

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 1 of 65

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Netters drop five set match to Webster](#)
- [3- City Council Story](#)
- [4- Weather Pages](#)
- [8- Daily Devotional](#)
- [9- 2022 Community Events](#)
- [10- Subscription Form](#)
- [11- News from the Associated Press](#)

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

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)

**“Forget the lottery,
bet on yourself
instead.”**

BRIAN KOSLOW



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 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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Netters drop five set match to Webster

Groton Area played its first five-set match of the year and ended up falling short as Webster took home a 3-2 win in volleyball action.

Game scores were 25-14, 18-25, 15-25, 25-17 and 15-10. In the final set, Webster jumped out to a 7-0 lead, but Groton Area would rally to tie the set at 10; however, Webster scored the final five points for the win.

The match was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, with Justin Hanson and Ryan Tracy doing the play-by-play. The broadcast was sponsored by Bahr Spray Foam, John Sieh Agency, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Locke Electric, Dacotah Bank, SD Army National Guard with Brent Wienk and Milbrandt Enterprises, Inc.

Anna Fjeldheim had 13 kills and two ace serves, Laila Roberts two kills and an ace, Carly Guthmiller one ace, Lydia Meier six kills and one block, Elizabeth Flihs four kills and one ace, Jerica Locke two aces, Aspen Johnson four kills, two ace serves and two blocks, Emma Kutter four kills and Jaedyn Penning had one ace serve.

Gracie Cadwell led Webster Area with 16 kills and one ace serve while Bayleann MOen had eight kills, Elliott STEiner had seven kills and one block, Erin Sannes five kills and three blocks, Mikala Wagner three kills and one ace, Emily Tarbox three aces, Kara Kawasiniewski one ace and Harley Johnson and Katie Braun each had one kill.

Groton Area, 3-2, will host Aberdeen Roncalli on Thursday. Webster goes to 4-1



Anna Fjeldheim



**Lydia Meier, Elizabeth Flihs
and Emma Kutter**



Laila Roberts

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 3 of 65

Garcial rehired as police officer

The Groton City Council rehired Tony Garcia as a police officer at a rate of \$26 an hour and six month probation.

The council tabled moving the water fountain from the old city hall to the new city hall. They want to look at the price of a new one.

On a 3-1 vote with Shirley Wells voting no, the council approved for a special event alcoholic beverage license for an adult painting class at the Wage Memorial Library. The event is scheduled for October 13.

The second reading of the water rate ordinance was approved.

Cole Simon will be a GHS Intern at City Hall and Wage Memorial Library through December 2022.

Landon Johnson was approved to attend the 2022 overhead electrical school in Marshall, Minn., Sept. 13-16.

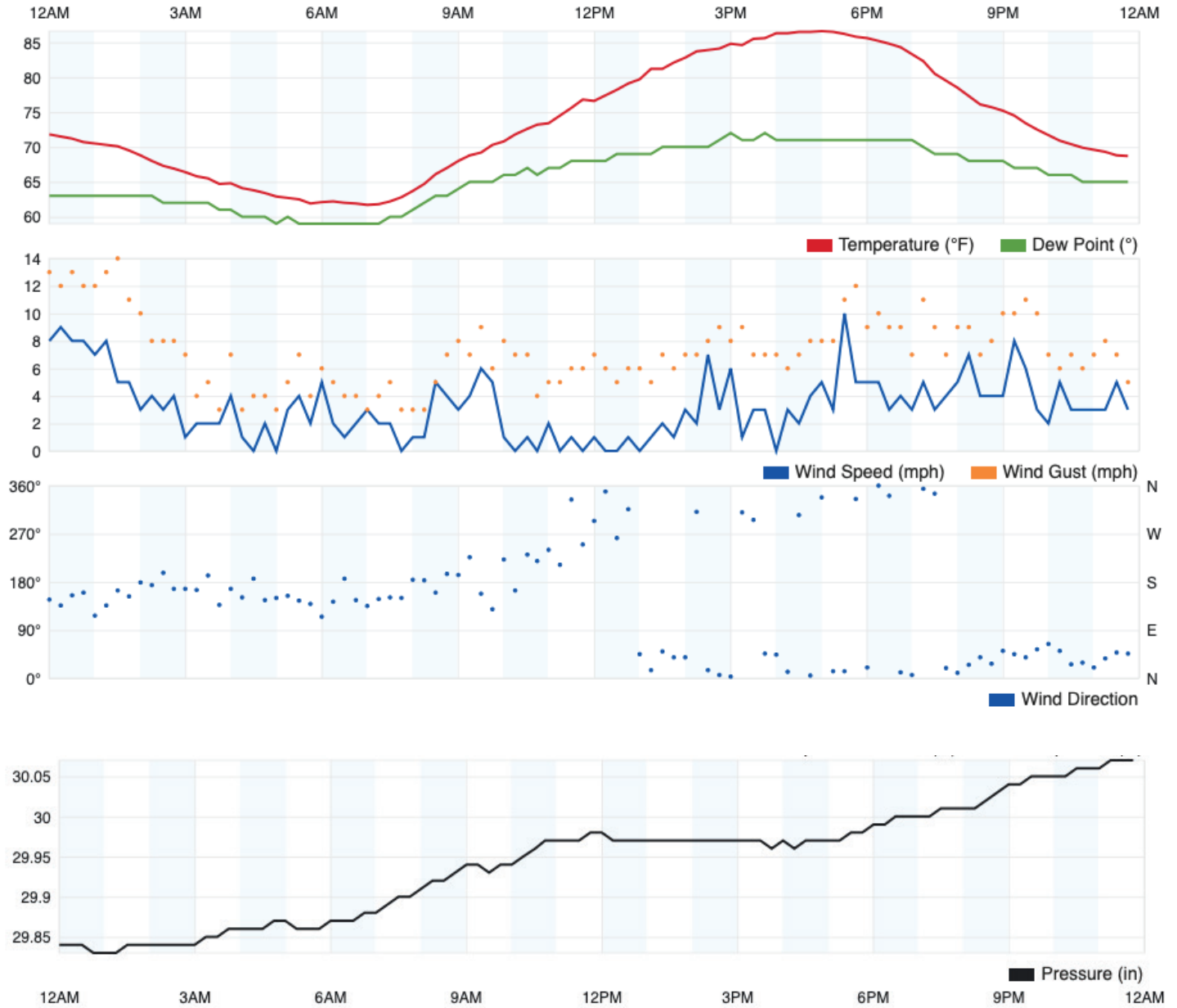
After an executive session, the council approved a committee reassignment for Jason Wambach from skating rink to baseball while Kevin Nehls will go from baseball to skating rink.

Darrell Hillstad presented the city with a \$6,280 donaton for the airport. He would like to see the electricity installed this fall.

Groton Daily Independent




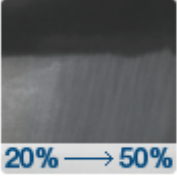

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 4 of 65

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

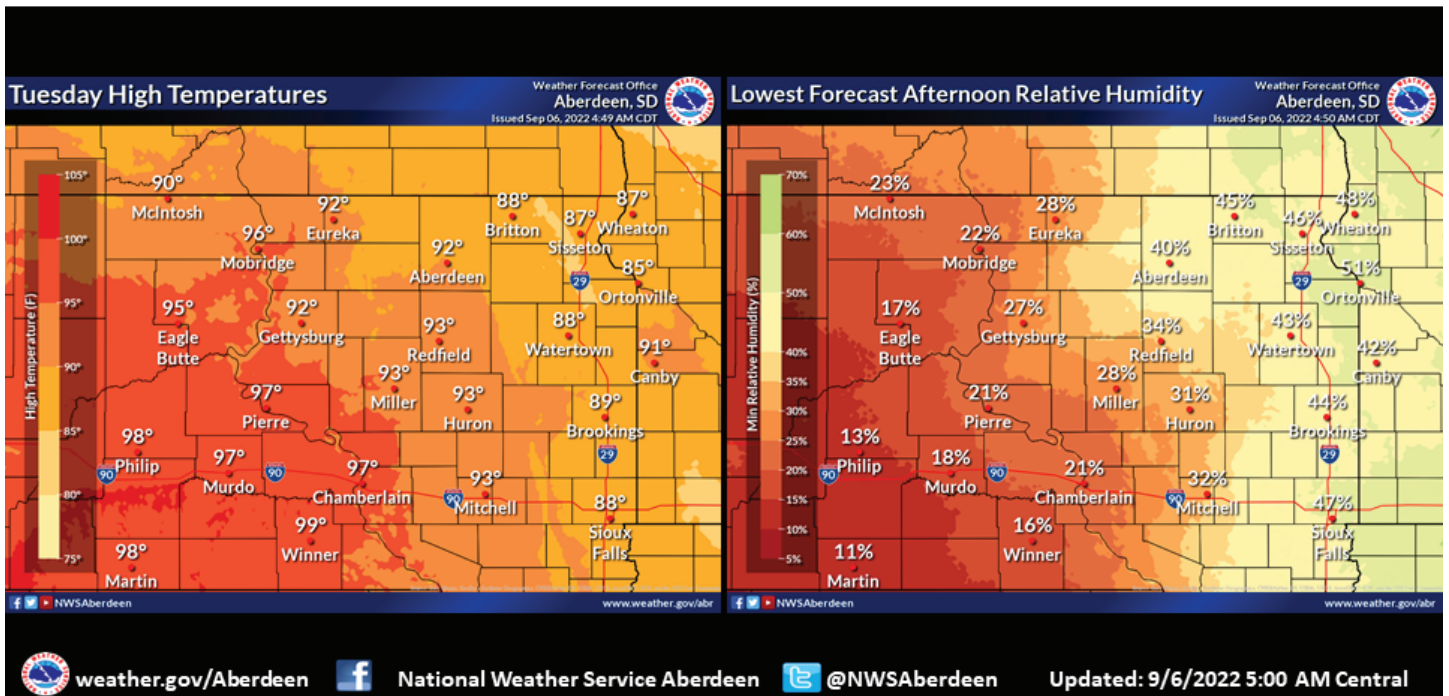


Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 5 of 65

Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
				
Mostly Sunny	Mostly Clear	Hot	20% → 50% Slight Chance Showers then Chance Showers	20% Slight Chance Showers
High: 89 °F	Low: 68 °F	High: 94 °F	Low: 56 °F	High: 70 °F

Still Hot and Dry



Today will continue the hot and dry pattern of the last few days with highs ranging from the mid 80s to 100°F. Elevated Fire Danger is expected this afternoon west river as relative humidity drops below 20% and winds gust up to 24 mph. Citizens are urged to use caution if burning is necessary. Icons on the high temp map (left) indicate areas with a Special Weather Statement in effect for elevated fire danger. Areas outlined on the relative humidity map (right) are in a Fire Weather Watch currently in effect for Thursday between the hours of NOON and 7PM CDT.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 6 of 65

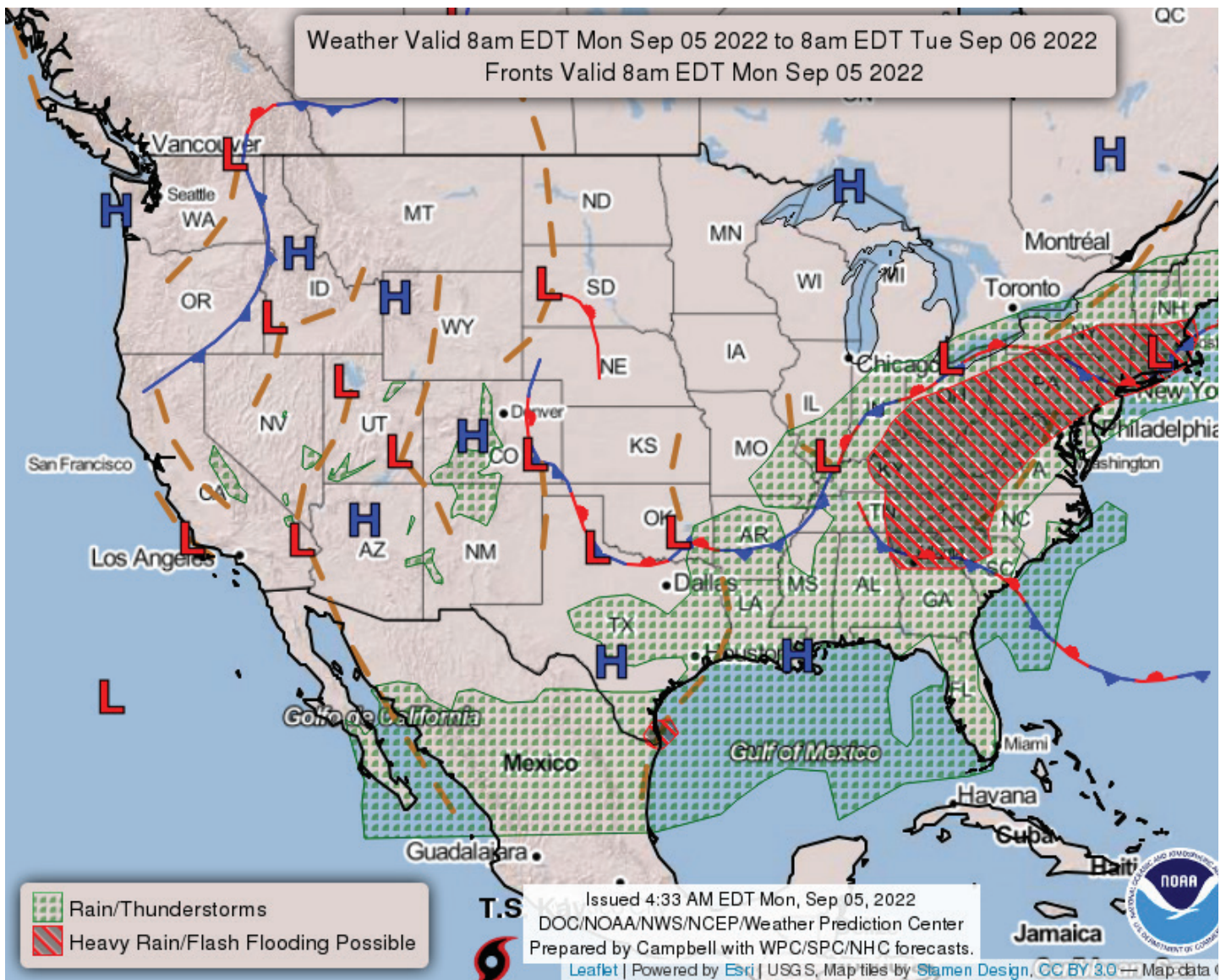
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 87 °F at 4:51 PM
Low Temp: 62 °F at 6:53 AM
Wind: 14 mph at 1:27 AM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 13 hours, 00 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 103 in 1970
Record Low: 32 in 1956
Average High: 79°F
Average Low: 51°F
Average Precip in Sept.: 0.41
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 16.75
Precip Year to Date: 15.96
Sunset Tonight: 8:00:35 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:01:16 AM



Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 7 of 65

Today in Weather History

September 7, 1961: A tornado struck a farm near the McPherson-Brown county line, or about 10 miles east and 2 miles north of Leola, at around 825 pm CDT. All farm buildings were destroyed, including two chicken coops, granary, machine shop, and two trailer homes. The house was pushed about a foot off its foundation and had windows broken, plaster cracked, and part of the roof ripped. A farm truck and tractor were both blown about 500 feet and demolished. Rain up to 2.5 inches and hail accompanied the storm and caused minor damage.

