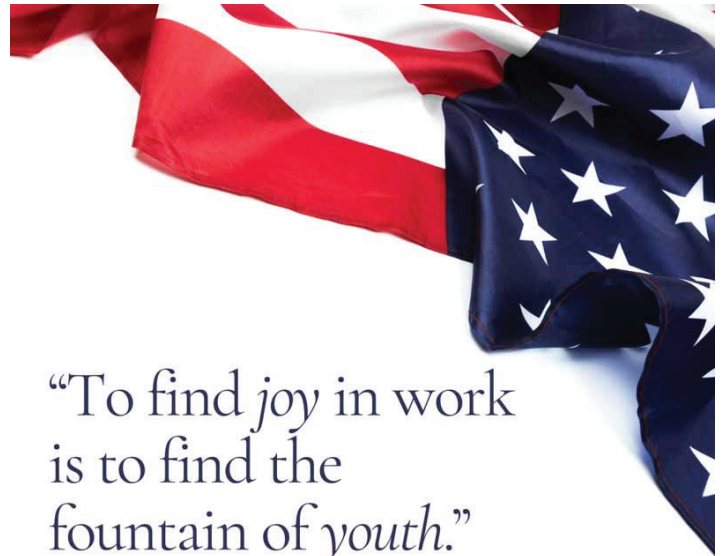


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*"To find joy in work
is to find the
fountain of youth."*

PEARL S. BUCK

*Chicken Soup
for the Soul*

Monday, Sept. 6 - LABOR DAY

NO SCHOOL

Emmanuel: 6:30 am Bible Study

Tuesday, Sept. 6

Senior Menu: Ham and Bean soup, egg salad sandwich, tomato spoon salad, fruit..

School Menu: Breakfast: French Toast; Lunch: Meatballs, mashed potatoes.

Groton UMC: 10:00am Bible Study

St. John's Lutheran: Ladies Aid LWML, 1:00 pm

4 p.m.: Cross Country at Britton

4 p.m.: Combined JH FB hosts Webster

5:15 p.m.: JV Football game hosts Webster

Volleyball hosts Webster (8th grade at 6 p.m. followed by 7th grade in gym; Arena games have C match at 5 p.m. followed by JV and varsity)

7 p.m.: City Council Meeting

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

Wednesday, Sept. 7

Senior Menu: Roast pork, mashed potatoes and gravy, parsley buttered carrots, apple sauce, whole wheat bread.

School Menu: Breakfast: Eggs, Omelets; Lunch: Chicken strips, sweet potato fries.

Emmanuel: 5 pm Sarah Circle

St. John's Lutheran: Bible Study. 2:45--3:30 pm; Confirmation, 3:45 pm

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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Thursday, Sept. 8

Senior Menu: Ranch chicken bread, boiled potato, squash, fruit, whole wheat bread.

School Menu: Breakfast: Muffins; Lunch: Hot dogs, baked beans.

10 a.m.: Golf Meet at Olive Grove Golf Course

Volleyball hosts Roncalli (8th grade at 6 p.m. followed by 7th grade in gym; games in Arena are C match at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity)

Friday, Sept. 9

Senior Menu: Hamburger and cabbage dish, mixed vegetables, pears, muffin.

School Menu: Breakfast: Eggs and sausage; Lunch: Mac and Cheese, peas.

3/4 and 5/6 games at Clark prior to varsity game (around 5 p.m.)

7 p.m.: Football vs. Clark/Willow Lake at Clark

Groton Airport hosts Fly-in Weekend

The Groton Airport has been the site for the annual fly-in during this Labor Day Weekend. The airport is located 5 miles north of Groton. The event concludes today. Thanks to Bruce Babcock for the wonderful photos!



Darrel Hillestad was France's pilot flying the orientation rides. One of the happy flyers that got a plane ride during the Groton Muni Fly-in. Frances Elm of Valley City ND. 87 years young and mother of Groton local Bruce Babcock.



Bill Motsinger of Hanger 9 flew a flight demonstration Saturday at the Fly-in in his Pits acrobatic airplane.



Some of the aircraft at the fly-in.



Bill Motsinger, Darrel Hillestad, and Brett Anderson were some of the local pilots at the Fly-in.

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“Keeping on the sunny side of life”

After a visit about aches, pains and various medical issues, a patient was commenting on getting older. Similar to other patients, I expected him to say something like, “It’s no fun getting older.” To my surprise, the patient said, “I’m 85. That means I have a lot to be thankful for.”



Based on Science, Built on Trust



Andrew Ellsworth, MD.

Some people are almost always positive, and some are usually negative. Those that are positive have been found to have better outcomes and seem to enjoy themselves more while unfortunately, those that tend to be more negative do not do as well. Granted, factors such as poor health and misfortune can diminish anyone’s attitude. Thankfully, with a little effort, anyone can change their mindset. It really is amazing how much gratitude and a positive demeanor can improve your health.

There are many small ways to brighten your outlook. To start with, begin and end your day listing what you are grateful for.

Stop comparing yourself to others. This is one of the reasons social media has been shown to make people unhappy. If one is constantly looking at how others are doing, dressing, and where they are traveling, one cannot resist comparing themselves and thinking they are missing out.

Exercise helps you feel better. Getting fresh air, some sun, and getting that heart pumping creates endorphins in your brain that can help improve your mental health in addition to the benefits to your physical health.

Look to build lasting relationships. Studies have shown that people who have satisfying relationships with friends and family are happier, have fewer health problems, and live longer. Start building those relationships now. It takes time to gain trust, to listen, and show you care.

As we get older, our world tends to get smaller. The places we go may decrease, the people we see may become fewer, and our daily activities may become more limited. However, that does not need to lead to less happiness. In fact, quite the contrary.

There is a poem that starts with “When I am an old woman I shall wear purple,” It draws on the wisdom of being yourself. When the pressure to perform and impress has passed, it can be liberating to know more about yourself, what you like, and what you do not like. Then you will be free to just enjoy your day, and maybe wear purple with a red hat, if you feel so inclined.

Andrew Ellsworth, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show based on science, built on trust for 21 seasons, broadcast on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.

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That's Life by Tony Bender: The pilgrimage

It's a mile west of Haynes, ND, past railroad tracks that stretch across a gravel road until they merge into steel dots in the distance. Then, bumpity-bump, over a plank crossing, past an algae-green creek. The cemetery was in a pasture, a shorn wheat field to the southeast, another awaiting a barber to the west. Net-wrapped bales pimpled the landscape.

Stubble rattled beneath my low-slung coupe. Grasshoppers. Buttes. Wind towers. Wind.

I'd come to say hello. Because goodbyes are too hard.

It was love at first sight three decades ago when I came to Hettinger as the inexperienced publisher of a foundering ship. Anyone can be captain when you're sinking. But fresh air in her sails and community support was all she needed.

I can't comprehend the alchemy of magic, that cosmic concoction of personalities and circumstances—or which planet is in what house in the Year of the Cat or whatever—but I do know we were waiting for each other. Ted and Nancy Uecker, Harriet and Jimmy Howe, Al McIntyre, Ginger and Kerry Dangerud, Roxanne Johnson. Tom Secret. There were others, but these were the usual suspects. We had wine-fueled arguments, said caustic (and hilarious) things to one another, then hugged at the end of the night. The way real friendships work.

I returned to the scene of the crime knowing what I'd find. Attrition. Maybe my heart. I left it around here somewhere. But magic was too much to expect.

McIntyre, the leprechaun, arrived first at the Dangeruds, mocking my affinity for fedoras with a floppy white hat so ridiculous that had someone forced it upon him he would have protested it as cruel and unusual punishment. He was wearing a "BS in the A.M." T-shirt, too: Bender, Secret, and Al McIntyre.

Everywhere in America, radio stations and newspapers are mortal enemies. Everywhere except Hettinger. Al knew a resurgent newspaper was good for the community, so he invited me to join him and Tom Secret, a Texas-born lawyer and former head of the state GOP, for a weekly talk show where I shamefully plugged the Adams County Record. Two Republicans and me, the voice of reason.

We were, uh, irreverent. Each show began with "Apology Corner," a segment during which we sort of apologized for the things we'd said the week before. Twice, angry listeners stormed the studio. Security was lacking.

And then there were two.

Ah, Secret... Ah, regrets... I didn't make it back one last time before his health failed... pandemic shutdowns, my own health challenges, business obligations, and well, life.

They didn't even have a service for the big man, McIntyre complained, and that got me fired up.

"What?! I would have given a heck of a speech," I said, my voice rising. "I would've had a lot to say!"

"I didn't like him, either!" Al shouted back.

They were, of course, the best of friends.

Ted, a banty rooster of a man, arrived next, moving glacially with a cane. He's 88, and all that lying (former cattle buyer) and womanizing was bound to catch up to him.

"Look," Kerry said. "You guys have the same cane!"

Yup, the same adjustable \$15 cane, his for a bum ankle, mine for a bum hip.

"Mine's longer," Teddy sniffed, shuffling past me. "Thicker, too."

And that, ladies and gentlemen, is Teddy Bill Uecker, the most politically-incorrect, irascible, loyal friend imaginable. Loyalty's a trait I hold sacred. Ted thought I was good for the community, too, and once offered to finance the purchase of the newspaper. But the timing wasn't right.

The thing about magic is that it's transitory. It evaporates. Revel in it while you can.

Ginger and I talked past midnight, laughed over old stories and new ones, and bragged about kids and grandkids. In the morning, I swung past the Uecker's for coffee and one more... one more... hello. Ted gave me one of his retired hats. We talked a bit, but I had a long drive ahead, and Ted was still in his bathrobe... I told them that I love them—because I do—and headed east.

The headstone read "Tom" Thales Latimer Secret. Thales Latimer? Jesus. That's probably what killed him. There was no speech. I didn't say anything at all. Let the wind do the talking.

I might have choked up a little as I replayed the events of the last 18 hours in my mind—the way McIntyre's eyes snagged mine as we embraced, softly insulting each other.

I imagined Tom's gigantic guffaw booming across dimensions. No, I heard it.

I turned full circle to drink it in before I slid into the cockpit. Inside, I removed my fedora and replaced it with Ted's Stetson.

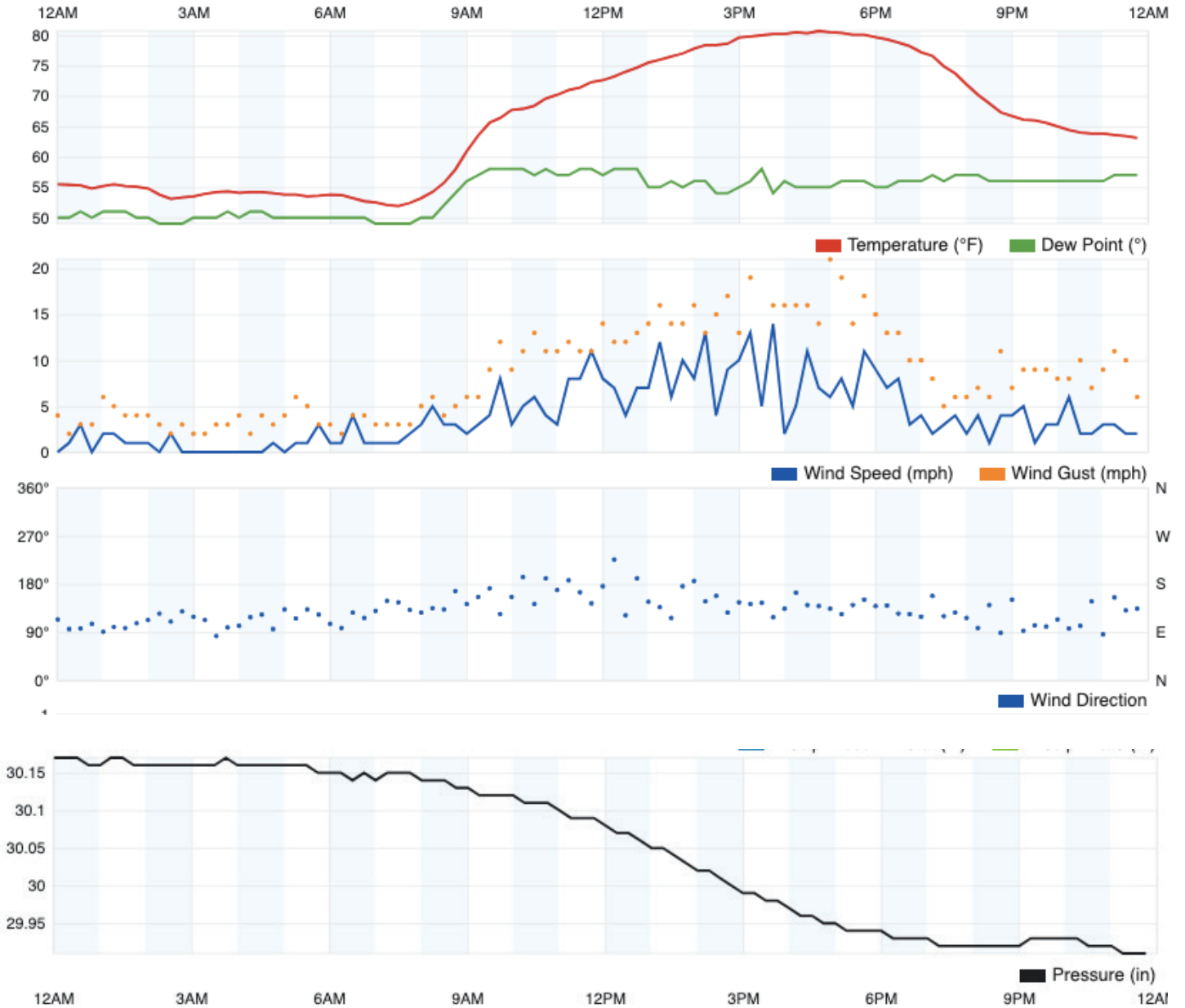
The stubble scraped away at the chassis. Grasshoppers pelted the hood like hailstones.

I smiled, squinting into the sun. For a moment, the magic was back.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Labor Day



Sunny and Breezy

High: 85 °F

Tonight



Mostly Clear

Low: 59 °F

Tuesday



Hot

High: 90 °F

Tuesday Night



Clear

Low: 59 °F

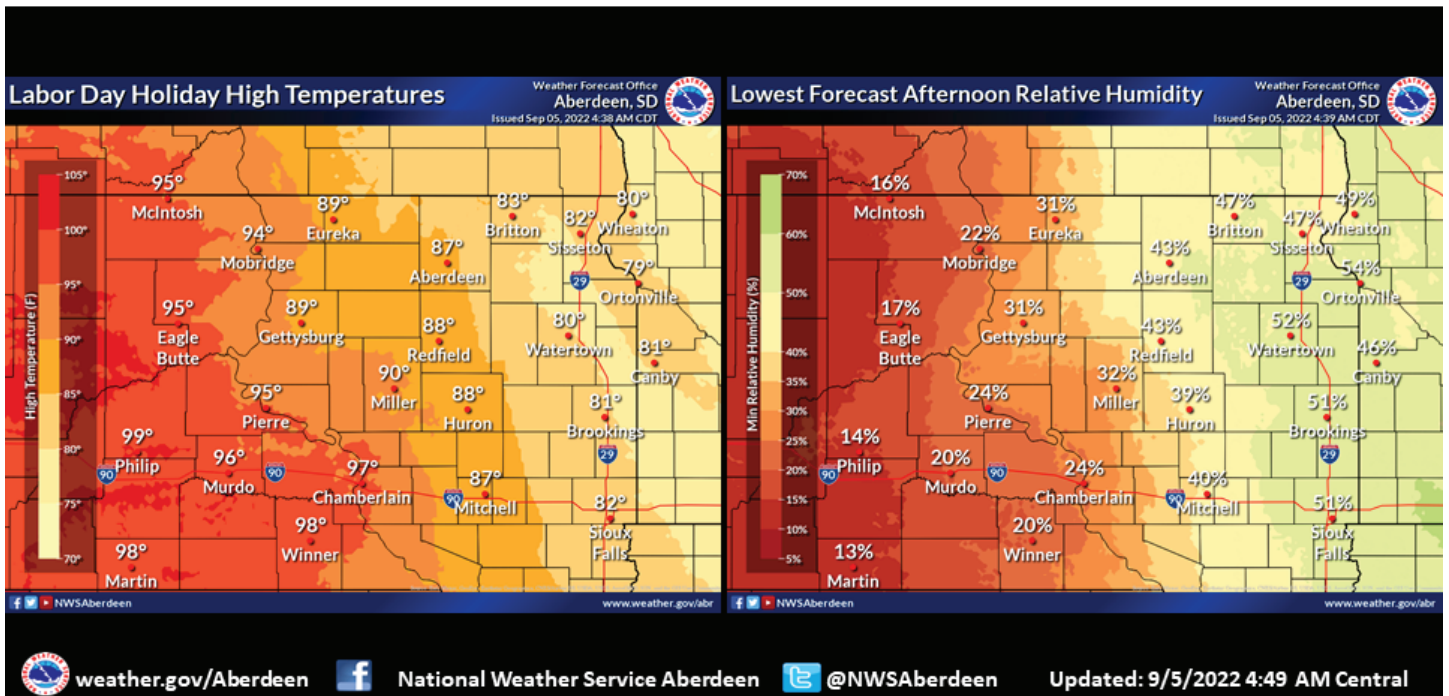
Wednesday



Hot

High: 90 °F

Hot and Dry Conditions Continue



Hot and dry conditions will continue across much of the area today. Highs will range from near 80 to 95 degrees this afternoon, with afternoon relative humidity bottoming out in the 13 to 23 percent range throughout and west of the Missouri River valley.

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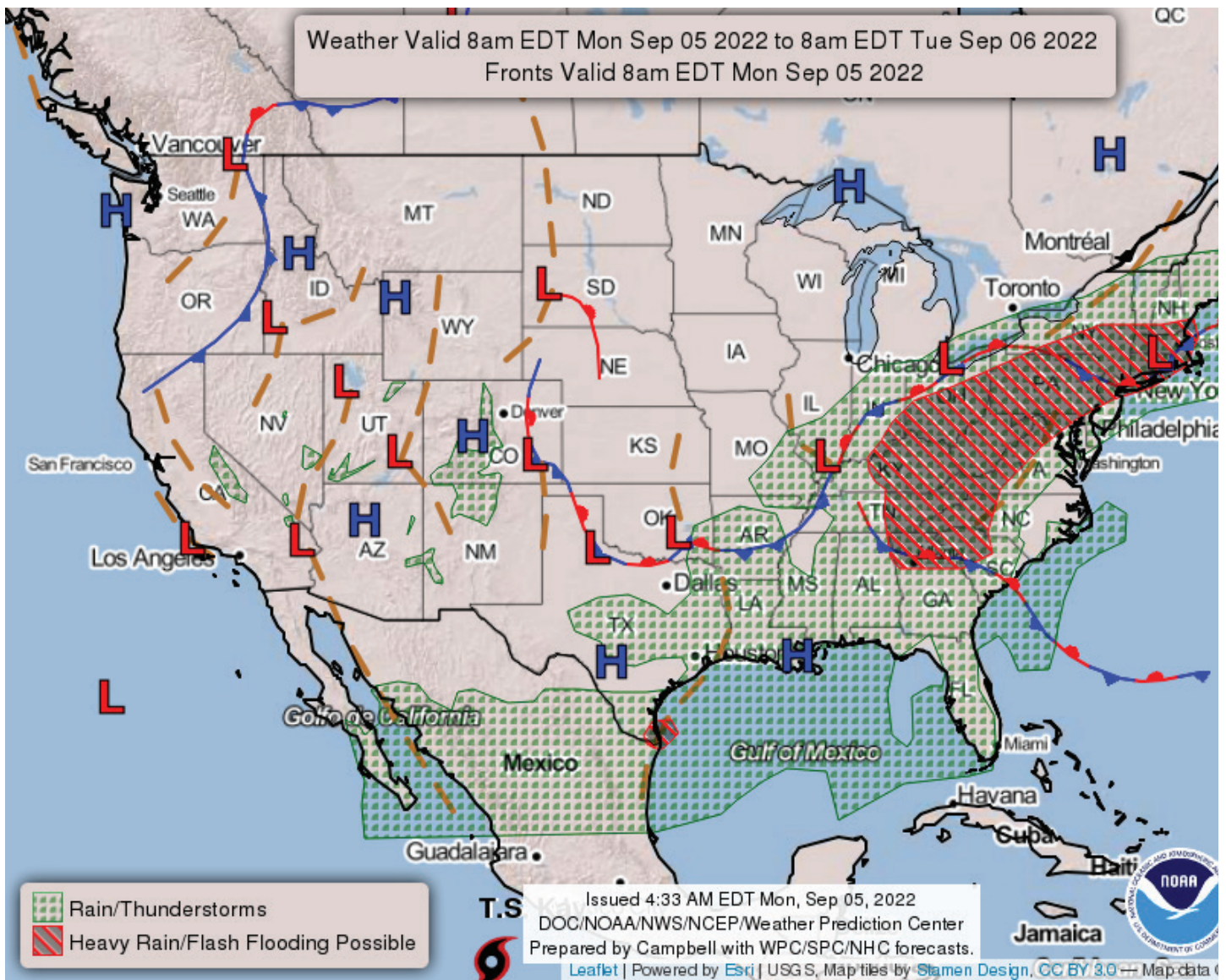
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 81 °F at 4:47 PM
Low Temp: 52 °F at 7:26 AM
Wind: 21 mph at 4:56 PM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 13 hours, 06 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 102 in 1945
Record Low: 32 in 1962
Average High: 79°F
Average Low: 51°F
Average Precip in Sept.: 0.34
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 16.68
Precip Year to Date: 15.96
Sunset Tonight: 8:04:23 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:58:50 AM



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Today in Weather History

September 5, 1983: In the late afternoon and early evening, hail up to 2, and ½ inches in diameter pounded crops, trees, buildings, and windows resulting in extensive damage in Spink, Beadle, Turner, and Clay Counties. Trees were stripped of numerous branches broken off.

1666: The Great Fire of London started on September 2nd and continued through September 5th. The fire spread rapidly due to strong westerly winds. This fire consumed 13,200 homes, 87 parish churches, and St. Paul's Cathedral.

1925 - The temperature at Centerville, AL, soars to 112 degrees to establish a state record. Every reporting station in Alabama was 100 degrees or above that afternoon. (The Weather Channel)

1929: Early season snowfall occurred in the mountains of Wyoming and the Black Hills of South Dakota on September 5th and 6th. The highest snowfall amount was 16 inches in Fox Park, Wyoming.

1933: A Category 3 hurricane made landfall on South Padre Island, Texas during the late evening hours on September 4th, or Labor Day. The storm caused 40 fatalities and nearly \$17 million in damages. With the storm making landfall during a holiday weekend, fatalities could have been much higher. The following is from the report of the official in charge at Corpus Christi, Texas: "Probably never before in the history of Texas hurricanes have such widespread and early warnings been given as were received from Washington in advance of this one. The telegram of Saturday, September 2, warning all persons to avoid inaccessible places over the weekend probably saved thousands of lives."

1950: Hurricane Easy was an erratic and unpredictable hurricane that lingered over the Tampa Bay area for days, dropping torrential rains and causing damage especially in Cedar Key, Florida where the storm eventually made landfall. This hurricane dumped 38.7 inches of rain in 24 hours in Yankeetown, a record for the U.S. at the time, and caused \$3.3 million in damage. Total rainfall amounts in Yankeetown was 45.20 inches.

1975 - Strong winds reduced visibilities to near zero in blowing dust resulting in a 22-car chain reaction accident on Interstate 10 near Toltec AZ. Two persons were killed, and 14 others were injured. (The Weather Channel)

1978: Tropical Depression Norman became the most recent tropical system to make landfall in California near Long Beach as an extra-tropical storm.

1987 - Thunderstorms over the Southern and Middle Atlantic Coast States drenched Charleston, SC, with 5.50 inches of rain, and a total of 13.50 inches in two days, flooding homes, and leaving roads and bridges under water. (The National Weather Summary) A tropical storm which formed off the South Atlantic coast was responsible for torrential rains over coastal regions of South Carolina. Between the 30th of August and the 8th of September, Charleston SC received 18.44 inches of rain. The heavy rains caused extensive flooding around the city of Charleston, seriously damaged cotton crops in the eastern part of the state, and resulted in an unusually high number of mosquitos. (Storm Data)

1988 - Five days of heavy rain commenced in west central Florida. Up to 20 inches of rain in four days resulted in extensive urban flooding, and evacuation of 1000 homes. Flooding claimed four lives, and caused more than five million dollars property damage. (The National Weather Summary)(Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced six to ten inches of rain in south central Kansas between 6 AM and Noon. Serious flooding was reported around Wichita, with water four feet deep along some roads. A cold front crossing the Northern High Plains Region produced wind gusts to 63 mph at Sheridan WY. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1996: Hurricane Fran made landfall near the tip of Cape Fear, North Carolina with maximum sustained winds near 115 mph on the evening of September 5th. Fran was responsible for 26 deaths and was at the time the most expensive natural disaster ever in North Carolina's history.

2017: Hurricane Irma became a category 5 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 180 mph. This made Irma one of strongest hurricane ever observed in the open Atlantic Ocean.



