

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 1 of 65

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller](#)
- [5- Groton Chamber Ad](#)
- [6- Groton Area netters beat Aberdeen Christian](#)
- [7- Weather Pages](#)
- [12- Daily Devotional](#)
- [13- 2022 Community Events](#)
- [14- Subscription Form](#)
- [15- News from the Associated Press](#)



“If you really want to receive joy and happiness, then serve others with all your heart. Lift their burden, and your own burden will be lighter.”

EZRA TAFT BENSON

## Tuesday, Aug. 30

School Breakfast: Fritatta  
School Lunch: Sloppy Joe, Waffle Fries  
Senior Menu: Hamburger on bun, oven roasted potatoes, cucumber salad, ice cream sundae.  
10 a.m.: Golf at Lee Park, Aberdeen  
5 p.m.: Volleyball hosts Ipswich (C/JV/V)  
Groton UMC: 10:00am Bible Study - Grill Out (Weather Permitting)  
The Pantry open at the Groton Community Center, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

## Wednesday, Aug. 31

School Breakfast, Hash brown, Pizza  
School Lunch: Chicken Alfredo, Cooked Broccoli  
Senior Menu: Breaded codfish, parsley buttered potatoes, creamy coleslaw, fruit, while wheat bread.  
Groton UMC: 9:30am Community Coffee Hour



Groton Community Transit

## ~JOB OPENING AVAILABLE~

Groton Community Transit is currently seeking an office dispatcher/driver..15-25 hours/week. Position includes scheduling daily transportation and drivers, some office work and driving. Starting wage \$14.00 /hr.

Application can be picked up at Groton Community Transit, 205 E 2nd Ave, Groton, SD 57445.. Applications accepted through September 2, 2022. Call 605-397-8661 for any questions or more information...EQE.

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

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

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

The news about this pandemic has really slowed down; that's a break for me and for you as well. There is virtually no weekend health department reporting anymore, so the update I have for you is actually very little different since Friday. I'm not sure a big deal though because the trends haven't changed in a week anyhow; we're still on a very slow decline across the board. At midday today, we were at an average of 88,391 new cases daily and a pandemic total of 93,956,420. Hospitalizations were at an average of 38,567. The seven-day deaths average was 478 with a pandemic total of 1,039,707.

The news of the week is that the updated booster vaccines are ready for the FDA's authorization process. Pfizer and BioNTech formally requested emergency use authorization (EUA) of their reformulated booster vaccine for those aged 12 and over on Monday. This is a bivalent that includes the original wild-type virus (the one that's been in all of the vaccines up until now) and Omicron's BA.4/BA.5 subvariant. Dosage is 30 micrograms. The application is accompanied by clinical data from the bivalent BA.1 vaccine and preclinical and manufacturing data for the bivalent BA.4/BA.5 vaccine. The companies indicated in their statement Monday that they have already ramped up production of this new formulation and stand ready to ship as soon as the FDA authorizes, certainly next month. I don't really anticipate any difficulty with this approval process; it's not like the companies spring these vaccines on the FDA unexpectedly—they've been talking all along.

Moderna requested EUA for their new booster vaccine for those aged 18 and over on Tuesday. This also is a bivalent that targets both the original wild-type virus and the Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants. This one is a 50 microgram dose. This vaccine is in phase 2/3 trials now, and so their data comes from animal experiments as well as humans trials using an earlier version of their booster targeted at BA.1. It appears this company is also prepared to ship vaccine next month if it receives EUA.

We're not sure whether the FDA will put its Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisor Committee (VRBPAC) on this or just move forward after its experts evaluate the submissions. I'm thinking, if they plan to call an Advisory Committee meeting, they'll do so relatively quickly. For now, we'll see how soon action can be taken.

I've read a study in preprint, so not yet peer-reviewed, from the University of California, San Francisco. The research team looked at data from 35 California prisons, representing a particularly at-risk population and covering mid-December 2021 to late May 2022, a period when the dominant variant circulating was Omicron, to assess the effect of vaccination and previous infection on infectiousness, that is, your ability to transmit the virus. In the study population of 111,687, there were 22,334 confirmed infections and 31 hospitalizations stemming from 1261 index cases; residents were tested an average of 8.1 times during the weeks of the study, so it is relatively unlikely very many infections were missed. It is less complicated to nail down information about close contacts in an incarcerated population than out in the world; prisoner movements around a prison are necessarily restricted, which makes tracing contacts fairly straightforward. Findings were that vaccination reduced your risk of transmitting the virus by 24 percent, previous infection reduced your risk of transmitting by 21 percent, and a combination of vaccination and previous infection reduced the risk by 41 percent. Booster doses improved the odds; each subsequent dose of vaccine reduced the risk of transmission by a further 12 percent. Time since vaccination weakened the protections; the reduction was about six percent for every five weeks out from the dose. So while vaccination or prior infection is not at all certain to prevent transmission (not a surprise), it appears they do reduce it.

I've read another study, this one published last week in JAMA, that looks at vaccination effects. The

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 3 of 65

research group at various universities, some hospitals, and the Ministry of Health in Singapore, used a cohort study of 2,441,581 individuals to estimate the effectiveness of an mRNA booster against severe Omicron infections. In the study population, 90.2 percent received three doses of vaccine by the end of the study period, nearly all of them an mRNA vaccine.

As we've been seeing in other work, vaccine effectiveness (VE) against Omicron infection was low (31.7 to 41.3 percent) after 15 to 60 days and dropped off quickly after that. The good news is that VE against severe disease was 87.4 percent and held steady for as long as six months, clocking in at 87.2 percent at five or six months. In the words of the authors, "booster mRNA vaccination markedly increased protection against severe COVID-19 and was durable over at least a 6-month period." We will note that this durability held, whichever vaccine was used for the initial vaccination; the mRNA booster was the key.

So the thing is, there is some pretty good evidence that boosters make sense. Testing indicates the reformulated boosters will improve the look of things, even though human trials have not yet been finished. It's likely the FDA will authorize these new boosters on the basis of the testing already done. That means we're taking something of a gamble that these boosters will work in real life inside humans the way they've worked in early testing. If that sounds foodhardy, I think it is important to be aware that this is the same way each year's new flu shots are approved; with an annual seasonal virus like influenza, there is never time for full-scale clinical trials before the year's new vaccines are authorized. If we waited for those clinical trials, we'd never have updated vaccines—or we'd have them after the flu season is nearly over. And if we wait for those trials before we put this new Covid-19 booster on the market, it is highly likely we'll still be behind an evolving virus which will have moved on to the next subvariant—or even an entirely unrelated new variant—by then. We work with what we have.

So how do you decide whether and when to go in for this new booster? While the CDC will undoubtedly weigh in with guidance, there's likely to be some gray area which will complicate the situation. To help you over the bumps, here's my summary of advice from a group of experts which was compiled in The Atlantic to help you out. The experts are Rishi Goel, immunologist, University of Pennsylvania; Marion Pepper, immunologist, University of Washington; Jenna Guthmiller, immunologist, University of Colorado; and Paul Offit, director, Vaccine Education Center, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

(1) If you've never been infected with Omicron (which means you were never infected or were infected prior to November/December 2021): Consider getting the new bivalent booster as soon as it becomes available. The only exception will be those who recently received one of the current boosters; those can limit the effectiveness of another booster given too soon, so it makes sense to give it some time before you receive the new booster. If you've already had three or four doses of the current vaccine, you've probably maxed out the value of that vaccine and will want to receive the new one which should tune up your immune system against the current subvariants, BA.4 and BA.5.

(2) If you have had an Omicron infection (infected after about December 2021/January 2022), you might still get a nice boost from exposure to these new subvariants. Any Omicron infection probably offers good protection against severe disease, but if you'd like to increase the odds you'll avoid the virus altogether, at least for the near future, then a dose of the bivalent booster is probably a good idea. We should note that the durability of the effects of this bivalent booster is not yet known, although it seems reasonable to project a trajectory that is not worse than that for the current booster.

(3) If you had an Omicron infection this summer, it was probably a BA.4 or BA.5 infection and your antibody supply is likely still quite high, no matter how severe or mild your case was. A booster at this time probably won't do much for you. Give it a few months; the guidance from the CDC might prove very

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 4 of 65

helpful in deciding just how long to wait.

(4) If you're at high risk—immunocompromised, over 50, have comorbidities that place you at risk—then get whatever booster is available as soon as possible. If you haven't had all the boosters for which you're now eligible, go get the current one tomorrow; you really can't afford to wait, unprotected, until the authorization process is complete. If you've had all the recommended boosters, go get this new bivalent booster as soon as it becomes available. One expert (Goel) "recommended waiting at least a month after your most recent infection or shot, but if you're very worried about your risk, you don't need to stretch the delay to three months. Your body might still have extra antibodies floating around, but with no practical way to check at scale, I'm honestly in favor of recommending boosting as a way to maximize individual benefit."

(5) If you're worried about the safety and efficacy of this new bivalent booster, don't wait to get some sort of protection; go in and get a dose of the current one. Data on safety and efficacy of the bivalent in humans is expected within a couple of months, so your next booster can be that one after you've satisfied yourself with those data. With fall coming, no one can really afford to sit around waiting until later.

There's a new study published in the New England Journal of Medicine that deals with the effectiveness of Paxlovid in reducing bad outcomes from Covid-19. One of the weaknesses of the data on this antiviral drug has been that the clinical trials were done in high-risk patients who were neither vaccinated nor previously infected. At the time the drug was authorized, this encompassed a whole lot of people, but we're now at a point where almost everyone has been vaccinated, infected, or both. That means the results of this new work are particularly relevant. I was unable to access a copy of the paper, so I'm working from summaries here; but the main takeaway is that the drug doesn't seem to offer any particular benefit to adults between 40 and 65. The study was done in 109,000 patients in Israel. Consistent with other research, the researchers found Paxlovid given shortly after infection reduced hospitalizations by around 75 percent and deaths by around 80 percent in adults 65 and over. That's a substantial benefit; but the finding didn't hold in the 40 to 64 age group for whom "no measurable benefit" was seen.

There are downsides to Paxlovid treatment: It interferes with some medications, so folks who use those need to stop taking them for the duration of the Paxlovid treatment, a move that can place the patient at risk because other health conditions are going untreated. It seems to increase the chance of a rebound infection occurring. It is very expensive. So if no benefit accrues, it doesn't make much sense to use it. We should point out that there are other studies which do show some benefit in this age group, but none of those have been peer-reviewed and published yet. We should also note that this was an observational study (that is, looking at data already compiled in the Israeli health system) rather than the gold-standard randomized, double-blind, controlled study. Still this raises significant questions about the advisability of using Paxlovid in this 40 to 64 age group, particularly in anyone without a serious risk factor for severe disease.

I've read a study from researchers at the University of Minnesota published in the New England Journal of Medicine a couple of weeks ago regarding the use of repurposed already-approved drugs, namely fluvoxamine, ivermectin, and metformin. The group completed a randomized, placebo-controlled, Phase 3 study of all three drugs on patients from December 2020 to January 2022. That's going to cover all major variants of the virus and the period before and after vaccines were available. Bottom line is, "None of the medications showed any impact on the primary outcome, which included experiencing low oxygen as measured on a home oxygen monitor." Since hypoxemia (low oxygen) is the primary reason why patients seek hospital care or die, that's not a great signal.

In case you're tempted to dismiss these scientists as tools of the deep state or Big Pharma or Bill Gates or whatever, we should note here that this research group included some of the folks who were urging the



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 5 of 65

FDA to authorize fluvoxamine back in May (see my Update #536 posted May 2, 2022, at <https://www.facebook.com/marie.schwabmiller/posts/pfbid02Vf-Pz1Sy9u2RrQHP1gyZRq23Jix6NQWut9DP329CA5g-DaVsAQN7SzdbSDQsB6qbGyl>). What happened to them is that they saw evidence they were wrong, they published that evidence, and they're not going to be pushing for the drug anymore. That's the way things are supposed to work and will if we let them. I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Science is self-correcting if you just get out of the way.

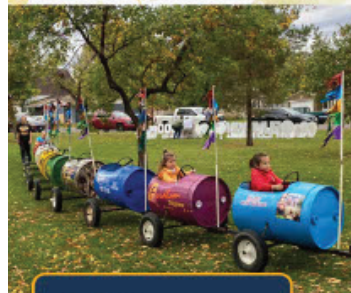
And that's it for today. Please be well going into this fall period. We'll talk again.

## GROTON'S EVENTS



**Sept. 2 - 4 Airport**  
Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton  
Municipal Airport

**Sept. 10 8am-3pm**  
Lion's Club Fall City-  
wide Rummage Sale



**Oct. 1 10am-3pm**  
Pumpkin Fest at  
the City Park

**Sept. 11 10am**  
Couples Sunflower  
Tourney at Olive  
Grove Golf Course

**Oct. 7 10am**  
Lake Region Marching  
Band Festival



**Oct. 31 4-6pm**  
Downtown Trick  
or Treat

**Oct. 31 5:30-7pm**  
United Methodist  
Church Trunk or Treat

**GROTON**  
Chamber Of Commerce

120 N Main St., Groton, SD 57445

605-397-8422

GrotonChamber.com

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 6 of 65

## Groton Area netters beat Aberdeen Christian

The Groton Area Tiger volleyball team posted a 3-0 win over Aberdeen Christian with game scores of 25-11, 25-17 and 25-12.

The match was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Bahr Spray Foam, John Sieh Agency, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Locke Electric, Dacotah Bank, SD Army National Guard, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc.

Groton Area won the first game with the help of a 10 point run and six ace serves by Laila Roberts. The game was tied twice with one lead change. Groton Area scored the final seven points of the set to win, 25-11.

The second set was tied 10 times and there were five lead changes. The Tigers outscored the Knights, 12-3, down the stretch to get the 25-17 win. Sydney Leicht had five kills and an ace serve while Anna Fjeldheim had two kills, a block and an ace serve and Aspen Johnson had three kills for the Tigers.

After three ties Groton Area took command of the third set with the help of five kills by Sydney Leicht and four ace serves by Carly Guthmiller to post the 25-12 win.

For the match, Anna Fjeldheim had four kills, one ace serve and a block, Laila Roberts had seven ace serves and a kill, Sydney Leicht had 12 kills and two ace serves, Carly Guthmiller had four ace serves, Lydia Meier had two kills, Hollie Frost had a block, Elizabeth Fliehs had three ace serves and a kill and Aspen Johnson had six kills, one ace serve and a block.

Groton Area won the junior varsity match, 25-13 and 25-9. The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Bob and Vicki Walter.

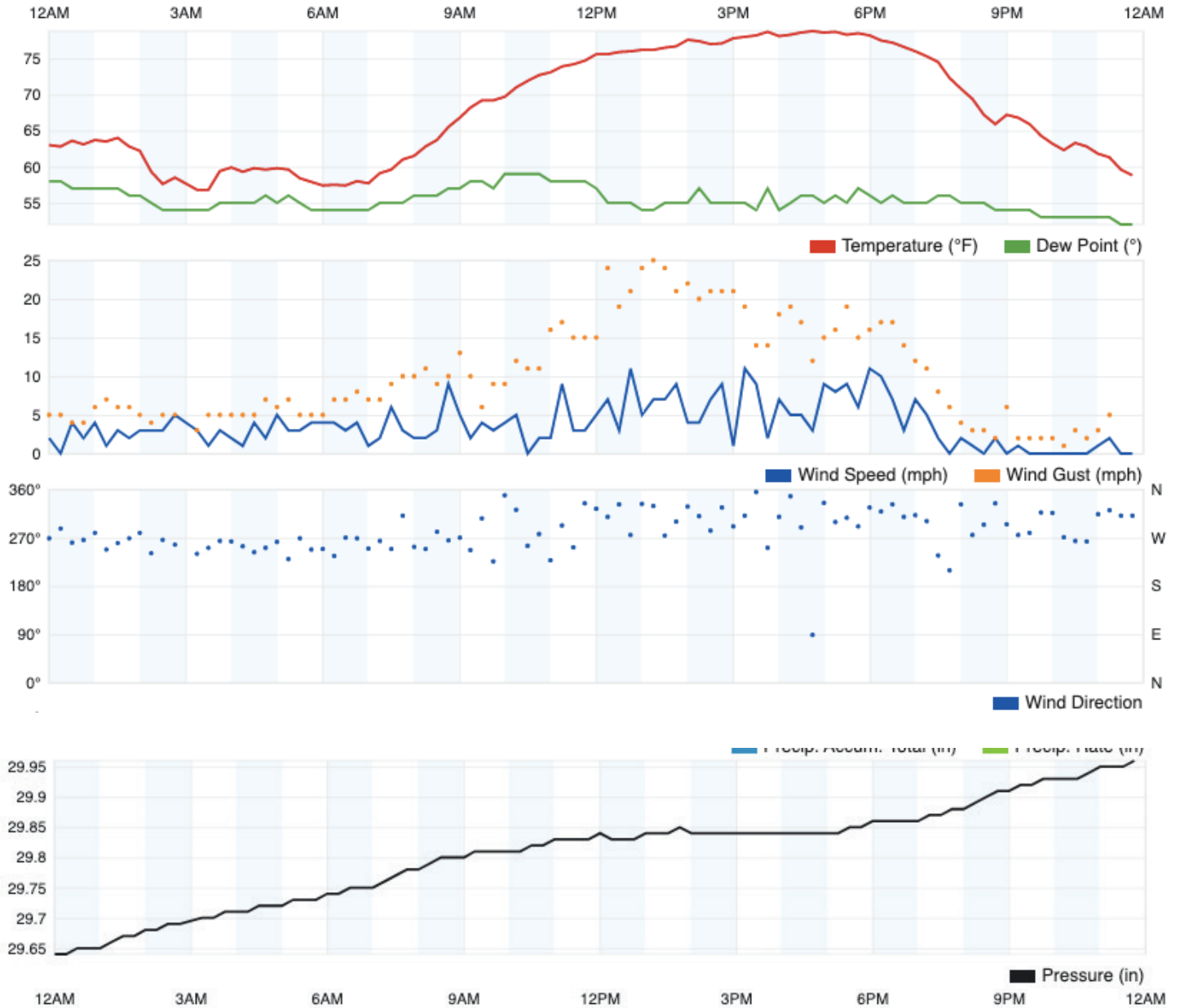
Jaedyn Penning had seven kills and two ace serves, Faith Traphagen had two ace serves, a block and a kill, Jerica Locke had four ace serves, Talli Wright had two ace serves, Chesney Weber had a kill and an ace serve and Rylee Dunker and Emma Kutter each had two kills.

Groton Area will host Ipswich today with a C match at 5 p.m. followed by the junior varsity and the varsity. At this point, the JV and varsity matches will be broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM. Anyone wanting to sponsor the C match should text Paul at 605-397-7460.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 7 of 65

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs





# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 8 of 65

Today



Sunny

High: 85 °F

Tonight



Clear

Low: 54 °F

Wednesday



Sunny

High: 86 °F

Wednesday  
Night



Clear

Low: 59 °F

Thursday



Hot

High: 91 °F

	Tues		Wed		Thurs		Fri		Sat		Sun	
<b>Aberdeen</b>	86	55	87	55	92	59	80	60	76	49	86	54
Britton	83	50	84	55	89	59	78	57	74	48	83	54
<b>Eagle Butte</b>	86	54	89	61	95	61	81	62	81	53	93	59
Eureka	85	51	89	58	94	60	80	59	78	49	89	56
Gettysburg	83	53	87	57	91	60	80	60	78	51	88	56
Kennebec	89	53	92	59	96	59	87	64	82	53	93	57
McIntosh	87	53	90	59	95	60	79	60	80	51	91	58
Milbank	81	55	85	59	88	59	78	60	73	50	80	51
Miller	85	54	89	58	94	59	82	60	78	50	88	55
<b>Mobridge</b>	90	52	93	59	97	63	84	64	83	53	93	60
Murdo	88	57	91	57	96	61	84	63	83	54	93	59
<b>Pierre</b>	89	55	92	59	98	62	86	66	84	55	95	60
Redfield	84	50	88	54	93	58	81	61	78	50	87	54
Sisseton	82	56	85	60	91	61	78	60	75	51	82	54
<b>Watertown</b>	79	51	84	55	88	59	78	60	73	49	80	51
Webster	79	53	82	57	86	60	76	59	72	50	80	54
Wheaton	80	55	84	55	88	58	77	59	73	49	80	51

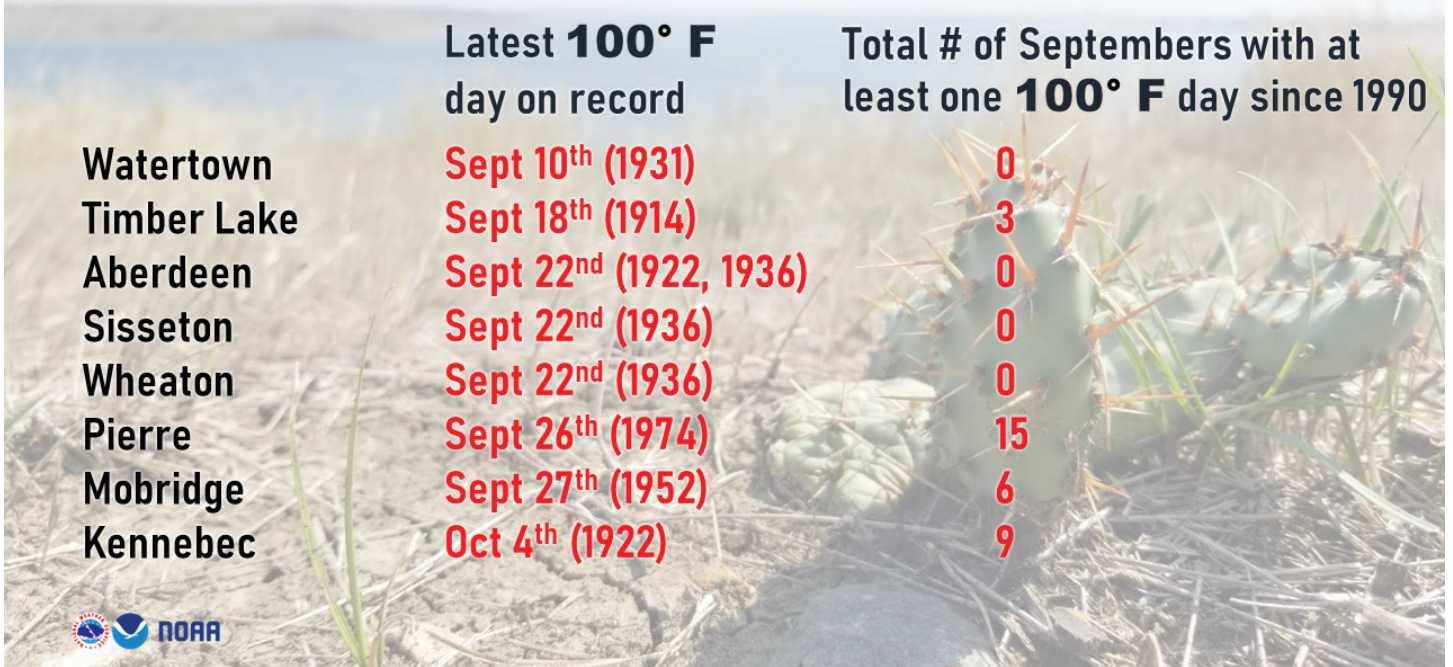


Updated: 8/30/2022 3:09 AM Central


We will see mostly dry conditions through the end of the weekend with temperatures a little above normal.