1769: Considered one of the worst storms of the Eighteenth century, this hurricane passed over Williamsburg, Virginia.

1881 - The temperature soared to 101 degrees at New York City, 102 degrees at Boston MA, and 104 degrees at Washington D.C. (David Ludlum)

1970: A lightning bolt struck a group of football players at Gibbs High School in St. Petersburg, FL. The lightning killed two people and injuring 22 others. All 38 players and four coaches were knocked off their feet.

1998: Two Derechos occurred on this day with one affecting most of Pennsylvania and New York City, the other impacting central New York.

1888 - Much of the Middle and Northern Atlantic Coast Region experienced freezing temperatures. Killer frosts resulted in a million dollars damage to crops in Maine. (David Ludlum)

1909 - Topeka, KS, was drenched with 8.08 inches of rain in 24 hours to establish a record for that location. (6th- 7th) (The Weather Channel)

1970 - A lightning bolt struck a group of football players at Gibbs High School in Saint Petersburg FL, killing two persons and injuring 22 others. All the thirty-eight players and four coaches were knocked off their feet. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Showers and thunderstorms produced 4 to 8 inch rains in three to six hours in Virginia, with totals across the state for the Labor Day weekend ranging up to fourteen inches. The Staunton River crested at 34.44 feet at Altavista on the 8th, its highest level since 1940. Damage due to flooding was estimated at seven million dollars around Bedford, Henry, and Franklin. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Fifty cities across the eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date. The low of 56 degrees at Mobile AL was their coolest reading of record for so early in the season. The mercury dipped to 31 degrees at Athens OH, and to 30 degrees at Thomas WV. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms in the central U.S. produced four inches of rain at Texamah overnight, and up to six inches of rain in southwestern Iowa. Evening thunderstorms in eastern Colorado produced golf ball size hail at Clear Creek and at Nederland. Late evening thunderstorms in Iowa drenched Harlan with more than four inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary)



Finding Refuge

Scripture: Isaiah 25:1–9 (NIV)

Praise to the Lord

25 Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect faithfulness you have done wonderful things, things planned long ago. 2 You have made the city a heap of rubble, the fortified town a ruin, the foreigners' stronghold a city no more; it will never be rebuilt. 3 Therefore strong peoples will honor you; cities of ruthless nations will revere you. 4 You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm driving against a wall 5 and like the heat of the desert. You silence the uproar of foreigners; as heat is reduced by the shadow of a cloud, so the song of the ruthless is stilled. 6 On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines. 7 On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; 8 he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth. The Lord has spoken. 9 In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the Lord, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."

Insight By: Jed Ostoich

The "strong peoples" and "ruthless nations" in Isaiah 25:3 likely refer to the Assyrians led by Sennacherib—the ever-present villain during the time of Isaiah's ministry (see chs. 36–37). For people of Jerusalem cowering behind the fortifications set up by the mighty King David long ago, Isaiah's testimony in today's passage rang with hope. The violence of Assyria might crash against Jerusalem like a "storm driving against a wall" (25:4), but God Himself would be their shelter. He would silence their oppressors. And, like their ancestor David in Psalm 23, they'd enjoy a feast in the presence of their enemies..

Comment By: Sheridan Voysey

My wife and I once stayed in a lovely old seaside hotel with large sash windows and thick stone walls. One afternoon, a storm ripped through the region, churning up the sea and pounding our windows like angry fists on a door. Yet we were at peace. Those walls were so strong, and the hotel's foundations so solid! While storms raged outside, our room was a refuge.

Refuge is an important theme in Scripture, starting with God Himself. "You have been a refuge for the poor," Isaiah says of God, "a refuge for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the storm" (Isaiah 25:4). In addition, refuge is something God's people were and are to provide, whether through Israel's ancient cities of refuge (Numbers 35:6) or by offering hospitality to "foreigners" in need (Deuteronomy 10:19). These same principles can guide us today when humanitarian crises hit our world. In such times, we pray that the God of refuge would use us, His people, to help the vulnerable find safety.

The storm that hit our hotel was gone the following morning, leaving us with a calm sea and a warm sun that made the seagulls glow. It's an image I hold on to as I think of those facing natural disasters or fleeing "ruthless" regimes (Isaiah 25:4): that the God of refuge would empower us to help them find safety now and a brighter tomorrow..

Reflect and Prayer: When have you taken "refuge" in God or found it through His people? How can you play a part in helping those facing a crisis today?

God of refuge, please empower me, Your child, to help the needy find refuge and hope.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 9 of 65

2022-23 Community Events

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

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 10 of 65

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News from the Associated Press

Elected officials, police chiefs on leaked Oath Keepers list

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER and MICHAEL KUNZELMAN Associated Press

The names of hundreds of U.S. law enforcement officers, elected officials and military members appear on the leaked membership rolls of a far-right extremist group that's accused of playing a key role in the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, according to a report released Wednesday.

The Anti-Defamation League Center on Extremism pored over more than 38,000 names on leaked Oath Keepers membership lists and identified more than 370 people it believes currently work in law enforcement agencies — including as police chiefs and sheriffs — and more than 100 people who are currently members of the military.

It also identified more than 80 people who were running for or served in public office as of early August. The membership information was compiled into a database published by the transparency collective Distributed Denial of Secrets.

The data raises fresh concerns about the presence of extremists in law enforcement and the military who are tasked with enforcing laws and protecting the U.S. It's especially problematic for public servants to be associated with extremists at a time when lies about the 2020 election are fueling threats of violence against lawmakers and institutions.

"Even for those who claimed to have left the organization when it began to employ more aggressive tactics in 2014, it is important to remember that the Oath Keepers have espoused extremism since their founding, and this fact was not enough to deter these individuals from signing up," the report says.

Appearing in the Oath Keepers' database doesn't prove that a person was ever an active member of the group or shares its ideology. Some people on the list contacted by The Associated Press said they were briefly members years ago and are no longer affiliated with the group. Some said they were never dues-paying members.

"Their views are far too extreme for me," said Shawn Mobley, sheriff of Otero County, Colorado. Mobley told the AP in an email that he distanced himself from the Oath Keepers years ago over concerns about its involvement in the standoff against the federal government at Bundy Ranch in Bunkerville, Nevada, among other things.

The Oath Keepers, founded in 2009 by Stewart Rhodes, is a loosely organized conspiracy theory-fueled group that recruits current and former military, police and first responders. It asks its members to vow to defend the Constitution "against all enemies, foreign and domestic," promotes the belief that the federal government is out to strip citizens of their civil liberties and paints its followers as defenders against tyranny.

More than two dozen people associated with the Oath Keepers — including Rhodes — have been charged in connection with the Jan. 6 attack. Rhodes and four other Oath Keeper members or associates are heading to trial this month on seditious conspiracy charges for what prosecutors have described as a weekslong plot to keep then-President Donald Trump in power. Rhodes and the other Oath Keepers say that they are innocent and that there was no plan to attack the Capitol.

The Oath Keepers has grown quickly along with the wider anti-government movement and used the tools of the internet to spread their message during Barack Obama's presidency, said Rachel Carroll Rivas, interim deputy director of research with the Southern Poverty Law Center's Intelligence Project. But since Jan. 6 and Rhodes' arrest, the group has struggled to keep members, she said.

That's partly because Oath Keepers had been associated so strongly with Rhodes that the removal of the central figure had an outsized impact, and partly because many associated with the group were often those who wanted to be considered respectable in their communities, she said.

"The image of being associated with Jan. 6 was too much for many of those folks," she said.

Among the elected officials whose name appears on the membership lists is South Dakota state Rep. Phil Jensen, who won a June Republican primary in his bid for reelection. Jensen told the AP he paid for

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 12 of 65

a one-year membership in 2014 but never received any Oath Keepers' literature, attended any meetings or renewed his membership.

Jensen said he felt compelled to join because he "believed in the oath that we took to support the US Constitution and to defend it against enemies foreign and domestic." He wouldn't say whether he now disavows the Oath Keepers, saying he doesn't have enough information about the group today.

"Back in 2014, they appeared to be a pretty solid conservative group, I can't speak to them now," he said.

ADL said it found the names of at least 10 people who now work as police chiefs and 11 sheriffs. All of the police chiefs and sheriffs who responded to the AP said they no longer have any ties to the group.

"I don't even know what they're posting. I never get any updates," said Mike Hollinshead, sheriff of Idaho's Elmore County. "I'm not paying dues or membership fees or anything."

Hollinshead, a Republican, said he was campaigning for sheriff several years ago when voters asked him if he was familiar with the Oath Keepers. Hollinshead said he wanted to learn about the group and recalls paying for access to content on the Oath Keepers' website, but that was the extent of his involvement.

Benjamin Boeke, police chief in Oskaloosa, Iowa, recalled getting emails from the group years ago and said he believes a friend may have signed him up. But he said he never paid to become a member and doesn't know anything about the group.

Eric Williams, police chief in Idalou, Texas, also said in an email that he hasn't been a member or had any interaction with the Oath Keepers in over 10 years. He called the storming of the Capitol "terrible in every way."

"I pray this country finds its way back to civility and peace in discourse with one another," he said.

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) _ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Tuesday:

Mega Millions

06-17-46-59-68, Mega Ball: 2, Megaplier: 4

(six, seventeen, forty-six, fifty-nine, sixty-eight; Mega Ball: two; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$210,000,000

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: 170,000,000

Tuesday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Florence/Henry, 25-23, 25-21, 21-25, 28-26

Belle Fourche def. St. Thomas More, 25-18, 25-17, 25-21

Bowman County, N.D. def. Harding County, 25-19, 25-17, 25-14

Bridgewater-Emery def. Menno, 19-25, 25-20, 25-20, 18-25, 15-13

Castlewood def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-7, 25-4, 25-5

Chester def. Baltic, 25-17, 25-17, 25-19

Clark/Willow Lake def. Iroquois/ Lake Preston Co-op, 25-15, 25-19, 25-22

Dakota Valley def. Beresford, 25-8, 25-15, 25-11

Deubrook def. Flandreau, 29-27, 18-25, 25-19, 25-22

Deuel def. DeSmet, 10-25, 25-18, 19-25, 25-23, 15-11

Douglas def. Hill City, 26-24, 27-25, 25-14

Edgemont def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-20, 25-23, 25-17

Elk Point-Jefferson def. West Central, 25-11, 25-19, 25-17

Faulkton def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-8, 25-12, 25-21

Freeman def. Centerville, 25-10, 25-11, 25-13

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 13 of 65

Highmore-Harrold def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-13, 25-15, 25-15
Howard def. Hanson, 14-25, 25-18, 25-23, 25-17
Huron def. Watertown, 19-25, 25-19, 25-18, 25-22
Ipswich def. Sully Buttes, 24-26, 25-15, 25-16, 25-20
Lemmon def. McIntosh, 23-25, 25-19, 25-20, 25-10
Lennox def. Tea Area, 28-26, 25-11, 18-25, 21-25, 15-7
Lyman def. Colome, 19-25, 25-15, 20-25, 25-20, 15-6
Marty Indian def. Santee, Neb., 25-12, 25-22, 25-22
Mobridge-Pollock def. North Central Co-Op, 25-19, 25-11, 25-10
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Ethan, 25-12, 27-25, 25-11
Pierre def. Mitchell, 25-22, 25-19, 25-15
Platte-Geddes def. Wagner, 19-25, 25-19, 25-23, 25-20
Rapid City Christian def. Spearfish, 25-20, 25-9, 25-12
Scotland def. Gayville-Volin, 23-25, 25-23, 25-18, 25-12
Sioux Falls Christian def. Madison, 25-11, 25-14, 25-12
Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Brandon Valley, 25-22, 25-21, 22-25, 25-15
Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Yankton, 25-15, 25-22, 25-21
Sioux Falls Washington def. Sioux Falls Jefferson, 17-25, 25-19, 25-22, 20-25, 16-14
Sisseton def. Hankinson, N.D., 22-25, 25-19, 24-19
Tiospa Zina Tribal def. Waubay/Summit, 23-25, 25-19, 25-12, 26-24
Tripp-Delmont/Armour def. Avon, 26-24, 25-16, 25-20
Vermillion def. Bon Homme, 25-19, 25-16, 25-22
Warner def. Miller, 25-13, 25-23, 23-25, 25-22
Webster def. Groton Area, 14-25, 25-18, 25-15, 17-25, 15-10
Wessington Springs def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 25-11, 25-13, 25-13
Wyndmere-Lidgerwood, N.D. def. Britton-Hecla, 25-21, 25-16, 25-20

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

Man held in shooting at ex-girlfriend's Sioux Falls home

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A man is in custody following a fatal shooting at his ex-girlfriend's apartment building in Sioux Falls.

