friday.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services said the patient died due to primary amebic meningoencephalitis, a rare and usually fatal infection caused by the naegleria fowleri amoeba.

The death was first reported by the Des Moines Register.

Health officials said they believe the parasite was contracted at Lake of Three Fires near Bedford, Iowa, about 120 miles (193 kilometers) north of Kansas City. The name and age of the patient will not be released, officials said.

Iowa officials closed the Lake of Three Fires State Park near Taylor County as a precaution on July 7. The beach remains closed.

People are infected when water containing the amoeba enters the body through the nose, usually while victims are swimming or diving in lakes and rivers, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention officials say. The fatality rate is more than 97%, according to CDC statistics.

The infections have primarily occurred in southern-tier states. It is the first case discovered in Iowa since infections were first confirmed in 1962 and possibly ever, the CDC said.

Among bordering states, Minnesota has had two cases and Missouri one, with none reported in Illinois, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wisconsin. Kansas has confirmed one case.

Sanford plans to appeal over affidavits in child porn probe

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Billionaire banker and philanthropist T. Denny Sanford plans to ask the South Dakota Supreme Court to bar the release of affidavits used to issue search warrants into a child pornography investigation, his lawyer said Friday.

The notice came after Judge James Power refused to first release the affidavits to Sanford's legal team before they became public. Sanford attorney Stacy Hegge argued they couldn't evaluate whether to appeal unless they reviewed the documents, the Sioux Falls Argus Leader reported.

The Argus Leader and ProPublica have been working to get the documents for two years.

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After Sanford's lawyers said they would meet Monday's deadline to appeal, Power followed up on an earlier promise to keep the documents sealed until Sanford has exhausted all legal options. He has not been charged.

State investigators in 2019 began searching Sanford's email account, as well as his cellular and internet service providers, for possible possession of child pornography after his accounts were flagged by a technology firm.

The South Dakota attorney general's office declined to file charges against Sanford following the probe, saying it found no prosecutable offenses within the state's jurisdiction.

The 86-year-old Sanford is worth an estimated \$3.4 billion. He made a fortune as the founder of First Premier Bank in South Dakota, which is known for issuing high-interest credit cards to those with poor credit.

He has donated greatly to the hospital that carries his name, Sanford Health, which is based in Sioux Falls and has major medical centers in Fargo and Bismarck, North Dakota, and Bemidji, Minnesota.

Experts to comb site of plane crash in northern Greece

By COSTAS KANTOURIS, DEMETRIS NELLAS and JOVANA GEC Associated Press

PALATIOCHORI, Greece (AP) — Experts were poised to investigate the site of a plane crash in northern Greece Sunday to determine whether any dangerous chemicals or explosive cargo remains.

The An-12 cargo plane smashed into fields between two villages late Saturday. Local residents reported seeing a fireball and hearing explosions for two hours after the crash. A plume of white smoke was still rising from the front end of the plane on Sunday morning.

Serbian Defense Minister Nebojsa Stefanovic told a news conference Sunday that all eight crewmembers were killed. He said the plane was carrying 11.5 tons of Serbian-made mortar ammunition to Bangladesh, which was the buyer. It had taken off from the Serbian city of Nis and had been due to make a stopover in Amman, Jordan.

The plane was operated by Ukrainian cargo carrier Meridian, and the Ukrainian consul in Thessaloniki, who has arrived at the crash site, told local officials that the crew were all Ukrainian.

"These were illuminating mortar mines and training (mines). ... This flight had all necessary permissions in accordance with international regulations," Stefanovic said.

The plane crashed shortly before 11 p.m., about 40 kilometers (25 miles) west of Kavala International Airport. Minutes before, the pilot of the plane had told air traffic controllers that there was a problem with one of his engines and that he had to make an emergency landing. He was directed to Kavala airport but never made it there.

The plane is a Soviet-era four-engine turboprop cargo carrier.

Drone footage shows that small fragments are all that is left from the plane. Firefighters who rushed to the scene in the night were prevented from reaching the crash site by smoke and an intense smell which they feared might be toxic.

Nearby residents were told to keep their windows shut all night, not to leave their homes and to wear masks. Authorities said they did not know if there were dangerous chemicals on the plane, including those contained in batteries.

A special army unit that looks for nuclear, biological and chemical substances will comb the site, but is not expected to arrive before 1 p.m. (1000 GMT).

The fire service has cordoned off the area at a radius of about 400 meters.

The mayor of the municipality of Paggai, to which the two villages close to the crash belong, has banned vehicle movement on nearby roads.

'I worry about this place': A day in Ukraine's Donetsk

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

POKROVSK, Ukraine (AP) — On the morning of Day 142 of the war in Ukraine, the mayor of a community slipping closer to the front line stands in sneakers and blazer near the newest soldier's grave.

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Aside from the gravedigger, Ruslan Trebushkin is the last to toss dirt on the casket, which had been closed. He worries how much of the body was left, how much the war took away. This is his 10th military funeral since Russia's invasion in February. Funerals were televised to give the soldiers recognition until the recruitment office and families asked to stop it "for humanity reasons," he says. It had become too much.

Here, in the path of Russia's invasion, the city of Pokrovsk and other emptying communities in eastern Ukraine's Donetsk region live every day at war. There's the obvious conflict, with tanks and ambulances snaking along the region's patched two-lane roads and smoke rising beyond sunflower fields.

And then there are the personal battles, the internal front lines.

Even as the mayor places a handful of roses at the grave and comforts the mother who wailed, "My son, why did you abandon me?" he wrestles with a responsibility that few residents have likely contemplated.

He must be ready when the military orders the remaining residents to leave, and as mayor he would be among the last to go. The uncertainty is unnerving: The upheaval could happen in "a week, a month, two months, depending on the front line movement," he says. Yet, he is calm.

At midday of Day 142 of the war in Ukraine, a humanitarian coordinator in the city of Selydove paces in the echoing, Soviet-era Palace of Culture as scores of residents pick up plastic bags containing food rations.

Zitta Topilina says the relief effort has served thousands of people, including some who have fled Russian-occupied areas such as the port of Mariupol. She believes the stories from people escaping "the other side" have been terrifying enough to sway any residents who might have sympathized with Russia out of nostalgia.

She is one of the thousands of Donetsk residents who are being urged by authorities to evacuate while they can. Unlike many people, she has a relative elsewhere in Ukraine who is able to host her. But she can't bring herself to go.

"I am 61, and they say you cannot plant old trees somewhere else," she says. "I belong here, and so do many other people. We believe that Ukraine is ours, and we are going to die here."

In a quiet side room of the Palace of Culture, with sunlight filtering through the drawn pink curtains, the war brings her to tears. It is taking Ukraine's youth, she says. Once the old die out, "there will be nothing."

But she must put such thoughts aside and help the people waiting.

On the afternoon of Day 142 of the war in Ukraine, soldiers roll up to a gas station in the city of Konstantinovka in a bullet-riddled van. The back windows are gone. The exhaust system is broken. A plastic skull sits on the windshield, facing the road.

For all the days of cluster bombs and other dangers he experiences on an undisclosed front line, one of the soldiers, Roman, in sunglasses and fingerless leather gloves, is playful. On his mobile phone, he shows photos of a blast crater with a football placed inside it. "For perspective," he says.

Perspective also comes with the bent ring hanging from his keychain. It is his wife's. At home are four small children, all under 10.

Roman hopes to keep the war far from them. "I would like them to be safe," he says.

He believes support from the West is helping. But he and his buddies need more so they can return home for good.

"I would like a peaceful sky over our heads," he says before piling back into the van to return to the front. "That's it."

On the evening of Day 142 of the war in Ukraine, a man stands at the counter in a boarded-up restaurant in the city of Kramatorsk. Bjork is playing on the speakers.

Bohdan thinks his is one of just three restaurants still operating in a city once home to more than 150,000 people. He says he believes it's better to be here than sitting at home, doing little but listening to artillery fire.

Several times he has almost fled. He was speechless for two days after more than 50 people were killed at the train station in an April attack. One customer, a soldier, asked him why he's still here.

Bohdan's grandmother and father don't want to leave. And his grandfather is essentially missing after his village near Lyman — just roughly 40 kilometers (25 miles) away — was overtaken by Russian forces

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in April. Bodhan hasn't been able to reach him since a phone call shortly before the Russians arrived. The last thing his grandfather said was that he needed to stock up on wood and other supplies to survive.

Bodhan wonders what will happen if his own city is taken too.

He said he believes in the Ukrainian forces, but "I worry about this place."

Minutes later, less than a kilometer away from the restaurant, Russia's latest rocket attack carves a crater in the Square of Peace.

Ouch! Actor Cranston hit by liner at All-Star celeb softball

By JOLENE LATIMER Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Bryan Cranston was hoping to get a hit in the All-Star Celebrity Softball game at Dodger Stadium.

Instead, the "Breaking Bad" actor got hit.

Cranston was struck in the right shoulder by a line drive off the bat of Grammy Award winner Anthony Ramos as they took batting practice in side-by-side makeshift cages outside the ballpark Saturday night.

The 66-year-old Cranston doubled over for a couple minutes, then headed to his nearby trailer.

"It's definitely going to bruise," Cranston said after recovering. "I might be more of a cheerleader in this game."

The Tony, Emmy and Olivier award winner later felt well enough to play on the field at Dodger Stadium. He took a called third strike and feigned an argument with the umpire.

Cranston played for the Los Angeles team, which lost to Brooklyn 15-13. Former San Francisco Giants star Hunter Pence hit two home runs for Brooklyn and was repeatedly booed by the LA crowd.

Best known for his role as Walter White on TV's "Breaking Bad," Cranston wore an Albuquerque Isotopes hat in the scene where White first meets lawyer Saul Goodman -- now the title character of the spinoff series "Better Call Saul."

Cranston has appeared at several games for the Triple-A Isotopes, and he and "Breaking Bad" costar Aaron Paul are scheduled to throw a ceremonial first pitch there July 30.

The Major League Baseball All-Star Game is Tuesday at Dodger Stadium.

Cargo plane operated by Ukraine carrier crashes in Greece

By COSTAS KANTOURIS and DEMETRIS NELLAS Associated Press

PALATIOCHORI, Greece (AP) — An Antonov cargo plane operated by a Ukrainian airline crashed Saturday near the city of Kavala in northern Greece, authorities said. Local residents reported seeing a fireball and hearing explosions for two hours after the crash.

Greek Civil Aviation authorities said the flight was heading from Serbia to Jordan. The An-12, a Soviet-built turboprop aircraft, was operated by cargo carrier Meridian.

Greek media reported there were eight people on the plane and that it was carrying 12 tons of "dangerous materials," mostly explosives. But local officials said they had no specific information on the cargo and provided varying numbers of people on board.

As a precaution because of a strong smell emanating from the crash site, a coordinating committee made up of municipal, police and fire service officials told inhabitants of the two localities closest to the crash site to keep their windows shut all night, to not leave their homes and to wear masks. Authorities say they do not know if there were dangerous chemicals on the plane, including those contained in batteries.