Lego Lessons

Scripture: James 1:2–12 (NIV)

Trials and Temptations

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,[a] whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. 6 But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7 That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8 Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do. 9 Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. 10 But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower. 11 For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business. 12 Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him..

Insight By: Monica La Rose

James' letter (most likely written by James the half-brother of Jesus) doesn't address a specific church but "the twelve tribes scattered among the nations" (v. 1)—suggesting its primary audience was Jewish believers in Jesus, perhaps those who left Judea fleeing persecution (see Acts 11:19).

James often calls believers in Jesus "brothers and sisters" (Greek adelphoi) in his letter (1:2, 16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14, 3:10, 12; 4:11; 5:7, 9, 10, 12, 19). Some scholars suggest that James' frequent use of this term would connect well to a Jewish audience who saw fellow Jews as brothers and sisters in their shared faith and heritage (adelphoi refers to fellow Jews in Acts 2:29 and Romans 9:3). In early Christianity, this language expanded to include all believers, including gentiles (see Romans 12:10)..

Comment By: Dave Branon

Approximately ten Lego pieces are sold for every person on earth each year—more than seventy-five billion of the little plastic bricks. But if it wasn't for the perseverance of Danish toymaker Ole Kirk Christiansen, there wouldn't be any Legos to snap together.

Christiansen toiled away in Billund, Denmark, for decades before creating Leg Godt, which means "play well." His workshop was destroyed by fire twice. He endured bankruptcy and a world war that caused a shortage of materials. Finally, in the late 1940s, he landed on the idea for self-locking plastic bricks. By the time Ole Kirk died in 1958, Legos was on the verge of becoming a household word.

Persevering in the challenges of work and life can be difficult. That's also true in our spiritual life as we strive to grow to be more like Jesus. Trouble hits us, and we need God's strength to persevere. James wrote: "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial" (James 1:12). Sometimes the trials we face are setbacks in relationships or finances or health. Sometimes they're temptations that slow us down in our goal of honoring God with our lives.

But God promises wisdom for such times (v. 5), and He asks us to trust Him as He provides what we need (v. 6). Through it all, when we allow Him to help us persevere in honoring Him with our lives, we find true blessing (v. 12)..

Reflect and Prayer: What trials are you facing these days? How can God help you live wholeheartedly for Him?

Dear Jesus, I know about perseverance from studying Your life. May Your example be my guide when trials come my way.

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2022-23 Community Events

- 07/21/2022: Pro Am Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/22/2022: Ferney Open Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start
07/24/2022: Moonlight Swim at the Swimming Pool 9-11pm for 9th grade to age 20
07/27/2022: Golf Fundraiser Lunch at Olive Grove Golf Course 11a-1pm
08/05/2022: Wine on Nine at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm
08/12/2022: GHS Basketball Golf Tournament
No Date Set: Groton Firemen Summer Splash Day 4-5pm GHS Parking Lot
09/10/2022: Lions Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
09/11/2022: 6th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3-5pm
09/11/2022: Couples Sunflower Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10 a.m.
09/02-04: Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
10/01/2022: Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
10/07/2022: Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
10/31/2022: Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)
10/31/2022: United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
11/12/2022: Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
11/24/2022 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)
12/03/2022 Tour of Homes & Holiday Party at Olive Grove Golf Course
12/10/2022: Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-12pm
01/29/2023 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am-1pm, Community Center
01/29/2023 85th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
04/01/2023 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)
04/22/2023 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
04/23/2023 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)
05/06/2023 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
05/29/2023 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
07/04/2023 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration, 10am Start (4th of July)
07/09/2023 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
09/09/2023 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
10/31/2023 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)
10/31/2023 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)

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News from the Associated Press

Southwest China quake leaves 21 dead, triggers landslides

BEIJING (AP) — At least 21 people were reported killed in a 6.8 magnitude earthquake that shook China's southwestern province of Sichuan on Monday, triggering landslides and shaking buildings in the provincial capital of Chengdu, whose 21 million residents are already under a COVID-19 lockdown.

The temblor struck a mountainous area in Luding county shortly after noon, the China Earthquake Networks Center said.

Sichuan, which sits on the edge of the Tibetan Plateau where tectonic plates meet, is regularly hit by earthquakes. Two quakes in June killed at least four people.

Along with the deaths, authorities reported stones and soil falling from mountainsides, causing damage to homes and power interruptions, state broadcaster CCTV said. One landslide blocked a rural highway, leaving it strewn with rocks, the Ministry of Emergency Management said.

Buildings shook in Chengdu, 200 kilometers (125 miles) away from the epicenter. Resident Jiang Danli said she hid under a desk for five minutes in her 31st floor apartment. Many of her neighbors rushed downstairs, wary of aftershocks.

"There was a strong earthquake in June, but it wasn't very scary. This time I was really scared, because I live on a high floor and the shaking made me dizzy," she told The Associated Press.

The earthquake and lockdown follow a heat wave and drought that led to water shortages and power cuts due to Sichuan's reliance on hydropower. That comes on top of the latest major lockdown under China's strict "zero-COVID" policy.

The past two months in Chengdu "have been weird," Jiang said.

The U.S. Geological Survey recorded a magnitude of 6.6 for Monday's quake at a relatively shallow depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles). Preliminary measurements by different agencies often differ slightly.

China's deadliest earthquake in recent years was a 7.9 magnitude quake in 2008 that killed nearly 90,000 people in Sichuan. The temblor devastated towns, schools and rural communities outside Chengdu, leading to a years-long effort to rebuild with more resistant materials.

Tensions remain at war-threatened Ukrainian nuclear plant

By HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Tension still gripped Europe's largest nuclear plant Monday, a day before U.N. inspectors were due to report on their efforts to avert a potential disaster at the Ukrainian site that has been engulfed by Russia's war on its neighbor.

The Russian military accused Ukrainian forces of staging "provocations" at the Zaporizhzhia plant, which lies within a Russian-installed administrative area.

Russia's Defense Ministry claimed that Kyiv's forces on Sunday targeted the territory of the plant with a drone, which it said Russian troops were able to shoot down.

The ministry said Ukrainian troops also shelled the adjacent city of Enerhodar twice overnight.

The two sides have traded accusations about endangering the plant, which the Kremlin's forces have held since early March. The plant's Ukrainian staff continue to operate it.

In a perilous mission, experts with the International Atomic Energy Agency traveled through the war zone to reach the plant last week.

Four of six U.N. nuclear agency inspectors have completed their work and left the site, Energoatom, Ukraine's state nuclear power plant operator, said Monday.

Two of the experts are expected to stay at the plant on a permanent basis, Energoatom said.

The U.N. inspectors are scheduled to brief the Security Council on Tuesday about what they found out on their visit.

The plant is largely crippled, amid a grinding war that has clobbered energy markets.

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A prominent Ukrainian nuclear expert said Monday that only a demilitarized zone of at least 10 kilometers (6 miles) around the plant could ensure its safety.

Hryhoriy Plachkov, Ukraine's former head of nuclear inspections, said he also feared for the morale and mental state of his countrymen working there.

Elsewhere, the fighting raged on for a seventh month, with Ukraine's presidential office saying Monday at least four civilians were killed and seven others were wounded by Russian shelling in the previous 24 hours across several regions of Ukraine.

Most of the casualties were in the eastern Donetsk region, where three people were killed and four were wounded. A large chunk of Donetsk is held by Russian-allied separatists.

In the Kharkiv region, further north, three people were wounded when a rocket hit a residential building, the president's office said.

Russian shells struck more than a dozen residential buildings along with a school, cafes and stores, Ukraine said.

Meanwhile, a counteroffensive by Ukrainian forces "is making verifiable progress in the south and the east" of the country, the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War said.

"The pace of the counteroffensive will likely change dramatically from day to day as Ukrainian forces work to starve the Russians of necessary supplies, disrupt their command and control, and weaken their morale even as counteroffensive ground assaults continue," the institute said late Sunday.

It predicted that Russian forces will launch "fierce artillery and air attacks" against the advancing Ukrainian troops and on any areas they liberate.

Amid increased Ukrainian strikes on the occupied Kherson region, Russian-installed authorities there said that for security reasons they were putting on hold their plans for a local referendum on whether the region should formally become part of Russia.

Kenya's Supreme Court upholds Ruto's narrow presidential win

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Kenya's Supreme Court has unanimously rejected challenges to the official results of the presidential election and upheld Deputy President William Ruto's win.

Opposition candidate Raila Odinga had alleged irregularities in the otherwise peaceful Aug. 9 election that was marked by last-minute drama when the electoral commission split and traded accusations of misconduct.

The court found little or no evidence for the various claims and called some "nothing more than hot air." It also expressed puzzlement why the four dissenting commissioners participated until the final minutes in a vote-tallying process they criticized as opaque. The commission "needs far-reaching reforms," the court acknowledged, "but are we to nullify an election on the basis of a last-minute boardroom rupture?"

The court shocked Kenyans in the previous election in 2017 by overturning the results of the presidential election, a first in Africa, and ordered a fresh vote after Odinga filed a challenge. He then boycotted that new election.

This time, Odinga was backed by former rival and outgoing President Uhuru Kenyatta in the latest example of shifting political alliances in East Africa's most stable democracy.

Odinga's team had challenged the technology used by the electoral commission and alleged that voting results had been tampered with, and it argued that the electoral commission chair had essentially acted alone in declaring the winner.

Odinga's team questioned an election seen as the country's most transparent, with results from tens of thousands of polling stations posted online within hours of the vote for Kenyans to follow the tally themselves. Such reforms were in part the result of Odinga's previous election challenge.

Now Kenyans wait to see whether any anger over the election will be channeled into the streets in a country with a history of sometimes deadly political violence. The election had one of the lowest turnouts in the country's history of multiparty democracy, under 65%.

The 77-year-old Odinga, who has pursued the presidency for a quarter-century, has indicated he would accept the court's decision.

The 55-year-old Ruto, who had a bitter split with Kenyatta after Kenyatta made peace with Odinga to calm the 2017 election crisis, had appealed to Kenyans by portraying himself as a "hustler" from humble beginnings against the "dynasties" of Kenyatta and Odinga, whose fathers were Kenya's first president and vice president.

Ruto now faces the challenge of finding the money to back up his campaign promises to the poor, as Kenya's debt levels are now nearly 70% of its GDP.

Excitement rises as 'Don't Worry Darling' arrives in Venice

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

VENICE, Italy (AP) — The Venice Film Festival is buzzing with anticipation for Olivia Wilde's "Don't Worry Darling," which is having its world premiere Monday night on the Lido.

There's the eagerness for the film itself, a mid-century styled psychological thriller with a starry cast, including Florence Pugh, Harry Styles and Chris Pine. There's also the arrival of Styles, whose otherworldly fame and following may make the Timothée Chalamet mania seen on Friday seem downright quaint. By 8 a.m. Monday, dozens of Styles fans were camping out in front of the theater where the premiere would be held that evening.

But it seems the most breathlessly awaited event is the film's press conference Monday afternoon. Behind-the-scenes drama rarely extends beyond internal industry gossip, but the question of exactly what happened in the making of "Don't Worry Darling" has become a source of global intrigue. Rumors about everything from Shia LaBeouf's departure from the film early on, to Pugh's perceived lack of public support for the project on her social media accounts have been simmering on TikTok and twitter for some time.

Wilde herself also became a tabloid fixture after paparazzi caught on to her off screen relationship with Styles. And then there was the CinemaCon moment, in which Wilde was served custody papers by her ex, Jason Sudeikis, during a presentation about her movie on stage in front of thousands of industry professionals and theater owners.

Then in the past few weeks, all the little threads seemed to catch fire at once. Much of that was stoked by LaBeouf, who came out of the woodwork to contest a two-year-old narrative that he'd been fired from the project. Ultimately, his role went to Styles.

Wilde, in a Variety cover story, is not directly quoted saying she fired him. She did offer: "His process was not conducive to the ethos that I demand in my productions. He has a process that, in some ways, seems to require a combative energy, and I don't personally believe that is conducive to the best performances."

In response, LaBeouf sent private emails, texts and video messages to Variety to prove his case that he actually quit due to lack of rehearsal time. The video message, in which she tries to convince LaBeouf to stay on as Jack, was subsequently leaked online.

LaBeouf, who is heading to court next year on abuse allegations from his ex, FKA twigs, happens to also be in Venice this year with the film "Padre Pio."

The leaked video also showed Wilde calling Pugh "Miss Flo," which some perceived as confirmation that the two did not get along. Wilde, for her part, has been nothing but effusive about her lead actor. In an interview with The Associated Press she spoke at length about Pugh's extraordinary talent saying that what she did with the role was "singularly brilliant" and that the character of Alice is a "heroine for the ages."

Still, questions have arisen about why Pugh has not been posting much about the film on her Instagram. She didn't hype the trailer, or say anything about getting into Venice. Only adding fuel to the fire, The Wrap then reported that Pugh would be limiting her press appearances around the film to Venice only. And on Sunday night, Variety broke the news that Pugh would not be participating in the press conference either because of her tight travel schedule and turnaround.

Pugh is in the middle of production on "Dune 2," a massive blockbuster (also a Warner Bros. joint) and is expected to go straight back after her Venice obligations. Chalamet, her "Dune 2" co-star, had a similarly

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brief stay in Venice for his film "Bones and All." It's likely to be the only appearance he'll make on behalf of that film, but no one wrote any headlines about Chalamet "limiting" his press engagements.

The hope is that the press conference will answer or clarify lingering questions, turn attention back to the film itself and maybe even drum up more excitement for its theatrical release on Sept. 23.

"This film is my love letter to the movies that push the boundaries of our imagination. It's ambitious, but I think we made something really special," Wilde wrote in her director's statement. "Imagine a life where you had everything you ever wanted, What would it take for you to give that up...Are you willing to dismantle the system that is designed to serve you?"

Regardless, one thing is certain: Everyone is talking about "Don't Worry Darling."

Flights grounded in South Korea as Typhoon Hinnamnor nears

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Hundreds of flights were grounded and more than 200 people evacuated in South Korea on Monday as Typhoon Hinnamnor approached the southern region with heavy rains and winds of up to 170 kilometers (105 miles) per hour, putting the nation on alert for its worst storm in decades.

South Korea's weather agency said the country will start to feel the full force of Hinnamnor, the strongest global storm this year, by early Tuesday when it is forecast to graze the southern resort island of Jeju before making landfall near the mainland city of Busan.

Government officials raised concern about potentially huge damage from flooding, landslides and tidal waves triggered by the typhoon, which comes just weeks after capital Seoul and nearby regions were hit with heavy rainfall that unleashed flashfloods and killed at least 14 people.

President Yoon Suk Yeol, who said he would stay at his office overnight to monitor the typhoon, urged maximum effort to prevent casualties during an emergency response meeting on Monday. Prime Minister Han Duk-soo called for proactive efforts to evacuate residents in areas vulnerable to flooding.

"This is forecast to be a historically strong typhoon that we never experienced before," Han said.

Officials say Hinnamnor could bring more powerful winds than 2003 Typhoon Maemi, which left 117 people dead and was the strongest storm to make landfall in the country since the start of record keeping in 1904.

As of Monday evening, Hinnamnor was over the open sea 180 kilometers (112 miles) southwest of Jeju. It has dumped more than 62 centimeters (24 inches) of rain in the central part of Jeju since Sunday, where winds were blowing at a maximum speed of 124 kph (77 mph) and were picking up.

South Korea's Ministry of the Interior and Safety said there were no immediate reports of casualties. At least 11 homes and buildings were flooded in Jeju while more than 270 people were forced to evacuate in Busan and nearby cities because of safety concerns.

Around 370 domestic flights and 100 ferry services were grounded and hundreds of roads and bridges were closed nationwide as of Monday evening while more than 66,000 fishing boats returned to port.

Kindergartens and elementary schools in Seoul and all schools in Busan and nearby southern regions are scheduled to be closed or shift to online classes Tuesday, officials said.

North Korea was also bracing for Hinnamnor as it reported increasingly heavy rain in all parts of the country except for its border region with China. Agricultural workers across the country were engaged in "all-out efforts" to minimize damage to crops while officials were encouraged to take "double and triple emergency measures" to protect buildings and equipment from flooding and landslides, the North's state media said.

South Korea's military said North Korea also discharged water from a dam near its border with the South in an apparent preventive step without notifying its rival. South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs, said the North has so far ignored Seoul's request to give notification before it releases water from the Hwanggang Dam.

Cities in eastern China suspended ferry services and classes and more than 100 flights were canceled in Japan on Sunday as Hinnamnor passed through the region. The typhoon is on track to move closer to eastern China later in the week.

1 dead, 9 missing after floatplane crashes in Puget Sound

LANGLEY, Wash. (AP) — One person was killed and nine people remained missing, including a child, after a floatplane crashed Sunday afternoon in Puget Sound in Washington state, the U.S. Coast Guard said.

The agency said in a press release the plane was flying from Friday Harbor, a popular tourist destination in the San Juan Islands, to Renton, a southern suburb of Seattle.

Four Coast Guard vessels, a rescue helicopter and an aircraft were involved in the extensive search, along with nearby rescue and law enforcement agencies. Two vessels were to continue searching during the night and air patrols would resume at first light, the Coast Guard said late Sunday.

The crash was reported at 3:11 p.m. The Coast Guard said one body had been recovered and nine people were still missing. The cause of the crash is unknown, authorities said.

The plane went down in Mutiny Bay off Whidbey Island, roughly 30 miles (50 kilometers) northwest of downtown Seattle and about halfway between Friday Harbor and Renton.

The National Transportation Safety Board said the plane was a de Havilland DHC-3 Otter, a single-engine propeller plane.

Floatplanes, which have pontoons allowing them to land on water, are a common sight around Puget Sound, an inlet of the Pacific Ocean. There are multiple, daily flights between the Seattle area and the San Juan Islands, a scenic archipelago northwest of Seattle that draws tourists from around the world.

These aircraft, which also fly between Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia, frequently travel over Seattle and land in Lake Washington, not far from the city's iconic Space Needle.

Renton, where authorities say the flight was headed Sunday, is at the southern tip of Lake Washington, about 10 miles (16 kilometers) southeast of Seattle.

In 2019, a midair crash in Alaska between two sightseeing planes killed six people. The Ketchikan-based floatplanes were carrying passengers from the same cruise ship, the Royal Princess, and were returning from tours of Misty Fjords National Monument.

Suicide attack at Russia embassy in Kabul kills 2 diplomats

By EBRAHIM NOROOZI and DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — A suicide bombing outside the Russian Embassy in the Afghan capital of Kabul on Monday killed two members of the embassy staff and at least one Afghan civilian in what Moscow denounced as an "unacceptable terrorist act."

The blast went off at the entrance to the embassy's consular section where Afghans were waiting for news about their visas, according to the Russian Foreign Ministry and the state news agency RIA Novosti. A Russian diplomat had emerged from the building to call out the names of candidates for visas when the explosion occurred, the agency said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the blast, the latest in a series of attacks since the Taliban seized power a year ago, deposing a Western-backed government and capping their 20-year insurgency.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called the explosion "a terrorist act, absolutely unacceptable." He told reporters during his daily press conference call that "now the main thing that needs to be done is to get information from the ground about what happened to our diplomatic representatives."

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said the embassy has enhanced its security in the wake of the attack, and that "additional forces of the Taliban authorities," including the Taliban-run intelligence service, were brought in.

"Let's hope that the organizers of this terrorist act and its perpetrators will be punished," Lavrov said.

The Russian Foreign Ministry said the explosion went off right outside the entrance to the embassy's consular section. "An unknown militant set off an explosive device," the ministry said. "As a result of the attack, two members of the diplomatic mission were killed, and there are also casualties among Afghan

citizens.”

Khalid Zadran, a spokesman for the Kabul police chief, said at least one civilian was killed and that 10 others were wounded.

Zadran said a suicide bomber was involved in the blast. He said the bomber was identified by security forces before he could get closer to the crowd waiting outside the embassy. He said security forces shot the assailant. It was not immediately clear if the attacker was able to set off the blast before being shot, or if the gunfire detonated the explosives.

Even though there was no immediate claim of responsibility, immediate suspicion fell on the extremist Islamic State group. The local affiliate of IS has stepped up attacks against the Taliban and civilians since the former insurgents took over the country last year as U.S. and NATO troops were in the final stages of their withdrawal.

Although Moscow has designated the Taliban as a terrorist group and outlawed it on the Russian soil, the Taliban have representation in Russia and a delegation attended the recent St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said in late June that Russia is trying to build relations with the Taliban and that Russia wants to see all the ethnic groups in Afghanistan take part in running the country.

China locks down 65 million as holiday travel peak looms

BEIJING (AP) — China has locked down 65 million of its citizens under tough COVID-19 restrictions and is discouraging domestic travel during upcoming national holidays.

Most of the 21 million people in the southwestern city of Chengdu are confined to their apartments or residential complexes, while in the eastern port city of Tianjin, classes have been moved online after 14 new cases were reported, all but two showing no symptoms.

China reported a total of 1,552 new cases on Monday across the nation of 1.4 billion people, the National Health Commission reported.

Despite the relatively low number of infections, authorities have adhered to a “zero-COVID” policy requiring lockdowns, quarantines and the confining of people suspected of being in close contact with any confirmed case.

Sept. 10-12 is China’s mid-autumn festival, the country’s second-most important holiday after the Lunar New Year. The anti-virus measures have taken a major toll on the economy, travel and society in general, but China’s ruling Communist Party says they are necessary to prevent a wider spread of the virus, first detected in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in late 2019.

The fear of being caught in a lockdown or sent to a quarantine facility for even being in proximity with a person who tested positive has severely constrained people’s work, socializing and travel habits.

In Chengdu, the start of the new school term has been delayed and most residents have been confined to their residential compounds. In all, 33 cities are restricting residents to their homes or compounds, according to state media reports.

Since the outbreak began, China has placed tens of millions of people under lockdowns that have been ruthlessly applied, sometimes preventing residents from obtaining food, health care and basic necessities.

A more-than five-week closure of Shanghai, China’s largest city and key financial hub, upended the local economy, prompted protests and led to an exodus of foreign residents.

Canadian police search province for deadly stabbing suspects

REGINA, Saskatchewan (AP) — Canadian police searched across the expansive province of Saskatchewan for two suspects believed to have stabbed to death 10 people in an Indigenous community and a nearby town in one of the deadliest mass killings in the country’s history.

The suspects also injured 15 people in the series of knife attacks that led the James Smith Cree Nation to declare a state of emergency and badly shook residents of the nearby village of Weldon.

“No one in this town is ever going to sleep again. They’re going to be terrified to open their door,” said

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Weldon resident Ruby Works, who was close to one of the victims.

Police, meanwhile, said a vehicle reportedly carrying the two suspects had been spotted in Regina, about 335 kilometers (208 miles) south of the communities where the stabbings occurred.

Regina police chief Evan Bray said late Sunday they still believe the suspects are in Regina.

"If in the Regina area, take precautions & consider sheltering in place. Do not leave a secure location. DO NOT APPROACH suspicious persons. Do not pick up hitch hikers. Report suspicious persons, emergencies or info to 9-1-1. Do not disclose police locations," the RCMP said in a message on Twitter.

The suspects were identified as Damien Sanderson, 31, and Myles Sanderson, 30.

"It is horrific what has occurred in our province today," said Rhonda Blackmore, the Assistant Commissioner of the RCMP in Saskatchewan, adding there were 13 crime scenes where either deceased or injured people were found.

Blackmore said some of the victims appear to have been targeted by the suspects but others appear to have been attacked at random.

She couldn't provide a motive, but the chief of the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations gave a statement suggesting the stabbings could be drug-related.

The elected leaders of the three communities that make up the James Smith Cree Nation, including the Chakastaypasin Band and the Peter Chapman Band, declared a local state of emergency and opened up two emergency operations centers.

Chakastaypasin Chief Calvin Sanderson — who is not related to the suspects — said everyone has been affected by the tragic events.

"They were our relatives, friends," Sanderson said of the victims. "It's pretty horrific."

"This is the destruction we face when harmful illegal drugs invade our communities, and we demand all authorities to take direction from the Chiefs and Councils and their membership to create safer and healthier communities for our people," said Chief Bobby Cameron of the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations.

Among the 10 victims killed was Lana Head, who is the former partner of Michael Brett Burns and the mother of their two daughters.

"It's sick how jail time, drugs and alcohol can destroy many lives," Burns told the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. "I'm hurt for all this loss."

Last May, Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers issued a wanted list that included Myles Sanderson, writing that he was "unlawfully at large."

The attack is among the deadliest mass killings in Canadian history. The deadliest gun rampage in Canadian history happened in 2020 when a man disguised as a police officer shot people in their homes and set fires across the province of Nova Scotia, killing 22 people. A man used a van to kill 10 pedestrians in Toronto in 2019. But mass killings are less common in Canada than in the United States.

Deadly mass stabbings are more rare than mass shootings but have happened around the world. In 2014, 29 people were slashed and stabbed to death at a train station in China's southwestern city of Kunming. In 2016, a mass stabbing at a facility for the mentally disabled in Sagami-hara, Japan, left 19 people dead. A year later, three men killed eight people in a vehicle and stabbing attack at London Bridge.

Doreen Lees, an 89-year grandmother from Weldon, said she and her daughter thought they saw one of the suspects when a car came barreling down her street early in the morning Sunday as her daughter was having coffee on her deck. Lees said a man approached them and said he was hurt and needed help.