Authorities say the 38-year-old suspect killed 26-year-old Kaisean Marcell Tyler Monday shortly before 9 p.m. Police Lt. Nick Butler says the alleged shooter was arrested about 5 a.m. Tuesday.

Butler says police have not yet found the weapon used in the crime.

A court affidavit says the suspect arrived at his former girlfriend's apartment to pick up some of his belongings and saw Tyler with the woman in her bedroom. Authorities say the two men exchanged punches and the ex-boyfriend pulled out a handgun and shot Tyler.

Tyler fell to the ground and the suspect fired three more rounds into the victim's back as his ex-girlfriend got on the floor and covered herself with a blanket, the Argus Leader reported citing the affidavit.

The woman told investigators that her ex-boyfriend once threatened to kill any man he saw at her with at her apartment.

The shooting death is the third homicide of 2022 in Sioux Falls.

Raised with trauma, Sandy Hook survivors send hope to Uvalde

By DAVE COLLINS and PAT EATON-ROBB Associated Press

NEWTOWN, Conn. (AP) — The survivors who were able to walk out of Sandy Hook Elementary School nearly a decade ago want to share a message of hope with the children of Uvalde, Texas: You will learn how to live with your trauma, pain and grief. And it will get better.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 14 of 65

They know what's ahead. There's shock, followed by numbness. There are struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder. Anxiety. Survivor's guilt. Anger that these shootings continue to happen in America. Reliving their trauma every time there's another mass shooting.

They know it will be hard to say they are from Uvalde. That well-meaning adults will sometimes make the wrong decisions to protect you. That grief can be unpredictable, and different for everyone.

"It's been nine years since Sandy Hook," said Ashley Hubner, 17, who was a second grader at the Newtown school when 20 children and six educators were killed on Dec. 14, 2012. "We had nine years for this to not happen again. And yet it did. And now these kids are going to have to go through the same exact thing. That's just, like, heartbreaking."

On May 24, a gunman killed 19 students and two teachers at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde. It was so striking to the Sandy Hook survivors because of how similar it was to their tragedy. Now on the cusp of adulthood, the survivors of Sandy Hook are telling their stories, some for the first time, about growing up as a mass shooting survivor to help the children in Texas, who return to school this week.

'I FEEL LIKE I'VE GROWN ALONGSIDE OF IT.'

Marie Gay was a 9-year-old third grader at the Sandy Hook school when the gunman shot his way into the building and killed the 26 victims, including her little sister, Josephine. All the children who died were first graders.

"Initially I thought it was a bear, the gunshots," said Gay, now an 18-year-old college student. "I don't know. We lived in rural Connecticut. I heard them and my first thought was, 'Oh, there's totally a bear just banging on the walls of the school.'"

Marie said adults around her were all well intentioned, but some of what they did after the tragedy bothered her.

Her teachers would take her out of the classroom before conducting any emergency drills. They were also careful not to use phrases like "bullet points" around her, which she found silly.

She also felt "icky" about the thousands of gifts that poured into Newtown for all the children of Sandy Hook. She got upset the day hundreds of those presents were passed out to children who lined up outside the local intermediate school to get a doll or a game, she said.

"All that I could think about at the time was the one child in my sister's class who survived," she said. "I know I went through a lot too, but in my brain, I was like, I'm not understanding how all these people are like clamoring for gifts."

Marie said the shooting in Uvalde brought so many feelings. It was disheartening, she said, but also made her want to get out there and fight for things like mental health reform and gun control.

She said she would tell the children of Uvalde that grief is individual and that their path forward will be their own — and to be gentle with themselves and kind to others. Their pain and grief will remain a part of them, but they will learn to live with it. She still gets anxiety in lecture halls and looks for exits when she's in a classroom.

"There's reminders of it daily here at random times," she said. "But I feel like I've grown alongside of it and it's made me a better person."

'I THINK WHAT HAPPENED CHANGED MY ENTIRE LIFE.'

For Ashley Hubner, the trauma became part of her life as she grew up. Sometimes she became sad and cried. But it wasn't until middle school that her symptoms, including PTSD and depression, started to overwhelm her.

They would hit her harder around the anniversary of the shooting.

Ashley, now a senior at Newtown High School, was sitting in a circle with her second grade class for its usual morning meeting when the shooting started. Her sister, a kindergartner who also survived, was in another classroom.

Ashley and her classmates ran to the cubby area to hide. They heard their teacher call police to report an active shooter. The school intercom system clicked on, and everyone could hear gunshots, screaming and crying.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 15 of 65

They were also frightened by footsteps they heard on the roof, which they didn't know at the time were those of first responders. When police finally came to lead them out, she and her classmates didn't want to open the door because they thought bad guys could be impersonating officers.

"We didn't want to let them in," she said. "And so like every single kid in my class screamed, 'No!' And it was so heartbreaking to hear a bunch of little kids screaming 'No.' But thank God we opened the door and it was actually the police."

The children formed a line. They were told to put their hands on the shoulders of their classmates and to close their eyes — to avoid seeing any of the carnage — as they were led out of the building. They were brought to a nearby firehouse, where she was reunited with her sister.

It was only last year that she was diagnosed with PTSD, depression, anxiety and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Many students have said they weren't diagnosed with mental health and other disorders until years later, likely because they were so young at the time of the shooting and their symptoms didn't fully develop for a while.

"I think what happened changed my entire life," she said. "Maybe when you're an adult like you have trauma and then you're able to kind of like overcome it because you had this person who you were before.

"But when you're so young," she said, "you don't really have the person that you were before. You just take your surroundings and you take what you're taught and you take that trauma and you make it a part of your life and you grow up with that and you have to like process that in the years forward."

Ashley said she gets angry sometimes at her parents and adults and kids in school for not recognizing her problems earlier or not believing her when she told them what she was going through. She began therapy only recently.

"Take what you are feeling and, like, do that research and like get that help," she said, offering advice to Uvalde survivors. "It's so important to like know who you are and know what you have and like what you're dealing with so that you can go through life a lot easier and like make your quality of life better."

'FOCUS ON HEALING YOURSELF.'

In her college application essay, Liv Doscher wrote about how she and her classmates were forced into a more mature mindset because of what happened in their school.

"I don't think anyone no matter your age should have to go through something like that," she said. "But kids are not equipped to deal with stuff like that. No one is, but especially kids."

Liv and her third-grade classmates ran to a carpet in their room when they first heard what turned out to be gunshots. Some thought it was a joke at first and laughed, she said. Others, like her best friend, started crying immediately. Liv was confused.

Her teacher put some paper over the window in the door to the hallway, but it fell down. Liv was nervous to look at the door in fear of what she might see. Plus the shades on the windows to the outside were up. Liv felt exposed and vulnerable.

Then police officers ran by the windows to the outside, saw the children and yelled at them to go into an adjoining classroom that shared a door with theirs. With the blinds down, the other classroom was very dark, and she couldn't recognize people to find comfort.

"I remember just kind of trying to see in the dark, trying to recognize people," she said.

Police led the students and teachers out an exit on the opposite side of the school from the shooting. Liv remembers seeing an officer with "a huge gun." She didn't even know then what a gun was.

Like Ashley, she suffered for years with anxiety, especially at school, before being diagnosed and treated. She learned last year that she has ADHD, obsessive-compulsive disorder and anxiety.

She said it took so long because she kept what she was feeling inside, didn't understand her emotions and didn't reach out for help. She often felt numb. In December 2020, around the eighth anniversary of the shooting, she became extremely depressed and missed two weeks of school.

"I couldn't get through days without crying," she said. "And you don't really realize it's so debilitating sometimes."

Her parents got her into therapy, which she credits for helping her cope. At school, there were frustra-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 16 of 65

tions in the years after the shooting, said Liv, now 18. One of the problems was not enough communication between school staff and students about what help and services were available to address mental health and other issues. Many school staff avoided talking about the shooting, she said, apparently to avoid retraumatizing students.

"I understand wanting to protect us, but we've seen the worst of it. We were there that day," she said.

Students were only recently given two mental health days that do not count as absences. When the anniversary fell on a school day, she said, kids would be crying in the hallways trying to get to class. She was critical of school officials for not offering accommodations such as increased passing time between classes.

To the Uvalde children, Liv said not to be afraid, or ashamed, to communicate what you are feeling.

"Focus on healing yourself and focus on working through the trauma, what happened," she said. "But also, you know, focus on holding onto life before and searching for positive things because there's so many positive things. Finding pictures. Finding people that mean a lot to you. Just take that and just appreciate that.

"A huge part of that is like to not feel shame about where you are in your healing process," she said.

"Don't compare yourself to others. Don't feel invalid because someone may have it worse."

"I SHOULDN'T HAVE TO BE STILL STRUGGLING WITH THIS TODAY."

There have been several different kinds of therapies since the shooting to help Jackie Hegarty cope with PTSD. New mass shootings are a trigger, bringing her back to the day of the Sandy Hook shooting. Loud noises still startle her.

She was doing yoga with her second-grade class when the shooter opened fire right across the hall. She didn't know what the gunshot sounds were. Kids in her class thought maybe a janitor dropped a trash can or somebody dropped a chair or a desk.

But no one could drop a trash can that many times.

"I remember running to my cubby and sitting on my backpack," said Jackie, 17, who is a senior at Newtown High School. "And I remember being grateful that I was farther away from the door because I thought that the kid that was closest to the wall was going to get shot first."

That Friday, like others, the children in her class got to bring in their favorite stuffed animals to watch movies with them. On that day, however, Jackie forgot hers — it wasn't in her backpack when she went to reach for comfort.

Her class and teacher sat anxiously in the dark classroom. After the shooting ended and the gunman, 20-year-old Adam Lanza, had killed himself, police got to Jackie's classroom and told them to cover their eyes as they were led out of the building. Along the way, Jackie opened her eyes. She doesn't like to talk about what she saw.

"Once we were leaving, I was wondering how that could have happened so closely to me and that that could have been me and how come I'm walking out of the school right now and they aren't," she said. She is a triplet, and her two siblings survived.

When she and Liv went to the March For Our Lives anti-gun violence event in the nation's capital this summer, there were a few moments of panic after someone yelled something during a moment of silence. People in the crowd started running away. She couldn't breathe, and kept running. Her chest tightened. She felt like she was going to throw up. She felt guilty for not being able to stay with her friends.

"But I shouldn't have to be still struggling with this today and still having to search for treatment methods to improve my quality of life and to make me feel better because of how I react to things or, you know, the triggers and the stimuli I have. I'll flinch with a loud noise."

Jackie said she would tell the Uvalde children to not bottle up their feelings and to talk to family and friends.

"Because it's so important to talk this stuff through and know that their feelings are validated and that we're going to do everything that we can to make sure that things like this don't have to happen," she said.

"We've been through a similar thing and we want them to know that we care about them and they're loved," Jackie said.

'I HAVE JUST NOW GOTTEN THE ABILITY TO SAY I AM FROM SANDY HOOK.'

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 17 of 65

The days that followed her brother Chase's death at Sandy Hook Elementary are hard for Brittany Kowalski to remember. She does remember how trauma was inflicted on her family by others.

People spreading misinformation that the shooting was staged by actors emerged, the town was filled with media and a police officer guarded the family's driveway.

"Between harassing phone calls from Sandy Hook 'truthers,' international news people trying to come into the house while we mourned the loss of my brother, having to keep the blinds down for weeks, maybe even months, because photographers were walking through the woods to get around the police vehicle in our driveway ... It felt like an alternate universe," she said.

She was a freshman in a math class at Newtown High School when the shooting started, and the school went into lockdown. She and other students with siblings at Sandy Hook were called into an auditorium. She called her parents, but there was no answer.

"I couldn't tell you how many people were in the room, but it felt like the sea of people was thinning out in both the slowest yet fastest time frame," she said. "All of the people dissipated until I was the last person who hadn't heard back."

Over the next several years, she said, she would lie and tell people she was from other nearby towns. She calls it avoiding the "Oh, you're from Sandy Hook" conversation. She didn't want to console people for how they felt about what she had lived through.

"The feeling of empathy and pity are too similar when you are known due to a traumatic event that had global coverage. It's been almost 10 years and I have just now gotten the ability to say 'I am from Sandy Hook' without the full amount of anxiety tangled into it."

She would tell the children of Uvalde that you don't have to grieve the same way the person next to you is grieving. She has Chase's ashes tattooed on her chest.

"I still go to therapy, I still have days that feel like I have a rain cloud over my head but I have always been able to pull myself out of it or have someone in my support system give me a little extra help when needed. Texas brought up a lot of old emotions that I thought I had fully worked through. The disappointment, the anxiety and the hole in my heart seemed to rip back open."