Greece's Civil Aviation authority said the pilot managed to alert authorities about a problem in one of the plane's engines and he was given the choice of landing in either the Thessaloniki or Kavala airports, and he opted for Kavala, which was closer, saying that he had to make an emergency landing.

Communication with the plane ceased almost immediately afterwards. The plane crashed about 40 kilometers (25 miles) west of the airport.

"We were hearing explosions until a few minutes ago," Filippos Anastassiadis, mayor of the municipality of Paggaios, told the Associated Press a little over an hour after the accident. "I am about 300 meters

from the site of the crash.”

One of Anastassiadis’ deputies told state broadcaster ERT that explosions were heard for two hours following the crash.

Locals reported seeing a fireball and a plume of smoke before the crash.

ERT reported that army and explosive experts were en route to the site, located on farmland close to two villages that are part of the Paggaiio municipality. But they are not expected to start working before dawn. Experts from Greece’s Atomic Energy Commission will join them.

The fire service has cordoned off the area at a radius of about 400 meters. The cordoned-off area will be expanded at dawn, fire service officials said.

Ukraine on her mind as high jumper goes for gold at worlds

By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer

EUGENE, Ore. (AP) — It took her three days by car to escape from Ukraine after the war started. Champion high jumper Yaroslava Mahuchikh can only guess at how long it will take to get back.

On her way out, Mahuchikh heard gunfire and could sometimes see shells raining down miles away. Though her hometown of Dnipro was far from the front lines of the Russian invasion, she could never shake the fear that when she said goodbye to her mom and dad and grandfather and sister, it might have been for the last time.

“When a war is going on,” Mahuchikh said, “it’s highly complicated to say that any city is safe.”

Four months after that harrowing trip to cross the border in Serbia, the 20-year-old is at the track and field world championships, a world away in Eugene, Oregon.

She easily made it through qualifying Saturday, and is a favorite to win a gold medal Tuesday in part because her main rival, three-time world champion Maria Lasitskene, is Russian and not allowed to compete because of the war.

World Athletics President Seb Coe said that given the difficulties the 22 Ukrainians competing in worlds have endured simply to make it to this point, it would be “inconceivable” to think the Russians would’ve been allowed here to go up against them.

Mahuchikh agrees. In a series of in-person interviews and email exchanges with The Associated Press, she said that though the relationship between herself and Lasitskene was always cordial, it was never warm. Now, it might never be repaired.

“She wrote that she can’t compete because she’s Russian,” Mahuchikh said of Lasitskene’s recent open letter that criticized Coe and International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach. “And our people die because they’re Ukrainian. I don’t want to see, at the track, killers. Because it’s really killers, a lot of sportsmen who support this war.”

There are some Russian athletes who have backed the war, led by a handful of gymnasts including Ivan Kuliak, who wore a “Z” symbol in support of the war while standing only steps away from a Ukrainian athlete on a medal podium at a recent World Cup event. Shortly after, gymnastics officials stripped the medal from Kuliak and suspended him for a year.

Other Russians have promoted peace, including tennis player Daniil Medvedev, who was barred from competing at Wimbledon this year, and Alex Ovechkin, who plays for the NHL’s Washington Capitals.

In her letter, Lasitskene, who won last year’s Olympics to go along with her three straight world titles, commiserated with the plight of the Ukrainian athletes. They “are experiencing what no one human being should ever have to feel,” she wrote.

She also said keeping Russians out of sports did not stop the war “but on the contrary, it gave birth to a new one, around and inside the sports, which is impossible to contain.”

Missing in Lasitskene’s correspondence, Mahuchikh said, has been outreach to the Ukrainians themselves.

“Russia is an aggressor country that launched a full-scale invasion of my country,” she said. “Many coaches and athletes have gone to the Army to defend our country; some are in hot spots, and some are imprisoned or killed. Sports infrastructure in many cities is destroyed. We can’t train in our native country.”

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That Mahuchikh — or any of the Ukrainians on start lists this week at worlds — have made it to Eugene can fairly be seen as a triumph of persistence, logistics and an otherworldly ability to separate the day-to-day threat posed to their families and country from the day-to-day challenges an elite athlete must confront.

"They understand how important this is," Mahuchikh's coach, Tetiana Stepanova, told the AP through a translator. "They walk through the airport. People see their Ukrainian uniforms and they walk up to us and form their hands in the shape of a heart. It means a lot."

After her perilous trip to Serbia, Mahuchikh resumed training again and tried to make things feel normal. Her mother, sister and niece made it out of the country and into Germany.

"It's better for them there," Mahuchikh said. "We can stay in touch, and they can send me things, and I can relax and stay focused knowing that they're safe."

Her father and grandpa stayed in Dnipro, located about 250 miles southeast of the Kyiv. Mahuchikh said they're safe there for the time being.

For a time, she stayed in Dnipro, But after a few weeks, her regular job beckoned and she had to leave behind the trips to bring food and clothes to hospitals and shelters, and stopping at places around Dnipro to help animals "They cannot leave," she said.

She sends money to friends and family back home when she can. This summer, her life is spent toggling between a steady stream of news updates, underscored by constant worrying, and a training regimen that, at first, had all arrows pointed toward the world indoor championships in Belgrade in March.

By that point, policy had already been set regarding the Russians in sports. Bach said the IOC's recommendation was as much for Russians' safety as anything. Coe said the World Athletics decision, which also excluded athletes from Russian ally Belarus, was a fairness issue.

"It was made for from a very clear standpoint, and that was about the integrity of competition," he said. "It would have been inconceivable to have a world championships here with athletes from Belarus and Russia, two aggressive nations who have moved into an independent state."

Mahuchikh — who won bronze last year at the Tokyo Olympics and preceded that with wins at every junior level since 2017 — captured the gold medal at the indoor championships. It was about more than simply jumping high.

"I realized that on the track and jumping, I could show the power and strong spirit of the whole Ukrainian nation," she said. "I could show worldwide that we will fight until the end. Until we win."

Someday, Mahuchikh hopes to bring that gold medal back home. Maybe after Tuesday's final, she'll have two.

But there is no way to know when — or if — she'll return, or what her country will be like.

"It's so bad, and it's difficult mentally," she said. "But I believe we will win and we will come back to our lives. And we will always remember this period of time."

2 kids among 6 dead in Montana highway pileup, 8 others hurt

By STEFANIE DAZIO and SALLY HO Associated Press

Two children are among the six people who died in a Montana pileup after a Friday evening dust storm caused blackout conditions on Interstate 90, a major route in both Montana and the Western U.S.

Montana Highway Patrol Sgt. Jay Nelson said investigators so far have found no other factors that contributed to the pileup that also sent eight other injured people to hospitals.

"Everything is indicative of an isolated extreme weather event," Nelson said of the investigation, calling the crash among the worst he'd seen in 24 years with the state. "What could people do? It really was just panic."

The pileup was just west of Hardin, with additional ambulances called in from Billings to help. The identities of the dead and conditions of the survivors are not yet being released.

The crash was reported around 4:30 p.m., as 21 vehicles, including six commercial semi-trucks, lost control in the dust storm that was fueled by gusts topping 60 mph (97 kph), authorities said.

Nelson said there was zero visibility for a mile-long stretch during a peak summer traffic hour for those

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commuting home from work or traveling for outdoor recreation.

It took more than six hours to fully reopen the road.

"We had a lot of debris and complete chaos," Nelson said.

Gov. Greg Gianforte said on Twitter: "I'm deeply saddened by the news of a mass casualty crash near Hardin. Please join me in prayer to lift up the victims and their loved ones. We're grateful to our first responders for their service."

Montana Attorney General Austin Knudsen said in a statement that the Montana Highway Patrol, which he oversees, was investigating. "We will release more information as it becomes available and is appropriate out of respect of the lives lost and their loved ones.

A video from The Billings Gazette showed hundreds of tractor-trailers, campers and cars backed up for miles along the two eastbound lanes of the interstate.

Before the pileup, storms popped up in central southern Montana between 1 and 2 p.m. and slowly began moving east, said Nick Vertz, a National Weather Service meteorologist in Billings.

Those storms prompted a severe thunderstorm watch that covered Hardin and other parts of Montana from mid-afternoon until 9 p.m. Friday. Meteorologists forecasted the potential for isolated hail the size of a quarter, scattered gusts up to 75 mph (121 kph) and frequent lightning.

A so-called outflow — or a surge of wind that's produced by storms — flew about 30 miles (48 kilometers) ahead of the storms, Vertz said.

Winds picked up quickly around the time of the crash, according to readings at nearby Big Horn County Airport. A 40 mph gust (64 kph) was recorded about 15 minutes before the crash was reported and in less than an hour another burst of wind hit 64 (103 kph).

The wind easily picked up dust — a product of recent temperatures into the 90s and triple digits over the last week — and reduced visibility to less than 1/4 mile (0.4 kilometers).

"If they looked up in the sky while they're in Hardin, they probably didn't see much of what you'd think of for a thunderstorm cloud, maybe not even much at all," Vertz said. "It was just a surge of wind that kind of appeared out of nowhere."

Mexico's capture of drug kingpin could be signal to US

By MARÍA VERZA and MARK STEVENSON Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The United States' motivation to find infamous drug lord Rafael Caro Quintero was never in doubt — hence the \$20 million reward for information leading to his capture — there was less certainty about the commitment of Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who had made clear his lack of interest in pursuing drug lords.

Yet on Friday, three days after López Obrador and U.S. President Joe Biden met in the White House, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's most wanted target was in Mexican custody.

The man allegedly responsible for the murder of a DEA agent more than three decades ago was roused from the undergrowth by a bloodhound as Mexican marines closed in deep in the mountains of his native state of Sinaloa.

The arrest came at a heavy cost: Fourteen Mexican marines died and another was injured when a navy Blackhawk helicopter crashed during the operation. The navy said it appeared to have been an accident, with the cause under investigation.

Mexico's Attorney General's Office said in a statement late Friday that Caro Quintero was arrested for extradition to the U.S. and would be held at the maximum security Altiplano prison about 50 miles west of Mexico City.

DEA Administrator Anne Milgram celebrated the capture of a man especially despised by U.S. officials for the torture and murder of DEA agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena in 1985. "Our incredible DEA team in Mexico worked in partnership with Mexican authorities to capture and arrest Rafael Caro Quintero", she said in a message to the agency late Friday. "Today's arrest is the result of years of your blood, sweat, and tears."

Cooperation between the DEA and Mexico's marines had led to some of the highest-profile captures

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during previous administrations, but not under López Obrador, noted security analyst David Saucedo.

"It seems to me that in the private talks between President Joe Biden and Andrés Manuel (López Obrador) they surely agreed to turning over high-profile drug traffickers again, which had been suspended," Saucedo said.

Both presidents face domestic pressure to do more against drug traffickers. With Caro Quintero's arrest, "Narcos are being captured again and I believe that clearly it was what was in fact needed," Saucedo said.

U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Ken Salazar said in a statement Saturday that no U.S. personnel participated directly in the tactical operation that led to the capture of the drug lord. "The apprehension of Caro Quintero was exclusively conducted by the Mexican government."