But Lees said the man took off and ran after her daughter said she would call for help.

"He wouldn't show his face. He had a big jacket over his face. We asked his name and he kind of mumbled his name twice and we still couldn't get it," she said. "He said his face was injured so bad he couldn't show it."

She said the man was by himself and "kind of a little wobbly."

"I followed him a little ways to see if he was going to be OK. My daughter said 'Don't follow him, get back here.'"

Weldon residents have identified one of the victims as Wes Petterson. Ruby Works said the 77-year-old

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widower was like an uncle to her.

"I collapsed and hit the ground. I've known him since I was just a little girl," she said, describing the moment she heard the news. She said he loved his cats, was proud of his homemade Saskatoon berry jam and frequently helped out his neighbors.

"He didn't do anything. He didn't deserve this. He was a good, kind hearted man," said Works.

Weldon resident Robert Rush also described the victim as a gentle, widowed man in his 70s.

"He wouldn't hurt a fly," he said.

Rush said Petterson's adult grandson was in the basement at the time and phoned police.

At the Weldon Christian Tabernacle Church the congregation began their regular Sunday service by saying a special prayer to the victims and their families.

At the James Smith Cree Nation, a convenience store that also serves as a gas station became a gathering place for community members, who greeted each other with tears and hugs.

A sign on the door said: "Due to safety concerns with our community we will remain closed until further notice."

The search for suspects was carried out as fans descended on Regina for a sold out annual Labor Day game between the Canadian Football League's Saskatchewan Roughriders and Winnipeg Blue Bombers.

The Regina Police Service said in a news release that with the help of Mounties, it was working on several fronts to locate and arrest the suspects and had "deployed additional resources for public safety throughout the city, including the football game at Mosaic Stadium."

The alert first issued by Melfort, Saskatchewan RCMP about 7 a.m. was extended hours later to cover Manitoba and Alberta, as the two suspects remained at large.

The Saskatchewan Health Authority said multiple patients were being treated at several sites.

"A call for additional staff was issued to respond to the influx of casualties," authority spokeswoman Anne Linemann said in an email.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said in a statement he was "shocked and devastated by the horrific attacks."

"As Canadians, we mourn with everyone affected by this tragic violence, and with the people of Saskatchewan," Trudeau said.

Nice Bastille Day attack trial begins in Paris terror court

By NICOLAS VAUX-MONTAGNY and BARBARA SURK Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Eight people go on trial on Monday in a special French terrorism court accused of helping an attacker who drove a truck into a crowded beachfront on Bastille Day six years ago, killing 86 people.

During a planned two-and-half months of court proceedings in Paris, survivors and those mourning loved ones will recount the horrors inflicted in the southern French resort of Nice on the night of July 14, 2016.

The trial will be broadcast live to a convention center in Nice. The verdict is expected in December.

Thousands of locals and tourists had packed Nice's famed boardwalk on the Mediterranean coast that Thursday summer night to celebrate France's national day, strolling along the Promenade des Anglais with friends and family members, laughing and dancing on the beach just bellow.

Shortly after the end of a fireworks display, the truck careered through the crowds for two kilometers (1¼ miles) like a snow plow, hitting person after person. The final death toll was 86, including 15 children and adolescents, while 450 others were injured. Of the dead, 33 were foreign nationals.

The attacker, Mohamed Lahouaiej Bouhlel, was killed by police soon after.

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the carnage. However, French prosecutors said that while Bouhlel had been inspired by the extremist group's propaganda, investigators found no evidence that IS orchestrated the attack.

Investigators didn't find evidence that any of the suspects in the current trial was directly involved in the murderous rampage on that hot summer night in 2016. Bouhlel, a 31-year-old Tunisian with French residency, is considered solely responsible for the deaths.

With the perpetrator dead, few expect to get justice.

"Our clients expect everything and nothing from the trial," said Gerard Chelma, a lawyer for some victims' families. "Some feel (the trial) will be useless. Other are hoping for convictions and as much attention as there was during the trial of the Paris attacks."

Three suspects have been charged with terrorist conspiracy for alleged links to Bouhlel. Five others face other criminal charges, including for allegedly providing arms to the assailant. If convicted, they face sentences ranging from five years to life in prison.

The proceedings will be broadcast live to the Acropolis Convention Center in Nice for those victims' family members and general public not traveling to Paris. Audio of the trial will also be available online, with a 30-minute delay.

UN says part of Somalia will reach famine later this year

By CARA ANNA and OMAR FARUK Associated Press

MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP) — The United Nations says "famine is at the door" in Somalia with "concrete indications" famine will occur later this year in the southern Bay region. This falls just short of a formal famine declaration in Somalia as thousands are dying in a historic drought made worse by the effects of the war in Ukraine.

U.N. humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths told reporters that he was "shocked to my core these past few days" on a visit to Somalia in which he witnessed starving babies too weak to cry.

A formal famine declaration is rare and a warning that too little help has come too late. At least 1 million people in Somalia have been displaced by the worst drought in decades, driven by climate change, that also affects the wider Horn of Africa including Ethiopia and Kenya.

Famine is the extreme lack of food and a significant death rate from outright starvation or malnutrition combined with diseases like cholera. A declaration means data shows more than a fifth of households have extreme food gaps, more than 30% of children are acutely malnourished and over two people out of 10,000 are dying every day.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has been described as a disaster for Somalia, which has suffered from a shortage of humanitarian aid as international donors focus on Europe. Somalia also sourced at least 90% of its wheat from Russia and Ukraine before the war and has been hit hard by scarcity and the sharp rise in food prices.

"Ukraine has occupied the narrative," Griffiths said.

Hungry families in Somalia have been staggering for days or weeks on foot through parched terrain in search of assistance. Many bury family members along the way. Even when they reach camps outside urban areas, they find little or no help.

At one camp outside the capital, Mogadishu, Fadumo Abdi Aliyow showed The Associated Press the graves of her two small sons next to their makeshift home. Disease had overwhelmed their weakened bodies. One was 4. The other was eight months old.

"I wanted to die before them so they could bury me," Aliyow said. Another resident of the camp of 1,800 families, Samey Adan Mohamed, said the last meal she and her eight children had was rice a day ago. Today they had only tea.

Camps like theirs are ringed by death, bringing aid workers to tears. "I couldn't get out of my head the tiny mounds of ground marking children's graves," UNICEF's deputy regional director Rania Dagash said last week. "I'm from this region and I've never seen it so bad."

A formal famine declaration would bring desperately needed funding. But "tragically, by the time a famine is declared, it's already too late," the U.N. World Food Program has said.

When famine was declared in parts of Somalia in 2011, the deaths of a quarter-million people were well underway.

"This is not a repeat of the 2011 famine. It is much worse," the U.N. humanitarian agency said last week.

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So far, at least 730 children have died in nutrition centers across Somalia, it said, and more than 213,000 people are at "imminent risk" of dying.

"You feel like you're looking at the face of death," Mercy Corps CEO Tjada McKenna told the AP after visiting the badly hit city of Baidoa. There is not enough therapeutic food to treat the acutely malnourished, said McKenna, who saw many young children and pregnant women. "For every one person I saw, imagine all the people who couldn't get that far. And so many people were arriving each day."

At the same time, aid funding has dropped more than 60% from the response to Somalia's previous drought in 2017, USAID administrator Samantha Power said last week, noting a "degree of despair and devastation" not seen before in her career.

The Horn of Africa region has seen four straight failed rainy seasons for the first time in well over four decades. The upcoming rainy season is also expected to fail. That endangers an estimated 20 million people in one of the world's most impoverished and turbulent regions.

"Sadly, our models show with a high degree of confidence that we are entering the fifth consecutive failed rainy season," the director of the regional climate prediction center, Guleid Artan, has said. "In Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia, we are on the brink of an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe."

The rainfall in this year's failed March-to-May season was the lowest in the last six decades, Artan told the AP. Next year's March-to-May season doesn't look good either, he said, worrying that "this could be the seven-year drought, the biblical one."

Formal famine declarations are rare because data to meet the benchmarks often cannot be obtained because of conflict, poor infrastructure or politics. Governments can be wary of being associated with a term of such grim magnitude. Somalia's recently elected president, however, appointed a drought envoy in one of his first acts in office, which Griffiths called "impressive."

Because of the remote nature of Somalia's drought, and with some hard-hit areas under the control of the al-Shabab extremist group which has been hostile to humanitarian efforts, no one knows how many people have died — or will in the months to come.

Hundreds of calls from across Somalia, including from al-Shabab-controlled areas, come in daily to the Somali-run Radio Ergo. Some say no aid is available in camps. Others say water sources have run dry or lament the loss of millions of livestock that are the foundation of their health and wealth.

"People don't cry because they want their voice to be heard," radio editor Leyla Mohamed told the AP. "But you can feel they are hurting, that they feel more than we can hear."

New Israeli rules on foreigners tighten control in West Bank

By JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — An Israeli military body has released a list of rules and restrictions for foreigners wanting to enter Palestinian areas of the West Bank, extending its control of daily life and movement in and out of the occupied territory.

COGAT, the Israeli body in charge of Palestinian civilian affairs, stepped back from a number of controversial restrictions that had appeared in a draft of the rules published earlier this year, such as a requirement that people who form romantic relationships with local Palestinians register with Israeli authorities.

But many of the changes in the 90-page document released late Sunday appeared to be largely cosmetic. The U.S. ambassador expressed concern over the rules, and critics said they merely entrenched Israel's 55-year control over the Palestinian population in the territory.

"The Israeli military is proposing new restrictions in order to isolate Palestinian society from the outside world and keep Palestinian families from living together," said Jessica Montell, executive director of HaMoked, an Israeli human rights group that has challenged the rules in court.

"In response to criticism they have removed the most outrageous elements. Yet they are keeping the basic structure of this very invasive and harmful procedure in place," she added. The rules are set to go into effect on Oct. 20.

The wide-ranging policy imposes rules on foreigners who marry Palestinians or who come to the West

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Bank to work, volunteer, study or teach. The rules do not apply to people visiting Israel or the more than 130 Jewish settlements scattered across the West Bank.

Israel captured the West Bank, along with east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, in the 1967 Mideast war — territories Palestinians seek for an independent state.

The initial draft included a requirement that a foreigner who forms a serious romantic relationship with a local Palestinian notify the Israeli military within 30 days of the "start of the relationship," defined as an engagement, wedding or moving in together.

The 30-day notice was removed from Sunday's rules. But it nonetheless says that if a foreigner starts a relationship with a Palestinian, "the appointed COGAT official must be informed as part of their request to renew or extend the existing visa."

The new rules also dropped earlier limits on the number of foreign students and teachers allowed to study or work in the West Bank. The amount of time they can stay in the territory was also lengthened.

Yet COGAT continues to hold great discretion over who is allowed in. It must approve the academic credentials of a university lecturer invited by a Palestinian institution, and holds the right to screen potential students if there is "suspicion of misuse" of a visa.

Tough restrictions on foreign spouses of Palestinians also remain in place. Spouses are only entitled to short-term visits and can be required to deposit up to 70,000 shekels (about \$20,000) to guarantee they will leave the territory.

The new rules offer some potential relief for foreign spouses, including a longer-term visa of 27 months that can be renewed and include multiple visits in and out of the territory. It also drops a previous "cooling off" period that required spouses to leave for lengthy periods between visas.

But these new and improved visas require an application through the Palestinian Authority to Israel — a process that is uncertain and notoriously opaque, Montell said. The document says a final decision also is subject to approval by Israel's "political echelon."

U.S. Ambassador Tom Nides expressed disappointment with the rules, and said he had "aggressively engaged" with Israel on the draft and would continue to do so ahead of the rules' formal implementation.

"I continue to have concerns with the published protocols, particularly regarding COGAT's role in determining whether individuals invited by Palestinian academic institutions are qualified to enter the West Bank, and the potential negative impact on family unity," he said. "I fully expect the Government of Israel to make necessary adjustments" during a two-year pilot program to ensure "fair and equal treatment of all U.S. citizens and other foreign nationals traveling to the West Bank."

Israel hopes to reach a visa-waiver program with the United States, which has long resisted the move in part because Israel treats Palestinian-Americans differently than other U.S. citizens.

The European Union, which sends hundreds of students and professors on academic exchanges to the West Bank each year, did not immediately comment on the Israeli announcement.

COGAT officials declined further comment, while the Palestinian Authority had no immediate reaction. Montell said her group would continue its legal challenges.

US B-52 bombers fly over Middle East amid tensions with Iran

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The United States military said Monday it flew a pair of nuclear-capable B-52 long-distance bombers over the Middle East in a show of force, the latest such mission in the region as tensions remain high between Washington and Tehran.

The bombers took off from the Royal Air Force base at Fairford, England, and flew over the eastern Mediterranean, the Arabian Peninsula and the Red Sea on Sunday in training missions together with Kuwaiti and Saudi warplanes, before departing the region.

"Threats to the U.S. and our partners will not go unanswered," Lt. Gen. Alexis Grynkewich, the top U.S. Air Force officer in the Middle East said in a statement. "Missions like this ... showcase our ability to combine forces to deter and, if necessary, defeat our adversaries."

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Although the U.S. military's Central Command did not mention Iran, Washington has frequently dispatched B-52 bombers to the region as hostilities simmered between the U.S. and Iran. The last such flyover was in June.

Iran's regional foe, Israel, also joined in the multinational mission. Though unacknowledged by the U.S., three Israeli F-16 fighter jets accompanied the American bombers "through Israel's skies on their way to the (Persian) Gulf," the Israeli military said, describing the country's cooperation with the U.S. military as key to "maintaining aerial security in Israel and the Middle East."

Central Command was expanded last year to include Israel, a move seen to encourage regional cooperation against Iran under former President Donald Trump.

Trump's decision four years ago to withdraw the U.S. from Tehran's landmark nuclear deal with world powers sparked a series of escalating incidents in the region.

Even as diplomats now wrangle over a possible revival of the nuclear accord, Iran's navy seized two American sea drones in the Red Sea last week.

That capture came just days after the country's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard towed another sea drone before releasing it as an American warship trailed it. The U.S. Navy has been deploying ultra-endurance aerial surveillance drones to monitor threats in the crucial waterways, which have witnessed repeated maritime attacks.

Tensions also remain high after recent confrontations between U.S. forces and Iranian-backed militias in the region. Washington last month carried out airstrikes in eastern Syria that targeted areas used by militias backed by Iran's Revolutionary Guard, prompting a response from Iranian-backed fighters.

U.S. and Iranian negotiators in Vienna have been attempting to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, which imposed sharp limits on Iran's atomic program in exchange for international sanctions relief. Last week, the State Department described Iran's latest negotiating position as "not constructive."

Meanwhile, Iran now enriches uranium up to 60% purity — a level it never reached before that is a short, technical step away from 90%. While Iran long has maintained its program is peaceful, nonproliferation experts warn Tehran has enough 60%-enriched uranium to reprocess into fuel for at least one nuclear bomb.

Chile looks for way forward after rejecting new constitution

By DANIEL POLITI Associated Press

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — Chileans overwhelmingly rejected a new progressive constitution to replace its dictatorship-era charter, dealing a blow to youthful President Gabriel Boric who must now hammer out deals to create another document or change the current one.

Although the proposed charter was expected to be defeated in Sunday's plebiscite, the almost 24-point win by the rejection camp was a shocking defeat for a document that was three years in the making and had been billed as a democratic effort to replace the constitution imposed by Gen. Augusto Pinochet 41 years ago.

With 99.9% of the votes counted, the rejection camp had 61.9% support compared to 38.1% for approval amid heavy turnout with long lines at polling states. Voting was mandatory.

Boric, who had lobbied hard for the new document, said the results made it evident the Chilean people "were not satisfied with the constitutional proposal that the convention presented to Chile."

The president said there would now likely be "adjustments to our governing team" as he seeks to find a path forward. Despite the loss, the large majority believe the current constitution needs changing, they just felt the proposed one was not a suitable replacement, analysts say.

Boric made it clear the process to amend it would not end with Sunday's vote. He said it was necessary for leaders to "work with more determination, more dialogue, more respect" to reach a new proposed charter "that unites us as a country."

In Chile's capital of Santiago, horns blared in celebration as groups of people gathered in numerous intersections to celebrate the results.

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"We're happy because, really, we all want a new constitution, but one that is done right and this one didn't fulfil the expectations of the majority," said Lorena Cornejo, 34, while waving a Chilean flag. "Now we have to work for a new one that unites us, this one didn't represent us and that was clear in the vote."

Even some who were in favor of the proposed document, put a positive spin on the defeat.

"Although it's true that I wanted it to be approved, this is a new opportunity to reform everything that people didn't agree with," Alain Olivares, 36, said. "We're just going to have to wait longer to change the constitution."

Carlos Salinas, a spokesman for the Citizens' House for Rejection, said the majority of Chileans saw rejection as "a path of hope."

Despite the expectations of defeat for the proposed charter, no analyst or pollster had predicted such a large margin for the rejection camp, showing how Chileans were not ready to support a charter that would have been one of the most progressive in the world and would have fundamentally changed the South American country.

The constitution was the first in the world to be written by a convention split equally between male and female delegates, but critics said it was too long, lacked clarity and went too far in some of its measures, which included characterizing Chile as a plurinational state, establishing autonomous Indigenous territories, and prioritizing the environment and gender parity.

"The constitution that was written now leans too far to one side and does not have the vision of all Chileans," Roberto Briones, 41, said after voting in Chile's capital of Santiago. "We all want a new constitution, but it needs to have a better structure."

But others had fervently hoped it would pass.

Italo Hernández, 50, said he backed the changes as he exited the polling station in the National Stadium in Chile's capital of Santiago. "We have to leave behind Pinochet's constitution that only favored people with money."

Hernández said it was "very symbolic and very emotional" to be voting at a stadium that had been used as a detention and torture site during the military dictatorship.

Boric, 36 is Chile's youngest-ever president and a former student protest leader. He had tied his fortunes so closely to the new document that analysts said it was likely some voters saw the plebiscite as a referendum on his government at a time when his approval ratings have been plunging since he took office in March.

What happens now amounts to a big question mark. Chilean political leaders of all stripes agree the constitution that dates from the country's 1973-1990 dictatorship must change. The process that will be chosen to write up a new proposal still has to be determined and will likely be the subject of hard-fought negotiations between the country's political leadership.

Boric has called on the heads of all political parties for a meeting tomorrow to determine the path forward.

The vote marked the climax of a process that began when the country once seen as a paragon of stability in the region exploded in student-led street protests in 2019. The unrest was sparked by a hike in public transportation prices, but it quickly expanded into broader demands for greater equality and more social protections.

The following year, just under 80% of Chileans voted in favor of changing the country's constitution. Then in 2021, they elected delegates to a constitutional convention.

The 388-article proposed charter, besides focusing on social issues and the environment, also introduced rights to free education, health care and housing. It would have established autonomous Indigenous territories and recognized a parallel justice system in those areas, although lawmakers would decide how far-reaching that would be.

In contrast, the current constitution is a market-friendly document that favors the private sector over the state in aspects like education, pensions and health care. It also makes no reference to the country's Indigenous population, which makes up almost 13% of the population.

Coco Gauff, 18, reaches US Open quarterfinals for 1st time

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Coco Gauff raised a fist, then wagged her right index finger, responding to, and riling up even more, a loud-louder-loudest Arthur Ashe Stadium crowd that was standing and screaming. Gauff's U.S. Open opponent, Zhang Shuai, covered both ears with her hands to shield them from what she described later as a "Boom!" of sound.

Gauff and her fans were reacting excitedly to quite a point, one in which the 18-year-old Floridian raced to her right for a defensive forehand, then changed directions to sprint and slide into a backhand that drew a netted volley from Zhang. Just four points later, Gauff was a quarterfinalist at Flushing Meadows for the first time.

Gauff, the French Open runner-up in June, came back in each set to beat China's Zhang 7-5, 7-5 on Sunday to become the youngest American to make it this far at the U.S. Open since Melanie Oudin was 17 in 2009.

"Here, I can't hear myself scream. Makes me want to do it more. I think I'm feeding off the momentum a lot. I enjoy it," said No. 12 seed Gauff, who meets No. 17 Caroline Garcia of France on Tuesday. "New York is bringing out a side of me that I haven't had since I was 15, so it's nice."

Nick Kyrgios is playing much better than he ever has at Flushing Meadows, too, building off the momentum of his run to the Wimbledon final in July, and he eliminated defending champion and No. 1-ranked Daniil Medvedev 7-6 (11), 3-6, 6-3, 6-2 on Sunday night.

The 23rd-seeded Kyrgios was up to some of his usual behavior — warned for cursing, yelling at his guest box, playing to the crowd — but he also outplayed Medvedev in a high-quality match.

"I'm just glad I'm finally able to show New York my talent," said Kyrgios, never past the third round at the U.S. Open until now. "I haven't had too many great trips here."

He'll play No. 27 seed Karen Khachanov on Tuesday, when the other's men's quarterfinal on the top half of the bracket is 2022 French Open runner-up Casper Ruud against 2021 Wimbledon runner-up Matteo Berrettini.

Medvedev will relinquish the top spot in the rankings after the U.S. Open, with Ruud joining Rafael Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz as players with a chance to replace him.

After trailing 5-4 in the opening set, then 5-3 in the second, which she was a point from losing, Gauff was buoyed by spectators who cheered her every point and chanted "Let's go, Coco!" as the end neared. She improved to 4-0 in Ashe this year after having never previously won a match at the biggest arena in Grand Slam tennis.

How loud was it?

"It got so raucous in there that I got a headache. I had to take an Advil," said Gauff's father, Corey. "I kept pinching myself. I'm like, 'My gosh, all of these people here for my daughter.' You dream about this, but you never know if you're going to realize that. She was pumping herself up and they responded to her. It sent chills up my spine."

Zhang, at 33 the oldest woman to reach the fourth round, said it was more noise than she's ever heard at a match.

She praised Gauff's play, calling her "a superstar" and adding: "Everything is very good. She's so much younger than me. Her energy is so much better. She's faster. She's powerful."

They competed mostly from the baseline, and the longer the exchanges, the more success Gauff found: She claimed a 45-26 edge in points that lasted five or more strokes.

Garcia is coming off a hard-court title at Cincinnati and stretched her winning streak to 12 matches by defeating No. 29 Alison Riske-Amritraj of the U.S. 6-4, 6-1.

"I'm super excited, actually, to play Coco — in U.S., in New York, quarterfinal of a Slam. It's great," Garcia said.

The other quarterfinal on that half of the women's field will be between Ajla Tomljanovic, the player who beat Serena Williams in the third round, and No. 5 Ons Jabeur, who was the runner-up at Wimbledon. Tomljanovic got past Liudmila Samsonova 7-6 (8), 6-1 at Louis Armstrong Stadium in a matchup between

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unseeded players, while Jabeur defeated No. 18 Veronika Kudermetova 7-6 (1), 6-4.

Tomljanovic is a 29-year-old Australian who is now into her third Grand Slam quarterfinal after making it that far at Wimbledon the past two years. On Wednesday, Tomljanovic beat Williams in three sets in what is expected to be the last match of the 23-time Grand Slam champion's career.

In Gauff-Zhang, the whirring of the Ashe retractable roof being pulled shut accompanied the start of the second set because of showers that started soon after, and it took a while for the artificial lights to reach full strength. The match proceeded, even though it was rather dark — and quite humid — indoors.

Zhang started getting a bit better of the back-and-forth midway through the second set, and when she hit a backhand winner of her own, she broke to lead 5-3.

Last year's U.S. Open doubles champion — she and Sam Stosur beat Gauff and Caty McNally in the final — served to force a third set, and was a point away from getting there, but Gauff steeled herself and stood her ground.

That set point was frittered away when Zhang sent a backhand long. Gauff smacked — what else? — a down-the-line backhand winner for her third break point of that game, then delivered a good return to a corner that drew a long backhand to make it 5-4 and start a four-game, match-closing run.

Everyone's known how talented Gauff is for a while now. After all, at 15, she became the youngest qualifier in Wimbledon history in 2019, beat Venus Williams in the first round of the main draw and made it all the way to the fourth. There have been more steps along the way, more achievements — last month, she became the second-youngest doubles No. 1 in WTA history — and her ever-developing game — the most notable recent improvements were to her forehand and second serve — keeps carrying her closer to the top of the singles rankings and closer to a Grand Slam title.

And at this point, having the full sport of more than 20,000 folks in Ashe doesn't hurt, either.

"She's found a home there," Dad said. "I hope she's going to play there for the rest of the tournament."

Lawyer's mission: Translate Tenn.'s bewildering abortion ban

By CLAIRE GALOFARO AP National Writer

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Chloe Akers considers herself a grizzled criminal defense attorney. Until a few months ago, she didn't spend much time thinking about abortion — for all her 39 years, abortion was not a crime, so she'd never imagined having to defend someone accused of performing one.

That changed in June, when the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. Akers sat down in her law office and pulled up Tennessee's new criminal abortion statute.

She didn't read it through a political lens; it doesn't matter whether she likes a law — there are a lot of them she doesn't like. Instead, she read it like she would any other statute: What does it make illegal? How would it be enforced?

She was shocked. She read it maybe 10 times more. Surely, she was missing something.

