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“When we show up, act boldly, and practice the best ways to be wrong, we fail forward. No matter where we end up, we've grown from where we began.”

STACEY ABRAMS

Monday, Aug. 22

Senior Menu: Ranch chicken, boiled potatoes, green beans, cake with strawberries, whole wheat bread.

8 a.m.: Faculty In-Service

The Pantry open at the Groton Community Center, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Noon: Senior Citizens Meet at the Groton Community Center, Potluck Dinner

Tues., Aug. 23

Senior Menu: BBQ chicken breast, rosemary red potatoes, coleslaw, fruit cocktail, whole wheat bread.

8 a.m.: Faculty In-Service

10 a.m.: NEC Golf at Sisseton

7 p.m.: City Council Meeting

The Pantry open at the Groton Community Center, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Wed., Aug. 24 - First Day of School

School Breakfast: Breakfast, Eggs, Breakfast Potatoes

School Lunch: Nachos

Senior Menu: Sloppy Joe on bun, oven roasted potatoes, mixed vegetables, crunchy cranberry salad.

Thurs., Aug. 25

School Breakfast: Stuffed Bagels

School Lunch: Chicken Sandwich, Fries

Senior Menu: Scalloped potatoes and ham, peas, mandarin orange salad, whole wheat bread.

6 p.m.: Volleyball at Hamlin (JV/V)

Fri., Aug. 26

School Breakfast: Biscuits and Gravy

School Lunch: Pizza Cruncher, Green Beans

Senior Menu: Roast beef, potatoes/carrots/onions, gravy, fruit, whole wheat bread.

7 p.m.: Football hosts Redfield

Sat., Aug. 27

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

10 a.m.: 3/4 and 5/6 football at Sisseton

1 p.m.: Girls soccer hosts Vermillion

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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#549 in a series Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

We're continuing to taper; it's slow, but the numbers are coming down. At midday today, the seven-day new-case average was 95,145; this below-100,000 thing seems to be sticking this time. Still, at levels like this, we continue to rack up new millions, as we have again this past week. Here you go:

March 3 – 79 million – 15 days
March 31 – 80 million – 28 days
April 27 – 81 million – 27 days
May 11 – 82 million – 14 days
May 20 – 83 million – 9 days
May 31 – 84 million – 11 days
June 8 – 85 million – 8 days
June 17 – 86 million – 9 days
June 27 – 87 million – 10 days
July 7 – 88 million – 10 days
July 14 – 89 million – 7 days
July 21 – 90 million – 7 days
July 29 – 91 million – 8 days
August 8 – 92 million – 10 days
August 17 – 93 million – 9 days

Hospitalizations are now starting to come down too; the seven-day average has dropped to 40,728. We haven't been below 40,000 in over a month, so I'll look forward to noting that when it happens. Deaths aren't dropping much; we're still at a seven-day average of 460 and a pandemic total of 1,036,360. This should follow on the decreases in hospitalizations, so in a couple of weeks or so, there may be more movement here.

Polio was a relic of history in the US—we thought. It hasn't been seen here at all since 2013—until now. A highly contagious and potentially devastating disease we thought we'd taken care of, one for which we have an eminently-effective preventive, is back; and it's spreading. Polio is a difficult disease to control, given the vast majority of cases go unrecognized; this means it can circulate widely before we have a clue it's going around, and apparently this is what it's done yet again. Few people now alive remember the panicky days of the late '40s and early '50s for parents who were desperate to protect their children from the potentially paralytic, sometimes fatal disease. Only a small percentage of infected people develop symptoms, fewer develop neurologic disease, and fewer yet develop paralysis; but when tens of thousands became infected every summer, the fewers add up, and for thousands of patients, mostly children, who survived severe disease every single summer, things would never be the same—a lifetime unable to walk unassisted or a lifetime requiring respiratory support for every breath. That's before you add in the thousands of deaths. I wouldn't have thought it would take too many of these examples to persuade folks this is a good one to prevent; but I guess I'd be wrong. One zip code in the county in New York where a paralytic case of polio showed up last month has just a 37 percent polio vaccination rate. Wastewater surveillance (polio is spread via the fecal-to-oral route, so it definitely will show up in wastewater) has yielded an escalating number of positive samples which demonstrates geographic spread as well. With polio, unlike Covid-19, the risk is greatest to small children; they're significantly more likely to end up in every category of the disease from asymptomatic carrier to dead person. I'm old enough to have a sense of how freaked-out everyone was way back when as children fell ill and ended up trapped, often for life, in iron lungs; one would think that, with our ability to write stuff down and other folks to read about it later, we would not be compelled to revisit a history like that of polio; but it's looking like we're going to

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have to do just that. Hang on folks; this one's going to hurt.

As for Covid-19, I'm hearing from people who feel sort of thrown to the wolves in terms of figuring out how to assess and minimize their risks now that the CDC has significantly revised its guidance. I do want to point out that the new guidance is largely after the fact: Most folks weren't following the old guidance anyhow, and at some point you start to look faintly ridiculous publishing lists of recommended steps no one's going to take.

I've read an article in the Wall Street Journal providing advice from physicians on how to go about making decisions about what you will and won't do to minimize your own risks. Because I think it's important to know your sources, you should realize that this is a publication which just printed an editorial explaining why all of the steps taken to mitigate spread of Covid-19 since the earliest days of the pandemic were dumb, pointless, counterproductive, and bad for people and the economy; so we should view this next through a very clear lens. Nonetheless, there's some useful stuff in it. Here's a summary:

(1) Look at your risk profile. If you have risk factors for severe disease—age, health condition, immune functioning, then you will want to continue using precautions. Likewise, if you're someone who is very concerned about long-term effects of an infection, you will want to take precautions. It's OK to continue to distance in public places, to avoid crowded venues, to wear a mask when with others. It is also OK to ask others to test negative before you will gather with them indoors and unmasked. If you are at low risk for severe disease and are not very concerned about long-term problems, then your assessment might be that it's worth some or even a great deal of risk to get back to normal; just be sure the risks you take are your own.

(2) Decide which precautions you are willing to take. Some people routinely wear masks almost everywhere; others hate them and will do anything to avoid them. Many don't mind testing before and after attending large events. You might decide a particular event is important to you and worth some risk whereas a different event isn't important enough, or you might decide to be especially careful in the run-up to a gathering with vulnerable people or simply one you really want to attend. You may choose to take on risk based on the value you place on a given activity.

(3) I will remind you of something we discussed a long time ago: Risk is cumulative. Every risky activity adds to the accumulated risk you've taken on, so it makes sense to weigh each decision in terms of how much it matters to you to do this or that activity compared to how much it matters to you to stay safe. Very cautious people sometimes end up infected, and wildly risk-taking people can sometimes (although increasingly infrequently) avoid it. You could get infected the first time you let your guard down even a little, and someone else might not get infected no matter what choices they're making; yet in general risk accumulates. Keep an eye on your risk bank account.

(4) (This one's my advice.) Importantly, be open with others about how you are living. Before gathering with or meeting someone, discuss with your friends or relatives what level of risk each of you can tolerate, what sorts of chances (and precautions) you've been taking, what you're comfortable with. The idea here is to be sure you are providing to those in your circle the information they need to make as good decisions for themselves as you've made for yourself. Relevant information includes whether you're up-to-date with vaccinations, whether you've recently attended a large event, whether you routinely wear a mask in public, whether you may have been exposed, whether you eat in restaurants, and the like. People have the right to decide they cannot gather with you if your activities constitute more risk to them than they wish to take; and you do not have the right to insist on substituting your judgement or decisions for theirs. If someone asks you to test before meeting, it doesn't hurt you to do that and honestly report the

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results. We're all on the honor system here, so we're going to all need to be honorable. Wouldn't hurt to be kind either.

(5) (Mine too.) Respect others' choices. If you think the pandemic is a hoax or masks don't make any difference or the government's making this all up to control us, you're allowed to think that; but you're not allowed to endanger others to prove your point. Even if you sincerely believe you are not endangering them (because you know the "real" truth about this stuff), you still need to respect and observe others' different beliefs and limits. Refusal to do that doesn't make you smarter than everyone else; it makes you an objectively bad person. So just don't.

On Friday, the FDA granted emergency use authorization (EUA) to the Novavax vaccine for use in children 12 to 17. This is a protein-based vaccine; instead of including mRNA for the viral spike proteins, it includes the actual proteins themselves. It is administered as a two-dose primary series with a three-week interval between doses and was authorized for adults last month. Clinical efficacy in this younger age group runs around 80 percent, which is very good; it has been 90 percent in adults. The company says the immune response to the vaccine is a broad one that encompasses BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants of Omicron. Work continues on trials in younger children with results expected early next year and on a bivalent BA.5-containing vaccine with results expected later this year. The hope has been that this more traditional vaccine platform would calm fears and prove more acceptable to those who do not trust mRNA platforms and new technologies, but so far, we really aren't seeing that. It's looking to me as though we've pretty much vaccinated those who are ever going to agree to vaccination, and the rest will just have to sort things out as we go along. I'd like to be wrong about this, but I am not seeing any real signs of it.

There's a new study of Covid-19 in children published in the journal Pediatrics last week from a group at Boston Children's Hospital and Harvard Medical School. I wasn't able to access the paper, so I'm working from a summary here. The researchers looked at 328 children hospitalized during the period between May 2020 and May 2021 at 25 pediatric hospitals for Covid-19 or MIS-C (multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children), a rare but serious inflammatory sequela of Covid-19 which can affect major organs like the kidneys, brain, lungs, and heart. The findings of this study include that as many as 30 percent of these children have lingering symptoms more than two months after they were diagnosed. The most common symptoms were activity impairment (trouble doing normal activities), inability to exercise or even walk as much as usual, sleeping more, and trouble concentrating in school. We should note that this was before Delta or Omicron came along and also before vaccines were available to children; so these findings would not account for any changes wrought by any of those events. This is particularly important since we have good research that shows vaccination can help to prevent serious illness and MIS-C.

Interesting in light of the research I reported in my last Update about the adverse pregnancy outcomes from Covid-19 infection in pregnant women is a paper I read in The Lancet. Published last week, it reported on an observational study done by a group at British Columbia Children's Hospital Research Institute which compared 8705 pregnant vaccinated females with 339 pregnant unvaccinated controls, 265,896 nonpregnant vaccinated controls, and 5840 non-pregnant unvaccinated controls. First, second, and third trimester of pregnancy were all well-represented in each cohort. The team collected reports of significant health events within seven days of vaccination or within the past seven days for unvaccinated individuals; a significant health event was defined as a "new or worsening health event sufficient to cause work or school absenteeism, medical consultation, or prevent daily activities within 7 days after vaccination for vaccinated participants and in the previous 7 days for control groups; this definition would include any of the known side-effects of the vaccine. Findings were that significant health events were somewhat more common in vaccinated pregnant people than in unvaccinated pregnant people; this is not surprising when one considers that minor vaccination side effects like sore arms, aches and fever, and muscle and head-

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aches are quite common. The most common health problems reported were feeling unwell, headache, and respiratory tract infection. Other findings were that pregnant vaccinated women had decreased odds of a significant health event compared with non-pregnant vaccinated women after either dose of any mRNA vaccination; there was no significant difference between the groups when considering only more serious problems that needed medical attention. This offers further confirmation that vaccination is a remarkably safe procedure during pregnancy. Longer-term studies are underway as well but the bottom line is, with what we know about damaging effects of Covid-19 in pregnancy, vaccination in pregnancy seems like an easy—and an important—decision.

I read an NIH report on work being done under a NIH grant at the California Institute of Technology to develop a vaccine that induces immune responses to a broader range of coronaviruses. The work is being done in mice and monkeys so far. The research team combined receptor-binding domains (RBDs) from eight different coronaviruses in a nanoparticle-based vaccine which induced antibody-producing B cells which recognize these RBDs from parts of the viruses that are highly conserved, that is, which don't mutate much and are, therefore, similar across the various viruses.

The vaccine, called mosaic-8, was tested against a nanoparticle vaccine made only from SARS-CoV-2 RBDs. The first test subjects were humanized mice, that is mice engineered to produce human ACE2, the cellular site for coronavirus binding. After the mice were vaccinated, they were challenged with SARS-CoV-2 and with SARS-CoV. We should note no SARS-CoV RBDs were included in the vaccine being tested, so any specificity for those RBDs in the immune response would have to be from the SARS-CoV-2 RBDs in the vaccine. Findings were that mice who received either of the two vaccines were protected against the SARS-CoV-2 challenge; but only mice who received mosaic-8 were also protected against SARS-CoV too.

The same sort of result was seen in the monkeys. These animals were challenged with SARS-CoV and SARS-CoV-2 Delta. These were both protected against by mosaic-8. Once again, we expect the protection against SARS-CoV-2 because those were the RBDs in the vaccine; the response to SARS-CoV is a bonus that provides evidence the nanoparticle vaccine mosaic-8 may prove to be protective against current and future variants as well as a broad spectrum of other coronaviruses. If these findings hold up in humans, that would be big news. Planning is underway for human trials.

There's news of a nasal spray in development at the University of California, Berkeley, that may prevent and treat Covid-19 by targeting not the mutation-susceptible spike protein but RNA production, a necessary step for a host cell to produce new copies of the virus and thereby sustain the infection in its host. Preventing viral replication effectively shuts an infection down. The spray does not require cold temperatures for shipping and storage, so it would be quite easy to distribute; it is also easier to manufacture than current vaccines.

The spray has been tested in mice and hamsters; these early studies are to establish a safety profile. Next up would be animal trials, and if the spray proves safe and effective in those, human trials could follow. We have indications it may be useful in treating current infection as well as preventing infection in the first place. There isn't much publicly-available information yet about the work done thus far, but I'll be watching for a paper as time goes on. Putting something like this spray on the market is almost certainly at least a year away, but it appears there is progress being made—a very good thing.

I read a paper published last week in *The Lancet*. The work reported was done at the University of Oxford and focused on long-term neurological and psychiatric effects of Covid-19. Looking at health records for 1,284,437 people in eight countries infected between January 2020 and April 2022 who were matched with an equal number of patients with another respiratory infection, the researchers found that

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the risks for certain disorders—dementia, epilepsy/seizures, psychosis, and cognitive deficit (what's being called brain fog)—persisted for two years after infection. The brain fog appears to be the most common in adults. The risks were highest in people 65 and older. One data point that stood out for me was the rate for dementia in elderly: The background rate (rate at which dementia develops in this age group in general) is 3.3 percent over two years; that was increased to 4.5 percent in the two years following Covid-19. It is important to recognize that, while Omicron's variants are causing less severe symptoms than earlier variants like Delta did in the acute phase, the neurologic and psychiatric outcomes were found to be similar in the Delta and Omicron waves. That isn't great because we have a whole lot more people getting infected with Omicron than ever before. There is good news as well: Some common psychiatric disorders with increased incidence returned to baseline after just a month or two; these include depression and anxiety, both of which were huge concerns. Also good news is that, while some are serious, such as brain fog, insomnia, stroke, and epilepsy, effects in children were not permanent. Experts have hastened to note that this was not a study of long-Covid per se, but it undoubtedly is going to show some significant overlap with work being done with that condition as well. More information is good; that's the only way we're going to get a handle on just what we're facing in this regard. I'm quite sure we haven't wrapped our brains around these long-term effects at all well, or more of us would be exerting some care to avoid infection. Maybe dying isn't the worst thing that can happen from Covid-19.

There's a woman blogging on Twitter as Your Local Epidemiologist. Her name is Katelyn Jetelina, and she offers some of the most cogent and reliable information I've seen throughout the pandemic. On Friday, she offered an explanation of older people's particular vulnerability to severe Covid-19, and I thought I'd share the highlights with you. She starts out with this: "Age is the strongest predictor of COVID-19 severe disease and death. Even though those aged 65+ are the leaders in vaccination rates, they continue to lead hospitalizations in the U.S. and across the globe." Turns out there are three elements in our defenses that apply here.

(1) Neutralizing antibodies: If you have these in sufficient number and quality, they spring into action as soon as the virus gets into the body, stopping it before it can enter your cells. The problem with these antibodies is it turns out they require regular exposure to maintain high levels, and old people make fewer of them in the first place. Further, the neutralizing antibodies old people make are less able to recognize the mutated spike proteins in variants than those in younger people, so the ones they have don't work as well.

(2) Memory B cells: These guys hang around long after an infection (or vaccination) and start making more antibodies as soon as a subsequent exposure occurs. These guys are robust into older age, so do not wane the way the neutralizing antibodies do; but they do require the help of T cells to function optimally.

(3) T cells: You have two kinds, killer T cells that recognize and kill infected cells, thus preventing viral reproduction, and helper T cells that help B cells make more and better antibodies. The problem with T cells is that we pretty much quit making new ones by the time we're 40. That's because the thymus, a weird little organ in our chests which provides a site for maturation of new T cells, devolves into useless tissue as we get older, and by the time we're 40 is pretty much done functioning. So if the T cells we already have can adapt to new threats at older ages, we can be OK, but if they're not able to adapt, we're sort of in trouble. Diversity of T cells is limited after about the age of 50; we're not so bad with subsequent encounters after an initial infection, but first encounters can be a little bit more dicey. T cells age, and we've been seeing T-cell dysfunction with this virus.

So there are some flaws in the strategy as we age, flaws that can hamper our ability to respond, even if we're in overall very good health. Then there are, for many elderly people, also increasing comorbidities as we age, which sets the whole immune system back another notch. This combination of events is going

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to yield more breakthrough infections and more severe disease in the elderly, even if they're vaccinated. A help is more frequent exposure; the more exposures, the greater the chance the immune system will rally to produce an effective response, which means the older you get, the more important boosters become. Unvaccinated people have a 42 times greater risk of dying from Covid-19 as those with two boosters; those with one booster are still four times as likely to die. I don't know how you parse those odds and decide not to bother; but then I'm as boosted as I can be and eager to sign up for the next dose. Only 40 percent of 65+ people are up-to-date on vaccinations. I cannot explain this, but I can say it's foolhardy and dangerous. There's time for folks to rethink some of their life decisions, if only they will.

That's all I have today. I hope you're keeping well and staying safe as we head into these last days of summer. We'll talk again.

That's life/Tony Bender

Things that bind, people who divide

This is my safe space. I write another weekly column that appears in many of the dailies in the region in which I tackle current events and political issues. Here, I favor human interest pieces, but we don't live in a vacuum, so sometimes, if I feel an issue's noteworthy, I'm compelled to address it. Here we go.