Samuel González, who founded the organized crime office in Mexico's Attorney General's Office and now is a security analyst, said the capture may not have a major effect on the map of organized crime in Mexico, as Caro Quintero was not as powerful as decades ago, and it might even generate more violence in territories such as Sonora, at the US border.

But he said that to López Obrador's benefit, the arrest "shows evidence that there's no protection of capos" by his administration.

González believes Caro Quintero has long been a thorn in the bilateral relationship, but said that "without doubt" his capture was fruit of the recent negotiations in Washington.

"The Americans never stopped pressing for his arrest," González said.

U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland and Salazar expressed gratitude for Mexico's capture of the man blamed for killing Camarena — a case that brought a low point in U.S.-Mexico relations.

"This achievement is a testament to Mexico's determination to bring to justice someone who terrorized and destabilized Mexico during his time in the Guadalajara Cartel; and is implicated in the kidnapping, torture and murder of DEA agent Kiki Camarena," Salazar said in a statement late Friday.

Garland said the U.S. government would seek his immediate extradition.

"My hope is that with the capture of Caro Quintero, that that will mend a lot of tensions between the DEA and Mexico", said Mike Vigil, the DEA's former chief of international operations.

Mexico's navy and Attorney's General Office led the operation deep in the mountains that straddle the border between Sinaloa and Chihuahua states, many miles from any paved road. They found Caro Quintero, with help of "Max," hiding in brush in a place in Sinaloa called San Simon.

López Obrador said that the helicopter that crashed in the coastal city of Los Mochis had been supporting the operation against Caro Quintero. U.S. officials expressed condolences for the marines who died.

Caro Quintero came from Badiraguato, Sinaloa, the same township as Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, the former leader of the Sinaloa cartel, which formed later. Caro Quintero was one of the founders of the Guadalajara cartel and according to the DEA was one of the primary suppliers of heroin, cocaine and marijuana to the United States in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Caro Quintero had blamed Camarena for a raid on a huge marijuana plantation in 1984. The next year, Camarena was kidnapped in Guadalajara, allegedly on orders from Caro Quintero. His tortured body was found a month later.

Caro Quintero was captured in Costa Rica in 1985 and was serving a 40-year sentence in Mexico when an appeals court overturned his verdict in 2013. The Supreme Court upheld the sentence, but it was too late — Caro Quintero had been spirited off in a waiting vehicle.

Caro Quintero was added to FBI's 10 most wanted list in 2018 with a \$20 million reward for his capture. López Obrador had previously seemed ambivalent about his case.

Last year, the president said the legal appeal that led to Caro Quintero's release was "justified" because supposedly no verdict had been handed down against the drug lord after 27 years in jail. López Obrador also depicted a later warrant for his re-arrest as an example of U.S. pressure.

"Once he was out, they had to look for him again, because the United States demanded he shouldn't have been released, but legally the appeal was justified," López Obrador said.

Presidential spokesman Jesús Ramírez said at the time, "The president was just saying that it was a legal aberration that the judge had not issued a verdict on Mr. Caro Quintero after 27 years ... but he was not

defending his release.”

Mexican reporter Anabel Hernandez twice interviewed the fugitive Caro Quintero in the mountains of northern Mexico without revealing the location. Caro Quintero claimed in those interviews that he was no longer involved in the drug trade.

McIlroy, Hovland avoid blunders to share British Open lead

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

ST. ANDREWS, Scotland (AP) — Cheers from every corner of the Old Course that belonged to Tiger Woods for two days at St. Andrews switched over to Rory McIlroy in the British Open, and he certainly did his part to give them what came to see Saturday.

McIlroy holed a bunker shot for eagle on the 10th hole that he described as part skill and part luck, but it was pure magic. He showed discipline to know when to aim away from the flag, and to take bogey when he was stuck between a wall and a road behind the 17th green.

McIlroy now shares the stage at the home of golf with Viktor Hovland, the emerging Norwegian star who was every bit as good in making birdies and avoiding the blunders that cost so many other potential contenders.

Both made birdie on the final hole for a 6-under 66. No one else was closer than four shots. They have the same score at 16-under 200, though the support is one-sided.

“They’re chanting his name out there. I think he’s definitely a crowd favorite,” Masters champion Scottie Scheffler said. “How can you not root for Rory?”

McIlroy is one round away from ending eight long years without a major. He wants to stay in his world without ignoring the support raining down on him.

“I think it’s appreciating the moment as well and appreciating the fact that it’s unbelievably cool to have a chance to win The Open at St Andrews,” McIlroy said. “It’s what dreams are made of. And I’m going to try to make a dream come true tomorrow.”

Hovland, already with six victories worldwide in his four years since leaving Oklahoma State as a U.S. Amateur champion, could appreciate the support for McIlroy and all he has done. He played mistake-free and sounded as though he were up for the task.

“I’m going against one of the best players in the world and I’m certainly not going to hold back, because he’s certainly not,” Hovland said.

It wasn’t a two-man race, even if it felt that way as the Old Course emptied and bagpipes began to skirl at the end of the day.

Cameron Smith, who started with a two-shot lead, took double bogey on the 13th hole when he tried a bold play with his feet in a pot bunker. Cameron Young went over the 16th green and then back down the other side for a double bogey on the 16th hole.

They were four shots behind, still in the game. Two-time major champion Dustin Johnson, the best candidate from the Saudi-funded LIV Golf league to claim this major, putted across the green and into a bunker for one of three bogeys on the back nine. He fell six shots behind.

McIlroy and Hovland had no such trouble.

Hovland holed a pair of 40-foot putts on his way to four straight birdies on the front nine to seize the lead. McIlroy finally caught him by holing out from a pot bunker some 80 feet away for eagle on the 10th hole, setting off a roar that could be heard all the way back at the Royal & Ancient clubhouse.

McIlroy only a day earlier tipped his cap to Woods as he started his second round and Woods was on his way to missing the cut, crossing the Swilcan Bridge for what might have been last time. The R&A set the tee times that way so they would pass each other.

Woods stands alone in driving the sport, though McIlroy is the most popular worldwide, and it sounded like that — on the first tee when McIlroy was introduced, for every birdie, and when he took the lead for the first time with a birdie on the 14th.

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"I love that I've got so much support," McIlroy said. "But at the same time, I need to keep in my own little world and try to play a good round of golf. Hopefully, that's enough."

His lone mistake was coming out of the left rough and over the 17th green, across the road and near the stone wall. He played a safe pitch onto the green and two-putted for bogey.

Hovland, bogey-free for the round, showed off some magic of his own on the 17th by putting off the dirt path just short of the road, up the hill to about 5 feet for a par.

"I've never been in a bigger spot in my career," Hovland said. He sounded up to the task, and the popular Norwegian also saw — and heard — what he will be up against Sunday.

"I get a couple in there," he said of the cheers so heavily slanted toward McIlroy. "I'm probably an underdog, but I don't mind that at all. Hopefully, we can push ourselves tomorrow."

Smith missed a short birdie chance on the 18th and had a 73. His biggest mistake was not getting the ball back in play on the 13th, instead trying to advance the ball and getting into tough spots. He also three-putted from 30 feet to start his round and made just two birdies.

Young, the PGA Tour rookie who finished one shot out of a playoff at the PGA Championship two months ago, had a 71.

Scheffler was lurking after a 69. He missed a 10-foot birdie chance on the 16th and then three-putted the 17th for a bogey. Scheffler, who finished one shot behind in the U.S. Open, had a 69 and was five back along with Si Woo Kim (67).

Johnson also within three shots until a bogey on the 13th and another on the par-5 14th, where his long eagle putt raced up a hill, across the green and into a pot bunker. Instead of birdie, he had to scramble for bogey. He dropped two more shots coming in for a 71 and was six behind.

McIlroy last won a major in 2014 at the PGA Championship at Valhalla. He would love nothing more than to win at the home of golf, on the Old Course where Jack Nicklaus once said a player's career would not be complete without winning a claret jug at St. Andrews.

"Every part of my game has felt good this week," McIlroy said. "I just need to keep it going for one more day."

Russia steps up attacks across Ukraine's north, east, south

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

KRAMATORSK, Ukraine (AP) — Russian forces fired missiles and shells at cities and towns across Ukraine on Saturday after Russia's military announced it was stepping up its onslaught against its neighbor. Ukraine reported at least 17 more civilians killed.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu gave "instructions to further intensify the actions of units in all operational areas, in order to exclude the possibility of the Kyiv regime launching massive rocket and artillery strikes on civilian infrastructure and residents of settlements in the Donbas and other regions," his ministry said Saturday.

Russia's military campaign has been focusing on the eastern Donbas, but the new attacks hit areas in the north and south as well. Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, has seen especially severe bombardments in recent days, with Ukrainian officials and local commanders voicing fears that a second full-scale Russian assault on the northern city may be looming.

At the same time, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged Ukrainians not to fall for Russia's attempts to scare them with warnings of horrendous missile attacks to come, which he said were aimed at dividing Ukrainian society.

"Sometimes, information weapons can do more than regular weapons," he said in his nightly video address to the nation.

"It's clear that no Russian missiles or artillery will be able to break our unity or lead us away from our path" toward a democratic, independent Ukraine," he said. "And it is also clear that Ukrainian unity cannot be broken by lies or intimidation, fakes or conspiracy theories."

In the Kharkiv region, at least three civilians were killed and three more were injured Saturday in a

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pre-dawn Russian strike on the city of Chuhuiv, which is only 120 kilometers (75 miles) from the Russian border, the police said.

Serhiy Bolvinov, the deputy head of the Kharkiv region's police force, said four missiles presumably fired from the Russian city of Belgorod hit an apartment building, a school and administrative buildings at about 3:30 a.m. Writing on Facebook, he said the three bodies were found under the rubble.

Lyudmila Krekshina, who lives in the apartment building that was hit, said a husband and wife were killed, and also an elderly man who lived on the ground floor.

Another resident said she was lucky to have survived.

"I was going to run and hide in the bathroom. I didn't make it and that's what saved me," said Valentina Bushuyeva. Pointing up at her destroyed apartment, she said: "There's the bathroom — explosion. Kitchen — half a room. And I survived because I stayed put."

In the neighboring Sumy region, one civilian was killed and at least seven were injured after Russians opened mortar and artillery fire on three towns and villages not far from the Russian border, regional governor Dmytro Zhyvytsky said Saturday.

In the embattled eastern Donetsk region, seven civilians were killed and 14 wounded in the last 24 hours in Russian attacks on cities, its governor said Saturday.

Later in the day, on the outskirts of Pokrovsk, a city in the Donetsk region, a woman said a neighbor was killed by a rocket attack Saturday afternoon. Tetiana Pashko said she herself suffered a cut on her leg and one of her family's dogs was killed.

She said her 35-year-old neighbor, who was killed in her front yard, had evacuated earlier this year as authorities had requested but had returned home after being unable to support herself. Several homes on the quiet residential street were damaged, with doors and roofs ripped away.