Tennessee's law is one of the strictest in the country. It makes performing an abortion a Class C felony, punishable by up to 15 years in prison. There are no exceptions. This is the part that Akers has since found herself having to repeat, often eliciting raised eyebrows and deeply drawn breaths: Unlike many states' abortions bans, including the one in Texas, this law does not explicitly exempt abortions performed to save a mother's life.

Instead, it offers doctors an "affirmative defense." The difference is linguistically subtle but extraordinarily meaningful in criminal law, Akers says. The law makes performing all abortions illegal. And instead of the state having to prove that the procedure was not medically necessary, the law shifts the burden to the doctor to convince a court that it was.

She ran down the hallway toward a colleague's office: "Have you read this?" she gasped.

Then she opened up Instagram, where she sometimes explains criminal law to a handful of followers. She looked into the camera and explained that there are no exceptions for rape, for incest or for those so desperate they threaten to end their lives.

"Our legislature is not having any of that," she said. "They straight-up criminalized abortion."

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If she would have known that 2 million people would end up watching her 13-minute video — including members of Congress and country music stars — she would have brushed her hair and spit out her gum.

She tried to explain an affirmative defense in a way people without a law degree might understand it: It is akin to claiming self-defense after killing someone. A prosecutor might decide the killing was justified and decide not to charge. But that's entirely up to the prosecutor. If they do charge, the defendant is at the mercy of the courts.

"It's about to get real, and it may not happen to you. But it's going to happen here," she said. For those who were scared or confused, she added words of support: "You know exactly where to find me."

And they did. Her inbox was flooded with thousands of messages, so many she couldn't keep up.

The mayor wrote. Socialites invited her to present at dinner parties. Doctors pleaded for guidance. A women's motorcycle club asked her to come talk with them.

She had accidentally become the state's primary interpreter of this law, which went into effect Aug. 25. Within days she quit her cushy job in a law firm and started a nonprofit she named Standing Together Tennessee. For the past two months, she's crisscrossed the state on a tour aimed at explaining this abortion law to doctors, and the intricacies of pregnancies to the lawyers who might have to defend them.

As she climbed off the stage after her latest stop at a Nashville synagogue, a doctor asked a question she's heard again and again.

"Are they really going to enforce this?"

Akers' answer is always the same.

"I don't know."

Nikki Zite, a Knoxville OB-GYN, watched Akers' video and sent her a message.

"I need to know you," she wrote. "I think physicians and people will be very confused about the affirmative defense. How close to dead does the patient need to be?"

Zite is a complex family planning physician, and until recently provided abortion care for pregnancies that threatened the life of the mother and for those where it was clear the fetus would not survive. The latter are no longer allowed in Tennessee.

These are often desired pregnancies, with parents who have decorated nurseries and decided on names. It's devastating every time, she said. Since Roe fell, her colleagues had to tell three mothers carrying babies who would not survive that the law forbids them from ending their pregnancies.

She's also treated two ectopic pregnancies, where the pregnancy is growing outside the womb, usually in the fallopian tubes. An ectopic pregnancy can never be viable and can rupture if allowed to continue to grow, threatening the mother's life. Termination is standard treatment. And yet Zite has found herself looking over her shoulder.

"What if someone disagrees with me? Am I going to go to jail?" she wonders.

Zite is on the executive committee of the Tennessee section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, which issued a statement that the trigger law might lead doctors to hesitate, to contact lawyers in the midst of medical emergencies, while their patients get sicker.

One day soon in Tennessee, a doctor will inevitably see a woman whose water breaks early, weeks before viability, Zite said. She will not be on her death bed, but risks infection, sepsis, bleeding.

She knows how risky delays can be: After Texas passed its six-week abortion ban last year, researchers studied 28 patients who were enduring dangerous pregnancies and hospitals interpreted the law to mean they had to delay care until the patient became sicker. More than half suffered serious health complications, twice the rate of patients in states where abortions were immediately available.

"We are now at the mercy of the criminal justice system," Zite said. "Should I win? I think so. But do I want to go through that? No. I don't want to feel guilty until proven innocent."

She signed up to be the medical director of Akers' nonprofit. They hosted a panel of doctors and asked them: What are you afraid of?

Akers can't stop thinking about an oncologist who described a scenario pregnant women face with some

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regularity: They are diagnosed with aggressive cancer in early pregnancy, when they cannot receive chemotherapy or radiation.

Before, doctors would have hard conversations with patients about how they would like to proceed. They could delay treatment, understanding that their cancer might grow. Or they can terminate and treat themselves immediately, save their own lives and try for a baby once they are well.

Akers asked the doctor what they planned to do in that scenario after the trigger ban.

"That's what we're asking you," the doctor said.

Akers knows pressure. Every time she speaks to a jury, her client's freedom is on the line. Still, she said, the stakes seem higher here.

She's lost weight. She barely sleeps. She jolts awake at night, her head spinning with questions:

What about insurance companies? If a termination is illegal, even to save a mother's life, will they pay for it? Would that make them an accomplice akin to a getaway driver?

What about nurses? Anesthesiologists?

Providers must submit a form to the state reporting every termination. Now, would that amount to forcing them to prepare evidence against themselves in violation of the constitution's protection against self-incrimination?

"It's like I opened a box, and thought there was one question. And in answering that question, 10 more questions arise and 10 more from that and 10 more from that," she said. "That's the most frustrating part about this whole endeavor is feeling like I'm on a merry-go-round, going round and round."

When she first began her tour, she thought of it as a pragmatic, apolitical effort to explain the law without the fervor of the abortion wars. She'd leave the debate to others.

But she's grown indignant about the confusion that continues to swirl over what the law really says. Many, including legislators who passed it, insist it includes an exemption to save the mother's life.

"I don't know how many other ways to say there's no exceptions. We can't tell people that it's not going to be prosecuted," Akers said. "People might be like, 'Why is this lady being so persnickety and detail-oriented?' Because I'm a lawyer."

Words matter in a courtroom. She's spent hours arguing with prosecutors over the definition of "unreasonable." There is no world in which she can imagine telling a judge that her client thought there was an exception, even though there wasn't.

As a criminal defense lawyer for 15 years — many of them as a public defender — she's well acquainted with the mercilessness of America's criminal justice system.

"I think there is this hope in people. That because this is so unreasonable and because this is so anti-theoretical to what we think of as fair and just and American, that they're like, surely, surely someone's not going to prosecute this. Right?" she said. "But I have seen cases that would make your skin crawl."

She's watched the courts throw the book at mentally ill clients, homeless veterans, children, people struggling with addiction.

So she told the doctors in Nashville:

"Do I suspect that this law will be enforced? Yes, I do. Otherwise, why write laws?"

Will Brewer, an attorney and lobbyist with Tennessee Right to Life, thinks the lawyers like Akers and doctors agonizing over the wording are exaggerating the possible consequences.

"I think you're going to be hard-pressed to find a prosecutor that is going to prosecute a physician when they can back up their claim that they did this to save the life of the mother," Brewer said.

Brewer has said — and has written in published essays — that the law should be interpreted as only applying to elective abortions, when the sole reason for termination is that the mother doesn't want a baby.

Yet he said lawmakers chose the wording for a specific reason: to raise the bar high for doctors to perform an abortion. Exemptions are easier to abuse, he said. It was designed to be a narrow window where abortions would be justified.

The law mandates doctors prove only that the abortion in their "good faith medical judgment" was neces-

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sary "to prevent the death of the pregnant woman or to prevent serious risk of substantial and irreversible impairment of a major bodily function."

That gives them wide berth, Brewer thinks — it doesn't require death be imminent and it doesn't mean every decision will be second-guessed.

"You still end up in the same place at the end of the day," he said of the line between an exemption and a defense. "But you just make sure the due diligence was done and that the law was treated with the seriousness that it deserves."

He pointed to Ohio laws in effect for years that used affirmative defense language in banning later-term abortions except in medical emergencies.

"Were any physicians charged with violating any of these laws? No, not one," he said.

That no one was prosecuted because of them does not reflect the true toll they have taken on doctors, said Danielle Bessett, a professor at the University of Cincinnati. She held focus groups with 35 Ohio physicians working in hospitals and private practice, not abortion clinics.

Doctors reported feeling demonized, confused, powerless. They described waiting to perform an abortion they knew would be inevitable until the patient became sicker so the hospital would deem their condition "bad enough." Others said they advised patients to go out of state for terminations if they were in decent health to travel.

Pregnancy complications are not black-and-white, Bessett said. It was cases in the gray area, where serious health consequences were not imminent but likely, that caused doctors "great moral distress," Bessett said.

And these Ohio laws governed only later-term abortions, which account for a tiny fraction of terminations, she said. The post-Roe laws like the one in Tennessee will govern virtually all pregnancies, so the number of times a termination could be questioned in court will skyrocket.

Idaho has a trigger ban nearly identical to Tennessee's. The wording is the same, though unlike Tennessee's, it includes an affirmative defense for rape or incest. And while Tennessee's includes one to protect the mother from death or serious injury, Idaho's scraps the language about injury and allows an abortion only to prevent death.

The United States Department of Justice sued that state, arguing that the ban would force hospitals to violate federal law that requires they stabilize patients in medical emergencies.

U.S. District Judge B. Lynn Winmill blocked part of the ban from taking effect.

Lawyers representing the state had argued in part that in the "real world," no prosecutors would ever bring charges against a doctor for performing an abortion on a sick patient.

Winmill seemed skeptical. They were asking him to ignore what the law actually says, he wrote. It makes criminal what doctors routinely do to care for patients. One gynecologist had described for the court that physicians were "bracing for the impact of this law, as if it is a large meteor headed towards Idaho."

"More fundamentally," Winmill wondered, "if the law does not mean what it says, why have it at all?"

Akers was on her way home from the Nashville stop on her speaking tour when another doctor called for help. Leilah Zahedi, a Chattanooga OB-GYN, said she'd been on a conference call with hospital lawyers who reminded her that if she hesitates too long and a pregnant patient suffers, she could be liable for malpractice.

"We're being told there's this very fine tightrope where you can follow the law. And if you fall one way, you're committing a felony and if you fall the other way and you wait too long, then someone can sue you for malpractice. It feels pretty much impossible," she said. "What am I supposed to do?"

She specializes in the most dangerous pregnancies. Complications uncommon for most obstetricians are not uncommon for her. She wants to stay in Tennessee, but she's not sure if the new law will make that too risky.

"The women of Tennessee need you here," Akers said. This is her greatest fear: Doctors will move to states where they will not face the threat of jail for doing their jobs.

Akers' own sister survived a high-risk pregnancy with twin boys — because she had top-notch care, she

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believes. She thinks all of her neighbors deserve the same. One of her closest friends, a lifelong Republican and fellow lawyer, recently gave birth after a high-risk pregnancy. She'd thought she'd have more children, but now, because of the law, she fears getting pregnant again.

Tennessee already ranks toward the top of the list of states with abysmal maternal mortality rates, and Zahedi worries this will make matters worse.

Soon after Roe was overturned, a patient was referred to Zahedi. She'd had two uncomplicated pregnancies before, delivered by Cesarean section. But this time her water broke early at 15 weeks. The likelihood of the baby surviving birth was extremely low; without fluid, a baby's lungs will not develop.

Some such patients choose to keep their pregnancies and risk their own health to be able to hold their babies for the few moments they are alive. Others choose to terminate. Zahedi helps them either way. It is a personal choice, she believes, and not one she or anyone else should make for them.

Then Zahedi discovered a dangerous complication: the woman's placenta was growing into her C-section scar and her uterus. It could cause severe infection and bleeding, and she'd likely lose her uterus.

The patient, a woman of strong faith, agonized over the choice, and Zahedi lived through that grief and despair alongside her. The patient didn't want to risk leaving her two living children motherless and decided to terminate.

Zahedi didn't sleep the night before the procedure. She was worried for her patient, and for herself.

"We all just risked our lives for two years in a pandemic. I'm not really excited about now risking my liberty and freedom in order to take care of patients here when it has become very clear I am no longer welcome," she said, "even though I know people need me."

She wants to stay. She loves her practice and her patients, she told Akers.

"But I just don't know."

Akers sighed as they hung up, and shook her head. She gets calls like this from doctors all the time now.

She hopes she's wrong and making a big deal out of nothing. Maybe none of them will be prosecuted; maybe the intent was only to shut down abortion clinics. If a year from now, all is well, she'll happily fold her new nonprofit and go back to defending people charged with other crimes.

"But I just keep coming back to asking, if it was really just about shutting down clinics, why not write a law that criminalized elective abortions?" she said. "If this was all just a scare tactic, well played, mission accomplished, we're all scared. And these are situations where moments matter."

That evening, back in Nashville, Dr. Nancy Lipsitz was working an emergency shift.

Appearing that afternoon with Akers, the gynecologist had described the fear she's seen in her patients. One is planning to move out of state. Another asked her: If things go bad, will you have to let me die?

She feels like practicing medicine has become a minefield of risk. She struggled to find a word to describe the thought of facing criminal charges for treating patients. It was "mind-bending," she said.

That very night, a pregnant woman came into the emergency room in extraordinary pain, with signs of internal bleeding. Lipsitz found that she had a ruptured ectopic pregnancy.

This was the very mind-bending scenario she had described from the stage just hours before, one that might have pitted the vagaries of a statute against a patient's welfare.

Lipsitz did not hesitate. She went to work.

What to watch in Massachusetts' primary election

By STEVE LeBLANC Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Republicans hoping to hold on to the Massachusetts governor's office are choosing between a Donald Trump-backed candidate and a more moderate businessman in Tuesday's primary election.

Massachusetts is just the latest blue state to feature a top-of-the-ticket contest between a conservative candidate endorsed by Trump and a more centrist opponent. In recent primaries in Maryland and Connecticut, GOP voters have opted for the Trump loyalists, potentially worsening their chances of winning a general election.

The winner of Tuesday's Massachusetts primary will take on Democratic Attorney General Maura Healey

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in November. If elected, she would be the state's first openly gay governor and the first woman elected governor of Massachusetts. Republican Jane Swift served as acting governor after Gov. Paul Cellucci stepped down in 2001 to become U.S. ambassador to Canada.

The governor's office is open this year because popular GOP Gov. Charlie Baker opted against running for a third term.

What to watch:

Former state Rep. Geoff Diehl, who has Trump's endorsement, is going up against businessman Chris Doughty, a political newcomer, in the Republican primary for governor.

Diehl, who launched a failed campaign for U.S. Senate against Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren in 2018, is popular among Republican activists. He won the party's endorsement with 71% of delegates at the state party convention in May, but he could face a tougher climb in a general election in a state in which Trump won only 32% of votes in 2020.

Diehl has opposed COVID-19 mandates, falsely claimed the 2020 presidential race was rigged, fought against the extension of mail-in voting and said he supports the Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*.

Trump — a critic of Baker, who publicly refused to vote for Trump in 2016 and 2020 — endorsed Diehl last October, saying in a statement that he is "strong on Crime, Election Integrity, our now under siege Southern Border, loves our Military, and has a big focus on taking care of our Vets."

Doughty described himself as moderate when he entered the race but has since embraced the label of conservative as he tries to appeal to Republican primary voters. Doughty has said his experience running a manufacturing company gives him the know-how to be a successful chief executive.

He has said he wants to make Massachusetts more affordable for residents and businesses. He has described himself as "pro-life," but acknowledges the state's highest court has recognized a right to abortion and said he doesn't have an interest in changing that.

Baker hasn't endorsed either candidate.

Healey, who's won two statewide races for attorney general, is running virtually unopposed, with her sole rival dropping out of the race in June, though she remains on the ballot. Healey is hoping to break a political "curse" in Massachusetts, referring to a string of unsuccessful campaigns by attorneys general for governor.

Despite being considered a Democratic stronghold, Massachusetts has a history of electing Republican governors as a check on a Legislature in which Democrats hold overwhelming majorities. Those Republican governors, including Mitt Romney, have typically been fiscally conservative but more socially moderate.

Baker said in December that he opted not to seek reelection so he could focus on helping the state emerge from the pandemic. He credited his administration's focus on issues over personality as a big reason for his success with voters, which he said stands "apart from a lot of the bipartisan noise that's created in politics generally these days."

The election also features several statewide contested Democratic primaries, including for attorney general and secretary of the commonwealth.

Two Democrats are jockeying for the top law enforcement office: former Boston city councilor Andrea Campbell and workers' rights attorney Shannon Liss-Riordan. A week before the election, a former assistant attorney general, Quentin Palfrey, announced he was suspending his campaign and endorsed Campbell.

The winner will face Republican Jay McMahan, a trial attorney who previously ran against Healey and lost, in November.

If elected, Campbell would be the first Black woman to hold the office in Massachusetts. She's won the endorsement of several high-profile elected officials, including Healey, Sen. Edward Markey and half the state's congressional delegation.

Liss-Riordan has the backing of Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Boston Mayor Michelle Wu and former acting Boston Mayor Kim Janey.

In the race for secretary of the commonwealth, Democratic incumbent William Galvin is hoping to win

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an eighth term in office. He's fielding a primary challenge from fellow Democrat Tanisha Sullivan, a lawyer and president of the Boston branch of the NAACP. Sullivan would be the first Black person to serve in the post in the state.

There are also contested races in the Democratic primary for auditor and for the Democratic and Republican races for lieutenant governor.

None of the state's nine incumbent Democratic U.S. House members is facing primary challengers. There are two contested Republican primaries, in the 8th and 9th congressional districts.

The Massachusetts primary lands on the day after Labor Day, raising concerns about a potentially low turnout, although early voting began on Aug. 27.

A new state law makes "no excuse" mail-in ballots and early voting permanent fixtures in Massachusetts elections. Many of the voting options included in the new law were implemented during the height of the coronavirus pandemic and proved popular.

The law also increases ballot access for voters with disabilities, service members overseas and incarcerated individuals.

Biden visiting 2 swing states as midterm crunch time begins

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden is making his third trip to Pennsylvania in less than a week and returning just two days after his predecessor, Donald Trump, staged his own rally there — illustrating the battleground state's importance to both parties as Labor Day kicks off a nine-week sprint to crucial midterm elections.

Trump spoke Saturday night in Wilkes-Barre, near Scranton, where Biden was born. The president made his own Wilkes-Barre trip last week to discuss increasing funding for police, decry GOP criticism of the FBI after the raid on Trump's Florida estate and to argue that new, bipartisan gun safety measures can help reduce violent crime.

Two days after that, Biden went to Independence Hall in Philadelphia for a prime-time address denouncing the "extremism" of Trump's fiercest supporters. On Monday, he's attending Labor Day festivities in Milwaukee, in another key swing state, Wisconsin, before traveling to Pittsburgh for that city's parade.

The White House says Biden will celebrate "the dignity of American workers." The unofficial start of fall, Labor Day also traditionally kicks off political crunch time, with campaigns scrambling to excite voters ahead of Election Day on Nov. 8. That's when control of the House and Senate, as well some of the country's top governorships, will be decided.

Trump has endorsed candidates in key races around the country and Biden is warning that some Republicans now believe so strongly in Trumpism that they are willing to undermine core American values to promote it. The president said Thursday that the midterms will be a battle "for the soul of the nation," the same slogan he used to win the 2020 election, and that "blind loyalty to a single leader, and a willingness to engage in political violence, is fatal to democracy."

Biden added in that speech that "MAGA Republicans are destroying American democracy," referring to Trump's "Make America Great Again" campaign cry and pointing to incidents like last year's mob attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Trump said during his Saturday rally that Biden's Philadelphia appearance featured "the most vicious, hateful and divisive speech ever delivered by an American president."

"He's an enemy of the state," the former president said.

Monday will see Biden return to another theme that was a centerpiece of his 2020 campaign, that labor unions burnished the middle class, which in turn built and strengthened modern American society.

Endorsements from key unions helped Biden overcome disastrous early finishes in Iowa and New Hampshire to win the Democratic primary, and eventually the White House. He has since continued to praise labor unions — even though many voters without college degrees, many working class, remain among Trump's strongest bloc of supporters.

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Mary Kay Henry, president of the 2-million-member Service Employees International Union, called Biden championing unions heading into the midterms “critical” and said that the labor movement must “mobilize in battlegrounds across the country to ensure that working people turn out.”

“We’re really excited about the president speaking directly to workers about, if he had the opportunity, he’d join a union,” Henry said. She added: “This president has signaled which side he’s on. And he’s on the side of working people. And that matters hugely.”

Biden, meanwhile, has personal history with Pittsburgh’s Labor Day parade, which is among the nation’s largest. He attended the 2015 installment as vice president and returned in 2018. Both times, Biden, now 79, faced questions about whether he’d run for president in upcoming elections — which he opted against in 2016 before winning the White House in 2020.

This year, the oldest president in the nation’s history has faced speculation about if he’ll seek a second term in 2024 — though he’s insisted that’s his intention, and the pressure has dissipated some in recent weeks, amid a string of policy and political successes for Biden and his party.

Still, both perennial presidential battleground states Biden is visiting on Monday may provide key measures of Democrats’ strength before this November and 2024. With inflation still raging and the president’s approval ratings remaining low, how much Biden can help his party in top races remains to be seen.

In Wisconsin, Democratic Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes is trying to unseat incumbent Republican Sen. Ron Johnson, but drew criticism from Johnson’s campaign for being noncommittal beforehand about appearing with Biden in Milwaukee. In the state’s other top race, Tim Michels, a construction executive endorsed by Trump, is attempting to deny Democratic Gov. Tony Evers a second term. Evers said he planned to join Biden on Monday.

Pennsylvania voters are choosing a new governor, with state Attorney General John Shapiro facing another Trump-endorsed Republican, Doug Mastriano, and a new senator. That race is between Democratic Lt. Gov. John Fetterman and Trump-backed celebrity heart physician Mehmet Oz. Shapiro and Fetterman both planned to attend Monday’s Pittsburgh parade.

The Pennsylvania and Wisconsin races could decide which party controls the Senate next year, while the winner of each governorship may influence results in 2024’s presidential election. The stakes are particularly high given that some Trump-aligned candidates have spread lies about widespread fraud that did not occur during the 2020 election — raising questions about what might happen if a candidate they don’t support wins the next presidential contest.

Citing imminent danger Cloudflare drops hate site Kiwi Farms

The Associated Press undefined

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Citing an “immediate threat to human life,” Cloudflare has dropped the notorious stalking and harassment site Kiwi Farms from its internet security services following an online campaign started by transgender Twitch streamer Clara Sorrenti to pressure it to do so.

“This is an extraordinary decision for us to make and given Cloudflare’s role as an Internet infrastructure provider, a dangerous one that we are not comfortable with,” CEO Matthew Prince wrote in a blog post Saturday in an about-face after earlier insisting that the company would not block the site. “However, the rhetoric on the Kiwifarms site and specific, targeted threats have escalated over the last 48 hours to the point that we believe there is an unprecedented emergency and immediate threat to human life unlike what we have previously seen from Kiwifarms or any other customer before.”

For years, members of the site created and operated by Joshua Conner Moon, 29, have congregated on what they call a “lighthearted discussion forum” to organize vicious harassment campaigns against transgender people, feminists and others they deem mockable. They gang up on victims and pool their personal details such as addresses and phone numbers in a practice called “doxxing,” spreading vile rumors and targeting workplaces, friends, families and homes. Another favorite tactic has been “swatting” — making false emergency calls to provoke an armed police response at a target’s home. Some people subjected to the group’s abuse have died by suicide.

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Sorrenti, who goes by “Keffals” online, has been leading a campaign to pressure Cloudflare to drop Kiwi Farms. In August, she fled her home in Canada for Europe after she was doxxed and swatted. Her online stalkers, however, found her in Belfast, Ireland, as well and continued to intensify their harassment campaign against her just as her campaign against Kiwi Farms and its enablers was gaining momentum.

“When a multi-billion dollar corporation like Cloudflare has to drop Kiwi Farms because of an ‘imminent and emergency threat to human life’ it is no longer a matter of free speech. Removing Kiwi Farms from the internet is a matter of public safety for every single person online,” she tweeted on Saturday.

On Sunday, Kiwi Farms was inaccessible. But a version of the site with a .ru domain name was intermittently up and running, though it was not clear whether it would remain up.

The decision to drop Kiwi Farms Saturday was an about-face for Cloudflare and Prince, who earlier in the week put out a 2,600-word blog post — without mentioning the site by name — doubling down on the decision to protect it and comparing Cloudflare to a phone company that “doesn’t terminate your line if you say awful, racist, bigoted things.”

But Sorrenti and other targets of the site say it was far worse than that, as trolls on the site relentlessly pursued their victims offline — often for years on end.

“They are trying to get people to lose their jobs. They’re trying to get people to lose their housing, to be starving and homeless,” Liz Fong-Jones, a former Google engineer and cloud computing expert who is transgender, told the AP last week. “And then they go after people’s families and then they tell people that the only way out is to kill themselves.”

Moon started Kiwi Farms nearly a decade ago as a wiki site dedicated to harassing a transgender woman; Moon even used the woman’s initials in an early version of the site’s name. Over time its users began to target other people -- mostly active online users who are transgender, have autism or other mental conditions. Kiwi Farms in its current form was born in 2015.

An overarching theme of the site’s discussions centers on users’ fierce opposition to transgender children receiving gender-affirming medical care. Members typically refer to those who support such treatment as “groomers” and “pedophiles,” rhetoric that is also used increasingly by conservatives in their opposition to LGBTQ rights.