## With September Comes Reduced Heat



	Latest <b>100° F</b> day on record	Total # of Septembers with at least one <b>100° F</b> day since 1990
Watertown	Sept 10 <sup>th</sup> (1931)	0
Timber Lake	Sept 18 <sup>th</sup> (1914)	3
Aberdeen	Sept 22 <sup>nd</sup> (1922, 1936)	0
Sisseton	Sept 22 <sup>nd</sup> (1936)	0
Wheaton	Sept 22 <sup>nd</sup> (1936)	0
Pierre	Sept 26 <sup>th</sup> (1974)	15
Mobridge	Sept 27 <sup>th</sup> (1952)	6
Kennebec	Oct 4 <sup>th</sup> (1922)	9



With September just a couple days away, we're fast approaching the end of the climatological warmest 3 month period of the year. As such, the first day of meteorological fall is September 1st. Still longing for some more heat? Above average temperatures are favored through at least the first third of September. That said, history shows that it's uncommon for those of us in northeastern SD and west central MN to have temperatures reach the century mark after August.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 10 of 65

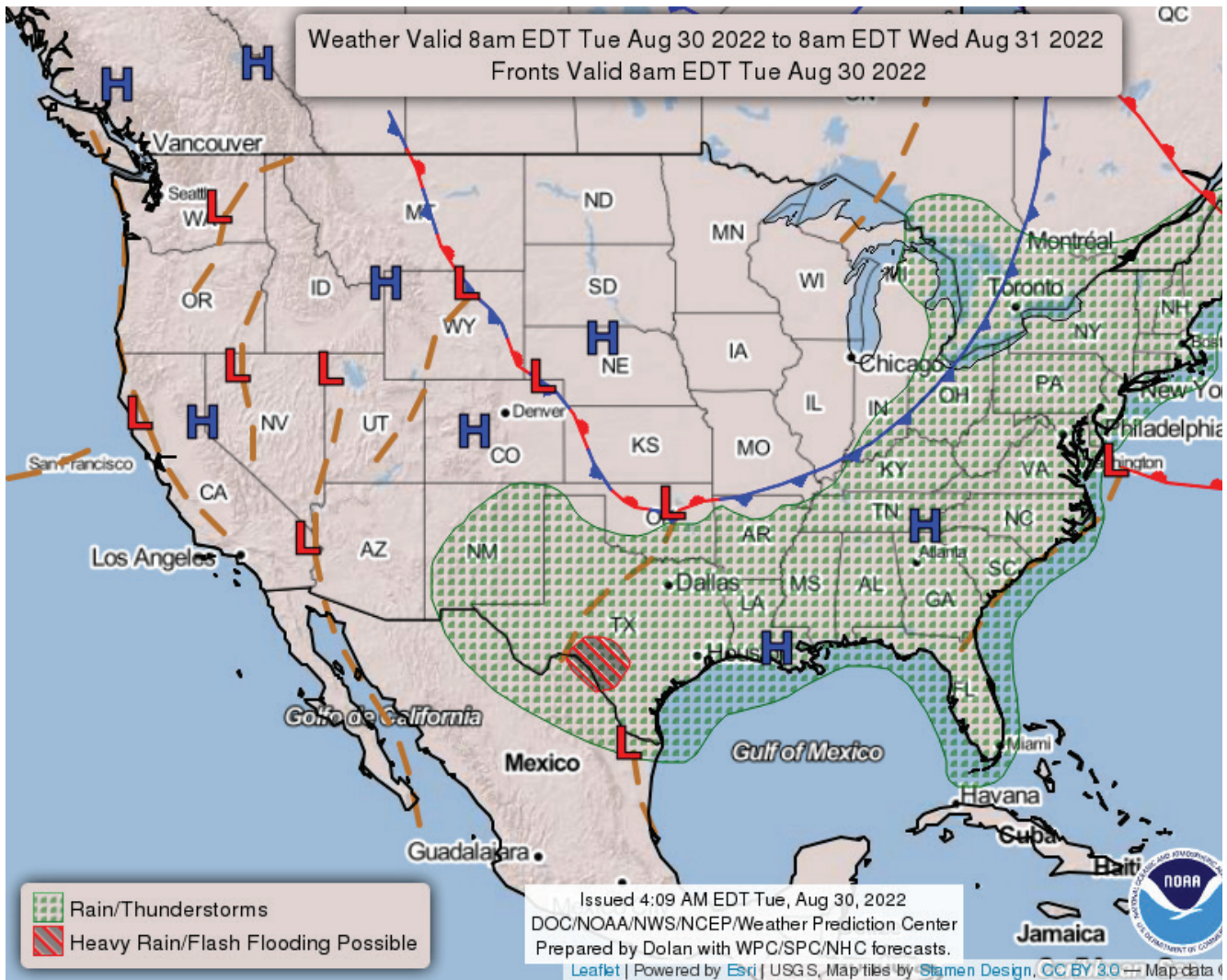
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 79 °F at 4:45 PM**  
**Low Temp: 56 °F at 3:26 AM**  
**Wind: 25 mph at 1:09 PM**  
**Precip: : 0.00**

Day length: 13 hours, 25 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 100 in 1898  
Record Low: 37 in 2003  
Average High: 80°F  
Average Low: 53°F  
Average Precip in Aug.: 2.17  
Precip to date in Aug.: 1.42  
Average Precip to date: 16.27  
Precip Year to Date: 15.96  
Sunset Tonight: 8:15:33 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:15:33 PM



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 11 of 65

## Today in Weather History

August 30, 1979: A thunderstorm rolled over Ellsworth Air Force Base bringing almost 60 mph winds to the area.

1776 - General Washington took advantage of a heavy fog to evacuate Long Island after a defeat. Adverse winds kept the British fleet from intervening. (David Ludlum)

1838: A major tornado, possibly the worst in Rhode Island history, passed south of Providence. It uprooted and stripped trees of their branches, unroofed or destroyed many houses, and sucked water out of ponds. The tornado barely missed a local railroad depot, where many people were waiting for a train. The tornado injured five people.

1839 - A hurricane moved from Cape Hatteras NC to offshore New England. An unusual feature of the hurricane was the snow it helped produce, which whitened the Catskill Mountains of New York State. Considerable snow was also reported at Salem NY. (The Weather Channel)

1982 - A tropical depression brought torrential rains to portions of southern Texas. Up to twelve inches fell south of Houston, and as much as eighteen inches fell southeast of Austin. The tropical depression spawned fourteen tornadoes in three days. (David Ludlum) Record cold gripped the northeastern U.S. Thirty-one cities in New England reported record lows, and areas of Vermont received up to three inches of snow. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Eight cities in California and Oregon reported record high temperatures for the date, including Redding CA and Sacramento CA where the mercury hit 100 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms drenched Georgia and the Carolinas with heavy rain, soaking Columbia, SC, with 4.10 inches in three hours. Fresno CA was the hot spot in the nation with a record high of 109 degrees. Duluth MN tied their record for the month of August with a morning low of 39 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced large hail in Montana and North Dakota during the evening and early nighttime hours. Hail three inches in diameter was reported 20 miles south of Medora ND, and thunderstorms over Dawson County MT produced up to three inches of rain. Thunderstorms produced golf ball size hail at Roundup MT, Dazey ND and Protection KS. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2002: Typhoon Rusa dumps torrential rains across South Korea, causing widespread flooding from the 30th through September 1st. Typhoon Rusa was the most powerful typhoon to hit South Korea since 1959. Nearly 90,000 people were evacuated. The province of Gangwon was hit the hardest, where an estimated 36 inches of rain fell in less than 48 hours. The torrential rains flooded nearly 36,000 homes. The Korean Defense Ministry reported flood waters submerged 16 jet fighters and 622 military buildings and facilities at Kangungnong airbase.





## Leave the Light On

### Scripture: Matthew 5:13–16 (NIV)

#### Salt and Light

13 “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

14 “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven..

#### Insight By: J.R. Hudberg

Ponder for a moment the connection between being the salt and light in Matthew 5:13–16 and the Beatitudes in the previous section (vv. 3–12). In the Beatitudes, Jesus lists many of the characteristics that describe people who’ll benefit under the kingdom of heaven—the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers, and so on. Immediately following these descriptions, Jesus speaks the words of today’s passage. So who is the salt of the earth and the light of the world? Taking these two sections together, we see that those who are salt and light are characterized by the attributes listed in the Beatitudes. Our good deeds—humility, meekness, showing mercy, righteousness, having a pure heart, peacemaking—are to be on display to those watching (vv. 3–10). These are the actions that point people to our good Father in heaven..

#### Comment By: Katara Patton

A hotel chain’s commercial featured one little building standing amidst a dark night. Nothing else was around. The only light in the scene came from a small lamp near the door on the porch of the building. The bulb cast enough illumination for a visitor to walk up the steps and enter the building. The commercial ended with the phrase, “We’ll leave the light on for you.”

A porch light is akin to a welcome sign, reminding weary travelers that there’s a comfortable place still open where they can stop and rest. The light invites those passing by to come on in and escape from the dark, weary journey.

Jesus says the lives of those who believe in Him should resemble that of a welcoming light. He told His followers, “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden” (Matthew 5:14). As believers, we’re to illuminate a dark world.

As He directs and empowers us, “[others] may see [our] good deeds and glorify [our] Father in heaven” (v. 16). And as we leave our lights on, they will feel welcomed to come to us to learn more about the one true Light of the World—Jesus (John 8:12). In a weary and dark world, His light always remains on.

Have you left your light on? As Jesus shines through you today, others may see and begin radiating His light too..

**Reflect and Prayer:** In what ways can you shine your light for Jesus today? What can prevent you from shining for Him?

Jesus, help me to shine brightly so that others may be drawn to You.



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 13 of 65

## 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)  
10/31/2023 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm  
11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 14 of 65

## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 15 of 65

## News from the Associated Press

### SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Lotto America

04-16-17-22-43, Star Ball: 5, ASB: 2

(four, sixteen, seventeen, twenty-two, forty-three; Star Ball: five; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$20,700,000

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: 153,000,000

Powerball

13-36-43-61-69, Powerball: 18, Power Play: 3

(thirteen, thirty-six, forty-three, sixty-one, sixty-nine; Powerball: eighteen; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$134,000,000

### Monday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Arlington def. Estelline/Hendricks, 25-12, 25-23, 25-23

Dell Rapids def. Baltic, 25-18, 18-25, 24-26, 25-19, 15-12

Freeman def. Corsica/Stickney, 25-7, 25-21, 25-7

Groton Area def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-11, 25-17, 25-12

Parkston def. Hanson, 25-23, 25-18, 26-24

Warner def. Wolsey-Wessington, 25-14, 25-16, 25-19

Some high school volleyball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

### Iraqi cleric tells loyalists to leave streets after clashes

By SAMYA KULLAB and QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — An influential Iraqi cleric called on his supporters to withdraw Tuesday from the capital's government quarter, where they have traded heavy fire with security forces in a serious escalation of a monthslong political crisis gripping the nation.

In a televised speech, Muqtada al-Sadr gave his supporters an hour to leave — and minutes later some could be seen abandoning their positions on live television. Iraq's military announced an end to a curfew, further raising hopes that there might be a halt to the street violence.

The unrest began Monday, when al-Sadr announced he would resign from politics and his supporters stormed the Green Zone, once the stronghold of the U.S. military that's now home to Iraqi government offices and foreign embassies. At least 30 people have been killed, officials said.

"This is not a revolution," al-Sadr said in a televised address, which followed pleas for restraint and peace from several Iraqi officials and the United Nations.

Iraq's government has been deadlocked since al-Sadr's party won the largest share of seats in October parliamentary elections but not enough to secure a majority government — unleashing months of infighting between different Shiite factions. Al-Sadr refused to negotiate with his Iran-backed Shiite rivals, and his withdrawal Monday catapulted Iraq into political uncertainty.

Iran closed its borders to Iraq on Tuesday — a sign of Tehran's concern that the chaos could spread, though even before al-Sadr's order, streets beyond the capital's government quarter largely remained

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 16 of 65

calm. The country's vital oil continued to flow, with global benchmark Brent crude trading slightly down.

Earlier Tuesday, supporters of al-Sadr could be seen on live television firing both machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades into the heavily-fortified area through a section of pulled-down concrete walls. Security forces armed with machine guns inside the zone sporadically returned fire.

Some bystanders filmed the gunfight with their mobile phones, though most hid behind still-standing segments of wall, wincing when rounds cracked nearby. As al-Sadr's forces fired, a line of armored tanks stood on the other side of the barriers that surround the Green Zone, though they did not use their heavy guns.

At least one wounded man from al-Sadr's forces was taken away in a three-wheel rickshaw, the Iraqi Foreign Ministry visible in the background. Heavy black smoke at one point rose over the area, visible from kilometers (miles) away.

At least 30 people have been killed and over 400 wounded, two Iraqi medical officials said. The toll included both al-Sadr loyalists killed in protests the day before and clashes overnight. Those figures are expected to rise, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to release the information to journalists.

Members of Iraq's majority Shiite Muslim population were oppressed when Saddam Hussein ruled the country for decades. The 2003 U.S.-led invasion that toppled Saddam, a Sunni, reversed the political order. Just under two-thirds of Iraq is Shiite, with a third Sunni.

Now, the Shiites are fighting among themselves after the Americans largely withdrew from the nation, with Iranian-backed Shiites and Iraqi-nationalist Shiites jockeying for power, influence and state resources.

It's an explosive rivalry in a country where many remain wary of the Iranian government's influence even though trade and ties remain strong between its peoples. Iraq and Iran fought a bloody war in the 1980s that saw a million people killed.

Al-Sadr's nationalist rhetoric and reform agenda resonates powerfully with his supporters, who largely hail from Iraq's poorest sectors of society and were historically shut out of the political system under Saddam.

Al-Sadr's announcement that he is leaving politics has implicitly given his supporters the freedom to act as they see fit.

Iranian state television cited unrest and a military-imposed curfew in Iraqi cities for the reason for the border closures. It urged Iranians avoid any travel to the neighboring country. The decision came as millions were preparing to visit Iraq for an annual pilgrimage to Shiite sites, and Tehran encouraged any Iranian pilgrims already in Iraq to avoid further travel between cities.

Kuwait, meanwhile, called on its citizens to leave Iraq. The state-run KUNA news agency also encouraged those hoping to travel to Iraq to delay their plans.

The tiny Gulf Arab sheikhdom of Kuwait shares a 254-kilometer- (158-mile-) long border with Iraq.

The Netherlands evacuated its embassy in the Green Zone, Foreign Affairs Minister Wopke Hoekstra tweeted early Tuesday.

"There are firefights around the embassy in Baghdad. Our staff are now working at the German embassy elsewhere in the city," Hoekstra wrote.

Dubai's long-haul carrier Emirates stopped flights to Baghdad on Tuesday over the ongoing unrest. The carrier said that it was "monitoring the situation closely." It did not say when flights would resume.

On Monday, protesters loyal to al-Sadr pulled down the cement barriers outside the government palace with ropes and breached the palace gates. Many rushed into the lavish salons and marbled halls of the palace, a key meeting place for Iraqi heads of state and foreign dignitaries.

## Eyes on Kherson as Ukraine claims bold move on Russians

By PAUL BYRNE Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — A surge in fighting on the southern front line and a Ukrainian claim of new attacks on Russian positions fed speculation Tuesday that a long-expected counteroffensive has started to try to turn the tide of the war.



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 17 of 65

But Ukrainian officials warned against excessive optimism in a war that has seen similar expectations of changing fortunes before, and the Russian defense ministry claimed an attempt by Ukraine's troops to launch an offensive had failed and caused heavy casualties.

Even though independent verification of battlefield moves has been extremely tough, the British defense ministry said in an intelligence report that, as of early Monday, "several brigades of the Ukrainian Armed Forces increased the weight of artillery fires in front line sectors across southern Ukraine."

Attention centered on potential damage Ukraine might have inflicted on Russian positions around the port city of Kherson, a major economic hub close to the Black Sea and one of Moscow's prized possessions since it started the invasion just over half a year ago.

Ukraine's presidential office reported Tuesday that "powerful explosions continued during the day and night in the Kherson region. Tough battles are ongoing practically across all" of the strategic area. Ukrainian forces, the report said, have destroyed a number of ammunition depots in the region and all large bridges across the Dnieper that are vital to bring supplies to the Russian troops.

Russian state news agency Tass reported five explosions rocking Kherson on Tuesday morning — blasts likely caused by air defense systems at work.

The Ukrainian military's Operation Command South also reported destroying a pontoon crossing the Dnieper that the Russian forces were setting up and hitting a dozen command posts in several areas of the Kherson region with artillery fire.

"The most important thing is Ukrainian artillery's work on the bridges, which the Russian military can no longer use," Ukrainian independent military analyst Oleh Zhdanov told The Associated Press.

"Even the barges have been destroyed. The Russians can't sustain forces near Kherson — this is the most important."

On Monday, the southern command center's Nataliya Gumenyuk told Ukrainian news outlet Liga.Net that Kyiv's forces have launched offensive operations "in many directions in our area of responsibility and have breached the enemy's first line of defense." The statement quickly made headlines after weeks of reports that Ukraine forces were preparing an offensive there and as Ukrainian attacks on the Kherson region intensified.

Zhdanov said that Russia has three lines of defense in the Kherson region, and breaching the first one signals only "isolated offensive actions by the Ukrainian army."

The war has ground to a stalemate over the past months with casualties rising and the local population bearing the brunt of suffering during relentless shelling in the east and also in the wider area around the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia atomic power plant, which has also been at the heart of fighting in Ukraine.

Amid fears the plant could be damaged, leading to a radioactive leak, a U.N. nuclear watchdog team has arrived in Kyiv and is further preparing a mission to safeguard the Russian-occupied plant from nuclear catastrophe.

The stakes couldn't be higher for the International Atomic Energy Agency experts, who will visit the plant in a country where the 1986 Chernobyl disaster spewed radiation throughout the region, shocking the world and intensifying a global push away from nuclear energy.

Compounding an already complicated task is the inability of both sides in the war to agree on much beyond allowing the team to go there. Ukraine and Russia have accused each other of shelling the wider region around the nuclear power plant, Europe's largest, time and again.

Nikopol, which is just across the Dnieper River from the Zaporizhzhia plant, once again came under a barrage of heavy shelling, local authorities said, with a bus station, stores and a children's library sustaining damage.

And the city of Zaporizhzhia itself, about 50 kilometers (30 miles) away, was targeted by a Russian missile strike, the Ukraine presidential office said.

The dangers of a leak are now so high that officials have begun handing out anti-radiation iodine tablets to nearby residents.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reacted to speculation in his nightly video address Monday,

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 18 of 65

about whether his forces had launched a major counteroffensive.

"Anyone want to know what our plans are? You won't hear specifics from any truly responsible person. Because this is war."

His adviser, Mykhailo Podolyak, cautioned against "super-sensational announcements" about a counter-offensive.

From the other side, the Moscow-appointed regional leader of Crimea, Sergei Aksyonov, dismissed the Ukrainian assertion of an offensive in the Kherson region as false. He said Ukrainian forces have suffered big losses in the area. And for its part, Russia's Defense Ministry said its forces had inflicted heavy personnel and military equipment losses on Ukrainian troops.

The Kherson region is just north of the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014 to set off a conflict that was largely frozen until the Feb. 24 invasion.

Otherwise, the attacks and shelling in the rest of eastern and southern Ukraine continued with the dull beat of death and destruction.

At least nine civilians were killed in more Russian shelling, Ukrainian officials said, from the Black Sea port of Mykolaiv to the northeastern industrial hub of Kharkiv, where five were killed in the city center.

## **Diana's death stunned the world — and changed the royals**

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Above all, there was shock. That's the word people use over and over again when they remember Princess Diana's death in a Paris car crash 25 years ago this week.

The woman the world watched grow from a shy teenage nursery school teacher into a glamorous celebrity who comforted AIDS patients and campaigned for land mine removal couldn't be dead at the age of 36, could she?

"I think we need to remind ourselves that she was probably the best known woman in the English-speaking world, aside from perhaps Queen Elizabeth II herself," said historian Ed Owens.

"And, given this massive celebrity persona that she had developed, to have that extinguished overnight, for her to die in such tragic circumstances, at such a young age, I think really came as a massive shock to many people."

It was that disbelief that cemented Diana's legacy as the woman who brought lasting change to Britain's royal family, helping bridge the gap between centuries of tradition and a new, multicultural nation in the internet age.

First, there was the outpouring of grief from the public who streamed to the princess' home at Kensington Palace to mourn the loss of a woman most had never met. That alone forced the royals to recognize that Diana's common touch had connected with people in ways that hadn't yet occurred to the House of Windsor.

Those lessons have since inspired other royals, including Diana's sons, Princes William and Harry, to be more informal and approachable. For proof, look no further than the glitzy concert that was a centerpiece of June's Platinum Jubilee celebrating the queen's 70 years on the throne.

There were rock bands and opera singers, dancers and lasers painting pictures of corgis on the sky. But the biggest applause was for Elizabeth herself, who appeared in a short film to share a pot of tea with British national treasure Paddington Bear. She then solved a longtime mystery and revealed what's inside her famous black handbag: A marmalade sandwich — just for emergencies.

It wasn't obvious Diana would be a royal rebel when she married Prince Charles.

A member of the aristocratic Spencer family, Diana was known for flouncy bows, sensible skirts and a boyish blond bob when she started dating the future king. After leaving school at 16, she spent time at a finishing school in the Swiss Alps and worked as a nanny and preschool teacher while living in London.

But she blossomed, becoming an international style icon the moment she walked down the aisle of St. Paul's Cathedral shrouded in lace and followed by a 25-foot train on July 29, 1981.

From that moment on, reporters and photographers followed Diana wherever she went. While Diana

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 19 of 65

hated the intrusion, she quickly learned the media was also a tool she could use to bring attention to a cause and to change public perceptions.

That impact was seen most famously when the princess opened the U.K.'s first specialized ward for AIDS patients on April 9, 1987.

Such ribbon-cutting ceremonies are a staple of royal duties. But Diana realized there was more at stake. She reached out and took the hands of a young patient, demonstrating the virus couldn't be transmitted by touch. The moment, captured by photos beamed worldwide, helped combat the fear, misinformation and stigma surrounding the AIDS epidemic.

A decade later, Diana was even more media savvy.

Seven months before she died, Diana donned a protective visor and flak jacket and walked down a path cleared through a minefield in Angola to promote the work of The HALO Trust, a group devoted to removing mines from former war zones. When she realized some photographers didn't get the shot, she turned around and did it again.

The images brought international attention to the campaign to rid the world of explosives that lurk underground long after wars end. Today, a treaty banning land mines has been signed by 164 countries.

But that public platform came at a price.

Her marriage disintegrated, with Diana blaming Charles' continuing liaison with longtime mistress, Camilla Parker Bowles. The princess also struggled with bulimia and acknowledged suicide attempts, according to "Diana: Her True Story — In Her Own Words," published in 1992 based on tapes Diana sent to author Andrew Morton.

"When I started my public life, 12 years ago, I understood the media might be interested in what I did," Diana said in 1993. "But I was not aware of how overwhelming that attention would become. Nor the extent to which it would affect both my public duties and my personal life, in a manner that's been hard to bear."

In the end, it contributed to her death.

On Aug. 30, 1997, a group of paparazzi camped outside the Hotel Ritz in Paris in hopes of getting shots of Diana and boyfriend Dodi Fayed pursued their car to the Pont de l'Alma tunnel, where their driver lost control and crashed.

Diana died Aug. 31, 1997.

A stunned world mourned. Bouquets of flowers, many including personal notes, carpeted the grounds outside Diana's home in Kensington Palace. Weeping citizens lined the streets outside Westminster Abbey during her funeral.

The public reaction contrasted with that of the royal family, who were criticized for not quickly appearing in public and refusing to lower the flag over Buckingham Palace to half-staff.

The mourning prompted soul-searching among members of the House of Windsor. They set about to better understand why Diana's death had prompted such an overwhelming spectacle, said Sally Bedell Smith, a historian and author of "Diana in Search of Herself."

"I think her legacy was something that the queen in her wisdom (sought) to adapt in the early years after her death," Smith said of focus groups and studies the monarchy used to grasp Diana's appeal.

"The queen was more likely to interact with people, and I think you see the informality magnified now, particularly with William and Kate," she said.

William, his wife, Kate, for example, made improving mental health services a primary goal, going so far as to publicly discuss their own struggles. Harry also is a champion for wounded military veterans.

The rehabilitation of Charles' reputation had to wait until public anger over his treatment of Diana began to fade. That's now well under way, helped by his 2005 marriage to Camilla, who softened his image. The queen earlier this year said she hoped Camilla would become queen consort when Charles ascends the throne, trying to heal old wounds.

But there are lessons for the monarchy to learn as it struggles with the fallout from the scandal over Prince Andrew's links to convicted pedophile Jeffrey Epstein. Beyond that, there's the decision of Harry and his wife, Meghan, to give up royal duties for life in Southern California.

Meghan, an American biracial former actress who grew up in Los Angeles, has said she felt constrained by palace life and that a member of the royal family even inquired about the potential skin color of her first child before he was born.

This episode shows the royals haven't fully learned the lesson of Diana, said Owens, author of "The Family Firm: Monarchy, Mass Media and the British Public 1932-1953."

"Once again, not enough room was created," Owens said of Meghan.

Diana had her own struggles with the palace, airing her grievances in a 1995 BBC interview that continues to make headlines. The BBC was forced to apologize last year after an investigation found reporter Martin Bashir used "deceitful methods" to secure the interview.

Diana's brother said this year that the interview and the way it was obtained contributed to Diana's death because it led her to refuse continued protection from the palace after her divorce.

But her words about how she wished to be viewed remain firmly in memory.

"I'd like to be a queen of people's hearts, in people's hearts, but I don't see myself being queen of this country," Diana said in the interview. "I don't think many people will want me to be queen."

## **Student loan relief limited for many by US drug war's legacy**

By AARON MORRISON Associated Press

President Joe Biden says he hopes his proposal to forgive federal student loans will narrow the nation's racial wealth gap. But a generation of Black and Hispanic Americans was disproportionately shut out of one of the keys to Biden's plan: the Pell Grant program.