"We can rebuild but we can't bring her back," said another neighbor, Olha Rusanova.

In the neighboring Luhansk region, however, Ukrainian troops repelled a Russian overnight assault on a strategic eastern highway, said Gov. Serhiy Haidai, adding that Russia had been attempting to capture the main road between the cities of Lysychansk and Bakhmut for more than two months.

The Luhansk and Donetsk regions make up the Donbas, an eastern industrial region that used to power Ukraine's economy and has mostly been taken over by Russian and separatist forces.

In southern Ukraine, two people were wounded by Russian shelling in the town of Bashtanka, northeast of the Black Sea city of Mykolaiv, according to the regional governor, Vitaliy Kim. He said Mykolaiv itself came under renewed Russian fire before dawn Saturday. On Friday, he posted videos of what he said was a Russian missile attack on the city's two largest universities and denounced Russia as "a terrorist state."

In Odesa, a key port city on the Black Sea, a Russian missile hit a warehouse, engulfing it in flames and sending up a plume of black smoke, but no injuries were reported, local officials said.

Two people were killed and a woman was hospitalized after a Russian rocket strike on the eastern river-side city of Nikopol, emergency services said. Dnipropetrovsk Gov. Valentyn Reznichenko said a five-story apartment block, a school and a vocational school building were damaged.

On Friday, cruise missiles fired by Russian bombers struck Dnipro, a major city in southeastern Ukraine on the Dnieper River, killing at least three people and wounding 16, Ukrainian officials said. On Saturday, Russian defense officials claimed that strike had destroyed "workshops producing components for, and repairing, Tochka-U ballistic missiles, as well as multiple rocket launchers."

The Ukrainian air force said Russian forces fired six more cruise missiles Saturday from strategic bombers in the Caspian Sea, and two hit a farm in the Cherkasy region along the Dnieper River. No one was hurt, but agricultural equipment was destroyed and some cattle were killed, regional Gov. Ihor Taburets said. The Ukrainian air force said the other four missiles were intercepted.

The deadliest Russian attack this week came Thursday, when a Russian missile strike killed at least 24 people — including three children — and wounded more than 200 in Vinnytsia, a city southwest of Kyiv, the capital, far from the front lines. Three of those missing after the attack were found alive in the rubble Saturday and one person remained missing, the emergency service said.

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Russia claimed the Kalibr cruise missiles hit a "military facility" that was hosting a meeting between Ukrainian air force command and foreign weapons suppliers. Ukrainian authorities insisted the site, a concert hall, had nothing to do with the military.

Ukraine's Interior Ministry says Russian forces have conducted more than 17,000 strikes on civilian targets during the war, killing thousands of fighters and civilians and driving millions from their homes.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has also rippled through the world economy, hiking energy and food prices and crimping exports of key Ukrainian and Russian products such as grain, fuel and fertilizer.

UN decries rising death toll, rights violations in Haiti

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. human rights office on Saturday expressed concern about rising violence around Haiti's capital, saying 99 people have been reported killed in recent fighting between rival gangs in the Cite Soleil district alone.

The warning came hours after the U.N. Security Council unanimously approved a resolution renewing the mandate of a U.N. office in the troubled Caribbean nation and calling on all countries to stop the transfer of small arms, light weapons and ammunition to anyone there supporting gang violence and criminal activity.

U.N. humanitarian agencies said they were ready to help embattled communities once it is safe to do so, and Jeremy Laurence, spokesperson for the U.N.'s High Commissioner for Refugees, laid out those dangers.

"We have so far documented, from January to the end of June, 934 killings, 684 injuries and 680 kidnappings across the capital," he said Saturday. In addition, "Over a five-day period, from 8-12 July, at least 234 more people were killed or injured in gang-related violence in the Cite Soleil area of the city."

He said most of the victims "were not directly involved in gangs" but were targeted by them.

Separately, the U.N.'s humanitarian affairs office reported that 99 of the recent casualties in Cite Soleil were deaths.

Laurence called on gangs to halt the violence, while also urging Haitian authorities to ensure that fundamental human rights are "placed at the front and center of their responses to the crisis. The fight against impunity and sexual violence, along with the strengthening of human rights monitoring and reporting, must remain a priority", he said.

The Security Council resolution drafted by the United States and Mexico was approved 15-0 Friday. It demanded an immediate cessation of gang violence and criminal activities — a point stressed by China.

"The heavily armed gangs are becoming increasingly sophisticated in their actions, conducting simultaneous, coordinated and organized attacks in different areas," Laurence said.

The government, he said, has a duty to protect citizens' right to life even from threats that come from private entities.

The U.N. agencies said some gangs even deny access to drinking water and food in order to control the population, aggravating malnutrition.

U.S. Deputy Ambassador Richard Mills said the new resolution will allow the U.N. mission to promote political dialogue and bolster the capacity of the Haitian National Police to control gang violence and protect human rights.

A year after the unsolved assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, gang violence has grown worse and many Haitians have tried to flee a country that seems to be in economic and social freefall. Attempts to form a coalition government have faltered, and efforts to hold general elections have stalled.

The United Nations has been involved in Haiti on and off since 1990, and the last U.N. peacekeeping mission was in the country from 2004 until October 2017. The political mission now there advises Haiti's government on promoting political stability and good governance.

Biden's Mideast trip aimed at reassuring wary leaders

By AAMER MADHANI, AYA BATRAWY, ZEKE MILLER and CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Before stepping foot in Saudi Arabia, President Joe Biden knew there

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would be trouble.

Biden was risking criticism by visiting a country he had vowed to make a "pariah" for human rights abuses, and there was no guarantee the visit would immediately yield higher oil production to offset rising gas prices.

He decided to face the blowback anyway, hoping to use the visit to repair strained ties and make clear to wary Arab leaders that the United States remains committed to their security and the region's stability.

His visit to Saudi Arabia was occasionally uncomfortable but, in Biden's view, ultimately necessary. Although he's been focused on confronting Russia's invasion of Ukraine and limiting China's expanding influence in Asia, those goals become far more difficult without the partnerships that he was tending to here.

"It is only becoming clearer to me how closely interwoven America's interests are with the successes of the Middle East," the president said Saturday at a summit in the Red Sea city of Jeddah.

It was a belated recognition of geopolitical reality that, for nearly a century, has kept the United States deeply invested in the energy-rich region, most recently with ruinous wars that stretched over two decades. Biden tried to turn the page on those conflicts while insisting that the U.S. would remain engaged.

"We will not walk away and leave a vacuum to be filled by China, Russia or Iran," Biden said. "We will seek to build on this moment with active, principled, American leadership."

The summit, where Biden announced \$1 billion in U.S. funding to alleviate hunger in the region, was the final destination on Biden's four-day trip, which included stops in Israel and the West Bank.

His travels were shadowed by a steady stream of grim news from Washington, where Democratic plans to address climate change floundered on Capitol Hill and there was fresh evidence that inflation had reached historic levels.

And at every step along the way, Biden confronted a far different region than existed when he served as vice president.

President Donald Trump withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal reached under President Barack Obama, and Tehran is believed to be closer than ever to building a nuclear weapon.

The threat, which Biden has struggled to address through renewed negotiations, has deepened coordination between Israel and its Arab neighbors, who have found common cause in confronting Iran.

The budding ties have also opened the door to greater economic and security integration, recasting the Middle East's fractious politics at the same time that Arab leaders were fearing the U.S. had become a less reliable ally. They distrusted Obama's outreach to Iran and Trump's erratic behavior, then viewed Biden as neglectful toward the region once he took office.

Biden's challenge has been to recognize the shifting landscape and persuade leaders in the Middle East to remain aligned with U.S. interests — without being dragged back into a corner of the world that the American public has largely turned away from after the end of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Although Biden expressed a renewed commitment to the region by saying "the United States is not going anywhere," he also seemed to acknowledge its limitations.

"The United States is clear-eyed about the challenges in the Middle East and about where we have the greatest capacity to help drive positive outcomes," he said.

Besides announcing the new funding for hunger relief, he met individually with several of his counterparts, some for the first time since he became president.

He also invited Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who recently became president of the United Arab Emirates, formalizing his role at the helm of major policy decisions, to visit the White House in the coming months.

It was another effort to smooth ties that have become strained, in part because of Biden's actions. For example, although the U.S. has played a key role in encouraging a monthslong cease-fire in Yemen, the Emiratis have criticized his decision to reverse a Trump-era move that had listed the Iran-backed Houthis as a terrorist group.

The centerpiece of Biden's outreach in the Middle East was his first meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia and heir to the throne held by his father, King Salman.

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The encounter began Friday with a fist bump outside the royal palace in Jeddah, a chummy gesture that was swiftly criticized because of Prince Mohammed's history of human rights abuses. In addition to cracking down on his critics in Saudi Arabia, the prince, according to U.S. intelligence, likely approved the killing of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi nearly four years ago.

Biden rejected the notion that he was abandoning human rights by meeting with the crown prince, and said he brought up Khashoggi's murder during their conversation. The topic created a "frosty" start to the meeting, according to a U.S. official who was not authorized to discuss the private meeting and insisted on anonymity.

The Saudi-owned Al Arabiya news network, citing an unnamed Saudi source, reported that Prince Mohammed responded to Biden's mention of Khashoggi by saying that attempts to impose a set of values can backfire. He also said the U.S. had committed mistakes at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, where detainees were tortured, and pressed Biden on the killing of Palestinian American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh during a recent Israeli raid on the West Bank city of Jenin.

The atmosphere between the two eventually became more relaxed, the U.S. official said, as they spoke about energy security, expanding high-speed internet access in the Middle East and other issues.

The regional summit in Jeddah and Biden's visit provided Prince Mohammed with the opportunity to showcase his country's heavyweight role in the Middle East, and his position at the helm of the world's largest oil exporter.

He hinted that the kingdom could pump more oil than it currently does, something Biden wants to see when existing production quotas among OPEC+ member countries, which include Russia, expire in September.

"I'm doing all I can to increase the supply for the United States of America, which I expect to happen," Biden said Friday. "The Saudis share that urgency, and based on our discussions today, I expect we'll see further steps in the coming weeks."

He also tried to draw Arab nations onto his side over the invasion of Ukraine by releasing satellite imagery indicating that Russian officials visited Iran in June and July to see weapons-capable drones that it could acquire.

The disclosure appeared aimed at drawing a connection between the war in Europe and Arab leaders' own concerns about Iran.

So far, none of the countries represented at the summit has moved in lockstep with the U.S. to sanction Russia, a foreign policy priority for the Biden administration. If anything, the UAE has emerged as a sort of financial haven for Russian billionaires and their multimillion-dollar yachts. Egypt remains open to Russian tourists.

Meantime, there are sharp divisions on regional foreign policy among the heads of state who attended the summit.

For example, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the UAE are trying to isolate and squeeze Iran over its regional reach and proxies. Oman and Qatar have solid diplomatic ties with Iran and have acted as intermediaries for talks between Washington and Tehran.

But before ending his speech at the summit, Biden expressed hopes for a new era of cooperation.