The Fargo School Board recently and unnecessarily, in my view, opened a can of worms when they voted to stop reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. However, you'd have thought they were commie turncoats by some of the ugly, threatening, and racist reactions fueled by disingenuous media members and politicians. There are some hateful people in our midst. Some of them have microphones.

Now, I've covered school boards for three decades, and none of them opened with the pledge because of all the local governing bodies, school boards are seemingly the most wary about introducing anything that could be construed as overtly nationalistic or religious.

In this case, a conservative board member, who wasn't reelected in June, forced a gotcha vote on the issue prior to the election for obvious political reasons. Politicians do this all the time, especially in Congress, where a good bill might have a poison pill or some pork barrel waste that causes lawmakers to vote no, so the opposition portrays them as callus haters of American values.

I believe you have to pick your battles, and a naive board with new members stepped in it. However, the Fargo School Board had only been reciting the pledge since April. In that time, however, it apparently became a sacred tradition according to opportunists who intentionally misled the public into believing that this somehow would stop students from having the option to recite the pledge at the start of each school day. It just ain't so.

Meanwhile, some on the far left seem to think that saying the pledge is one step away from indoctrinating an American version of the Hitler Youth, and, while I understand the dangers of virulent nationalism, I don't think this is that. I see first graders skipping, not goose-stepping at recess. Let's face it, it's like the liturgy in church, after a thousand times you're reciting it by rote without any conviction. So, I don't think that after reciting the pledge, amped-up student warriors will be going over the hill with mindless patriotic zeal, machine gun bullets spraying at perceived godless oppressors. Nor do I think that anyone who doesn't participate or kneels during the national anthem to draw attention to an injustice is an un-American turncoat, as frothing conservative extremists would have you believe. The opposite is true. Veterans will tell you they fought for the American right and sometimes necessary right to dissent.

Sure, some of the language is troublesome to some, specifically the words "under God," which were introduced under the insane McCarthy Red Scare Era, but it's an abstract term in my eyes, not the next step to mandated worship of someone else's specific invisible deity. And if you're that worked up about it, stop using legal tender because God (again, unnecessarily) is invoked on every coin and bill, which is why Joel Osteen has so much of it.

Maybe I'm the naive one, but I believe American liberals and conservatives want the same thing—a better country for everyone—and perhaps, as imperfect as the words may be in the eyes of some, the pledge and national anthem serve a purpose, which is to bind us together, if only for a moment. If not that, what? Sometimes I feel that in the pursuit of societal evolution and political correctness, we dissect things like this to death. It's really small stuff, and we shouldn't sweat the small stuff.

But I'll say this. After the viscous attacks on the Fargo School Board, I wouldn't have backed down to the bullies, as the board did by reinstating the pledge a week later. They'd already taken the beating, at least claim the victory. I don't think their original decision on its merits was necessarily right or wrong, but you have to stand your ground against bullies (like McCarthy) or they'll ruin this country. Shame on the politicians nationally and here at home, leading right up to the governor's office, for amplifying the division for political gain.

Whether any board pledges allegiance to the flag before a meeting doesn't amount to a hill of beans. What matters are actions. So, God bless (if it's still OK) the folks who take up the challenge of the most American thing you can do, engage in the practice self-governance. The way these public servants were treated by a cruel minority of fascists is a stain upon North Dakotan ideals.

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Weekly Vikings Recap- Preseason game #2

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

The San Francisco 49ers came to Minnesota early in the week to participate in two days of live practices against the Vikings and finish the week playing in the Vikings' lone home preseason game.

From what we have heard and seen via the media, the practice sessions were much more competitive than Saturday night's game at US Bank Stadium, which saw the Niners walk away with a 17-7 victory over the Vikings.

For the most part, both teams sat the majority of their starters, and it was open auditions for reserves as roster cuts are looming in the next few weeks.

Here are some observations from Saturday night:

T.Y. McGill, the veteran defensive lineman from NC State, is playing for his 8th team in eight seasons. After just two games, the undrafted McGill has been doing his best John Randle impression, causing havoc up the middle and getting a few sacks along the way. If he continues to impress the staff in the final pre-season of the game next week, he may have earned himself a backup role with the new Vikings defense.

Ed Ingram, the rookie offensive guard from LSU, continues to impress and will be pushing for the starting job come September 11th versus the Packers. If he becomes the starter, the Viking's offensive line will be one of the youngest in the league, with Garrett Bradbury being the oldest guy on the line at 27 years old. The most successful teams in the NFL are those that have a consistent group of guys upfront for many, many years, and the Vikings look to be doing just that.

Andrew Booth, the promising rookie cornerback from Clemson, twisted an ankle in the first half. Booth has shown early in the season that he belongs in this league and will be pushing for playing time against second year cornerback, Cam Dantzler. Hopefully, the injury was minor, and he'll be back on the field soon.

Finally, the backup quarterback competition is more confusing than ever before. As mentioned, the Vikings have been fortunate that Kirk Cousins has been incredibly durable over the past four seasons, but no one is feeling good about what they are seeing from Mond and Mannion. Kellen Mond looked decent at the start, only to throw a lazy interception to stifle an opening drive and then followed that up with another interception in the fourth quarter. His pocket presence when there is pressure needs a lot of work as it feels like he holds onto the ball way too long. Sean Mannion, even during warm-ups, looks like he is throwing a lead weight compared to Cousins and Mond. There is a reason Mannion has been a career backup. The Niners rookie from Iowa State, Brock Purdy, appeared to outplay them both and may have convinced the Niners that moving on from Jimmy Garrapalo to Trey Lance may be the right decision as Purdy will be a much cheaper option at backup quarterback. When it's all said and final cuts completed, if the Viking's biggest concern is who will be our backup quarterback when we have a guy that doesn't miss many snaps, we should all be feeling good about 2022.

The family made the trip downtown to US Bank Stadium on Saturday night. We do not regularly attend the preseason after 25+ years as season ticketholders but the interest in the new regime drew us downtown to watch the only preseason game on this year's schedule. Conclusion, we are ready for the regular season to begin. SKOL!!!

Back to school with allergy and asthma

For students with allergies and asthma, back to school means more than getting their backpacks filled with paper, pencils, and any needed odds and ends. Keeping your child safe and healthy involves creating a proactive plan to be implemented both at home and at school. Allergy doctors refer to these plans as "control programs" because the goal is prevention and control.



Mark E. Bubak, M.D.

Food allergies can cause anaphylaxis, the total body allergic reaction with shortness of breath, hives, low blood pressure, vomiting, diarrhea, and potentially death. Avoidance is the treatment. If an accident happens and the student starts to react, it is imperative that epinephrine is given and the student is taken to the emergency room for ongoing care.

A local, itchy reaction can occur if the allergic student touches the food and the more serious reaction, anaphylaxis can occur if the food is eaten.

Children diagnosed as asthmatics tend to have more frequent issues than food allergic children. Like food allergies, prevention is key. Therefore, the student should take any daily prevention medications at home prior to going to school. Students with allergy eyes and noses should also take their medications before they leave for school to minimize symptoms. If they continue to have symptoms, it is time to see the doctor.

Asthmatics need ready access to a rescue medication such as albuterol to use when they develop their cough, wheeze, or shortness of breath. While at school, students can use their inhaler before strenuous exercise to prevent an attack. A control program should spell out what to do if the inhaler does not work. Most often this will trigger a call to the parents. If the attack is severe, it could mean getting the student to an emergency room. Most asthma flares are triggered by viral infections. Getting the flu shot can reduce the odds of a flareup and staying home during a flareup may be best.

Parents and guardians, be sure to prepare your child's control program before school starts and share it with the school team. Make sure the student's medications are present and ready to go. Have the school forms completed by the student's doctor and remember to get that doctor appointment scheduled early. Talk with your child so they know what to do.

Students with allergy and asthma can expect to fully participate in virtually all school activities including gym class and sporting events. If they are having symptoms, it means the control program needs to be improved and participation continued.

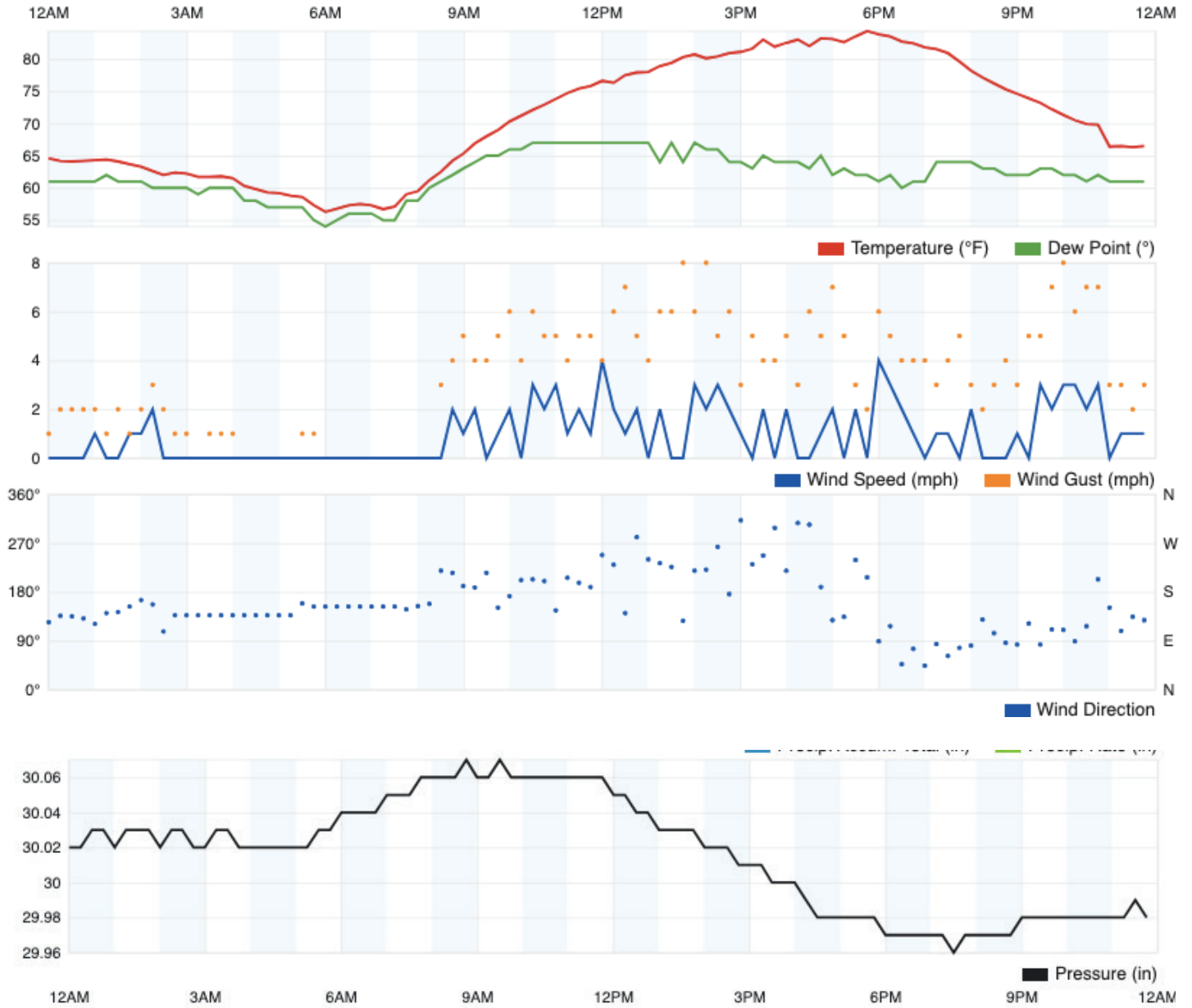
Having the entire team ready is the best way to feel good about sending your children back to school. Working together results in happy, confident, successful students and proud parents!

Mark E. Bubak, M.D. is a contributing Prairie Doc® columnist. He is a board-certified allergist with a practice based in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc®...based on science, built on trust, at www.prairedoc.org and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show, broadcast on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
				
Mostly Sunny	Slight Chance T-storms 20%	Sunny	Chance T-storms 30%	Chance T-storms 30%
High: 87 °F	Low: 61 °F	High: 86 °F	Low: 62 °F	High: 79 °F



Very Warm/Hot Early This Week

August 22, 2022
2:14 AM



Chance of late afternoon and evening showers and thunderstorms today and Tuesday, mainly central SD



Today & Tuesday
Highs 80s east, 90s west



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

It will be very warm to hot early this week, with a late day/evening chance for showers and thunderstorms. #sdwx #mnwx

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Today in Weather History

August 22, 1985: Intense thunderstorms moved from near Shadehill Reservoir in northwest South Dakota late in the evening of the 21st, to northern Brown County after sunrise on the 22nd. These thunderstorms produced high winds, large hail, rain, and lightning. Considerable crop and property damage were caused mainly by the strong winds and hail. Winds gusts ranged from 55 mph at Moberge to 60 mph in and around Akaska. Winds of 70 mph were reported at Onaka and Faulkton. The strongest wind gust was reported in Hoven with a peak gust of 72 mph. Widespread damage was reported throughout the area. Many mobile homes, storage sheds, silos, and roofs were damaged or destroyed. Nine miles south and four miles west of Keldron, over two inches in diameter hail fell for 40 minutes, breaking windows and piling in ditches to a depth of four feet. These intense thunderstorms also produced brief heavy rainfall ranging from three-quarters of an inch to over four inches.

August 21, 2011: The Missouri River at Pierre, Fort Pierre, and Chamberlain/Oacoma fell throughout August as releases on the Oahe Dam were slowly decreased. The Missouri River at Chamberlain/Oacoma fell below flood stage on August 22nd. The extensive damage to homes and roads began to surface as the water receded. The river continued to fall into September.

1816 - The growing season for corn was cut short as damaging frosts were reported from North Carolina to interior New England. (David Ludlum)

1893: Four hurricanes are observed in the Atlantic Ocean at the same time. Over a century would pass, 1998 before four hurricanes would again rage together in the Atlantic.

1923 - The temperature at Anchorage, AK, reached 82 degrees, a record for August for the location which was later tied on the 2nd in 1978. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A cold front lowered temperatures 20 to 40 degrees across the north central U.S., and produced severe thunderstorms in Ohio and Lower Michigan. An early morning thunderstorm near Sydney MI produced high winds which spun a car around 180 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Afternoon highs of 88 degrees at Astoria, OR, and 104 degrees at Medford, OR, were records for the date, and the number of daily record highs across the nation since the first of June topped the 2000 mark. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Evening thunderstorms in the central U.S. produced golf ball size hail at May City IA, and wind gusts to 66 mph at Balltown IA. Lightning struck a barn in Fayette County IA killing 750 hogs. Evening thunderstorms in Montana produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Havre. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1992 - Hurricane Andrew makes landfall in Southern Florida as a Category 5 storm with wind gusts estimated in excess of 175 m.p.h. Estimated damages exceeded \$20 billion, more than 60 people were killed and approximately 2 million people were evacuated from their homes. (University of Illinois WW2010)

1994: Hurricane John, about 345 miles south of Hilo, Hawaii had winds of 175 mph and pressure at 920 millibars or 27.17 inches of mercury, making it one of the strongest hurricanes ever in the Central Pacific. The 31-day existence made John the longest-lasting tropical cyclone recorded in both the Pacific Ocean and worldwide, surpassing both Hurricane Tina's previous record in the Pacific of 24 days in the 1992 season and the 1899 San Ciriaco hurricane's previous world record of 28 days in the 1899 Atlantic season. John was also the farthest-traveling tropical cyclone in both Pacific Ocean and worldwide, with distance traveled of 7,165 miles, out-distancing previous record holders Hurricane Fico in the Pacific of 4,700 miles in the 1978 season and Hurricane Faith worldwide of 6,850 miles in the 1966 Atlantic season.

2003: The Okanagan Mountain fire reaches its destructive peak, destroying 250 homes. Nearly 40,000 residents have been evacuated or are on evacuation alert. The Okanagan Mountain Park Fire is estimated to be 17,000 hectares and continues to grow.



Transmitting Truth

Scripture: Deuteronomy 4:9–14 (NIV)

9 Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them. 10 Remember the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, when he said to me, "Assemble the people before me to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach them to their children." 11 You came near and stood at the foot of the mountain while it blazed with fire to the very heavens, with black clouds and deep darkness. 12 Then the Lord spoke to you out of the fire. You heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a voice. 13 He declared to you his covenant, the Ten Commandments, which he commanded you to follow and then wrote them on two stone tablets. 14 And the Lord directed me at that time to teach you the decrees and laws you are to follow in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess..

Insight By: J.R. Hudberg

Moses' words in Deuteronomy 4 reveal two related aspects of the human condition. First, it's easy to forget important events and words (v. 9a). Second, to avoid this, we need to intentionally keep important things in the forefront of our minds (v. 9b). We can see how this deliberate call to remember the deeds of God anticipates the cycle of generational spiritual wandering that occurs in the book of Judges.

Here in Deuteronomy, the people are encouraged to pass the memories of the deeds of God on to their "children and to their children after them" (vv. 9–10). In the book of Judges, we read (repeatedly) of both the failure to do this and its consequences (see 3:10–12). In each "cycle" of the book of Judges, the disobedience of Israel arises within a generation or two of God's deliverance—a seeming neglect of passing on His deeds to their children..

Comment By: Kirsten Holmberg

Without the ability to see their grandchildren in person due to risk of infection, many grandparents sought new ways of connecting during the COVID-19 pandemic. A recent survey showed that many grandparents adopted texting and social media as a means to maintain their precious bond with their grandchildren. Some even worshiped with their extended families by video call.

One of the most wonderful ways parents and grandparents can influence their children is by passing down the truths of Scripture. In Deuteronomy 4, Moses charged God's people to "not forget the things" they'd seen about God "or let them fade from [their] heart[s]" (v. 9). He went on to say that sharing these things with their children and their children's children would enable them to learn to "revere" Him (v. 10) and to live according to His truth in the land He was giving them.

The relationships God gives us with our families and friends are certainly meant to be enjoyed. By God's design, they're also intended to be a conduit to convey His wisdom from one generation to another, "training [them] in righteousness" and equipping them for "every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16–17). When we share God's truth and work in our lives with the next generation—whether by text, call, video, or in-person conversation—we equip them to see and enjoy His work in their own lives..

Reflect and Prayer: Who has "transmitted" God's truth to you? With whom can you share His truth—through a text, a note, or an in-person conversation?

Thank You, God, for the legacy of faith You've passed on to me. Please help me to lovingly impart that legacy to others.