“There has never been a violent incident in our history, which cannot be said for many other sites still on Cloudflare. This narrative feels like a lie spun up to save face,” Moon, who posts on Kiwi Farms under the pseudonym “Null,” posted Saturday in response to Cloudflare’s cutoff. Reached earlier by The Associated Press to comment on the campaign against his site, Moon replied only “the press are scum.”

KiwiFarms.ru is registered to and protected by the Russian company DDoS-Guard, whose customers have in the past included Russian government websites including the Defense Ministry and cybercriminal forums where stolen credit cards are bought and sold.

Last year, DDoS-Guard protected the pro-Trump social media website Parler.com for a time after Amazon withdrew hosting services. KiwiFarms.ru was registered on July 12, suggesting Moon, was aware Cloudflare could drop his site and thus created a backup plan.

DDoS-Guard did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment on Sunday. Kiwi Farms’ internet connection is provided by VegasNAP, a Las Vegas-based company that said in response to queries last week that it does not disclose information about its clients. Contacted again Sunday, the company did not immediately respond.

“In the past, DDoS-Guard has been known to discontinue support for some seriously problematic websites, apparently as a result of press inquiries. That very well may happen again, in this instance, but I wouldn’t bet on it,” said independent internet expert Ron Guilmette. “Obviously, a lot has changed in the world since February 24, 2022, and I do believe that, in general, Russians these days, and over the past 6 months in particular, have learned to care a whole lot less about what the rest of the world thinks of them and/or their actions.”

Chileans resoundingly reject new progressive constitution

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By DANIEL POLITI Associated Press

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — Chileans resoundingly rejected a new constitution to replace a charter imposed by the dictatorship of Gen. Augusto Pinochet 41 years ago, dealing a stinging setback to President Gabriel Boric who argued the document would have ushered in a new progressive era.

With 99% of the votes counted in Sunday's plebiscite, the rejection camp had 61.9% support compared to 38.1% for approval amid heavy turnout with long lines at polling states. Voting was mandatory.

The approval camp conceded defeat, with its spokesman Vlado Mirosevic saying: "We recognize this result and we listen with humility to what the Chilean people have expressed."

Boric, who had lobbied hard for the new document, said the results made it evident the Chilean people "were not satisfied with the constitutional proposal that the convention presented to Chile."

Most Chileans favor changing the dictatorship-era constitution and Boric made it clear the process to amend it would not end with Sunday's vote. He said it was necessary for leaders to "work with more determination, more dialogue, more respect" to reach a new proposed charter "that unites us as a country."

The rejection was widely expected in this country of 19 million as months of pre-election polling showed that Chileans had grown wary of the proposed charter that was written by a constituent assembly in which a majority of delegates were not affiliated with a political party.

Carlos Salinas, a spokesman for the Citizens' House for Rejection, said the majority of Chileans saw rejection as "a path of hope."

"We want to tell the government of President Gabriel Boric... that 'today you must be the president of all Chileans and together we must move forward,'" he said.

Despite the broad expectations of defeat for the proposed new charter, no analyst or pollster had predicted such a large margin for the rejection camp, showing how Chileans were not ready to support a charter that would have been one of the most progressive in the world and would have fundamentally changed the South American country.

The proposed document was the first in the world to be written by a convention split equally between male and female delegates, but critics said it was too long, lacked clarity and went too far in some of its measures, which included characterizing Chile as a plurinational state, establishing autonomous Indigenous territories, and prioritizing the environment and gender parity.

"The constitution that was written now leans too far to one side and does not have the vision of all Chileans," Roberto Briones, 41, said after voting in Chile's capital of Santiago. "We all want a new constitution, but it needs to have a better structure."

But others had fervently hoped it would pass.

Italo Hernández, 50, said he backed the changes as he exited the polling station in the National Stadium in Chile's capital of Santiago. "We have to leave behind Pinochet's constitution that only favored people with money."

Hernández said it was "very symbolic and very emotional" to be voting at a stadium that had been used as a detention and torture site during the military dictatorship.

The result deals a major blow to Boric, who at 36 is Chile's youngest-ever president. He had tied his fortunes so closely to the new document that analysts said it was likely some voters saw the plebiscite as a referendum on his government at a time when his approval ratings have been plunging since he took office in March.

What happens now amounts to a big question mark. Chilean political leaders of all stripes agree the constitution that dates from the country's 1973-1990 dictatorship must change. The process that will be chosen to write up a new proposal still has to be determined and will likely be the subject of hard-fought negotiations between the country's political leadership.

Boric has called on the heads of all political parties for a meeting tomorrow to determine the path forward.

The vote marked the climax of a three-year process that began when the country once seen as a paragon of stability in the region exploded in student-led street protests in 2019. The unrest was sparked by a hike in public transportation prices, but it quickly expanded into broader demands for greater equality and more social protections.

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The following year, just under 80% of Chileans voted in favor of changing the country's constitution. Then in 2021, they elected delegates to a constitutional convention.

The 388-article proposed charter, besides focusing on social issues and the environment, also introduced rights to free education, health care and housing. It would have established autonomous Indigenous territories and recognized a parallel justice system in those areas, although lawmakers would decide how far-reaching that would be.

In contrast, the current constitution is a market-friendly document that favors the private sector over the state in aspects like education, pensions and health care. It also makes no reference to the country's Indigenous population, which makes up almost 13% of the population.

Military reserves, civil defense worry Taiwan as China looms

By HUIZHONG WU Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Chris Chen, a former captain in Taiwan's military, spent a lot of time waiting during his weeklong training for reservists in June. Waiting for assembly, waiting for lunch, waiting for training, he said.

The course, part of Taiwan's efforts to deter a Chinese invasion, was jam-packed with 200 reservists to one instructor.

"It just became all listening, there was very little time to actually carry out the instructions," Chen said.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has underscored the importance of mobilizing civilians when under attack, as Ukraine's reserve forces helped fend off the invaders. Nearly halfway around the world, it has highlighted Taiwan's weaknesses on that front, chiefly in two areas: its reserves and civilian defense force.

While an invasion doesn't appear imminent, China's recent large-scale military exercises in response to a visit by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan have made the government in Taipei more aware than ever of the hard power behind Beijing's rhetoric about bringing the self-ruled island under its control.

Experts said that civilian defense and reserve forces have an important deterrent effect, showing a potential aggressor that the risks of invasion are high. Even before the invasion of Ukraine in March, Taiwan was working on reforming both. The question is whether it will be enough.

Taiwan's reserves are meant to back up its 188,000-person military, which is 90% volunteers and 10% men doing their four months of compulsory military service. On paper, the 2.3 million reservists enable Taiwan to match China's 2 million-strong military.

Yet, the reserve system has long been criticized. Many, like Chen, felt the seven days of training for the mostly former soldiers was a waste of time that did not prepare them well enough.

The number of combat-ready reservists — those who could immediately join front-line battles — is only about 300,000, said Wang Ting-yu, a lawmaker from the governing Democratic Progressive Party who serves on the defense committee in the legislature.

"In Ukraine, if in the first three days of the war it had fallen apart, no matter how strong your military is, you wouldn't have been able to fight the war," Wang said. "A resilient society can meet this challenge. So that when you are met with disasters and war, you will not fall apart."

Taiwan reorganized its reserve system in January, now coordinated by a new body called the All Out Defense Mobilization Agency, which will also take over the civil defense system in an emergency.

One major change was the pilot launch of a more intensive, two-week training instead of the standard one week, which will eventually be expanded to the 300,000 combat-ready reservists. The remaining reservists can play a more defensive role, such as defending bridges, Wang said.

Dennis Shi joined the revamped training for two weeks in May at an abandoned building site on Taiwan's northern coast. Half the time it was raining, he said. The rest, it was baking hot. The training coincided with the peak of a COVID-19 outbreak. Wearing raincoats and face masks, the reservists dug trenches and practiced firing mortars and marching.

"Your whole body was covered in mud, and even in your boots there was mud," Shi said.

Still, he said he got more firing time than during his mandatory four months of service three years ago and felt motivated because senior officers carried out the drills with them.

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"The main thing is when it's time to serve your country, then you have to do it," he said.

There are plans to reform the civil defense force too, said Wang, though much of the discussion has not been widely publicized yet.

The Civil Defense Force, which falls under the National Police Agency, is a leftover from an era of authoritarian rule before Taiwan transitioned to democracy in the 1980s and 1990s. Its members are mostly people who are too old to qualify as reservists but still want to serve.

"It hasn't followed the passage of the times and hasn't kept pace with our fighting ability," Wang said.

Planned changes include a requirement to include security guards employed by some of Taiwan's largest companies in the force, and the incorporation of women, who are not required to serve in the military.

About 73% of Taiwanese say they would be willing to fight for Taiwan if China were to invade, according to surveys by Kuan-chen Lee at the Defense Ministry-affiliated Institute for National Defense and Security Research, a number that has remained consistent.

The Ukraine war, at least initially, shook some people's confidence in the willingness of America to come to Taiwan's assistance in the event of an attack. Whereas 57% said last September they believed the U.S. would "definitely or probably" send troops if China invaded, that dropped to 40% in March.

The U.S. policy of strategic ambiguity leaves it murky as to whether the U.S. would intervene militarily. Pelosi said during her visit that she wants to help the island defend itself.

Outside of government efforts, some civilians have been inspired to do more on their own.

Last week, the founder of Taiwanese chipmaker United Microelectronics, Robert Tsao, announced he would donate 1 billion New Taiwan Dollars (\$32.8 million) to fund the training of a 3 million-person defense force made up of civilians.

More than 1,000 people have attended lectures on civil defense with Open Knowledge Taiwan, according to T.H. Schee, a tech entrepreneur who gives lectures and organizes civil defense courses with the volunteer group, which aims to make specialized knowledge accessible to the public.

Others have signed up for first aid training, and some for firearms courses, though with air guns as Taiwan's laws do not allow widespread gun ownership.

These efforts need government coordination, said Martin Yang, a spokesperson for the Taiwan Military and Police Tactical Research and Development Association, a group of former police officers and soldiers interested in Taiwan's defense.

"The civil sector has this idea and they're using their energy, but I think the government needs to come out and coordinate this, so the energy doesn't get wasted," he said.

Yang is critical of the government's civil defense drills, citing annual exercises in which civilians practice taking shelter.

"When you do this exercise, you want to consider that people will hide in the subway, they need water and food, and may have medical needs. You will possibly have hundreds or thousands of people hiding there," Yang said. "But where does the water and food come from?"

In July, the New Taipei city government organized a large-scale drill with its disaster services and the Defense Ministry. Included for the first time was urban warfare, such as how first responders would react to an attack on a train station or a port.

The drills had the feeling of a carnival rather than serious preparation for an invasion. An MC excitedly welcomed guests as Korean pop music blared. Recruiters for the military, the coast guard and the military police set up booths to entice visitors, offering tchotchkes such as toy grenade keychains.

Chang Chia-rong guided VIP guests to their seats. The 20-year-old expressed a willingness to defend Taiwan, though she hadn't felt very worried about a Chinese invasion.

"If there's a volunteer squad, I hope that I can join and defend my country," she said. "If there's a need, I would be very willing to join."

Tory front-runner Truss vows fast action on cost of living

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

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LONDON (AP) — Liz Truss, who is widely expected to become Britain's new prime minister this week, has pledged to act within a week to tackle a cost-of-living crisis fueled by soaring energy bills linked to the war in Ukraine.

But Truss, speaking to the BBC on Sunday, refused to provide any details on the actions she would take, suggesting it would be wrong to discuss specific policies until she takes the top post. She stressed, however, that she understands the magnitude of the problems facing Britain.

The government has been unable to address soaring inflation, labor strife and strains on the nation's creaking health-care system since early July, when Johnson announced his intention to resign and triggered a contest to choose his successor. The ruling Conservative Party will announce the winner on Monday.

"I want to reassure people that I am absolutely determined to sort out this issue as well as, within a month, present a full plan for how we are going to reduce taxes, how we're going to get the British economy going, and how we are going to find our way out of these difficult times," said Truss, who has been foreign secretary for the past year.

Truss is facing Rishi Sunak, the government's former Treasury chief, in the contest to become Conservative Party leader and so prime minister. Only dues-paying party members were allowed to vote in the election, putting the choice of Britain's next leader in the hands of about 180,000 party activists.

During the campaign, Truss promised to increase defense spending, cut taxes and boost energy supplies, but she refused to provide specifics on how she would respond to the cost of living crisis.

With household energy bills set to increase by 80% next month, charities warn that as many as one in three households will face fuel poverty this winter, leaving millions fearful of how they will pay to heat their homes.

The Bank of England has forecast that inflation will reach a 42-year high of 13.3% in October, threatening to push Britain into a prolonged recession. Goldman Sachs has estimated that inflation could soar to 22% by next year unless something is done to mitigate high energy prices.

Chance of California power outages up as heat wave worsens

By KATHLEEN RONAYNE Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California's chance of power outages will grow in the coming days, as the state prepares to enter the most brutal stretch yet of an ongoing heat wave, officials said Sunday.

Energy demand is expected to outpace supply starting Monday evening, and predictions for Tuesday show the state rivaling its all-time high for electricity demand, said Elliot Mainzer, president and chief executive officer of the California Independent System Operator.

"This is about to get significantly more intense," Mainzer told reporters.

The system operator is in charge of managing and maintaining reliability on the electric grid, a challenging job during hot weather when energy demand soars as people crank up their air conditioners.

Grid managers have several options available before power outages, like tapping backup generators, buying more power from other states and using so-called demand response programs, where people are paid to use less energy. But keeping the lights on will also require Californians to continue conserving as they have been, even as temperatures rise.

Most of California's 39 million people are facing extremely hot weather. Temperatures in the Central Valley are expected to be as high as 115 degrees Fahrenheit (46 degrees Celsius) for several days. In Los Angeles, meanwhile, temperatures topped 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius), unusually warm temperatures for September.

Energy officials and power companies have been urging people since Wednesday to use less power from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. by keeping air conditioners at 78 degrees Fahrenheit (25.5 degrees Celsius) or higher and avoiding using major appliances like ovens and dishwashers. Those so-called flex alerts have allowed the grid operator to keep the lights on so far.

On Saturday night, the state used about 44,000 megawatts of electricity, Mainzer said. By Tuesday, that's supposed to ramp up to more than 50,000 megawatts, nearing record levels of energy use set in 2006. But

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the state would rather curb demand to avoid that number than test the power grid's capability to respond. "Our goal is to make sure that we do not reach that number," Mainzer said.

During the day, California's energy grid runs on a mix of mostly solar and natural gas, as well as some imports of power from other states. But solar power begins to fall off during the late afternoon and into the evening, which is the hottest time of day in some parts of the state.

Meanwhile, some of the aging natural gas plants that California relies on for backup power aren't as reliable in hot weather. As of Sunday afternoon, three of the state's coastal power plants were experiencing partial outages, though they make up just a small fraction of the state's supply, officials said.

At the same time, some hydropower resources are limited due to drought. Dry conditions and heat are hitting California as the state heads into what traditionally is the worst of the fire season, with large fires already burning and turning deadly. Scientists say climate change has made the West warmer and drier over the last three decades and will continue to make weather more extreme and wildfires more frequent and destructive.

Several hundred thousand Californians lost power in rolling blackouts in August 2020 amid hot weather. The state avoided a similar scenario last summer. Newsom on Friday signed legislation potentially allowing the state's last remaining nuclear plant to stay open beyond its planned 2025 closure in order to ensure more power for the energy grid.

On Sunday evening, nuclear power accounted for about 5% of California's energy supply.

Mistrial in abuse case in Texas against ex-MVP Wetteland

DENTON, Texas (AP) — A Texas judge has declared a mistrial in the child sex assault case against former All-Star and World Series MVP pitcher John Wetteland after the jury deadlocked.

The Denton County jury told Judge Lee Ann Breeding three times that it was split before she declared a mistrial Friday. Wetteland, who played for the Texas Rangers from 1997 to 2000 and also played for the New York Yankees and Seattle Mariners, was being tried on three counts of aggravated sexual assault of a child.

When asked if the case will be retried, Denton County First Assistant District Attorney Jamie Beck said in an email Sunday: "We will move forward, whether this means it is resolved through negotiations or trial again is up to him."

Wetteland, who is 56 and a Rangers' Hall of Famer, faced 25 years to life in prison, if convicted.

Authorities had accused Wetteland of sexually assaulting a child three times between 2004 and 2006, starting when the child was 4 years old. Wetteland, who pleaded not guilty, testified in his own defense and said the accuser's account of sexual abuse was a lie.

The accuser, who is now 22, said the abuse happened in the master bathroom shower of Wetteland's home in Bartonville, located just south of Denton.

Wetteland's attorneys said the accuser was manipulated to levy false accusations against Wetteland.

The accuser testified that he didn't want to involve law enforcement. Instead, he had written a letter intended only for family members disclosing the abuse. But, according to testimony, an investigation started after the accuser's high school learned of the allegations in 2019 when district software flagged a letter written in Google Docs that was linked to the accuser's school-issued email.

Prosecutor Rachel Nichols said the accuser had "nothing to gain" by coming forward with abuse allegations. "He's not this evil kid," Nichols said. "He didn't want the world to know."

Emergency declared as flash flooding hits northwest Georgia

SUMMERVILLE, Ga. (AP) — Thunderstorms and heavy rain pounded parts of northwest Georgia on Sunday, sparking flash flooding in some areas. Local news reports showed roads under water and homeowners struggling to keep water out.

Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp declared a state of emergency Sunday afternoon in Chattooga and Floyd Counties, directing all state resources to help with "preparation, response and recovery activities." The

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National Weather Service said rainfall of up to one inch per hour was causing creeks, streams, roadways and urban areas to experience unusually high levels of water. Up to 12 inches of rain was estimated to have fallen in the area, according to Kemp's executive order.

"This is an extremely dangerous and life-threatening situation. Do not attempt to travel unless you are fleeing an area subject to flooding or under an evacuation order," the service said.

The service declared a "flash flood emergency" for Summerville, Lyerly and James H. Floyd State Park in Chattooga County. Floyd County — just to the south — was also under a flash flood warning.

At 3:10 p.m., the service advised locals to avoid non-emergency travel as another round of emergency rainfall entered the area.

The city of Summerville advised residents who use the city's water utility services to boil water prior to drinking, cooking or preparing baby food due to flash flooding at the Raccoon Creek Filter plant.

"Water should be boiled for at least one minute after reaching a rolling boil. Citizens should continue to boil their water until they are notified by their drinking water utility that the water system has been restored to full operation, and that the microbiological quality of the water in the distribution system is safe for human consumption," the city said on its website.

Brendan Fraser celebrated for comeback role in 'The Whale'

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

VENICE, Italy (AP) — Brendan Fraser is having a moment at the Venice International Film Festival.

The once ubiquitous movie star of "The Mummy" franchise and "George of the Jungle" had, in the last decade, backed away from the spotlight. But Fraser is charting what could be a major comeback starting with his transformative role in Darren Aronofsky's "The Whale," which had its world premiere Sunday night at the festival.

As the credits rolled in the Sala Grande theater, the audience gave the film a long standing ovation while Fraser, on the balcony alongside his director and co-stars, wiped tears away.

Fraser plays Charlie, a reclusive English teacher with a kind soul who weighs 600 pounds (270 kilograms). While the film already has pundits predicting Oscar nominations, Fraser is trying not to think about whether awards are in his future.

"I'm just trying to stay in today," Fraser said before the premiere.

Aronofsky has been trying to make "The Whale" for about 10 years. He vividly remembers reading The New York Times review of Samuel D. Hunter's play, going out to see it, and knowing he had to meet the writer.

One line in particular stuck out to him: "People are incapable of not caring." It's why, he said, he had to make the film.

But casting presented a challenge.

"To a lot of Sam Hunter's pain, it took me 10 years to make this movie and that's because it took me 10 years to cast," Aronofsky said. "Casting Charlie was a huge challenge. I considered everyone. Every single movie star on the planet. But none of it really clicked. ... It didn't move me. It didn't feel right."

Then, a few years ago, he saw a trailer for "a low-budget Brazilian movie" with Fraser and "a lightbulb went off," he said.

Fraser, who also has a role alongside Leonardo DiCaprio in Martin Scorsese's next film, "Killers of the Flower Moon," said he doesn't "know an actor in my peer group worth his weight in salt who wouldn't want to work with Darren."

Plus: "By far and away I think Charlie is the most heroic man I have ever played," Fraser added. "His superpower is to see the good in others and bring that out of them."

Prosthetics were used to transform Fraser into Charlie, who rarely leaves his couch.

"I needed to learn to absolutely move in a new way. I developed muscles I did not know that I had. I even felt a sense of vertigo at the end of the day when all the appliances were removed, as you would feel stepping off of a boat in Venice," Fraser said. "It gave me an appreciation for those with bodies similar."

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... I learned that you need to be an incredibly strong person, physically, mentally, to inhabit that body."

Beyond his physicality, Charlie is also a character with profound empathy and love for everyone around him, including his estranged daughter, Ellie, played by "Stranger Things" star Sadie Sink.

"She's got a lot of things to say so she comes in hot. But I think what she's not expecting is someone who cares so much about her," Sink said. "For someone like Charlie to see that there's good in someone like Ellie, it's throwing her for a loop."

Hunter, who also wrote the screenplay, said his play is personal. He started it 12 years ago when he was teaching a mandatory expository writing course at Rutgers University that no one wanted to take and everyone resented. He also pulled from his own background, setting the play in his hometown of Moscow, Idaho, and weaving in his history of being depressed, self-medicating with food and going to a fundamentalist religious high school as a gay teenager.

"I was afraid to write it," he said. "I thought the only way I can do it is if I write it from a profoundly place of love and empathy. ... I wanted (Charlie) to be a lighthouse in the middle of a dark, dark sea."

"The Whale" was Aronofsky's favorite kind of challenge — in that it had so many limitations. He learned long ago on 1998's "Pi" that boundaries are "your gateway to freedom." On that film, he only had \$20,000 and a dream. In "Mother!" he was limited to a house. And, in "The Whale," it's not just a single apartment, it's also a character who doesn't move much.

He and cinematographer Matthew Libatique, whose friendship stretches back to their days at the American Film Institute in 1990, spent quite a bit of time talking about "how to turn theater into cinema" and "how to make that engaging and exciting." In the rough cut, Aronofsky said he was relieved to find that it didn't feel claustrophobic.

Fraser added that the film is "a piece of cinema. Proper cinema."

Venice is a regular stop for Aronofsky, who in 2008 won the Golden Lion for "The Wrestler" and also debuted "Black Swan" and "The Fountain" on the Lido. He said the festival is like home.

Aronofsky and his actors could be poised to leave with trophies in hand this year, too. "The Whale" is part of the official competition of the festival, which will be decided on by a Julianne Moore-led jury on Sept. 10. And A24 plans to release it in theaters on Dec. 9. But he's mostly just glad to be back with his first film since 2017's "Mother!"

"The last few years, so many of us have lost so much. ... Cinema is about human connection. It's about the chance to slide into someone else's shoes and have two hours of empathy in someone else's mind. I think that's exactly what the world needs. I'm just so happy to be back," Aronofsky said. "It's a big moment for me and, I think, for cinema."

Sheriff: 2 dead in Northern California wildfire

By ADAM BEAM and KATHLEEN RONAYNE Associated Press

WEED, Calif. (AP) — Two people have died in a blaze that ripped through a Northern California town, said Siskiyou County Sheriff Jeremiah LaRue.

LaRue shared the news of the fatalities Sunday afternoon during a community meeting held at an elementary school north of Weed, the rural Northern California community charred by one of California's latest wildfires. He did not immediately provide names or other details including age or gender of the two people who died.

"There's no easy way of putting it," he said before calling for a moment of silence.

Both LaRue and other officials acknowledged uncertainties facing the community, such as when people would be allowed back into their homes and power would be restored. About 1,000 people were still under evacuation orders Sunday as firefighters worked to contain the blaze that had sparked out of control Friday at the start of the holiday weekend.

The blaze, known as the Mill Fire, hadn't expanded since Saturday morning, covering about 6.6 square miles (17 square kilometers) with 25% containment, according to Cal Fire. But the nearby Mountain Fire grew in size on Sunday, officials said. It also started Friday, though in a less populated area. More than

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300 people were under evacuation orders.

Power outages, smoky skies and uncertainty about what the day would bring left a feeling of emptiness around the town of Weed the morning after evacuation orders were lifted for thousands of other residents.

"It's eerily quiet," said Susan Tavalero, a city councilor who was driving to a meeting with fire officials.

She was joined by Mayor Kim Greene, and the two hoped to get more details on how many homes had been lost. A total of 132 structures were destroyed or damaged, fire officials said Sunday, though it wasn't clear whether they were homes, businesses, or other buildings.

Three people were injured, according to Cal Fire, but no other details were available. Two people were brought to Mercy Medical Center Mount Shasta, Cal Fire Siskiyou Unit Chief Phil Anzo said Saturday. One was in stable condition and the other was transferred to UC Davis Medical Center, which has a burn unit. It's unclear if these injuries were related to the deaths reported Sunday.

Weed, home to fewer than 3,000 people about 280 miles (451 kilometers) northeast of San Francisco, has long been seen by passersby as a whimsical spot to stop along Interstate 5. But the town, nestled in the shadow of Mt. Shasta, is no stranger to wildfires.