"This is a table full of problem solvers," he said. "There's a lot of good we can do if we do it together."

Diesel lacking for Cuba drivers as fuel used for electricity

By ANDREA RODRÍGUEZ Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Dany Pérez had spent four days in a line of vehicles waiting to fill his truck with diesel he needs for the 900-kilometers (560-mile) trip from Havana to his home in eastern Cuba.

Taxi driver Jhojan Rodríguez had been waiting at another station even longer — it was nearing two weeks — but he was finally near the head of the line of hundreds of vehicles in the Playa district of the capital.

Such lines have become increasingly common in Cuba, where officials apparently have been sending scarce diesel fuel to power generation plants rather than fuel stations for vehicles.

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It's not the first time the island has suffered fuel shortages, but it's one of worst.

"I have seen pretty bad situations, but not like now," said the 46-year-old Pérez, who was eating and sleeping in his 1950s-era Chevrolet truck, which he had outfitted to haul some 40 passengers.

Drivers in the lines have tried to organize themselves by creating lists of those waiting and updating them daily as they wait for tanker trucks to arrive with fuel. Because of the lists, those who live nearby can go home for spells — keeping track of any progress via a WhatsApp group.

"I'm a professional taxi driver. ... I pay taxes, social security. I'm legally established," said Rodríguez, the 37-year-old owner of a gold-and-white 1954 Oldsmobile whose worn-out gasoline engine at some point had been replaced with a diesel. "My home, my family depend on this diesel."

The car had run out of fuel and Rodríguez had to push it into the line. That was 12 days earlier. Authorities say drivers can only fill their tanks, but not other containers. For Rodríguez, that's 60 liters (16 gallons), which he said will last him three days.

The recent fuel shortage largely affects diesel — used by heavy vehicles and classic cars whose original engines were long ago swapped out, often with Eastern European truck engines — rather than the gasoline used by most cars.

Rodríguez expressed frustration at the lack of clear explanations from officials.

"Nobody has said 'this is what is happening' with the fuel," Rodríguez said. "If at some point there was information that, 'Look, there is no fuel because the situation of the country requires it to give electricity to people,' I would understand."

Experts — agreeing with scuttlebutt in the streets — say the country can't afford to buy all the diesel it needs and what it has is being directed to generate power.

"What we are seeing is what we call the domino effect," said Jorge Piñon, director of the Latin America and Caribbean Energy Program at the University of Texas in Austin.

"The collapse of the thermoelectric plants has caused an increased demand for diesel generation groups. Venezuela has not been sending Cuba the quantity of diesel it needs, so Cuba has had to take part of the supply that was dedicated to the transport sector for the diesel electric generation groups," he said.

Half of Cuba's electricity comes from 13 thermoelectric plants, eight of which are more than 30 years old. They usually depend on the island's own heavy crude oil, but their operation has been erratic. So the island turns to diesel units to try to cover the shortfall.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Cuba used about 137,000 barrels a day of fuel — gasoline, diesel, natural gas and derivatives — to keep the economy moving. About half of that came from political ally Venezuela, which itself has sunk into economic crisis and, under mismanagement and U.S. embargoes, has found it increasingly difficult to produce and ship fuel.

A series of recent power blackouts caused public grumbling and led Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel to try to explain the situation on national television and tour thermoelectric plants.

International news media and tanker tracking sites reported that a Russian tanker carrying 700,000 barrels of oil reached Cuba in recent days, though authorities did not comment.

"We think it's a shipment from Russia in place of Venezuela — that it is a triangulation where Russia is substituting for Venezuela with this shipment, later to be paid by Venezuela and not by Cuba," Piñon said.

Meanwhile, Cubans are adapting as they can — whether at home or by heading abroad.

"I am going to keep struggling because I can't stop working," Pérez said at the station in Guanabacoa, east of central Havana. "but if there's no (fuel), we will have to park it."

At the station in Playa, the taxi driver Rodríguez said he was thinking of other options.

"My Plan B is to sell the car and leave the country with my family. I don't know what I am going to do."

US soprano, offended by blackface, pulls out of Italy opera

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Soprano Angel Blue says she won't perform in an opera in Italy this month because blackface was used in the staging of a different work this summer on the same stage.

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The U.S. singer posted a note on her angeljoyblue Instagram page saying she will be bowing out of "La Traviata" at Verona's Arena this month because the theater recently mounted another Giuseppe Verdi opera, "Aida," that had performers in blackface.

She blasted such use of "archaic" theatrical practices as "offensive, humiliating, and outright racist."

Angel Blue, however, was still listed Saturday on the Arena's website as singing the role of Violetta in "La Traviata" on July 22 and 30.

The theater said it was hoping that Blue, who is Black, would accept an invitation to meet with Arena officials in a "dialogue" over the issue. The Arena, in a statement Friday, said it had "no reason nor intent whatsoever to offend and disturb anyone's sensibility."

For decades, U.S. civil rights organizations for decades have publicly condemned blackface — in which white performers blacken their faces — as dehumanizing Blacks by introducing and reinforcing racial stereotypes.

The Arena this summer has mounted performances of "Aida" based on a 2002 staging of the opera classic by Italian director Franco Zeffirelli who died in 2019. That staging uses blackface.

"Dear Friends, Family, and Opera Lovers," began the soprano's Instagram post. "I have come to the unfortunate conclusion that I will not be singing La Traviata at Arena di Verona this summer as planned."

Referring to Arena's decision to use blackface makeup in "Aida," the singer wrote: "Let me be perfectly clear: the use of blackface under any circumstances, artistic or otherwise, is a deeply misguided practice based on archaic theatrical traditions which have no place in modern society. It is offensive, humiliating and outright racist."

She wrote that she couldn't "in good conscience associate myself with an institution which continues this practice."

The theater's statement said "Angel Blue knowingly committed herself to sing at the Arena" even though the "characteristics" of the 2002 Zeffirelli staging were "well known."

Still, the theater stressed its hope that her protest would ultimately improve understanding between cultures as well as educate Italian audiences.

"Every country has different roots, and their cultural and social structures developed along different historical and cultural paths," said the statement by the Arena of Verona Foundation. "Common convictions have often been reached only after years of dialogue and mutual understanding."

The Arena statement stressed dialogue, "in effort to understand others' point of view, in respect of consciously assumed artistic obligations."

"Contraposition, judgments, labeling, lack of dialogue only feed the culture of contrasts, which we totally reject," said the statement, appealing for cooperation "to avoid divisions."

It's not the first time that the use of blackface makeup for a staging of "Aida" in Verona has sparked a soprano's protest. In 2019, opera singer Tamara Wilson, who is white, protested against darkening her face to sing the title character of an Ethiopian woman in the opera at the Arena.

Parroting Trump, GOP primary losers cast doubt on elections

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — It was no shock that state Rep. Ron Hanks and Mesa County Clerk Tina Peters handily lost their recent Republican primaries in Colorado for U.S. Senate and secretary of state.

Hanks was outspent 14-to-1 by his rival. Peters, who was vying to become Colorado's top elections official, had been indicted on seven felony charges alleging she helped orchestrate a breach of her voting system's hard drive.

But this past week, both candidates formally requested recounts of their primary elections from June 28, suggesting widespread irregularities seen by no one other than their own campaigns and allies.

"I have reasons to believe extensive malfeasance occurred in the June 2022 primary," Peters wrote in her recount request, "and that the apparent outcome of this election does not reflect the will of Colorado voters not only for myself but also for many other America First statewide and local primary candidates."

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America First is a coalition of conservative candidates and officeholders who, among other things, promote the falsehood that Democrat Joe Biden did not win the 2020 presidential election.

This idea has seeped deeply into this year's Republican primaries, which have revealed a new political strategy among numerous candidates: running on a platform that denies President Donald Trump's defeat two years ago. As some of those candidates lose their own races, they are reaching new frontiers in election denial by insisting that those primaries, too, were rigged.

"There's a clear reason they're doing it, and it's a much broader, coordinated attack on the freedom to vote across the country," said Joanna Lydgate of States United Action. Her group supports election officials who recognize the validity of the 2020 election.

Noting that she coaches youth basketball, Lydgate added another reason: "Really, what this is is people who are sore losers, people who don't want to accept defeat."

The primary losers have an obvious role model: Trump himself.

After his first election loss during his 2016 run for the White House, in the Iowa caucuses, Trump baselessly claimed fraud and demanded an investigation. When he was elected president later that year, he claimed that fraud was the reason Democrat Hillary Clinton won more votes than he did. Trump set up a commission to try to prove that. That commission was disbanded when it failed to produce any evidence.

After his 2020 defeat, Trump and his supporters lost 63 of 64 legal challenges to the election. Trump continued to blame fraud, without evidence, even after his own attorney general and election reviews in the states failed to turn up any widespread wrongdoing that would have any impact on the outcome.

This year's post-primary election denial may be a preview for November, when Republicans face Democrats in thousands of races across the country. The GOP is expected to do well — an expectation that could set the stage for more false claims of fraud when some of those candidates lose.

Still, some Republicans aren't waiting for Democratic voters to weigh in before making unsubstantiated fraud claims.

Some recent candidates who have done that are relatively marginal ones.

In Georgia, Trump's two recruits to challenge the state's governor and secretary of state — former Sen. David Perdue and Rep. Jody Hice — admitted defeat after they lost the May primaries. But Kandiss Taylor, a fringe candidate who won only 3% of the primary vote for governor, refused to concede, claiming there was widespread cheating.

In South Carolina, Republican Harrison Musselwhite — who goes by Trucker Bob — lost his primary against Gov. Henry McMaster by 66 percentage points. Still, he complained of problems with the election to the state party, as did another losing GOP contender, Lauren Martel, who ran for attorney general. The party rejected their claims.

Others who have cried fraud are more prominent.

Joey Gilbert, who came in second in the Nevada Republican primary for governor, posted a Facebook video days after the June tally showing him 26,000 votes short. "These elections, the way they've been run, it's like Swiss cheese," he said. "There's too many holes."

Gilbert, who attended Trump's rally near the White House on Jan. 6, 2021, before the riot at the U.S. Capitol, demanded a recount. The results appear unlikely to substantially change the final tally. He did not return messages seeking comment.

In Arizona, former newscaster Kari Lake won Trump's endorsement in her quest for the party's nomination for governor, insisting that he won the presidency in 2020. This past week, she told supporters that her top opponent in the primary "might be trying to set the stage for another steal" in next month's primary.

That earned her a rebuke from Gov. Doug Ducey, a Republican who has endorsed Lake's chief rival, Karin Taylor Robson.

"The 2022 elections haven't even been held yet, and already we're seeing speculation doubting the results — especially if certain candidates lose," Ducey tweeted. "It's one of the most irresponsible things I can imagine."

Lake's campaign did not return messages seeking comment.

In Colorado, county clerk Peters immediately questioned the primary results once the tally showed her

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losing badly in the secretary of state's race. Claiming fraud as she trailed former county clerk Pam Anderson, a regular debunker of Trump's election lies, Peters said: "Looking at the results, it's just so obvious it should be flipped."