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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)
09/11/2022: 6th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3-5pm
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)
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11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)

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News from the Associated Press

State officials say officer justified in fatal shooting

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota authorities say a Sioux Falls officer was justified in shooting and killing a man last month who fired a gun at a police drone during a standoff.

The South Dakota Attorney General's office and the state Division of Criminal Investigation reviewed the July 3 shooting of 57-year-old Glenn Nisich after it happened.

The Sioux Falls Argus Leader reports that officials said officers were trying to arrest Nisich and serve a search warrant in connection with a fatal shooting at a rural Minnehaha County home that happened one day earlier when the standoff happened. Police were negotiating with him before he fired toward the drone, the marksmen's area and occupied homes. A SWAT team member fired twice in response, hitting Nisich once and killing him.

Attorney General Mark Vargo said in a statement Friday that police "exhausted every reasonable option to safely bring Nisich into custody on his warrant before his statements and actions made it clear that deadly force was required."

In addition to the 63-year-old man who died after the shooting Nisich was a suspect in, a second man was also seriously hurt.

Trump's turbulent White House years culminate in Fla. search

By JILL COLVIN and MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Mounds of paper piled on his desk. Framed magazine covers and keepsakes lining the walls. One of Shaquille O'Neal's giant sneakers displayed alongside football helmets, boxing belts and other sports memorabilia, crowding his Trump Tower office and limiting table space.

Well before he entered politics, former President Donald Trump had a penchant for collecting. And that lifelong habit — combined with his flip disregard for the rules of government record keeping, his careless handling of classified information, and a chaotic transition born from his refusal to accept defeat in 2020 — have all culminated in a federal investigation that poses extraordinary legal and political challenges.

The search of Trump's Mar-a-Lago club earlier this month to retrieve documents from his White House years was an unprecedented law enforcement action against a former president who is widely expected to run for office once again. Officials have not revealed exactly what was contained in the boxes, but the FBI has said it recovered 11 sets of classified records, including some marked "sensitive compartmented information," a special category meant to protect secrets that could cause "exceptionally grave" damage to U.S. interests if revealed publicly.

Why Trump refused to turn over the seized documents despite repeated requests remains unclear. But Trump's flouting of the Presidential Records Act, which outlines how materials should be preserved, was well documented throughout his time in office.

He routinely tore up official papers that later had to be taped back together. Official items that would traditionally be turned over to the National Archives became intermingled with his personal belongings in the White House residence. Classified information was tweeted, shared with reporters and adversaries — even found in a White House complex bathroom.

John Bolton, who served as Trump's third national security adviser, said that, before he arrived, he'd heard "there was a concern in the air about how he handled information. And as my time went on, I could certainly see why."

Others in the Trump administration took more care with sensitive documents. Asked directly if he kept any classified information upon leaving office, former Vice President Mike Pence told The Associated Press on Friday, "No, not to my knowledge."

The investigation into Trump's handling of documents comes as he's facing mounting legal scrutiny on multiple fronts. A Georgia investigation into election interference has moved closer to the former president,

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with former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, a top defender, informed earlier this month that he is a target of a criminal probe.

Meanwhile, Trump invoked his Fifth Amendment protection against self-incrimination as he testified under oath in the New York attorney general's long-running civil investigation into his business dealings. A top executive at the business pleaded guilty last week in a tax fraud case brought by the Manhattan district attorney.

But few legal threats have galvanized Trump and his most loyal supporters like the Mar-a-Lago search. The former president and his allies have argued the move amounts to political persecution, noting the judge who approved the warrant has given money to Democrats. The judge, however, has also supported Republicans. And White House officials have repeatedly said they had no prior knowledge of plans to search the estate.

Trump allies have tried to claim the presidency granted him unlimited power to unilaterally declassify documents without formal declaration. But David Laufman, the former chief of the Justice Department's counterintelligence section, said that's not how it works.

"It just strikes me as a post hoc public affairs strategy that has no relationship to how classified information is in fact declassified," said Laufman, who oversaw the investigation into Hillary Clinton's personal email server during her tenure as secretary of state. While he said it is true that there is no statute or order that outlines procedures the president must abide by to declassify information, "at the same time it's ludicrous to posit that a decision to declassify documents would not have been contemporaneously memorialized in writing."

It's "not self executing," he added. "There has to be some objective, contemporaneous, evidence-based corroboration of the claims that they're making. And of course there won't be because they're making it all up."

The decision to keep classified documents at Mar-a-Lago — a property frequented by paying members, their guests and anyone attending the weddings, political fundraisers, charity dinners and other events held on site — was part of a long pattern of disregard for national security secrets. Former aides described a "cavalier" attitude toward classified information that played out in public view.

There was the dinner with then-Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Mar-a-Lago's patio, where fellow diners watched and snapped cellphone photos as the two men reviewed details of a North Korean missile test.

There was the time Trump revealed highly classified information allegedly from Israeli sources about Islamic State militants to Russian officials. And there was the time he tweeted a high-resolution satellite image of an apparent explosion at an Iranian space center, which intelligence officials had warned was highly sensitive. Trump insisted he had "the absolute right" to share it.

Former White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham said Trump was "careless" with sensitive and classified information and "seemed never to bother with why that was bad."

Grisham recalled one incident involving Conan, a U.S. military dog hailed as a hero for his role in the raid that killed Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. She said that before the dog's arrival at the White House, staff had received a briefing in which they were told the dog could not be photographed because the images could put his handlers in danger. But when the dog arrived, Trump decided he wanted to show it off to the press.

"Because he wanted the publicity, out went Conan," she said. "It's an example of him not caring if he put lives in danger. ... It was like it's his own shiny toy he's showing off to his friends to impress them."

Bolton said that, during his time working for Trump, he and others often tried to explain the stakes and the risks of exposing sources and methods.

"I don't think any of it sank in. He didn't seem to appreciate just how sensitive it was, how dangerous it was for some of our people and the risks that they could be exposed to," he said. "What looks like an innocuous picture to a private citizen can be a gold mine to a foreign intelligence" entity.

"I would say over and over again, 'This is really sensitive, really sensitive.' And he'd say, 'I know' and then go and do it anyway."

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Bolton said that top intelligence officials would gather before briefings to discuss how best to handle sensitive subjects, strategizing about how much needed to be shared. Briefers quickly learned that Trump often tried to hang onto sensitive documents, and would take steps to make sure documents didn't go missing, including using iPads to show them to him.

"Sometimes he would ask to keep it and they'd say, 'It's really sensitive.' Sometime he just wouldn't give it back."

Trump's refusal to accept his election loss also contributed to the chaos that engulfed his final days in office. The General Services Administration was slow to acknowledge President Joe Biden's win, delaying the transition process and leaving little time to pack.

While other White House staff and even the former first lady started making arrangements, Trump largely refused. At the same time, White House staff were departing in droves as part of the regular "offboarding process," while morale among others had cratered in the aftermath of the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Bolton said he doubted that Trump had taken documents for nefarious reasons, and instead thought Trump likely considered them "souvenirs" like the many he'd collected through his life.

"I think he just thought some things were cool and he wanted them," Bolton said. "Some days he liked to collect french fries. Some days he liked to collect documents. He just collected things."

The Washington Post first reported in February that the National Archives had retrieved 15 boxes of documents and other items from Mar-a-Lago that should have been turned over to the agency when Trump left the White House. An initial review of that material concluded that Trump had brought presidential records and several other documents that were marked classified to Mar-a-Lago.

The investigation into the handling of classified material intensified in the spring as prosecutors and federal agents interviewed several people who worked in the Trump White House about how records — and particularly classified documents — were handled during the chaotic end of the Trump presidency, a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press. Around the same time, prosecutors also issued a subpoena for records Trump was keeping at Mar-a-Lago and subpoenaed for surveillance video from Mar-a-Lago showing the area where the records were being stored, the person said.

A top Justice Department official traveled to Mar-a-Lago in early June and looked through some of the material that was stored in boxes. After that meeting, prosecutors interviewed another witness who told them that there were likely additional classified documents still stored at Mar-a-Lago, the person said. The person was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Justice Department later sought a search warrant and retrieved the additional tranches of classified records.

Kenya presidential vote loser files Supreme Court challenge

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Kenya's losing presidential candidate Raila Odinga has filed a Supreme Court challenge to last week's election results.

Odinga arrived to cheers Monday and helped to hoist boxes of material for the petition into place, starting the 14-day period in which the court must rule. At least one other petition was filed by human rights figures.

Deputy President William Ruto was declared the winner of the close Aug. 9 election. The peaceful election turned chaotic in the final minutes before the declaration when the electoral commission split and a majority of commissioners said they couldn't support the results.

The dissenting commissioners and the chairman have traded accusations of misconduct, extending the uncertainty in East Africa's most stable democracy. Until then, the election had been seen as the country's most transparent, with the commission posting more than 46,000 results forms online from polling stations for anyone to do the math themselves.

President Uhuru Kenyatta backed former rival and longtime opposition leader Odinga against his own deputy, Ruto. He still has not spoken publicly since he cast his vote. Kenyatta spokeswoman Kanze Dena

didn't reply when asked when he might make a statement.

This is the 77-year-old Odinga's fifth and likely final try at the presidency. His court challenge to the 2017 election led to the court overturning the results over irregularities, a first in Africa. He boycotted the fresh election, but his challenge led to reforms this time around.

As inflation soars, access to Indigenous foods declines

By CLAIRE SAVAGE, HANNAH SCHOENBAUM and TRISHA AHMED Associated Press/Report for America CHICAGO (AP) — Blueberry bison tamales, harvest salad with mixed greens, creamy carrot and wild rice soup, roasted turkey with squash. This contemporary Native American meal, crafted from the traditional foods of tribes across the United States and prepared with "Ketapanen" — a Menominee expression of love — cost caterer Jessica Pamoncutt \$976 to feed a group of 50 people last November.

Today it costs her nearly double.

Pamoncutt is the executive chef of Chicago-based Native American catering business Ketapanen Kitchen. She is a citizen of the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin but was raised in the Windy City, home to one of the largest urban Native populations in the country, according to the American Indian Center of Chicago.

Her business aims to offer health-conscious meals featuring Indigenous ingredients to the Chicago Native community and educate people about Indigenous contributions to everyday American fare.

One day, she aims to purchase all ingredients from Native suppliers and provide her community with affordable access to healthy Indigenous foods, "but this whole inflation thing has slowed that down," she said.

U.S. inflation surged to a new four-decade high in June, squeezing household budgets with painfully high prices for gas, food and rent.

Traditional Indigenous foods — like wild rice, bison, fresh vegetables and fruit in the Midwest — are often unavailable or too expensive for Native families in urban areas like Chicago, and the recent inflation spike has propelled these foods even further out of reach.

Risk of disease compounds the problem: healthy eating is key to battling diabetes, which afflicts Native Americans at the highest rate of any ethnic group in the United States.

"There are many benefits to eating traditional Native foods," said Jessica Thurin, a dietician at Native American Community Clinic in Minneapolis. "The body knows exactly how to process and use that food. These foods are natural to the Earth."

But many people the clinic serves are low-income and do not have the luxury of choosing where their food comes from. Food deserts — areas with limited access to a variety of healthy and affordable foods — are more likely to exist in places with higher rates of poverty and concentrations of minority populations.

"In these situations, there are limited healthy food options, not to mention limited traditional food options," Thurin said.

Aside from health benefits, traditional foods hold important cultural and emotional value.

"It's just comfort," said Danielle Lucas, a 39-year-old descendant of the Sicangu Lakota people from the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in South Dakota.

Lucas' mother, Evelyn Red Lodge, said she hasn't prepared traditional dishes of the Great Plains, like wojapi berry sauce or stew, since May because the prices of key ingredients — berries and meat — have soared.

Pamoncutt, too, is feeling the pinch. Between last winter and this spring, the price of bison jumped from \$13.99 to \$23.99 per pound.

Shipping costs are so high that the chef said it's often cheaper to drive hundreds of miles to buy ingredients, even with spiking gas prices. She's even had to create her own suppliers: the 45-year-old's parents are now growing crops for her business on their Wisconsin property near the Illinois border.

Gina Roxas, program coordinator at Trickster Cultural Center in Schaumburg, Illinois, a Chicago suburb, has also agreed to grow Native foods to help the chef minimize costs.

When a bag of wild rice costs \$20, "you end up going to a fast food place instead to feed your family," Roxas said.

More than 70% of Native Americans reside in urban areas — the result of decades of federal policies

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pushing families to leave reservations and assimilate into American society.

Dorene Wiese, executive director of the Chicago-based American Indian Association of Illinois, said members of her community have to prioritize making rent payments over splurging on healthy, traditional foods.

Even though specialty chefs like Pamoncutt aim to feed their own communities, the cost of her premium catering service is out of the price range for many urban Natives. Her meals end up feeding majority non-Native audiences at museums or cultural events that can foot the bill, said Wiese, a citizen of the Minnesota White Earth Band of Ojibwe Indians.

"There really is a shortage of Native foods in the area," she said, "But the problem isn't unique to Chicago.

Dana Thompson, co-owner of The Sioux Chef company and executive director of a Minneapolis Indigenous food nonprofit, is another Native businesswoman striving to expand her urban community's access to traditional local foods like lake fish, wild rice and wild greens amid the food price surge.

Thompson, of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate and Mdewakanton Dakota people, said inflation is "really impacting the food systems we have here," which include dozens of Indigenous, local and organic food producers.

At Owamni, an award-winning Indigenous restaurant under The Sioux Chef umbrella, ingredients like Labrador Tea – which grows wild in northern Minnesota – have been especially difficult to get this year, Thompson said.

When an ingredient is not consistently available or affordable, she changes the menu.

"Being fluid and resilient is what we're used to," Thompson said. "That's like the history of indigeneity in North America."

Inflation is similarly impeding the American Indian Center of Chicago's efforts to improve food security. Executive Director Melodi Serna, of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians and the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, said the current prices of food boxes they distribute – with traditional Midwestern foods like fish, bison, venison, dairy products and produce – are "astronomical."

"Where I could have been able to provide maybe 100 boxes, now we're only able to provide 50," Serna said.

For 57-year-old Emmie King, a Chicago resident and citizen of the Navajo Nation, getting the fresh ingredients she grew up with in New Mexico is much more difficult in the city, especially with inflation biting into her budget.

She finds ways to "stretch" the food she buys so it lasts longer, purchasing meat in bulk and freezing small portions to add to stews later on. "I get what I need, rather than what I want," she said.

But King was able to enjoy a taste of home at an Aug. 3 luncheon at the American Indian Center of Chicago, where twenty elders gathered to enjoy turkey tamales with cranberry-infused masa, Spanish rice with quinoa, elote pasta salad with chickpea noodles and glasses of cold lemonade.

The mastermind behind the meal was Pamoncutt herself, sharing her spin on Southwestern and Northern Indigenous food traditions. Through volunteering at senior lunches and developing a food education program, the chef is continuing to increase access to healthy Indigenous foods in her community.

"I want kids to learn where these foods come from," the chef said. "That whole act of caring for your food ... thanking it, understanding that it was grown to help us survive."

Qatar detains workers protesting late pay before World Cup

By MALAK HARB Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Qatar recently arrested at least 60 foreign workers who protested going months without pay and deported some of them, an advocacy group said, just three months before Doha hosts the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

The move comes as Qatar faces intense international scrutiny over its labor practices ahead of the tournament. Like other Gulf Arab nations, Qatar heavily relies on foreign labor. The workers' protest a week ago — and Qatar's reaction to it — could further fuel the concern.

The head of a labor consultancy investigating the incident said the detentions cast new doubt on Qatar's

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pledges to improve the treatment of workers. "Is this really the reality coming out?" asked Mustafa Qadri, executive director of the group Equidem.

In a statement to The Associated Press on Sunday night, Qatar's government acknowledged that "a number of protesters were detained for breaching public safety laws." It declined to offer any information about the arrests or any deportations.

Video footage posted online showed some 60 workers angry about their salaries protesting on Aug. 14 outside of the Doha offices of Al Bandy International Group, a conglomerate that includes construction, real estate, hotels, food service and other ventures. Some of those demonstrating hadn't received their salaries for as many as seven months, Equidem said.

The protesters blocked an intersection on Doha's C Ring Road in front of the Al Shoumoukh Tower. The footage matched known details of the street, including it having several massive portraits of Qatar's ruling emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, looking down on passers-by.

Al Bandy International Group, which is privately owned, did not respond to requests for comment and a telephone number registered in its name did not connect on multiple attempts to call it.

The Qatari government acknowledged that the firm hadn't paid salaries and that its Labor Ministry would pay "all delayed salaries and benefits" to those affected.

"The company was already under investigation by the authorities for nonpayment of wages before the incident, and now further action is being taken after a deadline to settle outstanding salary payments was missed," the government said.

Qadri said police later arrested the protesters and held them in a detention center where some described being in a stifling heat without air conditioning. Doha's temperature this week reached around 41 degrees Celsius (105.8 degrees Fahrenheit).

Qadri described police telling those held that if they can strike in hot weather, they can sleep without air conditioning.

One detained worker who called Equidem from the detention center described seeing as many as 300 of his colleagues there from Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Nepal and the Philippines. He said some had been paid salaries after the protest while others hadn't. His comments could not be corroborated.

Qatar, like other Gulf Arab nations, has in the past deported demonstrating foreign workers, and tied residency visas to employment. The right to form unions remains tightly controlled and available only to Qataris, as is the country's limited right to assembly, according to the Washington-based advocacy group Freedom House.

Qatar, a small, energy-rich nation on the Arabian Peninsula, is home to the state-funded Al Jazeera satellite news network. However, expression in the country remains tightly controlled. Last year, Qatar detained and later deported a Kenyan security guard who wrote and spoke publicly about the woes of the country's migrant labor force.

Since FIFA awarded the tournament to Qatar in 2010, the country has taken some steps to overhaul the country's employment practices. That includes eliminating its so-called kafala employment system, which tied workers to their employers, who had say over whether they could leave their jobs or even the country.

Qatar also has adopted a minimum monthly wage of 1,000 Qatari riyals (\$275) for workers and required food and housing allowances for employees not receiving that directly from their employers.

Activists like Qadri have called on Doha to do more, particularly when it comes to ensuring workers receive their salaries on time and are protected from abusive employers.

"Have we all been duped by Qatar over the last several years?" Qadri asked, suggesting that recent reforms might have been "a cover" for authorities allowing prevailing labor practices to continue.