Putin, Xi to meet in Uzbekistan next week, official says

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping will meet next week at a summit in Uzbekistan, a Russian official said Wednesday.

The two leaders will meet at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit, held in the Uzbek city of Samarkand on Sept. 15-16, Russian Ambassador to China Andrei Denisov told reporters.

"Less than 10 days from now another meeting of our leaders will take place at the SCO summit in Samarkand. We are actively preparing for it," Denisov was quoted by Russia's state news agency Tass as saying.

The visit to Uzbekistan, if it goes ahead, will be Xi's first foreign trip in 2½ years. Russian media also reported Xi's plans to visit Kazakhstan prior to the summit in Uzbekistan, but the reports have remained unconfirmed.

When asked about the Uzbekistan trip, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a daily briefing Wednesday: "On your question, I have nothing to offer."

Putin and Xi last met in Beijing in February, weeks before the Kremlin sent troops into Ukraine. The two presidents oversaw the signing of an agreement pledging that relations between the sides would have "no limits." It remains unclear whether Xi knew at the time of Russia's plan to launch what Moscow is calling "a special military operation" in Ukraine.

While offering its tacit support for Russia's campaign in Ukraine, China has sought to appear neutral and avoid possible repercussions from supporting the Russian economy amid international sanctions.

Moscow and Beijing have increasingly aligned their foreign policies to oppose liberal democratic forces in Asia, Europe and beyond, making a stand for authoritarian rule with tight borders and little regard for free speech, minority rights or opposition politics.

The Russian military held sweeping military drills that began last week and ended Wednesday in the

country's east that involved forces from China, another show of increasingly close ties between Moscow and Beijing amid tensions with the West over the military action in Ukraine.

Even though Moscow and Beijing in the past rejected the possibility of forging a military alliance, Putin has said that such a prospect can't be ruled out. He also has noted that Russia has been sharing highly sensitive military technologies with China that helped significantly bolster its defense capability.

Trump-backed Diehl to take on Healey in Mass. governor race

By STEVE LeBLANC Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Geoff Diehl, a former state representative endorsed by former President Donald Trump, has won the Republican nomination for Massachusetts governor over businessman Chris Doughty, who was considered the more moderate candidate in the race.

The victory for Diehl sets up a general election contest against Democratic Attorney General Maura Healey, who would be the first openly gay person and the first woman elected governor of Massachusetts if she wins in November. The state's current governor, Republican Charlie Baker, decided against seeking a third term.

Republican voters made Massachusetts the latest blue state this midterm season to nominate a Trump loyalist in a high-profile race, potentially dooming the party's chances of winning in November. Voters in Connecticut and Maryland, liberal states where centrist Republicans have found some success in previous elections, also selected far-right candidates to go up against a Democrat in the general election.

"We're going to run a campaign that is focused specifically on 'We the people' — our freedoms, our rights and our prosperity," Diehl told supporters Tuesday evening. "Massachusetts is no longer the place where people flock to in order for the protection of their freedoms and to build a better life for the families. Now it's a place people are leaving."

Healey, whose only rival for the nomination dropped out of the race but remained on the ballot, will be the heavy favorite in November against Diehl in one of the most liberal states in the nation.

At her victory party Tuesday night before the GOP race was called for Diehl, Healey told cheering supporters that regardless of which candidate emerged as her opponent, "We know he'll be out of touch with the values we stand for." Speaking of both candidates, she added, "They'll bring Trumpism to Massachusetts."

Diehl, the favorite among state Republican Party delegates, has ties to Trump stretching to 2016, when he served as co-chair for Trump's presidential campaign in Massachusetts. Diehl has also opposed COVID-19 protocols and hailed the Supreme Court ruling overturning *Roe v. Wade*.

Doughty said he supported some of Trump's initiatives but wanted to focus on challenges facing Massachusetts, which he said is increasingly unaffordable.

During a telerally Monday night, Trump said Diehl would "rule your state with an iron fist."

Diehl has come to embrace Trump's false claims that he won the 2020 election. Diehl said last year that he didn't think it was a "stolen election" but later said the election was rigged, despite dozens of courts, local officials and Trump's own attorney general saying the vote was legitimate. Doughty, meanwhile, has said he believes President Joe Biden was legitimately elected.

The challenge for Diehl in the general election is that support of Trump may play well among the party's conservative wing but could be a political albatross in a state where registered Republicans make up less than 10% of the electorate compared to about 31% for Democrats and about 57% for independents.

Diehl faced a similar struggle when he challenged Democratic U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren in 2018. He won a three-way Republican primary only to capture just over a third of the vote in the general election.

Massachusetts has a history of electing fiscally conservative, socially moderate Republican governors — including former Govs. William Weld and Mitt Romney — to provide a check on overwhelming Democratic legislative majorities. Baker, another Republican in that mold, has remained popular in the state.

Healey has said she would work to expand job training programs, make child care more affordable and modernize schools. Healey has also said she would protect "access to safe and legal abortion in Massachusetts" in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 19 of 65

But Healey does face an oddball hurdle in Massachusetts — the so-called curse of the attorney general. Since 1958, six former Massachusetts attorneys general have sought the governor's office. All failed.

The state has previously had a female governor, though she was appointed to the position. Republican Jane Swift served as acting governor after Gov. Paul Cellucci stepped down in 2001 to become U.S. ambassador to Canada.

Tuesday's election also featured several statewide contested Democratic primaries, including for attorney general and secretary of the commonwealth.

Former Boston City Councilor Andrea Campbell defeated workers' rights attorney Shannon Liss-Riordan in the Democratic primary for attorney general. A week before the election, a third candidate, former assistant attorney general Quentin Palfrey, announced he was suspending his campaign and endorsed Campbell; he remained on the ballot.

Campbell would be the first Black woman to hold the office in Massachusetts if elected in November. She will face Republican Jay McMahan, a trial attorney who previously ran against Healey and lost.

Liss-Riordan pumped millions of her own money into her campaign — including \$6.3 million in August alone. Healey earned an annual salary of more than \$185,000 as attorney general.

Incumbent Democratic Secretary of the Commonwealth William Galvin, who is vying for an eighth term in office, defeated fellow Democrat Tanisha Sullivan, president of the Boston branch of the NAACP.

Galvin will face Republican Rayla Campbell in November. Campbell would be the first Black person to serve in the post if elected.

In the Democratic three-way race for lieutenant governor, Salem Mayor Kim Driscoll defeated state Rep. Tami Gouveia of Acton and state Sen. Eric Lesser of Longmeadow.

In the Democratic primary for state auditor, state Sen. Diana DiZoglio defeated transportation advocate Chris Dempsey for the chance to succeed Suzanne Bump, a Democrat who opted not to seek reelection. DiZoglio will face Republican Anthony Amore in November.

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

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

This Old House: Restoration honors Black Atlanta postmaster

By MICHAEL WARREN Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Most contractors told them they would tear it down. A two-story five-bedroom Victorian built around 1900, it was abandoned and collapsing, with vines reaching its rafters. Elegant features were scavenged long ago. The house's place in American history was at risk of disappearing.

An Atlanta couple bought the property nevertheless, hoping to fix it up and live there with their two children. Eventually they found partners who also recognized the importance of the house built by early civil rights activist Luther Judson Price.

Kysha and Johnathan Hehn's renovation plans shifted to fast-forward when a neighbor connected them with "This Old House." The PBS show chronicled their renovation in eight episodes to stream Sept. 29, weaving Black history in with its usual home improvement tips.

"An old house that has fallen into disrepair is our bread and butter," the show's host, Kevin O'Connor, said before a scene involving an antique door. "But Kysha and Jonathan continue to surprise me with their determination that anyone who walks through the house is aware of the legacy."

Born enslaved by his plantation owner-father, Price was an early Clark College graduate who served as the federally appointed postmaster of South Atlanta, executive secretary of a Masonic order and superintendent of the South Atlanta Methodist Episcopal Church, while his wife, Minnie Wright Price, a graduate of Atlanta University, "shared each of these positions with her husband," according to their obituaries in the Atlanta Daily World.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 20 of 65

The Prices also led voter registration drives for African Americans and organized support for the Republican Party of their time, according to the Atlanta Public Schools, which has a middle school named in his honor.

In the house, the Hehns now plan to create a community space downstairs where people will be welcomed for meetings, to share food and stories and learn about a family that tried to point the South toward justice after the Civil War.

The Prices married in 1889 and built the home several years later along a two-block stretch of Gammon Avenue, flanked by the Gammon Theological Seminary and Price's general store and post office. It was the hub of what was then called Brownsville, an upwardly mobile community that prospered even as Southern whites crushed federal efforts to help Black people rise from slavery's political, social and economic legacy.

Then came a nightmare in September 1906, when a white mob that had killed at least 25 Black people in downtown Atlanta and ransacked the area, chasing rumors that Price had supplied his neighbors with weapons.

"Can you imagine seeing this mob of people coming toward you? Just imagine what your emotions would have been, with people coming to your house and neighborhood because of the color of your skin?" said Kysha Hehn, shuddering at the trauma they must have felt.

Price was narrowly rescued, staying at the county jail for his own safety until the violence ended. "A lot of white people in Atlanta who had contact with him went out of their way to protect him," said his grandson, Farrow Allen.

The massacre prompted an exodus of Black people from Atlanta, and those who stayed were legally disenfranchised. While Luther and Minnie Price lived in the home until his death in 1936, their five children left Georgia, missing a chance at generational wealth through real estate. The home changed hands as the neighborhood declined, its assessed value falling below \$7,000 before the Hehns bought it, tax records show.

"The most graceful way to move forward is to be gentle and honest with the past, with pieces of our history that we cannot change, while moving forward with the intention of creating a more peaceful and compassionate world for everyone," Kysha Hehn said.

One small example: The Hehns urged the show's producers to avoid saying "master bedroom," given its connotations of slavery. O'Connor said they made the switch to "primary bedrooms" a while ago.

And while they'll acknowledge the trauma, she said visitors should know "there were birthdays here. There were celebrations here. We lived in joy, even when that was not what was expected for us to do."

"Everyone has been so kind and nice," she added, describing how one couple came over and said "Hey, we have Luther Price's mantelpiece, do you want it?" They had been keeping it in their basement nearby.

Another cherished discovery was the Ashanti symbol of "Sankofa" they saw in wrought-iron bars protecting a downstairs window.

"It's a bird that's facing forward, but its neck is craning backward and there's an egg on its back and the bird is picking up the egg, symbolizing how she's carrying the wisdom of the past and bringing it forward to the youth," Kysha Hehn said. "To have this symbol of Sankofa all around where people gathered is just a dream for me."

Shelling goes on near Ukraine nuclear plant, despite risks

By YURAS KARMANAU Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian renewed its shelling in the area of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, a local official said Wednesday, a day after the U.N. atomic watchdog agency pressed for the warring sides to carve out a safe zone there to protect against a possible catastrophe.

The city of Nikopol, located on the opposite bank of the Dnieper River from Europe's largest nuclear power plant, was fired on with rockets and heavy artillery, regional governor Valentyn Reznichenko said.

The reports of nearby shelling, which couldn't be independently verified, have caused international alarm. The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Rafael Grossi, warned the U.N. Security Council on Tuesday that "something very, very catastrophic could take place" at Zaporizhzhia.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 21 of 65

"There are fires, blackouts and other things at the (plant) that force us to prepare the local population for the consequences of the nuclear danger," Reznichenko said.

The potential peril led the U.N. atomic watchdog agency to urge Russia and Ukraine to establish a "nuclear safety and security protection zone" around the plant.

There are fears the fighting could trigger a catastrophe on the scale of the Chernobyl disaster in 1986. The plant was built during the Soviet era and is one of the 10 biggest in the world.

Neither Moscow nor Kiev officials would immediately commit to the idea of a safety zone, saying more details of the proposal were needed.

Russian President Vladimir Putin defied pressure to halt the war, saying Wednesday that Moscow will forge ahead with its military offensive in Ukraine until it achieves its goals. He also mocked Western attempts to stop Russia with sanctions.

The eastern city of Sloviansk came under Russian fire on Wednesday morning, damaging a school and another building, according to the head of the city administration Vadym Lyakh. He said the number of injuries wasn't yet known.

Three civilians were killed in Russian shelling in the Donetsk region, the Ukrainian presidential office said. Kharkiv city was hit by rockets twice during the night.

But Ukrainian forces have taken control of an unspecified number of towns in the Kherson region, according to Nataliya Humenyuk, a spokesperson for the southern military command. She said details would come later from the military leadership.

The U.K. defense ministry said there had been heavy fighting on three fronts: in the north, near Kharkiv; in the east in the Donbas; and in the south in Kherson Oblast.

Amid a Ukrainian counterattack in the east, "multiple concurrent threats spread across 500 kilometers (310 miles) will test Russia's ability to coordinate operational design and reallocate resources across multiple groupings of forces," the ministry said Wednesday.

The Russian military held large-scale military drills that began last week and ended Wednesday in the country's east that involved forces from China. It was seen as another show of increasingly close ties between Moscow and Beijing amid tensions with the West over the military action in Ukraine.

EXPLAINER: Why is Xi Jinping's Central Asia trip important?

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese President and head of the ruling Communist Party Xi Jinping is expected to meet with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin during a visit the neighboring Central Asian nations of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan this month, in what would be his first overseas visits since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak in late 2019.