Phil Anzo, Cal Fire's Siskiyou Unit Chief, acknowledged the toll fires have taken on the rural region in recent years.

"Unfortunately, we've seen lots of fires in this community, we've seen lots of fires in this county, and we've suffered lots of devastation," Anzo said.

Dominique Mathes, 37, said he's had some close calls with wildfires since he has lived in Weed. Though fire dangers are becoming more frequent, he's not interested in leaving.

"It's a beautiful place," he said. "Everybody has risks everywhere, like Florida's got hurricanes and floods, Louisiana has got tornadoes and all that stuff. So, it happens everywhere. Unfortunately here, it's fires."

The winds make Weed and the surrounding area a perilous place for wildfires, whipping small flames into a frenzy. Weed has seen three major fires since 2014, a period of extreme drought that has prompted the largest and most destructive fires in California history.

That drought persists as California heads into what traditionally is the worst of the fire season. Scientists say climate change has made the West warmer and drier over the last three decades and will continue to make weather more extreme and wildfires more frequent and destructive.

Crews battled flames while much of the state baked in a Labor Day weekend heat wave, with temperatures expected to top 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) in Los Angeles, exceptionally warm weather for Southern California. Temperatures were expected to be even hotter through the Central Valley up to the capital of Sacramento.

The California Independent System Operator issued its fifth "flex alert," a plea for people to use their air conditioners and other appliances sparingly from 4 to 9 p.m. to protect the power grid.

Sterling Lord, uniquely enduring literary agent, dies at 102

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Sterling Lord, the uniquely enduring literary agent who worked for years to find a publisher for Jack Kerouac's "On the Road" and over the following decades arranged deals for everyone from true crime writer Joe McGinniss to the creators of the Berenstain Bears, has died. He had just turned 102.

Lord died Saturday in a nursing home in Ocala, Florida, according to his daughter, Rebecca Lord.

"He had a good death and died peacefully of old age," she told The Associated Press.

Sterling Lord, who started his own agency in 1952 and later merged with rival Literistic to form Sterling Lord Literistic Inc., was a failed magazine publisher who became, almost surely, the longest-serving agent in the book business. He stayed with the company he founded until he was nearly 100 — and then decided to launch a new one.

He was well-spoken and athletic, a most able negotiator who dressed in tweed and avoided most vices. But he was alert to new trends and an early ambassador for a revolutionary cultural movement: the Beats. With rare persistence, he endured the initial unwillingness of publishers to take on Kerouac's unorthodox

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narrative and was later the longtime agent for poet and playwright Amiri Baraka, novelist Ken Kesey and poet and City Lights bookstore owner Lawrence Ferlinghetti.

His full roster of clients produced works about sports, politics, murder and the travails of illustrated animals.

Thanks to his friendship with Theodore Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, Lord helped launch Stan and Jan Berenstain's multimillion-selling books about an anthropomorphic bear family. He negotiated terms between McGinniss and accused killer Jeffrey MacDonald, later convicted, for the true crime classic "Fatal Vision." He found a publisher for Nicholas Pileggi's mob story "Wiseguy" and helped arrange the deal for its celebrated film adaptation, "Goodfellas."

In the early 1960s, Viking had asked Lord to get a blurb from Kerouac for "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," Kesey's first and most famous novel. Kerouac declined, but Lord was so impressed by the book that he ended up representing Kesey for his next work, "Sometimes a Great Notion."

He represented former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara and Judge John Sirica of Watergate fame and worked often with Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis during her time as an editor with Doubleday and Viking. Some of the great sports books of the 20th century, from "North Dallas Forty" to "Secretariat," were written by his clients.

"A number of things about this business have really caught me and made it a compelling interest," Lord told the AP in 2013. "First, I'm interested in good writing. Second, I am interested in new and good ideas. And third, I've been able to meet some extraordinarily interesting people."

Lord would also speak proudly of a project he declined: Lyndon Johnson's memoir. Representatives for the former president informed Lord in the late 1960s that Johnson wanted \$1 million for the book and that Lord should accept less than his usual commission for the honor of working with him. Lord turned them down, much to their surprise and anger.

Johnson's "The Vantage Point," ultimately published in 1971, was dismissed by critics as bland and uninformative. Lord instead found a deal for "Quotations from Chairman LBJ," a bestselling parody.

Lord was married four times, and had one child, Rebecca.

Books and tennis were lifelong passions for Lord, born in Burlington, Iowa, in 1920. It began when his mother would read to him after dinner; he went on to edit his high school newspaper and work as a sports stringer around the same time for the Des Moines Register. He also became a tennis star at Grinnell College, and later a good enough player to compete against Don Budge, among others.

His upbringing, he would later write, was the kind of "pleasant, orderly" world "the Beats were trampling on in the fifties and sixties."

After serving in the Army Air Force during World War II, Lord co-owned the Germany-based magazine Weekend, which soon folded. Back in the U.S., he served as an editor at True and Cosmopolitan, from which he was fired, before founding the Sterling Lord Literary Agency. Lord had met many agents during his magazine years and believed they failed to understand that the American public was becoming more urban and sophisticated. He also prided himself on his sympathy for writers who lived far more wildly than he did.

His first marriage, he would acknowledge, helped inspire him to go into business for himself.

"Frankly, I didn't want to deal with the situation at home," he told the Des Moines Register in 2015.

Lord had quick success by selling film rights to two popular sports books, Rocky Graziano's "Somebody Up There Likes Me" and Jimmy Piersall's "Fear Strikes Out." But Lord's "On the Road" quest would prove bumpier.

In his 2013 memoir "Lord of Publishing," Lord remembered first meeting Kerouac in 1952. Kerouac already had completed a conventional novel, "The Town and the City," but had no agent and surely needed one for his next book: "On the Road" was typed, as Lord was among the first to know, "on a 120-foot scroll of architectural tracing paper."

Lord believed that Kerouac had "a fresh, distinctive voice that should be heard." But the industry was not in the mood. Even younger editors who may have related to Kerouac's jazzy celebration of youth and personal freedom turned him down. One editor wrote to Lord that "Kerouac does have enormous talent

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of a very special kind. But this is not a well-made novel, nor a saleable one nor even, I think, a good one.”

By 1955, Kerouac was ready to give up — but Lord was not. The agent eventually sold excerpts to The Paris Review and the periodical New World Writing. An editor from Viking Press contacted Lord, offering an advance of \$900. Lord held out for \$1,000. In 1957, the book was released, The New York Times raved and “On the Road” soon entered the American canon.

But Kerouac was a shy and fragile man, Lord wrote. Fame magnified a drinking problem that killed him by 1969. Lord even recruited a doctor who unsuccessfully attempted to get Kerouac to clean up, but the businessman eventually backed away since he was his “literary agent, not his life agent.”

Lord attended Kerouac’s funeral, sharing a limousine ride with his client Jimmy Breslin and standing by the grave alongside Allen Ginsberg, “the sunlight filtering through the trees, the leaves brown after losing their fall colors.”

Lord oversaw Kerouac’s numerous posthumous releases even as he battled the author’s family for control of the estate. After years of failed attempts, a filmed version of “On the Road” was released in 2012. But Lord had little involvement in the project, directed by Walter Salles and starring Sam Riley and Kristen Stewart. He didn’t bother to attend a special screening, citing mixed early reviews, and didn’t show up for a private party for the film.

“I decided to go home,” he told the AP in 2013.

Energy problems in Ukraine and Europe take center stage

KARL RITTER undefined

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Energy problems plagued Ukraine and Europe as much of the Russian-occupied region that’s home to a largely crippled nuclear power plant was reported temporarily in blackout Sunday.

Only one of six reactors at the Zaporizhzhia facility was connected to the electricity grid, and Russia’s main pipeline carrying natural gas to Germany remained shut down.

The fighting in Ukraine and related disputes over pipelines lie behind the electricity and natural gas short-falls that have worsened as Russia’s war in Ukraine, which began on Feb. 24, grinds on for a seventh month.

Both issues will take center stage this week. U.N. nuclear agency inspectors are scheduled to brief the Security Council on Tuesday about their inspection and safeguard visit to the Zaporizhzhia power plant. European Union energy ministers were slated to hold an emergency meeting Friday in Brussels to discuss the bloc’s electricity market, which European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has said “is no longer operating.”

Much of the Zaporizhzhia region, including the key city of Melitopol, lost power Sunday.

But electricity was gradually being restored, said Vladimir Rogov, the head of the Russia-installed local administration in Enerhodar, the city where the nuclear power plant is located. To the southwest, power was also out in several parts of the port city of Kherson, according to Russia’s Tass news agency. Rogov blamed the outages in both locations on damage to high-voltage power lines.

While Rogov said no new shelling of the area around the six-reactor Zaporizhzhia plant was reported Sunday, the effects of earlier strikes lingered.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said Saturday that the plant was disconnected from its last main external power line and one reactor was disconnected because of grid restrictions. Another reactor was still operating and producing electricity for cooling and other essential safety functions at the site, as well as externally for households, factories and others through a reserve power line, the IAEA said.

Russian forces have held the Zaporizhzhia facility, Europe’s largest nuclear plant, since early March, with its Ukrainian staff continuing to operate it.

IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi said he will brief the U.N. Security Council on Tuesday on a mission he led to the plant last week. The 14-member delegation braved gunfire and artillery blasts to reach the plant last Thursday after months of negotiations to enable passage through the fighting’s front lines.

Without blaming either warring side, Grossi said his big concerns are the plant’s physical integrity, its power supply and the staff’s condition.

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Europe's energy picture remained clouded by the war in Ukraine.

Just hours before Russian energy company Gazprom was due to resume natural gas deliveries to Germany through a major pipeline after a three-day stoppage, it announced Friday that it couldn't do so until oil leaks in turbines are fixed.

That is the latest development in a saga in which Gazprom has advanced technical problems as the reason for reducing gas flows through Nord Stream 1 — explanations that German officials have rejected as a cover for a political power play. Dismissing Gazprom's latest rationale for the shutdown, Germany's Siemens Energy — which manufactured turbines the pipeline uses — said turbine leaks can be fixed while gas continues to flow through the pipeline.

Von der Leyen blamed Russian President Vladimir Putin's war against Ukraine for Europe's energy crisis. Before the EU energy ministers' meeting this coming Friday, she said electricity and natural gas prices should be decoupled and that she supports a price cap on Russian pipeline gas exported to Europe.

Natural gas is one of the main fuels used in electricity generation, and is a major source of Russia's income, along with oil exports.

On Ukraine's battlefield, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address Sunday, without providing specifics, that his country's forces had retaken control of two settlements in Ukraine's south and one in the separatist eastern Donetsk region.

Russian shelling hit the southern Ukraine port city of Mykolaiv during the night, damaging a medical treatment facility, the city's mayor said Sunday.

Mykolaiv and its surrounding region have been hit daily for weeks. On Saturday, a child was killed and five people were wounded in rocket attacks in the region, Gov. Vitaliy Kim said.

Mykolaiv Mayor Oleksandr Senkevych didn't report injuries in the overnight attack, which he said also damaged residences. Mykolaiv, which is 30 kilometers (20 miles) upstream from the Black Sea on the Southern Bug River, is a significant port and shipbuilding center.

In Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, Russian shelling late Saturday set a large wooden restaurant complex on fire, according to the region's emergency service. One person was killed and two others were wounded in shelling in the region, Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said.

Pavlo Kyrylenko, governor of the eastern Donetsk region where Russian forces have been trying to take full control, said four people were killed in shelling on Saturday.

Pakistan's hope as lake fills: Flood villages to save a city

By ZARAR KHAN Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistani engineers cut into an embankment for one of the country's largest lakes on Sunday to release rising waters in the hopes of saving a nearby city and town from flooding as officials predicted more monsoon rain was on the way for the country's already devastated south.

While officials hope the cut in the sides of Lake Manchar will protect about half a million people who live in the city of Sehwan and the town of Bhan Saeedabad, villages that are home to 150,000 people are in the path of the diverted waters. The hometown of Sindh province's chief minister was among the affected villages, whose residents were warned to evacuate ahead of time, according to the provincial information minister.

More than 1,300 people have died and millions have lost their homes in flooding caused by unusually heavy monsoon rains in Pakistan this year that many experts have blamed on climate change. In response to the unfolding disaster, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres last week called on the world to stop "sleepwalking" through the crisis. He plans to visit flood-hit areas on Sept. 9.

Several countries have flown in supplies, but the Pakistani government has pleaded for even more help, faced with the enormous task of feeding and housing those affected, as well as protecting them from waterborne diseases.

While floods have touched much of the country, Sindh province has been the most affected.

With meteorologists predicting more rain in the coming days, including around Sindh's Lake Manchar,

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and its level already rising, authorities ordered that water be released from it. Sindh's chief minister, Murad Ali Shah, made the call even though his own village could be flooded, said Sharjil Inam Memon, the provincial information minister. The government helped residents of the villages in the waters' path to evacuate ahead of time, said Memon.

The hope was that the water, once released, would flow into the nearby Indus River, but the lake's level continued to rise even after the cut was made, according to Fariduddin Mustafa, administrator for Jamshoro district, where the affected villages are located. Authorities have also warned residents of neighboring Dadu district that they might be at risk of more flooding in coming days.

While the release valve was created in one area, army engineers worked elsewhere to reinforce the banks of Lake Manchar, which is the largest natural freshwater lake in Pakistan and one of the largest in Asia.

In its latest report, Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority put the death toll since mid-June — when monsoon rains started weeks earlier than is typical — at 1,314, as more fatalities were reported from flood-affected areas of Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan provinces. The report said 458 children were among the dead.

Rescue operations continued Sunday with troops and volunteers using helicopters and boats to get people stranded out of flooded areas to relief camps, the authority said. Tens of thousands of people are already living in such camps, and thousands more have taken shelter on roadsides on higher ground.

Hira Ikram, a physician at a camp established by Britain's Islamic Mission in Sukkur charity, said many people had scabies, gastrointestinal infections and fevers.

Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, who is visiting flood-affected areas and relief camps daily, called for more international help Sunday.

"With over 400 (children) dead they make up one third of overall death toll. Now they are at even greater risk of water borne diseases, UNICEF and other global agencies should help," he tweeted.

UNICEF, in fact, delivered tons of medicine, medical supplies, water purifying tablets and nutritional supplements to Pakistan on Sunday.

Alkidmat Foundation, a welfare organization, said its volunteers used boats to deliver ready-to-eat meals and other help for residents as well as animal feed on a small island in the Indus. The group also distributed food and items needed by those living by the roadside.

In the country's northwest, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the provincial disaster management authority warned of more rains, possible flash floods and landslides in the coming week in Malakand and Hazara districts. Taimur Khan, spokesman for the authority, urged residents Sunday not to go to any of the areas already flooded in recent weeks.

According to initial government estimates, the devastation has caused \$10 billion in damage, but Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said Saturday "the scale of devastation is massive and requires an immense humanitarian response for 33 million people."

Mississippi capital's Black business owners decry water woes

By MICHAEL GOLDBERG Associated Press/Report for America

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — When John Tierre launched his restaurant in Jackson's neglected Farish Street Historic District, he was drawn by the neighborhood's past as an economically independent cultural hub for Black Mississippians, and the prospect of helping usher in an era of renewed prosperity.

This week he sat on the empty, sun-drenched patio of Johnny T's Bistro and Blues and lamented all the business he has lost as tainted water flows through his pipes — just like other users in the majority Black city of 150,000, if they were lucky enough to have any pressure at all. The revival he and others envisioned seems very much in doubt.

"The numbers are very low for lunch," Tierre told The Associated Press. "They're probably taking their business to the outskirts where they don't have water woes."

Torrential rains and flooding of the Pearl River in late August exacerbated problems at one of Jackson's two treatment plants, leading to a drop in pressure throughout the city, where residents were already

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under a boil-water order due to poor quality.

Officials said Sunday that most of Jackson should have running water, though residents are still advised not to drink straight from the tap. The city remains under a boil water notice. Officials also said future repairs leave potential for fluctuations in water pressure.

The water crisis has compounded the financial strain caused by an ongoing labor shortage and high inflation. And the flow of consumer dollars from Jackson and its crumbling infrastructure to the city's outskirts hits Black-owned businesses hardest, the owners say.

Another Black entrepreneur who has taken a hit is Bobbie Fairley, 59, who has lived in Jackson her entire life and owns Magic Hands Hair Design on the city's south side.

She canceled five appointments Wednesday because she needs high water pressure to rinse her clients' hair of treatment chemicals. She also has had to purchase water to shampoo hair to try fit and in whatever appointments she can. When customers aren't coming in, she's losing money.

"That's a big burden," she said. "I can't afford that. I can't afford that at all."

Jackson can't afford to fix its water problems. The tax base has eroded over the past few decades as the population decreased, the result of primarily white flight to suburbs that began about a decade after public schools integrated in 1970. Today the city is more than 80% black, and 25% of its residents live in poverty.

Some say the uncertainty facing Black businesses fits into a pattern of adversity stemming from both natural disasters and policy decisions.

"It's punishment for Jackson because it was open to the idea that people should be able to attend public schools and that people should have access to public areas without abuse," said Maati Jone Primm, who owns Marshall's Music and Bookstore up the block from Johnny T's. "As a result of that, we have people who ran away to the suburbs."

Primm thinks Jackson's longstanding water woes — which some trace to the 1970s when federal spending on water utilities peaked, according to a 2018 Congressional Budget Office report — have been made worse by inaction from Mississippi's mostly white, conservative-dominated Legislature.

"For decades this has been a malignant attack, not benign. And it's been purposeful," Primm said.

Political leaders have not always been on the same page. Jackson's Democratic mayor, Chokwe Antar Lumumba, has blamed the water problems on decades of deferred maintenance, while Republican Gov. Tate Reeves has said they stem from mismanagement at the city level.

Last Monday the governor held a news conference about the crisis, and the mayor was not invited. Another was held later in the week where they both appeared, but Primm said it's clear that the two are not in concert.

"The lack of cooperation speaks to the continued punishment that Jackson must endure," she said.

Under normal circumstances, Labor Day weekend is a bustling time at Johnny T's. The college football season brings out devoted Jackson State fans who watch away games on the bistro's TVs or mosey over from the stadium after home games. But this weekend many regulars were busy stocking up on bottled water to drink or boiling tap water to cook.

Even as revenue plummeted, Tierre's expenses increased. He has been spending \$300 to \$500 per day on ice and bottled water, not to mention canned soft drinks, tonic water and everything else that would typically be served out of a soda gun. He brings staff in a few hours earlier than usual so they can get a head start on boiling water to wash dishes and stacking the extra soda cans.

In total, Tierre estimated, he's forking over an added \$3,500 per week. Customers pay the price.

"You have to pass some of this off to the consumer," Tierre said. "Now your Coke is \$3, and there are no refills."

At a water distribution site in south Jackson this week, area resident Lisa Jones brought empty paint buckets to fill up so her family could bathe. In a city with crumbling infrastructure, Jones said she felt trapped.

"Everybody can't move right now. Everyone can't go to Madison, Flowood, Canton and all these other places," she said, naming three more affluent suburbs. "If we could, trust me, it would be a dark sight: Houses would be boarded up street by street, neighborhood by neighborhood."

Israel: Attack on bus in West Bank wounds 5 troops, civilian

JERUSALEM (AP) — Palestinian gunmen opened fire on a bus carrying a group of Israeli soldiers in the occupied West Bank on Sunday, wounding five soldiers, one of them seriously, as well as the civilian bus driver, the Israeli military said.

The Israeli military said three attackers traveling in a pickup bus carried out the attack. It said they passed the bus, threw explosives at it and then blocked it before opening fire with automatic weapons. Soldiers on board then returned fire, the military said.

The pickup truck fled but then burst into flames. Lt. Col. Richard Hecht, a military spokesman, said two of the attackers were captured and taken to an Israeli hospital with serious burns. The third attacker remains on the run. The cause of the fire was unclear, though Hecht said it might have been a result of the flammable materials the attackers were carrying.

Hecht said the incident was "quite irregular," both in its brazenness and because it took place in the Jordan Valley, a normally quiet part of the West Bank.

He said that although the bus was carrying new recruits, it was a civilian vehicle and it was not clear whether the attackers were aware there were soldiers onboard.

Two of the attackers were from the West Bank town of Jenin — where Israeli troops have been carrying out nightly arrest raids in recent months — while the third appeared to be a Palestinian citizen of Israel, Hecht said.

The attack took place on Route 90, the main north-south highway running through the West Bank's Jordan Valley. The road is dotted with Israeli settlements and Palestinian villages and towns.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war and has built dozens of settlements in the territory. Most of the international community considers the settlements illegal and an obstacle to peace with the Palestinians, who seek the territory as the heartland of a future state.

On Colombia's San Andres, a historic church's roots run deep

By LUIS ANDRES HENAO Associated Press

SAN ANDRES, Colombia (AP) — First Baptist Church was born by a tamarind tree perched on a hill overlooking the turquoise waters of the Caribbean.

Under the tree's shade, First Baptist's founder taught English-speaking former slaves and their descendants how to read using the Bible. The tree still stands more than 175 years later — even if crooked after surviving devastating hurricanes.

The church is so crucial to the history of the Colombian island of San Andres that detailed record of births and deaths are kept here in crumbling books that date back nearly two centuries.

The "mother church," as it is often called, is a source of pride for the Raizals, the English-speaking, mostly Protestant inhabitants of San Andres, Providencia and the smaller islands and keys that form an archipelago in the western Caribbean near Nicaragua, about 440 miles (710 kilometers) from the Colombian mainland.

"For a young person like me, it's finding my roots — it's good to know where we come from," said the Rev. Shuanon Hudgson, 26, the church's associate pastor.

"It's like Marcus Garvey says," quoting the Jamaica-born, early 20th-century Black nationalist: "A people without knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.' And this church has been a pillar."

Under the tree, a stone plaque commemorates the birth of the congregation: "Baptist work was established here by Rev. Phillip Beekman Livingston (Jr.) in 1844."

Three years later the congregation began to meet nearby under a thatched hut.

It kept growing, and a building made in the style of the large Anglican churches of Jamaica was ordered. First built in the late 19th century in Mobile, Alabama, and then moved to New York City, the white-walled church was disassembled and shipped to the island piece by piece.

Parishioners carried the foundations on their backs from the port to one of the highest points on the island, a neighborhood known as the Hill, said Lastenia Herrera May, the wife of the current lead pastor,

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the Rev. Ronald Hooker, and the church was dedicated on Feb. 2, 1896.

A scenic overlook more than 100 feet up in the steeple offers some of the best views of San Andres.

Over a century after being claimed by Spain, the island was first settled in the 1630s by English Puritans. It later became an outpost for pirates and today is home to many descendants of Puritans and African slaves, and also large numbers of more recent arrivals from mainland Colombia.

Sharika Crawford, a professor of history at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, whose research focuses on Colombia and its African-descended peoples, said First Baptist "was the bedrock of the Raizal community" and "the most important social institution" in the archipelago.

From its founding until 1913, she said, its pastors held great authority over the community in shaping islanders' values and behavior.

"Before the church was formed, the island population lived without a church or religious establishment. Efforts to bring a Catholic priest never materialized," Crawford said. "Thus, First Baptist Church and its satellite churches across San Andres and Providencia Islands had the advantage over other Christian communities such as the Catholics and Seventh-day Adventists."

"The church had glorious moments," Herrera May said. "By the 1900s, thousands had converted."

Livingston, the founder, first evangelized among enslaved and freed people of San Andres, Crawford said, and the church remains a symbol of the anti-slavery struggle. Each year people from congregations across the islands gather here Aug. 1 to celebrate events commemorating emancipation.

During a recent Sunday service, Lucia Barker, 83, and other women in the choir, clothed in bright pink shirts, sang hymns. Parishioners in wooden pews, illuminated by sunlight from stained-glass windows, swayed, lifted their arms and sang along to songs infused with Calypso beats.

"This church is my life," Barker said of the sanctuary where she was baptized, married and has worshipped for more than seven decades.

In his homily, Hudgson, the associate pastor, asked congregants to remember the sacrifice of their enslaved ancestors. He called on them to be resilient against adversity, just as the tree and the church, and listed by name and year the many hurricanes that both survived.

"Here we get the knowledge about our land, our history, how we started by this tamarind tree, how we have a church," choir member Marjeen Martínez said. "It's very important to maintain our roots alive."

Americans splurge on beauty, despite pullbacks elsewhere

By HALELUYA HADERO and ANNE D'INNOCENZIO AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Like many Americans, Karla Maldonado has been cutting back her spending to spare her wallet from rising costs: She is eating out less and attending fewer social events to curb the impact of high gas prices.

But the 26-year-old social worker of Portland, Oregon, hasn't skimped on her eye makeup — the mascara, eyeliner and eyeshadow she typically wears to work just above her face mask.

"That's something I can't go without," Maldonado said. And she doesn't seem to be alone.

Many major retailers slashed their financial outlooks for the year after seeing shoppers pull back on many discretionary items in the latest quarter. But among the notable exceptions: beauty.