As part of the "war on drugs" — a consequential, anti-crime legislative agenda that Biden championed as a U.S. senator — an estimated hundreds of thousands of convicted drug offenders had their access to federal financial aid delayed or denied, including Pell Grants and student loans. If they wanted to go to college after their prison terms ended, these offenders had to take on larger, often predatory, private student loans.

Some were discouraged from seeking federal aid by a requirement to disclose their drug record on financial aid applications, while others put off attending college or dropped out entirely.

The people most harmed by these policies: Black and Latino men, thanks to drug laws in the 1990s with harsh punishments for crack cocaine and marijuana offenses. Incarceration rates for men of color skyrocketed. The policies remained in place for 25 years, until Congress repealed the Pell Grant ban in 2020.

America's student loan debt burden, which now tops \$1.6 trillion, "is especially heavy on Black and Hispanic borrowers, who on average have less family wealth to pay for it," Biden said last week as he announced the forgiveness plan.

The administration has offered to forgive up to \$10,000 in student debt for individuals earning annual incomes of less than \$125,000, or less than \$250,000 for families. And its offer doubles the debt relief to \$20,000 for borrowers who also received Pell Grants, a federal program that gives the neediest undergraduates aid that they don't have to repay.

Studies show that Pell Grants — one of the nation's most effective financial aid programs — routinely help more than half of Black students and almost half of Hispanic students afford college. According to the White House, among the 43 million borrowers who are eligible for debt relief under Biden's plan, more than 60% are Pell Grant recipients.

The White House said in a statement to The Associated Press that the student debt relief plan will wipe away about half of the average debt held by Black and Hispanic borrowers, not counting the additional \$10,000 cancellation for Pell Grant recipients.

Amid debate over whether Biden's forgiveness plan goes far enough for disproportionately indebted communities, criminal justice reform advocates say the president's solutions to the student debt crisis must be as comprehensive as the anti-drug laws were.

"I think there's a particular onus on this administration and on this president to be part of the solution for issues that he was very deeply involved in," said Melissa Moore, the director of civil systems reform



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 21 of 65

at Drug Policy Alliance.

There's a generation of former drug offenders who borrowed to pay for school, but don't have Pell Grants or federal loans, and won't have any of their student debt forgiven. According to a Student Borrower Protection Center report on private loan debt, Black students are four times as likely as white students to struggle in repayment of private loans.

"For people who previously would have had to check that box, there should be some mechanism by which, if you were excluded in the past, you are prioritized now for relief," Moore said.

An AP review last year of federal and state incarceration data showed that, between 1975 and 2019, the U.S. prison population jumped from 240,593 to 1.43 million Americans, as a result of the war on drugs that President Richard Nixon declared in 1971. About 1 in 5 people were incarcerated with a drug offense listed as their most serious crime.

Nixon's Democratic and Republican presidential successors would go on to leverage drug war policies, responding to an alarming national surge in violent crime linked to the illegal drug trade, cementing the drug war's legacy.

Following the passage of stiffer state and federal penalties for crack cocaine and other drugs, the incarceration rates for Black and Hispanic Americans tripled between 1970 and 2000. By comparison, the white incarceration rate only doubled in that same timespan.

Biden's Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 put in place the ban on Pell Grants and other federal financial aid for people incarcerated in federal or state prison. However, then-Sen. Biden reportedly opposed the amendment that added the ban to his bill. At the time, his spokesperson said Biden believed education programs could break the cycle of recidivism among formerly incarcerated individuals.

Ultimately, Biden worked passionately to pass the crime bill he sponsored. Academic programs in federal and state prisons, which had been robust, dwindled severely nationwide.

Later, in 1998, Congress expanded the ban to exclude any student with a state or federal drug conviction from receiving Pell Grants and federal student loans, for as little as one year or indefinitely, depending on the number of convictions. Biden voted in favor of the measure, although his opinion on the Pell Grant provision was unclear.

In just the five years after the expanded ban took effect, the measure cost more than 140,000 would-be college students between \$41 million and \$54 million in Pell Grants per year, and between \$100 million and \$164 million in federal student loans per year, according to an estimate by the federal Government Accountability Office.

However, in 2006, Congress changed the ban on grants to drug offenders. It applied only to students whose convictions happened while they were receiving federal student aid, narrowing its effect significantly, although experts say the law still forced hundreds of enrolled students to drop out of college when they lost their aid. The ban on Pell Grants for incarcerated individuals was fully repealed when Congress passed the omnibus spending and COVID-19 relief legislation in December 2020.

Drug convictions no longer affect a student's financial aid eligibility, although the question still appears on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. In April, the U.S. Department of Education expanded its Second Chance Pell Program, which provides grants to incarcerated students to help them enroll in academic programs. A further expansion of Pell Grants to incarcerated students begins in July 2023, according to the Department of Education.

For DeAnna Hoskins, the legacy of the war on drugs nearly cost her much-needed Pell Grants and student loans. She attended college after her incarceration and, by happenstance, just after Congress lifted the ban on aid to people with drug convictions.

"The '94 crime bill was so comprehensive in the destruction that it did," said Hoskins, the president of JustLeadershipUSA, a criminal justice reform group. She questions how Biden's debt relief plan was crafted. "I feel like you're piecemealing our liberation back to us."

There are tens of thousands of people who had to get private student loans at high interest rates, because of the ban on Pell Grants, Hoskins added.

"This is why it's so important, when decisions like this are being made, that the voices of people with lived experiences are present," she said. "We can help you obtain the equity you're seeking."

## UN to seek \$160 million in emergency aid for Pakistan floods

By MUNIR AHMED Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The United Nations and Pakistan are set to appeal Tuesday for \$160 million in emergency funding for nearly a half million displaced victims of record-breaking floods that have killed more than 1,150 people since mid-June, officials said.

Pakistani authorities backed by the military, rescuers and volunteers have been battling the aftermath of the floods that have affected more than 33 million people, or one in seven Pakistanis.

Although rains stopped three days ago and flood waters in some areas were receding, large areas remain underwater. Rescuers were evacuating stranded people to safer ground, including makeshift tent camps have sprung up along highways, inundated villages and towns.

According to initial government estimates, the devastation caused \$10 billion in damage to the economy. "It is a preliminary estimate likely to be far greater," Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal told The Associated Press.

His comment came hours before the United Nations and Pakistan were to launch an appeal in Islamabad for help.

A day earlier, the International Monetary Fund's executive board approved the release of a much-awaited \$1.17 billion for Pakistan.

Pakistan and the IMF originally signed a large bailout accord in 2019. But the release of a \$1.17 billion tranche had been on hold since earlier this year, when the IMF expressed concern about Pakistan's compliance with the deal's terms under the government of former Prime Minister Imran Khan, who was ousted through a no-confidence vote in the parliament in April.

Last week, the United Nations in a statement said it has allocated \$3 million for U.N. aid agencies and their partners in Pakistan to respond to the floods. This money will be used for health, nutrition, food security, as well as water and sanitation services in flood-affected areas, focusing on the most vulnerable.

On Monday, Climate Minister Sherry Rehman and meteorologists told the AP that new monsoons were expected in September. Monsoons have hit earlier and more heavily than usual since the start of summer, officials say — most recently with massive rains last week that affected nearly the entire country.

Pakistan is accustomed to monsoon rains and flooding, Rehman said, but not like this.

Several scientists say the record-breaking flooding in Pakistan has all the hallmarks of a catastrophe juiced by climate change, but it is too early to formally assign blame to global warming.

"This year Pakistan has received the highest rainfall in at least three decades. So far this year the rain is running at more than 780% above average levels," said Abid Qaiyum Suleri, executive director of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute and a member of Pakistan's Climate Change Council. "Extreme weather patterns are turning more frequent in the region and Pakistan is not an exception."

Pakistan saw similar flooding and devastation in 2010 that killed nearly 2,000 people. But the government didn't implement plans to prevent future flooding by preventing construction and homes in flood prone areas and river beds, said Suleri of the country's Climate Change Council.

Floods and monsoon rains have damaged one million houses and affected 33 million people.

It reflects how poorer countries often pay the price for climate change largely caused by more industrialized nations. Since 1959, Pakistan is responsible for only 0.4% of the world's historic CO2 emissions. The U.S. is responsible for 21.5%, China for 16.5% and the EU 15%.

According to the National Disaster Management Authority, at least 498,000 people in the country of 220 million are in relief camps after being displaced.

Many more displaced flood victims are believed to be living with relatives, friends or out in the open, without shelter.

Pakistan started receiving international aid this week, and more planes carrying aid from Turkey and the United Arab Emirates landed at an airport near Islamabad on Tuesday, according to a statement released

by the military.

It said Chinese planes carrying aid will also arrive in Pakistan later Tuesday.

Pakistan has also deployed at least 6,500 soldiers to help authorities in rescue and relief operations.

## **WHO director in Asia accused of racism, abuse put on leave**

By MARIA CHENG AP Medical Writer

LONDON (AP) — The World Health Organization's top director in the Western Pacific, Dr. Takeshi Kasai, has been indefinitely removed from his post, according to internal correspondence obtained by The Associated Press.

Kasai's removal comes months after an AP investigation revealed that dozens of staffers accused him of racist, abusive and unethical behavior that undermined the U.N. agency's efforts to stop the coronavirus pandemic in Asia.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told staff in the Western Pacific in an email on Friday that Kasai was "on leave" without elaborating further. Tedros said Deputy Director-General, Dr. Zsuzsanna Jakab, would be arriving Tuesday in Manila, WHO's regional headquarters, to "ensure business continuity." Two senior WHO officials who asked not to be identified because they were not authorized to speak to the press, said Kasai had been put on extended administrative leave after internal investigators substantiated some of the misconduct complaints.

In a statement, WHO said it was unknown how long Kasai would be away. The U.N. health agency said the investigation into him was continuing and that it was believed to be the first time a regional director had been relieved of their duties. Kasai did not respond to requests for comment but previously denied he used racist language or acted unprofessionally.

In January, the AP reported that more than 30 unidentified staffers sent a confidential complaint to senior WHO leadership and members of the organization's Executive Board, alleging that Kasai had created a "toxic atmosphere" in WHO's offices across the Western Pacific. Documents and recordings showed Kasai made racist remarks to his staff and blamed the rise of COVID-19 in some Pacific countries on their "lack of capacity due to their inferior culture, race and socioeconomics level." Several WHO staffers working under Kasai said he improperly shared sensitive coronavirus vaccine information to help Japan, his home country, score political points with its donations.

Days after the AP report, WHO chief Tedros announced that an internal probe into Kasai had begun. Several months later, however, WHO staffers alleged that Kasai was manipulating the investigation. In a letter sent to the U.N. agency's top governing body in April, the Executive Board, the staffers wrote that Kasai had ordered senior managers to destroy any incriminating documents and instructed IT staff "to monitor emails of all the staff members."

Kasai is a Japanese doctor who began his career in his country's public health system before moving to WHO, where he has worked for more than 15 years.

The removal of a regional director at WHO, even temporarily, is "unprecedented," according to Lawrence Gostin, director of the WHO Collaborating Center on Public Health Law and Human Rights at Georgetown University. "There have been a lot of bad regional directors at WHO, but I've never heard of action like this," Gostin said.

Any withdrawal of support from Japan for Kasai could hasten his dismissal. A Japanese government official who spoke on condition of anonymity said they hoped WHO had conducted a fair investigation.

Kasai's removal stands in stark contrast to WHO's past reluctance to discipline perpetrators of unethical and sometimes illegal behavior, including during the sex abuse uncovered during the Ebola outbreak in Congo from 2018-2020. More than 80 outbreak responders under WHO's direction sexually abused vulnerable women; an AP investigation found senior WHO management was informed of multiple exploitation claims in 2019 but refused to act and even promoted one of the managers involved. No senior WHO staffers linked to the abuse have been fired.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 24 of 65

"WHO's reputation was shattered by those allegations," Gostin said, calling the lack of accountability in Congo "truly outrageous." He welcomed the disciplinary action taken against Kasai and called for WHO to release its investigation in some form.

Gostin and other public health academics said that if WHO's Executive Board determines that Kasai violated his contract by engaging in the racist and abusive conduct alleged, his contract could be terminated.

WHO's own staff association urged Tedros to take action against Kasai at a meeting in June, saying that failing to do so "would be a tragic mistake," according to a memo from the private briefing.

"If swift action is not taken ... the results may be regarded as questionable at best, fixed and farcical at worst," the staffers warned Tedros. "If (Kasai's) wrongdoing is proven, the assumption will be that many other items were swept aside to save face."

Before Kasai was put on leave, WHO's Western Pacific office had planned a town hall this week to address "workplace culture," including concerns about racism and abusive conduct. In an email to staff on Saturday, Dr. Angela Pratt, a director in Kasai's office, announced that the meeting had been postponed.

## AP Was There: Diana's final hours, on a tragic Paris night

By JOCELYN NOVECK Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — An elegant dinner at the Ritz in Paris. A post-midnight drive past the city's floodlit treasures. And then, tragedy. The story of Princess Diana's death at age 36 in that catastrophic crash in a Paris traffic tunnel continues to shock, even after a quarter-century.

Twenty-five years later, The Associated Press is making available this account of Diana's final hours in the French capital, published on Sept. 5, 1997, a few days after the Aug. 31 crash. (The account, based on reporting, interviews and news reports available at the time, has been trimmed and edited lightly.)

Entering the Pont de l'Alma traffic tunnel at night, one of the last things you see is the floodlit Eiffel Tower. Its iron latticework shimmering like lace against a black sky, it likely was one of the last things Princess Diana ever saw.

The tower's lights go off every night at 1 a.m. By that time on Sunday, Aug. 31, a dying Diana lay trapped in a crumpled wreck of a Mercedes, with rescuers trying frantically to treat her while they cut through the metal roof.

The short ride to the tunnel from the Ritz Hotel had been a stunning one, with a view of the city's other floodlit treasures: the obelisk at the Place de la Concorde, the Arc de Triomphe off to the right, the gold-domed Hotel des Invalides across the river to the left.

Four people were in the car: a driver and a bodyguard in front, the princess and her boyfriend in back. Behind them — it isn't clear how far — were several motorcycles and perhaps two cars bearing paparazzi.

Approaching the tunnel along the Seine River, the shining tower was just to the left. Even through the tinted windows of a luxury car, it would've been hard not to look.

Seconds later, there was a huge crash — witnesses said it was like an explosion. It would soon reverberate around the world, but for a few minutes in the still night, there was only the insistent blare of a car horn set off by the driver's slumped body, and then the clicking of camera shutters.

For the princess, after the spectacular city lights, there was only blackness.

10 p.m.: The evening begins for Diana and Dodi Fayed with dinner in the sitting room of the Imperial Suite at the Ritz. It is the best suite in the hotel, and no wonder: The hotel is owned by Fayed's father, Mohamed Al Fayed.

The food comes from the hotel's two-star restaurant, Espadon, which means swordfish. It's known for its 100,000-bottle wine cellar.

Diana is reported to have ordered an appetizer of mushrooms and asparagus, and then sole; for Dodi, turbot.

Dodi may have carried a surprise in his pocket: News reports quote a Paris jeweler saying he'd sold him



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 25 of 65

an "extraordinary" diamond solitaire ring for \$205,000, and it is at the Ritz that Dodi may have given it to Diana.

Is it an engagement ring? No one will ever know for sure.

But the day has been tense. The couple has been having problems with paparazzi ever since their mid-afternoon arrival in Paris. First, they trailed Diana and Dodi from Le Bourget Airport outside Paris, on their way to see Villa Windsor — a mansion that once housed the Duke and Duchess of Windsor and that Dodi's father has bought and renovated. Their driver managed to shake the photographers.

Then, an attempt to have a 9:30 p.m. dinner at the chic Paris bistro Chez Benoit failed, when paparazzi again picked up the trail. Giving up, Diana and Dodi decide to dine at the Ritz, where there is better security.

Hotel video shows the cars arriving back at the Ritz, flashes going off as Diana goes through a revolving door, eyes downcast, looking distressed.

They walk down the Ritz's blue carpet bordered in gold toward the restaurant. Ten minutes later, they walk back down the hallway — "because of the attention in the restaurant," Paul Handley-Greaves, head of Al Fayed's security team, says later in London — and head up a spiral staircase to the Imperial Suite.

Inside, the plush hotel, with rust-colored marble columns and floors covered with Persian rugs, is calm and peaceful. But outside the entrance, on the elegant Place Vendome, paparazzi have again gathered.

10:08 p.m.: Henri Paul, the No. 2 security man at the Ritz, arrives at the hotel after having been summoned on his cell phone at 10 p.m. He parks his own car outside, chats with some people and shakes hands with a friend, the night duty manager and the concierge. Their accounts, Handley-Greaves says, "are that he was sober, he didn't smell of alcohol, his gait was steady."

Paul spends the next two hours in the lobby area. At one point, he goes into the hotel bar and sits with two other security people at a table on the edge of the bar area. There is no security camera in the bar, but both Handley-Greaves and Michael Cole, an Al Fayed family spokesman, said interviews with hotel personnel showed no evidence that Paul was drinking.

12:07 a.m.: After dinner, as they leave the Imperial Suite, Diana and Fayed stop to discuss the paparazzi "and the concern that the princess had that something would happen," Handley-Greaves says. "Earlier on in the day," he tells a London news conference, "she had expressed concern to bodyguard Trevor Rees-Jones at the foolhardiness of the motorcycle riders, not for the safety of the vehicle she was traveling in. She expressed concern that the erratic manner in which they were driving might result in one of them falling under the wheels either of the lead car or the backup."

Diana and Fayed are headed to an apartment he owns off the Champs-Elysees, just near the Arc de Triomphe. Knowing paparazzi are outside, they've decided to use two decoy vehicles — Range Rover and a Mercedes. They post the Range Rover outside the Ritz's main entrance, with Fayed's regular driver at the wheel.

They need a third car, so a rented Mercedes is called into service. The jet-black car, rented from the Etoile limousine company, is known for its silky-smooth ride, but because of its weight, it isn't the best car for weaving in and out of traffic. "This isn't the kind of car you do slalom in," says Jean-Pierre Bretton, a limousine driver who often picks up well-heeled clients at the Ritz.

Diana and Dodi need a driver, too, and that's why Paul has been called back in from home. Paul, 41, a native of France's Brittany region, is reported to have received special training in Germany to drive the armored Mercedes. Police say Paul lacked the special license to drive the car; the Al Fayed family denies it.

Paris prosecutors say autopsy blood tests showed Paul was legally drunk, and judicial sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, put the blood-alcohol level at more than three times the legal limit, at least.

Despite reports that Paul was a heavy drinker, at least two bartenders who knew him told The Associated Press they never saw signs of that.

Tony Poer, a former bartender at Willi's wine bar near the Ritz, says Paul was a regular there, but only drank beer.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 26 of 65

"I never saw him extremely drunk," says Poer, now manager of a San Francisco nightclub. "He even gave me a ride home a few times. I wasn't worried or anything."

And Alain Bousseau, owner of the Mazarin bar not far from the Ritz, says that although Paul was reported to be a regular there, he saw him only two or three times in the last few years. Once, he drank only a small glass of Cheverny wine; another time, he had a coffee.

12:19 a.m.: Dodi and Diana stand in an area by the back entrance of the hotel, milling with security officers preparing their departure. A Ritz Hotel security camera video shows Dodi slipping his arm protectively around Diana's waist.

12:20 a.m.: The couple leaves the Ritz from the back entrance, and climbs into the Mercedes. Diana is dressed in a black top, black jacket and belted white trousers. Her hair is carefully coiffed and she wears red lipstick.

Dodi looks more casual in a tan jacket and long gray shirt, open at the neck and hanging loosely over stone-washed jeans.

The hotel video shows no paparazzi outside the back entrance, but the decoy ruse clearly hasn't worked.

With paparazzi in pursuit, the Mercedes travels down the Rue Cambon and turns right onto the colonnaded, boutique-lined Rue de Rivoli, with the Tuileries Gardens on the left. Arriving at the Place de la Concorde, it takes a left past the obelisk, allowing a view of the Champs-Elysees and the Arc de Triomphe on the right as it makes its way to the bank of the Seine.

Here, some photographers say, Paul already is driving dangerously. Jacques Langevin says he was told by fellow photographers that at the Place de la Concorde, when they were stopped at a red light, the Mercedes took off with a roar before the light turned green.

Already, the photographer told the Liberation daily, "the Mercedes was fishtailing dangerously and the driver didn't seem to be in control."

Neither Diana nor Fayed are wearing seat belts; only bodyguard Rees-Jones, sitting in the front passenger seat, is wearing one.

The Mercedes is heading along the river now, down the Cours de la Reine, then the Cours Albert 1st, where the approach to the tunnel lies.

About 12:25 a.m.: The Mercedes enters the 660-foot-long tunnel, probably to avoid traffic on the crowded Place de l'Alma. The tunnel is brightly lit, neon bulbs reflecting on the white-tiled walls.

The approach is dangerous at high speed. The road swerves slightly to the right, then to the left; then there is a quick dip.

The speed limit is 30 mph. A cab driver says he once tried the tunnel at 70 mph and was scared. "That thing is narrow and dangerous," said Jacques Gauthier. "You'd have to be crazy to take it fast."

Just how fast does Paul take it?

Police officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, say the car's speedometer was found frozen at 196 kilometers per hour, or 121 mph. They call it an almost certain indicator of its speed at impact, but the Al Fayed family disputes that, saying the speedometer was stuck instead at zero. A Mercedes expert says the speedometer moves automatically to 0 or to top speed when power cuts off.

Witnesses also have described the car as going well over 90 mph, perhaps close to 120 mph.

Also, police say the car, equipped with anti-lock brakes, left 53 feet of skid marks — another indication of high speed.

It isn't clear how many paparazzi are tailing the car, and at what distance. A lawyer for Al Fayed says a "cortege" of paparazzi were "swarming" the car. But one photographer, Lazlo Veres, says they were at least 550 yards behind.

Seconds after the car enters the tunnel in the left westbound lane, it goes out of control, striking the 13th concrete pillar dividing the tunnel, rolls over and rebounds into the right wall. It then spins around.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 27 of 65

When the car stops, it is facing east — the direction it came from.

The driver's body is slumped over the horn. The impact is so great that parts of the radiator are reportedly found embedded in his body. Fayed, behind him on the left side of the car, also is killed immediately.

Jack and Robin Firestone, tourists from Long Island in New York, are walking near the tunnel when they hear the awful noise. They run in. In interviews, they, too, describe photographers "swarming" the wreck.

Yet a doctor who says he was driving through the tunnel in the other direction just after the accident, arriving before rescuers did, says he wasn't hindered by the photographers.

Dr. Frederic Mailliez says Diana "was unconscious, moaning and gesturing in every direction" as she fought for breath.

"There were 10 or 15 photographers around, and they were snapping photos nonstop, but I cannot say they hindered my work," he says.

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12:27 a.m.: Firefighters get the first call for help.

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About 12:40 a.m.: Police and firefighters arrive. Diana and bodyguard Rees-Jones are still alive. The car is a crumpled mass of metal and glass.

Police arrest six photographers and one motorcyclist, confiscating their film and cellular phones.

Rescuers need to cut through the roof of the car to get the victims out. They finally extract Diana through the back. Meanwhile, emergency doctors have been trying to treat her at the scene.

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2 a.m.: Diana is bleeding heavily from the chest when she arrives at Hospital La Pitié Salpêtrière, along with the bodyguard. She quickly goes into cardiac arrest.

Doctors close a wound to the left pulmonary vein, then try to revive her with two hours of chest massage — first externally and then directly to the heart. It fails.

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4 a.m.: Diana is declared dead.

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6 a.m.: "The death of the Princess of Wales," says British ambassador Michael Jay, with doctors at a hospital news conference, "fills us all with shock and deep grief."

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## Volunteer sniper embodies Ukraine's versatile military

By DEREK GATOPOULOS and ADAM PEMBLE Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Before taking a shot, Ukrainian sniper Andriy buries his face in a foldout mat, breathing slowly and deliberately.

"I need to be completely relaxed, to find a place where I will not move the rifle when I pull the trigger," he says. "I don't think about anything. It's a kind of vacuum."

In a semicircle around his head are boxes of bullets, printouts of charts, a heavy-duty stapler and a roll of tape.

Strapped to his wrist is a monitor, which is the shape of a jewelry box. It's a ballistics calculator to factor in the wind and other surrounding conditions. Bees persistently circling his head and scope are ignored.

After a long pause, he says the word "shot" in Ukrainian.

Crack! A sound not unlike a starting gun used at sporting events produces a reflexive jolt in people unaccustomed to war.

Six months ago, the noise might have startled Andriy, who had moved to Western Europe to pursue a career in engineering.

