

# Groton Daily Independent

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Thursday, Aug. 11  
First allowable day of volleyball and cross country practice

July 23-24  
Jr. Legion Region

July 29-Aug. 2  
State Legion at Gregory

August 5-7: State Jr. Legion at Clark

Thursday, Aug. 4  
First allowable day of football practice

Monday, Aug. 8  
First allowable day of boys golf practice

**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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## Agtegra Cooperative Announces New Leadership Team Members

(Aberdeen, SD) July 21, 2022 – Agtegra Cooperative is pleased to announce promotions to its Senior Leadership Team. Agtegra’s CEO Jason Klootwyk noted, “As we continue to invest in our core assets, we must also find ways to strategically grow the business and drive collaboration; with that in mind, I am announcing the following additions to our leadership team.”

Mike Traxinger has been promoted to SVP and General Counsel, Government Affairs. In this role Mike will lead Agtegra’s legal department, compliance, corporate governance, contractual transactions, public policy, and assist with board governance and relations. Mike joined Agtegra in the summer of 2014 as Corporate Attorney, and then became General Counsel and Director of Governmental Affairs in 2019, a position he has held until now. Traxinger is a graduate of Drake University Law School with a J.D. Degree and the University of Minnesota with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science and Journalism.



Travis Antonsen has been promoted to SVP, Grain Marketing & Rail Logistics. In this role Travis will lead Agtegra’s Grain Division including driving its origination strategy, leading product lines, and overseeing rail logistics. Travis joined Agtegra in 2009 as a Grain Merchandiser. He has held numerous positions in his 13 years with the company including domestic corn trader and Director of Origination. Since October Travis has led product line teams as well as the commodity risk committee in addition to his responsibilities as Wheat Product Line Manager. Antonsen is a graduate of South Dakota State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Ag-Business.



## Beloved monarch butterflies now listed as endangered

By CHRISTINA LARSON AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The monarch butterfly fluttered a step closer to extinction Thursday, as scientists put the iconic orange-and-black insect on the endangered list because of its fast dwindling numbers.

"It's just a devastating decline," said Stuart Pimm, an ecologist at Duke University who was not involved in the new listing. "This is one of the most recognizable butterflies in the world."

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature added the migrating monarch butterfly for the first time to its "red list" of threatened species and categorized it as "endangered" — two steps from extinct.

The group estimates that the population of monarch butterflies in North America has declined between 22% and 72% over 10 years, depending on the measurement method.

"What we're worried about is the rate of decline," said Nick Haddad, a conservation biologist at Michigan State University. "It's very easy to imagine how very quickly this butterfly could become even more imperiled."

Haddad, who was not directly involved in the listing, estimates that the population of monarch butterflies he studies in the eastern United States has declined between 85% and 95% since the 1990s.

In North America, millions of monarch butterflies undertake the longest migration of any insect species known to science.

After wintering in the mountains of central Mexico, the butterflies migrate to the north, breeding multiple generations along the way for thousands of miles. The offspring that reach southern Canada then begin the trip back to Mexico at the end of summer.

"It's a true spectacle and incites such awe," said Anna Walker, a conservation biologist at New Mexico BioPark Society, who was involved in determining the new listing.

A smaller group spends winters in coastal California, then disperses in spring and summer across several states west of the Rocky Mountains. This population has seen an even more precipitous decline than the eastern monarchs, although there was a small bounce back last winter.

Emma Pelton of the nonprofit Xerces Society, which monitors the western butterflies, said the butterflies are imperiled by loss of habitat and increased use of herbicides and pesticides for agriculture, as well as climate change.

"There are things people can do to help," she said, including planting milkweed, a plant that the caterpillars depend upon.

Nonmigratory monarch butterflies in Central and South America were not designated as endangered.

The United States has not listed monarch butterflies under the Endangered Species Act, but several



**FILE - Monarch butterflies land on branches at Monarch Grove Sanctuary in Pacific Grove, Calif., Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2021. On Thursday, July 21, 2022, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature said migrating monarch butterflies have moved closer to extinction in the past decade — prompting scientists to officially designate them as "endangered."** (AP Photo/Nic Coury, File)

environmental groups believe it should be listed.

The international union also announced new estimates for the global population of tigers, which are 40% higher than the most recent estimates from 2015.

The new figures, of between 3,726 and 5,578 wild tigers worldwide, reflect better methods for counting tigers and, potentially, an increase in their overall numbers, said Dale Miquelle, coordinator for the nonprofit Wildlife Conservation Society's tiger program.

In the past decade, tiger populations have increased in Nepal, northern China and perhaps in India, while tigers have disappeared entirely from Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, said Miquelle. They remain designated as endangered.

## Zebra Mussels Discovered in Enemy Swim Lake

Pierre, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) has confirmed the presence of zebra mussels in Enemy Swim Lake in Day County.

"An adult zebra mussel was found near the NeSoDak Beach area in early July," said Area Fisheries Supervisor, Mark Ermer. "Lake residents and GFP spent several weeks looking for additional mussels. One adult, of similar size to the first mussel discovered, was found near the Church Bay boat ramp."

Enemy Swim Lake is now considered infested with zebra mussels.

"The peak of summer is upon us and water users need to make sure they are practicing 'clean, drain, dry' every time they are on the water," said Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator, Tanner Davis.

\* **Clean** watercraft and trailers of all aquatic plants and mud.

\* **Drain** all water by removing all drains, plugs, bailers, or valves that retain water. Be sure to completely drain your lower unit of any water by lowering completely.

\* **Dry** all equipment that has made contact with the water before it's next use.

All watercraft encountering a Watercraft Inspection/Decontamination (WID) station including non-motorized watercraft (canoes, kayaks, SUPs, and inflatables) need to be inspected. GFP has inspection stations across the state including northeast South Dakota. Inspection stations are the first line of defense in preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species. GFP WID stations are equipped with hot water sprayers (140-120°F) that are able to kill any residual invasive mussel tissue or other aquatic invasive species.

Completely draining and drying a boat are the first steps in making sure invasive species are not transferred to other waters. It is important to note that invasive Zebra/Quagga mussels can survive up to 30 days out of water.

Mid-summer is a great time to start looking at submersed equipment such as boat docks, boat lifts, and hard substrate such as rocks and woody debris for zebra mussels. Zebra mussels can vary in size, depending on the age of the mussel. Newly formed mussels can be as microscopic as grains of sandpaper, while adults can grow to two inches in length. GFP encourages boaters to feel along their watercraft below the waterline for any roughness which may indicate that newly formed mussels, called settlers, may have attached.

For more information on zebra mussels, other aquatic invasive species, and how to properly decontaminate your watercraft, or to report potential infestations please visit [sdleastwanted.sd.gov](http://sdleastwanted.sd.gov) and report findings on the Citizen Monitoring page or email [tanner.davis@state.sd.us](mailto:tanner.davis@state.sd.us).



## Forest Service Taking Emergency Action to Protect Giant Sequoias

WASHINGTON, July 22, 2022 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service is initiating emergency fuels reduction treatments to provide for the long term survival of giant sequoia groves against immediate wildfire threats. These actions make use of the agency's existing authorities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to conduct emergency fuels treatments as expeditiously as possible.

"Without urgent action, wildfires could eliminate countless more iconic giant sequoias," said Forest Service Chief Randy Moore. "We can and must do more to protect giant sequoias using all the tools and flexibilities available to us. This emergency action to reduce fuels before a wildfire occurs will protect unburned giant sequoia groves from the risks of high-severity wildfires."

Encompassing approximately 13,377 acres that will protect 12 giant sequoia groves, the emergency fuels treatments would remove surface and ladder fuels that present the greatest wildfire risk and include hand cutting of small trees, mechanical removal of trees, application of borate on green stumps, pulling duff away from the base of large giant sequoias and prescribed burning.

Most of the planned treatments have already initiated NEPA required environmental reviews. The environmental review processes for two of the projects are scheduled to be completed by April 2023 and the other will be completed by November 2023. With the emergency action, giant sequoias could receive accelerated protection by as much as 9 to 12 months in most groves and years earlier in other groves. The intent is to complete treatments by 2023 but may continue through the end of 2024.

On the Sequoia National Forest, the estimated cost for the manual and mechanical treatments, including prescribed burn preparation on up to 11,945 acres, is approximately \$15 million, which the Forest Service has available thanks to funds from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and appropriations from Congress. Work on eight groves could be initiated this summer and work on three additional groves could begin this fall.

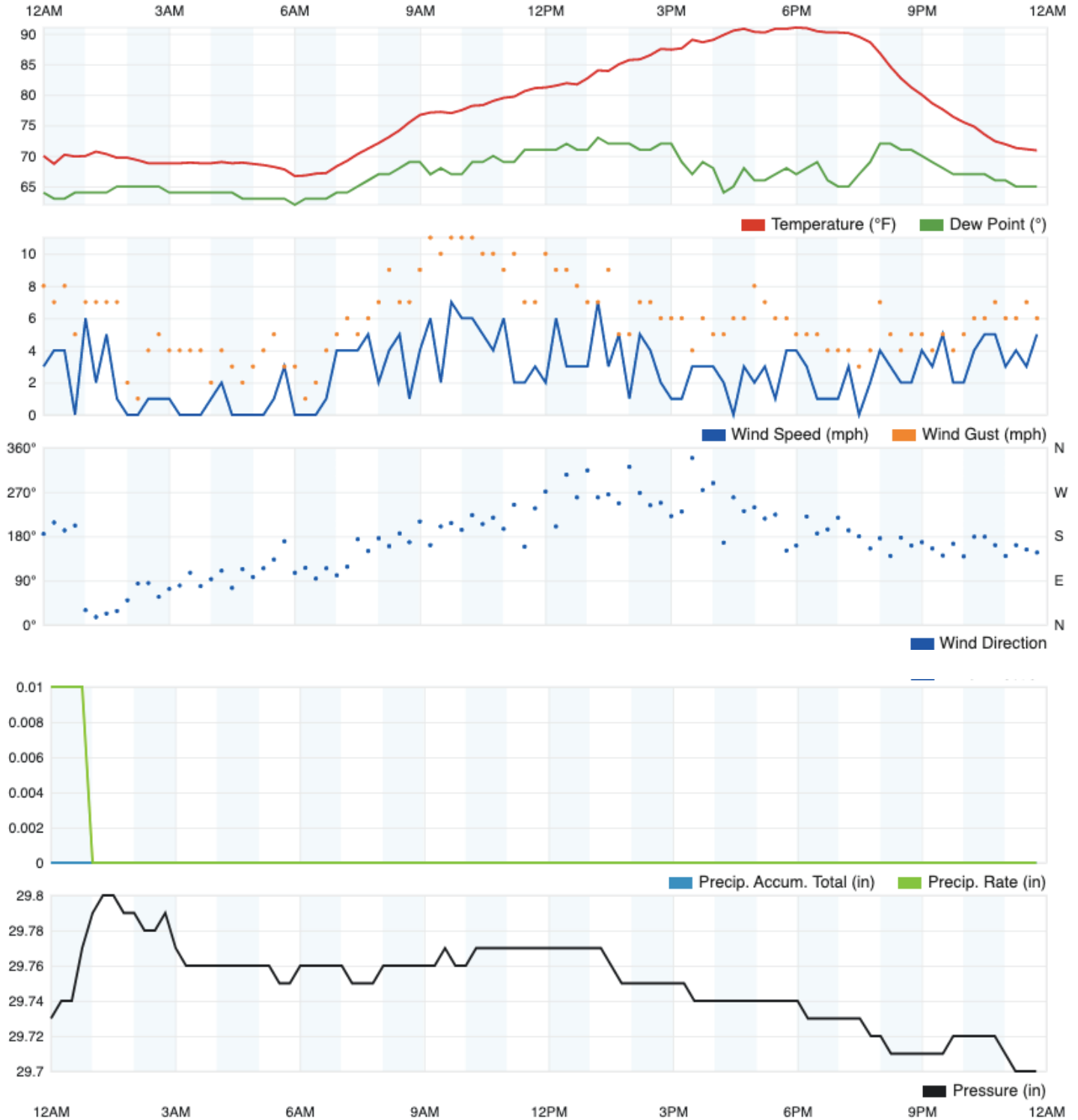
On the Sierra National Forest, approximately \$6 million is needed for manual and mechanical treatments, including prescribed burn preparation on up to 1,432 acres. Work could be initiated this summer on three groves.

Of the 37 giant sequoia groves found on 37,000 acres of national forests in California, all but five have burned or partially burned in recent wildfires, and many giant monarchs – the largest sequoias in a grove – were killed. Since 2015, wildfires have caused significant destruction of the giant sequoia groves, and have destroyed nearly one-fifth of all giant sequoias in the last two years. The emergency facing giant sequoias is unprecedented.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Saturday



Chance  
T-storms

High: 81 °F

Saturday  
Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 59 °F

Sunday



Sunny

High: 78 °F

Sunday  
Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 57 °F

Monday



Mostly Sunny

High: 81 °F

## Weather Outlook

Today

80s

isolated Showers & Thunderstorms



Tonight

High 50s to low 60s

Clear and comfortable



Sunday

Mid 70s to mid 80s

Sunny and seasonable



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

Updated: 7/23/2022 3:08 AM Central



A cold front makes its way across the area today bringing gusts up to 30 mph to central SD and a chance of showers and thunderstorms to northeast SD this morning. Temperatures today will be in the 80s with mostly cloudy skies becoming mostly sunny by late afternoon.



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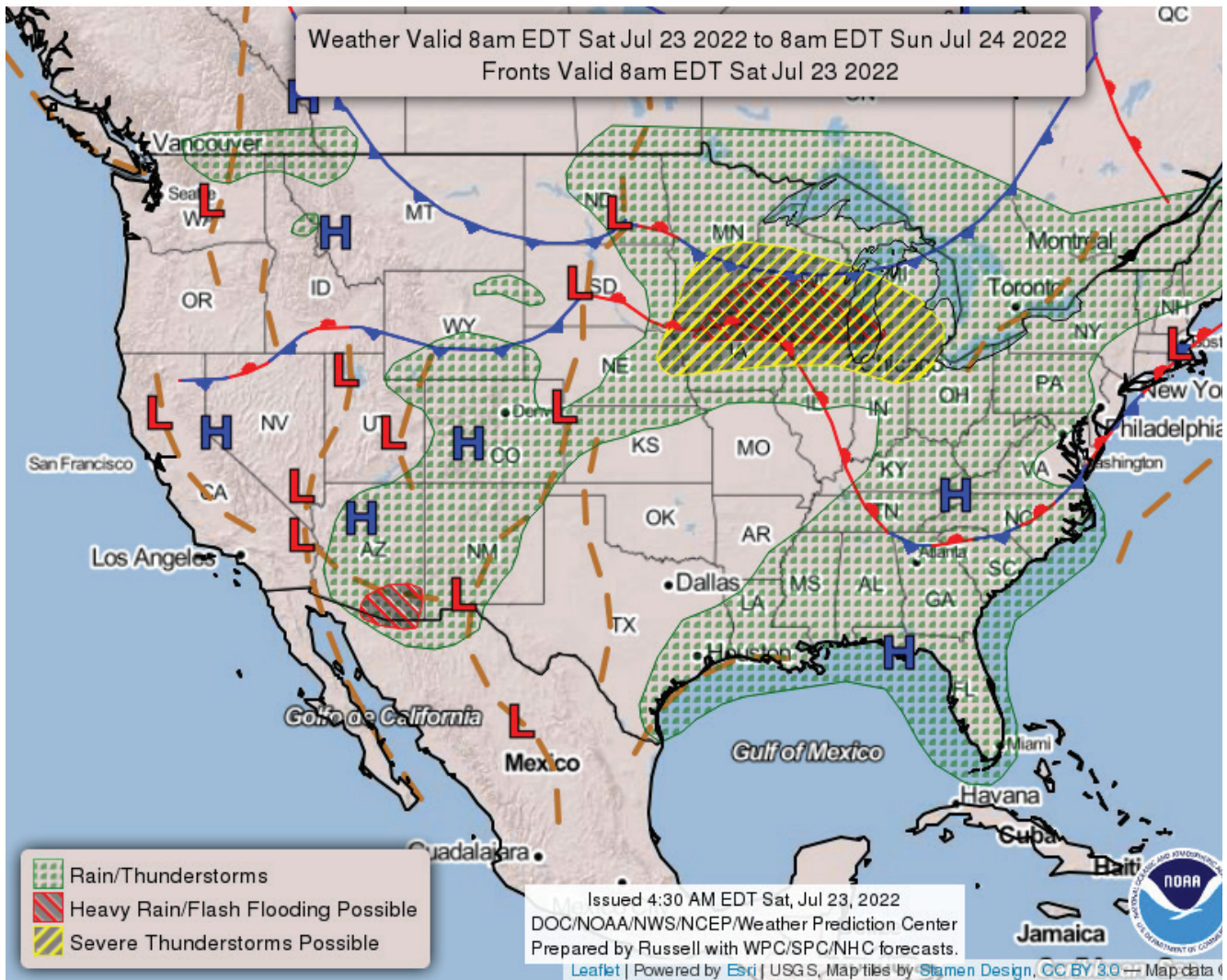
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 91 °F at 5:37 PM**  
**Low Temp: 66 °F at 6:05 AM**  
**Wind: 12 mph at 9:34 AM**  
**Precip: 0.00**

Day length: 15 hours, 7 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 109 in 1941  
Record Low: 41 in 1904  
Average High: 85°F  
Average Low: 60°F  
Average Precip in July.: 2.44  
Precip to date in July.: 2.36  
Average Precip to date: 13.45  
Precip Year to Date: 13.94  
Sunset Tonight: 9:12:41 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:06:14 AM





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## Today in Weather History

July 23, 2007: High heat indices along with very little wind contributed to the deaths of over 2800 cattle in Brown, Spink, Day, and Marshall Counties. Most of the cattle deaths occurred on July 23rd. The high heat indices continued through the 25th with some more cattle deaths, but protective measures kept the death count down. Most of the cattle that died were on feedlots. The total loss was around 3 million dollars.

July 23, 2010: A United States record setting hailstone fell from a powerful supercell thunderstorm moving southeast across central South Dakota. The record setting hailstone fell near Vivian, South Dakota and measured 8 inches in diameter, 18.625 inches in circumference, and weighed 1.9375 pounds. This hailstone broke the previous United States record for diameter (7.0 inches - 22 June 2003 in Aurora, NE) and weight (1.67 pounds - 3 September 1970 in Coffeyville, KS). The Aurora, Nebraska hailstone will retain the record for circumference (18.75 inches). Several other stones of 6 inches or more in diameter were measured during the storm survey.

Along with the huge hail, damaging winds more than 70 mph along with an isolated tornado occurred. The large hail and high winds caused extensive damage to homes, outbuildings, and vehicles as it moved southeast across the region. Some of the hail went entirely through car windshields, roofs, garages, and campers. The hail caused five minor injuries to motorists on Interstate 90 as it went through their windshields. A child was severely injured when the large hail completely shattered the glass in the mini-van he was traveling. The child suffered numerous cuts, many requiring stitches.

1788: Called the George Washington's Hurricane, this storm originated near Bermuda on the 19th before making landfall in Virginia. It passed directly over the Lower Chesapeake Bay and Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington. This track is very similar to the path of the Chesapeake-Potomac hurricane of 1933. At Norfolk, winds increased at 5 p.m. on the 23rd with the wind originating from the northeast. At 12:30 a.m., the wind suddenly shifted to the south and "blew a perfect hurricane, tearing down chimneys, fences"...some corn was also leveled. Also, large trees were uprooted, and houses were moved from their foundations.

Port Royal and Hobb's Hole experienced a violent northeast gale which drove several vessels ashore. In Fredricksburg, vast quantities of corn, tobacco, and fruit were destroyed. Houses and trees fell in significant numbers across Northumberland, Lancaster, Richmond, and Westmoreland counties. Crops were destroyed, and many livestock perished in Lower Mathews County. Many plantations saw their houses leveled. Homes were flooded with water six feet deep, and several inhabitants drowned.

Historical figures of the time logged the storm's antics. George Washington noted the sinking of the small ship Federalist and uprooted trees. Colonel James Madison, the father of the future president, experienced the passing of great winds and rains near Orange. In Alexandria, damage to wheat, tobacco, and corn was "beyond description." The information above is from the Weather Prediction Center and noted American historian David Ludlum.

2011: Chicago set an all-time daily record rainfall when 6.86 inches fell during the early morning hours of Saturday, July 23, 2011, at O'Hare airport. The previous daily record was 6.64 inches set on September 13, 2008.

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## ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING!

A poor widow had two sons. She was extremely consumed with their success and feared that they would fail. Both were self-employed. One sold umbrellas and the other one sold fans.