Target, Kohl's, Macy's and Nordstrom all highlighted strong sales of beauty items in their fiscal second-quarter earnings reports issued over the past few weeks. Walmart, the nation's largest retailer, said that it's seeing increased momentum in its beauty business, citing strong sales in cosmetics as well as skin and hair businesses. Meanwhile, Ulta Beauty, the largest beauty retailer in the country, said overall sales spiked nearly 17% in its most recent quarter, compared to the same period last year.

Americans, once stuck behind Zoom screens in the thick of the pandemic, are out and about and wanting to look their best. Co-workers — some of whom are meeting each other for the first time — are trying to make an impression. Meanwhile, people are going out on dates and getting together for summer parties and barbecues after months of pandemic-induced leisurewear and Netflix binges at home.

But another possible explanation for why beauty is thriving when consumers are more apprehensive

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about their spending is a long-held theory known as the “lipstick index,” which posits that lipstick sales rise during times of economic downturn.

The reasoning goes: When consumer sentiment declines, Americans seek escapism by looking for small ways to indulge themselves, such as by purchasing a new lipstick instead of pricier alternatives they can no longer afford. For others, their version of lipstick might be cheap beer or a \$5 Caramel Macchiato from Starbucks, which reported record revenue in August for its fiscal third quarter.

The lipstick theory has held, though not always. Makeup sales spiked during the Great Depression and the recession in the early 2000s. But sales declined during the 2008 economic collapse, according to market research firm NPD Group. The same happened during the early days of the pandemic as Americans stayed home — or behind masks -- and shifted their interests towards wellness and skincare as stimulus payments flooded bank accounts, helping balloon the savings of consumers who were already spending less on traveling or eating out due to pandemic lockdowns.

Now, makeup is roaring back. Americans have bought more eye, face and lip makeup — roughly 2%, 5% and 12% respectively — in a year-over-year analysis of sales across stores, according to the market research firm IRI.

At Macy’s, CEO Jeff Gennette noted in an earnings call late last month that consumers have focused on deals and cut back on purchases amid high inflation. Still, they managed to buy beauty products as well as travel-related items like luggage, shoes and clothes to wear to the office, Gennette said.

Meanwhile, Kohl’s reported that shoppers were making fewer trips, spending less per transaction and shifting toward value-oriented store brands. But at its Sephora beauty shops, launched last year as part of a partnership with the beauty chain, shoppers are spending freely on skincare, makeup and fragrance.

“Customers are not willing to give up their beauty purchases,” Kohl’s CEO Michelle Gass recently told The Associated Press. “People need to feel good at this time with so much pressure on them.”

The Sephora sales reflect broader findings released in July by NPD Group, which showed among 14 discretionary industries tracked by the group this year, beauty was the only category that saw a rise in sales. However, the persistence of beauty at more prestige markets — such as Macy’s, Sephora and Nordstrom — is primarily being driven by high-income earners, or those with an annual salary of \$100,000 or more, according to Larissa Jensen, NPD’s beauty industry adviser.

“While we’re all feeling these inflationary pressures, it has less of an impact on a consumer earning six figures than it does on a lower income consumer,” Jensen said.

Elsewhere, however, strong sales show Americans of all income levels participating in the uptick. At Target, beauty enjoyed sales increases in the low single digits while home goods, clothing and electronics all suffered declines. As a result, for the winter holidays, Target said it will be more cautious with its orders for discretionary merchandise but will lean on beauty as well as necessities like groceries.

Its competitor Walmart launched higher-end beauty areas in March in collaboration with British retailer SpaceNK, and it says those sections have performed well. The retailer, which has been offering consumers select discounts, will hold a beauty event in September where customers can find deals at the store and online.

These wins, combined with low levels of price increases and supply chain issues, has made the beauty industry feel insulated from challenges in the wider economy, Jensen said.

“But there’s still so many things swirling around,” she warned. “And we need to be cognizant that things could change at any minute.”

Challenges mount against Peru’s president, his family

By REGINA GARCIA CANO Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — President Pedro Castillo’s surprise election brought hopes for change in Peru’s unstable and corrupt political system, but the impoverished rural teacher and political neophyte has found himself so engulfed in impeachment votes and corruption allegations that his presidency has become an exercise in political survival.

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Chances the leftist leader could accomplish a signature policy such as improving education or health care were slim to begin with, given his lack of support in Congress, and have evaporated as he focuses on staying in office and his family's freedom.

In just over one year as president, Castillo has survived two congressional votes to oust him, named more than 60 ministers to the 19 agencies that make up his cabinet and confronted six criminal investigations into accusations ranging from influence peddling to plagiarism, one that recently saw a close relative imprisoned. The probes are in their initial stages and no formal charges have been filed.

Castillo says he has not had a "single minute of truce" since taking office and blames it on Peru's political elite wanting him gone.

"I don't speak like them, I don't sit at those opulent tables like them," he told people gathered at a remote desert community. Later, he told a group of mothers outside a recently restored school that he comes from the lower class and that the accusations will not "break" him.

But Castillo's tribulations follow a pattern in Peru, which recently had three different presidents in a single week after one was impeached by Congress and protests forced his successor to resign. Almost all former Peruvian presidents who governed since 1985 have been ensnared in corruption allegations, some imprisoned or arrested in their mansions. One died by suicide before police could arrest him. Castillo defeated the daughter of one of those presidents, Alberto Fujimori, during last year's elections.

The preliminary investigations by prosecutors against Castillo are a first for a sitting president in Peru, as is the preventative detention of his sister-in-law stemming from money laundering allegations.

Peru's constitution does not specifically say whether a sitting president can be investigated for crimes, and in the last two decades, attorneys general had proposed initiating initial investigations of three acting presidents. One against then-president Martín Vizcarra was opened in October 2020, but the attorney general immediately froze it until the end of the presidential term.

Now, however, there is a new attorney general, Patricia Benavides, who has promised to go "after the investigation of any criminal act, whether it be by the most powerful or any ordinary citizen."

When he assumed power, Castillo not only faced a fragmented Congress and his own political inexperience, but a distrustful elite upset with controversial campaign promises that included nationalizing key industries.

Castillo was a rural schoolteacher in Peru's third poorest district before he moved into the presidential palace. His only leadership experience before becoming president was as the head of a teachers' strike in 2017.

That inexperience makes some doubt whether he is the "ringleader" of corruption scheme, as critics allege.

"That said, you can't look at Castillo's record and say, 'Hey, this guy is honest.' So, how do we put those together?" said Cynthia McClintock, a political science professor at George Washington University who has studied Peru extensively. "My sense of it is that part of him doesn't quite understand how careful he should be. Whether he just sort of thought this was the way you do business? It's unclear at this point."

Five of the probes against Castillo are linked to what prosecutors describe as a criminal network led by the president, involving influence peddling and other crimes. A sixth investigation accuses him and his wife of plagiarizing their master's degree theses a decade ago.

One case involves a contract won by a group of businessmen in 2021 to build a bridge. Authorities say an informant claims former Transportation Minister Juan Silva told him late last year that Castillo was "happy" when he received \$12,900 after the contract was awarded. Silva is considered a fugitive.

In another case, prosecutors allege that Castillo, his former personal secretary and a former minister of defense requested the promotion of several military or police officers because those moves would net them money. Authorities say they have statements from the ex-head of the Army, José Vizcarra, claiming he was pressured to promote military personnel close to the government.

Authorities also suspect Castillo of obstructing justice for removing an interior minister who had set up a team to capture Silva and one of the president's nephews, who is also linked to the bridge contract investigation.

"Ideally, the president would resign," Lady Camones, head of Peru's Congress, said last month. "He

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has been asked to do so... It would be the ideal scenario. But let's hope in any case that the evaluation is made by the president."

In a separate preliminary investigation, agents of the prosecutor's office last month entered the presidential palace in Lima to arrest Yenifer Paredes, Castillo's sister-in-law, whom he raised and considers a daughter. They searched under Castillo's bed and in the closets of the presidential bedroom, according to a search report obtained by The Associated Press.

Paredes turned herself in a day later. A judge then ruled she can be detained until February 2025 while authorities investigate her alleged involvement in money laundering.

"They don't mind breaking the family. They don't mind leaving our children orphaned, a situation has been designed with the purpose of breaking us," Castillo said.

Paredes' attorney, José Dionicio, said prosecutors have no evidence against his client.

Historian Charles Walker, director of the Hemispheric Institute on the Americas at the University of California, Davis, said Castillo's position is a reflection of the ingrained corruption surrounding government and an implacable opposition that feels it is losing power.

"It's a perfectly wretched storm," Walker said. "It does seem that, around him, there is a circle of people getting contracts, doing shoddy work — I mean classic, almost traditional corruption.

"But on the other hand, you have this right wing that feels like it's besieged Vietnam, that the ultra-left has taken over ... and there's this incredible paranoia. I think this almost needs psychological explanation because most of their benefits are still intact; the elite economy is doing quite well."

Emotions raw before Nice Bastille Day attack trial begins

By BARBARA SURK and NICOLAS VAUX-MONTAGNY Associated Press

NICE, France (AP) — It was Bastille Day on the French Riviera.

A lawyer was strolling with her mother, friends and a colleague along the beachfront boulevard in Nice to celebrate France's national day. Four young sisters from Poland had spent a day of sightseeing. Two Russian students were on a summer break. And a Texas family, on vacation with young children, was taking in some of Europe's classic sights. The bright lights of the packed boardwalk glittered along the bay like a string of stars.

Those lights would mark a pathway of murder and destruction that night of July 14, 2016. Shortly after the end of a fireworks display, a truck careered through the crowds for two kilometers (1¼ miles) like a snow plow, hitting person after person.

The final death toll was 86, including 15 children and adolescents, while 450 others were injured.

Eight people go on trial on Monday in a special French terrorism court accused of helping the attacker, Mohamed Lahouaiej Bouhlel, who left a gruesome trail of crushed and mangled bodies across 15 city blocks. Bouhlel himself was killed by police the same night.

"It was like on a battlefield," said Jean Claude Hubler, a survivor and an eyewitness to the horrific attack that holiday Thursday. He rushed to the boardwalk to help after hearing desperate screams of people, who had been cheering and laughing and dancing on the beach a minute before.

"There were people lying on the ground everywhere, some of them were still alive, screaming," Hubler said. As he waited for the ambulances to arrive, he kneeled down beside a man and a woman as they lay dying on the pavement, in a pool of blood and surrounded by crushed and mangled bodies.

"I was holding her hand on her last breath," Hubler said.

Three suspects have been charged with terrorist conspiracy for alleged links to the attacker. Five others face other criminal charges, including for allegedly providing arms to the assailant. If convicted, they face sentences ranging from five years to life in prison. The verdict is expected in December.

Investigators didn't find evidence that any of the suspects was directly involved in the murderous rampage on that hot summer night in 2016.

Bouhlel, a 31-year-old Tunisian with French residency, was the lone attacker, and is considered solely responsible for the deaths of 86 people, including 33 foreigners from Poland, the United States, Russia,

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Algeria, Tunisia, Switzerland and elsewhere.

Myriam Bellazouz, the lawyer, lived a few blocks from Nice's boardwalk. She was strolling along it with her mother on the night of the attack and was killed. It took friends and colleagues three days of frantic searching around the traumatized city and pleas on social media to find her remains.

Only two of four Chrzanowska sisters, on vacation from Poland, returned home alive.

When the 19-metric ton (21-short ton) truck sped through the crowd, one of the students from Moscow, Viktoria Savachenko, couldn't get out of the way in time and was killed. American Sean Copeland, from a town near Austin, Texas, also died in the attack along with his 11-year-old son, Brodie.

Christophe Lyon is the sole survivor of an extended French family that had gathered in Nice for the Bastille Day celebrations. His parents, Gisele and Germain Lyon, his wife, Veronique, her parents Francois and Christiane Locatelli and their grandson Mickael Pellegrini, all died in the attack. Lyon is listed among dozens of witnesses, survivors and victims' family members who will later this month testify in the Paris court to the horrific events of that night.

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the carnage. However, French prosecutors said that while Bouhlel had been inspired by the extremist group's propaganda, investigators found no evidence that IS orchestrated the attack.

Eight months before the Nice attack, on Nov. 13, 2015, a team of battle-hardened IS extremists, spread around Paris to mount coordinated attacks on the Bataclan concert hall, cafes and the national stadium, killing 130 people and injuring hundreds.

After nine months of trial, the lone survivor of the murderous group that had terrorized the French capital, Salah Abdeslam, was in June convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison without parole for the deadliest peacetime attack in France's history.

The trial of the eight suspects in the Nice attack will take place in the same Paris courtroom as the proceedings against Abdeslam. French law mandates that terrorism trials are held in the capital.

The proceedings will be broadcast live to the Acropolis Convention Center in Nice for those victims' family members and general public not traveling to Paris. Audio of the trial will also be available online, with a 30-minute delay.

Many survivors and those mourning loved ones brace themselves for reliving the traumatic events during the trial. For others, the proceedings — although far away from the city that is still reeling from the bloodshed and loss — are an opportunity to recount publicly their personal horrors inflicted that night and to listen to countless acts of bravery, humanity and compassion among strangers.

With the perpetrator dead, few expect to get justice.

Audrey Borla, who lost her twin sister, Laura, will travel to Paris to face the group of eight suspects. She wants to tell them how she's survived the past six years without the woman she calls her "other half," and how she plans to live a full life for many years even without her.

"You took my sister away from me, but you are not going to make me stop living," Borla said in an interview with broadcaster France 3.

"You are not going to make me give up on life."

New congressional maps dilute Black power, critics say

By SARA CLINE Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — When Press Robinson registered to vote in South Carolina in 1963, he was handed a copy of the U.S. Constitution and told to read it aloud and interpret it.

Robinson, then a college sophomore, wasn't surprised. He heard stories from others in the South's Black community who faced Jim Crow-era methods to suppress Black votes — from literacy tests to poll taxes to the infamous "jellybean test" that required prospective voters to guess how many of the small candies were in a jar.

As Robinson began reading, he thought about the woman behind him who was also registering to vote for the first time: his 43-year-old mother, who had never fulfilled her constitutional right, partly out of fear

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that she would encounter this exact situation.

In 1965, the Voting Rights Act outlawed the discriminatory voting practices of many states in the South, where Jim Crow laws also restricted how and where Black people could live, work, eat and study.

Yet, nearly 60 years later, Robinson and civil rights activists say those gains are being eroded. In Alabama, Florida and Louisiana, new congressional maps that some judges have ruled dilute the power of Black voters are being used in upcoming elections.

Civil rights leaders worry the maps could diminish minority representation on Capitol Hill. The issue is especially contentious this year, when Democrats — traditionally favored by minority voters — are fighting to hang on to slim majorities in Congress in midterms that tend to reward the party not in the White House.

"I'm hurt. I'm shocked. I'm disappointed," an 85-year-old Robinson said. "I'm also a little afraid, because I don't know where all this is heading."

Every 10 years, state lawmakers, armed with new U.S. Census Bureau information, redraw political maps for seats in the U.S. House, state Senate and state House. It is typically an extraordinarily partisan process, with each major party trying to scoop up enough of its voters to guarantee wins in the largest number of districts. The boundaries determine which political parties will make decisions that have a profound impact on people's lives, such as abortion, gun control and how billions of tax dollars are spent.

Under the Voting Rights Act, mapmakers are required to draw districts with a plurality or majority of African Americans or other minority groups if they live in a relatively compact area with a white population that votes starkly differently from them.

Republican legislators have often used this to their advantage by packing one district with Democratic-leaning African American voters, leaving the remaining seats whiter and more Republican.

Both Alabama's and Louisiana's Republican-dominated legislatures produced such maps after receiving the latest numbers from the 2020 U.S. census. In both cases, Democrats and civil rights groups sued, and courts ordered new maps drawn.

In Alabama, the U.S. Supreme Court put the lower court's ruling on hold, essentially saying there wasn't enough time to redraw maps ahead of the election and that it would take up arguments in the fall. The court also delayed a ruling that would have allowed the creation of a second majority-Black district in Louisiana, until it can hear arguments in the Alabama case. Any ruling is unlikely to come before 2023.

In Florida, the GOP-led legislature approved — and an appeals court upheld — a map created by Republican governor and potential 2024 presidential contender Ron DeSantis that would dismantle at least one district where Blacks have a strong say at the polls.

"What this ultimately means is that (Black voters) will not have as big of a voice as they should if the districts were drawn more fairly," said Robert Hogan, a professor and chair of Louisiana State University's political science department.

In Alabama, GOP lawmakers packed most Black voters into only one of seven congressional districts, even though Blacks make up 27% of the state's population.

In Louisiana, where nearly one-third of the state's population is Black, GOP lawmakers approved a map containing five majority-white districts, all of which favor Republican incumbents. The 2nd Congressional District, held by Democratic U.S. Rep. Troy Carter, is the sole Black-majority district. It stretches from the New Orleans area along the Mississippi River up to the capital city of Baton Rouge.

Democrats and Black activists want two Black-majority districts instead of just the one.

"We want our seat at the table," Louisiana state Rep. Denise Marcelle, a Democrat and Black caucus member, said during a recent legislative session. "It's real simple. ... Give us an opportunity to elect another Black seat so that we can fight for the issues that we believe our people want us to fight for."

But Republican leaders say placing the state's widely dispersed Black population in two districts would actually result in very narrow Black majorities that could diminish Black voter power.

There is also another reason why the GOP generally opposes — and Democrats support — additional majority-Black districts. For decades, Black voters have overwhelmingly voted Democratic. Adding Black-majority districts could boost the party's representation in the House.

"(Republicans) want to use the Voting Rights Act to the extent that it helps put all the African Americans

in one district and it creates very noncompetitive, heavily Republican districts around it," Hogan said. "But, when you take the Voting Rights Act out too far and try to create a second district ... you're taking away from the Republicans."

The way Robinson sees it, though, it's not about more Democratic seats and fewer Republican ones; it's about fundamental rights for which Blacks have fought too long and hard to let slip away.

"This is 2022. I thought that once we got past those initial hurdles in the '60s that things would really just move forward and that we would be treated as regular Americans," Robinson said. "But we are not."

Some states could tax Biden's student loan debt relief

By STEVE KARNOWSKI and COLLIN BINKLEY Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — President Joe Biden's student loan forgiveness plan could lift crushing debt burdens from millions of borrowers, but the tax man may demand a cut of the relief in some states.

That's because some states tax forgiven debt as income, which means borrowers who are still paying down student loans could owe taxes on as much as \$10,000 or even \$20,000 that was taken off their bill. In Mississippi, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Arkansas and North Carolina, forgiven student loans will be subject to state income taxes unless they change their laws to conform with a federal tax exemption for student loans, according to a tally by the Tax Foundation, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank.

That dismays Cathy Newman, a Louisiana State University graduate who just took a job teaching freshman biology at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. She figures she could end up owing a few hundred dollars of money that she could have kept had she stayed in Louisiana.

Newman said she can come up with the cash because she has a good job, but she knows of a lot of other borrowers who will still be stuck in difficult financial positions even with their loans forgiven.

"If they stay in the state, they could end up with a pretty hefty tax burden if things don't change," Newman said. "I won't be happy if I have to do it. I can do it. But a lot of people can't."

More than 40 million Americans could see their student loan debt cut or eliminated under the forgiveness plan Biden announced late last month. The president is erasing \$10,000 in federal student loan debt for individuals with incomes below \$125,000 a year, or households that earn less than \$250,000. He's canceling an additional \$10,000 for those who also used federal Pell Grants to pay for college. But it only applies to those whose loans were paid out before July 1, which leaves out current high school seniors and students who will follow them.

Although having \$10,000 or \$20,000 in loan payments eliminated will be a boon over the long term to borrowers who qualify, those in the affected states might be required to declare that as income. Depending on a state's tax rates, the taxpayer's other income and the deductions and exemptions they're able to claim, that could add up to several hundred extra tax dollars that they'll owe.

Spokespeople for tax agencies in several states — including Virginia, Idaho, New York, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Kentucky — told The Associated Press that their states definitely won't tax student loans forgiven under Biden's program. Revenue officials in a few other states said they needed to do more research to know.

Newman, 38, went into debt to pay for graduate school. She had already set herself up for relief under the federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, though that requires five more years of teaching on top of the five she already taught at the University of Louisiana Monroe. Biden's program would cut \$10,000 off her debt load when it takes effect, but under existing Mississippi tax law, the relief won't come free.

"It's not a huge burden for me, but it could be for a lot of other people, which is what I'm worried about, especially if it's unexpected, and I think a lot of people don't realize that," Newman said.

Any relief in states that would tax the forgiven debt would have to come from their Legislatures. Leaders of the Minnesota Legislature and Democratic Gov. Tim Walz have indicated in recent media interviews that there's broad support for a fix, which could come during the 2023 session, or even earlier on the remote chance of a special session.

In Wisconsin, Democratic Gov. Tony Evers' administration plans to propose a fix in the state budget next

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year, but that would have to be approved by the Republican-controlled Legislature. And Evers needs to get reelected in November before he can formally make that request. Republican legislative leaders and Evers' GOP challenger, Tim Michels, did not reply to messages seeking comment on the student loan tax issue.

However, in Mississippi, the chairman of the state Senate committee in charge of taxes said he's willing to take a look when the Legislature convenes next year. Republican state Sen. Josh Harkins, of Brandon, said he needs to learn more about what his state's tax laws say on debt forgiveness.

"I'm sure people will want to look at adjusting that or making some changes in the law, but a lot of factors have to be considered," Harkins said, noting that Mississippi enacted its biggest-ever tax cut earlier this year and adding that he wants to gauge the impact of inflation before making big tax policy decisions. "This all just hit in the last week."

America's secrets: Trump's unprecedented disregard of norms

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump isn't the first to face criticism for flouting rules and traditions around the safeguarding of sensitive government records, but national security experts say recent revelations point to an unprecedented disregard of post-presidency norms established after the Watergate era.

Document dramas have cropped up from time to time over the years.

Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson's national security adviser held onto explosive records for years before turning them over to the Johnson presidential library. The records showed that the campaign of his successor, Richard Nixon, was secretly communicating in the final days of the 1968 presidential race with the South Vietnamese government in an effort to delay the opening of peace talks to end the Vietnam War.

A secretary in Ronald Reagan's administration, Fawn Hall, testified that she altered and helped shred documents related to the Iran-Contra affair to protect Oliver North, her boss at the White House National Security Council.

Barack Obama's CIA director, David Petraeus, was forced to resign and pleaded guilty to a federal misdemeanor for sharing classified material with a biographer with whom he was having an affair. Hillary Clinton, while Obama's secretary of state, faced FBI scrutiny that extended into her 2016 presidential campaign against Trump for her handling of highly classified material in a private email account. The FBI director recommended no criminal charges but criticized Clinton for her "extremely careless" behavior.

As more details emerge from last month's FBI search of Trump's Florida home, the Justice Department has painted a portrait of an indifference for the rules on a scale that some thought inconceivable after establishment of the Presidential Records Act in 1978.

"I cannot think of a historical precedent in which there was even the suspicion that a president or even a high-ranking officer in the administration, with the exception of the Nixon administration, purposely and consciously or even accidentally removing such a sizable volume of papers," said Richard Immerman, who served as assistant deputy director of national intelligence from 2007 to 2009.

FBI agents who searched Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort on Aug. 8 found more than 100 documents with classification markings, including 18 marked top secret, 54 secret and 31 confidential, according to court filings. The FBI also identified 184 documents marked as classified in 15 boxes recovered by the National Archives in January, and it received additional classified documents during a June visit to Mar-a-Lago. An additional 10,000 other government records with no classification markings were also found.

That could violate the Presidential Records Act, which says that such records are government property and must be preserved.

That law was enacted after Nixon resigned from office in the midst of the Watergate scandal and sought to destroy hundreds of hours of secretly recorded White House tapes. It established government ownership of presidential records starting with Ronald Reagan.

The act specifies that immediately after a president leaves office, the National Archives and Records Administration takes legal and physical custody of the outgoing administration's records and begins to work with the incoming White House staff on appropriate records management.

According to the National Archives, records that have no "administrative, historical, informational, or

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evidentiary value" can be disposed of before obtaining the archivist's written permission.

Documents have been recovered from Trump's bedroom, closet, bathroom and storage areas at his Florida resort, which doubles as his home. In June, when Justice Department officials met a Trump lawyer to retrieve records in response to a subpoena, the lawyer handed them documents in a "Redweld envelope, double-wrapped in tape."

Trump has claimed he declassified all the documents in his possession and had been working in earnest with department officials on returning documents when they conducted the Mar-a-Lago search. During the 2016 campaign, Trump asserted that Clinton's use of her private email server for sensitive State Department material was disqualifying for her candidacy; chants from his supporters to "lock her up" became a mainstay at his political rallies.

James Trusty, a lawyer for Trump in the records matter, said on Fox News that Trump's possession of the sensitive government material was equivalent to hanging on to an "overdue library book."

But Trump's former attorney general, Bill Barr, said in a separate Fox News interview that he was "skeptical" of Trump's claim that he declassified everything. "People say this (raid) was unprecedented -- well, it's also unprecedented for a president to take all this classified information and put them in a country club, OK," Barr said.

Trump's attitude about White House records is not so surprising to some who worked for him.

One of Trump's national security advisers, John Bolton, said briefers quickly learned that Trump often tried to hang onto sensitive documents, and they took steps to make sure documents didn't go missing. Classified information was tweeted, shared with reporters and adversaries — even found in a White House complex bathroom.