The World Cup will start this November in Qatar.

Police file terrorism charges against Pakistan's Imran Khan

By MUNIR AHMED Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistani police have filed terrorism charges against former Prime Minister Imran

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Khan, authorities said Monday, escalating political tensions in the country as the ousted premier holds mass rallies seeking to return to office.

The charges followed a speech Khan gave in Islamabad on Saturday in which he vowed to sue police officers and a female judge and alleged that a close aide had been tortured after his arrest.

Khan himself has not publicly spoken about the latest charges against him. However, a court in Islamabad issued a so-called "protective bail" for Khan for the next three days, preventing police from arresting him over the charges, said Shah Mahmood Qureshi, a senior leader in his Tehreek-e-Insaf opposition party.

Hundreds of Tehreek-e-Insaf members stood outside Khan's home on Monday in a show of support as the former premier held meetings inside. The party has warned that it will hold nationwide rallies if Khan is arrested while working to try to squash the charges in court.

Under Pakistan's legal system, police file what is known as a first information report about charges against an accused person to a magistrate judge, who allows the investigation to move forward. Typically, police then arrest and question the accused.

The report against Khan includes testimony from Magistrate Judge Ali Javed, who described being at the Islamabad rally on Saturday and hearing Khan criticize the inspector-general of Pakistan's police and another judge. Khan went on to reportedly say: "You also get ready for it, we will also take action against you. All of you must be ashamed."

Khan could face several years in prison from the new charges, which accuse him of threatening police officers and the judge under the country's sedition act, which stems from British colonial-era law. However, he's not been detained on other lesser charges levied against him in his recent campaigning against the government.

The Pakistani judiciary also has a history of politicization and taking sides in power struggles between the military, the civilian government and opposition politicians, according to the Washington-based advocacy group Freedom House. Current Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif likely will discuss the charges against Khan at a Cabinet meeting scheduled for Tuesday.

Khan came to power in 2018, promising to break the pattern of family rule in Pakistan. His opponents contend he was elected with help from the powerful military, which has ruled the country for half of its 75-year history.

In seeking Khan's ouster earlier this year, the opposition had accused him of economic mismanagement as inflation soars and the Pakistani rupee plummets in value. The parliament's no-confidence vote in April that ousted Khan capped months of political turmoil and a constitutional crisis that required the Supreme Court to step in. Meanwhile, it appeared the military similarly had cooled to Khan.

Khan alleged without providing evidence that the Pakistani military took part in a U.S. plot to oust him. Washington, the Pakistani military and Sharif's government have all denied the allegation. Meanwhile, Khan has been carrying out a series of mass rallies trying to pressure the government.

In his latest speech Sunday night at a rally in the city of Rawalpindi outside of Islamabad, Khan said so-called "neutrals" were behind the recent crackdown against his party. He has in the past used the phrase "neutrals" for the military.

"A plan has been made to place our party against the wall. I assure you, that the Sri Lankan situation is going to happen here," Khan threatened, referencing the recent economic protests that toppled that island nation's government.

"Now we are following law and constitution. But when a political party strays from that path, the situation inside Pakistan, who will stop the public? There are 220 million people."

Khan's party has been holding mass protests, but Pakistan's government and security forces fear the former cricket star's popularity still could draw millions out to the street. That could further pressure the nuclear-armed nation as it struggles to secure a \$7 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund amid an economic crisis, exacerbated by rising global food prices due in part by Russia's war on Ukraine.

On Sunday, the internet-access advocacy group NetBlocks said internet services in the country blocked access to YouTube after Khan broadcast the speech on the platform despite a ban issued by the Pakistan

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Electronic Media Regulatory Authority.

Police arrested Khan's political aide, Shahbaz Gill, earlier this month after he appeared on the private television channel ARY TV and urged soldiers and officers to refuse to obey "illegal orders" from the military leadership. Gill was charged with treason, which under Pakistani law carries the death penalty. ARY also remains off-air in Pakistan following that broadcast.

Khan has alleged that police abused Gill while in custody. Police say Gill suffers from asthma and has not been abused while detained.

Gill was discharged from a hospital to attend a court hearing Monday on whether he should return to jail. Gill appeared healthy in television footage as he left for the court amid tight security.

Khan's speech Saturday in Islamabad focused primarily on Gill's arrest.

Meanwhile, police separately arrested journalist Jameel Farooqi in Karachi over his allegations that Gill had been tortured by police. Farooqi is a vocal supporter of Khan.

Philippine kids back in school after 2 years lost to virus

By JIM GOMEZ Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Millions of students wearing face masks streamed back to primary and secondary schools across the Philippines on Monday for their first in-person classes after two years of coronavirus lockdowns that are feared to have worsened alarming illiteracy rates among children.

Officials grappled with daunting problems, including classroom shortages, lingering COVID-19 fears, an approaching storm and quake-damaged school buildings in the country's north, to welcome back nearly 28 million students who enrolled for the school year.

In a grade school in San Juan city in the capital region, teachers checked the temperatures of students and sprayed alcohol on their hands before letting them into classrooms.

Renaline Pemapelis, 27, excitedly gave last-minute instructions to her son, who was going to school for the first time. "I have mixed feelings, worried and excited," she told The Associated Press.

Only about 24,000 of the nation's public schools, or about 46%, were able to begin in-person classes five times a week starting Monday, while the rest will resort to a mix of in-person and online classes until Nov. 2, when all public and private schools are required to bring all students back to classrooms, education officials said.

But about 1,000 schools will be unable to shift entirely to face-to-face classes during the transition period for various reasons, including damage to school building wrought by a powerful earthquake last month in the north, officials said.

The Department of Education said some schools will have to split classes into up to three shifts a day due to classroom shortages, a longstanding problem, and to avoid overcrowding that could turn schools into new centers of coronavirus outbreaks.

"We always say that our goal is a maximum of two shifts only but there will be areas that would have to resort to three shifts because they're really overcrowded," Education Department spokesperson Michael Poa said on Friday. Despite many concerns, education officials gave assurances that it's "all-systems go" for Monday's resumption of classes, he said.

Sen. Joel Villanueva, however, said such assurances have to be matched by real improvements on the ground.

"The era of missing classrooms, sharing tables and chairs and holding classes under the shade of trees must no longer happen," said Villanueva, who filed two bills calling for additional grocery, transportation and medical allowances for public school teachers.

Among the worst-hit by the pandemic in Southeast Asia, the Philippines under then-President Rodrigo Duterte enforced one of the world's longest coronavirus lockdowns and school closures. Duterte, whose six-year term ended June 30, rejected calls for a resumption of in-person classes due to fears it might ignite new outbreaks.

The prolonged school closures sparked fears that literacy rates among Filipino children — already at

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alarming levels before the pandemic — could worsen.

A World Bank study last year showed that about nine out of 10 children in the Philippines were suffering from “learning poverty,” or the inability of children by age 10 to read and understand a simple story.

“Prolonged school closures, poor health risk mitigation, and household-income shocks had the biggest impact on learning poverty, resulting in many children in the Philippines failing to read and understand a simple text by age 10,” UNICEF Philippines said in a statement.

“Vulnerable children such as children with disabilities, children living in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas, and children living in disaster and conflict zones fare far worse,” the U.N. agency for children said.

Poa said 325 temporary learning spaces were being constructed in northern Abra province and outlying regions to replace school buildings battered by a July 27 quake.

Education officials also scrambled to help more than 28,000 students look for new schools after at least 425 private schools closed permanently following the pandemic’s arrival in 2020, mainly due to financial losses. About 10,000 of the students have been enrolled in public schools, Poa said.

Poverty has also been a key hindrance to education. Crowds mobbed the Department of Social Welfare and Development offices on Saturday to claim cash aid for indigent students, resulting in the injury of at least 26 people who were pinned in entrance gates.

China fights brush fires, extends power rationing in drought

BEIJING (AP) — Brush fires have forced the evacuation of more than 1,500 people in southwest China and power rationing for factories has reportedly been extended as weeks of record heat and drought batter the region.

Some shopping malls in the megacity of Chongqing have been ordered closed for most of the day to reduce electricity demand, state broadcaster CCTV said, limiting opening hours to 4 to 9 p.m.

The drought and heat have wilted crops and caused rivers including the giant Yangtze to shrink, disrupting cargo traffic and reducing power supply from hydroelectric dams at a time of soaring demand for air conditioning. State media say the government will try to protect the autumn grain harvest, which is 75% of China’s annual total, by shooting chemicals into clouds to try to generate rain.

The disruption adds to challenges for the ruling Communist Party, which is trying to shore up sagging economic growth before a meeting this fall at which President Xi Jinping is expected to be given a third five-year term as party leader.

There was no public announcement of the extension of power rationing in Sichuan province into a second week, but it was detailed in a company statement and a government notice to companies that was reported by Chinese news outlets.

The “tense situation” of power supplies in Sichuan province “has further intensified,” Tencent News said Monday in a report that included a photo of the government notice.

LIER Chemical Co. said in an announcement through the stock exchange in the southern city of Shenzhen that its facilities in the cities of Jinyang and Guang’an in Sichuan received an order extending power rationing through Thursday.

Factories in Sichuan that make processor chips, solar panels, auto components and other industrial goods were required to shut down or reduce activity last week to conserve power for homes as air conditioning demand surged in temperatures as high as 45 degrees Celsius (113 degrees Fahrenheit). Air conditioning, elevators and lights were shut off in offices and shopping malls.

In Shanghai, a factory and shipping hub on China’s east coast, Tesla Ltd. and a major state-owned automaker suspended production last week due to disruption in supplies of components from Sichuan, the Shanghai city government said.

Sichuan, with 94 million people, is especially hard-hit because it gets 80% of its power from hydroelectric dams. Other provinces rely more on coal-fired power, which isn’t affected.

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Economists say if Sichuan reopens relatively soon, the national impact should be limited because the province accounts for only 4% of China's industrial output.

The Chinese government says this summer is China's hottest and driest since it began keeping temperature and rainfall records in 1961. Temperatures have exceeded 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) for the past week and longer.

Brush fires in outlying areas of Chongqing, which borders Sichuan, are the latest scourge resulting from the heat and drought.

More than 1,500 residents had been moved to shelters, while around 5,000 civilian and military personnel had been mobilized to put out the blazes, the official Xinhua News Agency said Monday.

Helicopters have been sent to drop water on the fires, supporting crews on the ground who have in the past been left to their own resources.

In 2019, a wildfire in the mountains of Sichuan province killed 30 firefighters and volunteers.

No deaths have yet been reported as a result of the heat wave, Xinhua said, although that could not be independently verified.

US, S. Korea open biggest drills in years amid North threats

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The United States and South Korea began their biggest combined military training in years Monday as they heighten their defense posture against the growing North Korean nuclear threat.

The drills could draw an angry response from North Korea, which has dialed up its weapons testing activity to a record pace this year while repeatedly threatening conflicts with Seoul and Washington amid a prolonged stalemate in diplomacy.

The Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises will continue through Sept. 1 in South Korea and include field exercises involving aircraft, warships, tanks and potentially tens of thousands of troops.

While Washington and Seoul describe their exercises as defensive, North Korea portrays them as invasion rehearsals and has used them to justify its nuclear weapons and missiles development.

Ulchi Freedom Shield, which started along with a four-day South Korean civil defense training program led by government employees, will reportedly include exercises simulating joint attacks, front-line reinforcements of arms and fuel, and removals of weapons of mass destruction.

The allies will also train for drone attacks and other new developments in warfare shown during Russia's war on Ukraine and practice joint military-civilian responses to attacks on seaports, airports and major industrial facilities such as semiconductor factories.

The United States and South Korea in past years had canceled some of their regular drills and downsized others to computer simulations to create space for the Trump administration's diplomacy with North Korea and because of COVID-19 concerns.

Tensions have grown since the collapse of the second meeting between former President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in early 2019. The Americans then rejected North Korean demands for a major release of crippling U.S.-led sanctions in exchange for dismantling an aging nuclear complex, which would have amounted to a partial surrender of the North's nuclear capabilities. Kim has since vowed to bolster his nuclear deterrent in face of "gangster-like" U.S. pressure.

South Korea's military has not revealed the number of South Korean and U.S. troops participating in Ulchi Freedom Shield, but has portrayed the training as a message of strength. Seoul's Defense Ministry said last week that Ulchi Freedom Shield "normalizes" large-scale training and field exercises between the allies to help bolster their alliance and strengthen their defense posture against the evolving North Korean threat.

Before being shelved or downsized, the United States and South Korea held major joint exercises every spring and summer in South Korea.

The spring drills had included live-fire drills involving a broad range of land, air and sea assets and usually involved around 10,000 American and 200,000 Korean troops. Tens of thousands of allied troops participated

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in the summertime drills, which mainly consisted of computer simulations to hone joint decision-making and planning, although South Korea's military has emphasized the revival of field training this year.

The drills follow North Korea's dismissal last week of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol's "audacious" proposal of economic benefits in exchange for denuclearization steps, accusing Seoul of recycling proposals Pyongyang has long rejected.

Kim Yo Jong, the increasingly powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, described Yoon's proposal as foolish and stressed that the North has no intentions to give away an arsenal her brother clearly sees as his strongest guarantee of survival.

She harshly criticized Yoon for continuing military exercises with the United States and also for letting South Korean civilian activists fly anti-Pyongyang propaganda leaflets and other "dirty waste" across the border by balloon.

She also ridiculed U.S.-South Korean military capabilities for monitoring the North's missile activity, insisting that the South misread the launch site of the North's latest missile tests on Wednesday last week, hours before Yoon used a news conference to urge Pyongyang to return to diplomacy.

Kim Yo Jong's statement came a week after she warned of "deadly" retaliation against South Korea over a recent North Korean COVID-19 outbreak, which Pyongyang dubiously claims was caused by leaflets and other objects floated by southern activists. There are concerns that the threat portends a provocation which might include a nuclear or missile test or even border skirmishes, and that the North might try to raise tensions sometime around the allied drills.

In an interview with Associated Press Television last month, Choe Jin, deputy director of a think tank run by North Korea's Foreign Ministry, said the United States and South Korea would face "unprecedented" security challenges if they don't drop their hostile military pressure campaign against North Korea, including joint military drills.

Last week's launches of two suspected cruise missiles extended a record pace in North Korean missile testing in 2022, which has involved more than 30 ballistic launches, including the country's first demonstrations of intercontinental ballistic missiles in nearly five years.

North Korea's heightened testing activity underscores its dual intent to advance its arsenal and force the United States to accept the idea of the North as a nuclear power so it can negotiate economic and security concessions from a position of strength, experts say.

Kim Jong Un could up the ante soon as there are indications that the North is preparing to conduct its first nuclear test since September 2017, when it claimed to have developed a thermonuclear weapon to fit on its ICBMs.

Gays hail Singapore sex-ban repeal, see long way to equality

By TOH EE MING and EILEEN NG Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — Singapore's gay community Monday hailed a plan to decriminalize sex between men as "a triumph of love over fear" but warned there is still a long way to equality and new bans on same-sex unions could entrench discrimination against them.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong caught many by surprise when he announced in his National Day Rally speech Sunday that the government would repeal Section 377A of the Penal Code, a colonial-era law that made sex between men punishable by up to two years in jail.

Since 2007, when Parliament last debated whether to repeal Section 377A, its position was to keep the law but not enforce it. But Lee said societal norms have shifted considerably and many Singaporeans will now accept decriminalization.

Lee, however, vowed the repeal will be limited and not shake Singapore's traditional family and societal norms including how marriage is defined, what children are taught in schools, what is shown on television and general public conduct.

He said the government will amend the constitution to "safeguard the institution of marriage" and prevent any constitutional challenge to allow same-sex unions.

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The timing of the repeal or the constitutional change was not disclosed.

More than 20 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups — including Pink Dot SG that organizes an annual rally that attracts thousands of supporters — said the repeal was long overdue to show that “state-sanctioned discrimination has no place in Singapore.”

They called it a “hard-won victory, a triumph of love over fear” that will finally enable victims of bullying, rejection and harassment to heal. However, the groups said the repeal was merely “the first step on a long road towards full equality for LGBTQ people” amid other areas of discrimination they face at home, in schools, workplaces, and in housing and health systems.

They expressed disappointment with the government’s plan to introduce further legislation or constitutional amendments to ban same-sex unions that signal LGBTQ people as unequal citizens.

Such a decision will “undermine the secular character of our constitution, codify further discrimination into supreme law and tie the hands of future Parliaments,” they warned.

Religious groups were guarded in their reaction to Lee’s comments, saying the changes mustn’t hinder their religious freedom to articulate views on public morality nor cause any “reverse discrimination” on those who doesn’t support homosexuality.

Christian and Muslim groups said heterosexual marriage must be protected in the constitution before Section 377A is repealed and that there should be no further liberalization of policies.

“We seek the government’s assurance that the religious freedom of churches will be protected as we continue to teach against same-sex sexual acts and highlight such acts,” the National Council of Churches said in a statement. Pastors and church workers must be protected from charges of “hate speech” and not be compelled to adopt solely “LGBTQ-affirming” strategies in their counselling, it said.

The council expressed concerns the repeal could lead to LGBTQ culture expanding and called for redress for Christians who face “reverse discrimination.”

The Alliance of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches of Singapore, which represents over 80 local churches, was more blunt, calling it a “an extremely regrettable decision.”

“The decision to remove a moral marker as weighty as S377A signals a rewriting of acceptable sexual relationships, and celebrates homosexuality as being characteristic of a mainstream social environment,” it said.

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore said the church is not seeking to criminalize the LGBTQ community but to protect the family and marriage and its rights to teach and practice on such topics unhindered.

Singapore’s top Islamic leader, Mufti Nazirudin Mohd Nasir, said the repeal was a “tough balancing act” and steps to preserve traditional values were crucial.

“Even as we hold on to different values, aspirations and orientations, I don’t think we should let hate and contempt for differences to win,” he told Channel News Asia.

Section 377A was introduced under British colonial rule in the 1930s. Version of the law remain in other former British colonies, including neighboring Malaysia.

But laws have liberalized in recent years in Asia. India’s top court decriminalized gay sex in a 2018 ruling. Taiwan became the first Asian government to legalize gay marriage in 2019, and Thailand recently approved plans allowing same-sex unions.

National University of Singapore sociologist Tan Ern Ser said the repeal could set the scene for future challenges to the constitution.

“On the surface, it does look like one step forward, two steps backward, but my sense is that the repeal could be seen as a foot in the door, which could pave the way to future challenges to the constitution on the current definition of family and marriage,” Tan said.