The first thing she would do each morning was to run to the window to check the weather. If it was raining, she would sigh and say, "Oh, me, no one will want to buy fans today. It's going to be cool." And, if it was sunny, she would fret and say, "Oh my, no one will need an umbrella because it's not raining."

One day a friend said to her, "Listen, if the sun is shining, someone will buy a fan and if it's raining, someone will buy an umbrella. The weather is always changing so someone will always buy one or the other."

Many of us allow the conditions around us to control the attitude that is in us. It's "what's out there" that controls "what's in here." How unfortunate! We have things backward. When we are "in Christ," we need to go to Him and ask Him to fill our hearts with thanksgiving and joy for all that we have "in Him." We have all of His promises available to us in His Word. And, if we accept them and act on them, rain or sun, come what may – God is in control and will give us what we need. "Greater is He who is within you than he who is in the world!"

Prayer: Lord, help us to see things through Your eyes, and believe that Your care for us exceeds every need we will ever have. May we accept Your promises. In Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture For Today: 5:16-17 Always be joyful. Never stop praying. 1 Thessalonians

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## 2022-23 Community Events

- 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  
07/24/2022: 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  
12/10/2022: Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-12pm  
01/29/2023 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am-1pm, Community Center  
01/29/2023 85th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)  
04/01/2023 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)  
04/22/2023 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)  
04/23/2023 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)  
05/06/2023 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)  
05/29/2023 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)  
07/04/2023 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration, 10am Start (4th of July)  
07/09/2023 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)  
09/09/2023 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)  
10/31/2023 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)  
10/31/2023 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm  
11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)



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## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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## News from the Associated Press

### SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

14-40-60-64-66, Mega Ball: 16, Megaplier: 3

(fourteen, forty, sixty, sixty-four, sixty-six; Mega Ball: sixteen; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$790,000,000

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: 119,000,000

### Sister: Hiker who died in Badlands was on graduation trip

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The sister of a St. Louis man who died while hiking in the Badlands of South Dakota said Friday that he was camping as part of a trip to celebrate graduating from college and got lost trying to find his way back to his car.

The Pennington County Sheriff's Office tweeted that 22-year-old Maxwell Right collapsed on an unmarked trail in Badlands National Park on Wednesday. He and a friend who was traveling with him had run out of water, according to the tweet. Temperatures in the Badlands had been approaching 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) during the first half of the week.

Right's sister, Lucille, said that the National Park Service told the family that her brother died surrounded by rangers. Authorities have not identified his friend, who the sheriff's office said was flown to a Rapid City hospital and placed under observation for exposure and dehydration.

The sheriff's office said in its tweet that the unmarked trail has been featured in a social media challenge. Lucille Right said her brother and his friend weren't taking part in any social media challenge, saying they were on a larger trip to celebrate Maxwell graduating from Missouri S&T and had planned to visit Mt. Rushmore on Wednesday evening.

Pennington County Sheriff's Office spokesperson Helene Duhamel referred questions Friday to the National Park Service. Messages left at the park's Badlands offices weren't immediately returned.

### Indigenous Canadians wary, hopeful as pope prepares apology

By PETER SMITH Associated Press

MASKWACIS, Alberta (AP) — To this day, Flo Buffalo doesn't drink milk — not since two nuns force-fed her the sour milk she had refused at the Catholic-run Ermineskin Indian Residential School for Indigenous children that she attended in the 1960s.

Holding out her right hand, she showed how she has never been able to fully straighten it out since a nun severely beat her with a stick.

"The nuns, they were real mean," Buffalo said.

With international attention focusing on the former school in the prairie town of Maskwacis as Pope Francis visits Monday to apologize for abuses in a system designed to sever Native children from their tribal, family and religious bonds, Indigenous Canadians such as Buffalo are voicing a range of skepticism, wariness and hope.

Buffalo, a member of the Samson Cree First Nation in central Alberta, doesn't often talk about her two years at the school. But ahead of the pontiff's visit, she sat down to relate her experiences to Associated Press journalists and a small group of teen girls who are learning about the traumatic legacy of the schools.

Speaking in the council chambers of the Montana First Nation, a neighboring Cree tribe where she now works, Buffalo recalled that the nuns, who were white, beat the girls when they spoke in their native Cree

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instead of English.

At the same time, Buffalo, 67, said she often defied the nuns. "I scared the hell out of them, because I wouldn't put up with their ..." she said, completing the sentence with a mischievous chuckle.

Buffalo still considers herself Catholic. But she's not going to attend Monday's event with Francis — she doesn't want to deal with the crowds, and the ones she holds responsible are the nuns who abused her and never offered an apology while they were alive.

"It shouldn't be him apologizing," Buffalo said. "It should be them."

When Mavis Moberly heard the pope was coming, the news triggered some of the trauma she carries from her years at a residential school in northern Alberta. But after tears, prayers and a traditional smudging ceremony, a purification rite with scented plants, she found herself looking forward to hearing the pope's apology.

"Maybe it's going to help me to heal and to have a little bit more inner peace," she said after last Sunday's Mass at Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples, a Catholic parish in Edmonton oriented to Indigenous people and culture.

The papal apology is years, if not generations, in the making.

From the 19th century into much of the 20th, Canada's government collaborated with Catholic and Protestant churches to run residential schools in "an education system in name only," designed to weaken tribal identities and Indigenous resistance to land grabs, according to a 2015 report by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

It identified 139 schools, the majority Catholic-run, where about 150,000 students were sent. "Children were abused, physically and sexually," the report said, adding that schools were unsanitary and unsafe facilities where thousands of children died of disease, fire and other causes.

For decades, various Catholic and Protestant church groups have offered apologies, and Pope Benedict XVI in 2009 expressed his "personal anguish."

But the painful history took on new urgency last year when surveys of former schools with ground-penetrating radar found evidence of hundreds of unmarked graves.

Pope Francis met with a Canadian Indigenous delegation this spring and apologized "for the deplorable conduct of those members of the Catholic Church" involved with the schools. He also heeded survivors' calls to make an apology on Canadian soil, leading to Monday's event where thousands of attendees are expected.

Today, the Ermineskin residential school has largely been torn down. In its place stands a newer set of school buildings, run by four Cree nations in and around Maskwacis. A large tipi in front of the secondary school demonstrates how educators are promoting pride in the once-suppressed Indigenous culture.

Rose Pipestem, a member of the Montana First Nation who is also a survivor of the Ermineskin school, said she will try to see the pope. But like Buffalo, she believes the perpetrators should have apologized.

"I'm going to go see him," she said, sitting in the council chambers near a line of photos of past Montana chiefs. "I'm not mad at him."

Pipestem doesn't have conscious memories of abuse at the school, where she lived from age 3 after her mother died. But a classmate told her years later that a nun had beaten her until she bled because she wasn't doing her work on the blackboard fast enough.

"It just shocked me," she said through tears.

Pipestem did not file a claim for compensation because she can't recall the incident. But she knows there was abuse at the school.

"I'm always grateful I'm still around," she said. "I think it kind of made me stronger." She reached a point where "I didn't believe in the Catholic religion. Why did they allow all these things to happen?"

Other survivors have found spiritual solace in Catholicism.

On Sunday, worshipers crowded into Sacred Heart for the rededication of the sanctuary after a fire. The newly restored space features large wooden beams in the shape of a tipi over the altar and evocative images of Jesus and his followers portrayed with Indigenous features.

Drummers accompanied a procession into the church, followed by a multicultural mix of musical styles



and a liturgy in English and Cree.

"This church has been a part of my healing journey," said Moberly, who has been attending for many years.

She said that as a young adult, still traumatized by her school experiences, she rejected the Catholic faith for a time, turned to drinking and made poor choices. But when she became a grandmother, she resolved to change her ways and set a strong example for others.

"It wasn't an easy task," she said. "There was many tears."

Church elder Fernie Marty, 73, said Francis' visit will not only bring reconciliation but encourage what he calls "reconcili-action."

"We all play a part in making sure that those kinds of atrocities never happen again on Canadian soil," Marty said.

Edmonton Archbishop Richard Smith said the pope's visit sends a message not only with words but with action, since he's coming to Canada even as he has canceled other trips due to health problems.

"This is showing ... how important it is for him to demonstrate personally his personal closeness to the Indigenous peoples," Smith said.

## Rights groups urge Sri Lanka not to use force on protesters

By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI Associated Press

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — International human rights groups on Saturday urged Sri Lanka's new president to immediately order security forces to cease use of force against protesters after troops and police cleared their main camp following months of demonstrations over the country's economic meltdown.

A day after President Ranil Wickremesinghe was sworn, hundreds of armed troops raided a protest camp outside the president's office in the early hours of Friday, attacking demonstrators with batons. Human Rights Watch said the action "sends a dangerous message to the Sri Lankan people that the new government intends to act through brute force rather than the rule of law."

Two journalists and two lawyers were also attacked by soldiers in the crackdown. Security forces arrested 11 people, including protesters and lawyers.

"Urgently needed measures to address the economic needs of Sri Lankans demand a government that respects fundamental rights," Meenakshi Ganguly, South Asia director at Human Rights Watch, said in a statement. "Sri Lanka's international partners should send the message loud and clear that they can't support an administration that tramples on the rights of its people."

Also condemning the attack, Amnesty International said "it is shameful that the new government resorted to such violent tactics within hours of coming to power."

"The protesters have a right to demonstrate peacefully. Excessive use of force, intimidation and unlawful arrests seem to be an endlessly repetitive pattern in which the Sri Lankan authorities respond to dissent and peaceful assembly," said Kyle Ward, the group's deputy secretary general.

Wickremesinghe, who previously served as prime minister six times, was sworn in as president a week after his predecessor, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, fled the country. Rajapaksa later resigned while exiled in Singapore.

Sri Lankans have taken to the streets for months to demand their top leaders step down to take responsibility for the economic chaos that has left the nation's 22 million people struggling with shortages of essentials, including medicine, fuel and food. While the protesters have focused on the Rajapaksa's family, Wickremesinghe also has drawn their ire as a perceived Rajapaksa surrogate.

Armed troops and police arrived in trucks and buses on Friday to clear the main protest camp the capital, Colombo, even though protesters had announced they would vacate the site voluntarily.

Sri Lanka's opposition, the United Nations, and the U.S. have denounced the government's heavy-handed tactics.

Despite heightened security outside the president's office, protesters have vowed to continue until Wickremesinghe resigns.

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On Friday, he appointed as prime minister a Rajapaksa ally, Dinesh Gunawardena.

Wickremesinghe on Monday declared a state of emergency as acting president in a bid to quell the protests. Just hours after he was sworn in, he issued a notice calling on the armed forces to maintain law and order — clearing the way for the move against the protest camp.

The protesters accuse Rajapaksa and his powerful family of siphoning money from government coffers and of hastening the country's collapse by mismanaging the economy. The family has denied the corruption allegations, but the former president acknowledged that some of his policies contributed to Sri Lanka's crisis.

The political turmoil has threatened efforts to seek rescue from the International Monetary Fund. Still, earlier this week, Wickremesinghe said bailout talks were nearing a conclusion.

The head of the IMF, Kristalina Georgieva, told the Japanese financial magazine Nikkei Asia this week that the IMF hopes for a deal "as quickly as possible."

## 'Day by day': Trade bans, inflation send food prices soaring

By AYA BATRAWY, EILEEN NG, OMAR FARUK and KAREEM CHEHAYEB Associated Press

Soki Wu's food stall, tucked in a food court in a shopping mall in Singapore, is a crowd favorite for its fresh, juicy "chicken rice," a national dish. But customers recently began complaining that his chicken didn't taste quite as good as it used to.

Wu was forced to switch to frozen chicken after Malaysia banned exports last month of live broiler chickens that are more affordable and better tasting in a bid to offset rising local prices. For Singapore, which sources a third of its poultry from Malaysia, the impact was immediate.

"This is unavoidable. Using frozen chickens have affected the taste of the dish, but we have no choice," Wu said.

As inflation surges around the world, politicians are scrambling for ways to keep food affordable as people increasingly protest the soaring cost of living. One knee-jerk response has been food export bans aimed at protecting domestic prices and supplies as a growing number of governments in developing nations try to show a nervous public that their needs will be met.

For business owners, the rising cost of cooking ingredients — from oil to chicken — has prompted them to raise prices, with people paying 10% to 20% more at Wu's food stall. For consumers, it has meant paying more for the same or lesser-quality food or curbing certain habits altogether.

In Lebanon, where endemic corruption and political stalemate has crippled the economy, the U.N. World Food Program is increasingly providing people with cash assistance to buy food, particularly after a devastating 2020 port blast that destroyed massive grain silos. Constant power cuts and high fuel prices for generators limit what people can buy because they can't rely on freezers and refrigerators to store perishables.

Tracy Saliba, a single mother of two and business owner in Beirut, says she used to spend around a quarter of her earnings on food. These days, half her income goes to feeding her family as the currency loses strength amid soaring prices.

"I'm not buying (groceries) like I used to," Saliba said. "I'm just getting the necessary items and food, like day by day."

Food prices have risen by nearly 14% this year in emerging markets and by over 7% in advanced economies, according to Capital Economics. In countries where people spend at least a third or more of their incomes on food, any sharp increase in prices can lead to crisis.

Capital Economics forecasts that households in developed markets will spend an extra \$7 billion a month on food and beverages this year and much of next year due to inflation.

The pain is being felt unevenly, with 2.3 billion people going severely or moderately hungry last year, according to a global report by the World Food Program and four other U.N. agencies.

Food prices accounted for about 60% of last year's increase in inflation in the Middle East and North Africa, with the exception of oil-producing Gulf countries. The situation is particularly dire for Sudan, where inflation is expected to hit 245% this year, and Iran, where prices spiked as much as 300% for chicken,

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eggs and milk in May, sparking panic and scattered protests.

In Somalia, where 2.7 million people cannot meet their daily food requirements and where children are dying of malnutrition, sugar is a source of energy. In May, a kilogram (2.2 pounds) of sugar cost about the equivalent of 72 cents in Mogadishu, the capital. A month later, it had shot up to \$1.28 a kilogram.

"In my home, I serve tea (with sugar) three times a day, but from now on, I have to reduce it drastically to only making it when guests arrive," said Asli Abdulkadir, a Somali housewife and mother of four.

People there are bracing for even higher costs after India announced it would cap sugar exports this year. Even if that doesn't reduce India's sugar exports compared with previous years, news of the restriction was enough to cause speculation among traders like Ahmed Farah in Mogadishu.

"The cost of sugar is expected to surge since Somalia counts heavily on the white sugar exported from India and a few brown sugars from Brazil," he said.

Food export restrictions aimed at protecting domestic supplies and capping inflation is one reason for the rising cost of food.

Food prices had been steadily climbing worldwide because of drought, supply chain issues, and high energy and fertilizer costs. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization says food commodity prices were up 23% last year.

Russia's war in Ukraine further sent the price of wheat and cooking oils up, fueling a global food crisis. There was a breakthrough this week to create safe corridors for Black Sea shipments, but Ukrainian ports have been blocked from exporting these key goods for months and it will take time to get them moving again to vulnerable countries worldwide.

There's concern that the impact of all these factors will lead more countries to resort to food export bans, which are felt globally. When Indonesia blocked the export of palm oil for a month in April, palm oil prices spiked by at least 200%.

Analysts say food export bans are shortsighted because they have a domino effect of driving up prices.

"I would say that roughly 80% of the bans we see are ill-advised — a kind-of, sort-of gut reaction by certain politicians," said David Laborde, who is credited with creating a food trade policy tracker at the International Food Policy Research Institute.

"In the world where you will be the only one to do it, that can make sense," he said. "But in a world where other countries can also do it, actually that's far from being a good idea."

Laborde said bans are "a very selfish policy ... because you try to get better by making things worse for others."

The list of food export restrictions Laborde has been tracking since the COVID-19 pandemic is long and changes constantly. Examples of their impact include Kazakhstan's restrictions on grains and oil on prices in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan; Cameroon's rice export restriction on Chad; and Tunisia's fruit and vegetable restrictions on Libya.

In Singapore, 29-year-old Wu is hopeful he can keep the family business running as Singapore's government signed off on Indonesia as a new chicken supplier.

"Things will get better," he said. "(This) will only make us more resilient."

## **Pope's Indigenous tour signals a rethink of mission legacy**

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis' trip to Canada to apologize for the horrors of church-run Indigenous residential schools marks a radical rethink of the Catholic Church's missionary legacy, spurred on by the first pope from the Americas and the discovery of hundreds of probable graves at the school sites.

Francis has said his weeklong visit, which begins Sunday, is a "penitential pilgrimage" to beg forgiveness on Canadian soil for the "evil" done to Native peoples by Catholic missionaries. It follows his April 1 apology in the Vatican for the generations of trauma Indigenous peoples suffered as a result of a church-enforced policy to eliminate their culture and assimilate them into Canadian, Christian society.

Francis' tone of personal repentance has signaled a notable shift for the papacy, which has long ac-



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knowledgeable abuses in the residential schools and strongly asserted the rights and dignity of Indigenous peoples. But past popes have also, in the same breath, hailed the sacrifice and holiness of the European Catholic missionaries who brought Christianity to the Americas — something Francis, too, has done but isn't expected to emphasize during this trip.

Cardinal Michael Czerny, a Canadian Jesuit who is a top papal adviser at the Vatican, recalled that early on in his papacy, Francis asserted that no single culture can claim a hold on Christianity, and that the church cannot demand that people on other continents imitate the European way of expressing the faith.

"If this conviction had been accepted by everyone involved in the centuries after the 'discovery' of the Americas, much suffering would have been avoided, great developments would have occurred and the Americas would be all-around better," he told The Associated Press in an email.

The trip won't be easy for the 85-year-old Francis or residential school survivors and their families. Francis can no longer walk without assistance and will be using a wheelchair and cane because of painful strained knee ligaments. Trauma experts are being deployed at all events to provide mental health assistance for school survivors, given the likelihood of triggering situations.

"It is an understatement to say there are mixed emotions," said Chief Desmond Bull of the Louis Bull Tribe, one of the First Nations that are part of the Maskwacis territory where Francis will deliver his first sweeping apology on Monday near the site of a former residential school.

The Canadian government has admitted that physical and sexual abuse were rampant in the state-funded, Christian schools that operated from the 19th century to the 1970s. Some 150,000 Indigenous children were taken from their families and forced to attend in an effort to isolate them from the influence of their homes, Native languages and cultures.

The legacy of that abuse and isolation from family has been cited by Indigenous leaders as a root cause of the epidemic rates of alcohol and drug addiction on Canadian reservations.

"For survivors from coast to coast, this is an opportunity — the first and maybe the last — to perhaps find some closure for themselves and their families," said Grand Chief Georg Arcand Jr. of the Confederacy of Treaty Six in Maskwacis.

"This will be a difficult process but a necessary one," he said.

Unlike with most papal trips, the diplomatic protocols of a state visit are taking a back seat to personal encounters with First Nations, Metis and Inuit survivors. Francis doesn't even meet formally with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau until midway through, in Quebec City.

Francis is also ending the trip in unusual style, stopping in Iqaluit, Nunavut — the farthest north he's ever traveled — to bring his apology to the Inuit community before flying back to Rome.

As recently as 2018, Francis had refused to personally apologize for residential school abuses, even after Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2015 documented institutional blame and specifically recommended a papal apology to be delivered on Canadian soil.

Trudeau traveled to the Vatican in 2017 to appeal to Francis to apologize, but the pontiff felt "he could not personally respond" to the call, Canadian bishops said at the time.

What changed? The first pope from the Americas, who has long defended the rights of Indigenous peoples, had already apologized in Bolivia in 2015 for colonial-era crimes against Native peoples in the region.

In 2019, Francis — an Argentine Jesuit — hosted a big Vatican conference on the Amazon highlighting that injustices Native peoples suffered during colonial times were still continuing, with their lands and resources exploited by corporate interests.

Then in 2021, the remains of around 200 children were found at the site of what was once Canada's largest Indigenous residential school, in Kamloops, British Columbia. More probable graves followed outside other former residential schools.

"It was only when our children were beginning to be found in mass graves, garnering international attention, that light was brought to this painful period in our history," said Bull, the Louis Bull Tribe chief.

After the discovery, Francis finally agreed to meet with Indigenous delegations this past spring and promised to come to their lands to apologize in person.

"Obviously there are wounds that remained open and require a response," Vatican spokesman Matteo

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Bruni said, when asked about the evolution of the papal response.

One of those wounds concerns the papal influences in the so-called Doctrine of Discovery, the 19th-century international legal concept that is often understood as legitimizing European colonial seizure of land and resources from Native peoples.

For decades, Indigenous peoples have demanded the Holy See formally rescind the 15th century papal bulls, or decrees, that gave European kingdoms the religious backing to claim lands their explorers "discovered" for the sake of spreading the Christian faith.