She and Senate candidate Hanks repeated Trump's election lies, a position that had won them strong support last spring at the 3,000-strong GOP state assembly, a convention attended by the party's strongest activists. Both candidates, in letters to the secretary of state's office this past week demanding a recount, cited that support in explaining why they could not have lost their primaries.

Hanks referred a reporter to an email address for media for the two candidates, though no one responded to questions sent to that address.

The activists who attend the GOP gathering are just a small fraction of the 600,000 who voted in the June primary. According to preliminary results, Peters lost by 88,000 votes and Hanks by 56,000 votes.

Their recount letters gave reasons why the candidates believed those vote tallies were "being artificially controlled."

The Colorado Secretary of State's office said a recount will cost \$236,000 for each candidate. As of Friday night, the deadline set by the office to receive the money, neither candidate had paid, according to spokeswoman Annie Orloff.

Biden vows 'strong' climate action despite dual setbacks

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden is promising "strong executive action" to combat climate change, despite dual setbacks in recent weeks that have restricted his ability to regulate carbon emissions and boost clean energy such as wind and solar power.

The Supreme Court last month limited how the nation's main anti-air pollution law can be used to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants. Then late Thursday, Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., said he wants to delay sweeping environmental legislation that Democrats have pushed as central to achieving Biden's ambitious climate goals.

Biden, who has pledged to cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030, compared with 2005 levels, said Friday that "action on climate change and clean energy remains more urgent than ever."

If the Senate will not act to address climate change and boost clean energy, "I will take strong executive action to meet this moment," Biden said in a statement from Saudi Arabia, where he met Friday with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Biden did not specify what actions he will take on climate, but said they will create jobs, improve energy security, bolster domestic manufacturing and protect consumers from oil and gas price increases. "I will not back down," he promised.

Some advocates urged Biden to use the moment to declare a national climate emergency and reinstate a ban on crude oil exports, among other steps. Declaring a climate emergency would allow Biden to redirect spending to accelerate renewable energy such as wind and solar and speed the nation's transition away from fossil fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas.

Climate advocates, including some of Manchin's Democratic colleagues in the Senate, slammed his opposition — noting that it was the second time he has torpedoed climate change legislation.

"It's infuriating and nothing short of tragic that Sen. Manchin is walking away, again, from taking essential action on climate and clean energy," said Sen. Tina Smith, D-Minn. "The world is literally burning up while he joins every single Republican to stop strong action to cut emissions and speed the transition to clean energy."

Other Democrats said Manchin's announcement that he cannot back the climate provisions in the Senate bill — at least for now — frees Biden of the obligation to cater to a powerful, coal-state senator eager to protect his energy-producing home state. Manchin's vote is decisive in the evenly divided Senate, where Republicans unanimously oppose climate action.

"Free at last. Let's roll. Do it all and start it now," tweeted Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I. who has

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long pushed stronger action on climate. "With legislative climate options now closed, it's now time for executive Beast Mode," Whitehouse wrote.

Whitehouse suggested a series of actions Biden could take, including "a robust social cost of carbon rule" that would force energy producers to account for greenhouse gas emissions as a cost of doing business. The senator also urged Biden to require major polluters to use technology to capture carbon dioxide emissions and impose stronger pollution controls on cars, light trucks and heavy-duty vehicles.

Advocates also urged Biden to reject all onshore and offshore drilling on federal lands and in federal waters — a step he promised during the 2020 campaign but has not enacted — and restrict approval of natural gas pipelines and other fossil fuel projects.

"For too long, we've been waiting on a single legislative package to save us and a single legislator to determine our fate," said Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore. "Now that it's clear legislation to address our climate crisis is dead, President Biden needs to put us on an emergency footing to address this disaster."

Citing Biden's campaign promise to end new drilling on federal lands and waters, Merkley said, "Now is the time to show the American people he's serious by saying 'no' to expanding our addiction to fossil fuels."

Even before Manchin's apparent rejection of the climate measures, Democrats had slimmed their plan from about \$555 billion in climate spending to just over \$300 billion in a bid to secure his support. Proposed tax credits for wind, solar and nuclear energy, along with still-unproven carbon-capture technology, could reduce emissions by up to 40% by 2030, advocates said.

Manchin had already forced Democrats to drop two tax provisions he opposes: direct payments of clean energy credits and tax credits for drivers who purchase electric vehicles. Manchin forced other concessions last year, including killing a proposal that would have paid utilities that increase clean energy while penalizing those that do not.

Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, said he still hopes to salvage the clean energy tax provisions and said failure "really is not an option here."

Manchin's request to postpone action on the climate measure follows a June 30 ruling by the Supreme Court, which said in a 6-3 vote that the Clean Air Act does not give the Environmental Protection Agency broad authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from power plants.

The ruling by the court's conservative majority likely complicates the Biden administration's plan to manage power plant pollution, but does not eliminate its authority to regulate greenhouse gases. EPA Administrator Michael Regan has said the agency is moving forward with proposed rules for power plants in the coming months.

Ann Clancy, associate climate policy director for Indivisible, a progressive advocacy group, said it was time for Biden to "stop waiting for corporate-backed Democrats and their bad faith negotiations and deliver real wins for the American people on climate."

"We don't have any more time to waste," Clancy said.

Manchin, in a radio interview Friday, said climate activists want an immediate end to U.S. use of oil, coal and gas. "That's crazy," he told West Virginia talk show host Hoppy Kercheval. "I'm not throwing caution to the wind. I think we need an energy policy that works for our country."

From the end of the world to your town, Elton John's goodbye

By WAYNE PARRY Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — I think it's gonna be a long, long time until we see another songwriter and performer like Elton John.

Wrapping up a 50-plus year career with a farewell tour, the British pianist and vocalist has created some of the most memorable and enduring music in the history of pop-rock, songs burned into the collective DNA of humanity.

They may be quite simple, like the basic four-chord glory of "Crocodile Rock," or dazzlingly complex like the 11-minute magnum opus "Funeral For A Friend/Love Lies Bleeding."

But now that it's almost done, I hope you don't mind that I put down in words how wonderful it has

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been to have Elton John on our radios and in our ears since the late 1960s.

The artist born 75 years ago as Reginald Kenneth Dwight kicked off the final leg of his North American farewell tour Friday night at Citizens Bank Park, home of baseball's Philadelphia Phillies. And yes, he felt the love that night.

"America made me famous and I can't thank this country enough," he told the audience. "Thank you for the loyalty, the love, the kindness you showed me."

He has sold over 300 million records worldwide, has played over 4,000 shows in 80 countries, and recorded one of the best-selling singles of all-time, his 1997 reworking of "Candle In The Wind" to eulogize Princess Diana, which sold 33 million copies.

Sir Elton (he was knighted in 1998) has scored over 70 top 40 hits, including nine No. 1s, and released seven No. 1 albums in the 3 1/2-year period from 1972 to 1975, a pace second only to that of the Beatles.

He has five Grammy awards, as well as a Tony award for "Aida." His crooning of "Can You Feel The Love Tonight" in "The Lion King" motion picture has serenaded millions of children, and will entertain future generations of little ones.

The outrageous costumes and oversized glasses he was known for in his early '70s heyday are gone now (he dressed as Donald Duck, Pac-Man, the Statue of Liberty, Minnie Mouse, and a Los Angeles Dodgers baseball player, among others). And while the man has not met a sequin or a feather he doesn't adore, his wardrobe is (by Elton standards) somewhat tamer these days.

He took the stage in a white tuxedo with black lapels, and purple sparkly glasses, walking somewhat tentatively to his shiny black piano to pound out the instantly recognizable opening chord to "Bennie And The Jets."

Next up was "Philadelphia Freedom," which he dedicated to the hometown crowd as "one of the greatest cities I've ever played in." It was his 52nd concert in the City of Brotherly Love.

Throughout the night, John rolled out a dazzling array of smash hits spanning musical styles and genres. The gospel phrasings and cadences that so influenced his early work were evident on "Border Song" and "Take Me To The Pilot," and even the straightforward radio staple "Levon" got a come-to-meeting revved-up ending.

He showed off the prototypical power ballad, "Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me," with its close cousin "Someone Saved My Life Tonight."

And when longtime guitar sidekick Davey Johnstone donned an inverted Flying-V guitar, it was time for the power chord arena rockers, including Elton's hardest-rocking song ever, "Saturday Night's Alright For Fighting," and the brash, boastful and Elton-to-the-bone anthem "The Bitch Is Back."

Elton largely eschewed his famous falsetto; he still has 100 shows to go on the worldwide farewell tour that runs through next year, and he's learned over the years how to conserve his voice without sacrificing his style and authenticity.

No matter: the crowd happily supplied the falsetto parts for him, including a mass sing-along of the "la-la-la" chorus on "Crocodile Rock."

He reached back for only one deep track, "Have Mercy On The Criminal," featuring Johnstone's bluesy guitar licks, tucking it amid the dozens of smash hits.

And he avoided tear-jerkers like "Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest Word" and the gut-wrenching "The Last Song" about a farewell between a father and his son who's dying of AIDS, in favor of an upbeat, celebratory mood.

"All The Girls Love Alice," one of the earliest mainstream rock songs to focus on lesbian relationships in the early '70s, is an enduring concert staple, as is the straight-from-the-heart "Your Song."

Before the closing number, "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road," Elton peered toward the finish line of his final tour.

"I'm really looking forward to spending the rest of my life with my children and my husband," he said. "Be kind to yourself. Love each other."

The consummate showman to the very end, Elton finished the song, and was elevated into the sky on

a hydraulic lift as a hole opened in a brick wall atop the stage, engulfed him, and closed again. So while Elton John will soon be gone from the stage, thank God his music's still alive.

US agencies temporarily barred from enforcing LGBTQ guidance

By MARK GILLISPIE Associated Press

A judge in Tennessee has temporarily barred two federal agencies from enforcing directives issued by President Joe Biden's administration that extended protections for LGBTQ people in schools and workplaces.

U.S. District Judge Charles Atchley Jr. in an order on Friday ruled for the 20 state attorneys general who sued last August claiming the Biden administration directives infringe on states' right to enact laws that, for example, prevent students from participating in sports based on their gender identity or requiring schools and businesses to provide bathrooms and showers to accommodate transgender people.

Atchley, appointed by President Donald Trump in 2020, agreed with the attorneys generals' argument and issued a temporary injunction that prevents the agencies from applying that guidance on LGBTQ discrimination until the matter can be resolved by courts.

"As demonstrated above, the harm alleged by Plaintiff States is already occurring — their sovereign power to enforce their own legal code is hampered by the issuance of Defendants' guidance and they face substantial pressure to change their state laws as a result," Atchley wrote.

The attorneys general are from Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee and West Virginia.

The directives regarding discrimination based on sexual orientation was issued by the U.S. Department of Education and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in June following a landmark civil rights decision by U.S. Supreme Court in 2020 that, under a provision called Title VII, protects gay, lesbian and transgender people from discrimination in the workplace.