‘Time stopped’: Ukrainians long to go home as war drags on

By VANESSA GERA and KIRSTEN GRIESHABER Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — On March 8, nearly two weeks after Russia invaded Ukraine, Taisiia Mokrozub

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took her infant son, parted from her husband and joined an exodus to safety in Poland. She believed the war would end quickly and she would be home by May.

But a half-year later, with shelling near a nuclear power plant in her hometown of Zaporizhzhia, and the front line so close, the 36-year-old's husband is telling her to stay in Poland with their now-11-month-old baby. She now dreams of being home by winter, hoping Ukraine will have prevailed by then against Russia's onslaught.

As the war reaches the sixth-month mark Wednesday, many refugees are facing the sad realization that they will not be going home soon, if they have homes to return to at all. With missiles falling even far from the front line, many wouldn't feel safe yet, even in areas under Ukrainian control.

So they are biding their time, waiting for the end of a war that shows no signs of ending soon, longing for home and refusing to think too far into the future.

With a new academic year starting, some are reluctantly enrolling their children in schools abroad, worried they will fall behind in the Ukrainian system. Others take jobs below their skill levels. With most refugees being women, those with very young children, like Mokrozub, are unable to work.

"It seems to me that not only for me but for all Ukrainians, time has stopped," Mokrozub said. "We all live in some kind of limbo."

Russia's invasion has created the largest refugee crisis in Europe since World War II. The UN refugee agency says a third of Ukrainians have fled their homes, with more than 6.6 million displaced within the country and over 6.6 million more across the continent.

European countries have welcomed them without the political backlash that met influxes of refugees from the Middle East and Africa in past years, however.

Poland has taken in the most Ukrainians, with an estimated 1.5 million having registered for national ID numbers that allow them social benefits. Germany, which doesn't require visas for Ukrainians, has registered more than 900,000, though it isn't clear how many of those may have gone home or headed elsewhere.

Warsaw now has 180,000 Ukrainian refugees — representing a tenth of the Polish capital's population of 1.8 million — the largest single grouping anywhere.

Though Ukrainian and Russian — which is also commonly spoken back home — are heard on the city's streets and grocery stores now carry some Ukrainian foods, the newcomers have integrated with little trouble and seem almost invisible.

For many of the refugees, Poland's Slavic language and culture offer something familiar and reassuring. The country's proximity to Ukraine makes it possible to travel back for short visits with husbands and fathers who are banned from leaving due to the war effort.

"We didn't want to go farther," said Galina Inyutina, 42, who arrived in Poland in early March from Dnipro with her 11-year-old son. They long terribly for their forests and fields and food.

"Mom, if we go farther away then it will take us longer to get home," he told her.

The arrival of so many people has exacerbated a preexisting housing crisis in Warsaw, where rental prices have surged 30% over the last year, as well as other cities that have attracted large numbers of refugees.

In the early days of the war, hundreds of thousands of Polish families took Ukrainians, often total strangers, into their homes. Thanks to that hospitality, there was never a need for refugee camps, said Oksana Pstrykova, who administers a consultation center at the Ukrainian House in Warsaw, a social center for immigrants.

But what were expected to be short stays have turned into long ones, and some Poles are now calling the center's hotline to ask for help from Ukrainian speakers to tell their guests it's time to move on.

"The hospitality is getting weaker," Pstrykova said. "We understand it and we were expecting it."

Some corporations are stepping in to help.

The global tech company Siemens transformed office space at its Polish headquarters to create hotel-style accommodations for nearly 160 people, administered by the Warsaw city government. The facility is clean, with food and laundry facilities provided for free.

Among those living there now is Ludmila Fedotova, a 52-year-old shop assistant from Zaporizhzhia. She

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is terrified about what is happening back home but can at least relax knowing she has housing and food as she looks for work.

While there might not be enough housing for all the newcomers, there are more than enough jobs in an economy that has boomed in the post-communist era. Ukrainian immigrants who came to Poland in recent years are sometimes the ones helping the new arrivals with work and a place to live.

Oleh Yarovyi, from Khmelnytskyi in western Ukraine, arrived six years ago and has built up a coffee shop franchise with his wife. As they expand, he has lost some Ukrainian men helping with construction who returned to fight in the war, but he has been able to hire Ukrainian women who can use their language in a job they hope is temporary.

"Half of them plan to go back, so they don't even try to learn Polish," Yarovyi said. "They just look for a simple job without any additional challenges."

Tetiana Bilous, 46, who ran a short-term apartment rental business in Vinnytsia, Ukraine, is among those working in one of Yarovyi's kitchens. She fled two days into the war, joining a grown daughter already in Warsaw. She missed her husband and returned home for a two-week visit, but was terrified by the bombardments and air raid sirens.

Bilous remains torn over what her next steps should be, saying, "Everything is uncertain."

Farther west, in Schwerin, Germany, Marina Galla, a computer science teacher who left Mariupol with her 13-year-old son in late March, has found relief and stability. Last month they moved into a small rooftop apartment after a long escape that took them through Poland and Berlin.

She is free from the horrors and the deprivation from which she fled: the bodies in the streets, drinking melted snow because there was no running water. Yet she feels crushed with sadness thinking of family left behind.

In a black backpack she has carried every day since leaving Mariupol, Galla keeps a handwritten note in a side pocket listing contact information for her mother, father and grandmother. She originally wrote it in case she was killed in the war, and even in the safety of Schwerin, she doesn't leave home without it.

Her son messaged a lot with his friends from back home during their first months in Germany, but he barely talks to them anymore and has stopped asking when they will return to Ukraine.

"He probably understands," Galla said, "that we will not be able to go back there."

Fate of Ukrainian lands held by Russia still seems unclear

By YURAS KARMANAU Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — According to Russian state TV, the future of the Ukrainian regions captured by Moscow's forces is all but decided: Referendums on becoming part of Russia will soon take place there, and the joyful residents who were abandoned by Kyiv will be able to prosper in peace.

In reality, the Kremlin appears to be in no rush to seal the deal on Ukraine's southern regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia and the eastern provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk, even though officials it installed there already have announced plans for a vote to join Russia.

As the war in Ukraine nears its six-month mark, Moscow faces multiple problems in the territory it occupies — from pulverized civilian infrastructure that needs urgent rebuilding as colder weather looms, to guerrilla resistance and increasingly debilitating attacks by Kyiv's military forces that have been gearing up for a counteroffensive in the south.

Analysts say that what could have been a clear victory for the Kremlin is becoming something of a muddle.

"It is clear that the situation won't stabilize for a long time," even if referendums eventually are held, says Nikolai Petrov, a senior research fellow in Chatham House's Russia and Eurasia Program. "There will be the guerrilla movement, there will be underground resistance, there will be terrorist acts, there will be shelling. ... Right now, the impression is that even the Kremlin doesn't really believe that by holding these referendums, it would draw a thick line under it."

Moscow's plans to incorporate captured territories were clear from the outset of the Feb. 24 invasion. Several weeks in, separatist leaders of the self-proclaimed "people's republics" of Donetsk and Luhansk,

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which the Kremlin recognized as independent states, voiced plans to hold votes on becoming part of Russia. While forces backed by Moscow control almost all of Luhansk, some estimates say Russia and the separatists control about 60% of the Donetsk region.

Similar announcements followed from Kremlin-backed administrations of the southern Kherson region, which is almost completely occupied by Russians, and in the Zaporizhzhia region, large swaths of which are under Moscow's control.

While the Kremlin coyly says it is up to the residents to decide whether they formally want to live in Russia or Ukraine, lower-level officials talked about possible dates for the balloting.

Senior lawmaker Leonid Slutsky once mentioned July, although it did not occur. Vladimir Rogov, a Moscow-installed official in the Zaporizhzhia region, suggested the first half of September. Kirill Stremousov, a Kremlin-backed official in Kherson, talked about scheduling it before the end of the year.

As summer wanes, there is still no date for the referendums. Pro-Russian officials in Kherson and Zaporizhzhia say the votes will take place after Moscow takes full control of the rest of the Donetsk region, but the Kremlin's gains there have been minimal recently. Still, campaigns promoting the votes are reportedly well underway.

Russian TV shows cities with billboards proclaiming, "Together with Russia." Stremousov reports from Kherson almost daily on social media about his trips around the region, where he meets people adamant about joining Russia. In the Russian-controlled part of Zaporizhzhia, the Moscow-installed administration already has ordered an election commission to prepare for a referendum.

Balloting aside, there are other signs that Russia is planning on staying.

The ruble has been introduced alongside the Ukrainian hryvnia and has been used to pay out pensions and other benefits. Russian passports were offered to residents in a fast-track citizenship procedure. Schools were reported to have switched to a Russian curriculum, starting in September.

Russian license plates were given to car owners by traffic police, with Kherson and Zaporizhzhia assigned Russian region numbers 184 and 185. The Russian Interior Ministry, which oversees the traffic police, did not respond to an Associated Press request for comment to clarify how that was legal, given that both regions are still part of Ukraine.

Ukrainian officials and activists, meanwhile, paint a picture that contrasts sharply with the Russian TV portrayal of a bright future for the occupied territories under Moscow's generous care.

Luhansk Gov. Serhiy Haidai told AP that 90% of the population in the province's large cities has left. Devastation and squalor "reigns" in the cities and towns seized by Russia, he said, and there are only a few villages not under Moscow's control after weeks of exhausting battles.

Residents use "water from puddles" and build "a bonfire in the yard to cook food on, right next to garbage," Haidai said.

"Our people that manage to return home to collect their belongings don't recognize towns and villages that used to blossom," he added.

The situation isn't as dire in the southern city of Kherson, which sits just north of the Crimean Peninsula that Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014, according to pro-Ukrainian activist Konstantin Ryzhenko. Kherson was captured without much destruction early in the war, so most of its infrastructure is intact.

But supplies of essential goods have been uneven, and prices for food and medicine brought in from Russia have spiked, Ryzhenko told AP, adding that both are of "disgustingly low quality."

Early in the war, thousands of Kherson residents regularly protested the occupation, but mass repression forced many either to flee the city or to hide their views.

"Demonstrations have been impossible since May. If you publicly express anything pro-Ukrainian, an opinion on whatever subject, you are guaranteed to be taken into detention, tortured and beaten there," Ryzhenko said.

Melitopol Mayor Ivan Fedorov, whose city in the Zaporizhzhia region also was occupied early in the war, echoed Ryzhenko's sentiment.

Mass arrests and purges of activists and opinion-makers with pro-Kyiv views began in May, said Fedorov,

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who spent time in Russian captivity for refusing to cooperate. More than 500 people in Melitopol remain in captivity, he told AP.

Despite that intimidation, he estimated that only about 10% of those who remain in the city would vote to join Russia if a referendum takes place.

"The idea of a referendum has discredited itself," Fedorov said.

Kherson activist Ryzhenko believes a referendum would be rigged because "they're already talking about voting online, voting at home. ... So, you understand, the legitimacy of this voting will be nil."

Russian political analyst Dmitry Oreshkin said that because so many people have left the occupied regions, "there will be nothing close to a proper polling of the population about their preferences."

But Ukrainian authorities still have to regard such votes as a serious issue, said Vadim Karasev, head of the Kyiv-based Institute of Global Strategies think tank.

"After the referendums take place, Russia will consider the southern lands as part of its own territory and view Ukrainian attacks as attacks on Russia," Karasev said in an interview.

He said the Kremlin might also be using the threat of referendums to pressure Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to agree to negotiations on Moscow's conditions or else risk "losing the south" and a large part of its vital access to the sea.

Zelenskyy has said that if Moscow goes ahead with the votes, there will be no talks of any kind.

In the meantime, Ukrainian forces continue sporadic strikes against the Russian military in the Kherson region. On Thursday, Ukraine's Operational Command South reported killing 29 "occupiers" near the town of Bilohirka, northeast of Kherson, as well as destroying artillery, armored vehicles and a military supply depot.

3 Arkansas officers suspended after video captures beating

MULBERRY, Ark. (AP) — Three Arkansas law enforcement officers were suspended Sunday following social media outrage over a video that shows a suspect being held down on the ground and beaten.

Crawford County Sheriff Jimmy Damante issued a statement Sunday evening, stating two county deputies will be suspended during the course of the Arkansas state police's investigation into the incident and the sheriff's office's internal investigation. A Mulberry police officer also was suspended.

"I hold all my employees accountable for their actions and will take appropriate measures in this matter," Damante said.

In a statement released Sunday evening, Mulberry Police Chief Shannon Gregory said the officer involved in the incident is on leave pending the outcome of the investigation.

"The city of Mulberry and the Mulberry police department takes these investigations very seriously," Gregory said.

According to police, a report indicated that a man was making threats to a convenience store employee in Mulberry on Sunday morning. Mulberry is located about 137 miles (220.48 kilometers) northwest of Little Rock.

Police said when the officers confronted the man, he pushed a deputy to the ground and punched the back of his head, leading to the arrest seen in the video.

Three law enforcement officers are seen in the video. One can be seen punching the shoeless suspect with a clenched fist, while another can be seen kneeling him, and a third is holding him down.

The unidentified man was arrested and taken to a local hospital. He faces charges of terroristic threatening, resisting arrest and other assault charges, police said.

Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson said Sunday night on Twitter that the "incident in Crawford County will be investigated pursuant to the video evidence and the request of the prosecuting attorney."

No further information was immediately available.

What to watch: Top Democrats square off in Florida, New York

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By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Tuesday's primary elections feature two top Florida Democrats squaring off for the chance to face Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis, a rising conservative star frequently mentioned as a top alternative to Donald Trump in the 2024 GOP presidential contest.

In New York, redistricting has left two longtime House Democratic colleagues competing for the same seat, while the head of the party's campaign arm in the chamber is running in new territory and faces a challenge from the left.

Oklahoma Republicans will choose between two Trump loyalists competing in a runoff to be their party's nominee to finish the term of retiring GOP Sen. Jim Inhofe. The 87-year-old is stepping down at the end of the year, with more than four years left in his term.

What to watch:

FLORIDA

Once the nation's largest swing state, Florida has trended more Republican in recent years. Trump won it twice, and the GOP's domination of the Legislature has given DeSantis a national platform to carry out a brash brand of culture war politics that's delighted big GOP donors and sparked speculation he'll run for president.

State Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried and U.S. Rep. Charlie Crist, who was once governor himself as a Republican, are vying for the Democratic nomination to compete against DeSantis in November. Fried, the only statewide-elected Democrat, has sought to portray Crist as a Democrat in name only. She's highlighted Crist's former anti-abortion stance and his appointment of conservative state Supreme Court justices. Crist has dismissed Fried's criticisms as last-ditch efforts to counter his stouter fundraising and high-profile endorsements.

In the U.S. Senate race, Tuesday's primary is expected to cement a general election matchup between incumbent Republican Marco Rubio and Democratic congresswoman Val Demings, who is giving up her Orlando-based seat.

Meanwhile, hotly contested primaries stem from the departure of four House members, the acquisition of a new congressional district thanks to Florida's booming population, and new maps drawn by DeSantis' office that could boost Republicans even further.

One of the House's most controversial members, Republican Rep. Matt Gaetz, is facing a strong primary challenge from Mark Lombardo, a former Marine and former FedEx executive who has run a series of ads attacking Gaetz for being under federal investigation in a sex trafficking case. Gaetz has not been charged and denies wrongdoing.

Running for the Democratic nomination for Gaetz's seat is Rebekah Jones, a former Department of Health employee who received national attention after she questioned the state's COVID-19 dashboard and claimed Florida wasn't reporting accurate numbers — an allegation that an inspector general's report said was unfounded. Jones is facing Peggy Schiller, a local Democratic Party activist.

NEW YORK

New York is holding its second round of primary elections after voting in June for statewide races. Tuesday will cover the state's 26 U.S. House seats, a delayed date after a judge ordered a redrawing of political maps.

The new congressional districts have caused Democratic consternation, especially a new Manhattan-area seat that has turned two incumbents into rivals. Rep. Carolyn Maloney, who has represented New York City's Upper East Side for three decades, is facing Rep. Jerry Nadler, who has represented the Upper West Side for just as long.

Maloney, 76, and Nadler, 75, each chair powerful committees. Running in the same primary is Suraj Patel, a 38-year-old attorney who says it's time for a new generation of leaders.

Nadler has been endorsed by The New York Times and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer. But turnout could be low since many district residents have left for summer vacations, especially wealthy voters who have second homes elsewhere, making predicting the winner difficult.

Unpredictable turnout could also decide a primary in an ultraliberal district in southern Manhattan and

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Brooklyn. Competing there is progressive Rep. Mondaire Jones, who represents a Hudson Valley seat but is running further south to avoid another incumbent-on-incumbent challenge.

Other candidates for the seat include Assembly member Yuh-Line Niou, New York City Councilwoman Carlina Rivera and former Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman. Also running is Daniel Goldman, the former federal prosecutor who served as counsel to House Democrats in Trump's first impeachment inquiry.

Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, who heads the House Democratic campaign organization, is running in a new suburban district north of New York City. He swapped districts without consulting Jones, who currently represents most of the area. The move rankled the left and led state Sen. Alessandra Biaggi to challenge him for the seat.

A top Republican primary race is unfolding near Buffalo, where Republican Rep. Chris Jacobs opted not to seek reelection after facing backlash for voicing support for gun safety measures following a racist mass shooting in his district last May. New York Republican Party Chair Nick Langworthy and businessman Carl Paladino are running to replace him.

Paladino is a former gubernatorial candidate with a long history of offensive comments, including his suggestion that Adolf Hitler was "the kind of leader we need today" because of his ability to rally crowds. More recently, he said in a radio interview that U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland "should be executed" for authorizing a search of Trump's home. He said later in the show that he was being facetious.

OKLAHOMA

Two Trump supporters are competing in the GOP primary runoff for the remainder of Inhofe's term, which expires in January 2027.

Rep. Markwayne Mullin, a plumbing company owner who won his eastern Oklahoma House seat in 2012, finished atop a 13-candidate GOP field in June but came up short of the 50% threshold he needed to clinch the primary outright. He was endorsed by Trump, but only after finishing first in the primary.

Mullin faces former Oklahoma Speaker of the House T.W. Shannon, a bank executive who ran unsuccessfully for an open U.S. Senate seat in 2014. The winner will be heavily favored in November against former Democratic Rep. Kendra Horn.

In a state where nearly 10% of the population identifies as American Indian, both Mullin and Shannon are members of Native American tribes. Mullin is a Cherokee citizen, and Shannon, who is also African American, is a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation.