Church officials have long rejected those concepts, insisted the decrees merely sought to ensure European expansion would be peaceful, and said they had been surpassed by subsequent church teachings strongly affirming the dignity and rights of Indigenous peoples.

But the matter is still raw for Michelle Schenandoah, a member of the Oneida Nation Wolf Clan, who was the last person to address the pope when the First Nations delegation met with him March 31.

Wearing a cradle board on her back to represent the children whose lives were lost in residential schools, she told him the Doctrine of Discovery had "led to the continual taking of our babies."

"It deprived us of our dignity, our freedom, and led to the exploitation of our Mother Earth," she said. She begged Francis to "release the world from its place of enslavement" caused by the decrees.

Asked about the calls, Bruni said there was an articulated "reflection" under way in the Holy See but he didn't think anything would be announced during the trip.

## Trump, Pence campaign for rivals in Ariz. governor's race

By JONATHAN J. COOPER Associated Press

PEORIA, Ariz. (AP) — Former President Donald Trump and his estranged vice president, Mike Pence, held rival campaign events in Arizona on Friday, turning the governor's race into a broader referendum on the Republican Party's future.

Trump and Pence both talked up the successes of their administration and hammered President Joe Biden, but neither directly addressed the other or the growing rift between them.

Pence, who this week added his name to a growing list of GOP establishment figures endorsing housing developer Karrin Taylor Robson, offered only an oblique critique of the Republicans still pushing the lie that Trump lost because of fraud.

If you elect Robson, Pence said, "you can send a deafening message heard all across America that the Republican Party is the party of the future."

He was more direct later on Twitter: "Some people want this election to be about the past, but elections are always about the future. Democrats would love nothing more than for Republicans to take our eye off the ball and focus on days gone by."

Robson says the 2020 elections "weren't fair," accusing "liberal judges" of changing the rules late in the cycle and the media and big tech of suppressing conservative voices. But she has stopped short of saying Trump lost because of fraud.

Her main rival, former television anchor Kari Lake, has embraced Trump's election lies along with his combative approach to his political enemies and the media.

"No one understands better than Kari how to fight back against the fake news media and the radical left," Trump said Friday evening during his own rally in Prescott Valley, one of the most conservative areas of Arizona.

Trump took aim at two Arizona Republicans who refused to go along with his efforts to remain in office after losing to Biden. He said state House Speaker Rusty Bowers, who testified last month to the House Jan. 6 committee, "participated against the Republican Party." He said Gov. Doug Ducey has failed to secure the border with Mexico.

Robson is a lawyer and housing developer who is locking up support from mainstream GOP figures growing increasingly comfortable with breaking from Trump. In addition to Pence, her supporters include former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and term-limited Gov. Doug Ducey, who famously silenced a call

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from Trump while certifying Democrat Joe Biden's 2020 presidential victory in Arizona.

Telegenic and already well-known from her decades anchoring the evening news in Phoenix, Lake has energized Trump's most ardent supporters in Arizona. But she faces a potentially close contest with Robson, whose family's vast fortune has allowed her to vastly outspend Lake with early voting underway.

"As your governor I want to bring those America First Trump policies here to Arizona" Lake said. "We're going to secure that border. We are going to restore honesty and faith in our elections."

Pence highlighted Lake's past support for Barack Obama's presidential campaign and a "not my president" meme the then-news anchor posted as Trump prepared for his 2017 inauguration.

"You need a governor that's supported every conservative cause from Ronald Reagan to Donald Trump," Pence said of Robson, who worked in the Reagan administration and raised money for Trump's campaign along with her husband, housing developer Ed Robson, one of Arizona's wealthiest residents.

Robson has also donated to Democrats.

Robson, Pence and Ducey also discussed border security during a second event in Tucson at the headquarters for the Border Patrol union, which staunchly supported Trump but broke with him and endorsed Robson.

"Securing the border takes two things: resources and will power," Robson said. "President Trump and Vice President Pence already showed that it can be done."

Trump and Pence have occasionally taken different sides in primaries this year, but this is the first time that they will have appeared in the same state on the same day to rally for their preferred candidates. The split-screen moment marks a more confrontational phase in their relationship as they both consider running for president in 2024.

It also comes just a day after the House Jan. 6 committee revealed new details about the violent insurrection at the U.S. Capitol that fractured the relationship between the two men. The committee recounted how Trump refused to call off the mob attacking the Capitol as Pence, just feet away from rioters, was whisked to safety.

The committee played audio from an unidentified White House security official who said Pence's Secret Service agents "started to fear for their own lives" at the Capitol and left messages for their loved ones in case they didn't survive. Shortly afterward, at 2:24 p.m. on Jan. 6, 2021, Trump tweeted that Pence didn't have the "courage" to block or delay the election results as Congress was certifying Biden's victory.

"Mike Pence let me down," an unidentified White House employee testified Trump telling him at the end of the day on Jan. 6.

Trump did not talk about Pence Friday night, but did push back against earlier testimony by former White House aide Cassidy Hutchinson, who said she saw a White House valet cleaning up a mess after an angry Trump smashed a plate and the remains of his lunch on a wall.

"They have me throwing food," Trump said. "I don't throw food in the White House. I don't throw food anywhere. I eat the food."

Trump and Pence will again cross paths next week as the former president returns to the nation's capital for the first time since leaving the White House.

The Arizona primary is among Trump's last opportunities to settle scores and install allies to lead states that may prove decisive if he decides to run again in 2024. Trump and Pence were also at odds in the primary for Georgia governor, where the Pence-backed incumbent Brian Kemp easily defeated former U.S. Sen. David Perdue, who had Trump's support.

Arizona, a longtime Republican stronghold whose move toward the center accelerated during Trump's presidency, was central Trump's push to remain in power despite his loss. Trump pressed state officials to block the certification of Biden's victory and, when he failed, his allies in Congress objected to counting the state's 11 electoral votes.

Since the election, Trump supporters have recounted ballots and analyzed vote-counting machines in an attempt to prove something was amiss.

Federal and state election officials and Trump's own attorney general have said there is no credible evidence the election was tainted. Trump's allegations of fraud were also roundly rejected by courts, including

by judges Trump appointed.

## Walker aims to pivot focus back to Dems in tight Ga. race

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

ALTO, Georgia (AP) — Republican U.S. Senate nominee Herschel Walker commiserated as north Georgia farmers bemoaned environmental regulations and rising costs of doing business. Minutes before, the former football star and political newcomer volleyed with journalists on issues ranging from gas prices to abortion.

In both audiences, Walker tried every way he could to steer the conversation back to Sen. Raphael Warnock and a Democratic administration whose popularity lags in this battleground state that President Joe Biden won by the narrowest of margins.

"We need to be talking about what people are concerned about, that my opponent seems to be voting with Joe Biden rather than the people of Georgia," Walker said at a north Georgia produce market. "That's what we need to be putting headlines about what Herschel Walker is saying ... because the people of Georgia are hurting."

With generationally high inflation and Biden's low popularity, Republican candidates across the U.S. are spending this election year similarly trying to keep the focus on Democrats. But for Walker, the sweeping partisan jabs on display at multiple campaign stops this week offered a chance to steady an otherwise haphazard campaign.

Some Republicans quietly acknowledge that such deflection may be the only way Walker can win this midterm contest that will help determine control of a Senate now split 50-50 between the two major parties.

"Look, it's not how many times you get knocked down, it's how many times you get back up," said state Sen. Butch Miller, as he campaigned with Walker in north Georgia.

Walker, 60, cruised to the GOP nomination in May, mostly on his celebrity status as the star running back on the University of Georgia's national championship football team in 1980 and his personal friendship with former President Donald Trump.

But along the way, Walker has faced new disclosures on past violent threats against his first wife. He's exaggerated his academic and business records, and alternately denied ever making such statements. He acknowledged fathering multiple children he hadn't publicly mentioned previously despite spending decades blasting absent fathers. And Walker recently was captured on video at a closed campaign event offering a nonsensical explanation of the climate crisis as China sending its "bad air" to the U.S. while stealing "our good air."

Warnock's campaign and allied Democratic campaign arms reacted with an advertising onslaught casting Walker as unqualified.

"Every one of Walker's likes, scandals and bizarre statements proves that he isn't ready to represent to represent the people of Georgia and can't be trusted to serve in the U.S. Senate," said Dan Gottlieb, a spokesman for the Georgia Democratic Party.

All of that played out as Warnock has raked in campaign cash — more than \$17 million in the second quarter of 2020 and \$70 million-plus for the cycle. That has allowed the senator to develop a personal brand that positions him well ahead of Biden among Georgia voters and mutes any Republican contention that 2020 was an aberration in the state.

Just a few cycles ago, any Republican nominee would have been a prohibitive favorite in a midterm Senate election here, regardless of economic conditions or who occupied the White House. Instead, decades of growth, concentrated in metro Atlanta, have yielded a politically, racially and ethnically diverse population more open to electing Democrats. Trump's underperformance among college-educated whites accelerated the shift, as did Democrats' organizing efforts.

That led to Biden outpolling Trump by about 12,000 votes out of 5 million cast — a record November turnout for Georgia. Warnock followed with a wider margin in a January special election runoff: 94,000 votes out of almost 4.5 million cast, a record runoff turnout.



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Republicans have answered Walker's stumbles with an influx of experienced aides for the first-time candidate and visits to the state by national Republican operatives. Walker aides said the coming weeks will be built around various policy themes, with targeted attacks on Warnock.

It's not so much a campaign reset, the aides said, since mid- to late summer is nearly always when general election campaigns ratchet up. But it's an effort clearly aimed at changing the narrative around the matchup. The opening salvo was agriculture. Public safety and crime come next. The economy will follow.

Walker himself talked this week of "listening sessions" built around policy topics. He showed some evidence of those sessions in turning most any topic back to Warnock, Biden and the economy.

"Terrible, terrible leadership," he called it, adding that working-class Georgians "know it's not right."

He demonstrated an increasing familiarity with the details of Warnock's record when he blasted the idea of suspending the federal gas tax, something the senator proposed. Walker called that "the hero effect ... I cause the problem and then you call me to come put it out."

Yet there were flashes of the tangents and falsehoods that have drawn negative attention already.

At a livestock auction outside Athens, Walker again denied he ever said he'd graduated from the University of Georgia, accusing his questioner of being a "Raphael Warnock guy." Walker has made such claims on video; he never graduated. Later, Walker essentially committed to debate Warnock in October, only to have his campaign follow up with a series of conditions.

In a discussion about immigration, Walker offered bromides about the U.S. needing "legal immigration," only to have Miller step in to talk about specific visa programs. In a roundtable on agriculture, Miller and Terry Rogers, a former state representative, again filled in many details.

When farmers complained about the Biden administration's advocacy of electric farming vehicles, Walker didn't just focus on cost but questioned the technology itself. "It's only gonna run for a certain amount of time," he said. "You gotta charge it for eight hours. You'll never get any work done."

Miller downplayed any cumulative damage to Walker's prospects but said it's critical for the Republican nominee to crystallize his case against Warnock and weave in his own biography more effectively.

"One of his strongest virtues is his relatability to people, and he's getting out and doing that," Miller said. As for broader attacks about inflation and the economy, Miller added, Walker has a convenient ally: "It's all true."

## From 'an attempted coup' to chaos, Jan. 6 hearing moments

By The Associated Press undefined

WASHINGTON (AP) — Through eight hearings, 20 live witnesses and dozens of hours of recorded testimony, the House Jan. 6 panel has focused its case squarely on former President Donald Trump.

The panel has unveiled stunning evidence about the Capitol insurrection over six weeks of hearings, laying out in vivid detail what the panel calls an "attempted coup" by Trump as he desperately sought to overturn Joe Biden's election. Culling material from more than 1,000 witnesses, lawmakers have shown that officials inside the government fought Trump's schemes at every turn, calling them "nuts" and "unhinged."

From jaw-dropping testimony, to shocking video, to never-before-seen documents, revelations came fast during the tightly scripted hearings. Here are the moments that stood out:

### 'AN ATTEMPTED COUP'

The first hearing, aired in prime time and watched by more than 20 million viewers, set the stage for the next seven.

It laid out the conclusion that the panel would come back to in every hearing: that Trump conspired to overturn his own defeat, taking actions that sparked the violent insurrection at the Capitol, when hundreds of his supporters beat police and broke through windows and doors to interrupt the certification of President Joe Biden's victory.

"January 6th was the culmination of an attempted coup, a brazen attempt, as one rioter put it shortly after January 6th, to overthrow the government," said Mississippi Rep. Bennie Thompson, the Democratic chairman of the panel. "The violence was no accident. It represents seeing Trump's last stand, most des-

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perate chance to halt the transfer of power.”

## ‘CARNAGE’ AT THE CAPITOL

Capitol Police Officer Caroline Edwards, one of two witnesses at the first hearing, described what she saw outside the Capitol on Jan. 6 as a “war scene.” As some Republicans, including Trump, have tried to downplay the violence of the insurrection, calling it “peaceful,” Edwards recalled the brutality she experienced on the front lines. She suffered a traumatic head injury that day as some of the first protesters barreled through the flimsy bike rack barriers that she and other officers were trying to hold.

“I couldn’t believe my eyes,” Edwards testified. “There were officers on the ground. You know, they were bleeding. They were throwing up. ... It was carnage. It was chaos.”

## ‘DETACHED FROM REALITY’

The committee has used clips of its interview with former Attorney General Bill Barr in almost every hearing, showing the public over and over his definitive statements that the election was not stolen by Biden — and his description of Trump’s resistance as he told the president the truth.

At the second hearing, the panel showed a clip of Barr recalling how he told Trump to his face that the Justice Department had found no evidence of the widespread voter fraud that Trump was claiming. Barr said he thought Trump had become “detached from reality” if he really believed his own theories and said there was “never an indication of interest in what the actual facts were.”

“And my opinion then and my opinion now is that the election was not stolen by fraud and I haven’t seen anything since the election that changes my mind on that,” Barr said.

## A TENSE CONVERSATION

One question going into the hearings was what Trump and Vice President Mike Pence talked about in a phone call the morning of Jan. 6. The conversation came after Trump had pressured his vice president for weeks to try and somehow object or delay as he presided over Biden’s certification. Pence firmly resisted, and would gavel down Trump’s defeat — and his own — in the early hours of Jan. 7, after rioters had been cleared from the Capitol.

While only Trump and Pence were on the Jan. 6 call, White House aides filled in some details at the committee’s third hearing by recounting what they heard Trump say on his end of the line.

“Wimp is the word I remember,” said former Trump aide Nicholas Luna. “You’re not tough enough,” recalled Keith Kellogg, Pence’s national security adviser. “It became heated” after starting out in a calmer tone, said White House lawyer Eric Herschmann.

“It was a different tone than I’d heard him take with the vice president before,” said Ivanka Trump.

## 40 FEET AWAY

Encouraged by Trump’s tweet, after the attack had started, that Pence “didn’t have the courage to do what should have been done,” rioters at the Capitol singled out the vice president. Many chanted “Hang Mike Pence!” as they moved through the building. Pence evacuated the Senate just minutes before the chamber was breached, and later was rushed to safety as rioters were just 40 feet away.

Greg Jacob, the president’s lawyer, testified at the third hearing and said he had not known they were that close.

Jacob said Secret Service agents wanted them to leave the building but Pence refused to get in the car. “The vice president didn’t want to take any chance” that the world would see him leaving the Capitol, Jacob said.

## ‘I WILL NOT BREAK MY OATH’

At the committee’s fourth hearing, state officials detailed the extraordinary pressure the president put on them to overturn their states’ legitimate and certified results. Rusty Bowers, Arizona’s House speaker, told the committee how Trump asked him directly to appoint alternate electors falsely stating that he had won the state of Arizona and not Biden.

Bowers detailed additional calls with Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani. “I will not do it,” Bowers told him, adding: “You are asking me to do something against my oath, and I will not break my oath.”

## LIVES UPENDED

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Georgia election workers Wandrea "Shaye" Moss and her mother, Ruby Freeman, also testified before the panel in the fourth hearing, describing constant threats after Trump and his allies spread false rumors that they introduced suitcases of illegal ballots and committed other acts of election fraud. The Justice Department debunked those claims.

The two women said they had their lives upended by Trump's false claims and his efforts to go after them personally. Through tears, Moss told lawmakers that she no longer leaves her house.

In videotaped testimony, Freeman said there is "nowhere I feel safe" after the harassment she experienced.

## JUSTICE DEPARTMENT RESISTS THE SCHEME

When his efforts to overturn his defeat failed in the courts and in the states, Trump turned his focus to the leadership of the Justice Department.

Richard Donoghue, the acting No. 2 at the time, testified about his resistance to entreaties by another department official, Jeffrey Clark, who was circulating a draft letter recommending that battleground states reconsider the election results. Trump at one point floated replacing then-acting Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen with Clark, but backed down after Donoghue and others threatened to resign.

"For the department to insert itself into the political process this way, I think would have had grave consequences for the country," Donoghue testified. "It may very well have spiraled us into a constitutional crisis."

## 'THEY'RE NOT HERE TO HURT ME'

In a surprise sixth hearing, former White House aide Cassidy Hutchinson recounted some of Trump's actions on Jan. 6, including his dismissive response when told that some in the crowd waiting for him to speak outside the White House were armed.

"I was in the vicinity of a conversation where I overheard the president say something to the effect of, 'I don't effing care that they have weapons,'" Hutchinson said. "They're not here to hurt me. Take the effin' mags away. Let my people in. They can march to the Capitol from here."

Upset that the crowd didn't appear larger, Trump told his aides to take the metal-detecting magnetometers away. In the coming hours, he would step on the stage and tell them to "fight like hell."

Hutchinson also described Trump's anger after security officials told him he couldn't go to the U.S. Capitol with his supporters after he had told them he would. She said she was told that the president even grabbed the steering wheel in the presidential SUV when he was told he couldn't go.

For the president to have visited the Capitol during Biden's certification, and as his supporters descended on the building, would have been unprecedented.

## 'UNHINGED' WHITE HOUSE MEETING

At its seventh hearing, the committee painstakingly reconstructed a Dec. 18 meeting at the White House where outside advisers to Trump pushing election fraud claims clashed with White House lawyers and others who were telling him to give up the fight.

The six-hour meeting featured profanity, screaming and threats of fisticuffs, according to the participants, as Trump lawyer Sidney Powell and others threw out conspiracy theories, including that the Democrats were working with Venezuelans and that voting machines were hacked. Pat Cipollone, the top White House lawyer, testified that he kept asking for evidence, to no avail.

Hours later, at 1:42 a.m., Trump sent a tweet urging supporters to come for a "big protest" on Jan. 6: "Will be wild," Trump promised.

## 187 MINUTES

The final hearing focused on what Trump was doing for 187 minutes that afternoon, between his speech at the rally and when he finally released a video telling the rioters to go home at 4:17 p.m.

They showed that Trump was sitting at a dining room table near the Oval Office, watching Fox News coverage of the violence. But he made no calls for help — not to the Defense Department, the Homeland Security Department nor the attorney general — even as his aides repeatedly told him to call it off.

In the video released at 4:17 p.m., as some of the worst of the fighting was still happening down the

street, Trump told rioters to go home but said they were "very special."

The committee showed never-before-seen outtakes of a speech Trump released on Jan. 7 in which he condemned the violence and promised an orderly transition of power. But he bristled at one line in the prepared script, telling his daughter Ivanka Trump and others in the room, "I don't want to say the election is over."

## Jan. 6 hearings traced an arc of 'carnage' wrought by Trump

By CALVIN WOODWARD and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — To understand how Donald Trump's desperation and lies became a potent danger to democracy, consider the ginger mints.

Mints featured in one of the absurdist but toxic episodes fleshed out in the Jan. 6 hearings, which now pause even as the Justice Department presses ahead on a parallel criminal investigation that it calls the most important in its history.

Here's how one conspiracy theory, in a dark sea of them, was born:

A mother-daughter team at a Georgia elections center shared the treat during a long election night. Someone videotaped them and chose to believe the mint mother gave to daughter was a USB port. Trump's lawyer spread the accusation that the video caught the women using the device to try to corrupt the election against the president.

Frantic to stay in power, grasping at anything, Trump ran with the lie. He attacked the mother by name, branded her a "professional vote scammer," and soon vigilantes showed up at a family home intending to execute a "citizens' arrest," the committee was told. For the love of mints.

The episode fed into a web of fabricated stories, melting under scrutiny like snowflakes in a Georgia summer. The hearings illustrated how those stories fueled the anger of Trump's supporters across the U.S. and especially those who stormed the Capitol, many armed and out for blood.

Long before the committee called its first witness, scenes of the rampage had been burned into the public consciousness. What new information could possibly come from it? Plenty, it turned out. And as the inquiry continues, with more hearings planned in September, still more evidence is being gathered.

With seven Democrats working with two Republicans on the outs with their party, the committee did what Trump's two impeachment trials couldn't — establish a coherent story out of the chaos instead of two partisan ones clawing at each other.