Xi, 69, has participated in global gatherings by video link, but his physical absence and those of other top Chinese leaders has thrown a shadow over Beijing's global political and economic ambitions. Xi has only left mainland China to make a one-day visit to the semi-autonomous city of Hong Kong on July 1 to speak at a ceremony commemorating the 25th anniversary of its handover from British to Chinese rule. Xi has overseen a sweeping crackdown on civil rights in the city since pro-democracy protests in 2019, with opposition voices either imprisoned, forced into exile or intimidated into silence.

According to Russian media, Xi will attend a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Uzbekistan where he will meet with Putin. The two last met in Beijing in January in Beijing, just weeks before Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

On that occasion, they issued a joint statement declaring their relationship had "no limits." Beijing has since refused to criticize Russian aggression or even describe it as an invasion, while condemning sanctions against Moscow and blaming the U.S. and NATO for provoking the conflict.

A brief look at the issues surrounding Xi's visit:

WHAT ARE THE STAKES FOR XI GOING ABROAD?

Xi is at a crucial inflection point in his political career as he seeks — and is fully expected to receive — a third five-year term as Communist Party leader. That's a break with precedent that has limited members

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 22 of 65

of the party's all-powerful Politburo Standing Committee to two terms in an effort to prevent a return of the one-man dictatorial rule of the founder of the People's Republic, Mao Zedong.

The party, which brooks no opposition, has total control over politics, information and the media and Xi faces no open threats. However, discontent has at times been raised over his consolidation of total power, a sharply slowing economy, a relentless anti-corruption campaign that has targeted political opponents and the hard-line "zero-COVID" measures mandating strict lockdowns, quarantines, testing and masking that has taken a toll on the economy and society.

At the same time, relations with the U.S., Australia and much of Europe have deteriorated over China's human rights record, its often abrasive diplomacy, assertions of sovereignty in the South China Sea and threats to attack Taiwan. Along with COVID-19 travel concerns, all those factors have contributed to Xi's apparent reluctance to travel overseas for state visits and international gatherings.

WHAT IS THE SCO AND WHAT IS XI HOPING TO GAIN?

Alongside Russia, China dominates the eight-member SCO, which also includes most of the former Soviet Central Asian states, India and Pakistan. China has used the bloc to expand its influence in what was Moscow's backyard, including taking part in multinational military exercises displaying the capabilities of its fast-modernizing armed forces. China also sees the grouping as a counterweight to NATO and U.S. alliances in the Asia-Pacific.

The dynamic in the region has changed over recent months, however, with the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has drawn tepid support at best from most of the other SCO members. Xi may be hoping a meeting with Putin at the summit will bolster domestic perceptions of him as standing up to Western opposition to the Ukraine war and burnish his nationalist credentials at a time relations with the U.S. grow increasingly tense over trade, technology, Taiwan and other issues.

Coming just ahead of the party congress, the overseas visits would also show Xi is confident of his position and support among the party's 96 million members, his six colleagues on the Politburo Standing Committee and leaders of the party's powerful military branch, the People's Liberation Army. As always, the party remains swathed in a veil of secrecy, and travel by top leaders is almost never announced until the last minute, or even not until they return from their trips.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT XI'S TRAVEL PLANS

Xi and Putin will meet in the Uzbek city of Samarkand on Sept. 15-16, Russian Ambassador to China Andrei Denisov was quoted as saying by Russia's state news agency Tass.

Xi is also expected to attend a Group of 20 summit in Indonesia in mid-November, bolstering China's position as the world's second largest economy and a key link in supply chains for goods from cell phones to dishwashers. Separately, China has told Thailand that Xi would attend a meeting in Bangkok of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum shortly after the G-20, "if he is not preoccupied with other responsibilities."

Many leaders combine a trip to APEC and the G-20. China has not confirmed that Xi would attend either gathering.

Coincidentally, Xi's visit to Kazakhstan on Sept. 14, according to that country's Foreign Ministry, will overlap with a trip to the nation's capital by Pope Francis, who will be attending the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

China expelled all foreign priests shortly after the Communists seized power amid civil war in 1949, and continues to have no formal relations with the Vatican. While the party ended its ban on religion more than three decades ago, Xi has led a push to demand Christian, Islamic and other religious leaders pledge loyalty to the party and follow its dictates in relations with overseas groups.

Chelsea fires coach Thomas Tuchel after poor start to season

By STEVE DOUGLAS AP Sports Writer

Thomas Tuchel was fired by Chelsea on Wednesday, only one month into the season and just days after the club concluded a Europe-high spending spree of nearly \$300 million in the transfer window.

The decision by Chelsea's new ownership, fronted by Los Angeles Dodgers part-owner Todd Boehly, came a day after the team surprisingly lost to Dinamo Zagreb 1-0 in its first group match of the Champions League.

Tuchel, who has been a frustrated and prickly figure after matches this season, said "everything is missing" when he summed up Chelsea's performance against Dinamo and complained that his players "lacked hunger."

Chelsea has lost two of its first six games — to Leeds and Southampton — in an underwhelming start to the Premier League that has seen the club's new signings fail to gel.

"As the new ownership group reaches 100 days since taking over the club, and as it continues its hard work to take the club forward, the new owners believe it is the right time to make this transition," Chelsea said in a statement.

Tuchel was in charge for a year and a half, winning the Champions League only six months into his tenure. Chelsea faded in the second half of last season — Tuchel's only full campaign at the helm — and was eliminated in the quarterfinals of the Champions League before finishing third in the Premier League, 19 points behind champion Manchester City.

That came in a period where Chelsea was changing ownership after Roman Abramovich was forced to put the London club on the market after being sanctioned by the British government for what it called his enabling of Russian President Vladimir Putin's "brutal and barbaric invasion" of Ukraine.

That led to Chelsea's sale for 2.5 billion pounds (\$3.1 billion) to a consortium fronted by Boehly, who quickly made himself chairman as well as interim sporting director in charge of transfers.

Raheem Sterling, Kalidou Koulibaly and Marc Cucurella came in for big fees during the offseason, before the final days of the transfer window saw Chelsea spend 75 million pounds (\$87 million) on French center back Wesley Fofana and then bring in Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang from Barcelona to plug a gap in its striker options.

Aubameyang cited playing under Tuchel before — at Borussia Dortmund — as a benefit of the move and was handed a debut against Dinamo, which proved to be Tuchel's last game in charge.

Beijing hounds Chinese church seeking safety overseas

By TASSANEE VEJPONGSA and DAKE KANG Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Days after flying to Thailand to seek asylum, members of a Chinese church huddled in a restaurant to share their stories with journalists. But when they peered over their shoulders, they spotted strangers taking videos of them with cellphones.

In seconds, they scattered, fearing Chinese state security had come for them yet again.

"Political pressure is rising, and there's more and more ideological control," said Pastor Pan Yongguang, whose church has been on the run for years. "The persecution is growing worse."

The story of the exile of the Shenzhen Holy Reformed Church illustrates how the Chinese government is going to increasing lengths to control religious faith and its citizens, even far outside its borders.

Since leaving China for South Korea's resort island of Jeju three years ago, Pan's 61 congregants have been stalked, harassed, and received threatening calls and messages despite fleeing hundreds of kilometers (miles) away, he said. Relatives back in China have been summoned, interrogated and intimidated. In one case, Chinese diplomats refused to issue a member's newborn child a passport, rendering the baby stateless.

The government's tactics against the church echo ones used against the Uyghurs and other Chinese ethnic minorities abroad, as well as fugitives accused of corruption, to coerce them to return to China.

In China, Christians are legally allowed to worship only in churches affiliated with Communist Party-controlled religious groups, but for decades, the authorities largely tolerated independent, unregistered "house churches." They have tens of millions of worshippers, possibly outnumbering those in the official groups.

However, in recent years, house churches have come under heavy pressure, with many prominent ones

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 24 of 65

shut down. Unlike previous crackdowns, such as Beijing's ban of Falun Gong, a spiritual movement it labels a cult, the authorities have also targeted some believers not explicitly opposed to the Chinese state.

Most members of Pan's church are young, married middle-class couples, with their children making up about half the group.

Bob Fu, founder of ChinaAid, a Christian group helping Pan, cited tightening controls on religion under Chinese leader Xi Jinping aimed at rooting out foreign influence and bolstering national security.

"What national security threat?" Fu said. "They're not going to public squares, they're not trying to shame the Chinese government. They're just trying to seek religious freedom."

The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the matter was "not a diplomatic question" when asked for comment.

Ministering in China was never easy, Pan said. Since starting the church in 2012, it has had to move from house to house as authorities ordered landlords to turn them away. Police kept close track of church gatherings, recording attendees and hauling Pan in for questioning from time to time. The questions grew sharper after they discovered he was ordained into the Presbyterian church in Philadelphia, sharper still after new religious regulations in 2018. Police homed in on his ties overseas.

"They want to seal off Chinese churches from the outside world," Pan said.

Pan said the church began thinking of leaving after his friend, an outspoken pastor from the same denomination, was arrested.

The final straw came after millions began taking to the streets of Hong Kong in 2019 to protest Beijing's tightening grip on the city. Pan said they had no connection to the protests, but authorities in their city of Shenzhen on the mainland bordering Hong Kong were on high alert under "quasi-martial law." The church came under excruciating pressure.

Pan decided it was time to put the matter to a vote. Most members elected to leave.

"At the time, I thought maybe we could return after things settled down," said Nie Yunfeng, who joined the church months after its founding. "I never imagined things would get this bad."

At the beginning of this year, her parents were summoned by police and questioned about Nie's faith, as were dozens of relatives of other church members who had left for South Korea. Officers all over the country, from central Hubei province to tropical Hainan island, threatened the relatives with confiscation of state benefits or the closure of their businesses if the congregants didn't return to China.

"Your descendants may suffer," they told Nie's terrified father. "Tell them to come back right now, or else they will face serious consequences."

Officers found Pan's brother, sisters and mother and accused Pan of "treason," "collusion with foreign forces" and "subversion of state power." Evidence obtained by Pan and seen by the AP indicates that state security was ordered to investigate the church.

They left South Korea for Thailand after meetings with local and U.S. officials made it clear that prospects for refuge were dim. Despite being home to a large, active Christian population, South Korea's cultural and ethnic homogeneity can make it unfriendly toward refugees. Government statistics show less than 1% of asylum seekers were granted refuge there last year.

So, the church decided to flee again. On Monday, church members gathered outside the United Nations refugee office in Bangkok. They piled manila envelopes stuffed with asylum papers on a mailbox hanging by the entrance.

In Bangkok, members have split between different hotels and attend Sunday service on Zoom, wary of being tracked by Chinese police. They spend their days praying, worrying about an uncertain future.

Xie Jianqing, a church elder, said the transition has been tough. The church members, largely white-collar workers in the glittering high-tech metropolis of Shenzhen, had to get used to picking fruit and digging dirt in the volcanic soil of Jeju island. Now, they have no work, and their future is even cloudier.

Still, such sacrifices are worth it, Xie said. In China, he wasn't able to give his children the religious upbringing he wanted because state schools are compulsory and mandate an atheist, communism-infused curriculum. Abroad, he said, his children can learn about the God he believes in.

"We're willing to pay this price," he said. "God always has the best plan."

Video of child refugee in Libya sheds light on rampant abuse

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Cowering in a bare corner, the 15-year-old boy begs for mercy and holds up his arms, trying to fend off the rifle pointed at his face. "Where is the money? Where is the money?" the holder of the rifle barks, over and over.

The unseen man pulls the trigger. "Click-click-click!" The magazine is empty, it seems. The man wants to scare him, and it works. The boy flinches with each click.

"Where is the money? Where is the money?" the man keeps shouting, swatting the boy on the head with the rifle muzzle. "I swear, I don't have," the boy cries.

The boy, Mazen Adam, a refugee in Libya from Sudan's conflict-torn Darfur region, was kidnapped last week by unknown gunmen demanding ransom. Hours after the video depicting this scene spread on social media, the boy's father was taken by gunmen from his home in western Libya.

Their saga is all too common in the chaotic, war-torn Mediterranean country, where powerful militias and traffickers have for years taken advantage of the desperation of migrants fleeing wars and poverty and trying to reach Europe. But the abuse is rarely caught on-camera, and the story of the boy and his father has raised concerns among regular Libyans and rights workers.

The video has underscored how abuses, torture, sexual violence and killings of migrants are rampant in Libya, where the European Union is using fragments of the broken-down state as an out-sourced policeman to block migrants from reaching its shores, trapping them there.

Libya has been in chaos since a NATO-backed uprising toppled and killed longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi in 2011. The country has split into many factions, each supported by rogue militias and foreign governments.

Without a functioning government for most of the past decade, the country became a hub for migrants, with thousands coming in every year from Arab nations or sub-Saharan Africa, aiming to cross the Mediterranean to Europe.

A lucrative trafficking business has flourished and militias, most of which are on the government payroll, are involved at every stage. They sometimes receive payments from the smugglers who arrange the migrants' journeys. Militias often kidnap migrants and torture them to extort money from them.

Militias are part of the official state forces tasked with intercepting migrants at sea, including in the coast guard. They also run state detention centers, where abuses of migrants are common. As a result, militias — some of them led by warlords the U.N. has sanctioned for abuses — benefit from millions in funds the European Union gives to Libya to stop the migrant flow to Europe.

U.N.-commissioned investigators said last year such practices may amount to crimes against humanity. The U.N.'s refugee agency has warned that Libya "isn't a country of asylum, nor a place of safety."

Fleeing Sudan's Darfur, Mohamed Adam arrived in Libya with his four children in December 2017. A few months earlier, his wife died when their house was set on fire during a bout of tribal violence in Darfur.