His experience resembles that of many Ukrainians who returned home to the war, abruptly pulled from civilian life to embrace fighting methods — modern but also makeshift — that have held back the far larger Russian military.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 28 of 65

Andriy comes from Bucha, a district near Kyiv's airport that was hammered during the Russian advance. Hundreds of civilian killings took place there, the bodies found in mass graves or left lying where they were shot in what the United Nations describes as potential war crimes.

Tall and with a good command of English, the sniper spoke to The Associated Press while practicing alone at an informal firing range near Kyiv, hoping to resolve some issues with his weapon through hours of trial and error before his next deployment.

He asked only to be identified by his first name and that some details of his civilian life remain private.

Andriy scrambled home, taking a flight to Budapest and arranging an 1,200-kilometer (750-mile) overland route that included paying "a big amount of money" to a driver willing to take a risky journey eastward. Within a few days he had joined the ferocious fight around Kyiv, adopting the war nickname "Samurai."

He bought his own gear and a U.S.-made sniper rifle, and began receiving training from a special forces instructor, connected through friends in the military.

"Early in the morning on Feb. 24, I received a call from my mother. She lives in Bucha and told me the war had started. She could hear helicopters, airplanes, bombing and explosions. I decided to return," he said.

While not allowed to discuss any specifics of his operational activity, Andriy describes Ukraine's military as a force that prides itself on flexibility, harnessing a wide range of skills from its personnel to become more versatile in combat.

Snipers, he said, are often used to spot Russian military positions for artillery targeting.

"I have also gained experience in tactical medicine, with drones and shooting with assault rifles," he said.

Military specialists are encouraged to learn new skills and even find their own equipment, with Western suppliers still delivering to Ukraine in a private market that is monitored by the army.

To protect his hearing, Andriy acquired a set of hunter's headphones that suppress the noise from his rifle while amplifying voices. "You really need these," he says.

Russia has more than doubled the territory it controls in Ukraine since launching the invasion in February, to about 20% of the country, but Andriy shares the optimism of many fellow Ukrainians that victory will be possible after the winter.

"I think with the help of our friends in Europe and the United States that we can push them out of our territory," he said.

His desire to become a sniper came from a familiarity with hunting rifles, common in Ukraine, and playing the role of a distance shooter in video games.

But his goal at war: "It's to return to my home, to my family," he says.

"No one of us wanted to be a warrior, a shooter, a sniper. It's just a necessity to be here now and do what we're doing here."

After a pause he adds: "I don't know how to explain this: I don't like to kill people. It's not something you want to do, but it's something you have to do."

## Women race political clock, cross state lines for abortions

By LINDSEY TANNER AND PATRICK ORSAGOS Associated Press

DAYTON, OHIO (AP) — In the dim light of a clinic ultrasound room, Monica Eberhart reclines on an exam table as a nurse moves a probe across her belly. Waves of fetal cardiac activity ripple across the screen.

"The heartbeat," the nurse says. "About 10 weeks and two days."

Eberhart exhales. It's good news. "That means I'm just under," she says, raising her hands and crossing her fingers.

The 23-year-old mother of three is racing a political clock. When she learned she was pregnant again, she decided abortion was her best choice — even if meant navigating a patchwork of state laws enacted since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*.

Hours after the ruling in late June, Ohio imposed a ban on abortions once cardiac activity can be detected, at about six weeks of pregnancy. Since then, Women's Med clinic in Dayton has been referring hundreds of patients like Eberhart to its sister facility of the same name in Indiana, 120 miles away. There,



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 29 of 65

in-clinic abortions are allowed until 13 weeks and six days of pregnancy — for now. Indiana lawmakers recently approved a ban on almost all abortions, after weeks of debate in the Statehouse. The law takes effect Sept. 15.

At just over 10 weeks into her pregnancy, Eberhart will need to travel to Indianapolis for an abortion. It's disruptive, an inconvenience — but she's more than ready. With new state laws and court challenges popping up on what seems like a daily basis, she doesn't want to wait any longer.

"I have to get it done, I can't really wait. I've put everything on hold just to get this one thing handled," Eberhart says. "I absolutely cannot afford another baby, whether that be financially or mentally."

Women's Med has performed few abortions in Ohio since the state ban was enacted; most women don't learn they're pregnant until after six weeks. The Dayton clinic, a two-story building that blends into its leafy suburban surroundings, has been in business for almost 40 years. Recent days have become increasingly chaotic, workers say.

They see desperate patients — a teenager who was raped, women with ectopic pregnancies, families unfamiliar with Ohio law. Some workers have left for more stable jobs. Those who remain say they're determined to keep helping patients, even when it means sending them out of state.

"We are going to see as many people and do as much for these people as we can until we close down," says Dr. Jeanne Corwin, who works at both clinics. She knows they're likely to shutter next month. Until then, she focuses on preparing her Ohio patients to travel.

During Eberhart's visit, she and Corwin sit in her office. States have various requirements on what patients must be told -- procedure details, after-care instructions, birth control methods. But Indiana, Corwin explains, requires her to give what she derides as false information about fetal pain, and to discuss medical cremation. It is, she says, a bureaucratic process aimed at dissuading abortions.

Eberhart listens. Like most women at the clinic, she is undeterred.

The Indiana clinic can squeeze her in the next day, despite the influx of patients. The appointment gives her just enough time to meet Indiana's requirement for an 18-hour waiting period after the in-person education and counseling session. Anti-abortion advocates hope some women will decide against the procedure in that window, but Eberhart knows what she wants.

A manager for a beauty supply store, she lives paycheck to paycheck, and she struggles with postpartum depression from the birth of her youngest. She relies on her parents to help care for all three kids -- ages 4, 3 and 10 months.

"Love my kids to death, and they're everything I would ever want in my life," she says. "But if I, rationally speaking, could choose to do it over ... no kids at 18. Wait till I'm like 35. Wait till I have a whole house, a pension, a 401(k), a savings, three cars. Like, wait till you are financially able and stable."

Her children are staying with her parents for a few days; Eberhart wants them to know nothing of her plans. That night, at her unusually quiet house, Eberhart plays video games and watches TV. She doesn't feel scared or worried. Still, she struggles to sleep.

In the morning, the father, a friend who's been supportive of Eberhart's decision to seek an abortion, arrives to pick her up.

"I'm finally on my way," she tells herself. She manages to nap during the 2.5-hour drive, hoping to stave off pregnancy-induced nausea.

They arrive about noon at the Indianapolis clinic — a low-slung, nondescript building in a modest neighborhood. As at the Ohio facility, anti-abortion demonstrators gather here nearly every day, and an armed security guard is posted at the door.

Opponents believe unrestricted abortions disregard human life and argue that strict limits or bans are needed to protect the unborn. For Eberhart, the demonstrators are a nonfactor in her decision. Adoption was never an option for her — she spent time in foster care herself and says she knows the system is overflowing with children. She wants to move forward with the abortion; then, as she'll later say, "no more unplanned babies."

Eberhart and a steady stream of other patients file into the clinic. They sit, some fidgeting on padded

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 30 of 65

waiting-room chairs, staring at pastel walls and a droning soap opera on the TV. Each feels the urgency brought on by looming legislation.

There's the nurse who got pregnant when her IUD failed. The 27-year-old is still breastfeeding her 5-month-old and recovering from ovarian-cyst surgery. She and her partner worry that another pregnancy is too dangerous. At 11 weeks pregnant, she, too, traveled from Ohio.

A retail worker in Louisville got a ride from a friend when her appointment was abruptly canceled over a new state ban there. Indiana's waiting period means she'll have to make the two-hour drive again, another day. The 27-year-old was on birth control when she got pregnant.

A factory worker from southern Indiana says her strict, Catholic father would disown her over an abortion. She's certain she's going to hell. But as a 28-year-old single mom, she knows she can't raise another child.

A high school honor student got pregnant when her boyfriend's condom broke. She told her mom, who revealed a secret she'd kept even from her husband — she had two abortions long ago, before marriage, when any notion that *Roe v. Wade* could be overturned seemed remote.

All these women — who spoke to AP on condition of anonymity, over fears that family and friends would learn of their abortion plans — will see Dr. Katie McHugh. She and the other staff in Indianapolis are performing twice as many abortions as they did before the Supreme Court ruling. In July, 474 patients had abortions there, compared with just over 200 in May. At least half come from other states.

McHugh sees more fear in her patients these days, and she tries to extend extra kindness. "There's a sense of desperation," she says. "They feel so lucky that they got in just under the wire."

Depending on laws in patients' home states, the clinic offers abortion by procedure or pills, with women taking two prescription medicines days apart. It's the preferred and most common method to terminate pregnancy in the country, typically for women up to 70 days into pregnancy.

Eberhart is barely past that limit — but even if she qualified, she'd still need to have the more invasive medical procedure to empty her womb. The clinic won't risk the legal liability of patients using the pills back home, in more restrictive states.

Over an hour after arrival, it's time for Eberhart's procedure. The doctor tells her, "I'm sorry you had to come all the way here, but we're glad we can help."

Eberhart lies down on the exam table in a cramped procedure room and places her feet in the stirrups, a paper sheet covering her legs — much like an ordinary gynecological exam.

McHugh talks Eberhart through each step — feeling for the uterus, applying a numbing medication. Eberhart winces as she feels a pinch, then relaxes. She makes a bit of small talk, telling the doctor about her kids.

McHugh inserts a thin, hollow tube. It's attached to larger tubing and a suctioning pump. McHugh uses it to remove the pregnancy.

The procedure is over in five minutes. Eberhart feels little pain. McHugh tells her to take care.

Eberhart moves to a recovery area, rests on a reclining chair and snacks on a small bag of chips.

"I'm generally in good spirits," she says. "I knew what I signed up for."

Over the next few days, she has minor cramps, some hormonal moodiness — but no regrets.

Mostly, she feels an overwhelming sense of relief — that she was able to find a clinic to give her the care she wanted, that the fast-closing window for abortion had remained open long enough.

"I just want to do what's right for my body and my life," she said.

## Ex-classmates recall Safeway gunman as angry, liked to fight

By GILLIAN FLACCUS Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — The 20-year-old who opened fire in a Bend, Oregon, supermarket, killing two before he turned the gun on himself, was a loner who was passionate about mixed martial arts and was known for getting into fights at the high school where he graduated in 2020.

The shooter, identified Monday by police as Ethan Blair Miller, of Bend, "tried to fight quite literally everybody" at Mountain View High School, former classmate Isaac Thomas told The Associated Press. Thomas

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 31 of 65

said the gunman once threatened to shoot him after a fight at their school.

Police confirmed Monday they are investigating the "shooter's writings" but declined to comment further on postings on several online platforms that appear to have been written by him in recent months.

In posts on several sites, someone who appears to be the gunman says he's struggled to recover from the isolation and loneliness of the pandemic, expresses hatred for himself and indicates he planned to attack his alma mater next week, but couldn't wait until then because "the Rage has become uncontrollable."

Authorities sought a search warrant for digital devices found at the gunman's apartment and it will take several days to go through those materials and develop a clearer picture, said Police Chief Mike Krantz.

"We have that information. A lot of people sent us follow-up information about what has been posted on social media or other outlets and our investigators will sift through that information and make those connections — if it's truly connected— and ensure that we have accurate information," he said.

Police have no evidence of prior contact with the gunman and he had no criminal record in the area, authorities said.

Federal officials were also trying to determine where the gunman got the AR-15-style weapon and shot-gun he brought into the store, whether the guns were obtained legally and why he chose the supermarket for his deadly rampage. They found three Molotov cocktails in his car along with a sawed-off shotgun and more ammunition in his apartment, said Bend police spokeswoman Sheila Miller, who is not related to the shooter.

Thomas, the former classmate, said the shooter had worked at the Safeway and Thomas had run into him there two years ago.

Police credited a Safeway employee and 20-year U.S. Army veteran who was killed in the shooting with possibly forestalling a worse outcome and called the actions of 66-year-old Donald Ray Surret Jr. heroic.

"Mr. Surret engaged with the shooter, attempted to disarm him and may very well have prevented further deaths. Mr. Surret acted heroically turning this terrible event," the police spokeswoman said.

Customer Glenn Edward Bennett, 84, of Bend, was also killed Sunday evening, police said.

The gunman lived in an apartment complex behind The Forum Shopping Center. Witnesses said he began shooting Sunday evening as soon as he left the complex and continued firing as he entered the shopping complex's parking lot and then went into the Safeway.

Bennett was killed at the store's entrance, police said, and the shooter then moved through the aisles "spraying shots" from the assault rifle until Surret confronted him. The entire incident — from the first 911 calls to officers discovering the suspect dead in the store — unfolded in four minutes, Miller said.

Police entered the supermarket from the front and rear as shots were still being fired.

Debora Jean Surret, the ex-wife of the Safeway employee killed in the attack, told AP in a phone interview that Surret served in the Army for 20 years as a combat engineer. He wasn't deployed to active combat zones, but during the 20 years they were married from 1975 to 1995, they were stationed in Germany three times and lived on military bases across the U.S.

Bend Mayor Pro Tem Anthony Broadman said Americans "need to guard against the cynicism of thinking of these attacks on order and peace as regular, unavoidable things. I won't accept that."

"We know that in the face of the kind of chaos that we saw last night, we had brave first responders, brave citizens, people willing to stand up for their neighbors," he added.

The shooter graduated from Mountain View High School in Bend in 2020, according to online records, and Thomas remembered him as an extremely combative person who had few friends.

Thomas said he was suspended for a week as a freshman for fighting with the gunman. The gunman held onto a grudge from that fight and once threatened to shoot him, Thomas told AP.

"At one point he said he was going to shoot me and I was like, 'Get over yourself' because I didn't think he had a gun, but I guess I was wrong," Thomas said.

Thomas recalled running into the shooter in 2020 in the parking lot of the Safeway, where the gunman was gathering up carts as part of his job. He recognized him and threatened him again although several years had gone by, Thomas said.

"It was kind of crazy when I heard about it," he said of the shooting. "But it makes sense that he chose

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 32 of 65

Safeway because he worked there and he knew the layout.”

Bend is a city of about 97,000 approximately 160 miles (257 kilometers) southeast of Portland, Oregon.

## **Biden to talk crime, gun control in swing state Pennsylvania**

By CHRIS MEGERIAN and MARC LEVY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden is ready to talk up his crime prevention plans during a visit to Pennsylvania, where Democrats and Republicans are looking for ways to gain leverage on the issue ahead of November’s midterm elections.

The White House said Biden will use his Tuesday visit to call out Republicans for opposing his proposal to restore a ban on assault-style weapons.

Both parties worked together in a rare effort to pass bipartisan gun safety legislation earlier this year after massacres in Buffalo, New York, and Uvalde, Texas, but Biden has repeatedly said more needs to be done.

As a U.S. senator, Biden played a leading role in temporarily banning assault-style weapons, including firearms similar to the AR-15 that have exploded in popularity in recent years, and he wants to put the law back into place.

“A majority of Americans support this ... the NRA opposes it,” White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Monday. “So we’re going to hear from the president about the importance of making sure we protect our communities.”

Biden’s speech at Wilkes University in Wilkes-Barre comes as Democrats try to blunt Republican efforts to use concern about crime to their advantage in the midterms.

It’s a particularly fraught issue in Pennsylvania, a key swing state where a U.S. Senate seat and the governor’s office are up for grabs.

The Republican candidate for governor, Doug Mastriano, accuses Democrat Josh Shapiro of being soft on crime as the state’s twice-elected attorney general, saying at one recent event that crime has gone up on his opponent’s watch and that Shapiro “stands aside” as homicides rise across Pennsylvania.

Homicides have been increasing in Pennsylvania, but overall crime seems to have fallen over the last year, according to state statistics.

As attorney general since 2017, Shapiro has toured the state discussing the need to crack down on gun trafficking and ghost guns, and to recruit more police officers. Last December, he said that state agents and Philadelphia police officers working together had reduced the number of shootings in areas that were confronting gun violence related to drug trafficking.

Shapiro plans to attend Tuesday’s event with Biden.

The Republican U.S. Senate nominee, heart surgeon turned television celebrity Dr. Mehmet Oz, has tried to portray the Democratic candidate, Lt. Gov. John Fetterman, as extreme and reckless on crime policy.

Fetterman has endorsed recommendations that more geriatric and rehabilitated prisoners can be released from state prisons without harming public safety. Oz and Republicans have distorted that into the claim that Fetterman wants to release “dangerous criminals” from prisons or that he’s in favor of “emptying prisons.”

Fetterman does not plan to be in Wilkes-Barre with Biden, but he’s expected to march in Pittsburgh’s Labor Day parade when the president visits Monday. Biden also will be in Pennsylvania on Thursday for a prime-time speech that the White House said will address “the continued battle for the soul of the nation” and defending democracy.

It’s unclear whether crime will end up as a pivotal issue in November.

Only 11% of U.S. adults named crime or violence as one of the top five issues they consider most important for the government to work on in the next year, according to an AP-NORC poll conducted in June. That’s unchanged since December, and it’s well below the percentage naming many of the other top issues for Americans.

Biden has tried to balance his approach to crime by acknowledging voters’ fears and praising law enforcement, but also urging more accountability for officers.

He’s rejected the activist slogan “defund the police,” which Republicans have used as a cudgel against



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 33 of 65

Democrats in general, by calling for more money for cops.

Jean-Pierre said Monday that Biden will speak in Wilkes-Barre about the "simple basic notion that when it comes to public safety in this nation, the answer isn't to defund the police, but to fund the police."

Biden also plans to talk about the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol and the role that law enforcement played in defending Congress. He previously focused on that issue in a virtual address to the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives on July 25.

"The police were heroes that day," he said. "Donald Trump lacked the courage to act. The brave women and men in blue all across this nation should never forget that. You can't be pro-insurrection and pro-cop."

Biden's trip to Wilkes-Barre was originally scheduled for July 21 but was cancelled when the president contracted COVID-19 and went into isolation while he was contagious.

Biden has laid out a \$37 billion plan for addressing crime and boosting law enforcement resources. He wants Congress to spend \$13 billion to help communities hire and train 100,000 police officers over five years. Another \$3 billion would go to clearing court backlogs and resolving cases involving murders and guns, and \$5 billion more would go to support programs that could help stop violence before it occurs.

In addition, Biden is looking for \$15 billion to provide grants to initiatives for preventing violent crime or creating public health responses to nonviolent incidents.

## Asian stocks after Wall St pullback on Fed inflation stance

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Asian stocks were mixed Tuesday after Wall Street fell following last week's Federal Reserve pledge to fight inflation by keeping interest rates elevated.

Shanghai and Hong Kong fell while Tokyo and South Korea advanced. Oil prices retreated.

Wall Street's benchmark S&P 500 index lost 0.7% on Monday, adding to last week's losses.

Stocks tumbled after Fed chair Jerome Powell indicated Friday the U.S. central bank will stick to a strategy of rate hikes to cool inflation that is running at multi-decade highs. That appeared to quiet speculation the Fed might ease off due to signs economic activity is cooling.

"Markets are still digesting Jay Powell's hard-hitting message on inflation containment," said Venkateswaran Lavanya of Mizuho Bank in a report, while the European Central Bank also is giving "more hawkish" signals.

The Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.6% to 3,220.47 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong tumbled 1.3% to 19,762.31.

The Nikkei 225 in Tokyo gained 1% to 28,162.52 after the official unemployment rate for July held steady and the labor participation rate, or the share of the working-age population that is in jobs, stayed at a record high.

The Kospi in Seoul added 0.7% to 2,443.90 and Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 gained 0.5% to 6,996.60.

New Zealand and Southeast Asian markets also advanced.

On Wall Street, the S&P 500 fell to 4,030.61. On Friday, the benchmark index lost 3.4% in its biggest one-day drop in two months.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 0.6% to 32,098.99. The Nasdaq composite tumbled 1% to 12,017.67.

Selling was widespread. Tech and health care stocks were the biggest decliners. Energy and utilities stocks rose.

Investors worry rate hikes by the Fed and by central banks in Europe and Asia might derail global economic growth.

Fed officials point to a strong U.S. job market as evidence the biggest global economy can tolerate higher borrowing costs. Some acknowledge a recession is possible but say that might be necessary to extinguish surging inflation.

The Fed has raised interest rates four times this year. The latest two were by 0.75 percentage points, three times its usual margin.

Some investors had hoped that the Fed would ease up if inflation subsides. That sentiment led to a rally

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 34 of 65

for stocks in July and early August.

Investors expect another large hike at the Fed's September meeting, though the likelihood of such a big increase is smaller following weaker-than-forecast July retail sales.

The Fed's preferred gauge of inflation decelerated last month, while other data shows consumer spending slowed. Wall Street will get several more updates on the economy this week.

In energy markets, benchmark U.S. crude lost 39 cents to \$96.62 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract soared \$3.95 on Monday to \$97.01. Brent crude, the price basis for international trading, shed 69 cents to \$102.24 per barrel in London. It jumped \$4.10 the previous session to \$105.09.

The dollar declined to 138.55 yen from Monday's 138.83 yen. The euro rose to 99.99 cents from 99.92 cents.

## In new gun law, a quiet breakthrough for victims of abuse

By FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nikiesha Thomas was on her way to work one day when she told her sister that she was thinking about getting involved with domestic violence prevention.

The idea gave Keeda Simpson pause. Her younger sister had never mentioned anything like that before, and she was bringing it up in a phone call just days after filing for a protective order against her ex-boyfriend.

It was their last conversation.

Less than an hour later, Thomas' ex-boyfriend walked up to her parked car in a southeastern neighborhood of the nation's capital and shot through her passenger window, killing the 33-year-old.

It's cases like hers, where warning signs and legal paperwork weren't enough to save a life, that lawmakers had in mind this summer when they crafted the first major bipartisan law on gun violence in decades.

The measure signed by President Joe Biden in June was part of a response to a harrowing string of shootings over the summer, including the slaying of 19 children at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas.

The package included tougher background checks for the youngest gun buyers and help for states to put in place "red flag" laws that make it easier for authorities to take weapons from people adjudged dangerous.

Also tucked into the bill was a proposal that will make it more difficult for a convicted domestic abuser to obtain firearms even when the abuser is not married to or doesn't have a child with the victim.

Nearly a decade in the making, lawmakers' move to close the "boyfriend loophole" received far less attention than other aspects of the legislation. But advocates and lawmakers are hopeful this provision will save lives and become a major part of the law's legacy.

"We have so many women killed — one every 14 hours, from domestic partners with guns in this country," Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., a longtime advocate for the proposal, said before passage of the bill in June. "Sadly, half of those involve dating partners, people who aren't married to someone, but they are in a romantic relationship with them in some way."

Federal law has long barred people convicted of domestic violence or subject to a domestic violence restraining order from being able to buy a gun. But that restriction had only applied to an individual who is married to the victim, lived with the victim or had a child with the victim. As a result, it missed a whole group of perpetrators — current and former boyfriends or intimate partners — sometimes with fatal consequences.

At least 19 states and the District of Columbia have taken action on this issue, according to data compiled by Everytown for Gun Safety. Klobuchar and domestic violence advocates have worked for years to do the same on the federal level, with little success.

The struggle over defining a boyfriend in the law remained difficult to the end. Negotiations in Congress nearly broke down over the provision. The same thing happened in March when a similar bipartisan effort to reauthorize a 1990s-era law that extended protections to victims of domestic and sexual violence

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 35 of 65

passed only after Democratic lawmakers took out the loophole provision to ensure Republican support. "That was the toughest issue in our negotiations," Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., a lead negotiator of the gun package, said of the loophole proposal. "The biggest discussion that took us a long time at the end was around the question of how you would get your rights back after you had been prohibited."

Murphy and other Democratic negotiators were able to persuade Republicans by including a narrow path to restoring access to firearms for first-time offenders after five years, only if they are not convicted of another misdemeanor for violent crime. For married couples, and those who have had a child together, the firearm ban is permanent.

To some advocates, more change is still needed. The legislation only partially closes the loophole because dating partners subject to a domestic violence restraining order, as in Thomas' case, are still able to buy and maintain access to firearms.

"It will for sure save lives. But also to be clear, this is a partial closure of what's known as the boyfriend loophole. There's still a lot of work to be done," Jennifer Becker, the legal director and senior attorney for Legal Momentum, a legal defense and education fund for women, told The Associated Press.

Federal crime data for 2020 showed that out of all murder victims among intimate partners — including divorced and gay couples — girlfriends accounted for 37%, while wives accounted for 34%. Only 13% of the victims were boyfriends, and 7% were husbands.

In 2018, a group of researchers who looked at intimate partner homicides in 45 states from 1980 to 2013 found that when firearm prohibitions linked to domestic restraining orders included people who were dating, deaths dropped by 13%.

"It suggests that when you cast that wider net, by covering boyfriends, you are able to cover people who are more dangerous and potentially save more lives," April Zeoli, a researcher at the University of Michigan who was part of that study, told the AP.