"American carnage," Democratic Rep. Jamie Raskin of Maryland, lead manager of the second Trump impeachment and a committee member on this inquiry, said of the latter's bottom line. "That's Donald Trump's true legacy." Not the carnage Trump spoke of in his inaugural address.

In a methodical, even mannerly process rarely seen from Congress, the panel exposed behind-the-scenes machinations laying bare the lengths Trump and his enablers went to keep him in power and the extent to which his inner circle knew his case about a stolen election was bogus. Some told him that to his face; others humored him.

At every turn the hearings made clear Trump was willing to see the legislative branch of government and democratic processes in state after state consumed in the bonfire of his vanities.

He was told the rioters were out to find his vice president, Mike Pence, at the Capitol and hang him. Trump's chief of staff related to another aide the president's thoughts on the matter, that Pence "deserves it," according to testimony.

Trump was told many of his supporters that day bore arms. He didn't "effing care."

"They're not here to hurt ME," he said, according to testimony. "Take the effing mags away. Let my people in, they can march to the Capitol from here. Let the people in, take the effing mags away." It is unlikely he said "effing."

He wanted the magnetometers, or metal detectors, removed from security lines so loyalists in town for his rally could pack the space, underscoring a Trump obsession with crowd size that was evident from the first day of his presidency.



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The committee pinpointed a range of renegade if not criminal options that were floated in the White House, which taken together resembled a tin-pot coup in the country Ronald Reagan called democracy's "shining city upon a hill."

A city, Reagan imagined, "built on rocks stronger than oceans, windswept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace."

That bedrock convulsed as Trump and his allies contemplated an executive order to seize voting machines and other steps that democracies don't take.

"The idea that the federal government could come in and seize election machines, no," Pat Cipollone, the White House counsel, said as he recounted a White House meeting that devolved into a screaming match. "That — that's — I don't understand why we even have to tell you why that's a bad idea for the country."

Trump leaned on Republican-led states to find more votes for him — 11,780 in Georgia would do it, he said. State Republicans were pressed to appoint fake electors. He hectored Pence to do what he didn't have the power — or the will — to do, when called upon to certify the election.

When all else failed, Trump told his supporters to "fight like hell" and encouraged them to march down to the Capitol, saying he'd be joining them.

Saying no to the boss is never easy. Saying no to the U.S. president you work for is another thing altogether.

But Trump's plotting was foiled by Republicans in the states that mattered, conservative aides, bureaucrats and loyalists-to-a-point who ultimately said no, no, no.

When Trump demanded to be taken to the Capitol on Jan. 6, the committee was told, his Secret Service detail said no.

When Trump pressed his vice president to derail the certification of Joe Biden's election, four years of supplication and admiring glances by Pence came to an end. He said no.

The Republican election official in Georgia said no to cooking the results to deliver Trump the state, never losing his cool on the phone with the president. The Republican House speaker in Arizona, pressed to appoint fake electors, invoked his oath and said no way.

Two Justice Department leaders in succession said no to him. When he moved to appoint a compliant third, Justice Department officials told him in the Oval Office that if he did so, they would quit en masse and the new man would be left "leading a graveyard."

All of that left the president with an inept cadre, mostly of outsiders, to tell him what he wanted to hear. One sells pillows.

Even Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani, perhaps the most loyal of loyalists and a man who voiced plenty of delusional statements on behalf of his client, acknowledged at one point that there was nothing more to Trump's accusations of a rigged election than speculation.

"We've got lots of theories," he told Rusty Bowers, Arizona House speaker. "We just don't have the evidence."

Yet the comment — as related to the committee by Bowers — was made in the context of pressing him to appoint fake electors anyway, which Bowers refused to do. And it was Giuliani who stoked the USB conspiracy theory that prompted the FBI to direct the mother into hiding and made her daughter fearful of being out in public.

The Constitution demands that presidents "take care that the laws be faithfully executed." Failure to do so can be a crime.

With the summer hearings over, attention now shifts to the Justice Department, where Attorney General Merrick Garland has vowed to hold wrongdoers "at any level" accountable, whether present at the Capitol or not, and said as recently as this week that "no person is above the law."

He's made no public statements as to whether the department might pursue a criminal case against Trump, noting that the agency does not conduct its investigations in public. Yet he said he regards this one as the "most important" and sweeping it's ever undertaken.

Some legal experts have said the hearings identified a range of potential crimes for which the ex-president might conceivably be prosecuted. Corruptly obstructing an official proceeding. Conspiracy to defraud the

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U.S. Inciting a riot. Even seditious conspiracy.

But these crimes are easier to casually talk about than to prove beyond a reasonable doubt, especially against a former president and one who might run again.

As the hearings unfolded, Democrats were surprised to find themselves standing in admiration, if not awe, for the deeply conservative Rep. Liz Cheney, the poker-faced Republican on the committee who, despite her measured words, made clear her icy disdain for Trump and the many Republicans in Congress who appear to remain in thrall to him.

She did not countenance the Trump defenders who argued he was manipulated by outside "crazies." "President Trump is a 76-year-old man," she said. "He is not an impressionable child. Just like everyone else in our country, he is responsible for his own actions and his own choices."

Facing a Trump-backed primary opponent in August, her congressional seat in deep-red Wyoming in danger, she framed the stakes for fellow Republican lawmakers at the first hearing: "I say this to my Republican colleagues who are defending the indefensible: There will come a day when Donald Trump is gone, but your dishonor will remain."

Democrats and liberals nationwide as well as many Republicans are pouring money into her race, which she well could lose.

From the first hearing, June 9, watched by an estimated 20 million people, to the eighth on Thursday night, the committee told a seamless story stitched from the testimony of sober and evocative witnesses.

The panel introduced to the nation the harassed and haunted election workers from Georgia, a young White House aide who saw and knew a lot, little-known Justice officials who proved to be a bulwark against Trump's scheming, and more.

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## LADY RUBY

Her name is Ruby Freeman, but everyone in the Georgia community where she's spent her whole life knows her as Lady Ruby, the words on the T-shirt she wore on Election Day.

She hasn't worn that shirt since, says she never will. Her explanation for why not, broadcast to America, did more than make for captivating television. It put a human face on the impact of the pressure-and-smear campaigns wielded by the president and his allies.

For weeks, the country heard from lawyers at the highest echelons of government and campaign aides and White House workers present in the room with Trump for some of his more untethered moments.

Lady Ruby, and her daughter, Wandrea "Shaye" Moss, were none of those.

They were election workers in Fulton County, Georgia's most populated, where Shaye Moss said she took particular pleasure in distributing absentee ballots to the elderly and disabled and helping residents navigate the voter registration page.

When Giuliani publicized the sham video about a USB handover and Trump jumped on it, the women's lives took a sharp turn.

One day, Shaye Moss told the committee she got a call from her grandmother. She was "screaming at the top of her lungs" that strangers had shown at her door trying to force their way in to find her mother and her.

Since then, she said: "I don't want anyone knowing my name. I don't want to go anywhere with my mom because she might yell my name out over the grocery aisle or something. I don't go to the grocery store at all. I haven't been anywhere at all.

"I've gained about 60 pounds," she said. "I second guess everything that I do. It's affected my life in a — in a major way. In every way. All because of lies." She spit out that last word.

Lady Ruby was in the committee room as her daughter spoke and at one point gently held her hand.

"Now I won't even introduce myself by my name anymore," Lady Ruby said in her earlier videotaped testimony. "I'm worried about who's listening. I get nervous when I have to give my name for food orders. ... I've lost my name, and I've lost my reputation."

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CASSIDY HUTCHINSON

In 1973, the nation was riveted by a young White House lawyer, John Dean, a participant in the Watergate scandal who delivered hours of harmful testimony about the Nixon White House during congressional hearings while fielding the most memorable question of all: "What did the president know and when did he know it?"

The Jan. 6 hearings delivered another witness whose words will be long remembered even if they may not be as impactful as Dean's were in the proceedings that helped force a sitting president out of office.

She was Cassidy Hutchinson, the mid-20s White House staffer and aide to chief of staff Mark Meadows whose age and anonymity were belied by the lasting damage of her fly-on-the-wall testimony June 28. She described witnessing a president unbound.

In her composed account, the president was prone to fits of rage, heaving a porcelain plate of food against a White House wall when he learned his attorney general had publicly contradicted his claims of vast voter fraud. (She grabbed a towel to help the valet clean up dripping ketchup.)

In her telling, the president was aware on the morning of Jan. 6 that loyalists in Washington were armed but was so determined to have their support at a rally that he demanded security be eased.

It was she who heard from her boss, Meadows, that Trump had brushed off the mob's threat to hang Pence from the makeshift gallows the insurrectionists had erected outside the Capitol — that Trump thought the vice president deserved that fate.

It was she who was told by the White House counsel, Cipollone, that it was imperative to stay away from the Capitol despite Trump's desire to go.

"Keep in touch with me," Hutchinson quoted Cipollone as telling her. "We're going to get charged with every crime imaginable if we make that movement happen."

She had once recalled in an interview published on her college website being "brought to tears" when she learned she'd been selected for a White House internship.

Years later, though, she'd recall her disgust on Jan. 6 upon seeing a tweet from Trump saying Pence didn't have the courage to do what needed to be done — reject electors from the battleground states and help overturn the results.

"As an American, I was disgusted," she testified. "It was unpatriotic. It was un-American. We were watching the Capitol building get defaced over a lie."

Fiona Hill, a leading witness in Trump's first impeachment because of her insights as the president's Russia adviser, said Hutchinson took all sorts of risks to step up and tell what she knew, so early in her career. Despite her junior position in the White House, she exercised the power of listening to the senior people around her, and so will shape history.

She understood, Hill told The Associated Press, that "the most powerful thing you can do is tell the truth. She will certainly be defined by that. It's an extraordinarily brave act for her."

## SUNDAY NIGHT MASSACRE?

The hearings laid bare how the Justice Department — if not democracy itself — was brought to the brink not only by Trump's outside pressure but also by an accomplice from within.

Jeffrey Clark was a little-known lawyer who joined the department only in 2018, as its chief environmental enforcement official, and by 2020 was leading its civil division.

He was a prime cheerleader for Trump's voter fraud claims and the president weighed making him acting attorney general, a position where he could have done real damage. Clark had been stealthily advancing plans to challenge the election results without telling his higher-ups.

Three senior Justice officials testified to the committee, among them the acting attorney general at the time, Jeffrey Rosen. The men described in granular detail how they presented a united front against Trump's badgering.

"Just say that the election was corrupt + leave the rest to me and the R. Congressmen," according to handwritten notes from Rosen's deputy, Richard Donoghue, that conveyed what the president told the

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two men and that were shown at the hearing. "R." was short for Republican.

It all culminated in an Oval Office meeting on the Sunday evening three days before the Capitol attack, when the question hanging over the session was whether Trump would fire Rosen and elevate Clark. The plan had already progressed to a point that White House call logs cited by the committee were, by that afternoon, referring to Clark as the acting attorney general.

The meeting opened, Rosen testified, with Trump telling the group, "One thing we know is you, Rosen, you aren't going to do anything" to overturn the election.

You're right, Mr. President, Rosen said he replied.

As the meeting continued, Trump was told the Justice officials in the room — except Clark — would resign if Rosen were fired. Potentially hundreds of federal prosecutors would walk out the door, too.

Such a crisis would eclipse the Saturday Night Massacre of 1973, when the attorney general and his deputy both resigned rather than execute Richard Nixon's order to fire the Watergate prosecutor.

Trump backed down. Rosen would keep his job. But Trump had one last question for him: What happens to Clark now? Are you going to fire him?

No, Rosen said, he didn't have the authority to — only Trump did. And that wasn't going to happen.

"Alright," Rosen said. "Well, then we should all go back to work."

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## 187 MINUTES

The last scheduled hearing, in prime time like the first, examined 187 minutes from the time Trump left a rally stage sending his supporters to the Capitol to the time he ultimately appeared in a Rose Garden video to tell the insurrectionists "go home, we love you, you're very special."

Until then he had watched the melee on Fox News, tweeted his displeasure with Pence and resisted the entreaties of his horrified aides and even family members to say something to tamp down the violence. He even spent time calling senators asking them to block the certification of Biden's election, the committee said.

The hearing crystallized the degree to which the insurrectionists on their smartphones were tuned into any words from Trump as they assaulted the complex.

Secret Service radio transmissions described to the committee revealed agents at the Capitol trying to get Pence to safety and passing goodbye messages to their own families. The mob came within 40 feet or 12 meters of Pence.

The panel made a detailed case that Trump had been derelict in his duties. He did not summon the military or Homeland Security or the FBI. Outtakes from a video Trump recorded Jan. 7 showed him resisting parts of the script prepared for him.

"I don't want to say the election is over," he said. He still doesn't.

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The hearings produced enough words for a classic novel of scheming and corruption, longer than George Orwell's dystopian "1984," far longer than Niccolò Machiavelli's 16th century power study, "The Prince," and in the ballpark of "The Bonfire of the Vanities," Tom Wolfe's take on greed and deception from the 1980s era of Trump the New York developer and man about town.

In that period, Reagan spoke often of America the shining city, a notion handed down from the Puritans, but perhaps most poignantly in his farewell address in 1989. "How stands the city?" he asked rhetorically.

These days, intact but endangered, the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol found. Intact because enough of the president's men and women, public servants and state officials said an emphatic, effing, no.

## Author Wes Moore wins Democratic race for Maryland governor

By BRIAN WITTE Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Bestselling author Wes Moore won the Democratic primary for Maryland governor on Friday, setting up a general election contest against Republican Dan Cox, a hard-line conservative



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endorsed by former President Donald Trump.

Moore, the author of the book "The Other Wes Moore" and the former CEO of an anti-poverty nonprofit, defeated a long list of other high-profile Democrats, including Tom Perez, the former U.S. labor secretary and ex-Democratic National Committee chair, and Peter Franchot, the state's longtime comptroller.

Moore will be the strong favorite in the November election against Cox, a right-wing member of the Maryland House of Delegates whose extreme brand of politics is considered a liability in a heavily Democratic state that twice elected centrist Republican Gov. Larry Hogan. Moore would be the state's first Black governor if elected.

A political novice, Moore was boosted in his campaign by Oprah Winfrey, who hosted a virtual fundraiser for him. He also had the support of U.S. Rep. Steny Hoyer of Maryland, the No. 2 House Democrat.

Cox was declared the winner of the Republican primary on Tuesday night. It took until Friday to call the Democratic primary for Moore because the margins were tighter and a larger number of mail ballots were cast in the race. Maryland law prohibits counties from opening mail ballots until the Thursday after election day.

Cox, an acolyte of Trump and supporter of right-wing causes, has promoted Trump's lies of a stolen 2020 election, organized buses to Washington for the "Stop the Steal" rally on Jan. 6, 2021, and tweeted during the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol that then-Vice President Mike Pence was a "traitor."

Democrats see Moore as a strong candidate with a compelling personal story.

He was raised by a single mother after his father died when Moore was 3. Moore graduated from Valley Forge Military College and Johns Hopkins University and won a Rhodes scholarship to study at Oxford University.

He later served as a captain and paratrooper with the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne and saw combat in Afghanistan.

He started and eventually sold a small business called BridgeEdU, which, according to his website, "re-invents freshman year of college for underserved students to increase their likelihood of long-term success." During his four years as CEO of the anti-poverty nonprofit Robin Hood Foundation, the organization distributed more than \$600 million to help impoverished families.

Moore has written a number of books, including "The Other Wes Moore," a memoir that juxtaposes his life with that of another man with the same name and a similar background who ended up serving a life sentence for murder.

GOP voters' decision to nominate Cox dashed the hopes of Hogan and other establishment Republicans that the party could hold on to the governor's mansion in a state where Democrats outnumber Republicans 2-to-1. Hogan was able to draw bipartisan support with his moderate policies and his willingness to criticize Trump when he felt it warranted — a significant act in a party that expects its members to fall in line behind its leader.

Hogan, who was prohibited from running for a third consecutive term, endorsed his former Cabinet member Kelly Schulz in the four-way Republican primary. Hogan has not been shy in his distaste for Cox, denouncing him as a "nut" and a "QAnon whack job." Cox sued over Hogan's stay-at-home orders and regulations at the start of the pandemic and introduced a resolution to impeach Hogan for what Cox called "malfeasance in office."

Hogan will not vote for him in November, his spokesperson said Wednesday.

Trump gloated over Cox's success over Schulz on Tuesday night, writing in a statement, "RINO Larry Hogan's Endorsement doesn't seem to be working out so well for his heavily favored candidate."

Hogan shot back Wednesday, tweeting that "Trump lost Republicans the White House, the House, and the Senate." He said Trump will "cost us a Governor's seat in Maryland where I ran 45 points ahead of him."

"He's fighting for his ego," Hogan said. "We're fighting to win, and the fight goes on."

Jim Dornan, a Republican political strategist with experience in Maryland politics, described Cox's victory in the primary as "a disaster" for down-ballot GOP candidates relying on a strong gubernatorial nominee to draw voters to the polls. He said any satisfaction Trump gleaned from defeating Hogan's candidate would be short-lived because Republicans are now likely to lose the general election.

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"I guess it can be put this way: Trump won the battle, and Hogan is looking to win the war," said Dornan, who managed Republican Ellen Sauerbrey's 1998 gubernatorial campaign and ran former Republican Party chair Michael Steele's exploratory committee for governor last year before he decided against a bid.

Still, the fact that Hogan's handpicked successor lost to a Trump-backed rival is an ominous sign for any national political ambitions Hogan may have, said Todd Eberly, a political science professor at St. Mary's College of Maryland. Hogan, like Trump, has been considering a Republican bid for president in 2024.

"I think the harsh reality is going to be, if that's the case in a state that you've represented for the last eight years, a state that reelected you, it's going to be that much harder for you to find success when you move beyond the borders of that state seeking a national nomination," Eberly said.

Democrats have long viewed Cox as the weaker candidate in a general election. The Democratic Governors Association went so far as to spend more than \$1 million to air an ad intended to help Cox in the Republican primary by stressing his Trump endorsement and his conservative bona fides.

Maryland Senate President Bill Ferguson, a Baltimore Democrat who has had plenty of disagreements with Hogan in recent years, said he and Hogan could sit down and discuss their differences and negotiate. Marylanders, he said, are not well represented by the winner of Tuesday's GOP primary for governor.

"While it may be politically advantageous for the Democrats for that to be the case, I do worry what it means to have somebody who has such extreme views have a platform for the next four months," Ferguson said.

## **Biden's COVID symptoms improve; WH says he's staying busy**

By SEUNG MIN KIM, WILL WEISSERT and CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — COVID-19 symptoms left President Joe Biden with a raspy voice and cough as he met Friday via videoconference with his top economic team. But the president tried to strike a reassuring tone, declaring, "I feel much better than I sound."

Later Friday, White House officials told reporters that Biden was working more than eight hours a day. His appetite hadn't diminished — with Biden showing off an empty plate with some crumbs when speaking with his advisers — and he signed bills into law and took part in his daily intelligence briefings, albeit via phone.

"He's still doing the job of the president," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said. "That does not end."

It was all part of a diligently choreographed effort by the administration to depict a commander-in-chief who had not relinquished his day job, despite testing positive for COVID-19 Thursday and being sent into isolation at the White House residence.

As he beamed into a virtual meeting from the Treaty Room, Biden took off a mask and sipped water as he began discussing the decline in gas prices in recent weeks. Reporters were allowed to view a few minutes of the proceedings and, when they asked how Biden was feeling, he flashed a thumb's up — although he was audibly hoarse and coughed a handful of times.

The president's doctors said his mild COVID symptoms were improving and he was responding well to treatment, as the White House worked to portray the image of a president still on the job despite his illness. Biden received his presidential daily security briefing via a secured phone call while, separately, Chinese President Xi Jinping wished Biden a "speedy recovery."

Biden had an elevated temperature of 99.4 F on Thursday, but that went down with Tylenol, according to a new note from Dr. Kevin O'Connor, the president's personal physician. Biden also used an inhaler a few times but hasn't experienced shortness of breath.

The president completed his first full day of Paxlovid, the antiviral therapy treatment meant to reduce the severity of COVID, and Biden's primary symptoms were a runny nose, fatigue and a loose cough. Other metrics, such as pulse, blood pressure, respiratory rate and oxygen saturation were normal, O'Connor said, although the White House did not release specific figures and did not commit to doing so.

"The president right now feels well enough to continue working, and he has continued to work at a brisk

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pace," White House COVID-19 Response Coordinator Dr. Ashish Jha told reporters.

Jha said Biden will remain in isolation in the White House living quarters for five days and then be tested anew. He plans to return to in-person work once he tests negative. As he works in isolation, the number of aides around Biden has been reduced to a "very, very small footprint," Jean-Pierre said — including a videographer and photographer who captured the images of Biden in the residence.