Adam settled in Tripoli, waiting for the opportunity to reach Europe. He and his children were registered with the U.N. refugee agency, UNHCR, as asylum-seekers, according to a registration document shared with The Associated Press. Adam found work as a day laborer.

The AP spoke to Adam by phone. A few hours later, he was abducted by armed men in uniform, according to his 20-year-old daughter, Rehab Adam.

He described how in January, despite their recognized asylum-seeker status, the whole family was rounded up in a crackdown on migrants by Libyan authorities. They were held for over three months in a detention center in the town of Ain Zara, where guards abused them and burned their few belongings, he said.

They were released on April 25 after intervention by the UNHCR, he said. They then moved to Warshefana, a town on Tripoli's southwestern outskirts where living expenses were cheaper.

The town is also home to militias that have been implicated in human trafficking, said Tarik Lamloum, a Libyan activist working with the Belaady Organization for Human Rights.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 26 of 65

Mazen, the second oldest of the four siblings, worked also as a day laborer in farms and workshops to help the family survive. On Aug. 30, he left home in the morning for work as usual. But he did not return.

That afternoon, Adam received a call from another Sudanese woman in Libya, telling him that his son was likely kidnapped. The woman sent him the video of Mazen being abused, which she had seen on a WhatsApp group of Sudanese migrants. How the video made it there is unclear, but it's highly likely that Mazen's captors wanted it to reach his family to pressure them to send money. Migrants are regularly held for ransom inside Libya's formal and informal detention centers, although they are usually told to contact family in a phone call.

In the video, Mazen's captor demands 5,000 Libyan dinars, around \$1,000, and tells the boy to call friends or family to get it.

"Is he still alive or dead?" his father, Adam said, speaking hours after the video emerged. "I don't have the money to free him."

In response to a request for comment, UNHCR said it was aware of the "distressing video ... and is following up on it and in direct contact with the family."

Lamloum, the activist, says the U.N. agency should have been able to do more to protect the family, whether providing them shelter or hurrying their resettlement abroad, arguing that Libyan authorities in practice don't recognize the agency's papers for asylum seekers.

The video was shared on social media by activists in Sudan and by other Libyans worried for the boy's safety. A day after it appeared, three vehicles pulled in front of Adam's house in Warshefana. Rehab said armed men got out and took her father away.

No group claimed responsibility for the child's abduction nor his father's detention. A spokesman for the Tripoli-based government did not answer phone calls or a message seeking comment.

Now Rehab and her younger sister and brother, 11-year-old Manasek and 9-year-old Mustafa, are at a U.N. refugee agency facility in Tripoli, waiting for news.

"We don't know where our father and brother are," she said. "God willing, we will reunite soon," she said.

EXPLAINER: What help are North Korean weapons to Russia?

By HYUNG-JIN KIM and KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea is apparently moving to sell millions of rockets and artillery shells — many of them likely from its old stock — to its Cold War ally Russia.

Russia has called a U.S. intelligence report on the purchasing plan "fake." But U.S. officials say it shows Russia's desperation with the war in Ukraine and that Moscow could buy additional military hardware from North Korea.

The ammunitions North Korea reportedly intends to sell to Moscow are likely copies of Soviet-era weapons that can fit Russian launchers. But there are still questions over the quality of the supplies and how much they could actually help the Russian military.

WHAT EXACTLY WILL NORTH KOREA SUPPLY TO RUSSIA?

Slapped by international sanctions and export controls, Russia in August bought Iranian-made drones that U.S. officials said had technical problems. For Russia, North Korea is likely another good option for its ammunitions supply, because the North keeps a significant stockpile of shells, many of them copies of Soviet-era ones.

North Korea "may represent the single biggest source of compatible legacy artillery ammunition outside of Russia, including domestic production facilities to further supplies," said Joseph Dempsey, research associate for defense and military analysis at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS).

Lee Illwoo, an expert with the Korea Defense Network in South Korea, said both North and South Korea -- split along the world's most heavily fortified border for more than 70 years -- keep tens of millions of artillery shells each. North Korea will likely sell older shells that it wants to replace with newer ones for multiple rocket launch systems or sophisticated missiles in its front-line army bases, he said.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 27 of 65

But Bruce Bennett, a senior security expert at the California-based Rand Corporation, said most of the artillery rounds to be sent to Russia are likely to be ammunition for small arms, such as AK-47 rifles or machine guns.

"It's not millions of artillery shells and rockets – that's more than the likely consumption. It could be millions of small arms rounds," Bennett said.

HOW GOOD ARE NORTH KOREAN WEAPONS?

According to an IISS assessment, North Korea has an estimated 20,000 artillery pieces including multiple rocket launchers in service, a number that Dempsey described as "significantly more than any other country in the world."

North Korea's state media have called its artillery guns "the first arm of the People's Army and the most powerful arm in the world" that can reduce enemy position into "a sea of flames."

But its old artillery systems, whose ammunitions will likely be supplied to Russia, have a reputation for poor accuracy.

During North Korea's artillery bombardment of South Korea's front-line Yeonpyeong Island in 2010 that killed four people, Bennett said that only 80 of the 300-400 weapons North Korea should have fired likely hit their target. In his assessment, Lee said about half of the North Korean shells launched ended up falling into waters before reaching the island.

"That is miserable artillery performance. The Russians may experience the same thing, which will not make them very happy," Bennett said.

Observers doubt the usefulness of North Korean ammunition for the Russian campaign in Ukraine, which they say has depleted the military. There have been photos of barrel-busted Russian guns on social media.

It's unclear how serious Russian shortage of ammunitions is. In July, a senior U.S. defense official told reporters that Russia was launching tens of thousands artillery rounds each day and couldn't keep it up forever.

"While substantial stockpiles likely still exist, they may be increasingly infringing on those reserved for the contingency of a wider future conflict," Dempsey said.

NO NORTH KOREAN MISSILES EXPECTED

It's unlikely for North Korea to provide Russia with ballistic missiles that it views as crucial in its military strategies toward Washington and Seoul, said Yang Uk, an analyst at Seoul's Asan Institute for Policy Studies.

And if North Korea decides to supply missiles to Russia, it would need to send their launch platforms as well because Russia doesn't have launchers for the North's Scuds and other missiles. North Korea has developed a highly maneuverable, nuclear-cable ballistic missile that was likely modeled on Russia's Iskander. But the two missiles are of different sizes, according to Shin Jongwoo, a military expert at the Seoul-based Korea Defense and Security Forum,

There would be a number of items that North Korea could provide to Russia, given that the two countries share weapons systems going back to Soviet times. But the type of ammunitions North Korea would provide to Russia "are likely to be old and somewhere close to expiring," said Moon Seong Mook, an analyst at South Korea's Korea Research Institute for National Strategy.

WHAT COULD NORTH KOREA GET IN RETURN?

In return for weapons, North Korea will likely want food, fuel, warplane components and other materials from Russia. The North finds it difficult to buy such goods from abroad under U.N. sanctions imposed over its nuclear program, Shin said.

Yang said it's possible that North Korea is seeking advanced Russian weapons technologies that would boost its efforts to build more powerful, high-tech missiles targeting the United States and its allies.

"That would certainly be the worst scenario," Yang said.

According to Bennett, North Korea would be willing to be compensated with fuel. For its more advanced arms, it could seek advanced weapons technologies from Russia, possibly including those it needs for its

expected nuclear test, the first of its kind in five years, he said.

He said it would be difficult for Russia and North Korea to move the ammunitions over their narrow 15-kilometer (9-mile) long border, where there's only one, single-track rail bridge across a river. Bennett said China may help by allowing the use of its railways. Other experts say North Korea and Russia could use a sea route as well as their cross-border railway.

UK leader Truss holds 1st Cabinet meeting amid energy crisis

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Liz Truss is holding her first Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, after appointing a government diverse in race and gender and united in its support for the new leader's staunchly free-market views.

Truss will also face her political opponents for the first time as leader during the weekly Prime Minister's Questions session in the House of Commons.

Truss, 47, was appointed prime minister by Queen Elizabeth II on Tuesday after winning an internal election to lead the governing Conservative Party.

She immediately put her stamp on the government, clearing out many ministers from the administration of former Prime Minister Boris Johnson — notably those who had backed her leadership rival, Rishi Sunak.

She made Kwasi Kwarteng her Treasury chief, a key role for a Cabinet whose inbox is dominated by the energy crisis triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which threatens to push energy bills to unaffordable levels, shuttering businesses and leaving the nation's poorest people shivering at home this winter. Kwarteng is the first Black holder of the job, formally titled Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Truss ally Therese Coffey becomes Britain's first female deputy prime minister and also leads the health ministry as the state-funded National Health Service grapples with soaring demand and depleted resources in the wake of COVID-19.

For the first time, none of the U.K.'s "great offices of state" — prime minister, chancellor, foreign secretary and home secretary — is held by a white man. James Cleverly, whose mother is from Sierra Leone, is foreign secretary and Suella Braverman, who has Indian heritage, has been named home secretary, responsible for immigration and law and order.

In her first speech as prime minister on Tuesday, Truss said she would cut taxes to spur economic growth, bolster the NHS and "deal hands on" with the energy crisis, though she offered few details about how she would implement those policies. She is expected to unveil her energy plans on Thursday.

British news media reported that Truss plans to cap energy bills. The cost to taxpayers of that step could reach 100 billion pounds (\$116 billion).

"We shouldn't be daunted by the challenges we face," Truss said in her first speech as prime minister. "As strong as the storm may be, I know the British people are stronger."

Italy's fractured left taps young feminist to lift campaign

By COLLEEN BARRY Associated Press

MODENA, Italy (AP) — As far-right leader Giorgia Meloni's push to become Italy's first female premier gathers momentum, the country's fractured left is offering voters a contrasting style of feminist politics.

Elly Schlein, a 37-year-old U.S.-Italian national who grew up in Switzerland, cut her political organizing chops on two campaigns for former U.S. President Barack Obama. She is often compared with U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez because of her platform advocating social justice.

Schlein, a former deputy in the European Parliament, gained national attention in Italy 2½ years ago when she played a key role in blocking the right from taking power in her traditionally left-leaning region of Emilia-Romagna.

She famously confronted right-wing League leader Matteo Salvini at the time for his repeated failure to vote on immigration policy while sitting in the European Parliament, even though he gave fiery speeches at home against migrants.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 29 of 65

Schlein is now taking on Meloni, bringing a thoughtful, policy-packed voice to the Italian left's national campaign in a bid to prevent what opinion polls suggest is an inevitable victory for a right-wing coalition.

The 45-year-old Meloni's Brothers of Italy Party consistently has led polls going into the Sept. 25 parliamentary vote, putting her in position to be tapped as premier.

"Not all female leadership helps women," Schlein told an audience of several hundred at a weekend campaign rally at the Festa dell'Unita in Modena.

"It helps nothing to have a female premier if all the rights for other women are overturned, including control over their own bodies," she said, referring to growing concerns that Meloni would move to limit abortion.

As vice president of Emilia Romagna in charge of equality and environmental programs since 2020, Schlein has championed the rights of women, youth, migrants and the LGBTQ community.

She faults Italy's current political class with creating "paternalistic" policies that fail to consult the people they affect. In 2015, she quit the center-left Democratic Party (PD) over differences in the direction it was taking under Matteo Renzi, who was party leader and premier at the time.

In this election, Schlein remains outside the party structure, running as an independent candidate on the PD's Democratic and Progressive Italy list.

Drafting in Schlein to excite undecided voters and tap the youth vote is part of Democratic Party chairman Enrico Letta's long-term efforts to create a progressive coalition that might heal the Italian left's divisions.

But that effort failed miserably to bring into being an electoral coalition on the left for this vote. That has handed a clear advantage to the right-wing coalition made up of Meloni's far-right Brothers of Italy, Salvini's right-wing League and three-time former Premier Silvio Berlusconi's center-right Forza Italia.

"It is not a secret that I hoped for a broader coalition," Schlein told The Associated Press in Modena, speaking in her preferred language, Italian. "This didn't happen because of some tactical decisions, which I think were a mistake."

Letta ruled out an election alliance with one-time ally, the populist 5-Star Movement, after it helped topple Premier Mario Draghi's national unity government in July, against the wishes of the left.

And centrist parties refused to join Letta after he aligned with smaller parties further to the left.

On the campaign trail, the left's proposals — including a minimum salary, limiting short-term jobs and moving toward renewable energy sources — are often drowned out by right-wing rhetoric and tactics.

Meloni shocked opponents by posting on social media a video that purported to show a woman being raped in the street by an asylum-seeker. Salvini, meanwhile, has made repeated visits to overcrowded migrant centers, highlighting the problem even as arrivals are far below previous peaks.

"It is clear that we need to try to invert that right-wing rhetoric," Schlein said. "That is a rhetoric that finds an enemy a day, against which to hurl all the social anger, but which in reality does not give any solutions to the problems of the people. It is a strategy as old as it is cynical."

"You can dress things up and try to trick people," she added. "It is up to us to unmask this deceit for a better future."

In her appearances, Schlein spouts policy in rapid-fire speeches. She doesn't shy away from addressing fears, particularly among Italy's allies, and especially in Europe, that Meloni and her party's neo-fascist roots present a threat to democracy.

"Giorgia Meloni's models are (former U.S. President Donald) Trump, who fomented the attack on the Capitol ... and (Hungarian President Viktor) Orban, who as recently as a month and a half ago said that races shouldn't be mixed and who has substantially canceled the right of asylum in his country and who creates laws against the LGBTQ community," Schlein told the AP.

Schlein cut a popular figure at Modena's Festa dell'Unita, a traditional leftist gathering that combines the atmosphere of a country fair with politicking. She was greeted with applause when she entered a food tent, and was stopped by admirers as she walked along the midway.