Thomas' family hopes the changes in the law will save lives and ensure their daughter's death wasn't in vain. They say Thomas was doing everything she could to protect herself when she left her yearslong relationship with 36-year-old Antoine Oliver in late September 2021.

It was only after her death in October that her family members found out that the protective order Thomas had filed three days earlier, detailing how her former partner had access to firearms and she felt unsafe, was never served. Sheriff's deputies in Prince George's County, Maryland, where Thomas and Oliver lived, had been trying to reach him by phone.

When law enforcement finally reached Oliver, he told them he would come to accept service of the judicial order the following day. Instead, authorities said, he killed Thomas that day before fatally shooting himself.

"Some days I just sit and review the paper she had filed with the court just a few days prior and just think, what else could she have done to protect herself?" said Nadine Thomas, her mother. Gilbert Thomas, her father, said his daughter did everything she was supposed to do, but it was the system that failed her.

"She feared for her life and what did the police do? They called him and made arrangements for him to come to pick up the order," he said. "There was no urgency placed on it."

But now the family is bracing for the anniversary of Thomas' killing. The weight of grief is heavy, particularly for her 11-year-old daughter, Kylei, whom Thomas had from a relationship before she met Oliver.

In the months before her death, Thomas had been making plans to buy a home for her and her daughter. She was saving up from her job with the D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education, where she was assigned to an intervention program to help some of the district's most challenged students.

"We really were starting to map out some things and it just got taken away," her sister, Keeda Simpson, said. "One of the last things we talked about was her wanting to evoke change for other women.

"I'm going to do whatever it takes — even if it's a small thing — to help someone else that's in her situation, not to lose their life," she added.

## Containers are no hindrance for migrants on Arizona border

By ELLIOT SPAGAT Associated Press

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 36 of 65

YUMA, Ariz. (AP) — Hours before Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey declared “a major step forward to secure our border” with the installation of 130 double-stacked shipping containers, hundreds of migrants found their way around them, belying his claim.

They walked through tribal lands to the edge of a towering wall built during Donald Trump’s presidency to surrender to border agents waiting outside the reservation, expecting to be released in the U.S. to pursue asylum.

Families, young parents carrying toddlers, elderly people and others easily waded through the knee-deep Colorado River before dawn Wednesday, many in sandals with shopping bags slung over their shoulders.

The wall isn’t the issue it was in 2018 when Congress denied Trump funding for one of his top priorities, prompting the longest government shutdown in U.S. history. But last week’s events in Yuma are a reminder of obstacles that the government faces with border barriers: difficulty building on tribal land, most notably in the Tohono O’odham Nation in Arizona, and opposition from landowners, especially in Texas, where, unlike other border states, much property is privately owned.

Ducey’s critics have seized on images from Univision network showing two containers that toppled during 11 days of construction for unknown reasons. Gary Restaino, the top federal prosecutor in Arizona, used a bilateral meeting in Mexico City to needle the governor Friday, tweeting, “We’re not dumping a bunch of shipping containers in the desert and calling it a wall to get cheap press.” Ducey retorted that “we’ve taken matters into our own hands” because the federal government hasn’t done enough.

Migrants continue to avoid barriers by going around them — in this case, through a 5-mile (8-kilometer) gap in the Cocopah Indian Reservation near Yuma, a desert city of about 100,000 people between San Diego and Phoenix that has become a major spot for illegal crossings.

President Joe Biden halted wall construction his first day in office, leaving billions of dollars of work unfinished but still under contract. Trump worked feverishly in his final months to reach more than 450 miles (720 kilometers), nearly one-fourth of the entire border.

The Biden administration has made rare exceptions for small projects at areas deemed unsafe for people to cross, including four gaps in Yuma. It expects to award a contract for Yuma this fall and take up to 28 months to complete work.

When U.S. Customs and Border Protection announced its Yuma plans in July, Ducey said he couldn’t wait. Like fellow Republican Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas, he has sparred with the Democratic administration over immigration policies, often suing and recently offering free bus rides to the East Coast for asylum-seekers who are released in the United States to pursue their cases.

“Arizona did the job the federal government has failed to do — and we showed them just how quickly and efficiently the border can be made more secure — if you want to,” Ducey said to celebrate installation of the containers, which run the length of 13 football fields in five locations combined.

A string of 44 double-stacked containers ends abruptly in an open desert expanse. Farther north, at the Morelos Dam, containers plug several openings in an area that had become less traveled in recent months.

The day Ducey declared his project complete, the Border Patrol encountered a fairly typical count of about 850 migrants entering the country illegally in its Yuma sector. Most were dropped off by bus or hired vehicle on the Mexican side and walked through the reservation in darkness under a crescent moon.

Migrants used vehicle barriers, dirt roads and flashlights on their phones to guide them to Border Patrol agents outside tribal lands to be taken into custody.

CBP hasn’t commented on Ducey’s containers but says its plan to plug gaps in the Trump-style barrier of steel poles topped with a metal plate up to 30 feet (9.1 meters) high will make a difference by funneling traffic to fewer areas.

“If Yuma has 10 gaps and people were crossing all 10 gaps, it’s much more difficult for us to deal with than if Yuma has one or two gaps and the majority of traffic is crossing through those gaps,” said John Modlin, chief of the Border Patrol’s Tucson, Arizona, sector.

Asked for comment, the Cocopah Indian Tribe referred to a May 2020 letter to CBP expressing strong opposition to a wall, saying it would cut access to the river and tribal members in Mexico.

The tribe also released video showing its interim police chief, Arlene Martinez, outlining other cooperative



measures with the Border Patrol, such as surveillance cameras and ground sensors. "Cocopah supports efforts to secure the border and always has," she said.

## **EXPLAINER: Pakistan fatal flooding has hallmarks of warming**

By SETH BORENSTEIN and SIBI ARASU Associated Press

The familiar ingredients of a warming world were in place: searing temperatures, hotter air holding more moisture, extreme weather getting wilder, melting glaciers, people living in harm's way, and poverty. They combined in vulnerable Pakistan to create unrelenting rain and deadly flooding.

The flooding has all the hallmarks of a catastrophe juiced by climate change, but it is too early to formally assign blame to global warming, several scientists tell The Associated Press. It occurred in a country that did little to cause the warming, but keeps getting hit, just like the relentless rain.

"This year Pakistan has received the highest rainfall in at least three decades. So far this year the rain is running at more than 780% above average levels," said Abid Qaiyum Suleri, executive director of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute and a member of Pakistan's Climate Change Council. "Extreme weather patterns are turning more frequent in the region and Pakistan is not an exception."

Climate Minister Sherry Rehman said "it's been a catastrophe of unprecedented proportions."

Pakistan "is considered the eighth most vulnerable country to climate change," said Moshin Hafeez, a Lahore-based climate scientist at the International Water Management Institute. Its rain, heat and melting glaciers are all climate change factors scientists warned repeatedly about.

While scientists point out these classic climate change fingerprints, they have not yet finished intricate calculations that compare what happened in Pakistan to what would happen in a world without warming. That study, expected in a few weeks, will formally determine how much climate change is a factor, if at all.

The "recent flood in Pakistan is actually an outcome of the climate catastrophe ... that was looming very large," said Anjal Prakash, a research director at India's Bharti Institute of Public Policy. "The kind of incessant rainfall that has happened ... has been unprecedented."

Pakistan is used to monsoons and downpours, but "we do expect them spread out, usually over three months or two months," said the country's climate minister Rehman.

There are usually breaks, she said, and not as much rain -- 37.5 centimeters (14.8 inches) falls in one day, nearly three times higher than the national average for the past three decades. "Neither is it so prolonged. ... It's been eight weeks and we are told we might see another downpour in September."

"Clearly, it's being juiced by climate change," said Jennifer Francis, a climate scientist at the Woodwell Climate Research Center in Massachusetts.

There's been a 400% increase in average rainfall in areas like Baluchistan and Sindh, which led to the extreme flooding, Hafeez said. At least 20 dams have been breached.

The heat has been as relentless as the rain. In May, Pakistan consistently saw temperatures above 45 degrees Celsius (113 Fahrenheit). Scorching temperatures higher than 50 degrees Celsius (122 Fahrenheit) were recorded in places like Jacobabad and Dadu.

Warmer air holds more moisture -- about 7% more per degree Celsius (4% per degree Fahrenheit) — and that eventually comes down, in this case in torrents.

Across the world "intense rain storms are getting more intense," said Princeton University climate scientist Michael Oppenheimer. And he said mountains, like those in Pakistan, help wring extra moisture out as the clouds pass.

Instead of just swollen rivers flooding from extra rain, Pakistan is hit with another source of flash flooding: The extreme heat accelerates the long-term glacier melting then water speeds down from the Himalayas to Pakistan in a dangerous phenomenon called glacial lake outburst floods.

"We have the largest number of glaciers outside the polar region, and this affects us," climate minister Rehman said. "Instead of keeping their majesty and preserving them for posterity and nature. We are seeing them melt."

Not all of the problem is climate change.

Pakistan saw similar flooding and devastation in 2010 that killed nearly 2,000 people. But the government didn't implement plans to prevent future flooding by preventing construction and homes in flood prone areas and river beds, said Suleri of the country's Climate Change Council.

The disaster is hitting a poor country that has contributed relatively little to the world's climate problem, scientists and officials said. Since 1959, Pakistan has emitted about 0.4% of heat-trapping carbon dioxide, compared to 21.5% by the United States and 16.4% by China.

"Those countries that have developed or gotten rich on the back of fossil fuels, which are the problem really," Rehman said. "They're going to have to make a critical decision that the world is coming to a tipping point. We certainly have already reached that point because of our geographical location."

## Clashes erupt after Iraqi Shiite cleric resigns, 15 dead

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA and SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — An influential Shiite cleric announced Monday that he would resign from Iraqi politics, prompting hundreds of his angry followers to storm the government palace and sparking clashes with security forces. At least 15 protesters were killed.

Protesters loyal to cleric Muqtada al-Sadr pulled down the cement barriers outside the government palace with ropes and breached the palace gates. Many rushed into the lavish salons and marbled halls of the palace, a key meeting place for Iraqi heads of state and foreign dignitaries.

Iraq's military announced a nationwide curfew, and the caretaker premier suspended Cabinet sessions in response to the violence. Medical officials said dozens of protesters were wounded by gunfire and tear gas and physical altercations with riot police.

As night fell, Saraya Salam, a militia aligned with al-Sadr clashed with the Popular Mobilization Forces security group. A small force from the special forces division and Iraqi Army's 9th Division also joined to contain the militants as the clashes continued for hours inside the Green Zone, the seat of Iraq's government.

At least one soldier from the special forces division, which is responsible for security in the Green Zone, was killed. Many others, including a civilian woman, were wounded, two security officials said. Several mortar rounds were heard.

The crackle of machine gun fire echoed throughout central Baghdad.

The PMF is an umbrella group composed of state-sanctioned paramilitary groups, the most powerful of which are aligned with al-Sadr's rivals in the Iran-backed political camp.

Security officials said mortars and rocket-propelled grenades were used in the clashes, a culmination of intractable political impasse between the rival camps.

Iraq's government has been deadlocked since al-Sadr's party won the largest share of seats in October parliamentary elections but not enough to secure a majority government. His refusal to negotiate with his Iran-backed Shiite rivals and subsequent exit from the talks has catapulted the country into political uncertainty and volatility amid intensifying intra-Shiite wrangling.

Iraq's majority Muslim population is split into two sects, Shiites and Sunnis. Under Saddam Hussein, the Shiites were oppressed until the U.S.-led invasion reversed the political order. Now the Shiites are fighting among themselves, with the dispute centering around power and state resources but also influence over the Shiite street.

To further his political interests, al-Sadr has wrapped his rhetoric with a nationalist and reform agenda that resonates powerfully among his broad grassroots base of supporters who hail from Iraq's poorest sectors of society and have historically been shut out from the political system.

Many were first followers of his father, a revered figure in Shiite Islam. They are calling for the dissolution of parliament and early elections without the participation of Iran-backed Shiite groups, which they see as responsible for the status quo.

During Monday's clashes, Saraya Salam, a militia aligned with al-Sadr gathered in the capital's Tahrir Square to "protect" protesters, one of its commanders said.

A senior medical official confirmed at least 15 protesters were killed by gunfire.

Iraq's caretaker premier said he would open an investigation into the shootings and said the use of live

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 39 of 65

ammunition against protesters was forbidden.

Protests also broke out in the Shiite-majority southern provinces, with al-Sadr's supporters burning tires and blocking roads in the oil-rich province of Basra and hundreds demonstrating outside the governorate building in Missan.

Iran considers intra-Shiite disharmony as a threat to its influence in Iraq and has repeatedly attempted to broker dialogue with al-Sadr.

In July, Al-Sadr's supporters broke into the parliament to deter his rivals in the Coordination Framework, an alliance of mostly Iran-aligned Shiite parties, from forming a government. Hundreds have been staging a sit-in outside the building for over four weeks. His bloc has also resigned from parliament. The Framework is led by al-Sadr's chief nemesis, former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

This is not the first time al-Sadr, who has called for early elections and the dissolution of parliament, has announced his retirement from politics — and many dismissed Monday's move as another bluff to gain greater leverage against his rivals amid a worsening stalemate. The cleric has used the tactic on previous occasions when political developments did not go his way.

But many are concerned that it's a risky gambit and are worried how it will affect Iraq's fragile political climate. By stepping out of the political process, al-Sadr is giving his followers, most disenfranchised from the political system, the green light to act as they see fit.

Al-Sadr also commands a militia and maintains a great degree of influence within Iraq's state institutions through the appointments of key civil servant positions. His Iran-backed rivals also have militia groups.

Iraq's military swiftly called on the cleric's supporters to withdraw immediately from the heavily fortified government zone and to practice self-restraint "to prevent clashes or the spilling of Iraqi blood," according to a statement.

"The security forces affirm their responsibility to protect government institutions, international missions, public and private properties," the statement said.

Iraq's caretaker Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi also demanded that al-Sadr call on his followers to withdraw from government institutions.

The U.N. mission in Iraq said Monday's protests were an "extremely dangerous escalation" and called on demonstrators to vacate all government buildings to allow the caretaker government to continue running the state.

It urged all to remain peaceful and "refrain from acts that could lead to an unstoppable chain of events."

"The very survival of the state is at stake," the statement said.

Al-Sadr announced his withdrawal from politics in a tweet, and ordered the closure of his party offices. Religious and cultural institutions will remain open, it said.

The true motivations behind al-Sadr's announcement appeared to be a reaction to the retirement of Shiite spiritual leader Ayatollah Kadhim al-Haeri, who counts many of al-Sadr's supporters as followers.

In a surprise announcement Sunday, al-Haeri said he would be stepping down as a religious authority for health reasons and called on his followers to throw their allegiance behind Iran's Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, rather than the Shiite spiritual center in Iraq's holy city of Najaf.

The move was a blow to al-Sadr, who despite harboring ambitions to be a religious authority lacks the scholarly credentials to be an ayatollah. Al-Haeri, who resides in the Iranian holy city of Qom, once provided him with the legitimacy he lacked by designating al-Sadr as his representative in Iraq. He cut ties shortly after with the cleric, but continued to enjoy the support of his followers.

By calling on his followers to side with Khamenei, al-Haeri brought on a crisis of legitimacy for al-Sadr. In his tweet, al-Sadr said al-Haeri's stepping down "was not out of his own volition."

## US: Review of possibly privileged Trump papers already over

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department has completed its review of potentially privileged documents seized from former President Donald Trump's Florida estate this month and has identified "a limited set of materials that potentially contain attorney-client privileged information," according to a court filing

Monday.

The filing from the department follows a judge's weekend order indicating that she was inclined to grant the Trump legal team's request for a special master who would oversee the review of documents taken during the Aug. 8 search of the Mar-a-Lago estate and ensure that any that might be protected by claims of legal privilege be set aside.

In revealing that the department had completed its review of potentially privileged communications, law enforcement officials appeared to be suggesting that the appointment of a third-party special master might now be moot. The department had been relying on a specialized team to filter out potentially privileged communications and said Monday that it had completed its review of those materials before the judge's order.

U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon said on Saturday that it was her "preliminary intent" to appoint a special master — which would be an early procedural win for the Trump legal team — but gave the department an opportunity to respond and scheduled a Thursday hearing to discuss the matter further.

The judge also directed the Justice Department to submit under seal a more detailed description of the materials that were seized from Trump's estate in Palm Beach, something the department on Monday said it would do.

## Trump legal team advances broad view of presidential powers

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A newly unsealed FBI document about the investigation at Mar-a-Lago not only offers new details about the probe but also reveals clues about the arguments former President Donald Trump's legal team intends to make.

A May 25 letter from one of his lawyers, attached as an exhibit to the search affidavit, advances a broad view of presidential power, asserting that the commander-in-chief has absolute authority to declassify whatever he wants — and also that the "primary" law governing the handling of U.S. classified information simply doesn't apply to the president himself.

The arguments weren't persuasive enough to the Justice Department to prevent an FBI search of Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate this month, and the affidavit in any event makes clear that investigators are focused on more recent activity — long after Trump left the White House and lost the legal authorities that came with it. Even so, the letter suggests that a defense strategy anchored around presidential powers, a strategy employed during special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation when Trump actually was president, may again be in play as the probe proceeds.

It's perhaps not surprising that Trump's legal team might look for ways to distinguish a former president from other citizens given the penalties imposed over the years for mishandling government secrets, including a nine-year prison sentence issued to a former National Security Agency contractor who stored two decades' worth of classified documents at his Maryland home.

But many legal experts are dubious that claims of such presidential power will hold weight.

"When someone is no longer president, they're no longer president. That's the reality of the matter," said Oona Hathaway, a Yale Law School professor and former lawyer in the Defense Department's general counsel's office. "When you've left office, you've left office. You can't proclaim yourself to not be subject to the laws that apply to everyone else."

It's not clear from the affidavit whether Trump or anyone might face charges over the presence of classified records at Mar-a-Lago — 19 months after he became a private citizen — and FBI officials are investigating who removed the records from the White House to the Florida estate and who is responsible for retaining them in an unauthorized location.

The FBI recovered 11 sets of classified records during the Aug. 8 search, and the affidavit made public Friday said 184 documents with classified markings also were found in 15 boxes removed in January. The Justice Department, responding to a Trump team request for a legal special master to sort through the materials, said Monday that officials had completed their own review of potentially privileged documents.



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 41 of 65

No matter the outcome of that latest issue, the affidavit makes clear that investigators are focused on potential violations of three felony statutes, including an Espionage Act provision that criminalizes the willful retention or transmission of national defense information.

Another law punishable by up to three years in prison makes it a crime to willfully remove, conceal or mutilate government records. And a third law, carrying up to 20 years imprisonment, covers the destruction, alteration or falsification of records in federal investigations.

The Espionage Act statute regarding retention of national defense information has figured in multiple prosecutions. Past investigations have produced disparate results that make it hard to forecast the outcome in the Trump probe. But there have been convictions.

Harold Martin, the ex-NSA contractor, pleaded guilty in 2019 to storing troves of classified information inside his home, car and storage shed, including handwritten notes describing the NSA's classified computer infrastructure.

Which is why the Trump legal team may look to play up his status as a former president.

When it comes to handling government secrets, there are indeed some differences that could possibly be considered: Presidents, for instance, don't have to pass background checks to obtain classified information, they're not granted security clearances to access intelligence and they're not formally "read out" on their responsibilities to safeguard secrets when they leave office.

"There's no intelligence community directive that says how presidents should or shouldn't be briefed on the materials," said Larry Pfeiffer, a former CIA officer and senior director of the White House Situation Room. "We've never had to worry about it before."

The May 25 letter from Trump attorney M. Evan Corcoran to Jay Bratt, the head of the Justice Department's counterintelligence section, describes Trump as the leader of the Republican Party and makes multiple references to him as former president.

It notes that a president has the absolute authority to declassify documents, though it doesn't actually say — as Trump has asserted — that he did so with the records seized from his home. It also says the "primary" law criminalizing the mishandling of classified information does not apply to the president and instead covers subordinate employees and officers.

The statute the letter cites, though, is not among the three that the search warrant lists as being part of the investigation. And the Espionage Act law at issue concerns "national defense" information rather than "classified," suggesting it may be irrelevant whether the records were declassified or not.

Corcoran did not return messages seeking comment Monday.

It's possible to "imagine a good faith mistake" or a president taking something sensitive without realizing it or because they needed it for a particular reason, said Chris Edelson, a presidential powers scholar and American University government professor.

But that argument could be complicated by the fact that the documents were not returned earlier in their entirety by Trump to the National Archives and Records Administration and that the FBI came to suspect — correctly — that there was still classified information at the property.

"I think if he had simply returned the documents right away, he'd be in a much stronger position legally," Edelson said.

Ashley Deeks, a University of Virginia law professor and a former deputy legal adviser to President Joe Biden's National Security Council, said in an email that the Trump team claims in the letter "seem to be more of a political argument than a legal argument."

She added, "The president's defense team seems to be trying to point out the magnitude of proceeding with this case rather than articulating a clear legal defense."

## Indianapolis police quiet on fatal shooting of Dutch soldier

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Two Dutch soldiers wounded in a downtown Indianapolis shooting that killed another member of their commando unit could soon return to the Netherlands, city police said Monday while providing no new information on the search for the other people involved.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 42 of 65

The 26-year-old member of the Dutch Commando Corps died of his injuries "surrounded by family and colleagues" after the shooting early Saturday, the country's Defense Ministry said in a statement.

The Marion County coroner's office in Indianapolis identified the victim as Simmie Poetsema but didn't immediately release any additional information.

Poetsema and the two other soldiers were shot after what Indianapolis police believe was a disturbance outside the hotel where they were staying about 3:30 a.m. Saturday near several downtown bars and nightclubs, authorities said. The soldiers were in the U.S. for training exercises at a southern Indiana military base.

Indianapolis police on Monday described the injuries to the two surviving soldiers as "non-life-threatening" and the Dutch Defense Ministry said they were conscious. City police said they were working with U.S. and Dutch agencies to coordinate family members coming to Indianapolis and returning the victims to the Netherlands.

Police, however, released no additional information Monday about the circumstances of the shooting nor made any police officials available for interviews. No arrests have been announced.

The agency said in a statement that detectives were working to identify those involved in the shooting and that "the release of certain investigative information could negatively impact the ability to obtain justice in this case."

The Indiana National Guard said the soldiers had been training at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center, a 1,000-acre (405-hectare) complex about 70 miles (110 kilometers) southeast of the downtown Indianapolis shooting scene. The Guard said in a statement that the center is used for training by the Department of Defense "as well as other allies."

## **Police: Heroic Safeway employee confronted gunman in store**

By GILLIAN FLACCUS Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — A Safeway employee who previously served in the U.S. Army for two decades attacked a gunman in the produce section of the Bend, Oregon, supermarket, police said Monday, possibly preventing more casualties from a shooting that left the employee and one other person dead.

Police hailed the employee, 66-year-old Donald Ray Surrett Jr., of Bend, as a hero and said his actions may have saved shoppers at the store in the high-desert city ringed by mountains in the central part of the state. Customer Glenn Edward Bennett, 84, of Bend, was also killed Sunday evening, police spokeswoman Sheila Miller said.

"Mr. Surrett engaged with the shooter, attempted to disarm him and may very well have prevented further deaths. Mr. Surrett acted heroically turning this terrible event," Miller said at a news conference as she struggled against tears.

Police said Monday the shooter died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound; his body was found by police near an AR-15-style weapon and a shotgun. Police identified the gunman as Ethan Blair Miller, 20, of Bend.

The gunman lived in an apartment complex behind The Forum Shopping Center. Witnesses said he began shooting Sunday evening as soon as he left the complex and continued firing as he entered the shopping complex's parking lot and then went into the Safeway.

Bennett was killed at the store's entrance, police said, and the shooter then moved through the aisles "spraying shots" from the assault rifle until Surrett confronted him. The entire incident — from the first 911 calls to officers discovering the suspect dead in the store — unfolded in four minutes, Miller said.

Police entered the supermarket from the front and rear as shots were still being fired.

Debora Jean Surrett, the ex-wife of the Safeway employee killed in the attack, told The Associated Press in a phone interview that Surrett served in the Army for 20 years as a combat engineer.

He wasn't deployed to active combat zones, but during the 20 years they were married from 1975 to 1995, they were stationed in Germany three times and lived on military bases across the U.S.

"They're trained to be the first ones to go into war and the last ones to come home," she told the AP.

Bend Mayor Pro Tem Anthony Broadman said Americans "need to guard against the cynicism of thinking

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 43 of 65

of these attacks on order and peace as regular, unavoidable things. I won't accept that."

"We know that in the face of the kind of chaos that we saw last night, we had brave first responders, brave citizens, people willing to stand up for their neighbors," he added.

Authorities later found three Molotov cocktails and a sawed-off shotgun in the shooter's car. The Oregon State Police bomb squad was called in to sweep the store, the car and the suspect's apartment for explosives, authorities said, forcing the evacuation of eight surrounding apartments on Monday morning.