Once Biden tested positive Thursday — after more than two years of successfully dodging the virus — the White House sprang into action, aiming to dispel any notion of a crisis and to turn his diagnosis into what Biden Chief of Staff Ron Klain said he hoped would be a "teachable moment."

The White House released a photo Friday of Biden, masked and tieless, in the Treaty Room of the president's residence, on the phone with his national security advisers. After the economic team meeting, he participated in a separate discussion with senior White House advisers to discuss legislative priorities. Jha said his hoarse voice might actually be a sign that he is improving rather than the alternative.

Meanwhile, Jean-Pierre said 17 people were determined to have been in close contact with Biden when he might have been contagious, including members of his senior staff and at least one member of Congress. None have tested positive so far, she said.

One of Biden's close contacts was first lady Jill Biden. Her spokesman Michael LaRosa said she tested negative for COVID-19 on Friday morning in Wilmington, Delaware, and hasn't shown any symptoms. LaRosa said she's spoken to the president "multiple times" as he remains in isolation.

Another close contact was Vice President Kamala Harris, who participated in a National Urban League luncheon Friday and was spotted hugging participants, although during the event, she was seated more than six feet from others. She was masked as she headed onto the stage but took it off during the luncheon.

The administration is trying to shift the narrative from a health scare to a display of Biden as the personification of the idea that most Americans can get COVID and recover without too much suffering and disruption if they've gotten their shots and taken other important steps to protect themselves.

Jha said, "This virus is going to be with us forever," as he echoed Biden's message that Americans get vaccinated and boosted.

The overall message was crafted to alleviate voters' concerns about Biden's health — at 79, he's the oldest person ever to be president.

Jha said Friday that it'll likely take until next week for sequencing to determine which variant of the virus Biden contracted. Omicron's highly contagious BA.5 substrain is responsible for 78% of new COVID-19 infections reported in the U.S. last week, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's latest data released Tuesday.

Jean-Pierre has repeatedly bristled at suggestions the Biden administration wasn't being much more forthcoming with information about the president's illness than that of his predecessor, Donald Trump. The former president contracted COVID-19 in the fall of 2020, before vaccines were available, and was hospitalized at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for three nights.

Still, the White House has declined to make O'Connor directly available to reporters, despite repeated requests.

## Two children diagnosed with monkeypox in U.S., officials say

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Two children have been diagnosed with monkeypox in the U.S., health officials said Friday.

One is a toddler in California and the other an infant who is not a U.S. resident but was tested while in Washington, D.C., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The children were described as being in good health and receiving treatment. How they caught the disease is being investigated, but officials think it was through household transmission.

Other details weren't immediately disclosed.

Monkeypox is endemic in parts of Africa, but this year more than 15,000 cases have been reported in

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countries that historically don't see the disease. In the U.S. and Europe, the vast majority of infections have happened in men who have sex with men, though health officials have stressed that anyone can catch the virus.

In addition to the two pediatric cases, health officials said they were aware of at least eight women among the more than 2,800 U.S. cases reported so far.

While the virus has mostly been spreading among men who have sex with men, "I don't think its surprising that we are occasionally going to see cases" outside that social network, the CDC's Jennifer McQuiston told reporters Friday.

Officials have said the virus can spread through close personal contact, and via towels and bedding. That means it can happen in homes, likely through prolonged or intensive contact, said Dr. James Lawler, an infectious diseases specialist at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

"People don't crawl on each other's beds unless they are living in the same house or family," he said.

In Europe, there have been at least six monkeypox cases among kids 17 years old and younger.

This week, doctors in the Netherlands published a report of a boy who was seen at an Amsterdam hospital with about 20 red-brown bumps scattered across his body. It was monkeypox, and doctors said they could not determine how he got it.

In Africa, monkeypox infections in children have been more common, and doctors have noted higher proportions of severe cases and deaths in young children.

One reason may be that many older adults were vaccinated against smallpox as kids, likely giving them some protection against the related monkeypox virus, Lawler said. Smallpox vaccinations were discontinued when the disease was eradicated about 40 years ago.

## Monkeypox virus could become entrenched as new STD in the US

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The spread of monkeypox in the U.S. could represent the dawn of a new sexually transmitted disease, though some health officials say the virus that causes pimple-like bumps might yet be contained before it gets firmly established.

Experts don't agree on the likely path of the disease, with some fearing that it is becoming so widespread that it is on the verge of becoming an entrenched STD — like gonorrhea, herpes and HIV.

But no one's really sure, and some say testing and vaccines can still stop the outbreak from taking root.

So far, more than 2,800 U.S. cases have been reported as part of an international outbreak that emerged two months ago. About 99% have been men who reported having sex with other men, health officials say.

Health officials are not sure how fast the virus has spread. They have only limited information about people who have been diagnosed, and they don't know how many infected people might be spreading it unknowingly.

They also don't know how well vaccines and treatments are working. One impediment: Federal health officials do not have the authority to collect and connect data on who has been infected and who has been vaccinated.

With such huge question marks, predictions about how big the U.S. outbreak will get this summer vary widely, from 13,000 to perhaps more than 10 times that number.

Dr. Rochelle Walensky, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said the government's response is growing stronger every day and vaccine supplies will soon surge.

"I think we still have an opportunity to contain this," Walensky told The Associated Press.

Monkeypox is endemic in parts of Africa, where people have been infected through bites from rodents or small animals. It does not usually spread easily among people.

But this year more than 15,000 cases have been reported in countries that historically don't see the disease. In the U.S. and Europe, the vast majority of infections have happened in men who have sex with men, though health officials have stressed that anyone can catch the virus.

It spreads mainly through skin-to-skin contact, but it can also be transmitted through linens used by



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someone with monkeypox. Although it's been moving through the population like a sexually transmitted disease, officials have been watching for other types of spread that could expand the outbreak. There have been several cases like that: Officials on Friday said they were aware of two children with monkeypox in the U.S., and at least eight women.

Symptoms include fever, body aches, chills, fatigue and the bumps on parts of the body. The illness has been relatively mild in many men, and no one has died in the U.S. But people can be contagious for weeks, and the lesions can be extremely painful.

When monkeypox emerged, there was reason to believe that public health officials could control it.

The tell-tale bumps should have made infections easy to identify. And because the virus spreads through close personal contact, officials thought they could reliably trace its spread by interviewing infected people and asking who they had been intimate with.

It didn't turn out to be that easy.

With monkeypox so rare in the U.S., many infected men — and their doctors — may have attributed their rashes to some other cause.

Contact tracing was often stymied by infected men who said they did not know the names of all the people they had sex with. Some reported having multiple sexual interactions with strangers.

It didn't help that local health departments, already burdened with COVID-19 and scores of other diseases, now had to find the resources to do intensive contact-tracing work on monkeypox, too.

Indeed, some local health officials have given up expecting much from contact tracing.

There was another reason to be optimistic: The U.S. government already had a vaccine. The two-dose regimen called Jynneos was licensed in the U.S. in 2019 and recommended last year as a tool against monkeypox.

When the outbreak was first identified in May, U.S. officials had only about 2,000 doses available. The government distributed them but limited the shots to people who were identified through public health investigations as being recently exposed to the virus.

Late last month, as more doses became available, the CDC began recommending that shots be offered to those who realize on their own that they could have been infected.

Demand has exceeded supply, with clinics in some cities rapidly running out of vaccine doses and health officials across the country saying they don't have enough.

That's changing, Walensky said. As of this week, the government has distributed more than 191,000 doses, and it has 160,000 more ready to send. As many as 780,000 doses will become available as early as next week.

Once current demand is satisfied, the government will look at expanding vaccination efforts.

The CDC believes that 1.5 million U.S. men are considered at high risk for the infection.

Testing has also expanded. More than 70,000 people can be tested each week, far more than current demand, Walensky said. The government has also embarked on a campaign to educate doctors and gay and bisexual men about the disease, she added.

Donal Bisanzio, a researcher at RTI International, believes U.S. health officials will be able to contain the outbreak before it becomes endemic.

But he also said that won't be the end of it. New bursts of cases will probably emerge as Americans become infected by people in other countries where monkeypox keeps circulating.

Walensky agrees that such a scenario is likely. "If it's not contained all over the world, we are always at risk of having flare-ups" from travelers, she said.

Shawn Kiernan, of the Fairfax County Health Department in Virginia, noted that so far the outbreak is concentrated in one group of people — men who have sex with men. Spread of the virus into heterosexual people would be a "tipping point" that may occur before it's widely recognized, said Kiernan, chief of the department's communicable disease section.

Spillover into heterosexuals is just a matter of time, said Dr. Edward Hook III, emeritus professor of infectious diseases at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

If monkeypox becomes an endemic sexually transmitted disease, it will be yet another challenge for

health departments and doctors already struggling to keep up with existing STDs.

Such work has long been underfunded and understaffed, and a lot of it was simply put on hold during the pandemic. Kiernan said HIV and syphilis were prioritized, but work on common infections like chlamydia and gonorrhea amounted to "counting cases and that's about it."

For years, gonorrhea, chlamydia and syphilis cases have been rising.

"By and large," Hook said, doctors "do a crummy job of taking sexual histories, of inquiring about and acknowledging their patients are sexual beings."

## 'A beacon of hope': Ukraine, Russia sign grain export deal

By AYSE WIETING and SUZAN FRASER Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — Russia and Ukraine signed separate agreements Friday with Turkey and the United Nations clearing the way for the export of millions of tons of desperately needed Ukrainian grain — as well as some Russian grain and fertilizer — across the Black Sea. The long-sought deal ends a wartime standoff that has threatened food security around the globe.

The U.N. plan will enable Ukraine — one of the world's key breadbaskets — to export 22 million tons of grain and other agricultural goods that have been stuck in Black Sea ports due to Russia's invasion. U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres called it "a beacon of hope" for millions of hungry people who have faced huge increases in the price of food.

"A deal that allows grain to leave Black Sea ports is nothing short of lifesaving for people across the world who are struggling to feed their families," said Red Cross Director-General Robert Mardini. He noted that over the past six months, prices for food have risen 187% in Sudan, 86% in Syria and 60% in Yemen, just to name a few countries.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and Ukrainian Infrastructure Minister Oleksandr Kubrakov signed separate, identical deals Friday with Guterres and Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar at a ceremony in Istanbul that was witnessed by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Russia and Ukraine would not sign any deal directly with each other.

"Today, there is a beacon on the Black Sea," Guterres said. "A beacon of hope, a beacon of possibility, a beacon of relief in a world that needs it more than ever."

"You have overcome obstacles and put aside differences to pave the way for an initiative that will serve the common interests of all," he told the envoys.

Guterres described the deal as an unprecedented agreement between two parties engaged in a bloody conflict. Erdogan hoped it would be "a new turning point that will revive hopes for peace."

Yet in Kyiv, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba sounded a more somber note.

"I'm not opening a bottle of champagne because of this deal," Kuleba told The Associated Press. "I will keep my fingers crossed that this will work, that ships will carry grain to world markets and prices will go down and people will have food to eat. But I'm very cautious because I have no trust in Russia."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy echoed Kuleba's concerns in his nightly video address, saying, "It is clear to everyone that there may be some provocations on the part of Russia, some attempts to discredit Ukrainian and international efforts. But we trust the UN."

The European Union and the U.K. immediately welcomed the news.

"This is a critical step forward in efforts to overcome the global food insecurity caused by Russia's aggression against Ukraine," said EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell.

British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss applauded Turkey and the U.N. for brokering the agreement.

"We will be watching to ensure Russia's actions match its words," Truss said. "To enable a lasting return to global security and economic stability, (Russian President Vladimir) Putin must end the war and withdraw from Ukraine."

African leaders, whose countries import food and fertilizer from Ukraine and Russia, also welcomed the deal, with South African President Cyril Ramaphosa saying "it has taken much too long."

Ukraine is one of the world's largest exporters of wheat, corn and sunflower oil, but Russia's invasion of

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the country and naval blockade of its ports have halted shipments. Some Ukrainian grain is transported through Europe by rail, road and river, but the prices of vital commodities such as wheat and barley have soared during the war.

Although international sanctions against Russia did not target food exports, the war has disrupted shipments of Russian products because shipping and insurance companies did not want to deal with Russia.

Guterres said the plan, known as the Black Sea Initiative, opens a path for significant commercial food exports from three key Ukrainian ports: Odesa, Chernomorsk and Yuzhny.

The agreement, obtained by the AP, says a U.N.-led joint coordination center will be set up in Istanbul staffed by officials from Ukraine, Russia, Turkey to run the plan, including scheduling cargo ships' arrivals and departures.

Inspectors representing all parties at the Bosphorus in Turkey will search vessels entering and leaving Ukrainian ports to ensure no weapons or soldiers are on board.

Under the deal, "all activities in Ukrainian territorial waters will be under authority and responsibility of Ukraine," and the parties agree not to attack vessels and port facilities involved in the initiative. If demining is required to make the shipping lanes safe, a minesweeper from another country could clear the approaches to Ukrainian ports.

The sides will monitor the movement of ships remotely and no military ships, aircraft or drones will be allowed to approach "the maritime humanitarian corridor" closer than a distance the center sets. The agreement will remain in effect for 120 days and can be extended automatically.

Guterres believes grain shipments could start "within the next two weeks," according to U.N. deputy spokesman Farhan Haq. A senior U.N. official said Ukraine needs about 10 days to prepare the ports and needs time to "identify and be clear about those safe corridors." The aim is to export 5 million tons of grains per month to empty Ukraine's silos in time for this year's harvest.

Zelenskyy said nearly 20 million tons of grain will be exported initially, then some of the current harvest.

Guterres first raised the critical need to restart the supply of Ukraine's agricultural production and Russia's grain and fertilizer to world markets in late April during meetings with Putin in Moscow and Zelenskyy in Kyiv, then proposed a deal because of fears that the war could worsen hunger for up to 181 million people.

Peter Meyer, head of grain and oilseed analytics at S&P Global Platts, said the deal does not "mean that the global supply crisis is over."

Traders anticipated a deal for the past several weeks, he said, so its effect might already have shown up in grain prices. And the agreement only covers the 2021 crop. There's still considerable uncertainty about Ukrainian production this year and even next, Meyer said.

Before the agreements, Russian and Ukrainian officials blamed each other for the blocked grain shipments. Moscow accused Ukraine of failing to remove sea mines at the ports, insisted on checking incoming ships for weapons and lifting restrictions on Russian grain and fertilizer exports.

Ukraine argued that Russia's port blockade and launching of missiles from the Black Sea made any safe sea shipments impossible. It sought international guarantees that the Kremlin wouldn't use the safe corridors to attack Odesa and accused Russia of stealing grain from eastern Ukraine and deliberately setting Ukrainian fields on fire.

Volodymyr Sidenko, an expert with the Kyiv-based Razumkov Center think tank, said Ukraine apparently did not raise the issue of stolen grain in the negotiations.

"It was part of a deal: Kyiv doesn't raise the issue of stolen grain and Moscow doesn't insist on checking Ukrainian ships. Kyiv and Moscow were forced to make a deal and compromise," he said.

The deal was also important for Russia's geopolitical relations, the analyst noted.

"Russia decided not to fuel a new crisis in Africa and provoke a hunger and government changes there," Sidenko said. "The African Union had asked Putin to quickly ease the crisis with grain supplies."

## Steve Bannon's contempt conviction hailed by 1/6 committee

By ASHRAF KHALIL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Steve Bannon, a longtime ally of former President Donald Trump, was convicted

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Friday of contempt charges for defying a congressional subpoena from the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. Committee leaders called the verdict "a victory for the rule of law."

Bannon, 68, was convicted after a four-day trial in federal court on two counts: one for refusing to appear for a deposition and the other for refusing to provide documents in response to the committee's subpoena. The jury of 8 men and 4 women deliberated just under three hours.

He faces up to two years in federal prison when he's sentenced on Oct. 21. Each count carries a minimum sentence of 30 days in jail.

David Schoen, one of Bannon's lawyers said outside the courthouse the verdict would not stand. "This is round one," Schoen said. "You will see this case reversed on appeal."

Likewise, Bannon himself said, "We may have lost the battle here today; we're not going to lose this war."

He thanked the jurors for their service and said he had only one disappointment — "and that is the gutless members of that show trial committee, the J-6 committee didn't have the guts to come down here and testify."

Prosecutors were just as firm on the other side of the verdict.

"The subpoena to Stephen Bannon was not an invitation that could be rejected or ignored," Matthew Graves, the U.S. attorney in Washington, said in a statement. "Mr. Bannon had an obligation to appear before the House Select Committee to give testimony and provide documents. His refusal to do so was deliberate, and now a jury has found that he must pay the consequences."

The committee sought Bannon's testimony over his involvement in Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 presidential election. Bannon had initially argued that his testimony was protected by Trump's claim of executive privilege. But the House panel and the Justice Department contend such a claim is dubious because Trump had fired Bannon from the White House in 2017 and Bannon was thus a private citizen when he was consulting with the then-president in the run-up to the riot on Jan. 6, 2021.

Bannon's lawyers tried to argue during the trial that he didn't refuse to cooperate and that the dates "were in flux." They pointed to the fact that Bannon had reversed course shortly before the trial kicked off — after Trump waived his objection — and had offered to testify before the committee.

In closing arguments Friday morning, both sides re-emphasized their primary positions from the trial. The prosecution maintained that Bannon willfully ignored clear and explicit deadlines, and the defense claimed Bannon believed those deadlines were flexible and subject to negotiation.

Bannon was served with a subpoena on Sept. 23 last year ordering him to provide requested documents to the committee by Oct. 7 and appear in person by Oct. 14. Bannon was indicted in November on two counts of criminal contempt of Congress, a month after the Justice Department received the House panel's referral.

Bannon's attorney Evan Corcoran told jurors Friday in his closing arguments that those deadlines were mere "placeholders" while lawyers on each side negotiated terms.

Corcoran said the committee "rushed to judgment" because it "wanted to make an example of Steve Bannon."

Corcoran also hinted that the government's main witness, Jan. 6 committee chief counsel Kristin Amerling, was personally biased. Amerling acknowledged on the stand that she is a lifelong Democrat and has been friends with one of the prosecutors for years.

Jan. 6 Committee Chairman Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., was a particular target for Bannon and his defense team. His name was brought up multiple times during the trial, although U.S. District Judge Carl Nichols had warned the defense not to claim in court that the committee itself was politically biased. Bannon harshly criticized Thompson by name in his daily statements outside the courthouse, at one point implying that Thompson's COVID-19 diagnosis last week was faked to avoid pressure to appear.

Thompson and committee Vice Chair Liz Cheney, R-Wyo., hailed the verdict in a statement, calling it "a victory for the rule of law and an important affirmation of the Select Committee's work."

"Just as there must be accountability for all those responsible for the events of January 6th, anyone who obstructs our investigation into these matters should face consequences," they said. "No one is above



the law.”

Prosecutors focused on the series of letters exchanged between the Jan. 6 committee and Bannon’s lawyers. The correspondence shows Thompson immediately dismissing Bannon’s claim that he was exempted by Trump’s claim of executive privilege and explicitly threatening Bannon with criminal prosecution.

“The defense wants to make this hard, difficult and confusing,” said Assistant U.S. Attorney Amanda Vaughn in her closing statement. “This is not difficult. This is not hard. There were only two witnesses because it’s as simple as it seems.”

The defense Thursday motioned for an acquittal, saying the prosecution had not proved its case. In making his motion for acquittal before Judge Nichols, Bannon attorney Corcoran said that “no reasonable juror could conclude that Mr. Bannon refused to comply.”

Once the motion was made the defense rested its case without putting on any witnesses, telling Nichols that Bannon saw no point in testifying since the judge’s previous rulings had gutted his planned avenues of defense. Among other things, Bannon’s team was barred from claiming Bannon believed he was shielded by executive privilege or calling as witnesses House Speaker Nancy Pelosi or members of the House panel.

## Bravery of Azovstal defenders recalled at Kyiv funeral

By HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — When he gave himself up to Russian forces in May at the pulverized Azovstal steel mill in Mariupol, the wounded Ukrainian soldier could not say a proper goodbye to his slain friend, whose body had to be left behind with hundreds of other dead.

The former prisoner of war, who goes by the name of David, finally got his chance Thursday at a Kyiv crematorium.

Moving carefully on crutches after his left leg was amputated, David and other soldiers bade farewell to Ilya Honcharov, whose coffin was draped in the yellow-and-blue Ukrainian flag.

“A sweet death in agony for you,” they intoned. “I will dissolve in you and live forever in you.”

David is one of the few POWs from the Azovstal siege that Russia has freed in an exchange.

And the body of the 26-year-old Honcharov, among hundreds the two sides also have swapped even as they fight each other, is one of the very few that Ukrainian authorities have been able to identify. His brother recognized one of his tattoos.