That approach is out of step with how modern-day presidents have operated.

Obama, while writing his White House memoir after leaving office, had paper records he used in his research delivered to him in locked bags from a secure National Archives storage facility and returned them in similar fashion.

Dwight Eisenhower, who left office years before the Presidential Records Act was passed, kept official records secure at Fort Ritchie, Maryland, even though there was no requirement for him to do so.

Neil Eggleston, who served as White House counsel during the final years of the Obama administration, recalled that Fred Fielding, who held the same position in the George W. Bush administration, advised him as he started his new job to hammer home to staff the requirements set in the records act.

Similarly, Trump's White House counsel, Donald McGahn, sent a staff-wide memo in the first weeks of the administration underscoring "that presidential records are the property of the United States."

"It's not a hard concept that documents prepared during the course of our presidential administration are not your personal property or the president's personal properties," Eggleston said.

Presidents are not required to obtain security clearances to access intelligence or formally instructed on their responsibilities to safeguard secrets when they leave office, said Larry Pfeiffer, a former CIA officer and senior director of the White House Situation Room.

But guidelines issued by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, which oversees the intelligence agencies, require that any "sensitive compartmented information" — some of the highest-value intelligence the U.S. possesses — be viewed only in secure rooms known as "SCIFs."

The FBI, in a court filing, this past week included a photo of some of the records that agents discovered in the search of Trump's estate. The photo showed cover sheets on at least five sets of papers that are marked "TOP SECRET/SCI," a reference to sensitive compartmented information, as well as a cover sheet labeled "SECRET/SCI" and "Contains sensitive compartmented information." The FBI also found dozens of empty folders marked classified, with nothing inside and no explanation of what might have been there.

A president can keep reports presented during a briefing for later review. And presidents — or nominees for president during an election year — aren't always briefed in a SCIF, depending on their schedules and locations, Pfeiffer said.

"There's no intelligence community directive that says how presidents should or shouldn't be briefed on the materials," said Pfeiffer, now director of the Michael V. Hayden Center for Intelligence, Policy, and

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International Security. "We've never had to worry about it before."

People around the president with access to intelligence are trained on intelligence rules on handling classified information and required to follow them. But imposing restrictions on the president would be difficult for intelligence agencies, Pfeiffer said, because "by virtue of being the executive of the executive branch, he sets all the rules with regard to secrecy and classification."

President Joe Biden told reporters recently that he often reads his top secret Presidential Daily Briefing at his home in Delaware, where he frequently spends his weekends and holidays. But Biden said he takes precautions to make certain the document stays secure.

"I have in my home a cabined-off space that is completely secure," Biden said.

He added: "I read it. I lock it back up and give it to the military."

US election conspiracies find fertile ground in conferences

By MARGERY A. BECK and CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY Associated Press

Omaha, Neb. (AP) — On a quiet Saturday in an Omaha hotel, about 50 people gathered in a ballroom to learn about elections.

The subject wasn't voter registration drives or poll worker volunteer training. Instead, they paid \$25 each to listen to panelists lay out conspiracy theories about voting machines and rigged election results. In language that sometimes leaned into violent imagery, some panelists called on those attending to join what they framed as a battle between good and evil.

Among those in the audience was Melissa Sauder, who drove nearly 350 miles from the small western Nebraska town of Grant with her 13-year-old daughter. After years of combing internet sites, listening to podcasts and reading conservative media reports, Sauder wanted to learn more about what she believes are serious problems with the integrity of U.S. elections.

She can't shake the belief that voting machines are being manipulated even in her home county, where then-President Donald Trump won 85% of the vote in 2020.

"I just don't know the truth because it's not open and apparent, and it's not transparent to us," said Sauder, 38. "We are trusting people who are trusting the wrong people."

It's a sentiment now shared by millions of people in the United States after relentless attacks on the outcome of the 2020 presidential election by Trump and his allies. Nearly two years after that election, no evidence has emerged to suggest widespread fraud or manipulation while reviews in state after state have upheld the results showing President Joe Biden won.

Even so, the attacks and falsehoods have made an impact: An Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll from 2021 found that about two-thirds of Republicans say they do not think Biden was legitimately elected.

Events like the one held Aug. 27 in Nebraska's largest city are one reason why.

Billed as the Nebraska Election Integrity Forum, the conference featured some of the nation's most prominent figures pushing conspiracy theories that the last election was stolen from Trump through widespread fraud or manipulation of voting machines. It was just one of dozens of similar events that have been held around the country for the better part of a year.

Over eight hours with only a brief lunch break, attendees were deluged with election conspiracies, complete with charts and slide shows. Speakers talked about tampering of voting machines or the systems that store voter rolls, ballot-box stuffing and massive numbers of votes cast by dead people and non-U.S. citizens -- all theories that have been debunked.

There is no evidence of widespread fraud or tampering with election equipment that could have affected the outcome of the 2020 election, in which Biden won both the popular vote — by more than 7 million nationwide — and the Electoral College count. Numerous official reviews and audits in the six battleground states where Trump challenged his loss have upheld the validity of the results. Judges, including some appointed by Trump, dismissed numerous lawsuits making various claims of fraud and wrongdoing.

All that was ignored as speaker after speaker told attendees that machines are rigged and elections are stolen. One of the event's headliners was Patrick Byrne, the former CEO of Overstock.com, who said

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he has spent some \$20 million of his own money since 2020 trying to prove that voting machines were manipulated in that election and remain susceptible to tampering.

That any technology is vulnerable, including voting machines, is not in dispute. State and local election officials throughout the U.S. have been focused on improving their security defenses with help from the federal government.

But Byrne and some of the other speakers said they believe government has been corrupted and can't be trusted. In his remarks, he complained about those who say fraud did not occur in 2020 and journalists who report that, labeling them "election fraud deniers."

Another main speaker at the Omaha event was Douglas Frank, an Ohio math and science educator who has been traveling the country engaging with community groups and meeting with local election officials offering to examine and analyze their voting systems.

He had harsh words for some of those who oversee elections at the state level.

"I like to tell people that we have evil secretaries of states," Frank said. "We have a few of those in our country, and it's sort of like World War II — when the war's over, we need to have Nuremberg trials and we need to have firing squads, OK? I'm looking forward to the trials, OK?"

The crowd applauded.

State and local election officials have faced a barrage of harassment and death threats since the 2020 election. That has led some to quit or retire, in some places raising worries that their replacements may seek to meddle in elections or tamper with voting systems.

Trey Grayson, a former Republican secretary of state in Kentucky who is critical of those spreading conspiracy theories, said previous election-year attacks were focused on candidates or political parties, but now are targeted at election administration.

"There are a lot of really bad actors here that are trying to undermine confidence in a system. It is dangerous," he said.

The Omaha conference was sponsored by American Citizens & Candidates Forum for Election Integrity, which has hosted more than a dozen such gatherings since the 2020 election.

The speakers urged those in attendance to take action. That includes getting to know their local election officials and local sheriff, and to volunteer to be poll watchers for the November general election with the goal of reporting any activity they think could be fraudulent.

Omaha resident Kathy Austin said she recently submitted her name to serve as a poll worker, but has not heard back. She is convinced the 2020 election was stolen from Trump.

"I had not really been involved in politics before the 2020 election," said Austin, 75. That began to change after she saw posts making claims of election fraud on social media.

"Then I talked to different people," she said. "And the more I learned, the more it became clear there is a problem."

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Among those in the audience was Melissa Sauder, who drove nearly 350 miles from the small western Nebraska town of Grant with her 13-year-old daughter. After years of combing internet sites, listening to podcasts and reading conservative media reports, Sauder wanted to learn more about what she believes are serious problems with the integrity of U.S. elections.

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It's a sentiment now shared by millions of people in the United States after relentless attacks on the outcome of the 2020 presidential election by Trump and his allies. Nearly two years after that election, no evidence has emerged to suggest widespread fraud or manipulation while reviews in state after state have upheld the results showing President Joe Biden won.

Even so, the attacks and falsehoods have made an impact: An Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll from 2021 found that about two-thirds of Republicans say they do not think Biden was legitimately elected.

Events like the one held Aug. 27 in Nebraska's largest city are one reason why.

Billed as the "Nebraska Election Integrity Forum," the conference featured some of the nation's most prominent figures pushing conspiracy theories that the last presidential election was stolen from Trump through widespread fraud or manipulation of voting machines. It was just one of dozens of similar events that have been held around the country for the better part of a year.

Despite the relatively light attendance, the events are often livestreamed and recorded, ensuring they can reach a wide audience.

Over eight hours with only a brief lunch break, attendees were deluged with election conspiracies, complete with charts and slide shows. Speakers talked about tampering of voting machines or the systems that store voter rolls, ballot-box stuffing and massive numbers of votes cast by dead people and non-U.S. citizens -- all theories that have been debunked.

There is no evidence of widespread fraud or tampering with election equipment that could have affected the outcome of the 2020 election, in which Biden won both the popular vote — topping the Republican incumbent by more than 7 million nationwide — and the Electoral College count. Numerous official reviews and audits in the six battleground states where Trump challenged his loss have upheld the validity of the results. Judges, including some appointed by Trump, dismissed numerous lawsuits making various claims of fraud and wrongdoing.

Trump's former attorney general, William Barr, and other advisers and top government officials told him there was no evidence of widespread fraud. As part of the U.S. House committee's investigation of the riot at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, Barr told congressional investigators that the claims by Trump allies surrounding voting machines were disturbing but also were "made in such a sensational way that they obviously were influencing a lot of people." He added that the false claims were doing a "grave dis-service to the country."

Many local and state election officials have said the conspiracies have already led to rampant misinformation, vitriol aimed at election workers and calls to toss out voting equipment. Trey Grayson, a former Republican secretary of state in Kentucky who is critical of those spreading conspiracy theories, said previous election-year attacks were focused on candidates or political parties but now are targeted at election administration.

"There are a lot of really bad actors here that are trying to undermine confidence in a system. It is dangerous," he said.

Despite all the evidence that the 2020 election was fair and the results accurate, the conspiracy theories have persuaded many Republicans otherwise — with real world consequences.

In New Mexico this year, fears of voting machines being manipulated led one rural county commission to threaten that it would vote against certifying the results of its primary election even though the county clerk insisted the results were accurate. In Nevada, a rural county is pushing ahead with a plan to count by hand its thousands of ballots this November, a lengthy and painstaking process that ironically could lead to errors.

At the Omaha conference, evidence of an accurate election was ignored as speaker after speaker told attendees that machines are rigged and elections are stolen. One of the event's headliners was Patrick Byrne, the former CEO of Overstock.com who said he has spent some \$20 million of his own money since

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2020 trying to prove that voting machines were manipulated in that election and remain susceptible to tampering.

Wearing jeans and a black suit jacket over a yellow T-shirt, Byrne began his presentation by saying voting machines are vulnerable to hacking and outlining various security failures associated with them.

That any technology is vulnerable, including voting machines, is not in dispute. State and local election officials throughout the U.S. have focused on improving their security defenses with help from the federal government. After the 2016 election, the government designated voting systems as "critical infrastructure" -- on par with the nation's banks, dams and nuclear power plants. Government and election security experts have declared the 2020 election as "the most secure in American history."

But Byrne and some of the other speakers said they believe government has been corrupted and cannot be trusted. In his remarks, he complained about those who say fraud did not occur in 2020 and about journalists who report that, labeling them "election fraud deniers."

He accused critics of "trying to incite violence" and later told the attendees that China is planning to take over the U.S. by 2030.

"I can promise, every nice home in the United States, there's someone in China who already has a deed to your home," Byrne said, eliciting gasps from the crowd.

Another main speaker at the Omaha event was Douglas Frank, an Ohio math and science educator who has been traveling the country engaging with community groups and meeting with local election officials, offering to examine and analyze their voting systems.

Commonly known as Dr. Frank because of his doctorate in chemistry, he gives off a professorial vibe with his signature bow tie and glasses. He peppers his presentations with algorithms, line graphs and charts that he claims prove elections are corrupt. Frank said he has been to 43 states over the past 20 months.

He had harsh words for some of those who oversee elections at the state level.

"I like to tell people that we have evil secretaries of states," Frank said. "We have a few of those in our country, and it's sort of like World War II — when the war's over, we need to have Nuremberg trials and we need to have firing squads, OK? I'm looking forward to the trials, OK?"

The crowd applauded.

State and local election officials have faced a barrage of harassment and death threats since the 2020 election. That has led some to quit or retire, raising concerns about a loss of experience heading into the November general election, along with worries that their replacements may seek to meddle in elections or tamper with voting systems.

Also addressing the audience was Tina Peters, the clerk of Mesa County, Colorado, who has been charged in a security breach of voting systems in her election office. She has claimed she had an obligation to investigate and produced reports purporting to show tampering with voting systems, but her claims have been debunked by local authorities and experts.

During her remarks over video conference, Peters impugned the integrity of judges who have rejected dozens of legal efforts to challenge the 2020 presidential results. She urged citizens to join in the fight.

"You can't be afraid of going to jail," Peters told the crowd. "They can't get us all. Be bold. Be courageous. The Lord is on our side."

Frank, in an online post after the event, apologized for remarks he made during the forum about Nebraska's chief election official, Secretary of State Bob Evnen. Frank had called Evnen, a Republican, incompetent and said the official had "made a fool of himself" by refuting Frank's assertions that called into question the security of Nebraska's election.

One of the organizers of the event was Robert Borer, who unsuccessfully challenged Evnen in Nebraska's GOP primary this year. Borer said he ran because he was convinced that state election officials were not doing enough to address fraud and he believes the 2020 election was stolen.

"The whole objective of that election was to take down Trump," he said.

Since losing his bid to become the state's top election official, Borer has launched a campaign for Nebraska governor as a write-in candidate. This means his name will not appear on the November ballot, which, for him and his supporters, is entirely the point.

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"We don't want the machines to count our votes," Borer said. "If someone casts a write-in vote, the machine has to kick that out. It cannot read that vote, so they have to count that manually."

The Omaha conference was sponsored by American Citizens & Candidates Forum for Election Integrity, which has hosted more than a dozen such gatherings since the 2020 election.

The event was a study in contradictions.

Speakers insisted the issue of election integrity transcended party politics, with many repeating "this is not about Republicans or Democrats," before maligning both Democrats and so-called RINOs -- an acronym for "Republicans in name only" -- as "evil" or "criminal."

Speakers insisted that they rejected violence, yet they were throwing out menacing terms.

"I believe we're in a civil war," Graham Ledger, a conservative television show host, told the crowd at one point. "It's an unconventional, asymmetrical civil war, but it's red state versus blue state now."

Mark Finchem, the Republican nominee for secretary of state in Arizona, appeared remotely and spoke about his efforts to compel his state to ditch voting machines and switch to hand-counting ballots. Election experts say that process is time-consuming, will delay results and is unnecessary due to the rigorous testing that occurs before and after an election to ensure the equipment is working correctly.

"We have a fight on our hands," Finchem told attendees. "The establishment and the Democrats want to do everything they can to subvert our elections."

The speakers urged those in attendance to take action. That includes getting to know their local election officials and local sheriff, and to volunteer to be poll watchers for the November election with the goal of reporting any activity they think could be fraudulent.

Omaha resident Kathy Austin said she recently submitted her name to serve as a poll worker, but has not heard back from local election officials. She is convinced that the 2020 election was stolen from Trump.

"I had not really been involved in politics before the 2020 election," said Austin, 75. That began to change after she saw posts making claims of election fraud on the social media platform Telegram, which is popular with Trump supporters.

"Then I talked to different people," she said. "And the more I learned, the more it became clear there is a problem."

Now hiring: US offshore wind ramps up, workers taught safety

By JENNIFER McDERMOTT Associated Press

At a 131-year-old maritime academy along Buzzards Bay in Massachusetts, people who will build the nation's first commercial-scale offshore wind farm are learning the skills to stay safe while working around turbines at sea.

Some take to the tasks fairly easily since they're veterans of marine fields or construction. For others, it's totally new to be using fall protection and sea survival equipment, climbing from a boat onto a ladder to get to a turbine and learning how to work hundreds of feet in the air.

Offshore wind developers are hiring, after years of touting the promise of tens of thousands of jobs the industry could create in the United States. To launch this new clean energy industry, they now need plenty of workers with the right training and skills.

"It's the sheer number of people we're going to need in the timeframe that we need them," said Jennifer Cullen, senior manager of labor relations and workforce development at Vineyard Wind in Massachusetts. "We're combating this sense of, we've been talking about it for so long, ... is it actually coming? We're telling people, yes, it's here, it's now."

"We're building the turbines next year and we're going to be building many more wind farms after this," she added.

Vineyard Wind is on track to be the first commercial-scale offshore wind farm in the U.S. The development follows the Cape Wind project, which would've been closer to the Massachusetts shore but failed after years of litigation and local opposition.

The Massachusetts Maritime Academy is the only place in Massachusetts currently offering the basic

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safety training designed by a nonprofit founded by wind turbine manufacturers and operators — the Global Wind Organisation — though training is offered in other states. Everyone who will go to a wind farm offshore must complete safety training, and most developers meet the requirement with the GWO program.

The course draws union workers and others eager to work on future wind farms that the Biden administration wants to dot U.S. coastlines to help fight climate change. President Joe Biden set a goal of 30 gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2030, to power more than 10 million homes and create 80,000 jobs.

The payoff for offshore wind trainees is jobs with an average salary approaching \$80,000 a year.

Before arriving at the academy, students complete about six hours of online coursework.

Then, wearing waterproof suits, they practice stepping off a vessel in Buzzards Bay and onto a boarding ladder connected to a turbine — a dangerous part of the job, especially in rough seas.

The students step off the pier into the chilly bay waters to learn how to safely abandon a vessel or the turbine in an emergency. They inflate a life raft, climb in, and right it when it's upside down.

To prepare for working at heights, they use a harness and fall protection gear to ascend and descend a turbine's ladder. They practice lowering themselves by ropes from a 20-foot (6.1-meter) platform in case of emergency evacuation. And they rescue a fellow student who feigns being injured.

A day is devoted to first aid basics and CPR, and they put out a small fire with extinguishers.

Many trainees will be headed to work on Vineyard Wind, 15 miles (24 kilometers) off the Massachusetts coast. With 62 turbines, the project is expected to produce 800 megawatts — enough electricity annually to power more than 400,000 homes, beginning in late 2023. Work began onshore late last year.

Daniel Szymkowiak, a 36-year-old engineer, used to work offshore in the oil and gas industry. He took the maritime academy course in August, and now works on wind farm subsea cables for Vineyard Wind.

Szymkowiak changed careers, he said, because working in renewable, wind energy made him feel better about the world's future.

"It's up and coming. To be the first commercial project in the states, that's exciting," he said. "To make a positive change for our country, to bring across new opportunities, that's exactly why I'm here."

The maritime academy, founded in 1891, has historically focused on Coast Guard-approved training for professional mariners. Anticipating needs of the nascent U.S. offshore wind industry, it expanded its courses in support of offshore wind in 2019.

Over 200 people have completed the basic safety training at the academy's Maritime Center for Responsible Energy, in collaboration with RelyOn Nutec. The center plans to use grant funding to expand its offshore wind courses with basic technical training, enhanced first aid and advanced rescue, said Michael Burns, executive director of the maritime center. The safety course, offered twice a month, is booked through the end of the year.

In the classes, there's a sense of excitement to work offshore, take on a new challenge and help launch the industry, Burns said. He expects to see more schools and companies offering the training to meet the growing demand.

"We want to do everything in our power to do our part to help ensure these projects are able to go off on their intended timelines," Burns said.

In neighboring Rhode Island, Danish wind developer Orsted and utility Eversource are partnering with the state, the Community College of Rhode Island and union leaders to start a basic safety training course there too. Orsted and Eversource are planning to build Revolution Wind, a 400-megawatt wind farm south of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, to provide power for Connecticut and Rhode Island.

The first U.S. offshore wind farm opened off Rhode Island's Block Island in late 2016. But with five turbines, it's not commercial scale.

Cullen, of Vineyard Wind, said the role of the training is to qualify people to work for a variety of developers and to ramp up the workforce. Vineyard Wind is also working with a Martha's Vineyard program to prepare local residents for jobs as technicians.

Tyler Spofford has been working for GE Offshore Wind since January. The 35-year-old left his job as a tugboat captain to spend more time with his family.

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Spofford said he's excited the offshore wind industry is creating jobs, especially for mariners in the Northeast. There were few workboat jobs in the region after he earned his degree and license in 2009 at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy. That led him to the Gulf of Mexico, where he worked in the oil and gas industry.

"Pretty much since I got out of school, offshore wind was always a thing that was kind of being discussed, but nothing was really ever happening that was to scale," he said.

Then, Spofford said, the "stars aligned." He now helps assess the Vineyard Wind project's needs for vessels, assists in sourcing and contracting for the vessels, and will manage them. He took the maritime academy course in August.

"It kind of feels like we're a part of this startup in a way," he said. "We're up against a lot of challenges. It's kind of fun to think them through and solve them and come up with a product and something that's going to work, a solution."

Today in History: September 5, first Continental Congress

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, Sept. 5, the 248th day of 2022. There are 117 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 5, 1774, the first Continental Congress assembled in Philadelphia.

On this date:

In 1698, Russia's Peter the Great imposed a tax on beards.

In 1864, voters in Louisiana approved a new state constitution abolishing slavery.

In 1939, four days after war had broken out in Europe, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued a proclamation declaring U.S. neutrality in the conflict.

In 1960, at the Rome Olympics, American boxer Cassius Clay (later Muhammad Ali) defeated Zbigniew Pietrzykowski (zuh-BIG'-nee-ehf pee-eht-chah-KAHF'-skee) of Poland to win the light-heavyweight gold medal; Wilma Rudolph of the United States won the second of her three gold medals with the 200-meter sprint.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy signed legislation making aircraft hijackings a federal crime.

In 1972, the Palestinian group Black September attacked the Israeli Olympic delegation at the Munich Games, killing 11 Israelis and a police officer. German forces killed five of the gunmen.

In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford escaped an attempt on his life by Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme, a disciple of Charles Manson, in Sacramento, California.

In 1986, four hijackers who had seized a Pan Am jumbo jet on the ground in Karachi, Pakistan, opened fire when the lights inside the plane failed; a total of 20 people were killed before Pakistani commandos stormed the jetliner.

In 1991, the 35th annual Naval Aviation Symposium held by the Tailhook Association opened in Las Vegas; during the four-day gathering, there were reports that dozens of people, most of them women, were sexually assaulted or otherwise harassed. (The episode triggered the resignation of Navy Secretary H. Lawrence Garrett and the early retirement of Adm. Frank B. Kelso, then the chief of naval operations.)

In 1997, Mother Teresa died in Calcutta, India, at age 87.

In 2016, Hugh O'Brian, the actor who shot to fame as Sheriff Wyatt Earp in what was hailed as television's first adult Western, died in Beverly Hills, California, at age 91.

In 2018, The New York Times published an opinion piece from an anonymous senior administration official claiming to be part of an internal "resistance" working to thwart President Donald Trump's "worst inclinations"; Trump responded that if such a "gutless" person exists, "the Times must, for National Security purposes, turn him/her over to the government at once!" (In late 2020, Miles Taylor, a former chief of staff at the Department of Homeland Security, revealed that he was the author of the op-ed piece.)

Ten years ago: In an impassioned speech that rocked the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte,

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North Carolina, former President Bill Clinton proclaimed, "I know we're coming back" from the worst economic mess in generations, and he appealed to hard-pressed Americans to stick with Barack Obama for a second term in the White House; in a roll call that lasted past midnight, Obama was officially nominated.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump announced that he was phasing out the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program protecting young immigrants who were brought to the country illegally, but said he was giving Congress six months to come up with an alternative; he later tweeted that if Congress couldn't do so, he would "revisit" the issue. Hurricane Irma strengthened to a Category 5 storm as it approached the northeast Caribbean on a path toward the United States.

One year ago: A gunman massacred four members of a Florida family, including a baby boy, at their home; prosecutors said Bryan Riley, a 33-year-old former Marine, was under the delusion that the victims were child sex traffickers. (Riley faces charges including murder and attempted murder.)

Today's Birthdays: Comedian-actor Bob Newhart is 93. Actor-singer Carol Lawrence is 90. Actor Lucille Soong is 87. Former NFL All-Pro quarterback and college football Hall of Famer Billy Kilmer is 83. Actor William Devane is 83. Actor George Lazenby is 83. Actor Raquel Welch is 82. Movie director Werner Herzog is 80. Singer Al Stewart is 77. Actor-director Dennis Dugan is 76. College Football Hall of Famer Jerry LeVias is 76. Singer Loudon Wainwright III is 76. Soul/rock musician Mel Collins is 75. "Cathy" cartoonist Cathy Guisewite (GYZ'-wyt) is 72. Actor Michael Keaton is 71. Actor Debbie Turner-Larson (Marta in "The Sound of Music") is 66. Actor Kristian Alfonso is 59. R&B singer Terry Ellis is 59. Rock musician Brad Wilk is 54. TV personality Dweezil Zappa is 53. Actor Rose McGowan is 49. Actor Carice Van Houten is 46. Rock musician Kyle O'Quin (Portugal. The Man) is 37. Olympic gold medal figure skater Yuna Kim is 32. Actor Skandar Keynes is 31.