Miller said reports that there was a second shooter were not true.

Authorities are seeking a search warrant to comb through online materials on an unspecified number of digital devices they found at the shooter's apartment but declined to comment on reports that the suspect posted his plans online in advance. Bend police are working with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to determine where the suspect got his weapons and if he did so legally, Miller said.

"We are aware that the shooter may have posted information online regarding his plan. We're investigating this," she said. "We have no evidence of previous threats or prior knowledge of the shooter. We received information about the shooter's writings after the incident had taken place. And the shooter has no criminal history in the area."

The shooter graduated from Mountain View High School in Bend in 2020, according to online records, and a former classmate remembered him as an extremely combative person who had few friends.

He was a huge fan of mixed martial arts and "tried to fight everyone at Mountain View and kept getting his (expletive) kicked and he just never learned," said Isaac Thomas, who was suspended for a week as a freshman for fighting with the gunman. The gunman held onto a grudge from that fight and once threatened to shoot him, Thomas told AP.

"At one point he said he was going to shoot me and I was like, 'Get over yourself' because I didn't think he had a gun, but I guess I was wrong," Thomas said.

Thomas recalled running into the shooter in 2020 in the parking lot of the Safeway, where the gunman was gathering up carts as part of his job. He recognized him and threatened him again although several years had gone by, Thomas said.

"It was kind of crazy when I heard about it," he said of the shooting. "But it makes sense that he chose Safeway because he worked there and he knew the layout."

Oregon's elected leaders reacted to the shooting Monday with pledges to fight for more gun control.

Gov. Kate Brown, a Democrat, said in a statement that the shooting was one of several in Oregon over weekend and that "Oregonians deserve to be safe from gun violence."

Oregon residents will vote in November on one of the strictest gun-control measures in the nation. If passed, Measure 114 would ban large capacity magazines over 10 rounds — except for current owners, law enforcement and the military — and require a permit to purchase any gun.

To qualify for a permit, an applicant would need to complete an approved firearm safety course, pay a fee, provide personal information, submit to fingerprinting and photographing and pass a criminal background check. The state police would create a firearms database.

Bend is a city of about 97,000 approximately 160 miles (257 kilometers) southeast of Portland, Oregon.

## Zombie ice from Greenland will raise sea level 10 inches

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

Greenland's rapidly melting ice sheet will eventually raise global sea level by at least 10.6 inches (27 centimeters) -- more than twice as much as previously forecast — according to a study published Monday.

That's because of something that could be called zombie ice. That's doomed ice that, while still attached to thicker areas of ice, is no longer getting replenished by parent glaciers now receiving less snow. Without replenishment, the doomed ice is melting from climate change and will inevitably raise seas, said study co-author William Colgan, a glaciologist at the Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland.

"It's dead ice. It's just going to melt and disappear from the ice sheet," Colgan said in an interview. "This ice has been consigned to the ocean, regardless of what climate (emissions) scenario we take now."

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 44 of 65

Study lead author Jason Box, a glaciologist at the Greenland survey, said it is "more like one foot in the grave."

The unavoidable ten inches in the study is more than twice as much sea level rise as scientists had previously expected from the melting of Greenland's ice sheet. The study in the journal Nature Climate Change said it could reach as much as 30 inches (78 centimeters). By contrast, last year's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report projected a range of 2 to 5 inches (6 to 13 centimeters) for likely sea level rise from Greenland ice melt by the year 2100.

What scientists did for the study was look at the ice in balance. In perfect equilibrium, snowfall in the mountains in Greenland flows down and recharges and thickens the sides of glaciers, balancing out what's melting on the edges. But in the last few decades there's less replenishment and more melting, creating imbalance. Study authors looked at the ratio of what's being added to what's being lost and calculated that 3.3% of Greenland's total ice volume will melt no matter what happens with the world cutting carbon pollution, Colgan said.

"I think starving would be a good phrase," for what's happening to the ice, Colgan said.

One of the study authors said that more than 120 trillion tons (110 trillion metric tons) of ice is already doomed to melt from the warming ice sheet's inability to replenish its edges. When that ice melts into water, if it were concentrated only over the United States, it would be 37 feet (11 meters) deep.

The figures are a global average for sea level rise, but some places further away from Greenland would get more and places closer, like the U.S. East Coast, would get less. Although 10.6 inches may not sound like much, this would be over and above high tides and storms, making them even worse, so this much sea level rise "will have huge societal, economic and environmental impacts," said Elynn Enderlin, a geosciences professor at Boise State University, who wasn't part of the study.

"This is a really large loss and will have a detrimental effect on coastlines around the world," said NYU's David Holland who just returned from Greenland, but is not part of the study.

This is the first time scientists calculated a minimum ice loss — and accompanying sea level rise — for Greenland, one of Earth's two massive ice sheets that are slowly shrinking because of climate change from burning coal, oil and natural gas. Scientists used an accepted technique for calculating minimum committed ice loss, the one used on mountain glaciers for the entire giant frozen island.

Pennsylvania State University glaciologist Richard Alley, who wasn't part of the study but said it made sense, said the committed melting and sea level rise is like an ice cube put in a cup of hot tea in a warm room.

"You have committed mass loss from the ice," Alley said in an email. "In the same way, most of the world's mountain glaciers and the edges of Greenland would continue losing mass if temperatures were stabilized at modern levels because they have been put into warmer air just as your ice cube was put in warmer tea."

Time is the key unknown here and a bit of a problem with the study, said two outside ice scientists, Leigh Stearns of the University of Kansas and Sophie Nowicki of the University of Buffalo. The researchers in the study said they couldn't estimate the timing of the committed melting, yet in the last sentence they mention, "within this century," without supporting it, Stearns said.

Colgan responded that the team doesn't know how long it will take for all the doomed ice to melt, but making an educated guess, it would probably be by the end of this century, or at least by 2150.

Colgan said this is actually all a best case scenario. The year 2012 (and to a different degree 2019 ) was a huge melt year, when the equilibrium between adding and subtracting ice was most out of balance. If Earth starts to undergo more years like 2012, Greenland melt could trigger 30 inches (78 centimeters) of sea level rise, he said. Those two years seem extreme now, but years that look normal now would have been extreme 50 years ago, he said.

"That's how climate change works," Colgan said. "Today's outliers become tomorrow's averages."

**Man suspected of killing 3 'terrorized' Detroit, chief says**



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 45 of 65

By ED WHITE and JOEY CAPPELLETTI Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — A 19-year-old man suspected of randomly killing three people on Detroit streets over roughly two hours may have been emboldened when he didn't encounter police after the first shooting, the mayor said Monday.

The victims included a single mother of five children who was waiting for a bus Sunday. Lari Brisco was planning to move this week to a suburb closer to her job as a medical assistant at an allergy clinic.

"You never expect gun violence to hit close to home. You always hear about shootings, but it's never someone you know until it is," said her boss, Dr. Kathleen Dass.

Police still were sorting out details while a suspect who Chief James White said may have a mental illness remained in custody. The man was peacefully arrested at home after a 12-hour search Sunday, following a tip from someone close to him.

He "terrorized our community," White said.

Mayor Mike Duggan said no one called 911 when the first victim, a 28-year-old man, was shot before dawn, less than two miles from a police station.

"At 4:45 on a Sunday morning, not a lot of people are up. Some people might have thought they were hearing firecrackers," Duggan said. "I think there's a strong probability he expected to get caught. ... And then 35 minutes later he shoots and kills a second individual and proceeds from there."

The first incident occurred at 4:45 a.m. The suspect shot a man without provocation, walked away and then returned to fire more shots, White said.

About 30 minutes later and three blocks away, police got their first 911 call for a woman in her 40s shot on a sidewalk. Brisco, 43, was the third victim, shot multiple times while waiting for a bus a short distance away.

Dass said her clinic had planned to give Brisco a cake to celebrate her move to a new home.

"My patients loved her because she treated them all like they were her family," the doctor said.

A fourth shooting occurred at 7:10 a.m. while an 80-year-old man was walking his dog, said Michael McGinnis, major crimes commander. He survived.

A gun found by police matched the bullet casings at the shooting scenes, McGinnis said.

Bishop Daryl Harris of Total Life Christian Ministries said he could "feel the panic" in his congregation when he informed people that an active shooter was at large Sunday.

"Many of our members were distraught as they ran out of the sanctuary to try to call their loved ones and families," he said.

Duggan described the victims as "innocent people going about their lives on a Sunday morning."

He lamented that Detroit has limited use of ShotSpotter, a gunshot-detection technology. It's used in some precincts but not in the area where the shootings occurred. The City Council in June postponed a vote on expansion.

"Every single detective who came to the command center said the same thing: If we had had ShotSpotter, there was an excellent chance we would have arrested him by five in the morning," the mayor said.

## Tea drinkers enjoy possible health benefits, study suggests

By CARLA K. JOHNSON AP Medical Writer

A cup of tea just got a bit more relaxing.

Tea can be part of a healthy diet and people who drink tea may even be a little more likely to live longer than those who don't, according to a large study.

Tea contains helpful substances known to reduce inflammation. Past studies in China and Japan, where green tea is popular, suggested health benefits. The new study extends the good news to the U.K.'s favorite drink: black tea.

Scientists from the U.S. National Cancer Institute asked about the tea habits of nearly a half million adults in the United Kingdom, then followed them for up to 14 years. They adjusted for risk factors such as health, socioeconomics, smoking, alcohol intake, diet, age, race and gender.

Higher tea intake — two or more cups daily — was linked to a modest benefit: a 9% to 13% lower risk of death from any cause vs. non-tea drinkers. Tea temperature, or adding milk or sugar, didn't change the results.

The study, published Monday in *Annals of Internal Medicine*, found the association held up for heart disease deaths, but there was no clear trend for cancer deaths. Researchers weren't sure why, but it's possible there weren't enough cancer deaths for any effect to show up, said Maki Inoue-Choi, who led the study.

A study like this, based on observing people's habits and health, can't prove cause and effect.

"Observational studies like this always raise the question: Is there something else about tea drinkers that makes them healthier?" said Marion Nestle, a professor of food studies at New York University. "I like tea. It's great to drink. But a cautious interpretation seems like a good idea."

There's not enough evidence to advise changing tea habits, said Inoue-Choi.

"If you drink one cup a day already, I think that is good," she said. "And please enjoy your cup of tea."

## Diana's last moments: French doctor recalls 'tragic night'

By JADE LE DELEY Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The woman was crumpled on the floor of a mangled Mercedes, unconscious and struggling to breathe. The French doctor had no idea who she was and just focused on trying to save her.

Twenty-five years later, Dr. Frederic Mailliez is still marked by what happened in the Alma Tunnel in Paris on Aug. 31, 1997 — and the realization that he was one of the last people to see Princess Diana alive.

"I realize my name will always be attached to this tragic night," Mailliez, who was on his way home from a party when he came across the car crash, told *The Associated Press*. "I feel a little bit responsible for her last moments."

As Britain and Diana's admirers worldwide mark a quarter-century since her death, Mailliez recounted the aftermath of the crash.

That night, Mailliez was driving into the tunnel when he spotted a smoking Mercedes nearly split in two.

"I walked toward the wreckage. I opened the door, and I looked inside," he said.

What he saw: "Four people, two of them were apparently dead, no reaction, no breathing, and the two others, on the right side, were living but in severe condition. The front passenger was screaming, he was breathing. He could wait a few minutes. And the female passenger, the young lady, was on her knees on the floor of the Mercedes, she had her head down. She had difficulty to breathe. She needed quick assistance."

He ran to his car to call emergency services and grab a respiratory bag.

"She was unconscious," he said. "Thanks to my respiratory bag (...) she regained a little bit more energy, but she couldn't say anything."

The doctor would later find out the news — along with the rest of the world — that the woman he treated was Diana, Britain's national treasure adored by millions.

"I know it's surprising, but I didn't recognize Princess Diana," he said. "I was in the car on the rear seat giving assistance. I realized she was very beautiful, but my attention was so focused on what I had to do to save her life, I didn't have time to think, who was this woman."

"Someone behind me told me the victims spoke English, so I began to speak English, saying I was a doctor and I called the ambulance," he said. "I tried to comfort her."

As he worked, he noticed the flash of camera bulbs, of paparazzi gathered to document the scene. A British inquest found Diana's chauffeur, Henri Paul, was drunk and driving at a high speed to elude pursuing photographers.

Mailliez said he had "no reproach" toward the photographers' actions after the crash. "They didn't hamper me having access to the victims. ... I didn't ask them for help, but they didn't interfere with my job."

Firefighters quickly came, and Diana was taken to a Paris hospital, where she died a few hours later. Her companion Dodi Fayed and the driver also died.

"It was a massive shock to learn that she was Princess Diana, and that she died," Mailliez said. Then

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 47 of 65

self-doubt set in. "Did I do everything I could to save her? Did I do correctly my job?" he asked himself. "I checked with my medical professors and I checked with police investigators," he said, and they agreed he did all he could.

The anniversary is stirring up those memories again, but they also come back "each time I drive through the Alma Tunnel," he said.

As Mailliez spoke, standing atop the tunnel, cars rushed in and out past the pillar where she crashed, now bearing a stencil drawing of Diana's face.

The Flame of Liberty monument nearby has become a memorial site attracting Diana fans of all generations and nationalities. She has become a timeless figure of emancipation and a fashion icon even for those born after her death.

Irinia Ouahvi, a 16-year-old Parisian visiting the flame, said she knows Diana through TikTok videos and through her mother.

"Even with her style she was a feminist. She challenged royal etiquette, wearing cyclist shorts and casual pants," Ouahvi said.

Francine Rose, a Dutch 16-year-old who stopped by Diana's memorial while on a biking trip in Paris, discovered her story thanks to "Spencer," a recent film starring Kristen Stewart.

"She is an inspiration because she was evolving in the strict household, the royal family, and just wanted to be free," Rose said.

## UN agency to inspect Ukraine nuclear plant in urgent mission

By PAUL BYRNE Associated Press

KYIV (AP) — A U.N. nuclear watchdog team set off on an urgent mission Monday to safeguard the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia atomic power plant at the heart of fighting in Ukraine, a long-awaited trip the world hopes will help avoid a radioactive catastrophe.

The stakes couldn't be higher for the International Atomic Energy Agency experts who will visit the plant in a country where the 1986 Chernobyl disaster spewed radiation throughout the region, shocking the world and intensifying a global push away from nuclear energy.

"Without an exaggeration, this mission will be the hardest in the history of IAEA," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said.

Underscoring the urgency, Ukraine and Russia again accused each other of shelling the wider region around the nuclear power plant, Europe's largest, which was briefly knocked offline last week. The dangers are so high that officials have begun handing out anti-radiation iodine tablets to nearby residents.

To avoid a disaster, IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi has sought access for months to the Zaporizhzhia plant, which Russian forces have occupied since the early days of the six-month-old war. Ukrainian nuclear workers have been operating the plant.

"The day has come," Grossi tweeted Monday, adding that the Vienna-based IAEA's "Support and Assistance Mission ... is now on its way."

Ukraine's Foreign Ministry spokesman said the team, which Grossi heads, was scheduled to arrive in Kyiv on Monday. In April, Grossi had headed an IAEA mission to Chernobyl, which Russian forces occupied earlier in the war.

The IAEA said that its team will "undertake urgent safeguards activities," assess damage, determine the functionality of the plant's safety and security systems and evaluate the control room staff's working conditions.

Ukraine's nuclear energy agency, Energoatom, warned Monday of Russian attempts to cover up their military use of the plant.

"The occupiers, preparing for the arrival of the IAEA mission, increased pressure on the personnel ... to prevent them from disclosing evidence of the occupiers' crimes at the plant and its use as a military base," Energoatom said, adding that four plant workers were wounded in Russian shelling of the city where they live.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 48 of 65

Ukraine accused Russia of new rocket and artillery strikes at or near the plant, intensifying fears that the fighting could cause a massive radiation leak. So far, radiation levels at the facility, which has six reactors, have been reported to be normal.

Ukraine has alleged that Russia is essentially holding the plant hostage, storing weapons there and launching attacks from around it, while Moscow accuses Ukraine of recklessly firing on the facility.

World leaders have called on the Russians to demilitarize the plant. Satellite images provided by Maxar Technologies on Monday showed armored personnel carriers on a road near the reactors, damage to a building's roof also near the reactors, and brush fires burning nearby.

Ukraine reported more Russian shelling in Nikopol, across the Dnieper River from the nuclear power plant, with one person killed and five wounded. Relentless shelling has hit the city for weeks. In Enerhodar, a few kilometers from the plant, the city's Ukrainian mayor, Dmytro Orlov, blamed Russian shelling for wounding at least 10 residents.

Kuleba, Ukraine's foreign minister, said in Stockholm that he expects the IAEA mission to produce "a clear statement of facts, of violation of all nuclear, of nuclear safety protocols." He added, "We know that Russia is putting not only Ukraine, but also the entire world at threat at the risk of nuclear accident."

In Moscow, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Russia will ensure the IAEA mission's security, and he called on other countries to "raise pressure on the Ukrainian side to force it to stop threatening the European continent by shelling the territory of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant and surrounding areas."

Over the weekend, Energoatom painted an ominous picture of the threats at the plant by issuing a map forecasting where radiation could spread if a leak occurred.

Elsewhere on the battlefield, the Ukraine military claimed it had breached Russia's first line of defense near Kherson just north of the Crimea, the peninsula that Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014. Such an advance would represent a strategic breakthrough — if confirmed. Kherson is the biggest Ukrainian city that the Russians now occupy, and reports about Ukrainian forces preparing for a counteroffensive in the region have circulated for weeks.

For its part, Russia's Defense Ministry said its forces had inflicted heavy personnel and military equipment losses on Ukrainian troops trying to attack in three directions in Ukraine's southern Kherson and Mykoiv regions, the state news agency Tass reported.

Residents reported explosions Monday at a Kherson-area bridge over the Dnieper River that is a critical Russian supply line, and Russian news reports spoke of air defense systems activating repeatedly in the city, with nighttime explosions in the sky Monday night.

Russian-installed officials, citing Ukrainian rocket strikes, announced the evacuation of residents of nearby Nova Kakhovka — a city that Kyiv's forces frequently target — from their workplaces to bomb shelters on Monday. In another Kherson region city, Berislav, Russian news agencies reported that Ukrainian shelling had damaged a church, a school and other buildings.

But in a war rife with claims and counterclaims that are hard to verify independently, the Moscow-appointed regional leader of Crimea, Sergei Aksyonov, dismissed the Ukrainian assertion of an offensive in the Kherson region as false. He said Ukrainian forces have suffered heavy losses in the area. And Ukraine's presidential adviser, Mykhailo Podolyak, cautioned against "super-sensational announcements" about a counteroffensive.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reacted to speculation about whether his forces had launched a major counteroffensive in southern Ukraine by asking in his nightly video address Monday, "Anyone want to know what our plans are? You won't hear specifics from any truly responsible person. Because this is war."

In the eastern Donetsk region, eight civilians were reported killed and seven wounded. Russian forces struck the cities of Sloviansk and Kostyantynivka overnight and the region's Ukrainian governor, Pavlo Kyrylenko, urged residents to evacuate immediately.

## **NASA scrubs launch of new moon rocket after engine problem**

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer



# Groton Daily Independent

**Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 49 of 65**

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — NASA called off the launch of its mighty new moon rocket on its debut flight with three test dummies aboard Monday after a last-minute cascade of problems culminating in unexplained trouble related to an engine.

The next launch attempt will not take place until Friday at the earliest and could be delayed until mid-September or later.

The mission will be the first flight in NASA's Artemis project, a quest to put astronauts back on the moon for the first time since the Apollo program ended 50 years ago.

As precious minutes ticked away Monday morning, NASA repeatedly stopped and started the fueling of the Space Launch System rocket because of a leak of highly explosive hydrogen, eventually succeeding in reducing the seepage. The leak happened in the same place that saw seepage during a dress rehearsal in the spring.

The fueling already was running nearly an hour late because of thunderstorms off Florida's Kennedy Space Center.

Then, NASA ran into new trouble when it was unable to properly chill one of the rocket's four main engines, officials said. Engineers struggled to pinpoint the source of the problem well after the launch postponement was announced.

Mission manager Mike Sarafin said the fault did not appear to be with the engine itself but with the plumbing leading to it.

Complicating matters, as engineers were trying to troubleshoot that problem on the launch pad, yet another hydrogen leak developed, this one involving a vent valve higher up on the rocket, Sarafin said.

"This is a very complicated machine, a very complicated system, and all those things have to work, and you don't want to light the candle until it's ready to go," said NASA Administrator Bill Nelson.

Referring to launch delays, he said: "It's just part of the space business and it's part of, particularly, a test flight."

The rocket was set to lift off on a flight to propel a crew capsule into orbit around the moon. The six-week mission was scheduled to end with the capsule returning to Earth in a splashdown in the Pacific in October.

The 322-foot (98-meter) spaceship is the most powerful rocket ever built by NASA, out-muscling even the Saturn V that took the Apollo astronauts to the moon.

The dummies inside the Orion capsule were fitted with sensors to measure vibration, cosmic radiation and other conditions during the shakedown flight, meant to stress-test the spacecraft and push it to its limits in ways that would never be attempted if humans were aboard.

Asked about the possibility of another launch attempt on Friday, Sarafin said, "We really need time to look at all the information, all the data. We're going to play all nine innings here."

Even though no one was on board, thousands of people jammed the coast to see the rocket soar. Vice President Kamala Harris and Apollo 10 astronaut Tom Stafford were among the VIPs who arrived.

Assuming the shakedown flight goes well, astronauts will climb aboard for the second Artemis mission and fly around the moon and back as soon as 2024. A two-person lunar landing could follow by the end of 2025.

The problems seen Monday were reminiscent of NASA's space shuttle era, when hydrogen fuel leaks disrupted countdowns and delayed a string of launches back in 1990.

Later in the morning, NASA officials spotted what they feared was a crack or some other defect on the core stage — the big orange fuel tank with four main engines on it — but they later said it appeared to be just a buildup of frost in a crevice of the insulating foam.

Launch director Charlie Blackwell-Thompson and her team also had to deal with sluggish communication between the Orion capsule and launch control. The problem required what turned out to be a simple fix.

Even if there had been no technical snags, thunderstorms ultimately would have prevented a liftoff, NASA said. Dark clouds and rain gathered over the launch site as soon as the countdown was halted, and thunder echoed across the coast.

## Serena's Farewell: Stories from the leadup to the US Open

By The Associated Press undefined

The talk of tennis — and beyond — for most of the past three weeks has been about Serena Williams and her announcement that she is planning to stop playing professional tennis.

That all leads up to the U.S. Open, the year's last Grand Slam tournament, which began Monday, with Williams scheduled to play her first-round match in Arthur Ashe Stadium at night.

The Associated Press has chronicled the leadup to her departure in words and photos since her revelation earlier this month that she is preparing to "evolve" away from her career as a professional athlete. This guide offers a look at Williams the player and Williams the person, her accomplishments and her influence, as the 40-year-old American gets ready to shift her focus from serves and forehands to expanding her family and pursuing business interests.

### THE ANNOUNCEMENT

Williams revealed her plans in an essay in Vogue magazine that was published Aug. 9. She didn't give a timeline and didn't even say she was retiring, but that she was "evolving away from tennis, toward other things that are important to me."

Along with her business interests, Williams said she wanted to expand her family. She and her husband, Reddit co-founder Alexis Ohanian, have a daughter, Olympia, who turns 5 on Thursday.

"Believe me, I never wanted to have to choose between tennis and a family. I don't think it's fair," said Williams, who was pregnant when she won the 2017 Australian Open for her last Grand Slam trophy. "If I were a guy, I wouldn't be writing this because I'd be out there playing and winning while my wife was doing the physical labor of expanding our family."

### THE ON-COURT ACHIEVEMENTS

Williams' 23 Grand Slam singles titles are the most in the professional era of tennis, which began in 1968. She won 73 tour-level singles titles and was ranked No. 1 for more than six years' worth of weeks.

Her greatest success came at the U.S. Open, where her 106 victories were a tournament record. She has reached at least the semifinals in her last 11 appearances.

Williams also combined with older sister Venus for 14 Grand Slam women's doubles titles and has won four Olympic gold medals.

### THE OFF-COURT INSPIRATION

Williams' impact on the Black community is indelible. Raised in Compton, California, she learned tennis on the public courts that are far from the privileged private clubs that nurtured most U.S. players. She was outspoken on issues such as gun violence.

Williams is also a fashion icon. She has appeared everywhere from magazine covers to red carpets, and "What's Serena wearing?" was sometimes as big a question as "Who's Serena playing?" at a tennis tournament.

She launched a fashion collection in 2018 after collaborations with HSN and Nike.