In the two months since the Azovstal’s fighters surrendered, ending their dogged defense of the sprawling plant that became a symbol of Ukrainian tenacity in the war against Russia, few families and friends of those killed or captured have been able to find closure.

Still unanswered are gnawing questions of how, where and when loved ones died. Some remains may never be recovered.

If Ukrainian forces one day liberate Mariupol, some families hope to at least get handfuls of dirt from the city that was bombarded almost into oblivion. A killing field for thousands of civilians, the charred ruins are hallowed ground for families of soldiers killed trying to prevent the strategic city and its port from falling into Russian hands.

More than 2,000 Azovstal defenders marched out of its twisted wreckage into Russian captivity in mid-May, ending the nearly three-month siege of Mariupol. Their families still don’t know when — or even whether — they might come home.

David was among 144 Ukrainian soldiers — including 95 who fought in Mariupol — that Russian forces turned over June 29 in a prisoner exchange.

He’s still not able to talk about his six weeks in captivity for fear of jeopardizing the release of other POWs and he did not want to be identified by his full name.

But David spoke willingly about his friend Honcharov, who had been mangled by a mortar round that shattered bones in his arms and legs, and embedded shrapnel in his back. Honcharov had clung to life for hours through his pain, and his comrades dragged to cover in a basement after nightfall, moving through the plant’s hellscape of twisted metal, overturned cars and shattered concrete.

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"I don't know how he kept himself so brave. I could not stand such pain," David said.

Honcharov died May 16, the day that marked the beginning of the end of the Mariupol siege. That was when Azovstal's remaining defenders started surrendering — the last Ukrainian holdouts in the occupied city. They had largely exhausted their supplies and been told by commanders they had completed their mission of tying down and bleeding Russian forces for as long as possible.

A fortunate few were flown out in low-flying helicopters before the surrender in a series of daring and sometimes deadly clandestine rescue missions. But more than 2,400 remained trapped and turned themselves over to Russian forces. They included David, who had part of his left leg blown off by an anti-tank missile hours before the May 16 surrender began.

The survivors left behind hundreds of bodies — Honcharov's among them. It was returned to Kyiv in one of six exchanges of remains. The swaps have included the bodies of more than 400 soldiers who fell in Mariupol, including at Azovstal. How many remain isn't known.

"I think we will never know the exact number," said Olena Tolkachova, who works with the Azov Regiment, one of the Ukrainian units that defended the steel mill. She heads the regiment's specialized service that arranges medical care for its wounded and funerals for its dead. It also fields endless calls from families asking for news of prisoners and whether remains have been identified.

The last exchange was July 19. Each side gives the other 45 bodies, meeting and signing paperwork before going their separate ways. Bodies that Russian forces have turned over have been from a variety of Ukrainian units. Some body bags are marked "Azovstal" or "Mariupol," but most are simply labeled "Ukrainian."

DNA testing is needed to identify most of the remains. Just 2% to 3% are identified with personal belongings, soldiers' uniforms or distinguishing marks including tattoos, Tolkachova said.

Bodies come without information about exactly where they were found. But Tolkachova and her colleagues who volunteer at the Kyiv morgue have learned that if there's sand on a body, then it most likely was buried on the shore near the Azovstal mill, which backs onto the Sea of Azov.

"We are working and will continue to work until our last hero is decently buried, until the last wounded person is healed and brought back to life, until every family is reunited with their children," Tolkachova said. "The consequences of this war will be with us until the end of our lives."

## Kentucky judge extends block of state's abortion ban

By DYLAN LOVAN Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — A Kentucky judge granted an injunction on Friday that prevents the state's near-total ban on abortions from taking effect, meaning the state's two clinics can continue providing abortions, for now.

Jefferson Circuit Judge Mitch Perry's ruling says there is "a substantial likelihood" that Kentucky's new abortion law violates "the rights to privacy and self-determination" protected by Kentucky's constitution.

The injunction issued in Louisville allows the state's only two clinics to continue providing abortions while the case is litigated.

Kentucky's trigger law was meant to ban abortions as soon as the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, but Perry issued a restraining order in June blocking the ban. His ruling means that of the 13 states with trigger bans, five are in effect.

Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron, a Republican running for governor, said he was disappointed by the ruling and will appeal it to the state appeals court.

"The judge's suggestion that Kentucky's constitution contains a right to abortion is not grounded in the text and history of our state's governing document," Cameron said in a prepared statement. "We will continue our steadfast defense of these bipartisan laws that represent the Commonwealth's commitment to the lives of the unborn."

Kentucky's trigger law contains a narrow exception allowing a physician to perform an abortion if necessary to prevent the death or permanent injury of the pregnant woman. Gov. Andy Beshear, a Democrat,

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has denounced that law as “extremist,” noting it lacks exceptions for rape and incest.

Thirteen states created trigger bans, and of those, at least five are currently in effect: Arkansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma and South Dakota. Five are not due to take effect yet: Idaho, North Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and Wyoming. The remaining three — in Kentucky, Louisiana and Utah — are not in effect because of litigation.

In all, about half the U.S. states are likely to have bans or deep restrictions in place as a result of the Supreme Court ruling.

Perry, the Kentucky judge, held a hearing on July 6 to listen to arguments on the injunction. A doctor who performs abortions at one of the clinics cited statistics she said showed that pregnancy can be more dangerous to the health of a mother than abortion.

Perry also wrote in his ruling that the trigger ban is “an arguably unconstitutional delegation of authority,” since it depended on another “jurisdictional body” — the U.S. Supreme Court.

Kentuckians are set to vote in November on a constitutional amendment that would ensure there are no state constitutional protections for abortion.

In Louisiana, another state with a court-contested trigger ban, a state judge on Thursday blocked enforcement of its abortion ban. On Friday, state officials asked the same judge to suspend his own ruling while they pursue an appeal. Judge Donald Johnson’s preliminary injunction meant clinics in Shreveport, Baton Rouge and New Orleans could provide abortions while the lawsuit continues.

## ‘Lord of the Rings’ series trailer debuts at Comic-Con

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Comic-Con audiences got a sneak peek at the new “Lord of the Rings” series “The Rings of Power” Friday in San Diego. Amazon Studios unveiled a new trailer for the show, set thousands of years before the events of J.R.R. Tolkien’s “The Hobbit” and “The Lord of the Rings.” Stephen Colbert, a self-proclaimed Tolkien fan, was also on hand to moderate a panel teasing the series on the fan convention’s biggest stage, Hall H.

Under the leadership of showrunners and executive producers J.D. Payne and Patrick McKay, “Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power” focuses on Tolkien’s Second Age of Middle-earth, when kingdoms are forming and falling and evil forces loom and threaten to cover the world in darkness.

“The Rings of Power” will take audiences to fantastical locations like the Elven realms of Lindon and Eregion, the Dwarven realm Khazad-dûm, the Southlands, the Northernmost Wastes, the Sundering Seas, and the island kingdom of Númenór and introduce them to a large ensemble, including Galadriel (Morfydd Clark), Elrond (Robert Aramayo) and High King Gil-galad (Benjamin Walker).

The eight-part series will debut on Prime Video on Sept. 2, with new episodes arriving weekly. It is said to be the most expensive ever made, with a reported budget of \$465 million. Amazon bought the rights from the Tolkien estate for \$250 million in 2017.

Jennifer Salke, the head of Amazon Studios, told The Hollywood Reporter last year that while the number is a “crazy headline that’s fun to click on,” “that is really building the infrastructure of what will sustain the whole series” which she called a “huge, world-building show.”

Salke also said that a “giant, global audience needs to show up to it as appointment television” but that they were “pretty confident that will happen.”

The fan convention kicked off this week at the San Diego Convention Center, back in full force for the first time since 2019, with many studios spending big dollars to promote upcoming films and television shows. Comic-Con runs through Sunday.

## Jan. 6 probes: What’s next for Congress, criminal cases

By ERIC TUCKER and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — This isn’t the end of the Capitol riot story.

The House committee investigating the deadly events of a fateful, chilly January day — now a year and a half in the past — has wrapped up its hot summer series of televised hearings, each featuring revelatory

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details about the day of violence itself or the weeks of efforts by President Donald Trump and his allies to overturn his 2020 election loss.

But the Jan. 6 committee is preparing for more hearings in September, and investigations persist in multiple jurisdictions and venues. New details will be unearthed. Additional criminal cases against the rioters who stormed the Capitol are a safe bet. Other prosecutions — Georgia Republicans were recently warned they could face charges — could be on the horizon, too.

A look at what lies ahead:

THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT:

In keeping with department protocol, federal prosecutors haven't said anything publicly about scrutiny of Trump himself.

Attorney General Merrick Garland told reporters Wednesday that "we do not do our investigations in public." But he left no doubt about the scope of the probe, calling it "the most important investigation that the Justice Department has ever entered into."

He also said "no person is above the law" and has vowed to hold wrongdoers "at any level" accountable as signs point to an investigation that is intensifying rather than winding down.

Officials have so far arrested more than 855 people in connection with the riot, and the work to identify those who broke into the building continues. Yet the investigation goes beyond that, as prosecutors in recent weeks have made clear their interest in broader efforts by Trump allies to undo the election results.

Last month, the FBI opened a new front of investigative activity by seizing records from a group of Republicans who served as fake electors in battleground states won by Democrat Joe Biden. Trump and his allies pushed officials in those states to replace Biden's duly selected electors with ones who supported him as they advanced claims that his victory had been stolen.

As for Trump, who has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing, it remains unclear whether prosecutors might seek to bring criminal charges.

Legal experts have said damaging testimony from the hearings, including the assertion that he sought to join his supporters at the Capitol on Jan. 6 or that he dismissed warnings that many had weapons, gives prosecutors territory to explore. Some have said his overall campaign to cast aside the election results, and his desire to interfere with the congressional certification of the count, could amount to a criminal conspiracy to defraud the United States.

As Democrats pressure Garland to act, he and his team say their decisions are based on the facts, the evidence and the law. There are other considerations, though, that could conceivably come into play even if prosecutors assemble strong evidence.

Any prosecution of Trump is likely to further inflame tensions in an already deeply polarized country. And if the former president were to soon announce another run for office, a decision to charge him could inject the department into presidential politics.

AT THE CAPITOL:

The committee's investigation isn't over, and the panel plans to hold new hearings in September. Wyoming Rep. Liz Cheney, the Republican vice chairwoman, says the nine-member panel "has far more evidence to share with the American people and more to gather."

"Doors have opened, new subpoenas have been issued and the dam has begun to break," Cheney said Thursday. "We have considerably more to do."

One unresolved question is whether the committee will call Trump or former Vice President Mike Pence to testify. Members have debated whether to summon Trump, the main focus of their probe but a witness who has railed against the investigation, denied much of the evidence and whose credibility would be open to attack.

The panel could also invite Pence for closed-door testimony or ask him to answer written questions. Members have debated whether he is needed since many of his closest aides have already testified. His top lawyer at the White House, Greg Jacob, testified at one of the committee's hearings in June and



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characterized much of Pence's thought process during the time when Trump was pressuring him to block or delay Biden's win.

Another timing factor: If Republicans take over the House in November's midterm elections, the committee is likely to be disbanded in January. Its Democratic chairman, Mississippi Rep. Bennie Thompson, has said it will issue a report before the end of the year.

The committee is also expected to weigh in on possible legislative changes to the Electoral Count Act, which governs how a president is certified by Congress. A bipartisan group of senators this week released proposed changes to the law that would clarify the way states submit electors and the vice president tallies the votes. Trump and his allies tried to find loopholes in the law ahead of Jan. 6 as the former president worked to overturn his defeat to Biden. Pence refused to go along.

The committee has not been shy about referring for potential prosecution witnesses who refuse to cooperate. Though the Justice Department has not taken up all such referrals, it won a conviction Friday against longtime Trump ally Steve Bannon, who had defied the panel's subpoena.

## GEORGIA:

The inquiry that perhaps poses the most immediate peril to Trump is based in Fulton County, Georgia, where District Attorney Fani Willis has been investigating efforts by the former president to get state officials to undo his election loss by imploring them to "find" votes he — falsely — claimed had been stolen from them.

Willis has said she is contemplating subpoenaing Trump for his testimony, a move that would seek to force him to cooperate with a criminal probe even as he lays the groundwork for another run for office.

Prosecutors have already sought the testimony of several Trump associates, including lawyer Rudy Giuliani and Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham. They've also advised 16 Georgia Republicans that they are at risk of being indicted. Those Republicans signed a certificate asserting Trump had won the election and declaring themselves the state's "duly elected and qualified" electors, even though Biden had won the state and a slate of Democratic electors had been certified.

The investigation's scope includes a Jan. 2, 2021, phone call between Trump and Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger. During that call, Trump urged Raffensperger to "find" enough votes to overturn his loss in the state.

"All I want to do is this. I just want to find 11,780 votes, which is one more than we have," Trump said during that call. "Because we won the state."

Trump has denied any wrongdoing. He has repeatedly described his call to Raffensperger as "perfect."

## White House announces \$270M military package for Ukraine

By NOMAAN MERCHANT and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House announced Friday that the U.S. is sending an additional \$270 million in security assistance to Ukraine, a package that will include additional medium range rocket systems and tactical drones.

The latest tranche brings the total U.S. security assistance committed to Ukraine by the Biden administration to \$8.2 billion, and is being paid for through \$40 billion in economic and security aid for Ukraine approved by Congress in May.

The new package includes four High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, or HIMARS and will allow Kyiv to acquire up to 580 Phoenix Ghost drones, both crucial weapon systems that have allowed the Ukrainians to stay in the fight despite Russian artillery supremacy, according to John Kirby, the White House National Security Council's coordinator for strategic communications. The latest assistance also includes some 36,000 rounds of artillery ammunition and additional ammunition for the HIMARS.

"The president has been clear that we're going to continue to support the government of Ukraine and its people for as long as it takes," Kirby said.

Ukrainian forces have used U.S.-made rocket launchers and tactical drones to destroy dozens of Russian

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targets and hold at bay Russia's larger and more heavily equipped forces.

Russia can fire far more ammunition but has sustained huge losses of troops and equipment as Ukrainian forces have been equipped with precision weaponry from the U.S. and other Western allies. CIA Director William Burns on Wednesday said the U.S. estimates roughly 15,000 Russian forces have been killed. That death toll would be equivalent to the Soviet Union's military losses in its 1980s war in Afghanistan, which lasted nearly a decade.

To try to equalize the conflict, Ukraine has made ample use of Western-supplied technologies as it defends its eastern lines.

Ukraine has long sought more HIMARS launchers, which fire medium-range rockets and also can be quickly moved before Russia can target them. On Wednesday, Ukrainian forces reportedly used a HIMARS to hit a strategic bridge in the Russia-occupied southern region of Kherson. One military expert told The Associated Press that the systems have "hardly had any rest during the day or at night."

U.S. authorities also are providing Ukraine with more guided rockets known as GMLRS. The Pentagon continues to rule out sending longer-range rockets that Ukraine could potentially use to strike deep into Russian territory. That's a nod to the U.S. trying to manage the risk of Russia instigating a broader war.

The U.S. has already sent 12 truck-mounted HIMARS to Ukraine. The United Kingdom has also provided three launchers of a different kind with GMLRS rockets as well.

Both sides in the war have made ample use of drones. The U.S. had previously committed to sending 121 Phoenix Ghosts to Ukraine. Pentagon officials have not fully disclosed the capabilities of those drones, which were developed by the U.S. Air Force and produced by Aevex Aerospace, which describes itself as a leader in "full-spectrum airborne intelligence solutions." The latest batch of Ghosts is expected to arrive starting in August.

The drones have onboard cameras and can be used to attack targets. Speaking to reporters Friday, a senior U.S. defense official declined to say how the Ghost is used but said Ukraine had integrated drones into its battlefield approach "to great effect." The official spoke on condition of anonymity under rules set by the Pentagon.

The U.S. disclosed earlier this month that it believes Russia is planning to obtain several hundred drones from Iran. Iranian drones have previously penetrated Saudi and Emirati air defense systems in the Middle East that were supplied by the U.S. Biden administration officials have tried to publicly discourage Iran from moving forward with the transfer.

The White House released satellite imagery that indicates Russian officials twice visited Iran in June or July for a showcase of weapons-capable drones it is looking to acquire.

## Big Papi still awestruck as Hall of Fame induction looms

By JOHN KEKIS AP Sports Writer

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. (AP) — Six months after he got one of the most amazing phone calls in sports, David Ortiz is still awestruck at his good fortune.

The former Boston Red Sox slugger known affectionately as Big Papi will be inducted into the Hall of Fame on Sunday.

Maybe then baseball's highest honor will finally sink in.

"I still can't believe it. This is like a dream come true," the 46-year-old Ortiz said. "I grew up tough, man. I grew up tough. My childhood wasn't that easy, but I had great parents to guide me and keep me away from trouble."

Ortiz hit 541 home runs in 20 big league seasons and helped the Red Sox win three World Series. He is just the 58th player selected by the Baseball Writers' Association of America in his first year of eligibility, and he served as a designated hitter more than any previous inductee.

Six Era Committee selections are also part of the Class of 2022. Minnesota Twins teammates pitcher Jim Kaat and free-swinging slugger Tony Oliva, and late Dodger great Gil Hodges, who managed the New York Mets to their first World Series title in 1969, are among them.

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Also getting their due: Minnie Miñoso, a star with the Chicago White Sox in the 1950s; Buck O'Neil, who played for the Kansas City Monarchs in the Negro Leagues and was a tireless advocate for the game; and Bud Fowler, a pioneering Black player who grew up in Cooperstown in the 1860s and played in more than a dozen leagues.

It's a class with three Latino players and two Black players who helped pave the way for today's stars, and three players with ties to the Twins.

Minnesota holds a special place in Ortiz's heart because of the friendship he developed with Hall of Famer Kirby Puckett — No. 34 just like Big Papi — before Ortiz was dealt to the Red Sox after six seasons.

"That was my guy," said Ortiz, who survived a nightclub shooting three years ago in his native Dominican Republic.

Kaat's journey to Cooperstown is rather remarkable. He was 1-4 in 1958 playing for Missoula of the Pioneer League, and he figured he was one start from being sent home. Player-manager Jack McKeon gave Kaat a place in the rotation every fourth day, and he finished the season 16-9.

"I learned a lot about myself. I learned a lot about pitching," said the 83-year-old Kaat, who grew up in Zeeland, Michigan. "I feel badly for the pitchers today because that's where you get your foundation."

Using finesse instead of power, the 6-foot-4 left-hander pitched for 25 years before retiring in 1983 with 283 wins and 17 saves in stints with six teams. The last was St. Louis, and when the Cardinals won the 1982 World Series, Kaat became the only professional athlete in any of the major sports to play 24 seasons before getting a championship ring.

"It's hard to let it sink in, but it's pretty humbling (to be elected to the Hall of Fame)," said Kaat, who didn't play organized baseball until he was 15. "I'm always thankful that I had a durable body and that I could last a while. I wanted to play this game as long as I could."

Oliva, a native of Cuba, was on the powerhouse Twins teams in the 1960s with Kaat. The lefty-swinging Oliva spent his entire 15-year career with the Twins. He was the American League Rookie of the Year in 1964. He led the league in hits five times and became the first player in major league history to win batting titles in each of his first two seasons, finishing with a lifetime average of .304.

"It will be special to be able to go with Jim Kaat into the Hall of Fame after over 60 years we know each other," said Oliva, also 83. "I never think I go into the Hall of Fame. As a kid, I was thinking maybe I could play baseball in Cuba if somebody give me the opportunity. I just wanted to play the game."

Oliva got his chance in part because of Miñoso, the Cuban Comet.

He grew up on a sugar plantation and played ball on weekends. He was a star with the New York Cubans in the Negro Leagues from 1946-48 before debuting with Cleveland in 1949, becoming the first Black Latino player in the major leagues, two years after Jackie Robinson broke in.

Miñoso was a nine-time All-Star, led the league in triples and stolen bases three times each, and finished his career with 2,110 hits and a .299 batting average. He died in 2015.

"Miñoso is like the Jackie Robinson of Latino America," Oliva said. "He was a great ballplayer. He should have been in the Hall of Fame a long time ago. The numbers were there."

Hodges, a hard-hitting first baseman, had 370 homers and 1,274 RBIs to go with a career .273 batting average in 18 seasons — all but the last two with the Dodgers. He retired in 1963 after two partial seasons with the Mets and five years later was hired to manage the Mets, leading them in 1969 to their improbable World Series victory over the Baltimore Orioles.

Hodges, who was 660-753 in nine seasons of managing, died of a heart attack in 1972 at age 47.

The honor for O'Neil comes nearly 16 years after his death, though the Hall of Fame dedicated a statue to him in 2008 and established the Buck O'Neil Lifetime Achievement Award. O'Neil was the first chairman of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, Missouri.