Her political message, not unexpectedly, won praise in the heartland of Emilia-Romagna, which she adopted as her home region after graduating from law school in Bologna.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 30 of 65

Martina Lolli, a 24-year-old hairstylist from Modena, found strength in Schlein's feminist message. She said, "As a woman, I have hope that feminine solidarity, which I believe in, can change something, as Elly said."

"I am very worried, if the other woman wins," Lolli added, referring to Meloni. "If she wins I will not feel represented. At least I don't want to be represented by a political party that denies my rights."

Alessandro Corradi, a lifetime left-wing voter, walked away from the rally clutching a signed copy of Schlein's just-published book, impressed by her ideas.

"She has proposals, unlike politicians who only listen to polls and try to win votes, saying trite and coy things that are dull and repetitive," said Corradi, a bank employee who said the fractious state of the left "makes me want to cry."

Schlein's politics are untested on the national stage, and like Ocasio-Cortez, her emphasis on redistributing resources to the most fragile is broadly seen as left of the mainstream. But the fact that Letta not only tapped her, but has highlighted her role in his own appearances, suggests bigger things await.

"I think she has a lot of potential, because she has this mix of grassroots support and international connections, and she is actually not ideological," said Natalie Tocci, director of the International Affairs Institute, a think tank.

Schlein believes the left can still prevail in this month's election. She is focusing on the 40% of voters who, polls indicate, are undecided or are considering abstaining.

"I have never campaigned in an election where I didn't have opinion polls to overturn," Schlein said, citing both the 2020 Italian regional elections and her volunteer work on the Obama campaigns. "I hope that this happens also in this short, difficult campaign."

China earthquake deaths rise to 74 as lockdown anger grows

BEIJING (AP) — The death toll in this week's earthquake in western China has jumped to 74 with another 26 people still missing, the government reported Wednesday, as frustration rose with uncompromising COVID-19 lockdown measures that prevented residents from leaving their buildings after the shaking.

The 6.8 magnitude quake that struck just after noon Monday in Sichuan province caused extensive damage to homes in the Ganze Tibetan Autonomous Region and shook buildings in the provincial capital of Chengdu, whose 21 million citizens are under a strict COVID-19 lockdown.

Following the quake, police and health workers refused to allow anxious residents of apartment buildings out, adding to anger over the government's strict "zero-COVID policy" mandating lockdowns, quarantines and other restrictions, even while the rest of the world has largely reopened.

Footage circulating online showed residents of the central city of Wuhan, where the pandemic is believed to have originated in late 2019, chanting "lift the lockdown, refuse to be tested" at police.

The restrictions have prompted protests online and in person, rare in China's tightly controlled society where the all-powerful Communist Party can easily sentence people to months or years in prison on loosely defined charges such as "picking quarrels and provoking trouble."

In all, 65 million Chinese in 33 cities, including seven provincial capitals, are currently under varying levels of lockdown. The government is also discouraging domestic travel during the Mid-Autumn Festival on Saturday and the weeklong National Holiday at the start of October.

Outbreaks have been reported in 103 cities, the highest since the early days of the pandemic in early 2020.

Monday's quake was centered in a mountainous area of Luding county, which sits on the edge of the Tibetan Plateau roughly 200 kilometers (125 miles) from Chengdu, where tectonic plates grind up against each other.

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.

Candy, cash, gifts: How rewards help recovery from addiction

By CARLA K. JOHNSON AP Medical Writer

Harold Lewis has been fighting drug addiction for years, but only recently started thinking recovery could be fun.

The 59-year-old former cook earned small prizes — candy, gum, gift cards, sunglasses and headphones — for attending meetings and staying in treatment for opioid addiction during a 12-week program in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

“Recovery should be fun because you’re getting your life back,” Lewis said.

For an increasing number of Americans, addiction treatment involves not only hard work, but also earning rewards — sometimes totaling \$500 — for negative drug tests or showing up for counseling or group meetings.

There’s brain science behind the method, which is known as contingency management. And barriers to wider adoption of reward programs, such as government concerns about fraud, are starting to crumble.

“We’re in a state of desperation where we need to pull out all the stops and this is something that works,” said Dr. James Berry, who directs addiction medicine at West Virginia University.

U.S. overdose deaths climbed to a record high during the pandemic. While opioids are mostly to blame, deaths involving stimulants such as methamphetamines also are climbing. Often, people die with multiple drugs in their system.

Medication can help people quit abusing opioids, but stimulant addiction has no effective medicine. Rewards programs — especially when the dollar value increases with consistent performance — are widely recognized as the most effective treatment for people addicted to stimulants.

Since 2011, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has used the method with 5,700 veterans. Rewards are vouchers the vets redeem at their local canteen. Over the years, 92% of the urine tests done on these veterans have been negative for drugs, said Dominick DePhilippis of the VA’s substance use disorders program.

When done right, reward programs can be a bridge from the difficult days of early recovery to a better life, said Carla Rash, associate professor of medicine at UConn Health, who studies the method. It helps people make better decisions in the moment, tipping the scale when the immediate rewards of using drugs are difficult to resist.

The rewards can “provide a little bit of recognition for people’s efforts,” Rash said.

For Casey Thompson, 41, of Colville, Washington, the first month after quitting meth was the worst. Without stimulants, he felt burned out and exhausted.

“Even standing up, you could fall asleep,” Thompson said.

Earning gift cards for passing drug tests helped, he said. During his 12-week program, he received about \$500 in Walmart gift cards he spent on food, shirts, socks and shampoo. He’s a trained welder and is looking for work after a recent layoff.

“I’m a totally different person than I was,” said Thompson. “I was already planning on being clean, so it was just extra.”

More than 150 studies over 30 years have shown rewards work better than counseling alone for addictions including cocaine, alcohol, tobacco and, when used alongside medications, opioids.

The method is grounded in brain science. Psychologists have known for years that people who prefer small, immediate rewards over larger, delayed ones are vulnerable to addiction. They may vow to quit each morning and start using again by afternoon.

And neuroscientists have learned from imaging studies how addiction takes over the brain’s reward center, hijacking dopamine pathways and robbing people of the ability to enjoy simple pleasures.

“It’s very much using that same dopamine reward system that’s the basis for addictions to promote healthy behavior change,” said psychologist Stephen Higgins of the University of Vermont, who pioneered the method in 1991. His recent research shows it helps pregnant women quit smoking and improves the health of their newborns.

“Biologically, the use of substances lights up the same part of the brain that is lit up when a person

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 32 of 65

wins the lottery, falls in love or experiences something really positive and exciting," said psychologist Sara Becker of Northwestern University.

The same pathway is lit up if someone wins a reward.

"That's part of what's powerful about these programs," Becker said.

Support has never been stronger. The Biden administration backs the method in its National Drug Control Strategy. This fall, California will launch a pilot program designed to reward \$10 gift cards passing drug tests for stimulants. Oregon will use tax revenue from the state's legal marijuana industry to pay for similar incentives. Montana launched a program in March using a federal grant.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is working to revise its guidance on how much government grant money can be spent on prizes, rewards and cash cards. Researchers say the current \$75 limit per patient is arbitrary and ineffective and should be raised to \$599.

The method "is a widely studied and proven intervention that has been successful in treating people with a variety of substance use disorders," said Dr. Yngvild K. Olsen, who directs the U.S. government's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment.

Reward programs can be low tech — slips of paper drawn from a fish bowl — or high tech — using "smart" debit cards programmed so they cannot be spent at liquor stores or converted to cash at an ATM.

Maureen Walsh is a 54-year-old Philadelphia flower shop owner who stays off opioids with help from a smartphone app called DynamiCare. When she passes a saliva test, she earns cash on a smart card. She uses the money to treat herself to a new pair of shoes or make a donation to a favorite cause.

"The reward to me was knowing that I was clean and the test showed it," Walsh said.

For Lewis, the Connecticut man in recovery from opioids, a weekly prize drawing became a way for him to bring home gifts for his mother.

"The prizes make me feel good," he said. "But the prizes make my mother feel great. I'm talking Tony the Tiger GREAT!"

On a recent summer day, Lewis had earned the chance to pull 10 slips — 10 chances to win prizes, including a tablet computer. The big prize eluded him, but he won six small prizes and \$20 in grocery gift cards.

"Recovery is just not all balled-up fists and clutched teeth, you know what I mean?" Lewis said later. "It can be fun, where you can exhale and you can breathe and get excited — because you don't know what you're going to win today."

Steve Bannon expects to face new criminal charge in NY

By ERIC TUCKER and MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Steve Bannon, a longtime ally of former President Donald Trump, said Tuesday that he expects to be charged soon in a state criminal case in New York City.

Bannon, 68, plans to turn himself in on Thursday, according to a person familiar with the matter. The person insisted on anonymity to discuss an ongoing investigation.

The Washington Post, citing anonymous sources, reported that the state criminal case would resemble an earlier attempted federal prosecution, in which Bannon was accused of duping donors who gave money to fund a wall on the U.S. southern border.

That federal case ended abruptly, before trial, when Trump pardoned Bannon.

The Manhattan district attorney's office declined comment late Tuesday.

In a statement, Bannon said District Attorney Alvin Bragg "has now decided to pursue phony charges against me 60 days before the midterm election," accusing the Democratic prosecutor of targeting him because he and his radio show are popular among Trump's Republican supporters.

"The SDNY did the exact same thing in August 2020 to try to take me out of the election," Bannon said, referring to his arrest months before Trump's re-election loss.

Federal agents pulled Bannon from a luxury yacht off the Connecticut coast and arrested him on charges he pocketed more than \$1 million in wall donations.

"It didn't work then, it certainly won't work now," the former White House strategist said. "This is noth-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 33 of 65

ing more than a partisan political weaponization of the criminal justice system.”

Bannon, who had pleaded not guilty, was dropped from the federal case when Trump pardoned him on his last day in office in January 2021.

Two other men involved in the “We Build the Wall” project pleaded guilty in April. They had been scheduled to be sentenced this week, but that was recently postponed to December. A third defendant’s trial ended in a mistrial in June after jurors said they could not reach a unanimous verdict.

A president can only pardon federal crimes, not state offenses, but that doesn’t mean state-level prosecutors have carte blanche to try similar cases.

In 2019, then-Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. brought state mortgage fraud charges against Trump’s former campaign chairman Paul Manafort in what was widely seen as an attempt to hedge against a possible pardon.

But a judge threw the case out on double jeopardy grounds, finding that it was too similar to a federal case that resulted in Manafort’s conviction. (Manafort was later pardoned by Trump).

While Manafort’s New York case was pending, New York eased its double jeopardy protections, ensuring that state-level prosecutors could pursue charges against anyone granted a presidential pardon for similar federal crimes.

Bannon’s case differs because he was dropped from the federal case in its early stages. In most cases, double jeopardy is only a factor when a person has been convicted or acquitted of a crime.

In another case not covered by Trump’s pardon, Bannon was convicted in July on contempt charges for defying a congressional subpoena from the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. He is scheduled to be sentenced in October and faces up to two years in federal prison.

UN: At least \$1 billion needed to avert famine in Somalia

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. humanitarian chief predicted Tuesday that at least \$1 billion will be needed urgently to avert famine in Somalia in the coming months and early next year when two more dry seasons are expected to compound the historic drought that has hit the Horn of Africa nation.

Martin Griffiths said in a video briefing from Somalia’s capital Mogadishu that a new report from an authoritative panel of independent experts says there will be a famine in Somalia between October and December “if we don’t manage to stave it off and avoid it as had been the case in 2016 and 2017.”

The undersecretary-general for humanitarian affairs told U.N. correspondents that more than \$1 billion in new funds is needed in addition to the U.N. appeal of about \$1.4 billion. That appeal has been “very well-funded,” he said, thanks to the U.S. Agency for International Development, which announced a \$476 million donation of humanitarian and development aid in July.

The Famine Early Warning Systems Network, created by USAID, said in a report Monday that famine is projected to emerge later this year in three areas in Somalia’s southeastern Bay region, including Baidoa without urgent humanitarian aid.

Up to 7.1 million people across Somalia need urgent assistance to treat and prevent acute malnutrition and reduce the number of ongoing hunger-related deaths, according to a recent analysis by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification or IPC, used by the network to describe the severity of food insecurity.

The Horn of Africa region has seen four straight failed rainy seasons for the first time in over half a century, endangering an estimated 20 million people in one of the world’s most impoverished and turbulent regions.

Griffiths said meteorologists have predicted the likelihood of a fifth failed rainy season from October to December, and a sixth failed rainy season from January to March next year is also likely.

“This has never happened before in Somalia,” he said. “This is unprecedented.”

“We’ve been banging the drum and rattling the trees trying to get support internationally in terms of attention, prospects, and the possibilities and the horror of famine coming to the Horn of Africa -- here in Somalia maybe first, but Ethiopia and Kenya, probably they’re not far behind,” Griffiths said.

He said the U.N. World Food Program has recently been providing aid for up to 5.3 million Somalis,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 34 of 65

which is "a lot, but it's going to get worse if famine comes." He said 98% of the aid is given through cash distributions via telephones.

But many thousands are not getting help and hungry families in Somalia have been staggering for days or weeks through parched terrain in search of assistance.

Griffiths said a big challenge is to get aid to people before they move from their homes, to help avoid massive displacement.

Many Somalis raise livestock, which is key to their survival, but he said three million animals have died or been slaughtered because of the lack of rain.

"Continued drought, continued failure of rainy seasons, means that a generation's way of life is under threat," Griffiths said.