Many women thought of their own choices they faced in balancing family and career when Williams made her announcement. She was two months pregnant when she won her last major title but said she couldn't be expectant and playing again.

### THE RECENT MATCHES

Williams earned her only singles victory of the year on the day before her announcement, beating Nuria Parrizas-Diaz 6-3, 6-4 at the women's National Bank Open in Toronto. She hadn't won a singles match since the 2021 French Open.

Williams then was beat 6-2, 6-4 by Olympic gold medalist Belinda Bencic in her next match.

Williams had been off the tour since an injury in the first round of Wimbledon in 2021 and didn't return until this year's tournament, where she fell 7-5, 1-6, 7-6 (10-7) to Harmony Tan in the first round.

After the Toronto tournament, Williams went on to lose 6-4, 6-0 to U.S. Open champion Emma Raducanu in the Western & Southern Open.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 51 of 65

## THE PREPARATION

Williams has been working with Rennae Stubbs, who won four Slam titles in women's doubles, alongside coach Eric Hechtman, since last week. She practiced for about an hour inside Ashe on Saturday.

Later that day came news that even if she lost on Monday, Williams' U.S. Open career wouldn't be over quite yet. She and Venus accepted a wild card into the women's doubles tournament.

The Williams sisters will play the Czech pair of Lucie Hradecka and Linda Noskova in the first round. They have won the U.S. Open twice and this will be their first tournament together since the 2018 French Open.

## THE FIRST OPPONENT

Danka Kovinic said she is "honored" to be facing Williams under the bright lights of Ashe. The 27-year-old from Montenegro said she was happy to learn the news of the matchup after the U.S. Open draw was unveiled last week.

Ranked 80th in the world, Kovinic said she's never gotten the courage to ask Williams to practice, nor had she ever even hit in the stadium that holds more than 23,000 fans before the tournament.

Kovinic is only 2-4 at the U.S. Open but she scored an impressive Grand Slam victory earlier this year when she beat Raducanu in the second round of the Australian Open.

## **New this week: 'Lord of the Rings' prequel; 'Honk for Jesus'**

By The Associated Press undefined

Here's a collection curated by The Associated Press' entertainment journalists of what's arriving on TV, streaming services and music platforms this week.

### MOVIES

— Regina Hall and Sterling K. Brown star in the satirical comedy "Honk for Jesus. Save Your Soul," that's playing in theaters and streaming on Peacock on Friday. Brown plays husband to Hall and the pastor of a Southern Baptist megachurch that needs a big comeback in the aftermath of a scandal. The directorial debut of Adamma Ebo premiered earlier this year at the Sundance Film Festival. "Jurassic World: Dominion" also makes its debut on Peacock on Friday. The third and, supposedly, final installment to the "Jurassic World" series invites original "Jurassic Park" stars Laura Dern, Sam Neill and Jeff Goldblum to join the Chris Pratt/Bryce Dallas Howard crew. Though not the best movie of the bunch, there are moments, especially when DeWanda Wise is on screen.

— In 1976, Maurice Flitcroft, a shipyard crane operator, entered the British Open without ever having played golf before and shot the worst qualifying round in the tournament's history. His story gets a quirky, uplifting spin in "The Phantom of the Open," starring Mark Rylance as Maurice and Sally Hawkins as his wife Jean, which is available on video on demand starting Tuesday. In her AP review, Jocelyn Noveck wrote that "The closing footage of the real Maurice is utterly fascinating and hints that perhaps his story wasn't as sweet as the one we've just seen. But it's hard to deny it's been a darned enjoyable 18 holes."

— Also available on VOD on Tuesday is the documentary "Explorer," which delves into the life of Sir Ranulph Fiennes, who the Guinness Book of Records called "the world's greatest living explorer." That might have been in 1984, but according to his website he remains the only man alive ever to have travelled around the Earth's circumpolar surface. And at 78, he's getting more reflective than he ever has been before in director Matthew Dyas' film.

— AP Film Writer Lindsey Bahr

### MUSIC

— Yungblud has new music but you likely already knew that if you've watched any of ESPN's coverage of the new college football season — his single "The Emperor" is part of the official TV anthem. Yungblud said he wrote the song when he was 17 as "an outburst of unfiltered energy that I knew would have its moment one day." On Friday, he will release his self-titled third studio album, which features the previously released singles "The Funeral," "Memories" (featuring Willow) and "Don't Feel Like Feeling Sad Today."

— Thrash metal icons Megadeth have put more than music on tap for their next sonic step. The band releases their 16th studio album, "The Sick, The Dying... And The Dead!" on Friday and fans can watch the connected 7-minute "Night Stalkers: Chapter II," the latest installment of a multi-part short film about

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 52 of 65

troubled band mascot Vic Rattlehead. One of the tracks off the new album is "Soldier On!" and bandleader Dave Mustaine says it was inspired by "coming to the realization that you need to walk away from a relationship that's very toxic, and how hard it can be to start down that road."

— AP Entertainment Writer Mark Kennedy

## TELEVISION

— An epic battle of fantasy prequels is nigh. "The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power" debuts Friday on Amazon Prime Video, on the heels of HBO's "House of the Dragon," which is set two centuries before "Game of Thrones." The Amazon series takes place much earlier in the world of J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings" novels, with evil a threat to peaceful Middle-earth. Whatever the dueling body counts may be, "House of the Dragon" set a high bar for viewership: Nearly 10 million tuned in to make it the most-watched series premiere in HBO history. Amazon's early brag is that a "The Rings of Power" promotional spot during Super Bowl LVI was the game's most-watched trailer ever.

— The quartet of pals and business partners known as The Try Guys have gained a big YouTube following with their funny and offbeat willingness to venture into untested (for them) waters. They bring that approach to TV with "No-Recipe Road Trip with the Try Guys," in which Ned Fulmer, Keith Habersberger, Zach Kornfeld, and Eugene Lee Yang visit restaurants in Nashville; Los Angeles; Charleston, South Carolina; Atlanta; and Santa Barbara, California, and make each eatery's signature dish minus instructions. The series begins Wednesday on the Food Network and streams on discovery+.

## Cubans flee island's economic woes by air, land and sea

By GISELA SALOMON Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — One Cuban man endured a trek through eight countries that lasted more than a month. Another man paid a small fortune for a furtive speedboat trip. A third decided to risk a perilous passage aboard a homemade raft rather than stay a moment longer on the island.

Cubans are fleeing their country in the largest numbers in more than four decades, choosing to stake their lives and futures on a dangerous journey to the United States by air, land and sea to escape economic and political woes.

Most fly to Nicaragua as tourists and slowly make their way to the U.S. border, often to Texas or Arizona. A smaller number gamble on an ocean voyage. Three men who survived the odyssey spoke to The Associated Press about it.

Tens of thousands of others share the same goal. From January to July, U.S. border authorities stopped Cuban migrants entering from Mexico nearly 155,000 times, more than six times as many as in the same period of 2021. From October to August, the Coast Guard intercepted more than 4,600 Cubans, an almost sixfold increase over the entire previous year.

The vast majority are released with notices to appear in immigration court or report to immigration authorities.

In all, it is the largest flight of Cuban exiles since the Mariel boatlift in 1980, when nearly 125,000 Cubans came to the U.S. over a six-month period.

The exodus is fueled by Cuba's worst economic conditions in decades — a result of tightened U.S. sanctions and a hangover from COVID-19.

Massive street protests in mid-2021 triggered widespread arrests and fears of political oppression that prompted more to flee. An additional enticement emerged in November, when Nicaragua stopped requiring visas for Cubans to promote tourism.

Two of the three men spoke to AP on the condition of anonymity because they fear for the safety of relatives still on the island. These are their accounts of the trip:

### CROSSING EIGHT COUNTRIES AND TWO RIVERS

Rolando José Cisneros Borroto, who worked as a street vendor in Camaguey, a city in central Cuba, said he was tired of going hungry and decided to leave his wife and three children in hope of finding a job in



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 53 of 65

the U.S that would help sustain his family.

Borroto, 42, sold everything — his house, furniture and television — to pay for the journey, collecting \$13,000. His family stayed in another house that belongs to the wife.

After taking six flights, he finally arrived in Nicaragua in June. From there he went overland to Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico.

He crossed two rivers on an inflatable rubber ring, walked through mountains and along highways, and got rides aboard buses, cars and motorcycles.

While hiding from Mexican police, he spent days drinking water from a river and eating only grass. He finally crossed into the U.S. south of Del Rio, Texas, and surrendered to the Border Patrol.

Borroto was released after three days of detention and now lives in Algona, Iowa, where a cousin offered him a room in his house and food. The trip lasted 36 days.

"I never thought it would take so much work to arrive," said Borroto, who was detained at least three times in Cuba for selling garlic in the streets. "What one goes through along the way I do not advise anyone, but Cubans prefer to die on the way before staying in Cuba."

## A PROTEST, A PROSECUTION AND A SPEEDBOAT

Another Cuban man, 35, participated in protests in July 2021, when thousands of people across the island clamored for food and a change of government. He was tried on charges of public disorder and contempt and freed after 30 days in jail to await sentencing.

He fled in February, the month before he was to be sentenced to five years in prison. Air travel was out of the question because he would be stopped at the airport upon showing his passport. A raft was too dangerous.

A speedboat "was the only way to escape," the man said in an interview at the office of his Miami attorney, Wilfredo Allen. He left the island without telling his 5-year-old daughter. Only his wife, his mother and a brother knew.

Unemployed, he asked his father, who lives in Texas, for about \$15,000 to pay smugglers who gave him instructions over the phone.

Two days before the trip, he traveled 250 miles (400 kilometers) to Ciego de Avila, a city in the center of the island. From there, a bus picked him up along with 30 other people, and took them about 60 miles (100 kilometers) to one of the Cuba keys to board the speedboat. Among the migrants were a pregnant woman and a 7-year-old boy.

They passed through the Bahamas and, after 12 hours, arrived at an unknown place in the Florida Keys, at dawn. The boat stopped in a mangrove swamp. Then they came ashore, and several cars picked them up on a highway. A Cuban friend met him at a house where he was taken.

## A DESPERATE VOYAGE ON A HOMEMADE RAFT

Cubans who can't afford a speedboat or the \$10,000 to \$15,000 for travel and smuggling fees to fly to Nicaragua sometimes flee on rafts made from pipes or wood.

Among them was a 37-year-old man who occasionally worked in construction and fished. He couldn't pay a smuggler, so he built a raft of 10-foot aluminum tubes. In May 2021 he traveled with three friends for 22 hours until they reached south Florida.

"The first thing one thinks of is leaving, that either we all die of hunger little by little, or we make an attempt," said the man, who secretly constructed the raft over six months. "I knew I could die in the water, but I needed to take the risk."

He built the raft alone and kept it hidden in bushes and mangroves. The same day of the journey, he purchased a small engine that allowed him to travel at about 6 mph (10 kph).

No one knew about the trip, except his three companions, his mother and his wife. For fear of being discovered, he told his companions the date of their travel just a few hours before they left.

They departed late at night, rowing out from a fishing port west of Havana, he said in a long interview at Allen's office. With no GPS, they navigated by the stars.

A whole day passed, and when night started to fall again, they saw the entry buoys to an island. They

approached the coast and walked.

"At least we're alive," he thought, but they soon realized that someone was calling authorities to report them. They immediately ran back to the boat and returned to the sea, fearing that they would be detained and deported.

They waited in the water for a while and later reached a beach in Key West, where a group of Cuban tourists offered to take them to Miami. The man called his wife to tell her that he had arrived safely and was on his way to his in-laws' house.

He is now seeking asylum and hoping to bring his wife and three teenage daughters to join him in the U.S.

## Judge delays Gov. Kemp's testimony in Georgia election probe

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — A judge ruled Monday that Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp must testify before a special grand jury that's investigating possible illegal attempts by then-President Donald Trump and others to influence the 2020 election in the state — but not until after the November midterm election.

Lawyers for Kemp had argued that immunities related to his position as governor protect him from having to testify. But Fulton County Superior Court Judge Robert McBurney, who's overseeing the special grand jury, disagreed and said the governor must appear before the panel. But he did agree to a request from Kemp's lawyers to delay that testimony until after the Nov. 8 election, in which the Republican governor faces a rematch with Democrat Stacey Abrams.

"The Governor is in the midst of a re-election campaign and this criminal grand jury investigation should not be used by the District Attorney, the Governor's opponent, or the Governor himself to influence the outcome of that election," McBurney wrote. "The sound and prudent course is to let the election proceed without further litigation or other activity concerning the Governor's involvement in the special grand jury's work."

But once the election is over, McBurney wrote that he expects Kemp's lawyers to "promptly make arrangements for his appearance."

A delay could increase the likelihood that Trump will be a declared presidential candidate by the time the investigation moves toward its conclusion, further raising the political stakes. The investigation is one of several that could have serious legal consequences for the former president.

A statement from the governor's office says McBurney "acknowledged the potential political impact of the timing of these proceedings and correctly paused" Kemp's involvement until after the election. The governor plans to work with Willis' team and the judge "to ensure a full accounting of the Governor's limited role in the issues being investigated is available to the special grand jury."

A spokesperson for Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Also Monday, McBurney declined to quash a subpoena for lawyer Kenneth Chesebro, who represented the Trump campaign. He's scheduled to appear before the special grand jury on Tuesday, according to a court filing.

Willis opened the investigation early last year, prompted by a January 2021 phone call between Trump and Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger during which the then-president suggested the state's top election official could "find" the votes needed to overturn his loss. But the investigation's scope has widened considerably since then.

Raffensperger and some other state officials have already appeared before the special grand jury, which McBurney noted in his ruling.

Willis has also been pursuing testimony from close Trump allies and advisers. Former New York mayor and Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani, who's been told he faces possible criminal charges in the investigation, testified earlier this month. U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, a South Carolina Republican, is currently fighting a subpoena in federal court. And Willis last week filed paperwork seeking to compel testimony from former White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows and Trump-allied attorney Sidney Powell, among others.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 55 of 65

Prosecutors have said they want to ask Kemp about Raffensperger's call with the then-president, as well as his own contacts with Trump and others in the wake of the 2020 general election.

Kemp's lawyers had argued he was protected by the principle of "sovereign immunity," which says the state can't be sued without its consent. But McBurney agreed with Willis' team that the protection isn't applicable because Kemp isn't being sued and is instead being called as a witness to provide facts for a criminal investigation.

Kemp's lawyers had also raised concerns about attorney-client privilege, and McBurney wrote that neither prosecutors nor grand jurors will be able to ask the governor about the contents of communications covered by that privilege. He said he's aware of several conversations of interest to the investigation to which that privilege applies.

If there are disputes over what questions can be asked that cannot be resolved by the lawyers involved, they can be brought to McBurney "for resolution (or at least helpful direction)," the judge wrote.

McBurney's ruling Monday came after communications between Kemp's attorneys and Willis' team over when and how the governor would provide information for the investigation broke down. In a footnote of his ruling, the judge noted that correspondence between the two sides that was attached to court filings showed a "lack of civility among the attorneys involved."

Chesebro had argued that any testimony about his representation of the Trump campaign would be protected by attorney-client privilege. McBurney found that while much of what Chesebro did for the campaign is protected by privilege, there are topics of interest to the investigation that aren't off limits.

In a court filing seeking to compel his testimony, Willis wrote that Chesebro was "an attorney working with the Trump Campaign's legal efforts seeking to influence the results of the November 2020 election in Georgia and elsewhere."

As part of those efforts, he worked with Republicans in Georgia in the weeks following the election at the direction of the Trump campaign, Willis wrote. That included working on the coordination and execution of a plan to have 16 Georgia Republicans sign a certificate declaring falsely that Trump had won the 2020 presidential election and declaring themselves the state's "duly elected and qualified" electors even though Joe Biden had won the state and a slate of Democratic electors was certified.

## Taylor Swift wins top prize, announces new album at MTV VMAs

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr. AP Entertainment Writer

Taylor Swift took home the top prize at the 2022 MTV Video Music Awards on Sunday before she closed out the show with a surprisingly big announcement: Her new album.

"I thought it would be a fun moment to tell you that my new album comes out Oct. 21," said Swift after she won video of the year for her project "All Too Well: The Short Film" (10 minute version), which claimed best long form video and direction. "I will tell you more at midnight."

Swift said on social media that her upcoming 10th studio album would be called "Midnights," which she says will involve "stories of 13 sleepless nights scattered throughout my life." Her upcoming album comes after she released "Folklore" and "Evermore." Both projects came out five months apart two years ago. "Folklore" won album of the year at the 2021 Grammy Awards.

The pop star's reveal came at the end of her acceptance speech where she praised the other women in the category — which included Doja Cat and Olivia Rodrigo.

"I know with every second of this moment that we wouldn't be able to make this short film if it weren't for you - the fans," she said. "I wouldn't be able to re-record my albums if it wasn't for you. You emboldened me to do that."

Swift spoke earlier about creating her first short film, giving thanks to several including actors Sadie Sink and Dylan O'Brien who starred in the project.

"We put our entire hearts into this," Swift said.

Rapper Jack Harlow made his mark throughout the entire show. He kicked off the show with a performance inside a mock airplane walking down aisle while performing his hit song "First Class," which was

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 56 of 65

sampled by Fergie's "Glamorous." The rapper joined Fergie onstage — who wore a sparkling silver dress with the red words "First Class" — while she sang her 2006 jam.

"Thank you to Fergie for coming out with me tonight and clearing this song," said Harlow after "First Class" won the award for song of the summer later in the show. "The beauty of this song is that people don't realize it's so hip-hop because of the sampling. To bring Fergie into the mix in this way means the world to me. It's truly full circle. 'Glamorous' was one of the most important songs of my childhood."

Johnny Depp made a surprise appearance as the Moon Man nearly three months after the verdict in his defamation trial with his former wife Amber Heard. The 59-year-old actor appeared to float from the ceiling while wearing the iconic astronaut outfit with his face digitally inserted into costume's helmet.

"And you know what? I needed the work," Depp told the audience at the Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey.

Lizzo had Taylor Swift dancing out of her seat while she performed her new single "2 Be Loved (Am I Ready)." Lizzo won an award for video for good for "About Damn Time."

Harlow's name was called to come right back onstage to collect the show's first award for his guest appearance on Lil Nas X's song "Industry Baby," which won for best collaboration, art direction and visual effects. Harlow, Lil Nas X and Kendrick Lamar each entered the awards tied for leading nominees with seven apiece.

"This one is for the champions," said Lil Nas X before Harlow thanked him for the collaboration on the chart-topping single.

Harlow, in addition to performing and winning awards, joined LL Cool J and Nicki Minaj as the show's hosts.

Minaj performed a medley of her career's biggest hits from "Roman's Revenge," "Chun-Li," "Moment 4 Life," "Beez in the Trap," "Anaconda" and "Super Bass." After her set, the rapper accepted the show's Video Vanguard award, which MTV has said she's receiving for her artistry, barrier-breaking hip-hop and status as a global superstar. The honor is named after Michael Jackson.

During her acceptance speech, Minaj paid tribute to other music icons such as Jackson, Whitney Houston and Lil Wayne. She spoke about the importance of mental health.

"I wish people took mental health seriously, even when you think they have the perfect lives," said Minaj, who later won best hip-hop for her song "Do We Have a Problem?" featuring Lil Baby.

Harry Styles won album of the year for "Harry's House." He was unable to attend the awards due to his show at Madison Square Garden in New York.

Bad Bunny performed his hit "Titi Me Pregunto" from Yankee Stadium after he won artist of the year.

"I have been saying it and I always believed from the beginning that I could become great," he said. "That I could become one of the biggest stars in the world without having to change my culture, my language, my jargon. I am Benito Antonio Martínez from Puerto Rico to the whole world, thank you!"

Eminem and Snoop Dogg brought the metaverse to the VMAs as the duo performed "From the D 2 The LBC," which was featured on Eminem's greatest hits album "Curtain Call 2."

The Red Hot Chili Peppers took the stage as the recipients of the Global Icon award after being introduced by Cheech & Chong as their "favorite band of all time." The band — which consists of Anthony Kiedis, Flea, Chad Smith and John Frusciante — performed several songs including their classic "Can't Stop" from the group's 2002 album "By the Way" and their recent hit "Black Summer," which won best rock.

Flea made a speech about his love for human beings along with cockroaches, trees and dirt. Smith, the band's drummer, dedicated the award to Taylor Hawkins, the late Foo Fighters drummer who died early this year.

"I dedicate this to Taylor and his family," he said. "I love them and I miss him every day."

Madonna, who is the most awarded artist in MTV history with 20 wins, became the only artist to receive a nomination in each of the VMAs five decades. She earned her 69th nomination for her 14th studio album "Madame X."

**Attacked at home, Afghan Sikhs find community on Long Island**



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 57 of 65

By DEEPA BHARATH Associated Press

Kulwinder Singh Soni's voice quavered as he recounted the day in March 2020 when an Islamic State gunman burst into a Sikh gurdwara's prayer hall in Kabul, hurling grenades and firing assault rifles. Among the 25 people killed were Soni's father, sister-in-law and 4-year-old niece.

Police later warned the family not to attend their funerals because terrorists had planted land mines outside the temple. They were ultimately able to attend, but only after officers did a sweep and cleared them to enter the shrine.

"That's when we decided we needed to leave Afghanistan," Soni said. "There was absolutely no future for our family in that country."

After a two-year struggle to make an exit, including nearly a year under restored rule of the fundamentalist Taliban group, Soni and 12 family members including his mother, siblings, nieces and nephews, arrived in the United States last month.

They are settling in Hicksville, on New York's Long Island, a community that has come to be a growing refuge for not only Afghan Sikhs but also Hindus, both of them religious minorities that have increasingly suffered discrimination and persecution in their home country.

Sikhs and Hindus make up only a tiny fraction of the population of Afghanistan, which is almost entirely Muslim. Under the Taliban in the late 1990s, they were asked to identify themselves by wearing yellow armbands or badges, reminiscent of Nazi Germany, and in recent years they have been repeatedly targeted by extremists.

In July 2018 an ISIS suicide bomber ambushed a convoy of Sikhs and Hindus as they were on their way to meet President Ashraf Ghani in the eastern city of Jalalabad, killing 19. On June 16 of this year, an ISIS gunman attacked a gurdwara, or house of worship, in Kabul, killing one worshipper and wounding seven others. Sikhs have also faced challenges with cremating their dead, which they consider a sacred belief but Islam views as sacrilegious.

As the Aug. 30 one-year anniversary of U.S. forces' withdrawal from Afghanistan approaches, a recent report by the bipartisan U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom warns of "a rapid decline and near extinction of the already small Afghan Hindu and Sikh communities" in Afghanistan, in addition to persecution of other religious minorities.

In October 2021, the report says, the Sikh community shared videos of alleged Taliban members vandalizing and ransacking their gurdwara in the neighborhood of Karte Parwan, which is home to the remaining 100 or fewer Sikhs and Hindus in Kabul.

Soni, now 27, still has fresh memories of the 2020 gurdwara attack that ultimately drove the family from the country. When the assailants stormed the prayer hall early that morning, he was in the next room at the Gurdwara Har Rai Sahib, where his father was the chief granthi, or ceremonial reader of the Sikh sacred text.

He saw men running into the temple with shoes, something that is prohibited. As he darted out to stop them, Soni spotted the bodies of a security guard and a teen in a pool of blood right where devotees usually washed their feet before entering. He retreated with two siblings to a room, where they locked the door and hunkered down for several hours.

When the siege ended, Afghan special forces had killed the assailants and rescued at least 80 worshippers. Soni rushed to the prayer hall, where he found his three relatives dead and his mother and older brother wounded.

"My mom told me (the gunman) kept shooting and throwing bombs even as people tried to hide," Soni said. "My brother heard his daughter's voice calling out to him to help her. He was helpless."

In late August of last year, after the Taliban took over Kabul, Soni, one of the few English speakers in his community, assumed the role of a spokesperson and negotiator working to secure their exit from Kabul. He tried to talk the Canadian government into evacuating about 250 Sikhs and Hindus, including his family.

After an ISIS suicide bombing at the airport scuttled that plan and fears escalated under Taliban rule, the women and children in Soni's family moved to New Delhi and the men shuttled between India and Kabul to care for their sacred shrine. It then took months of struggle and daily communication between the U.S.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 58 of 65

State Department; the Sikh Coalition, a Sikh American advocacy group; and Afghan Sikhs in Hicksville to get the entire family of 13 to the U.S.

Paramjit Singh Bedi, a longtime community leader who moved to the United States in 1984 and was instrumental in bringing them over, is now hoping to help them get housing, work permits and medical insurance, and the children enrolled in school.

"This family has been through a lot," Bedi said. "But we are a resilient people and we are strong and steadfast in our faith. I know they will be OK."

Bedi has advocated for the permanent resettlement of the Afghan Sikh community here, and estimates there are about 200 of them living on Long Island.