In Oklahoma's other Senate race, Jason Bollinger, an Oklahoma City attorney, and Madison Horn, a cybersecurity expert, are competing in the Democratic primary runoff to face incumbent Republican Sen. James Lankford in November. Lankford will be the strong favorite in November.

Mullin's Senate bid left open House seat that drew 14 GOP challengers. Former state Sen. Josh Brecheen and current state lawmaker Avery Frix advanced to a runoff.

Closing arguments next in trial of 2 men in Whitmer plot

By ED WHITE Associated Press

Jurors will hear closing arguments Monday in the retrial of two men charged with conspiring to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer in 2020.

Adam Fox and Barry Croft Jr. declined to testify Friday as defense lawyers rested their case in federal court in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The government has portrayed Fox and Croft as leaders of a wild plan to snatch Whitmer at her vacation home in Elk Rapids, Michigan, and trigger chaos across the U.S.

Fox, Croft and their allies were furious about COVID-19 restrictions and generally disgusted by government, prosecutors say.

Defense lawyers, however, say Fox and Croft were a bumbling, foul-mouthed, marijuana-smoking pair exercising free speech and incapable of leading anything as extraordinary as an abduction of a public official. They say FBI agents and informants fed their outrage and pulled them into their web.

"It has FBI fingerprints all over it," Christopher Gibbons said.

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The jury heard secretly recorded conversations and read violent social media posts, some written before the FBI got involved. Two undercover agents and an informant testified for hours, explaining how the men trained in Wisconsin and Michigan and visited Elk Rapids to see Whitmer's home.

Other witnesses included Ty Garbin and Kaleb Franks, who pleaded guilty and insisted the group was not entrapped.

Fox and Croft are on trial for a second time after a jury in April couldn't reach a unanimous verdict but acquitted two other men.

Croft, 46, is from Bear, Delaware. Fox, 39, was living in the basement of a vacuum shop in the Grand Rapids area.

Whitmer, a Democrat, has blamed then-President Donald Trump for stoking mistrust and fomenting anger over coronavirus restrictions and refusing to condemn hate groups and right-wing extremists like those charged in the plot.

She said Sunday that she hasn't been following the retrial, but that she remains concerned about "violent rhetoric in this country."

"This is a dangerous trend that is happening. We cannot let it become normalized and I do hope that anyone that's out there plotting to hurt their fellow Americans is held accountable," Whitmer said at the Michigan Democratic Party's convention in Lansing.

Trump recently called the kidnapping plan a "fake deal."

California pig welfare rule delays frustrate small farmers

By SCOTT McFETRIDGE Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Ohio hog farmer Joe Brandt changed his operation a few years ago to give his pigs more room and keep pregnant sows out of the narrow crates used by most farms.

Brandt said he wanted to treat his pigs more humanely, but in doing so he also created a niche for his family business amid heightened concerns about the treatment of animals, and that enabled him to charge higher prices for the pigs.

That payoff seemed likely to grow even larger after the January 2022 implementation of a California ballot measure that required all pork sold in the state to abide by the standards Brandt had already implemented but that are rarely seen in large hog farms. With that measure, Brandt and farmers like him would suddenly be the only sources of bacon and pork chops for a state of 39 million people that consumes about 13% of the nation's pork supply.

Yet, for reasons out of Brandt's control, it hasn't happened. California has yet to fully write and approve the necessary regulations, a state judge has blocked enforcement of the law because of that regulatory delay, and the U.S. Supreme Court will soon hear a case brought by a national pork industry group that opposes the regulations. Given all the delays, Brandt wonders if he will ever see the surge in demand he expected when the measure was overwhelmingly approved by California voters in 2018.

"It absolutely would help," said Brandt, who maintains a herd of about 1,500 sows at his farm near Versailles, Ohio. "It comes down to positioning yourself. If you see something and you're progressive and you work toward it and you believe in it, I think if a measure like this does pass, you should be rewarded for it."

Brandt is among hundreds of relatively small farmers who are caught between the state of California and the Iowa-based National Pork Producers Council, which represents the nation's largest pig operations, based primarily in the Midwest and North Carolina.

At issue is whether California's Proposition 12 violates the U.S. Constitution by interfering with a national system in which about 65,000 farmers raise 125 million hogs annually, resulting in gross sales of \$26 billion. California's regulations would ban pork sales in the state unless the pigs were born to sows with at least 24-square-feet of space and an ability to turn around.

The National Pork Producers Council and American Farm Bureau Federation argue that California's law violates the Constitution's commerce clause because it throws a wrench in the nation's pork system and requires out-of-state producers to incur nearly all the costs of compliance.

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After losing before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, the national associations asked the U.S. Supreme Court to consider their case. Arguments are planned for October.

If the Supreme Court finds California's law unconstitutional, it couldn't be fully implemented and the nation's pork producers would be free to continue their current operations, including the use of so-called gestation crates that protect sows from other pigs but prevent them from turning around. Other aspects of the California law — governing the treatment of egg-laying chickens and cattle raised for veal — could be enforced.

A judge on Aug. 11 placed a similar sow welfare law on hold in Massachusetts, pending the outcome of the Supreme Court case.

Jared Schilling, who raises about 40,000 sows a year near New Athens, Illinois, said his family hoped to gain a competitive edge when they changed their operation to give pigs more room. The move has paid off; he gets premium prices by selling his animals to specialty pork business Coleman Natural Foods. Brandt also sells to Coleman.

But Schilling said his profits would likely rise more if the California and Massachusetts laws are implemented.

"Every industry has to make changes to adapt to what the consumer wants, whether it's the marketplace or legislation," Schilling said. "Most would prefer the marketplace but they did vote on it, so someone needs to meet that consumer demand."

Michael Formica, a lawyer for the National Pork Producers Council, said his group also represents small hog farmers and has no desire to place their needs secondary to large pork producers. Formica argued that the current system already rewards producers who meet what he estimated was the 5% of consumers who want to pay significantly more for pork raised with more square footage and without crates.

What the council opposes, Formica said, is California imposing its standards on the rest of the country, especially since the state produces less than 1% of the pork its residents consume.

"We respect the marketplace determining what the marketplace wants," he said. "If consumers really wanted this, they would be buying pork chops for \$15 or \$25 a pound, but they don't."

If California's law is allowed to take effect, Formica said, smaller producers could be hurt because once large suppliers shift to meet the rules, they would eventually be able to produce the same pork at a lower cost than the niche farms.

Charlie Thieriot, chief executive officer of Llano Seco Meats in Chico, California, said his business exceeds the California rules, and he strongly supports Proposition 12, calling its requirements the "tip of the iceberg" for how pigs should be treated. But Thieriot, whose business supplies a number of elite Bay Area restaurants, said national pork producers are adept at operating on thin margins, and he worries that small pig farmers don't realize the struggle they could face competing directly with big companies if they are forced to become Proposition 12 compliant.

"I think these big producers are really just incredibly smart, incredibly strategic," Thieriot said. "They will be getting ready for whatever the court decides and they'll have a Prop 12 compliant product ready when that hammer drops."

Back to school, with panic buttons: The post-Uvalde scramble

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH Associated Press

MISSION, Kan. (AP) — Melissa Lee comforted her son and daughter after a student opened fire in their suburban Kansas City high school, wounding an administrator and a police officer stationed there.

Then weeks later, she wept for the parents in Uvalde, Texas, who were forced to bury their children after the massacre there in May. She said she was "absolutely" reassured when she learned her district had since purchased one of the panic-alert systems gaining traction nationwide amid a surge in school violence that includes shootings and fights. The technology, featuring wearable panic buttons or mobile phone apps, enables teachers to notify each other and police in the event of an emergency.

"Time is of the essence," said Lee, whose son helped barricade a classroom door and watched police

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enter his school with guns drawn. "They can hit a button and, OK, we know something's wrong, you know, really wrong. And then it puts everybody else on high alert."

Multiple states now mandate or encourage the buttons, and a growing number of districts are shelling out tens of thousands of dollars per school for them — part of a widespread scramble to beef up school security and prevent the next tragedy. The spending spree includes metal detectors, security cameras, vehicle barriers, alarm systems, clear backpacks, bullet-resistant glass and door-locking systems.

Critics say school officials are scrambling to show action — any action — to worried parents ahead of the new school year, but in their haste may be emphasizing the wrong things. It's "security theater," said Ken Trump, president of the National School Safety and Security Services. Instead, he said, schools should focus on making sure teachers are implementing basic safety protocols such as ensuring doors aren't propped open.

The attack in Uvalde illustrated the shortcomings of panic-alert systems. Robb Elementary School had implemented an alert app, and when an attacker approached the school, a school employee did send a lockdown alert. But not all teachers received it because of poor Wi-Fi or phones that were turned off or in a drawer, according to an investigation by the Texas Legislature. And those who did may not have taken it seriously, the Legislature's report said: The school sent out frequent alerts related to Border Patrol car chases in the area.

"People want visible, tangible things," Trump said. "It's a lot harder to point to the value of training your staff. Those are intangibles. Those are things that are less visible and invisible, but they're most effective."

In suburban Kansas City, the decision to spend \$2.1 million over five years for a system called CrisisAlert "isn't a knee-jerk reaction," said Brent Kiger, Olathe Public Schools' director of safety services. He said he had been eying the system even before gunfire erupted in an Olathe high school in March as staff confronted an 18-year-old over rumors that he had a gun in his backpack.

"It helped us kind of evaluate it and look at it through a lens of: 'We've been through this critical incident, and how would it have helped us?' And it would have helped us that day," he said. "There's just no question about that."

The system, a different one than what Uvalde relied on, allows staff to trigger a lockdown that will be announced with flashing strobe lights, a takeover of staff computers and a prerecorded intercom announcement. Teachers can set off the alarms by pushing a button on a wearable badge at least eight times. Staff also can summon help to break up a hallway fight or to deal with a medical emergency if they push the button three times.

Demand for CrisisAlert had been growing even before Uvalde, with revenue from new contracts increasing 270% from the first quarter of 2021 to the first quarter of 2022, the product's maker, Centegix, said in a statement.

Arkansas was an early adopter of panic buttons, announcing in 2015 that more than 1,000 schools would be equipped with a smartphone app that connects users quickly with 911. At the time, education officials said the plan was the most comprehensive in the nation.

But the idea really gained steam after the 2018 mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

Lori Alhadeff, whose 14-year-old daughter, Alyssa, was among the 17 killed, founded the group Make Our Schools Safe and began advocating for panic buttons. She had texted her daughter as shots rang out that help was on the way.

"But in reality, there was no panic button. There was no immediate way to contact law enforcement or emergency services to get on site as soon as possible," said Lori Kitaygorodsky, the group's spokeswoman. "We always kind of go by the thinking that time equals life."

Lawmakers in Florida and New Jersey responded by passing Alyssa's Law, requiring schools to begin using panic alarms. District of Columbia schools also added panic-button technology.

Following Uvalde, New York Gov. Kathy Hochul signed a new bill into law that requires school districts to consider installing silent panic alarms. And Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt issued an executive order, calling on all schools to implement panic buttons if not already in use. The state previously provided money for

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schools to subscribe to an app.

Over the years, legislation also has been introduced in Nebraska, Texas, Arizona and Virginia, according to Make Our Schools Safe.

Las Vegas schools also decided to add panic buttons this year to deal with a wave of violence. Data show the district recorded 2,377 assaults and batteries from August 2021 through the end of May, including an after-school attack that left a teacher injured and unconscious in her classroom. Other districts adding panic buttons for back-to-school include Madison County Schools in North Carolina, which also are putting AR-15 rifles in every school, and the Houston County School District in Georgia.

Walter Stephens, the executive director of school operations in the 30,000-student Houston County district, said the district piloted the panic button technology last year in three schools before signing a \$1.7 million, five-year contract to make it available in all its buildings.

Like most schools, the district reassessed its safety protocols after the tragedy in Uvalde. But the Texas shooting didn't provide the impetus to add the panic buttons, Stephens insisted. If students don't feel safe, he said, "that translates to them not performing well in our schools."

Whether the buttons deliver as promised is something experts are monitoring. In places like Florida, a panic button app has proven unpopular with teachers. And what happens, asked Mo Canady, executive director of the National Association of School Resource Officers, in the case of a false alarm, or a student using a panic-button to cause mayhem?

"In throwing so much technology at the problem ... we may have unintentionally created a false sense of security," Canady said.

Kansas state Sen. Cindy Holscher represents an area that includes part of the Olathe district, and her 15-year-old son knew the Olathe East shooter. While Holscher, a Democrat, supports the addition of panic buttons in the district, she said schools alone can't fix the country's mass shooting problem.

"If we make it way too easy for people to get their hands on guns, it's still a problem," said Holscher, who has championed a red-flag law and another measure that would have mandated safe firearm storage. She said neither measure even got a hearing in the GOP-dominated Legislature.

"We have got to get to the heart of the issue at some point."

Kansas recount confirms results in favor of abortion rights

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH and JOHN HANNA Associated Press

OLATHE, Kan. (AP) — A decisive statewide vote in favor of abortion rights in traditionally conservative Kansas was confirmed with a partial hand recount, with fewer than 100 votes changing after the last county reported results Sunday.

Nine of the state's 105 counties recounted their votes at the request of Melissa Leavitt, who has pushed for tighter election laws. A longtime anti-abortion activist, Mark Gietzen, is covering most of the costs. Gietzen acknowledged in an interview that it was unlikely to change the outcome.

A no vote in the referendum signaled a desire to keep existing abortion protections and a yes vote was for allowing the Legislature to tighten restrictions or ban abortion. After the recounts, "no" votes lost 87 votes and "yes" gained 6 votes.

Eight of the counties reported their results by the state's Saturday deadline, but Sedgwick County delayed releasing its final count until Sunday because spokeswoman Nicole Gibbs said some of the ballots weren't separated into the correct precincts during the initial recount and had to be resorted Saturday. She said the number of votes cast overall didn't change.

A larger than expected turnout of voters on Aug. 2 rejected a ballot measure that would have removed protections for abortion rights from the Kansas Constitution and given to the Legislature the right to further restrict or ban abortion. It failed by 18 percentage points, or 165,000 votes statewide.

The vote drew broad attention because it was the first state referendum on abortion since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* in June.

Gietzen, of Wichita, and Leavitt, of Colby, in far northwestern Kansas, have both suggested there might

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have been problems without pointing to many examples.

Recounts increasingly are tools to encourage supporters of a candidate or cause to believe an election was stolen rather than lost. A wave of candidates who have echoed former President Donald Trump's lie that the 2020 election was rigged have called for recounts after losing their own Republican primaries.

Kansas law requires a recount if those who ask for it prove they can cover the counties' costs. The counties pay only if the outcome changes.

Leavitt and Gietzen provided credit cards to pay for the nearly \$120,000 cost, according to the secretary of state's office. Leavitt has an online fundraising page. Gietzen also said he is getting donations from a network built over three decades in the anti-abortion movement.

Gietzen said Sunday he doesn't accept the results of the Sedgwick County recount because of the discrepancy about the way the ballots were sorted and because some of the recount happened Saturday without outside observers present to watch.

"We still don't know what happened in Sedgwick County. I won't pay for Sedgwick County," he said.

He said he's also concerned about the results statewide because of a report out of Cherokee county in southeast Kansas about the results of one county election being transposed between two candidates when the results were transferred on a thumb drive from one voting machine to a tabulating machine.

Gietzen said he plans to file a lawsuit Monday seeking a full statewide recall.

Gietzen said he won't publicly report the names of private donors helping him finance the recount, even though a state ethics official says it's required. Gietzen, who leads a small GOP group, the Kansas Republican Assembly, argues that he's not campaigning for the anti-abortion measure but is instead promoting election integrity.

Votes were recounted in Douglas County, home to the University of Kansas' main campus; Johnson County, in suburban Kansas City; Sedgwick County, home to Wichita, Shawnee County, home to Topeka; and Crawford, Harvey, Jefferson, Lyon and Thomas counties. Abortion opponents lost all of those counties except Thomas.

In Jefferson County, the margin remained the same, with the pro- and anti-amendment totals declining by four votes each. Linda Buttron, the county clerk, blamed the change on things like ovals not being darkened and "the challenges of hand counting ballots."

In Lyon County, the anti-amendment group lost a vote. County Clerk and Election Officer Tammy Vopat said she wasn't sure the reason. But she noted: "You have to factor in human error."

Johnson County, the most populous in Kansas, faced the biggest recounting challenge because it had the most ballots. It pulled in workers from different departments to help. The sorting process took so long that the actual counting didn't begin until Thursday afternoon.

"This is almost like doing an Ironman triathlon and having to add on another marathon at the end," said Fred Sherman, the county's Election Commissioner. "So it is quite a gargantuan process."

Car blast kills daughter of Russian known as 'Putin's brain'

By JIM HEINTZ Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — The daughter of an influential Russian political theorist often referred to as "Putin's brain" was killed in a car bombing on the outskirts of Moscow, authorities said Sunday.

The Moscow branch of the Russian Investigative Committee said preliminary information indicated 29-year-old TV commentator Daria Dugina was killed by an explosive planted in the SUV she was driving Saturday night.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. But the bloodshed gave rise to suspicions that the intended target was her father, Alexander Dugin, a nationalist philosopher and writer.

Dugin is a prominent proponent of the "Russian world" concept, a spiritual and political ideology that emphasizes traditional values, the restoration of Russia's power and the unity of all ethnic Russians throughout the world. He is also a vehement supporter of Russian President Vladimir Putin's move sending troops into Ukraine.

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The explosion took place as his daughter was returning from a cultural festival she had attended with him. Russian media reports cited witnesses as saying the SUV belonged to Dugin and that he had decided at the last minute to travel in another vehicle.

The car bombing, unusual for Moscow, is likely to aggravate tensions between Russia and Ukraine.

Denis Pushilin, president of the separatist Donetsk People's Republic, the pro-Moscow region that is a focus of Russia's fighting in Ukraine, blamed the blast on "terrorists of the Ukrainian regime, trying to kill Alexander Dugin."

Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, denied Ukrainian involvement, saying, "We are not a criminal state, unlike Russia, and definitely not a terrorist state."

Political analyst Abbas Gallyamov, a former speechwriter for Putin, called the attack "an act of intimidation" aimed at Kremlin loyalists.

To them, he said, "this is a symbolic act, demonstrating that hostilities have been confidently transferred to the territory of Russia, which means that this is no longer an abstract war that you watch on TV," he said. "This is already happening in Russia. Not only Crimea is being bombed, but terrorist attacks are already being carried out in the Moscow region."