Less than three months before his death in 2006 at the age of 94, he traveled to Cooperstown to speak at the induction of 17 Negro Leagues stars.

"I've done a lot of things I really liked doing," O'Neil said in his speech. "But I'd rather be right here, right now, representing the people who helped build a bridge across the chasm of prejudice."

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Two others will be honored Saturday: BBWAA Career Excellence Award winner Tim Kurkjian and the late Jack Graney, winner of the Ford C. Frick Award for broadcasting.

## Protest held at Uffizi's 'Spring' but painting not damaged

ROME (AP) — Italian environmental activists glued their hands Friday to the glass protecting Sandro Botticelli's painting "Spring" in the Uffizi Galleries in Florence, police said. The museum said thanks to the glass, which was installed as a precaution several years ago, the masterpiece was unharmed.

Paired with the Florentine artist's other masterpiece, "Birth of Venus," the two iconic canvases, dating from the late 15th century, are among the museum's most popular artworks. The painting is large, standing 10 feet, 6 inches by 6 feet, 9 inches (319 cm by 207 cm).

Carabinieri police said two young women and a man, all Italians who had bought entrance tickets, staged the protest in the Uffizi's room dedicated to the painter. The activists sat on the floor and displayed a banner reading, "Last Generation No Gas No Coal," police said.

The glue was safely removed from the glass.

The Corriere della Sera newspaper quoted the activists as saying in a statement: "Today, is it possible to see a beautiful Spring like this?"

The three were taken to a police station in Florence. Italian media said the activists were issued official orders to stay out of the tourist-popular city for three years, using a strategy in Italy similar to that often applied to violent soccer fans.

## Indigenous Canadians wary, hopeful as pope prepares apology

By PETER SMITH Associated Press

MASKWACIS, Alberta (AP) — To this day, Flo Buffalo doesn't drink milk — not since two nuns force-fed her the sour milk she had refused at the Catholic-run Ermineskin Indian Residential School for Indigenous children that she attended in the 1960s.

Holding out her right hand, she showed how she has never been able to fully straighten it out since a nun severely beat her with a stick.

"The nuns, they were real mean," Buffalo said.

With international attention focusing on the former school in the prairie town of Maskwacis as Pope Francis visits Monday to apologize for abuses in a system designed to sever Native children from their tribal, family and religious bonds, Indigenous Canadians such as Buffalo are voicing a range of skepticism, wariness and hope.

Buffalo, a member of the Samson Cree First Nation in central Alberta, doesn't often talk about her two years at the school. But ahead of the pontiff's visit, she sat down to relate her experiences to Associated Press journalists and a small group of teen girls who are learning about the traumatic legacy of the schools.

Speaking in the council chambers of the Montana First Nation, a neighboring Cree tribe where she now works, Buffalo recalled that the nuns, who were white, beat the girls when they spoke in their native Cree instead of English.

At the same time, Buffalo, 67, said she often defied the nuns. "I scared the hell out of them, because I wouldn't put up with their ..." she said, completing the sentence with a mischievous chuckle.

Buffalo still considers herself Catholic. But she's not going to attend Monday's event with Francis — she doesn't want to deal with the crowds, and the ones she holds responsible are the nuns who abused her and never offered an apology while they were alive.

"It shouldn't be him apologizing," Buffalo said. "It should be them."

When Mavis Moberly heard the pope was coming, the news triggered some of the trauma she carries from her years at a residential school in northern Alberta. But after tears, prayers and a traditional smudging ceremony, a purification rite with scented plants, she found herself looking forward to hearing the pope's apology.

"Maybe it's going to help me to heal and to have a little bit more inner peace," she said after last Sunday's



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Mass at Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples, a Catholic parish in Edmonton oriented to Indigenous people and culture.

The papal apology is years, if not generations, in the making.

From the 19th century into much of the 20th, Canada's government collaborated with Catholic and Protestant churches to run residential schools in "an education system in name only," designed to weaken tribal identities and Indigenous resistance to land grabs, according to a 2015 report by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

It identified 139 schools, the majority Catholic-run, where about 150,000 students were sent. "Children were abused, physically and sexually," the report said, adding that schools were unsanitary and unsafe facilities where thousands of children died of disease, fire and other causes.

For decades, various Catholic and Protestant church groups have offered apologies, and Pope Benedict XVI in 2009 expressed his "personal anguish."

But the painful history took on new urgency last year when surveys of former schools with ground-penetrating radar found evidence of hundreds of unmarked graves.

Pope Francis met with a Canadian Indigenous delegation this spring and apologized "for the deplorable conduct of those members of the Catholic Church" involved with the schools. He also heeded survivors' calls to make an apology on Canadian soil, leading to Monday's event where thousands of attendees are expected.

Today, the Ermineskin residential school has largely been torn down. In its place stands a newer set of school buildings, run by four Cree nations in and around Maskwacis. A large tipi in front of the secondary school demonstrates how educators are promoting pride in the once-suppressed Indigenous culture.

Rose Pipestem, a member of the Montana First Nation who is also a survivor of the Ermineskin school, said she will try to see the pope. But like Buffalo, she believes the perpetrators should have apologized.

"I'm going to go see him," she said, sitting in the council chambers near a line of photos of past Montana chiefs. "I'm not mad at him."

Pipestem doesn't have conscious memories of abuse at the school, where she lived from age 3 after her mother died. But a classmate told her years later that a nun had beaten her until she bled because she wasn't doing her work on the blackboard fast enough.

"It just shocked me," she said through tears.

Pipestem did not file a claim for compensation because she can't recall the incident. But she knows there was abuse at the school.

"I'm always grateful I'm still around," she said. "I think it kind of made me stronger." She reached a point where "I didn't believe in the Catholic religion. Why did they allow all these things to happen?"

Other survivors have found spiritual solace in Catholicism.

On Sunday, worshipers crowded into Sacred Heart for the rededication of the sanctuary after a fire. The newly restored space features large wooden beams in the shape of a tipi over the altar and evocative images of Jesus and his followers portrayed with Indigenous features.

Drummers accompanied a procession into the church, followed by a multicultural mix of musical styles and a liturgy in English and Cree.

"This church has been a part of my healing journey," said Moberly, who has been attending for many years.

She said that as a young adult, still traumatized by her school experiences, she rejected the Catholic faith for a time, turned to drinking and made poor choices. But when she became a grandmother, she resolved to change her ways and set a strong example for others.

"It wasn't an easy task," she said. "There was many tears."

Church elder Fernie Marty, 73, said Francis' visit will not only bring reconciliation but encourage what he calls "reconcili-action."

"We all play a part in making sure that those kinds of atrocities never happen again on Canadian soil," Marty said.

Edmonton Archbishop Richard Smith said the pope's visit sends a message not only with words but with

action, since he's coming to Canada even as he has canceled other trips due to health problems.

"This is showing ... how important it is for him to demonstrate personally his personal closeness to the Indigenous peoples," Smith said.

## California OKs 'baby bonds' to help combat child poverty

By ADAM BEAM Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Parenting — that long chain of decisions that hopefully leads to a well-rounded adult — was always a little less stressful for Laura Guerra because her husband, Rigo, was "100% in it" for their daughter, Emilia.

But Rigo died from COVID-19 on Christmas Eve in 2020, alone in a hospital room while Guerra watched helplessly from the other side of a window. Since then, left to raise their now 2-year-old daughter mostly by herself, Guerra's mind hasn't stopped racing.

"I'm constantly thinking," she said. "Every decision that I make, if I make the wrong decision, she's going to suffer for it. And that scares the hell out of me."

Now, California is using some of its record-setting budget surplus to help ease Guerra's mind, and those of others like her. Last month, California became the first state to commit to setting up trust funds for children who lost a parent or caregiver to the pandemic.

The money — \$100 million in total — will go to into interest-bearing accounts for children from low-income families who have lost a parent to COVID and to kids who are in the state's foster care system. State lawmakers haven't decided how much money each child will get, but one early proposal would give younger kids \$4,000 and older kids \$8,000. That would be enough to provide funding for about 16,000 kids, who could spend the money once they become adults.

"As a mom, this gives me a little bit of that security back," said Guerra, who has been advocating for the trust funds as a member of the advocacy group COVID Survivors for Change. "I don't want her to continue to be a victim of this virus forever."

The first U.S. savings bonds were introduced in the 1930s to raise money for the government and give ordinary Americans an opportunity to invest. Those bonds were nicknamed "baby bonds," because parents would often buy them for their children.

These modern-day baby bonds are different in that, instead of being purchased by parents, the government gives the money to children from low-income families for free. Advocates have held up the idea as a way to help close the racial wealth gap between white and minority families, who were largely excluded from the federal wealth-building programs during the Great Depression.

Hillary Clinton briefly included a baby bonds proposal in her 2008 presidential campaign platform, and U.S. Sen. Cory Booker introduced a national baby bonds bill in Congress that has yet to pass.

The Washington D.C. City Council passed a baby bond program in 2021, committing to give low-income children \$500 plus another \$1,000 each year that their parents remain below a certain income level. Last year, Connecticut was the first state to approve a statewide baby bonds program — although it hasn't been funded yet.

The idea is similar to guaranteed income programs that give cash to low-income people each month with no restrictions on how they can use it. California has several such programs at the local level, modeled after high-profile demonstration project in Stockton that launched three years ago.

While guaranteed income programs are about helping people with short-term expenses, baby bonds are about the future. Children could not touch the money until they reach adulthood. During that time, the money would grow by collecting interest payments from a bank.

How much money they children will get depends on how long the account grows. For younger children, advocates hope they will have between \$20,000 and \$40,000 once they become adults.

"Income and wealth are different things," said Michael Tubbs, the former mayor of Stockton who is now an advisor to Gov. Gavin Newsom and founder of the advocacy group End Poverty in California. "People should have the wherewithal to pay their bills today ... but the next generation shouldn't have to live

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paycheck to paycheck.”

California’s baby bonds program is the latest in a surge of new spending aimed at combating poverty. Since 2018, California has spent \$13 billion on an array of new laws and policy changes that have lifted an estimated 300,000 children out of poverty, according to a report released earlier this year by Grace, a California-based nonprofit.

That spending includes a \$1,000 tax credit for low income families with young children, a universal school meals program, college savings accounts for low-income kids and a commitment to send every 4-year-old to kindergarten for free.

The group hopes California’s baby bonds program is just a first step. Its goal is to eventually have the state give trust funds to every child in the state born into a low income family.

“The goal has always been, ‘How do we help best set up low income children for their future?’ said Shimica Gaskins, president and CEO of Grace. “We had really relied on educational pathways, but also know that cash and cash assistance and opportunity are equally important.”

It’s not clear if the Legislature would expand the program to include all children from low-income families. State Sen. Nancy Skinner, a Democrat from Berkeley and chair of the Senate Budget Committee, said lawmakers will closely watch the COVID survivor bond program to see how it works.

“The great irony of California especially, but the nation as a whole, is we have such wealth but it’s so concentrated,” Skinner said. “Whatever we can do that can address that income inequality is essential to do.”

The state treasurer’s office will manage the money in interest-bearing accounts. Once the recipients become adults, they can spend the money however they want. But advocates hope they’ll use it for things like a down payment for a house, college tuition or a car.

Guerra said she doesn’t know how her daughter would use the money once she’s old enough to spend it. “I do whatever I can to steer her in the right direction and to make her a good human being, right?” she said.

For now, she’s focused on making sure her daughter, Emilia, remembers her father. So far, her efforts appear to be working.

Emilia Guerra sees her daddy everywhere. He’s in the picture frames on the walls of her room. He’s on the screen of her mother’s phone. And he’s in the recesses of her 2-year-old mind, showing his face to her in scattered moments across her bustling life.

“Randomly, we will be sitting somewhere and she says, ‘Hi Daddy!’” Guerra said. “I do tell her that mommy can’t see daddy. But maybe she can.”

## Liz Cheney braces for primary loss as focus shifts to 2024

By STEVE PEOPLES and MEAD GRUVER Associated Press

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) — Three weeks before the most significant election of her political career, Liz Cheney was nowhere to be seen as thousands of voters gathered for a massive midsummer rodeo and cowboy festival in Wyoming’s largest city.

Instead, the three-term Republican congresswoman was 1,600 miles away in Washington presiding over a U.S. House committee comprised largely of Democrats intent on exposing former President Donald Trump’s attack on democracy during the Jan. 6, 2021 insurrection. As the cowboy fest roared back home, Cheney railed against Trump’s failures.

“Donald Trump made a purposeful choice to violate his oath of office,” she said during Thursday’s hearing. Dean Finnerty, a rancher from Wheatland competing in the steer wrestling competition, was not moved.

“I tell you what: I voted for Cheney when she ran last time and I won’t vote for her ever again,” Finnerty said. “I don’t know if she’s representing the conservative Americans that voted her in.”

Cheney’s unrelenting criticism of Trump from a Capitol Hill committee room represents the centerpiece of an unconventional campaign strategy that may well lead to her political demise, at least in the short term. Many Cheney allies are prepared for — if not resigned to — a loss in Wyoming’s Aug. 16 Republican primary against Trump-backed challenger Harriet Hageman.

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But as primary day approaches, there is also a pervasive belief among Cheney's team that her unorthodox strategy in 2022 may put her in a stronger position for the 2024 presidential contest. Cheney's fierce anti-Trump message as vice chairman of the congressional committee investigating the insurrection has strengthened her national brand while expanding a national network of donors and Trump critics in both parties who could boost a prospective White House run.

Cheney has yet to finalize any decisions about 2024, but she has not ruled out a presidential run as a Republican or an independent.

"The single most important thing is protecting the nation from Donald Trump," Cheney said in interview with ABC News that aired Friday. She said she would make a decision about a potential White House bid "down the road."

Cheney's supporters understand the political paradox she faces in Wyoming, the state where Trump scored his largest margin of victory, 43 points, less than two years ago.

"She knew that she was shooting herself in the foot politically (in Wyoming) and she was going to walk around with a limp for the rest of her life," Landon Brown, a Wyoming state representative and Cheney ally, said of Cheney's unwavering Trump criticism. "But I could see this blossoming into something larger."

Cheney, the 55-year-old daughter of former Vice President Dick Cheney, is perhaps the best known among a small group of so-called "Never Trump" Republicans weighing presidential bids for 2024. They include term-limited Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan and Cheney's only Republican colleague on the Jan. 6 commission, Rep. Adam Kinzinger, R-Ill., who opted not to seek reelection this fall.

Trump would likely dominate a large field of presidential primary opponents should he run again, as he has said he will. But there is also a notable group of Republican voters eager to move past Trump and his continued fight to overturn his 2020 election loss.

Still, few believe that an outspoken Trump critic could ultimately prevail in a Republican presidential primary. The vast majority of Republican voters still approve of Trump.

And while her allies may be optimistic about her long-term future, Cheney would certainly like to avoid a blowout loss next month in her home state.

It won't be easy.

Facing consistent and credible death threats, she has been forced to abandon traditional retail campaigning, trading public rallies and town halls for private events where her presence is often revealed to the public only after their conclusion, if at all.

She has essentially been excommunicated by the Wyoming Republican Party, which voted last year to censure Cheney before deciding to stop recognizing her as a Republican altogether. Local GOP offices offer yard signs for Hageman and many other Republicans on the ballot but not Cheney.

Left with few options, she has turned to Democrats for help. Her campaign website now features a link to a form allowing voters to change their party affiliation to Republican to participate in the Republican primary.

Kinzinger's political team is helping to accelerate her crossover push.

"We need more principled leaders like Liz to ensure that those who want our democracy to fail don't succeed," Kinzinger told AP. "There has never been more urgency for pro-democracy voters to participate in primary elections."

Cheney has resisted private pressure from some allies to shift away from her anti-Trump message. Many Republicans on the ballot this year who criticized Trump after Jan. 6 have since tried to sidestep the controversy by focusing on local issues in their districts, President Joe Biden or runaway inflation.

Cheney has refused to soften her message, instead leaning into Trump at the biggest moments of her campaign.

In her reelection campaign announcement video this May, she promised to "reject the lies" while not surrendering "to pressure or intimidation." In her closing statement at last month's Republican primary debate, she called out "the lies of Donald Trump," vowing, "I will never put party above my duty to the country."

Meanwhile, Trump has made Cheney's defeat a chief priority.

He called her a "despicable human being" on his social media site this month. And in May, Trump traveled



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to Wyoming's second-largest city, Casper, to rally support for his preferred Cheney successor, conservative attorney Harriet Hageman.

As Cheney focuses her energy on the Jan. 6 commission, Hageman has barnstormed the state court- ing small, rural crowds in the traditional mold of Wyoming politicking. The approach is more like the one Cheney herself used to top a crowded Republican primary field to win Wyoming's lone House seat in 2016.

Friends and foes alike have noticed her absence this year.

"I do know that Liz absolutely wants to be out across the state meeting with all our residents," said Paul Ulrich, a former chairman of the Petroleum Association of Wyoming and a Cheney supporter. "It's painful for her to have these security concerns. It's disgusting that it's come to this."

The Capitol Police assigned Cheney a personal security detail last August, a step taken only when mem- bers of Congress are facing credible security threats.

Dean "Doc" Schroeder, a registered Democrat now planning to change his registration to vote for Cheney in the GOP primary, has been impressed by Cheney's leadership on the Jan. 6 commission. He said it may not matter whether the congresswoman spends more time in the state given Wyoming's overwhelming Republican majority.

"A very large proportion of that wouldn't care if she came flying into the election on angel's wings. They're not going to vote for her," said Schroeder, a retired psychologist and Frontier Days Rodeo volunteer. "So I don't know that it has hurt her anything. And I'm a perfect example of how her behavior in Washington has helped her."

Some Cheney allies are skeptical there are enough Democratic crossover votes to put her over the top next month.

"I wouldn't want to put any money on this race," said Marilyn Kite, a former state Supreme Court justice who supports Cheney. "I hope like heck she's successful, but if she isn't, maybe her being true to her oath truly is more important in the long run."

## UN court rejects Myanmar claims, will hear Rohingya case

By MIKE CORDER Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — Judges at the United Nations' highest court on Friday dismissed pre- liminary objections by Myanmar to a case alleging the Southeast Asian nation is responsible for genocide against the Rohingya ethnic minority.

The decision establishing the International Court of Justice's jurisdiction sets the stage for hearings air- ing evidence of atrocities against the Rohingya that human rights groups and a U.N. probe say breach the 1948 Genocide Convention. In March, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that the violent repres- sion of the Rohingya population in Myanmar, which formerly was known as Burma, amounts to genocide.

Tun Khin, president of the Burmese Rohingya Organization UK, welcomed the decision, saying 600,000 Rohingya "are still facing genocide," while "one million people in Bangladesh camps, they are waiting for a hope for justice."

The African nation of Gambia filed the case in 2019 amid international outrage at the treatment of the Rohingya, hundreds of thousands of whom fled to neighboring Bangladesh amid a brutal crackdown by Myanmar forces in 2017. It argued that both Gambia and Myanmar were parties to the 1948 convention and that all signatories had a duty to ensure it was enforced.

Judges at the court agreed.

Reading a summary of the decision, the court's president, U.S. Judge Joan E. Donoghue, said: "Any state party to the Genocide Convention may invoke the responsibility of another state party including through the institution of proceedings before the court."

A small group of pro-Rohingya protesters gathered outside the court's headquarters, the Peace Palace, ahead of the decision with a banner reading: "'Speed up delivering justice to Rohingya. The genocide survivors can't wait for generations.'"

One protester stamped on a large photograph of Myanmar's military government leader, Senior Gen.

Min Aung Hlaing.

The court rejected arguments raised at hearings in February by lawyers representing Myanmar that the case should be tossed out because the world court only rules in disputes between states and the Rohingya complaint was brought by Gambia on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The judges also dismissed Myanmar's claim that Gambia could not file the case as it was not directly linked to the events in Myanmar and that a legal dispute did not exist between the two countries before the case was filed.

Myanmar's representative, Ko Ko Hlaing, the military government's minister for international cooperation, said his nation "will try our utmost to defend our country and to protect our national interest."

Gambia's attorney general and justice minister, Dawda Jallow, said: "We are very pleased that justice has been done."

The Netherlands and Canada have backed Gambia, saying in 2020 that the country "took a laudable step towards ending impunity for those committing atrocities in Myanmar and upholding this pledge. Canada and the Netherlands consider it our obligation to support these efforts which are of concern to all of humanity."

However, the court ruled Friday that it "would not be appropriate" to send the two countries copies of documents and legal arguments filed in the case.

Myanmar's military launched what it called a clearance campaign in Rakhine state in 2017 in the aftermath of an attack by a Rohingya insurgent group. More than 700,000 Rohingya fled into neighboring Bangladesh. Myanmar security forces have been accused of mass rapes, killings and torching thousands of Rohingya homes.