The Department of Education guidance from June 2021 said discrimination based on a student's sexual orientation or gender identity would be treated as a violation of Title IX, the 1972 federal law that protects sex discrimination in education.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission released guidance that month about what could constitute discrimination against LGBTQ people and advised the public about how to file a complaint.

With its guidance, the Biden administration in part took a stand against laws and proposals in a growing number of states that aim to forbid transgender girls from participating on female sports teams. The state attorneys general contend that the authority over such policies "properly belongs to Congress, the States, and the people."

The education policy carried the possibility of federal sanctions against schools and colleges that fail to protect gay and transgender students.

The attorneys general argued that a delaying a legal review of the directives would "cause them significant hardship, as Defendants would be allowed to use the 'fear of future sanctions' to force 'immediate compliance' with the challenged guidance," Atchley wrote.

"The Court finds that Plaintiffs have shown a credible threat of enforcement," Atchley wrote. "Plaintiffs highlight that private litigants are relying on Defendants' guidance to challenge Plaintiffs' state laws."

Atchley noted that the U.S. Department of Education has filed a statement of interest in a West Virginia lawsuit taking a position that Title IX prohibits the state from excluding transgender girls from participating in single-sex sports restricted to girls.

UK gets ready for travel disruptions as temps may hit 104 F

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The British government held an emergency response meeting Saturday to plan for record high temperatures next week after weather authorities issued their first-ever "red" warning for extreme heat.

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The alert covers large parts of England on Monday and Tuesday, when temperatures may reach 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) for the first time, posing a risk of serious illness and even death among healthy people, the U.K. Met Office, the country's weather service, said Friday.

The British heat record is 38.7C (101.7F), set in 2019.

After chairing the meeting, Cabinet Office Minister Kit Malthouse warned that transport services will be significantly affected.

"The heat will affect rails, for example, so the trains have to run slower. There may be fewer services," he told the BBC. "People need to be on their guard for disruption. If they don't have to travel, this may be a moment to work from home."

Rail passengers and users of the London Underground subway system were being advised not to travel on Monday and Tuesday unless it's absolutely necessary. With children and older people considered particularly vulnerable to high temperatures, schools and nursing homes have been urged to take steps to protect students and older residents. Most schools in England are still in session until the end of next week.

The alert comes as scientists say climate change is increasing the likelihood of exceptional heat waves in Britain, a country unaccustomed to such temperatures. Few homes, apartments, schools or small businesses in the country have air conditioning.

Britain usually has moderate summer temperatures. Across the U.K., average July temperatures range from a daily high of 21 C (70 F) to a low of 12 C (53 F).

London Mayor Sadiq Khan met with representatives of the National Health Service, police, fire and other emergency services on Friday to review plans to deal with the heat emergency.

One doctor warned that the upcoming heat wave and a surge in COVID-19 infections were causing a nightmare for health workers.

"A lot of hospital buildings are very old, particularly in London, and many don't have air conditioning and windows that don't open – so they are extremely hot," said Dr. Claire Bronze, 38, an emergency room consultant in London. "Some staff still have to wear PPE – so plastic gowns, masks, gloves – on top of their normal uniform which, as you can imagine, means people are quickly going to get very hot and dehydrated."

Life or death for Parkland shooter? Trial will take months

By TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Four years, five months and four days after Nikolas Cruz murdered 17 at Parkland's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, his trial for the deadliest U.S. mass shooting to reach a jury begins Monday with opening statements.

Delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic and legal wrangling, the penalty-only trial is expected to last four months with the seven-man, five-woman jury being exposed to horrific evidence throughout. The jurors will then decide whether Cruz, 23, is sentenced to death or life without the possibility of parole.

"Finally," said Lori Alhadeff, who wants Cruz executed for murdering her 14-year-old daughter Alyssa. "I hope for swift action to hold him responsible."

All victim parents and family members who have spoken publicly have said directly or indirectly they want Cruz sentenced to death.

The former Stoneman Douglas student pleaded guilty in October to the Feb. 14, 2018, massacre and is only challenging his sentence. Nine other U.S. gunmen who fatally shot at least 17 people died during or immediately after their attacks by suicide or police gunfire. Cruz was captured after he fled the school. The suspect in the 2019 killing of 23 at an El Paso, Texas, Walmart is awaiting trial.

Lead prosecutor Mike Satz will give his side's presentation. Satz, 80, spent 44 years as Broward County's state attorney and appointed himself lead prosecutor shortly after the shootings that killed 14 students and three staff members. He did not seek a 12th term and left office in early 2021, but his successor, Harold Pryor, kept him on the case.

Craig Trocino, a University of Miami law professor, said Satz will likely emphasize the shooting's brutal-

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ity and the story of each victim lost. The prosecution's theme throughout the trial will be, "If any case deserves a death sentence, this is it," he said.

"They are going to want to talk about how horrible the crime was, how culpable Mr. Cruz is," said Trocino, who worked on defendants' death penalty appeals before joining the law school.

Cruz's lead public defender, Melisa McNeill, said in court recently that she hasn't decided whether her team will give its opening statement immediately after Satz or wait several weeks until it's time to present their case.

Trocino said delaying their opening statement would be a risky and extremely rare defense strategy as it would allow the prosecution to have the only say for half the trial.

He said Cruz's attorneys will likely want to plant the seed in jurors' minds that he is a young adult with lifelong emotional and psychological problems. The goal would be to temper the jurors' emotions as the prosecution presents grisly videos and photos of the shootings and their aftermath, the painful testimony of the surviving wounded and tearful statements from victims' family members.

The jurors will also tour the sealed-off three-story classroom building where the massacre occurred. It remains blood-stained and bullet-pocked, with deflated Valentine's Day balloons and dead flowers strewn about.

"The defense will want to put a human face on Cruz," Trocino said. "They will want to show why life without the possibility of parole is a sufficient punishment."

During the trial, the prosecution is expected to present an overarching narrative of Cruz's history of threats, his planning and the merciless nature of the shootings. But they will also spend time on each individual slaying as the jurors will eventually vote on 17 potential death sentences, one for each victim.

Satz's team will be required to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Cruz committed at least one aggravating circumstance specified under Florida law, but that should not be an issue. Those include murders that were especially heinous or cruel; committed in a cold, calculated and premeditated manner; or committed during an act that created a great risk of death to many persons.

Cruz's team can raise several mitigating factors that are also in the law. Before the shooting, Cruz had no criminal history. The attorneys can argue he was under extreme mental or emotional disturbance, and his capacity to appreciate his conduct's criminality or conform it to the law was substantially impaired.

They will likely present evidence that:

— Cruz's birth mother abused alcohol and drugs during pregnancy. His attorneys say that damaged his brain and left him intellectually disabled, with behavioral problems starting in preschool.

— A "trusted peer" sexually abused him.

— When Cruz was 5, his adopted father died of a heart attack in front of him, which left his adoptive mother to raise him and his brother alone.

— His adoptive mother abused alcohol and died less than four months before the massacre.

— He was an immature 19 when the shootings happened.

For each death sentence, the jury must be unanimous or the sentence for that victim is life. The jurors are told that to vote for death, the prosecution's aggravating circumstances for that victim must, in their judgement, "outweigh" the defense's mitigators. A juror can also vote for life out of mercy for Cruz. During jury selection, the panelists said under oath that they are capable of voting for either sentence.

It is possible Cruz could get death for some victims and life for others, particularly since he walked back to some wounded victims and killed them with a second volley. That might swing any hesitant jurors on those counts.

"The prosecution only needs for the jury to come back (for death) on one," Trocino said.

Mo Farah's story draws horror, understanding in Somalia

By OMAR FARUK Associated Press

MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP) — Many Somalis are reacting with horror — and a sense of understanding — at British runner Mo Farah's tale of being trafficked to Britain as a child and forced to look after other

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children.

Olympic champion Farah was born in present-day Somaliland, a territory by the Gulf of Aden that has asserted independence from the Horn of Africa nation of Somalia. In a BBC documentary aired earlier this week Farah revealed how as a boy of 8 or 9 he was separated from his family and trafficked from neighboring Djibouti to the UK under a new name under which he eventually ran for glory.

Here, in the Somali capital Mogadishu, those who have heard of Farah's account express sadness for what he went through as a child forced to work in servitude. But they also point out that he was not alone in facing exploitation.

Conflict, climate change and economic collapse are displacing record numbers of people around the world, pushing more and more migrants into the hands of criminals who profit by smuggling them into Britain, the European Union and the U.S.

Somalis, like their neighbors in Ethiopia and Eritrea, are often among the desperate — people fleeing conflict and hunger in hopes of safety and a better life. Convinced they have little to lose, the young, in particular, risk their lives on flimsy boats organized by human traffickers who get them across the English Channel to Britain.

Those who can afford it pay thousands of dollars to reach countries where they hope to find jobs and security. Others fall prey to criminals who force them into sex work, drug crimes and domestic servitude.

Wealthier countries lack robust policies to respond to this complicated situation. Britain has welcomed refugees from Ukraine, for example, while proposing to deport asylum seekers from other places to Rwanda. While Prime Minister Boris Johnson says the Rwanda plan will break the business model of criminals who smuggle people across the Channel in inflatable boats, immigrant activists are suing over a plan they describe as illegal and inhumane.

Farah, who represented Britain at three straight Summer Olympics in 2008, 2012 and 2016, is a rare success story. Many others trying to escape poverty, hunger and violence in countries such as Somalia don't get so lucky — the reason many activists here say efforts must be put into supporting local governments to eradicate the many reasons people wish to go.

"It is certainly sad that Mo Farah had such a bad experience as a boy," said Ahmed Dini, who runs the Mogadishu-based children's rights group Peace-Line. "It has become evident that there are many contributing factors to child trafficking, such as poverty, a lack of adequate education, and insufficient security."

Farah still has family members — including his mother and two brothers — living on a farm near Hargeisa, the Somaliland capital. He said in the BBC film that his father was killed during unrest when the boy was 4.

In the documentary, produced by the BBC and Red Bull Studios, Farah said that when he left Africa he thought he was going to Europe to live with relatives and had a piece of paper with the contact details. But the woman he ended up with tore his papers and took him to an apartment in west London where he was forced to care for her children.

Farah said his fortunes in Britain changed when he was finally allowed to attend school. A teacher who was interviewed for the documentary recalled a 12-year-old boy who appeared "unkempt and uncared for," was "emotionally and culturally alienated" and spoke little English.

Farah eventually told his story to a physical education instructor. The teacher contacted local officials, who arranged for a Somali family to take him in as a foster child. He soon blossomed on the track.

Anti-slavery advocates say Farah is the most prominent person to come forward as a victim of modern-day slavery, a crime that is often hidden because it occurs behind closed doors and inflicts such trauma on its victims.

Now that a man of such celebrity has spoken of his experience, there can no longer be any doubt about the horror of child servitude even among ordinary Somalis who otherwise would find his account "unusual," said Bashir Abdi, an academic based in Mogadishu.