There are also about 800 Afghan Hindus in the area, according to Doulat Radhu Bathija, a leader of that community.

Back in Afghanistan, gurdwaras and temples always stood side by side, and Bathija is thrilled that is also the case thousands of miles away on Long Island; in Hicksville, the Guru Nanak Darbar gurdwara is located right next to the Asa'Mai Hindu Temple.

Bathija said he sees the Hindu and Sikh communities as "the same," and they visit each other's places of worship and celebrate together Diwali, the festival of lights.

"We get together for weddings and funerals," he said, "like a family."

Sikhs and Hindus are not recent migrants to Afghanistan but have hundreds of years of history there. Sikh texts speak of a time when Guru Nanak, the religion's founder, visited Afghanistan in the 1500s. Yet they are often viewed as infidels, said Jagbir Jhutti-Johal, a professor of Sikh Studies at the University of Birmingham in the U.K. Women, in particular, have been subjected to severe restrictions under the Taliban.

While as recently as the 1970s there were about 200,000 Sikhs in Afghanistan, Jhutti-Johal anticipates that by the end of this year there may be none left. Over the years, most have moved to India or the West.

Jhutti-Johal believes the West may be the best home for these communities since their Afghan ethnic identity and meager social services in India make things more complicated there.

"They are also going to need access to mental health services after everything they have been through," she said.

Soni's family is now trying to win formal asylum in the U.S., and supporters say they have a strong case.

"There is an overwhelming and compelling amount of evidence for how this family experienced religious persecution in Afghanistan because they are Sikhs," said Mark Reading-Smith, senior managing director of programs for the Sikh Coalition. "They've lost more than we can ever imagine."

The family is slowly recovering. But Soni said he's not even sure what "normal" life looks like, having grown up bullied and beaten in school and on the street for being Sikh. By comparison, Long Island feels a lot more welcoming.

Soni has been praying at the gurdwara. He loves seeing his little nieces and nephews smile. And his mother does not panic anymore whenever he leaves home.

"She now tells us to go out and enjoy life," Soni said. "Here, I think, we have the opportunity to become who we want to become."

## China's drought-hit areas get rain, bringing flood risks

BEIJING (AP) — More than 100,000 people had moved to safer areas by Monday as heavy rains brought flood risks to a region of southwest China that was devastated by a heatwave and drought for most of the summer.

Heavy rain was forecast for parts of Sichuan province and Chongqing city through at least Tuesday. Chongqing, a megacity built in a hilly area and that also oversees the surrounding mountains and countryside, issued a flash flood warning for both days.

But China's meteorological agency maintained a national orange alert for drought, the second highest level, as the heat persisted in many parts of the country's south, the official Xinhua News Agency said. It recommended strict water conservation and using emergency water sources to supply people and livestock.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 59 of 65

The Sichuan emergency management administration said Monday that 119,000 people have been evacuated. One village under the jurisdiction of Guangyuan city recorded 18.8 centimeters (7.4 inches) of rain, state broadcaster CCTV said. The city was one of two in Sichuan most affected by the drought.

A national level IV emergency response for floods, the lowest in a four-tier system, is in effect in Sichuan, Chongqing and neighboring Gansu and Shaanxi provinces to the north. The hard, sunbaked soil left by the heatwave increases the risk of natural disasters when it rains, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

The shift in the weather brought some relief from the heat, and full power was restored to factories in Sichuan after two weeks of restrictions stemming from reduced hydropower output.

The rain should help farmers whose rice, spicy Sichuan peppers and other crops were withering during an extended drought that reduced community reservoirs to mostly cracked earth.

Temperatures topped 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) in what meteorologists called the strongest heat wave in China since record-keeping began in 1961.

Power in Sichuan for commercial and industrial use "has been fully restored," CCTV said on its website. Household demand for air conditioning declined as temperatures moderated and the rainfall was starting to replenish hydroelectric reservoirs.

Hydropower generation in the province was up 9.5% from its low point, the state broadcaster reported. Daily power use by households declined by 28% from a peak of 473 million to 340 million kilowatt hours, the report said, citing Zhao Hong, marketing director for State Grid's Sichuan subsidiary.

"The contradiction between power supply and demand in Sichuan will be basically resolved in the next three days," Zhao was quoted as saying.

The falling hydropower production prompted Sichuan utilities to step up the use of coal-fired power plants, temporarily setting back efforts to reduce carbon and other emissions.

The share of power in Sichuan that comes from coal has jumped to 25% from 10% with 67 generating stations running at full capacity, according to Caixin, a Chinese business news magazine.

Sichuan usually is seen as a clean power success story in China, getting 80% of its electricity from hydropower.

## 'The Invitation' tops tepid weekend at box office

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The horror film "The Invitation" needed just \$7 million to finish at the top of the weakest weekend of the summer at the North American box office, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Directed and co-written by Jessica M. Thompson and starring "Game of Thrones" actor Nathalie Emmanuel, "The Invitation" tells the story of a young woman who after her mother's death discovers dark secrets at her family home in the English countryside.

It debuted on 3,141 screens for Sony and cost just \$10 million to make.

Sony also had the No. 2 movie with the Brad Pitt vehicle "Bullet Train," which brought in an estimated \$5.6 million from 3,513 screens in its fourth week, bringing its domestic total to \$78.2 million.

Universal's "Beast," starring Idris Elba, finished third with \$4.9 million in its second week, after making \$11.6 million and ranking second in its first.

Elba was also the star of the week's other major debut, "Three Thousand Years of Longing," the fantasy epic from "Mad Max" director George Miller, which brought in just \$2.9 million on 2,436 screens and finished a distant and disappointing seventh.

The lagging results were no great surprise for this time of year.

"We're in that what is often the typical August slowdown heading into Labor Day weekend," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. "This was to be expected given the lineup of films this weekend."

Paramount's "Top Gun: Maverick" remained in fourth in its 14th weekend in theaters with an additional \$4.8 million. It has made over \$691 million in North America to date, making it the sixth-highest grossing domestic release of all time.

Last week's No. 1, "Dragon Ball Super: Super Hero" plunged to fifth in its second weekend with \$4.6

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 60 of 65

million after bringing in \$20.1 million in its debut.

The weekend overall saw about \$52.7 million in North American ticket sales — the slowest in months. A strong summer has meant that the year-to-date box office is still up significantly from a tepid 2021, but a long drought lies ahead until another surge of expected big earners such as “Halloween Ends” and “Black Adam,” which will both be released in October.

Amid the quiet spell at the box office, movie tickets will be just \$3 in the vast majority of American theaters as part of a newly launched “National Cinema Day” on Saturday. Major chains, including AMC and Regal Cinemas, are participating, as are all major film studios.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. “The Invitation,” \$7 million.
2. “Bullet Train,” \$5.6 million.
3. “Beast,” \$4.9 million.
4. “Top Gun: Maverick,” \$4.8 million.
5. “Dragon Ball Super: Super Hero,” \$4.6 million.
6. “DC League of Super-Pets,” \$4.2 million.
7. “Three Thousand Years of Longing,” \$2.9 million
8. “Minions: The Rise of Gru,” \$2.74 million.
9. “Thor: Love and Thunder,” \$2.7 million.
10. “Where the Crawdads Sing,” \$2.3 million

## **Palestinian toll mounts as Israel steps up West Bank raids**

By JOSEPH KRAUSS and JALAL BWAITEL Associated Press

TUBAS, West Bank (AP) — At least 85 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank this year as Israeli forces have carried out nightly raids in cities, towns and villages, making it the deadliest in the occupied territory since 2016.

The military says the vast majority were militants or stone-throwers who endangered the soldiers. The tally, from the Palestinian Health Ministry, includes Palestinians who carried out deadly attacks inside Israel.

But it also includes several civilians, including a veteran journalist and a lawyer who apparently drove unwittingly into a battle zone, as well as local youths who took to the streets in response to the invasion of their neighborhoods.

The length and frequency of the raids has pulled into focus Israel’s tactics in the West Bank, where nearly 3 million Palestinians live under a decades-long occupation and Palestinians view the military’s presence as a humiliation and a threat.

Israeli troops have regularly operated across the West Bank since Israel captured the territory in 1967.

Israel says it is dismantling militant networks that threaten its citizens, and that it makes every effort to avoid harming civilians. Palestinians say the raids are aimed at maintaining Israel’s 55-year military rule over territories they want for a future state — a dream that appears as remote as ever, with no serious peace negotiations held in over a decade.

Israel stepped up the operations this past spring after a string of deadly attacks by Palestinians against Israelis killed 17 people, some carried out by militants from the West Bank. There have been no deadly attacks since May, but the relentless military operations have continued.

The Palestinian Health Ministry has reported 85 Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces in the occupied West Bank and annexed east Jerusalem since the start of the year.

With four months to go this year, that already is the highest number since 2016, the tail-end of a previous wave of violence, when 91 Palestinians were killed, according to yearly data compiled by the Israeli human rights group B’Tselem.

The ministry’s tally includes attackers and known militants, but also the veteran Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, and a 58-year-old man who was shot in the head outside a bakery earlier this month.



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 61 of 65

The Israeli military says both might have been hit by Palestinian gunfire but has not provided evidence to substantiate its claims.

The dead include 17 teens under the age of 18, as well as six women, according to the ministry. Israel says that teenagers and women are often involved in violence, while critics accuse the army of using excessive force in many cases.

Israel is also holding more than 600 Palestinians without charge or trial in what's known as administrative detention — the highest in six years.

Amir Avivi, a retired Israeli general who now heads the Israel Defense and Security Forum, said the heightened pace of operations is the result of the recent wave of attacks and the Palestinian Authority's refusal to crack down on militants in the areas it administers.

"The Israeli forces always operate on the basis of very accurate intelligence," he said. "They operate only to apprehend terrorists that we know are involved in terror or are planning to attack Israelis."

The Palestinian Authority is mired in a crisis of legitimacy largely stemming from its cooperation with Israel on security matters. Palestinian officials say they will not help police the occupation, especially if there is no hope that doing so will lead to independence.

Rights groups say that while some Israeli missions are aimed at combatting specific threats, others are intended as a show of force, or to protect the growing population of Jewish settlers.

Ori Givati is the director of advocacy at Breaking the Silence, an Israeli group opposed to the occupation that gathers testimonies of former Israeli soldiers. Some soldiers recall carrying out mock arrests, in which fully armed soldiers raid a home in the middle of the night — for training purposes.

Even more common, Givati says, are so-called "stimulus and response" operations. Testimonies describe how Israeli troops patrol Palestinian areas, sometimes with lights and speakers on, hoping to lure stone-throwers or gunmen into the streets so they can arrest or confront them.

"The way we occupy the Palestinians is by creating more and more friction, making our presence felt," Givati said. "We invade their towns, their cities, their homes."

In a statement, the army denied the allegations, saying it acts "solely against threats and terrorist operatives who pose a security threat" in Israel and the West Bank.

Israel says it investigates all cases in which Israeli troops are suspected of killing civilians, but rights groups say most of those investigations are quietly closed with soldiers rarely facing serious repercussions.

There were two notable exceptions this year.

The killing of Abu Akleh, a veteran on-air correspondent, prompted numerous independent investigations that concluded she was likely killed by Israeli fire. Israel denies targeting her and says it is still investigating.

There was also the death in January of Omar Assad, a 78-year-old who died shortly after Israeli soldiers bound and blindfolded him and left him in the cold. In that case, senior officers were reprimanded and stripped of leadership roles.

Both were American citizens, and the U.S. raised both cases with Israel. Last week, Israel discharged four soldiers after they were caught on camera beating and kicking two detained Palestinians.

There was no such uproar over Salah Sawafta, who was shot outside the bakery as he returned from dawn prayers in the West Bank town of Tubas earlier this month. Israeli troops, who had gone to arrest suspected militants, were engaged in a firefight with Palestinian gunmen.

His family believes he was killed by an Israeli sniper in a building across the street. Zakreya Abu Dollah, the bakery owner who witnessed the shooting, said he saw Israeli soldiers fanned out on the street but no Palestinian gunmen or stone-throwers in the immediate area.

The military says it is investigating and that Sawafta might have been hit by a stray bullet fired by Palestinian militants.

Jehad Sawafta said his late brother, who made a living trading animal feed, had no connection to any political faction or militant group.

Salah had a son and four daughters, one of whom was engaged to be married this past Friday. The father of the bride was killed a week before the wedding.

"His second daughter was supposed to be married on Aug. 26, but then everything got turned upside

down," Jihad said. "Those girls adored their father because he provided a good and dignified life for them."

## Retiring AP reporter chronicles 4 decades covering Congress

By ALAN FRAM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the waning moments of Democrats' four-decade hold on the House, I saw a gesture that seems unthinkable today. On the evening of Nov. 29, 1994, they let the top Republican preside, briefly, over the chamber.

It was a display of respect and affection toward Minority Leader Bob Michel, R-Ill., retiring after a 38-year House career served entirely under Democrats. He embraced with outgoing Speaker Tom Foley, D-Wash. Republicans were taking over in January under the combative Rep. Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., abandoning Michel's consensus-building style.

Those feelings between leaders are all but gone. In their place are suspicion and even hostility, most starkly symbolized by magnetometers lawmakers must pass through before entering the House chamber.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., installed the metal detectors over GOP objections after the brutal Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol attack by supporters of then-President Donald Trump. Democrats also expressed concerns about Republican lawmakers who carry guns.

As I retire after nearly four decades covering Capitol Hill, that contrast and the forces behind it illustrate why I've loved covering Congress — and why I've recently felt dispirited.

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Congress is dominated by masters of political hardball who've survived a Darwinian culling of the nation's most ambitious politicians. Covering them is like attending a riveting theatrical drama, except you get to wander behind the curtain and chat up the actors.

In a moment of irony, I saw Gingrich in 1998, then speaker, lash out at the very conservatives who'd powered his own rise after they opposed his budget deal with President Bill Clinton as a surrender. Gingrich mocked them as the "perfectionist caucus," a bow to the compromises needed in a divided government. He soon announced his retirement.

Near midnight on Sept. 11, 2001, I watched Democrats and Republicans, in a show of solidarity on the Capitol steps, spontaneously sing "God Bless America."

Pelosi triumphantly waved the gavel aloft in 2007 when she became the first female speaker. "For our daughters and our granddaughters, we have broken the marble ceiling," the California Democrat said.

Eight years later, I saw awe in the eyes of House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, a Catholic, as he greeted Pope Francis, whom he'd invited to address Congress.

I saw shock on Republicans' faces the very next morning as they left a Capitol basement meeting where Boehner revealed he was quitting, hounded by a new generation of hard-right conservatives, the House Freedom Caucus.

Democrats and Republicans cheered when No. 3 House GOP leader Steve Scalise of Louisiana limped into the chamber in 2017, three months after being gravely wounded when a gunman attacked a Republican baseball practice.

I've seen change. Since Pelosi's 1987 arrival, the number of women in Congress has multiplied from 25 to 146. There are around 130 lawmakers of color, up from 38.

And I've witnessed upheaval. Starting in 2017, Sen. Al Franken, D-Minn., and others resigned amid the #MeToo sexual harassment movement.

I had one deeply embarrassing close encounter with a freshly sworn-in president in 2001. I was assigned to a ceremonial Senate room where new presidents sign papers immediately after their inaugural address.

Someone brushed my elbow. Standing beside me was President George W. Bush. I tried drawing him out with a folksy, "So, how'd it go?" He parried what was likely his first reporter's question as president with a nod, adding, "Good."

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Since coming to Washington in 1983, I've seen debates over wars, terrorism, recessions, government

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 63 of 65

shutdowns and taxes. Three of history's four presidential impeachment trials. Fights over social justice, abortion, a pandemic.

I still overhear Democrats and Republicans making dinner plans. The sorrow over this month's traffic accident death of Rep. Jackie Walorski, R-Ind., and two aides was bipartisan and heartfelt.

Yet today's common ground seems narrower, the atmosphere darker, the stakes higher.

Pelosi referred to House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., as a "moron" after he opposed mask mandates in the House as the coronavirus pandemic spiked. McCarthy said it would be "hard not to hit her" with the gavel if he becomes speaker. His spokesperson called it a joke.

Both parties have fewer moderates. House districts increasingly drawn for partisan advantage push Democrats left, Republicans right as they appeal to their most activist primary voters.

Voters self-sort among social media and news outlets they believe. That hardens constituents' views, further constraining lawmakers' willingness to compromise.

Senate filibusters requiring bills to garner 60 votes are commonplace, derailing nearly anything without broad bipartisan support.

Through early this century, most Supreme Court nominees were approved easily.

In 2016, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., refused to let President Barack Obama fill a Supreme Court vacancy, citing upcoming elections a full nine months away. Then just weeks before Election Day 2020, McConnell sped a Trump appointee through the Senate, giving the court a 6-3 conservative majority and McConnell a legacy achievement that outraged Democrats.

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None of that approximates Trump's baseless assertion that the 2020 election was stolen from him, a claim rejected by dozens of courts, local officials and his own attorney general.

His false construct fueled the Jan. 6 insurrection. I wasn't in the Capitol because of the pandemic, but there is no forgetting the death, injury, destruction and disheartening sense that democracy itself had been defiled.

Just hours after the mob was dispersed, more than half of House Republicans and eight GOP senators voted against certifying Democrat Joe Biden's victory. McCarthy initially said Trump "bears responsibility" for the attack but later blocked a bipartisan investigation.

Many Republicans have downplayed or deflected attention from that calamitous day. Trump remains his party's dominant figure.

Republicans have backed Trump's claims that this month's court-sanctioned search of his Mar-a-Lago estate was politically motivated. The FBI is led by Trump-appointed Director Christopher Wray and emerged with sensitive national security documents that are federal property.

Anti-government rhetoric by politicians is not new. But these latest assaults on faith in government and the election system underpinning it — by potent influencers like a former president and his elected supporters — come amid authorities' warnings about increased calls for violence, even civil war.

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Despite ever-tighter security, reporters still walk unfettered in most Capitol corridors.

I've bumped into celebrities from Muhammad Ali to Jon Stewart. But politicians have left the most lasting impressions.

Senate Republican leader Bob Dole of Kansas wielded light-speed wit. After the newly elected Clinton dined with GOP senators in a gesture of bipartisanship, he described a novel he'd read involving a murdered Democratic senator. "A happy ending!" Dole replied.

Gingrich's hardening of partisan enmity — he counseled describing Democrats with focus group-tested words like "traitors" and "sick" — was sometimes answered in kind. Rep. Sam Gibbons, D-Fla., angrily left one 1995 House hearing on Medicare cuts Republicans wanted. "I had to fight you guys 50 years ago," shouted Gibbons, who parachuted into France behind Nazi lines on D-Day.

I've seen agreements to authorize a military response to 9/11, keep the 2008 Great Recession from getting even worse and spend trillions of dollars to counter the pandemic.

Republicans have enacted huge tax cuts and created Medicare prescription drug coverage. Senate Majority

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 64 of 65

Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., recently muscled a top Biden priority to passage bolstering environment and health initiatives.

Trump's norm-busting four years featured constant clashes with Congress including Republicans, from whom he tolerated no dissent.

I prodded one Republican, privately critical of Trump, to talk on the record. "He'd send me to Gitmo," he said.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., just 48, announced in early 2018 that he would retire. He later told author Tim Alberta he could not endure two more years working with Trump.

The cautious McConnell and impulsive Trump long had a fraught relationship. It was severed as McConnell, who voted to acquit Trump over Jan. 6 on the grounds that he'd already left the White House, immediately afterward blistered him as being "practically and morally responsible" for the riot.

I've seen lawmakers risk their jobs by backing the party line. Democrats lost dozens of seats in 1994 after rallying behind a Clinton deficit-reduction package. They lost again in 2010 after enacting Obama's health care law.

And I've seen some infuriate colleagues by straying. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., elicited gasps with his decisive thumbs-down that derailed Trump's effort to repeal Obama's health care statute.

Ten House Republicans voted to impeach Trump over the insurrection. At least eight, including Rep. Liz Cheney, R-Wyo., Trump's most relentless GOP foe, will not be in Congress next year.

Lawmakers have recently approved accords helping Ukraine and veterans and modestly restricting guns — glimmers suggesting they can still work together.

Yet the confluence of today's forces chipping away at faith in government institutions would not be recognizable to Foley and Michel.

## Today in History: August 30, Thurgood Marshall confirmed

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Aug. 30, the 242nd day of 2022. There are 123 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Aug. 30, 2021, the United States completed its withdrawal from Afghanistan, ending America's longest war with the Taliban back in power, as Air Force transport planes carried a remaining contingent of troops from Kabul airport; officials put the number of Americans remaining in Afghanistan at under 200 and said they would keep working to get those people out. After watching the last U.S. planes disappear into the sky over Afghanistan, Taliban fighters fired their guns into the air, celebrating victory after a 20-year insurgency.

On this date:

In 1861, Union Gen. John C. Fremont instituted martial law in Missouri and declared slaves there to be free. (However, Fremont's emancipation order was countermanded by President Abraham Lincoln.)

In 1941, during World War II, German forces approaching Leningrad cut off the remaining rail line out of the city.

In 1945, U.S. Gen. Douglas MacArthur arrived in Japan to set up Allied occupation headquarters.

In 1963, the "Hot Line" communications link between Washington and Moscow went into operation.

In 1967, the Senate confirmed the appointment of Thurgood Marshall as the first Black justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1983, Guion (GY-un) S. Bluford Jr. became the first Black American astronaut to travel in space as he blasted off aboard the Challenger.

In 1991, Azerbaijan (ah-zur-by-JAHN') declared its independence, joining the stampede of republics seeking to secede from the Soviet Union.

In 1992, the television series "Northern Exposure" won six Emmy Awards, including best drama series,



# Groton Daily Independent

**Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 054 ~ 65 of 65**

while "Murphy Brown" received three Emmys, including best comedy series.

In 1993, "The Late Show with David Letterman" premiered on CBS-TV.

In 1997, Americans received word of the car crash in Paris that claimed the lives of Princess Diana, her boyfriend, Dodi Fayed (DOH'-dee FY'-ehd), and their driver, Henri (AHN'-ree) Paul. (Because of the time difference, it was August 31 where the crash occurred.)

In 2005, a day after Hurricane Katrina hit, floods were covering 80 percent of New Orleans, looting continued to spread and rescuers in helicopters and boats picked up hundreds of stranded people.

In 2007, in a serious breach of nuclear security, a B-52 bomber armed with six nuclear warheads flew cross-country unnoticed; the Air Force later punished 70 people.

Ten years ago: Mitt Romney launched his fall campaign for the White House with a rousing, personal speech to the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida, proclaiming that America needs "jobs, lots of jobs." Earlier in the evening, actor-director Clint Eastwood offered an endorsement of Romney that entailed using an empty chair to represent President Barack Obama. The U.S. Justice Department announced it had ended its investigation into CIA interrogations of terrorist detainees without bringing criminal charges.

Five years ago: The former Hurricane Harvey completed a U-turn in the Gulf of Mexico and rolled ashore for the second time in six days, hitting southwestern Louisiana as a tropical storm with heavy rains and winds of 45 miles an hour. Floodwaters began to recede in Houston, where thousands of homes were flooded. A federal judge in Texas temporarily blocked most of a new state law that would have let police officers ask people during routine stops whether they were in the country legally; the law also threatened sheriffs with jail time for not cooperating with federal immigration authorities. (The crackdown on "sanctuary cities" took effect the following March after a federal appeals court upheld the law.)

One year ago: Rescuers in boats, helicopters and high-water trucks brought to safety hundreds of people in Louisiana who were trapped by the floodwaters of Hurricane Ida. The entire resort city of South Lake Tahoe, California, was ordered evacuated as a ferocious wildfire raced toward Lake Tahoe on the California-Nevada state line; the city of 22,000 was normally filled with tens of thousands of summer tourists. (Improved weather conditions would help keep the flames out of the city.)

Today's Birthdays: Actor Elizabeth Ashley is 83. Actor Ben Jones is 81. Actor John Kani is 80. Cartoonist R. Crumb is 79. Olympic gold medal skier Jean-Claude Killy (zhahn-KLOHD' kee-LEE') is 79. Comedian Lewis Black is 74. Actor Timothy Bottoms is 71. Actor David Paymer is 68. Jazz musician Gerald Albright is 65. Actor Michael Chiklis is 59. Actor Michael Michele is 56. Country singer Sherrie Austin is 51. Rock singer-musician Lars Frederiksen (Rancid) is 51. Actor Cameron Diaz is 50. TV personality Lisa Ling is 49. Rock singer-musician Aaron Barrett (Reel Big Fish) is 48. Actor Raúl Castillo is 45. Actor Michael Gladis is 45. MLB pitcher Adam Wainwright is 41. Former tennis player Andy Roddick is 40. Singer Rachael Price (Lake Street Dive) is 37. Rock musician Ryan Ross is 36. Actor Johanna Braddy is 35. Actor Cameron Finley is 35.