In 2019, lawyers representing Gambia at the ICJ outlined their allegations of genocide by showing judges maps, satellite images and graphic photos of the military campaign. That led the court to order Myanmar to do all it can to prevent genocide against the Rohingya. The interim ruling was intended to protect the minority while the case is decided in The Hague, a process likely to take years.

The International Court of Justice rules on disputes between states. It is not linked to the International Criminal Court, also based in The Hague, which holds individuals accountable for atrocities. Prosecutors at the ICC are investigating crimes committed against the Rohingya who were forced to flee to Bangladesh.

## **Brazil prosecutors charge suspects in murder of Amazon pair**

By DAVID BILLER Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Public prosecutors have charged three individuals with the June murder of British journalist Dom Phillips and Indigenous expert Bruno Pereira in the remote western reaches of Brazil's Amazon rainforest, according to a statement.

All are local riverine dwellers, and their motive was that Pereira asked Phillips to photograph them when they passed by in a boat, the statement said. The area is a hotspot for illegal fishing and poaching.

Phillips and Pereira had met with Indigenous people near the entrance of the Javari Valley Indigenous Territory, which borders Peru and Colombia, and were traveling along the Itaquai River back to the city of Atalaia do Norte when they were attacked. Their disappearance generated intense international outcry and pressure for action and, with the help of local Indigenous people, authorities located their bodies hidden in the forest.

Prosecutors presented their charges Thursday, outlining that two of the men — Amarildo da Costa Oliveira and Jefferson da Silva Lima — have confessed to the crime, while witness testimony indicates Oseney da Costa de Oliveira also participated, according to the statement.

Pereira had previous confrontations with fishermen when seizing their catch and had received multiple threats. He carried a gun with him, and had left the federal Indigenous affairs agency in order to teach local Indigenous people how to patrol their land and gather geo-tagged photographic evidence of criminality.

On the day they were murdered, Pereira was transporting such evidence to authorities in Atalaia do Norte, and he was shot three times. Phillips, who was conducting research for a book entitled "How to Save the Amazon," was killed because "only because of being with Bruno, in order to ensure impunity for

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the prior crime," the prosecutors' statement said.

There has been speculation in the Brazilian press that their murder may have been ordered by the ring-leader of an illegal fishing network. Police earlier this month arrested a fourth man when he presented false documents, believing he may have some involvement, but no charges have yet been filed.

## Jan. 6 hearing dominates top TV networks — except one

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — America's top television networks on Thursday turned prime time over to a gripping account of former President Donald Trump's actions during the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol — with one prominent exception.

The top-rated news network, Fox News Channel, stuck with its own lineup of commentators. Sean Hannity denounced the "show trial" elsewhere on TV just as he was featured in it, with the House's Jan. 6 committee examining his tweets to Trump administration figures.

Hannity aired a soundless snippet of committee members entering the hearing room as part of a lengthy monologue condemning the proceedings.

That was all Fox News Channel viewers saw of the hearing.

"It's really just a cheap, selectively edited political ad," Hannity told his viewers.

Meanwhile, ABC, CBS, NBC, PBS, CNN and MSNBC aired the second prime-time hearing, focusing on Trump's real-time response to the riot. The committee said it was the last hearing until September.

"This very much sounded like a closing argument, certainly of this chapter of their investigation, and it was profound," ABC News anchor David Muir said.

About 20 million people watched the first prime-time hearing on June 9, the Nielsen Company said. Generally, reaching that big an audience in mid-July would be a long shot, as it is the least-watched television month of the year.

Yet the seven daytime hearings have proven something of an oddity. Buoyed by strong word-of-mouth, the hearings grew in audience as they went along. CNN, for example, reached 1.5 million people for the second daytime hearing on June 16, and 2.6 million for the last one on July 12, Nielsen said.

Fox's broadcast station in New York, which did not air last month's prime-time hearing, showed the Thursday night session. The 17 other Fox-owned stations elsewhere in the country aired both hearings.

There's little interest at Fox News Channel, which televised the daytime hearings, although only up until the demarcation line of the network's popular show "The Five." Ratings show that roughly half the network's audience flees when the hearings start, and return when they're over.

That would be a much more serious problem in prime time, where Fox's audience is more than double what it is during the day. Fox News Channel's decision not to air the prime-time hearings is almost certainly a function of the demands of their audience and prime-time hosts, said Nicole Hemmer, an expert on conservative media and author of the upcoming book "Partisans: The Conservative Revolutionaries Who Remade American Politics in the 1990s."

"It creates an awkward situation when a host like Tucker Carlson tells his audience that the hearings are a debacle not worth their time, and then the network preempts his show to air them," Hemmer said.

Carlson found plenty of things to talk about besides the hearing Thursday, including President Joe Biden's COVID-19 diagnosis, a "meltdown" by liberals over the U.S. Supreme Court's abortion decision, the failure of drug legalization, "climate crazies" and "trans-affirming" lessons in Los Angeles schools.

Hannity's lead story was the "grand finale" of the Jan. 6 committee, although he didn't show it — at least with the sound on.

He brought on guests like GOP Rep. Jim Banks of Indiana, who said that if the hearings have done anything, "they've exonerated President Trump and the people supporting him."

Talk show host Mark Levin told Hannity the U.S. Justice Department is corrupt because "the Colbert 9 are roaming free." That's a reference to federal prosecutors' decision not to bring charges against nine people associated with CBS' "Late Show with Stephen Colbert" who were arrested in a U.S. Capitol com-

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plex building last month.

While Hannity was on the air, the Jan. 6 committee showed tweets that Hannity and other Fox News personalities had sent to Trump administration officials, warning that the Capitol riot was making the president look bad.

In a closing statement, Rep. Liz Cheney, the committee's vice chair, noted that most of its case against Trump has been made by Republicans. She ridiculed the notion that the committee's findings would be much different if Republicans other than she and Rep. Adam Kinzinger were members.

"Do you really think that Bill Barr is such a delicate flower that he would wilt under cross-examination?" she said.

The Republicans watching Fox News Channel on Thursday night didn't hear her.

## 'Heat'-ing up: Michael Mann writes sequel-prequel 'Heat 2'

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Decades after the release of Michael Mann's "Heat," the classic crime thriller has endured in the minds of fans, critics, peers and the director himself.

He had so much left to say.

"There's always the sense of being shortchanged," Mann said during a Zoom interview from his apartment in Modena, Italy, where he is currently working on "Ferrari," starring Adam Driver as the race car driver-auto magnate. "I love doing the research and building these characters out very, very completely, and rooting the actor into a whole life. ... The movie is a splinter, it's just a very narrow slice of a complete life."

Mann has finally rounded out the story from his 1995 movie. He has brought back the lethal, calculating criminal Neil McCauley, played by Robert De Niro; the swaggering detective Vincent Hanna, played by Al Pacino; and such supporting characters as Chris Shiherlis (Val Kilmer), Michael Cheritto (Tom Sizemore) and Nate (Jon Voight).

He does hope to make another "Heat" movie, but he has chosen to introduce his new narrative through words only, the novel "Heat 2."

Written with the award-winning crime novelist Meg Gardiner and scheduled to come out Aug. 9, the 480-page "Heat 2" is a sequel and prequel, looking back to the late 1980s and ahead to the 21st century, expanding the world of McCauley and Hanna and Shiherlis among others, adding new characters and moving the action everywhere from Los Angeles to Paraguay and Asia.

Mann had never attempted a novel before and finally tried in part for a similar reason he takes on a given film: To see if he can. In some ways, he approached the book as if planning a movie production. He began with a basic story — he likes to know in advance how the plot turns out — and built the narrative outward, over time and space. For his novel, he speaks of creating "momentum that is almost cinematic," a symphony driving to a closing clash.

"Heat 2" permitted him to explore and digress in ways he wouldn't attempt on screen. He makes a point of knowing everyone's inner and outer lives. McCauley, for instance, he sees as a longtime outsider, institutionalized in his early teens. He sees him as "very intelligent," with a "really strong ego and very little self esteem." An ideal criminal.

"He goes to violence, immediately, zero to 60," Mann explains.

"Heat," among the most celebrated movies never to receive an Oscar nomination, has a base of obsessive admirers. After a special screening in June at the Tribeca Film Festival, audience members shouted lines from the movie during a panel discussion with Pacino and De Niro. Mann say fans often come up to him and quote from the famous coffee shop conversation between McCauley and Hanna, the first time Pacino and De Niro had ever shared screen time (They had previously appeared in separate time periods in "The Godfather, Part II").

"Heat 2" is a departure for Mann, and from novels in recent years by other filmmakers, among them Werner Herzog, Brian De Palma and David Cronenberg. While Herzog's "The Twilight World" and De Palma's "Are Snakes Necessary?" are original stories, Mann is doing a kind of reversal, taking characters created



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for the screen and adapting them to the page. Instead of finding it a distraction to think of Pacino when he's describing Hanna, he welcomes the merger of actor and character.

"They're fused. It's a fusion. They're one and the same," he says. "Vincent Hanna is Al Pacino and Al Pacino is Vincent Hanna. Neil McCauley in 1988 is Bobby (De Niro) seven years younger. ... Since I made the movie and sought Al Pacino and De Niro and Val Kilmer, you bet that's who these people are."

Gardiner joined Mann at the suggestion of their mutual literary agent, Shane Salerno. Known for her Evan Delaney novels, she is a "Heat" fan and a partisan for Mann's film in the many discussions she has had with fellow writers over whether "Goodfellas," "The Godfather" or "Heat" is their favorite crime movie. For "Heat 2," she helped Mann with the book's structure and otherwise proved a sounding board and close collaborator, the two eventually writing alternating chapters. Their time together — she lives in Austin, Texas, he is based in Los Angeles — in some ways mirrored the belated face-off between Pacino and De Niro, who despite being co-stars only meet midway in the 170 minute picture.

"We began working together in the depths of Covid," she says. "We didn't get a chance to meet for a year. It was all long phone calls, and long emails back and forth."

Mann, 79, has been working in film and television since the 1970s, whether writing episodes for "Starsky and Hutch," serving as executive producer of the show "Miami Vice" or directing "The Insider," "Manhunter" and "Public Enemies." He is a Chicago native who says his take on the world — "a certain kind of cynical worldview, I guess" — was shaped by his experiences as the son of grocers in the inner city. Citing "The French Connection" and its director, William Friedkin, as favorites, he jokes that filmmakers like himself and Friedkin who grew up in Chicago itself end up making crime stories, while those from the suburbs (such as the late John Hughes) prefer comedies.

"Heat 2" is the first of three planned novels (one of which may be related to "Heat"), and an ambitious literary beginning for a man who had never attempted a work of fiction before. He majored in English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, with thoughts of becoming a teacher, but decided that would be "really immensely boring." Asked to cite literary influences, he mentions John le Carre, but otherwise says he doesn't read crime fiction. Instead, he looks to "primary sources," the various killers, crooks, law enforcers and government agents he has met and befriended and whose stories he adapted for "Heat," "Thief" and other films.

Critics and fellow directors have praised him for his complex narratives and gifts for pacing and atmosphere: Christopher Nolan has cited "Heat" as inspiration for his acclaimed Batman movie "The Dark Knight." But some of Mann's favorite feedback has come from those "primary sources." He smiles when asked what some of the real-life models for his characters have said upon seeing his films.

"I've been offered alternative careers," he says.

## **FEMA report: Flood insurance hikes will drive 1M from market**

By MICHAEL PHILLIS Associated Press

ST. LOUIS (AP) — When questioned by members of Congress, the Federal Emergency Management Agency said its new update to the nation's flood insurance program will prompt more people to sign up for coverage, even though many will pay more for it.

But in a FEMA report obtained by The Associated Press under the Freedom of Information Act, the agency estimates one million fewer Americans will buy flood insurance by the end of the decade — a sizable number of people at risk of catastrophic financial loss.

As climate change drives increased flood risk in many parts of the country, FEMA has updated its flood insurance program to more accurately reflect risk, but also make the program more solvent. It's a response in part to criticism that taxpayers were funding big payouts when coastal mansions in risky locations flooded.

But nine senators from both parties expressed "serious concerns" about the new pricing system in a letter last September, after hearing that the agency's internal numbers predicted policies would drop off by 20%. The next month FEMA told the AP those figures were "misleading" and "taken out of context" and that on the subject of how many people will be insured "there is no study or report to share."

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The agency painted a different picture however at the end of the year when it sent a report to the treasury secretary and a handful of congressional leaders saying higher prices would drive a fall off of 1 million policies compared to the beginning of the decade.

The issue of how many people go uninsured for flooding is vital, said Chad Berginnis, executive director of the Association of State Floodplain Managers.

"We are talking the basic economic health, I think of not only our households and businesses, but our communities at large," if fewer people buy flood insurance, he said.

The federal flood insurance program was started when many private insurers stopped offering policies in high-risk areas. It operates in the red, paying out more in claims than it collects in premiums. By more accurately setting rates, the update, officially referred to as Risk Rating 2.0, makes it more expensive to develop in flood-prone regions, shifting the risks of disaster towards those homeowners.

Risk Rating 2.0 will factor in a property's unique flood risk — like its distance to water and cost to rebuild. The old system was based largely on a home's elevation and whether it was in a designed flood zone. Most policy holders will now see their rates go up. But for the first time, nearly a quarter of policyholders will see theirs go down. Buyers of new policies began seeing the new prices in October.

FEMA downplayed the report obtained by the AP as a pessimistic projection, aimed at forecasting finances, not insurance participation. The agency said it has not directly studied how many people will buy flood insurance.

"There's numerous reasons that growth could occur as time goes on," said David Maurstad, a senior executive of the National Flood Insurance Program, adding that an enrollment analysis should consider the agency's marketing efforts, the program's clear messaging of flood risk, price decreases and other factors.

But critics like Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., said affordability is a problem and FEMA didn't disclose the impact of those higher costs.

"This report makes it crystal clear that FEMA failed to be transparent with policyholders, Congress, and ultimately the American public," Menendez said in a statement. It shouldn't have taken a records request for details to emerge, he said.

When Francisca Acuña, a climate and community activist in Austin, Texas, was given a new quote, it was hard for her to believe.

"I go, 'no, you're making a mistake,'" she said.

Acuña had previously paid \$446 a year. Under Risk Rating 2.0, she was quoted \$1,893. Rate increases that large are rare. Increases are generally capped at 18% a year, but Acuña, juggling other expenses, had let her policy lapse so she was required to pay the full amount right away.

"There's no way, no how, that I can afford it," Acuña said.

Told of Acuña's situation, Maurstad said the rates reflect actual risk. It's unfortunate when people face big increases, but ensuring the financial health of the program and accurate rates, is "good public policy," he said.

Jim Rollo, a New York-based insurance agent, said he's seeing a change in some buyer attitudes. Some seem more skeptical about properties that have previously flooded and have higher premiums. Others "roll the dice" and forego costly insurance if it's not required.

"We are writing fewer policies than we were before," Rollo said.

Congress should create an affordability program for people struggling to buy insurance and fund efforts to improve flood protections, said Joel Scata, a lawyer at the Natural Resources Defense Council, an environmental advocacy group.

But Maurstad said FEMA's mission is different from the private sector. FEMA must help people "before, during and after" disasters as well as charge premiums that are risk-based and financially sound.

"We have certain responsibilities we are charged with. The number of policies sold isn't one of them, again, because we are a government program," he said.

Nevertheless the agency report predicts that the program, even with higher revenue, will continue to sink deeper into debt.

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## Today in History: July 23, Souter chosen for high court

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, July 23, the 204th day of 2022. There are 161 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 23, 1983, an Air Canada Boeing 767 ran out of fuel while flying from Montreal to Edmonton; the pilots were able to glide the jetliner to a safe emergency landing in Gimli, Manitoba. (The near-disaster occurred because the fuel had been erroneously measured in pounds instead of kilograms at a time when Canada was converting to the metric system.)

On this date:

In 1958, Britain's Queen Elizabeth II named the first four women to peerage in the House of Lords.

In 1967, five days of deadly rioting erupted in Detroit as an early morning police raid on an unlicensed bar resulted in a confrontation with local residents, escalating into violence that spread into other parts of the city; 43 people, mostly Blacks, were killed.

In 1982, actor Vic Morrow and two child actors, 7-year-old Myca Dinh Le and 6-year-old Renee Shin-Yi Chen, were killed when a helicopter crashed on top of them during filming of a Vietnam War scene for "Twilight Zone: The Movie." (Director John Landis and four associates were later acquitted of manslaughter charges.)

In 1990, President George H.W. Bush announced his choice of Judge David Souter of New Hampshire to succeed the retiring Justice William J. Brennan on the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1996, at the Atlanta Olympics, Kerri Strug made a heroic final vault despite torn ligaments in her left ankle as the U.S. women gymnasts clinched their first-ever Olympic team gold medal.

In 1997, the search for Andrew Cunanan (koo-NAN'-an), the suspected killer of designer Gianni Versace (JAH'-nee vur-SAH'-chee) and others, ended as police found his body on a houseboat in Miami Beach, an apparent suicide.

In 1999, space shuttle Columbia blasted off with the world's most powerful X-ray telescope and Eileen Collins, the first woman to command a U.S. space flight.

In 2003, Massachusetts' attorney general issued a report saying clergy members and others in the Boston Archdiocese probably had sexually abused more than 1,000 people over a period of six decades.

In 2006, Tiger Woods became the first player since Tom Watson in 1982-83 to win consecutive British Open titles.

In 2011, singer Amy Winehouse, 27, was found dead in her London home from accidental alcohol poisoning.

In 2019, Boris Johnson won the contest to lead Britain's governing Conservative Party, putting him in line to become the country's prime minister the following day.

In 2020, the virus-delayed and shortened major league baseball season began with the World Series champion Washington Nationals hosting the New York Yankees at an empty Nationals Park; Dr. Anthony Fauci threw out the ceremonial first ball. (The Yankees won, 4-1, in a game halted by rain.)

Ten years ago: His hair dyed a shocking comic-book shade of orange-red, James Holmes, the former doctoral student accused of killing 12 moviegoers at a showing of the new Batman movie in Aurora, Colorado, appeared in court for the first time. (Holmes was convicted of murder and attempted murder and sentenced to life in prison without parole.) Penn State's football program was all but leveled by penalties for its handling of the Jerry Sandusky child sex abuse scandal as the NCAA imposed an unprecedented \$60 million fine, a four-year ban from postseason play and a cut in the number of football scholarships it could award. Sally Ride, 61, the first American woman in space, died in La Jolla (lah HOY'-ah), California.

Five years ago: A tractor trailer was found in a Walmart parking lot in San Antonio, Texas, crammed with dozens of immigrants; ten died and many more were treated at a hospital for dehydration and heat stroke. (The driver, James Bradley Jr., was sentenced to life in prison after pleading guilty to transporting the immigrants resulting in death.) President Donald Trump tweeted that he had "complete power" to is-

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sue pardons. Jordan Spieth won the British Open for his third career major championship.

One year ago: The Tokyo Olympics, delayed for a year by the pandemic, were officially declared open by Japan's Emperor Naruhito; tennis star Naomi Osaka lit the cauldron at the opening ceremony. Cleveland's Major League Baseball team, known as the Indians since 1915, announced that it would get a new name, the Guardians, at the end of the 2021 season; the change came amid a push for institutions and teams to drop logos and names that were considered racist.

Today's Birthdays: Retired Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy is 86. Actor Ronny Cox is 84. Actor Larry Manetti is 79. Rock singer David Essex is 75. Singer-songwriter-politician John Hall is 74. Actor Belinda Montgomery is 72. Rock musician Blair Thornton (Bachman Turner Overdrive) is 72. Actor-writer Lydia Cornell is 69. Actor Woody Harrelson is 61. Rock musician Martin Gore (Depeche Mode) is 61. Actor Eriq La Salle is 60. Rock musician Yuval Gabay is 59. Rock musician Slash is 57. Model-actor Stephanie Seymour is 54. Sen. Raphael Warnock, D-Ga., is 53. Actor Charisma Carpenter is 52. R&B singer Sam Watters is 52. Country singer Alison Krauss is 51. R&B singer Dalvin DeGrate is 51. Rock musician Chad Gracey (Live) is 51. Actor-comedian Marlon Wayans is 50. Country singer Shannon Brown is 49. Actor Kathryn Hahn is 49. Retired MLB All-Star Nomar Garciaparra (NOH'-mar gar-SEE'-ah-par-rah) is 49. Former White House intern Monica Lewinsky is 49. Actor Stephanie March is 48. Actor Shane McRae is 45. R&B singer Michelle Williams is 42. Actor Paul Wesley is 40. Actor Krysta Rodriguez is 38. Actor Daniel Radcliffe is 33. Country musician Neil Perry is 32. Actor Lili Simmons is 29. Country singer Danielle Bradbery (TV: "The Voice") is 26.