While Dugin's exact ties to Putin are unclear, the Kremlin frequently echoes rhetoric from his writings and appearances on Russian state TV. He helped popularize the "Novorossiia," or "New Russia" concept that Russia used to justify the 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula and its support of separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine.

He promotes Russia as a country of piety, traditional values and authoritarian leadership, and disdains Western liberal values.

His daughter expressed similar views and had appeared as a commentator on the nationalist TV channel Tsargrad, where Dugin had served as chief editor.

Dugina herself was sanctioned by the United States in March for her work as chief editor of United World International, a website that the U.S. described as a disinformation source. The sanctions announcement cited a United World article this year that contended Ukraine would "perish" if it were admitted to NATO.

In an appearance on Russian television just Thursday, Dugina said, "People in the West are living in a dream, in a dream given to them by global hegemony." She called America "a zombie society" in which people opposed Russia but could not find it on a map.

Dugina, "like her father, has always been at the forefront of confrontation with the West," Tsargrad said Sunday.

An unknown Russian group, the National Republican Army, claimed responsibility Sunday for the bombing, according to a former Russian lawmaker, Ilya Ponomarev. The AP could not verify the existence of the group. Ponomarev, who left Russia after voting against its annexation of Crimea in 2014, made the statement to Ukrainian TV.

Ford to appeal \$1.7 billion verdict in Georgia truck crash

By JEFF MARTIN Associated Press

WOODSTOCK, Ga. (AP) — Ford Motor Co. plans to appeal a \$1.7 billion verdict against the automaker after a pickup truck crash that claimed the lives of a Georgia couple, a company representative said Sunday.

Jurors in Gwinnett County, just northeast of Atlanta, returned the verdict late last week in the yearslong civil case involving what the plaintiffs' lawyers called dangerously defective roofs on Ford pickup trucks, lawyer James Butler Jr. said Sunday.

Melvin and Voncile Hill were killed in April 2014 in the rollover wreck of their 2002 Ford F-250. Their children Kim and Adam Hill were the plaintiffs in the wrongful death case.

"While our sympathies go out to the Hill family, we do not believe the verdict is supported by the evidence, and we plan to appeal," Ford said in a statement to The Associated Press on Sunday.

Butler said he was stunned by evidence in the case.

"I used to buy Ford trucks," Butler said on Sunday. "I thought nobody would sell a truck with a roof this weak. The damn thing is useless in a wreck. You might as well drive a convertible."

In closing arguments, lawyers hired by the company defended the actions of Ford and its engineers. The Michigan-based automaker sought to defend the company against accusations "that Ford and its engineers acted willfully and wantonly, with a conscious indifference for the safety of the people who ride in their cars when they made these decisions about roof strength," defense lawyer William Withrow Jr. said in his closing arguments, according to a court transcript.

The allegation that Ford was irresponsible and willfully made decisions that put customers at risk is "simply not the case," another defense lawyer, Paul Malek, said in the same closing argument.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs had submitted evidence of nearly 80 similar rollover wrecks that involved truck roofs being crushed that injured or killed motorists, Butler's law firm, Butler Prather LLP, said in a statement.

"More deaths and severe injuries are certain because millions of these trucks are on the road," Butler's co-counsel, Gerald Davidson, said in the statement.

"An award of punitive damages to hopefully warn people riding around in the millions of those trucks Ford sold was the reason the Hill family insisted on a verdict," Butler said.

On Ukraine's front line, a fight to save premature babies

By INNA VARENYTSIA Associated Press

POKROVSK, Ukraine (AP) — Echoing down the corridors of eastern Ukraine's Pokrovsk Perinatal Hospital are the loud cries of tiny Veronika.

Born nearly two months prematurely weighing 1.5 kilograms (3 pounds, 4 ounces), the infant receives oxygen through a nasal tube to help her breathe while ultraviolet lamps inside an incubator treat her jaundice.

Dr. Tetiana Myroshnychenko carefully connects the tubes that allow Veronika to feed on her mother's stored breast milk and ease her hunger.

Before Russia's invasion of Ukraine in late February, three hospitals in government-controlled areas of the country's war-torn Donetsk region had facilities to care for premature babies. One was hit by a Russian airstrike and the other had to close as a result of the fighting — leaving only the maternity hospital in the coal mining town of Pokrovsk still operating.

Myroshnychenko, the site's only remaining neonatologist, now lives at the hospital. Her 3-year-old son divides the week between staying at the facility and with his father, a coal miner, at home.

The doctor explains why it's now impossible to leave: Even when the air-raid sirens sound, the babies in the hospital's above-ground incubation ward cannot be disconnected from their lifesaving machines.

"If I carry Veronika to the shelter, that would take five minutes. But for her, those five minutes could be critical," Myroshnychenko says.

Hospital officials say the proportion of births occurring prematurely or with complications has roughly doubled this year compared to previous times, blaming stress and rapidly worsening living standards for taking a toll on the pregnant women still left in the area.

Russia and Moscow-backed separatists now occupy just over half the Donetsk region, which is similar in size to Sicily or Massachusetts. Pokrovsk is still in a Ukrainian government-controlled area 60 kilometers (40 miles) west of the front lines.

Inside the hospital's maternity wards, talk of the war is discouraged.

"Everything that happens outside this building of course concerns us, but we don't talk about it," Myroshnychenko said. "Their main concern right now is the baby."

Although fighting in the Donetsk region started back in 2014, when Russia-backed separatists began battling the government and taking over parts of the region, new mothers are only now being kept in the hospital for longer periods because there's little opportunity for them to receive care once they have been discharged.

Among them is 23-year-old Inna Kyslychenko, from Pokrovsk. Rocking her 2-day-old daughter Yesenia, she was considering joining the region's massive evacuation westward to safer areas in Ukraine when she leaves the hospital. Many essential services in government-held areas of the Donetsk region — heat, electricity, water supplies — have been damaged by Russian bombardment, leaving living conditions that

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are only expected to worsen as the winter grows near.

"I fear for the little lives, not only for ours, but for all the children, for all of Ukraine," Kyslychenko said.

More than 12 million people in Ukraine have fled their homes due to the war, according to U.N. relief agencies. About half have been displaced within Ukraine and the rest have moved to other European countries.

Moving the maternity hospital out of Pokrovsk, however, is not an option.

"If the hospital was relocated, the patients would still have to remain here," said chief physician Dr. Ivan Tsyganok, who kept working even when the town was being hit by Russian rocket fire.

"Delivering babies is not something that can be stopped or rescheduled," he noted.

The nearest existing maternity facility is in Ukraine's neighboring Dnipropetrovsk region, a 3 1/2 hour drive along secondary roads, a journey considered too risky for women in late-term pregnancy.

Last week, 24-year-old Andrii Dobrelia and his wife Maryna, 27, reached the hospital from a nearby village. Looking anxious, they talked little as doctors carried out a series of tests and then led Maryna to the operating room for a C-section. Tsyganok and his colleagues hurriedly changed their clothes and prepared for the procedure.

Twenty minutes later, the cries of a newborn baby boy, Timur, could be heard. After an examination, Timur was taken to meet his father in an adjoining room.

Almost afraid to breathe, Andrii Dobrelia tenderly kissed Timur's head and whispered to him. As the newborn calmed down on his father's chest, tears came to Andrii's eyes.

As the war reaches the six-month mark, Tsyganok and his colleagues says they have a more hopeful reason to stay.

"These children we are bringing into the world will be the future of Ukraine," says Tsyganok. "I think their lives will be different to ours. They will live outside war." ____ Follow AP's coverage of the war in Ukraine at <https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine>

Leon Vitali, Stanley Kubrick's right-hand man, dies at 74

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Leon Vitali, the "Barry Lyndon" actor who became one of Stanley Kubrick's closest associates, has died. He was 74.

Vitali died Friday in Los Angeles, his family told The Associated Press Sunday. He passed peacefully surrounded by loved ones including his three children, Masha, Max and Vera.

"Leon was a special and lovely man driven by his curiosity, who spread love and warmth wherever he went," his children said in a statement provided by Masha Vitali. "He will be remembered with love and be hugely missed by the many people he touched."

Though Vitali was often described as Kubrick's assistant, Tony Zierra's 2017 documentary "Filmworker" shed light on Vitali's enormous and largely unsung contributions to the work of one of cinema's greatest figures from "The Shining" through "Eyes Wide Shut." He did everything from casting and coaching actors to overseeing restorations. Vitali even once set up a video monitor so that Kubrick could keep an eye on his dying cat.

Matthew Modine, who starred in Kubrick's "Full Metal Jacket," tweeted his condolences Sunday.

"There are people we meet who have a profound impact upon our lives. Leon Vitali was one such person in mine," Modine wrote. "An artist in every aspect of his life. A loving father & friend to so many. A kind, generous & forgiving nature. He exemplified & personified grace."

Filmmaker Lee Unkrich also tweeted that he was, "Completely heartbroken to hear about the passing of Leon Vitali. He helped me (asterisk)enormously(asterisk) with my Shining book and I'm gutted that he won't see it. He was a sweet, kind, humble, generous man and a vital part of Stanley Kubrick's team."

Before meeting Kubrick, Vitali was a rising actor in England, appearing in several British television shows including "Softly, Softly," "Follyfoot," "Z Cars" and "Notorious Woman." Then in 1974 he got his biggest break yet, when he was cast in "Barry Lyndon" as Lord Bullingdon, the son-in-law of Ryan O'Neal's title

character.

Vitali was so fascinated by Kubrick and his processes that he made an unusual decision: He gave up on acting and devoted himself entirely to the famously demanding director for over two decades. His next Kubrick credit was as "personal assistant to the director" on "The Shining," though that's only part of the story — Vitali famously helped cast 4-year-old Danny Lloyd to play Danny Torrance and Louise and Lisa Burns as the creepy Grady twins (citing Diane Arbus as inspiration).

"I made one truly, truly radical change in my life and that was when I said, 'I'm more interested in that' than I was in the acting," Vitali told the Associated Press in 2017. "That's the biggest conscious decision I've ever made. There were some sacrifices, but there were gains too."

After Kubrick's death in 1999, Vitali oversaw restorations for many of Kubrick's films. He received a Cinema Audio Society award for his work. Vitali later worked with director Todd Field on his films "Little Children" and "In the Bedroom."

Before making the documentary, Zierra said that he and many Kubrick-obsessed fans knew Vitali for his performances in "Barry Lyndon" and "Eyes Wide Shut," in which he played Red Cloak, and as a key member of Kubrick's inner circle. But when they finally met Vitali to make the film, they were struck by "his kindness, humility and the fascinating scope of his story."

Zierra is working on a director's cut of "Filmworker" that will include new footage that he and Vitali wanted in the film, but couldn't get done in time for its Cannes debut in 2017.

Lopez and Affleck celebrate marriage with friends, family

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Jennifer Lopez and Ben Affleck said "I do" again this weekend.

But instead of in a late night Las Vegas drive through chapel, this time it was in front of friends and family in Georgia, a person close to the couple who was not authorized to speak publicly said Sunday.

According to People Magazine, the wedding was held at Affleck's home outside of Savannah, Georgia, with all of their kids present for the proceedings on Saturday.

The celebrity couple were officially married last month in Las Vegas, which Lopez shared with fans in her "On the J Lo" newsletter.

"Love is beautiful. Love is kind. And it turns out love is patient. Twenty years patient," Lopez wrote last month, signing off as Jennifer Lynn Affleck.

Lopez, 53, and Affleck, 50, famously dated in the early 2000s. They starred together in 2003's "Gigli" and 2004's "Jersey Girl" and became engaged but didn't wed at the time.

Paparazzi has feverishly trailed the couple since they rekindled their romance last year, from the earliest stages of the courtship, to their red carpet debut at last year's Venice International Film Festival and their recent honeymoon in Paris.

Representatives for the couple did not immediately respond to request for comment Sunday.

Minneapolis teacher contract race language ignites firestorm

By STEVE KARNOWSKI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — When Minneapolis teachers settled a 14-day strike in March, they celebrated a groundbreaking provision in their new contract that was meant to shield teachers of color from seniority-based layoffs and help ensure that students from racial minorities have teachers who look like them.

Months later, conservative media outlets have erupted with denunciations of the policy as racist and unconstitutional discrimination against white educators. One legal group is looking to recruit teachers and taxpayers willing to sue to throw out the language. The teachers union paints the dispute as a ginned-up controversy when there's no imminent danger of anyone losing their job. Meanwhile, the feud is unfolding just months ahead of arguments in a pair of U.S. Supreme Court cases that could reshape affirmative action.

"The same people who want to take down teachers unions and blame seniority are now defending it for white people," said Greta Callahan, president of the teachers unit at the Minneapolis Federation of

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Teachers. "This is all made up by the right wing now. And we could not be more proud of this language."

Recent coverage in conservative platforms such as the local news website Alpha News, Fox News nationally and the Daily Mail internationally sparked criticisms from prominent figures, including Donald Trump Jr. and former Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, who curbed the power of public employee unions in his state. Walker on Twitter called it "another example of why government unions should be eliminated."

The contract language doesn't specifically say that white teachers would be laid off ahead of teachers of color, though critics say that's what the effect would be. The contract exempts "teachers who are members of populations underrepresented among licensed teachers in the District," as well as alumni of historically Black and Hispanic colleges, and of tribal colleges. Around 60% of the district's teachers are white, while more than 60% of the students are from racial minorities.

Advocates say students from racial minorities perform better when their educators include teachers and support staff of color, and that it's especially critical in a district that suffers from stubborn achievement gaps. Callahan said her union fought for years to get the protection added to their contract, and that she knows of two other Minnesota districts with similar provisions.

Minneapolis is one of many districts across the U.S. struggling with declining teacher headcounts and tight budgets. But Callahan disputed that the provision threatens anyone's job, noting that Minneapolis has nearly 300 unfilled positions as teachers and students prepare to go back to school, and the language won't take effect until the 2023 academic year.

Callahan called it "just one teensy, tiny step towards equity" that doesn't begin to make up for many teachers of color quitting the district in recent years because they felt underpaid and disrespected.

To Lindsey West, a fifth grade teacher at Clara Barton Community School who identifies as Black and Indigenous, the seniority language is one piece of a bigger mission of improving education.

West said she feels strongly that students of color benefit from having teachers that look like them, but said she's also seen that diversity can be empowering for white students. She said she's sometimes been the first educator of color that Black or white students have had.

"We want to have kids from all demographics having experiences with people of different backgrounds and different cultures, and becoming aware that our shared humanity is what's important, and not the things that divide us," West said.

Minneapolis Public Schools interim Superintendent Rochelle Cox declined a request for an interview.

"The object of this provision is clearly to lay off white teachers first, regardless of merit, based on the color of their skin, and that is a big problem under the Constitution and the 14th Amendment," said James Dickey, senior trial counsel at the Upper Midwest Law Center, a conservative nonprofit that often takes on public employee unions. It has brought litigation over such issues as COVID-19 mask mandates and displays of Black Lives Matter posters.

Dickey said his group is considering suing and has had a flood of Minneapolis taxpayers — and some teachers — contact them to say they are "offended that my tax dollars could go to fund this kind of racist agenda."

He argued that a 1986 U.S. Supreme Court decision known as the *Wygant* case bars such provisions and would serve as a precedent in Minnesota.

The *Wygant* case involved a teachers contract in Jackson, Michigan, which took a different approach from the Minneapolis agreement. It effectively said Jackson could not make cuts that led to an overall reduction in the percentage of minority personnel employed in the district. White teachers sued after being laid off while some teachers of color with less seniority kept their jobs. A divided Supreme Court held that the layoffs violated the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution.

Andrew Crook, spokesman for the American Federation of Teachers, said he didn't know of anything similar to the Minneapolis wording in contracts in other states, though he said some contracts provide exceptions from straight seniority rules for teachers in hard-to-fill specialties such as math and special education.

Officials with other national public employee unions and professional associations either said they didn't

know of anything similar in their fields or did not respond to requests for comment.

Two affirmative action cases set for oral arguments before the Supreme Court in October, involving Harvard University and the University of North Carolina, could have a bearing on the Minneapolis dispute. The cases are challenges to the consideration of race in college admission decisions.

Affirmative action has been reviewed by the high court several times over the past 40 years and has generally been upheld, but with limits. With three new conservative justices on the court since its last review, however, the practice may be facing its greatest threat yet.

Joseph Daly, a professor emeritus at the Mitchell Hamline School of Law who arbitrates disputes across the country, including many teacher cases over the years, said the Minneapolis language appears designed to survive a court challenge.

"The U.S. Supreme Court in the past has OK'd affirmative action when there were very valid objectives to be achieved in ultimately seeking equality for all human beings," Daly said. "Now the question of today is: Will this concept be upheld by the courts in light of the more conservative stance on the Supreme Court? I don't have an answer on that."

Polio in US, UK and Israel reveals rare risk of oral vaccine

By MARIA CHENG AP Medical Writer

LONDON (AP) — For years, global health officials have used billions of drops of an oral vaccine in a remarkably effective campaign aimed at wiping out polio in its last remaining strongholds — typically, poor, politically unstable corners of the world.

Now, in a surprising twist in the decades-long effort to eradicate the virus, authorities in Jerusalem, New York and London have discovered evidence that polio is spreading there.

The original source of the virus? The oral vaccine itself.

Scientists have long known about this extremely rare phenomenon. That is why some countries have switched to other polio vaccines. But these incidental infections from the oral formula are becoming more glaring as the world inches closer to eradication of the disease and the number of polio cases caused by the wild, or naturally circulating, virus plummets.

Since 2017, there have been 396 cases of polio caused by the wild virus, versus more than 2,600 linked to the oral vaccine, according to figures from the World Health Organization and its partners.

"We are basically replacing the wild virus with the virus in the vaccine, which is now leading to new outbreaks," said Scott Barrett, a Columbia University professor who has studied polio eradication. "I would assume that countries like the U.K. and the U.S. will be able to stop transmission quite quickly, but we also thought that about monkeypox."

The latest incidents represent the first time in several years that vaccine-connected polio virus has turned up in rich countries.

Earlier this year, officials in Israel detected polio in an unvaccinated 3-year-old, who suffered paralysis. Several other children, nearly all of them unvaccinated, were found to have the virus but no symptoms.

In June, British authorities reported finding evidence in sewage that the virus was spreading, though no infections in people were identified. Last week, the government said all children in London ages 1 to 9 would be offered a booster shot.