"Children consistently face abuses, but the story this renowned athlete revealed has captured the attention of many people, including Somalis," he said. "We often hear of child exploitations and I believe that significant (numbers of) Somali children go through domestic violence and abuses, but little is exposed to the public."

Amina Ali, a stay-home mother of four in Mogadishu, told The Associated Press that it was tough for her to hear the story of a 9-year-old boy "so weak and helpless forced to clean house and change the diapers of other kids."

"As a mother, I felt sadness for him once I have listened," she said. "Praise be to Allah that he is no longer under those circumstances. However, he is now at some point where he can reveal his story and I wish those (who) committed that abuse to be brought before justice one day."

Abortion laws spark profound changes in other medical care

By LINDSEY TANNER AP Medical Writer

A sexual assault survivor chooses sterilization so that if she is ever attacked again, she won't be forced to give birth to a rapist's baby. An obstetrician delays inducing a miscarriage until a woman with severe pregnancy complications seems "sick enough." A lupus patient must stop taking medication that controls her illness because it can also cause miscarriages.

Abortion restrictions in a number of states and the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade are having profound repercussions in reproductive medicine as well as in other areas of medical care.

"For physicians and patients alike, this is a frightening and fraught time, with new, unprecedented concerns about data privacy, access to contraception, and even when to begin lifesaving care," said Dr. Jack Resneck, president of the American Medical Association.

Even in medical emergencies, doctors are sometimes declining immediate treatment. In the past week, an Ohio abortion clinic received calls from two women with ectopic pregnancies — when an embryo grows outside the uterus and can't be saved — who said their doctors wouldn't treat them. Ectopic pregnancies often become life-threatening emergencies and abortion clinics aren't set up to treat them.

It's just one example of "the horrible downstream effects of criminalizing abortion care," said Dr. Catherine Romanos, who works at the Dayton clinic.

MEDICAL DILEMMAS

Dr. Jessian Munoz, an OB-GYN in San Antonio, Texas, who treats high-risk pregnancies, said medical decisions used to be clear cut.

"It was like, the mom's life is in danger, we must evacuate the uterus by whatever means that may be," he said. "Whether it's surgical or medical — that's the treatment."

Now, he said, doctors whose patients develop pregnancy complications are struggling to determine whether a woman is "sick enough" to justify an abortion.

With the fall of Roe v. Wade, "the art of medicine is lost and actually has been replaced by fear," Munoz said.

Munoz said he faced an awful predicament with a recent patient who had started to miscarry and developed a dangerous womb infection. The fetus still had signs of a heartbeat, so an immediate abortion — the usual standard of care — would have been illegal under Texas law.

"We physically watched her get sicker and sicker and sicker" until the fetal heartbeat stopped the next day, "and then we could intervene," he said. The patient developed complications, required surgery, lost multiple liters of blood and had to be put on a breathing machine "all because we were essentially 24 hours behind."

In a study published this month in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, doctors at two Texas hospitals cited the cases of 28 women less than 23 weeks pregnant who were treated for dangerous pregnancies. The doctors noted that all of the women had recommended abortions delayed by nine days because fetal heart activity was detected. Of those, nearly 60% developed severe complications — nearly double the number of complications experienced by patients in other states who had immediate therapeutic abortions. Of eight live births among the Texas cases, seven died within hours. The eighth, born at 24 weeks, had severe complications including brain bleeding, a heart defect, lung disease and intestinal and liver problems.

Before it overturned Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court never allowed states to ban abortion before the point when a fetus can survive outside the womb — roughly 24 weeks.

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Chicago diversity executive Sheena Gray survived a harrowing pregnancy-ending experience last year, when doctors discovered she had an embryo in a fallopian tube and an eight-week fetus in her womb. They removed the embryo along with the affected fallopian tube, and told her they needed to abort the other fetus to save her life.

The decision to proceed with treatment was hers — abortion is still legal in Illinois. In fact, the state provides greater access to abortion than most others, and has been flooded with patients seeking abortions following the recent Supreme Court decision.

Gray said she's heard about similar care being denied or delayed in other states, and fears the high court ruling will force other patients to face the same fate.

"No one should make these choices for a woman, period," she said.

Her story has a much happier ending: Gray became pregnant again and gave birth July 8 to healthy identical twin girls.

CHOOSING STERILITY

Julie Ann Nitsch, a sexual assault survivor and community college trustee in Austin, Texas, is among many women in states with restrictive abortion laws who are taking drastic steps.

Nitsch says she chose sterilization at age 36 rather than risk getting pregnant by another rapist.

"I ripped my organs out" to avoid that, she said.

Nitsch said she "saw the writing on the wall" after Texas enacted a law last year banning most abortions after six weeks, even in cases of rape or incest. She said she sensed that *Roe v. Wade* would be overturned, so she had surgery to remove her fallopian tubes in February.

"It's sad to think that I can't have kids, but it's better than being forced to have children," Nitsch said.

Dr. Tyler Handcock, an Austin OB-GYN, said his clinic has heard from hundreds of patients seeking sterilization since the Supreme Court's June 24 decision. Many choose this route because they fear long-acting birth control or other contraceptives could also become targets, he said.

His clinic scheduled a July 9 group counseling session to handle the surge, and every one of the 20 patients who showed up to hear about the risks and ramifications of fallopian tube-removal made an appointment to have the surgery.

Some physicians are reluctant to perform the surgery on young women with many reproductive years left, fearing they will change their minds later. Handcock said he heard from one 28-year-old woman who said six OB-GYNs declined to sterilize her.

Handcock said the choice should be up to patients.

"I will protect my patients and their rights however I can," he said.

TARGETING MEDICATION

Becky Schwarz, of Tysons Corner, Virginia, found herself unexpectedly thrust into the abortion controversy even though she has no plans to become pregnant.

The 27-year-old has lupus, an autoimmune disease that can cause the body to attack tissue surrounding joints and organs, leading to inflammation and often debilitating symptoms. For Schwarz, these include bone and joint pain, and difficulty standing for long periods of time.

She recently received a notice from her doctor saying she'd have to stop taking a medication that relieves her symptoms — at least while the office reviewed its policies for methotrexate in light of the Supreme Court ruling. That's because the drug can cause miscarriages and theoretically could be used in an attempt to induce an abortion.

"For me to have to be essentially babysat by some policy, rather than being trusted about how I handle my own body ... has made me angry," she said.

The Arthritis Foundation and American College of Rheumatology have both issued statements of concern about patients' access to the drug. Steven Schultz of the Arthritis Foundation said the group is working to determine how widespread the problem is. Patients having trouble getting the medication can contact the group's helpline, he said.

CONFUSING LAWS

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Many abortion laws are vague and they vary by state. That can leave physicians in a quandary. "We've asked some legislators, 'How are medical providers supposed to interpret the laws?'" said Dr. Dana Stone, who is based in Oklahoma, a state that recently banned almost all abortions. "They say, 'They'll figure it out,'" she said.

Today in History: July 17, Disneyland's opening day

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, July 17, the 198th day of 2022. There are 167 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 17, 1821, Spain ceded Florida to the United States.

On this date:

In 1862, during the Civil War, Congress approved the Second Confiscation Act, which declared that all slaves taking refuge behind Union lines were to be set free.

In 1918, Russia's Czar Nicholas II and his family were executed by the Bolsheviks.

In 1936, the Spanish Civil War began as right-wing army generals launched a coup attempt against the Second Spanish Republic.

In 1944, during World War II, 320 men, two-thirds of them African-Americans, were killed when a pair of ammunition ships exploded at the Port Chicago Naval Magazine in California.

In 1945, following Nazi Germany's surrender, President Harry S. Truman, Soviet leader Josef Stalin and British Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill began meeting at Potsdam in the final Allied summit of World War II.

In 1955, Disneyland had its opening day in Anaheim, California.

In 1975, an Apollo spaceship docked with a Soyuz spacecraft in orbit in the first superpower link-up of its kind.

In 1981, 114 people were killed when a pair of suspended walkways above the lobby of the Kansas City Hyatt Regency Hotel collapsed during a tea dance.

In 1996, TWA Flight 800, a Europe-bound Boeing 747, exploded and crashed off Long Island, New York, shortly after departing John F. Kennedy International Airport, killing all 230 people on board.

In 2009, former CBS anchorman Walter Cronkite died in New York at 92.

In 2014, Eric Garner, a Black man accused of selling loose, untaxed cigarettes, died shortly after being wrestled to the ground by New York City police officers; a video of the takedown showed Garner repeatedly saying, "I can't breathe." (Garner's family received \$5.9 million from the city in 2015 to settle a wrongful death claim.) All 298 passengers and crew aboard Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 were killed when the Boeing 777 was shot down over rebel-held eastern Ukraine; both Ukraine's government and pro-Russian separatists denied responsibility.

In 2020, civil rights icon John Lewis, whose bloody beating by Alabama state troopers in 1965 helped galvanize opposition to racial segregation, and who went on to a long and celebrated career in Congress, died at the age of 80.

Ten years ago: Israel plunged toward a political crisis after the largest party in the government quit, leaving Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in charge of a hard-line coalition opposed to most Mideast peace moves.

Five years ago: The latest Republican effort to repeal and replace "Obamacare" was dealt a fatal blow in the Senate when two more Republican senators announced their opposition to the measure. A white former Texas police officer, Roy Oliver, was indicted on a murder charge in the April shooting death of 15-year-old Jordan Edwards, who was in a car with four other Black teens when he was shot. (Oliver would be convicted of murder and sentenced to 15 years in prison.) A Georgia jury said CSX Transportation should pay \$3.9 million to the family of a movie worker killed on a railroad trestle in 2014 during the filming of a movie about musician Gregg Allman.

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One year ago: Syrian President Bashar Assad was sworn in for a fourth seven-year term in the war-torn country, pledging to overcome the impact of Western economic sanctions and retake territory still out of his control after 10 years of fighting. A baseball game between the San Diego Padres and the Washington Nationals was suspended in the sixth inning after a shooting outside Nationals Park that left three people injured; echoes of gunfire in the stadium prompted some fans to scramble for safety in the dugout.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Donald Sutherland is 87. Sportscaster Verne Lundquist is 82. Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, is 75. Rock musician Terry "Geezer" Butler is 73. Actor Lucie Arnaz is 71. Actor David Hasselhoff is 70. Rock musician Fran Smith Jr. (The Hooters) is 70. Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel is 68. Television producer Mark Burnett is 62. Actor Nancy Giles is 62. Singer Regina Belle is 59. Country singer Craig Morgan is 58. Rock musician Lou Barlow is 56. Contemporary Christian singer Susan Ashton is 55. Actor Andre Royo is 54. Actor Bitty Schram is 54. Actor Jason Clarke is 53. Movie director F. Gary Gray is 53. Rapper Sole' is 49. Country singer Luke Bryan is 46. Actor Eric Winter is 46. Actor Mike Vogel is 43. Actor Tom Cullen is 37. Actor Brando Eaton is 36. R&B singer Jeremih (jehr-uh-MY') is 35. Actor Summer Bishil is 34. Actor Billie Lourd is 30. Actor Leo Howard is 25.