In the U.S., an unvaccinated young adult suffered paralysis in his legs after being infected with polio, New York officials revealed last month. The virus has also shown up in New York sewers, suggesting it is spreading. But officials said they are not planning a booster campaign because they believe the state's high vaccination rate should offer enough protection.

Genetic analyses showed that the viruses in the three countries were all "vaccine-derived," meaning that they were mutated versions of a virus that originated in the oral vaccine.

The oral vaccine at issue has been used since 1988 because it is cheap, easy to administer — two drops are put directly into children's mouths — and better at protecting entire populations where polio is spreading. It contains a weakened form of the live virus.

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But it can also cause polio in about two to four children per 2 million doses. (Four doses are required to be fully immunized.) In extremely rare cases, the weakened virus can also sometimes mutate into a more dangerous form and spark outbreaks, especially in places with poor sanitation and low vaccination levels.

These outbreaks typically begin when people who are vaccinated shed live virus from the vaccine in their feces. From there, the virus can spread within the community and, over time, turn into a form that can paralyze people and start new epidemics.

Many countries that eliminated polio switched to injectable vaccines containing a killed virus decades ago to avoid such risks; the Nordic countries and the Netherlands never used the oral vaccine. The ultimate goal is to move the entire world to the shots once wild polio is eradicated, but some scientists argue that the switch should happen sooner.

"We probably could never have gotten on top of polio in the developing world without the (oral polio vaccine), but this is the price we're now paying," said Dr. Paul Offit, director of the Vaccine Education Center at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. "The only way we are going to eliminate polio is to eliminate the use of the oral vaccine."

Aidan O'Leary, director of WHO's polio department, described the discovery of polio spreading in London and New York as "a major surprise," saying that officials have been focused on eradicating the disease in Afghanistan and Pakistan, where health workers have been killed for immunizing children and where conflict has made access to some areas impossible.

Still, O'Leary said he is confident Israel, Britain and the U.S. will shut down their newly identified outbreaks quickly.

The oral vaccine is credited with dramatically reducing the number of children paralyzed by polio. When the global eradication effort began in 1988, there were about 350,000 cases of wild polio a year. So far this year, there have been 19 cases of wild polio, all in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Mozambique.

In 2020, the number of polio cases linked to the vaccine hit a peak of more than 1,100 spread out across dozens of countries. It has since declined to around 200 this year so far.

Last year, WHO and partners also began using a newer oral polio vaccine, which contains a live but weakened virus that scientists believe is less likely to mutate into a dangerous form. But supplies are limited.

To stop polio in Britain, the U.S. and Israel, what is needed is more vaccination, experts say. That is something Columbia University's Barrett worries could be challenging in the COVID-19 era.

"What's different now is a reduction in trust of authorities and the political polarization in countries like the U.S. and the U.K.," Barrett said. "The presumption that we can quickly get vaccination numbers up quickly may be more challenging now."

Oyewale Tomori, a virologist who helped direct Nigeria's effort to eliminate polio, said that in the past, he and colleagues balked at describing outbreaks as "vaccine-derived," wary it would make people fearful of the vaccine.

"All we can do is explain how the vaccine works and hope that people understand that immunization is the best protection, but it's complicated," Tomori said. "In hindsight, maybe it would have been better not to use this vaccine, but at that time, nobody knew it would turn out like this."

Western fires outpace California effort to fill inmate crews

By DON THOMPSON Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — As wildfires rage across California each year, exhausted firefighters call for reinforcements from wherever they can get them — even as far as Australia.

Yet one homegrown resource is rarely used: thousands of experienced firefighters who earned their chops in prison. Two state programs designed to get more former inmate firefighters hired professionally have barely made a dent, according to an Associated Press review, with one \$30 million effort netting jobs for just over 100 firefighters, little more than one-third of the inmates enrolled.

Clad in distinctive orange uniforms, inmate crews protect multimillion-dollar homes for a few dollars a day by cutting brush and trees with chainsaws and scraping the earth to create barriers they hope will

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stop flames.

Once freed from prison, however, the former inmates have trouble getting hired professionally because of their criminal records, despite a first-in-the-nation, 18-month-old law designed to ease their way and a 4-year-old training program that cost taxpayers at least \$180,000 per graduate.

"It's absolutely an untapped pool of talent," said Genevieve Rimer, who works with former inmates trying to clear their records. "Thousands of people are coming back from California's fire camps annually. They have already been trained. They have a desire to go and put their lives on the line in order to ensure public safety."

California is hardly alone in needing seasoned smoke eaters, but the nation's most populous state faces different challenges than other more sparsely settled Western regions. A wildfire that nearly leveled the Sierra Nevada foothills town of Paradise nearly four years ago, for instance, was the nation's deadliest wildfire in nearly a century, killing 85 people.

The U.S. Forest Service is short about 1,200 firefighters, 500 of them in California, and the Interior Department is down about 450 firefighters, 150 of them in California, said two of the state's top elected officials, U.S. Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Alex Padilla, in a recent letter to Biden administration officials.

Other Western states are grappling with the issue. Nevada is considering a program like Arizona's "Phoenix Crew," which started in 2017 and provides mostly former inmate firefighters a pipeline to firefighting jobs.

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed the California legislation in 2020, allowing former inmates to seek to withdraw guilty pleas or overturn convictions. A judge can then dismiss the charges. Former inmates convicted of murder, kidnapping, arson, escape and sex offenses are excluded.

Since the law took effect, the nonprofit Forestry & Fire Recruitment Program, started by two former inmate firefighters, has worked with the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles to help former inmates clear their records and get hired.

Yet they have only been able to file 34 petitions, and just 12 had records expunged during what the program warns "can be a long and drawn out process."

Ashleigh Dennis is one of at least three attorneys filing expungement petitions through the Oakland-based advocacy group Root & Rebound. She has similarly been able to file just 23 requests, with 14 granted.

Among other hurdles, applicants must show a judge evidence they have been rehabilitated, and the expungement only applies to crimes they were incarcerated for while working in firefighting crews. Many people have unrelated convictions that must be separately expunged.

It's been a learning curve to educate judges about the law and get the corrections department to speed up certifying to the court that inmates have served as firefighters, said Dennis and one of her clients, Phi Le. He petitioned the court in October and his record was expunged in January.

Da'Ton Harris Jr.'s record was finally cleared in August, about 18 months after starting the process.

"I'm out here, a public servant, risking my life every day to try and better my community," said Harris. "I don't think it was a smooth transaction at all."

Despite his record, Harris obtained firefighting jobs with the U.S. Forest Service, the state's firefighting agency Cal Fire, and the Forestry & Fire Recruitment Program.

But like Le, his advancement was limited because his criminal record made him ineligible for an Emergency Medical Technician certification, an obstacle that disappeared with the expungement. Outside of temporary federal and state firefighting agency jobs, most fire departments require applicants to be licensed EMTs — a certification the state bans certain felons from obtaining because the job comes with access to narcotics and sharp objects.

Rimer, the Forestry & Fire Recruitment Program's director of supportive services, said California should automatically expunge records of eligible former inmates, much as it does for those convicted of antiquated marijuana crimes. And it should include their entire criminal record, she said.

"I think it spearheaded opportunity for people, but I don't think it's good enough," she said of the expungement law.

The law's author, Assembly Majority Leader Eloise Reyes, a Democrat from San Bernardino, has been

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struggling ever since to learn how many former inmates it has helped. She said many former inmates have contacted her office to praise "the life-changing impact of the legislation."

The corrections department informs eligible inmates about the law but doesn't track expungements, said department spokeswoman Tessa Outhyse. Cal Fire, the court system and the state Department of Justice also couldn't say how many have had their records expunged.

In another effort, California in 2018 created a training program to help former inmates get hired professionally.

The 18-month program is run by Cal Fire, the California Conservation Corps, the state corrections department and the nonprofit Anti-Recidivism Coalition at the Ventura Training Center northwest of Los Angeles. Conservation corps members also are eligible. Former inmates convicted of arson or sex offenses are excluded.

Participants spend six months on life skills and firefighter training and the next year fighting or preventing fires and doing other community service, for which they are paid \$1,905 a month. The center has four fire crews with 60 participants.

In four years the program has cost over \$29.5 million but has just 106 graduates.

Nearly all found a professional job: 98 are with Cal Fire and three are with other agencies including the Orange County Fire Authority and the U.S. Forest Service, according to corrections officials. Cal Fire provided slightly different figures.

But they're the fortunate ones among the 277 who have participated since the program's inception. Another 111 participants, or 40%, left before completing the program, said Outhyse.

Climate change is making wildfires more frequent and destructive, so the shortage comes at a time when demand for wildfire crews is going up.

And the state is turning more to professional wildland firefighters, largely because inmate crews are less available after voters shortened criminal sentences and officials released thousands of lower-level inmates early to prevent coronavirus infections.

This August about 1,670 inmates are in fire camps, including staff like cooks and laundry workers, down about 40% from August 2019. The corrections department was budgeted for 152 crews this year, but fielded just 51, each with about 15-18 firefighters.

With fewer inmate crews, California is turning more to other agencies. The conservation corps is responsible for filling 30 crews, Cal Fire 26 and the California National Guard 14.

The state also is creating what officials called the first all-hazards fire engine strike team operated by a state National Guard. The fire engines can respond both to wildfires and urban blazes.

"We've recognized for a few years now that due to early release, due to COVID, a number of other reasons, we have to do something," said Battalion Chief Issac Sanchez, a Cal Fire spokesman.

Court puts on hold Graham's testimony in Ga. election probe

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — A federal appeals court on Sunday agreed to temporarily put on hold a lower court's order requiring that U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham testify before a special grand jury that's investigating possible illegal efforts to overturn then-President Donald Trump's 2020 election loss in Georgia.

A subpoena had instructed the South Carolina Republican to appear before the special grand jury on Tuesday.

U.S. District Judge Leigh Martin May last Monday denied Graham's request to quash his subpoena and on Friday rejected his effort to put her decision on hold while he appealed. Graham's lawyers then appealed to the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

On Sunday, a three-judge panel of the appeals court issued the order temporarily pausing May's order declining to quash the subpoena. The panel sent the case back to May to decide whether the subpoena should be partially quashed or modified because of protections granted to members of Congress by the U.S. Constitution.

Once May decides that issue, the case will return to the 11th Circuit for further consideration, according to the appeals court order.

Graham's representatives did not immediately respond Sunday to messages seeking comment on the appellate ruling. A spokesperson for Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis declined to comment.

Willis opened the investigation early last year, prompted by a Jan. 2, 2021, phone call between Trump and Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger. During that conversation, Trump suggested Raffensperger could "find" the votes needed to overturn his narrow loss in the state.

Willis and her team have said they want to ask Graham about two phone calls they say he made to Raffensperger and his staff shortly after the 2020 general election. During those calls, Graham asked about "reexamining certain absentee ballots cast in Georgia in order to explore the possibility of a more favorable outcome for former President Donald Trump," Willis wrote in a petition seeking to compel his testimony.

Graham also "made reference to allegations of widespread voter fraud in the November 2020 election in Georgia, consistent with public statements made by known affiliates of the Trump Campaign," she wrote.

Republican and Democratic state election officials across the country, courts and even Trump's attorney general found there was no evidence of voter fraud sufficient to affect the outcome of the election.

During a hearing earlier this month on Graham's motion to quash his subpoena, Willis' team said Graham may be able to provide insight into the extent of any coordinated efforts to influence the results of the 2020 general election in Georgia.

The U.S. Constitution's speech or debate clause protects members of Congress from questioning about official legislative acts. The 11th Circuit court instructed May to determine whether Graham "is entitled to a partial quashal or modification of the subpoena" as a result.

Graham's attorneys have argued that the calls were made as part of his legislative duties and that provision gives him absolute protection from having to testify in this case.

In her order last week, May noted that the clause doesn't protect actions that are political rather than legislative. Even if she accepted that the calls were "comprised entirely of legislative factfinding," and thus protected, "there would still be significant areas of potential testimony related to the grand jury's investigation on which Senator Graham could be questioned that would in no way fall within the Clause's protections," she wrote.

Horror film convention promoter speaks after Busey charges

CHERRY HILL, N.J. (AP) — A horror movie convention promoter says it is assisting authorities following charges against actor Gary Busey involving alleged sexual offenses at an event in New Jersey earlier this month.

Busey, 78, was charged Friday with two counts of fourth-degree criminal sexual contact, one count of attempted criminal sexual contact and one count of harassment following alleged actions Aug. 12-14 at the Monster Mania Convention at the Doubletree Hotel in the Philadelphia suburb of Cherry Hill, police said Saturday.

Monster-Mania Convention said in a Facebook post that after attendees complained, an unspecified "celebrity guest was removed from the convention and instructed not to return."

"Monster-Mania also encouraged the attendees to contact the police to file a report," the company said, adding that behavior that compromised the safety and well-being of attendees would not be tolerated. "Monster-Mania will continue to assist the authorities in any and every way possible," it said.

"It was about contact. It was about touching," Lt. Robert Scheunemann told The Philadelphia Inquirer of the multiple complaints police had received about Busey's conduct.

Busey, who lives in Malibu, California, was scheduled as a featured guest for all three days of the event.

Police did not immediately respond to a message seeking details. It also wasn't clear whether Busey has an attorney to comment on the charges, and a representative didn't immediately return a message seeking comment Saturday.

Busey is widely known as a character actor, largely in supporting roles, though he came to attention and

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was nominated for an Oscar for best actor for playing the title role in the 1978 film "The Buddy Holly Story."

Today in History: August 22, first America's Cup trophy

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, Aug. 22, the 234th day of 2022. There are 131 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Aug. 22, 1851, the schooner America outraced more than a dozen British vessels off the English coast to win a trophy that came to be known as the America's Cup.

On this date:

In 1787, inventor John Fitch demonstrated his steamboat on the Delaware River to delegates from the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

In 1910, Japan annexed Korea, which remained under Japanese control until the end of World War II.

In 1914, Austria-Hungary declared war against Belgium.

In 1922, Irish revolutionary Michael Collins was shot to death, apparently by Irish Republican Army members opposed to the Anglo-Irish Treaty that Collins had co-signed.

In 1968, Pope Paul VI arrived in Bogota, Colombia, for the start of the first papal visit to South America.

In 1972, John Wojtowicz (WAHT'-uh-witz) and Salvatore Naturile took seven employees hostage at a Chase Manhattan Bank branch in Brooklyn, New York, during a botched robbery; the siege, which ended with Wojtowicz's arrest and Naturile's killing by the FBI, inspired the 1975 movie "Dog Day Afternoon."

In 1989, Black Panthers co-founder Huey P. Newton was shot to death in Oakland, California. (Gunman Tyrone Robinson was later sentenced to 32 years to life in prison.)

In 1992, on the second day of the Ruby Ridge siege in Idaho, an FBI sharpshooter killed Vicki Weaver, the wife of white separatist Randy Weaver. (The sharpshooter later said he was targeting the couple's friend Kevin Harris, and didn't see Vicki Weaver.)

In 1996, President Bill Clinton signed welfare legislation ending guaranteed cash payments to the poor and demanding work from recipients.

In 2000, Publishers Clearing House agreed to pay \$18 million to 24 states and the District of Columbia to settle allegations it had used deceptive promotions in its sweepstakes mailings.

In 2003, Alabama's chief justice, Roy Moore, was suspended for his refusal to obey a federal court order to remove his Ten Commandments monument from the rotunda of his courthouse.

In 2007, A Black Hawk helicopter crashed in Iraq, killing all 14 U.S. soldiers aboard. Hurricane Dean slammed into Mexico for the second time in as many days.

Ten years ago: Ousted Penn State president Graham Spanier and his lawyers attacked a university-backed report on the Jerry Sandusky sex abuse scandal, calling it a "blundering and indefensible indictment." (Spanier was later convicted of child endangerment for failing to report a child sexual abuse allegation against Sandusky.)

Five years ago: Protesters and police clashed outside a convention center in Phoenix where President Donald Trump had just wrapped up his first political rally since the violence in Charlottesville, Virginia; police fired pepper spray at crowds after someone apparently lobbed rocks and bottles at officers.

One year ago: The British military said at least seven Afghans died in a panicked crush of people trying to enter Kabul's international airport, as thousands continued to try to flee the country a week after the Taliban takeover. The Pentagon ordered six U.S. commercial airlines to help move evacuees from temporary sites outside of Afghanistan. Miguel Cabrera became the 28th major league player to hit 500 home runs, as the Detroit Tigers beat the Toronto Blue Jays 5-3 in 11 innings.

Today's Birthdays: Broadcast journalist Morton Dean is 86. Author Annie Proulx (proo) is 86. Baseball Hall of Famer Carl Yastrzemski (yah-STREM'-skee) is 82. Pro Football Hall of Fame coach Bill Parcells is 80. Writer-producer David Chase is 76. CBS newsman Steve Kroft is 76. Actor Cindy Williams is 74. Pop musician David Marks is 73. International Swimming Hall of Famer Diana Nyad (NY'-ad) is 72. Baseball

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Hall of Famer Paul Molitor is 65. Rock musician Vernon Reid is 63. Country singer Ricky Lynn Gregg is 62. Country singer Collin Raye is 61. Actor Regina Taylor is 61. Rock singer Roland Orzabal (Tears For Fears) is 60. Rock musician Debbi Peterson (The Bangles) is 60. Rock musician Gary Lee Conner (Screaming Trees) is 59. Singer Tori Amos is 58. Country singer Mila Mason is 58. R&B musician James DeBarge is 58. International Tennis Hall of Famer Mats Wilander (VEE'-luhn-dur) is 57. Actor Brooke Dillman is 55. Rapper GZA (JIHZ'-ah)/The Genius is 55. Actor Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje (ah-day-WAH'-lay ah-kih-NOY'-yay ah-BAH'-jay) is 54. Actor Ty Burrell is 54. Celebrity chef Giada De Laurentiis is 51. Actor Melinda Page Hamilton is 50. Actor Rick Yune is 50. Rock musician Paul Doucette (DOO'-set) (Matchbox Twenty) is 49. Rap-reggae singer Beenie Man is 48. Singer Howie Dorough (Backstreet Boys) is 48. Comedian-actor Kristen Wiig is 48. Actor Jenna Leigh Green is 47. Rock musician Bo Koster is 47. Rock musician Dean Back (Theory of a Deadman) is 46. Talk show host James Corden is 43. Rock musician Jeff Stinco (Simple Plan) is 43. Actor Brandon Adams is 42. Actor Aya Sumika is 41. Actor Ari Stidham is 29.