He said the international community needs to help Somalis find an alternative way of life and making a living, which will require development funding and funding to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Griffiths, a British diplomat, said the war in Ukraine has had an impact on humanitarian aid, with U.N. humanitarian appeals around the world receiving about 30% of the money needed on average.

"To those countries, which are traditionally very generous, my own included, and many others," he said. "Please don't forget Somalia. You didn't in the past. You contributed wonderfully in the past. Please do so now."

Suspect in deadly Canada stabbings has long criminal record

By ROB GILLIES and ROBERT BUMSTED Associated Press

JAMES SMITH CREE NATION, Saskatchewan (AP) — As a Canadian Indigenous community comes to grips with a deadly stabbing rampage by two of its own, many blamed rampant drug and alcohol use on the reserve that they linked to repeated failures by the government over many years.

One of the alleged attackers, Myles Sanderson, has 59 criminal convictions, according to parole documents. He'd been serving a sentence of four years and four months on charges that included assault with a weapon, assault on a peace officer and robbery when he was released.

Public Safety Minister Mendicino said he's been told by the parole board there will be an investigation into its assessment of Myles Sanderson.

"I want to know the reasons behind the decision" to release him, he said. "I'm extremely concerned with what occurred here."

Many of his past crimes happened when he was intoxicated, and he told parole officials substance use made him out of his mind. He had been sought for a parole violation since May.

"The drug problem and the alcohol problem on these reserves is way out of hand," said Ivor Wayne Burns, whose sister was killed in the weekend attacks. "We have dead people and we asked before for something to be done."

Sanderson, 32, and his brother Damien, are accused of killing 10 people and wounding 18 others in the attacks that spread across the rural reserve and into the nearby town of Regina. Damien's body was found Monday near the attacks, and police were investigating whether his brother killed him.

The reserve, population of about 1,900, gets its name from its chief, who signed an agreement over lands with the Canadian Crown and other tribes in 1876, according to its website. More tribal members live off the reserve, for about 3,400 members total.

Like many Canadian Indigenous communities, it has been scarred by a dark history.

From the 19th century until the 1970s, more than 150,000 native children in Canada were ripped from their families and placed in government-funded Christian residential boarding schools. The aim was to Christianize and assimilate them into mainstream society, which previous Canadian governments considered superior.

Indigenous leaders blame the legacy of abuse and isolation at those schools as a root cause of the epidemic rates of alcohol and drug addiction now on Canadian reservations.

"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

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 35 of 65

communities for our people," said Chief Bobby Cameron of the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations.

The parole board cited the intergenerational impacts of residential schools, saying it may have contributed to Myles Sanderson's criminal past. It wasn't clear, though, whether the brothers or family members attended the schools.

Myles Sanderson had a long criminal history.

His childhood was marked by violence, neglect and substance abuse and led to a "cycle of substance abuse, seeking out negative peers and violent behavior," the parole documents said. He lived between his father's home in a city and grandparents' house on a reserve. There was violence and abuse in both households, it said.

Sanderson started drinking and smoking marijuana at around age 12 to cope with problems, the document said. Cocaine followed soon after.

Parole documents said he barged into his ex-girlfriend's home in July 2017 while she was with friends, punched a hole in the door of a bathroom while his two children were hiding in a bathtub and threw a cement block at a vehicle parked outside.

He got into a fight a few days later at a store, threatening to kill an employee and burn down his parent's home, documents said.

That November he threatened an accomplice into robbing a fast food restaurant by hitting him in the head with a firearm and stomping on his head. He then stood watch during the robbery.

In April 2018, he stabbed two men with a fork while drinking and beat someone unconscious.

He got into trouble twice while in prison for having contraband before he was let out in August 2021 on statutory release. But he got into trouble that year and had his release changed for failing to be honest with his parole supervisor about continuing what he acknowledged was a "rocky" relationship with his common law spouse.

Myles Sanderson said his childhood "normalized substance abuse and violence."

But Myles Sanderson said he had "stayed sober, found employment assisting an Elder, arranged for a therapist to deal with domestic violence and other issues." And in February, the board canceled the suspensions, while adding conditions to limit and monitor contact with his common law spouse and children.

Parole documents also stated he should not enter into relationships — either intimate or non-sexual — with women unless he had prior written permission from his parole officer.

Sanderson received statutory release from prison in the summer of last year. It was revoked after he failed to communicate with his parole supervisor, but the board decided only to reprimand him.

"It is the Board's opinion that you will not present an undue risk to society if released on statutory release," it says.

In May, a Crime Stoppers bulletin was issued for Sanderson, warning he was unlawfully at large.

Sharna Sugarman, who was organizing a GoFundMe for the victims, questioned the parole board for releasing him and why Myles Sanderson was still on the loose so many months after he was deemed "unlawfully at large."

"That's just egregious to me," said Sugarman, a counselor who worked in the community in 2010 and 2011 and counted Gloria Lydia Burns as one of her clients. "If they claim that they've been looking for him, well you weren't looking that hard."

Menicino, Canada's public safety minister, said he wants "to know if any mistakes were made during the (parole) process."

"It has to be an independent review," he said.

Brazil on edge for a bicentennial Bolsonaro has made his own

By CARLA BRIDI and DIANE JEANTET Associated Press

BRASILIA, Brazil (AP) — President Jair Bolsonaro calls Brazil's bicentennial Wednesday a chance to celebrate the nation's proud history, but critics say he has transformed what should be a day of unity into a campaign event that they fear he will use to undermine next month's election in Latin America's fourth biggest democracy.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 36 of 65

Bolsonaro, who trails in polls before the Oct. 2 vote, has urged Brazilians to flood the streets, and tens of thousands of his supporters were expected to turn out in Brasilia, Sao Paulo and his hometown of Rio de Janeiro in a show of strength. The military planned displays in the capital and in Rio, with Bolsonaro attending.

The far-right nationalist has for years made a mission of encouraging Brazilian patriotism, and coopted the national colors of green and yellow as his own. He stacked his administration with military officers and repeatedly sought their support, most recently to cast doubt on the reliability of the nation's electronic voting system, without evidence.

His attacks on the voting system has prompted widespread concern among his opponents that he may follow former U.S. President Donald Trump's footsteps in rejecting election results. Analysts said they would be monitoring for incendiary comments Wednesday.

"Bolsonaro and his supporters have built this up into the most important day of the whole campaign. So he'll have to deliver some kind of red meat," said Brian Winter, vice president for policy at the Americas Society/Council of the Americas. "But everyone wants to know if he'll cross that line and create a genuine institutional crisis."

Following a military parade in Brasilia, Bolsonaro will attend another display in Rio along Copacabana beach, where his supporters often demonstrate. The latter will entail rifle salutes, cannon fire, flyovers, paratroopers and warships anchored offshore.

But Rio won't be seeing what the president had announced would be a big parade instead of the annual nonpartisan event downtown. Instead, Rio's mayor and military leaders settled on the more modest display at the beach site the president designated.

Bolsonaro, a former army captain and lawmaker for decades before winning the 2018 presidential election, has spent most of his first term locking horns with Supreme Court justices, some of whom are also top members of the electoral authority.

He has accused some judges of hamstringing his administration and favoring former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the poll frontrunner seeking to return to the post he held in 2003-2010. That has effectively turned those figures and their institutions into enemies for Bolsonaro's base, which represents roughly one-quarter of the electorate.

When Bolsonaro launched his reelection bid July 24, he asked supporters for "one last" show of support on Independence Day. "Those few deaf people in black robes have to understand what the voice of the people is," he said, referring to the justices.

The National Guard will beef up security outside the Supreme Court building Wednesday, and police will search people at checkpoints around the esplanade where the military display and a later rally will take place.

Since his campaign began, Bolsonaro has softened his tone regarding Independence Day. In the southern city of Curitiba last week, he told supporters to lower a banner demanding a military coup. And in a TV spot released Tuesday, he urged people to turn out for the bicentennial "with peace and harmony."

Carlos Ranulfo de Melo, a political scientist at Federal University of Minas Gerais, said this likely reflects campaign strategy to avoid fiery rhetoric and instead focus on the improving economy.

But Rodrigo Prando, a political science professor at Mackenzie Presbyterian University in Sao Paulo, said he expected Bolsonaro to rail against the electronic voting system and the Supreme Court.

The president is known for off-the-cuff outbursts. At last year's Independence Day rally, he pushed the country to the brink of an institutional crisis by proclaiming he would ignore rulings from a Supreme Court justice. He later backtracked, saying his comments came in the heat of the moment, and the boiling tension was reduced to a simmer.

There have been concerns about political violence. Some of his die-hard supporters attempted to storm the Supreme Court last year. In July, a federal prison guard killed a local official from da Silva's Workers' Party as he celebrated his birthday, and witnesses said he shouted support for Bolsonaro before pulling the trigger.

The newspaper Estado de S. Paulo, among others, reported Aug. 19 that military intelligence had identified risks of radical, pro-Bolsonaro movements attempting to infiltrate bicentennial celebrations to provoke turmoil and defend military intervention.

"There's a movement that tries to legitimize a coup if the result from the ballots doesn't please the Bolsonaristas," said Tai Nalon, co-founder of fact-checking agency AosFatos. "You didn't have that in 2018."

Members of Bolsonaro's campaign are hoping he stays on message. Congressman João Augusto Rosa, deputy chairman of Bolsonaro's Liberal Party, told The Associated Press he wants to see the president reach out to undecided voters, especially poorer Brazilians who have received increased welfare payments under his administration.

"We have to show all the benefits we were able to conquer for them," the congressman, better known as Capitão Augusto, said by phone. "It isn't the time to preach to the ones who have already converted, but instead to those who could still change their minds."

Fears high as Canadian police search for stabbing suspect

By ROB GILLIES and ROBERT BUMSTED Associated Press

JAMES SMITH CREE FIRST NATION, Saskatchewan (AP) — Fears ran high Tuesday on an Indigenous reserve in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan after police warned that the suspect in a deadly stabbing rampage over the weekend might be nearby and officers surrounded a house with guns drawn.

Police later sent out an alert that it was a false alarm and they had determined the suspect was not in the community but people remained nervous with his whereabouts unknown and a province-wide alert still in effect.

People on the James Smith Cree First Nation reserve were earlier told to stay inside. An Associated Press reporter saw people running and screaming as police shut down roads.

The fugitive's brother and fellow suspect, Damien Sanderson was found dead Monday near the stabbing sites. Police are investigating whether Myles Sanderson killed his brother. The brothers are accused of killing 10 people and wounding 18.

Leaders of the James Smith Cree Nation, where most of the stabbing attacks took place, blamed the killings on drug and alcohol abuse plaguing the community, which they said was a legacy of the colonization of Indigenous people.

James Smith Cree Nation resident Darryl Burns and his brother, Ivor Wayne Burns, said their sister, Gloria Lydia Burns, was a first responder who was killed while responding to a call. Burns said his 62-year-old sister was on a crisis response team.

"She went on a call to a house and she got caught up in the violence," he said. "She was there to help. She was a hero."

He blamed drugs and pointed to colonization for the rampant drug and alcohol use on reserves.

"We had a murder suicide here three years ago. My granddaughter and her boyfriend. Last year we had a double homicide. Now this year we have 10 more that have passed away and all because of drugs and alcohol," Darryl Burns said.

Ivor Wayne Burns also blamed drugs for his sister's death and said the suspect brothers should not be hated.

"We have to forgive them boys," he said. "When you are doing hard drugs, when you are doing coke, and when you are doing heroin and crystal meth and those things, you are incapable of feeling. You stab somebody and you think it's funny. You stab them again and you laugh."

Blackmore said police were still determining the motive, but the chief of the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations echoes suggestions the stabbings could be drug-related.

"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.

Blackmore said the criminal record of Myles Sanderson dates back years and includes violence.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 38 of 65

He was released from prison in August 2021, but then his release was suspended that November because he had lied about his ex-spouse and children living with him. At a hearing in February, the board canceled the suspension, while adding conditions to limit and monitor contact with the woman and his children.

Public Safety Minister Mendicino said he's been told by the parole board there will be an investigation into its assessment of Myles Sanderson and his subsequent release.

"I want to know the reasons behind the decision and I want to know if any mistakes were made during the process," Mendicino said. "It has to be an independent review."

"I'm extremely concerned with what occurred here," he said.

The stabbing attack was among the deadliest mass killings in Canada, where such crimes are less common than in the United States. 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. In 2019, a man used a van to kill 10 pedestrians in Toronto.

Deadly mass stabbings are rarer 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.

Police in Saskatchewan got their first call about a stabbing at 5:40 a.m. on Sunday, and within minutes heard about several more. In all, dead or wounded people were found at 13 different locations on the sparsely populated reserve and in the town, Blackmore said. James Smith Cree Nation is about 30 kilometers (20 miles) from Weldon.

Weldon residents have identified one of the dead as Wes Petterson, a retired widower who made his coffee every morning at the senior center. He loved gardening, picking berries, canning, and making jam and cakes, recalled William Works, 47, and his mother, Sharon Works, 64.

"He would give you the shirt off his back if he could," William Works said, describing his neighbor as a "gentle old fellow" and "community first."

Sharon Works was baffled: "I don't understand why they would target someone like him anyway, because he was just a poor, helpless little man, 100 pounds soaking wet. And he could hardly breathe because he had asthma and emphysema and everybody cared about him because that's the way he was. He cared about everybody else. And they cared about him."

Evan Bray, the police chief of provincial capital city of Regina, has been saying as recently as Monday that police thought Sanderson was in Regina, but said Tuesday they've received information that is leading them to believe that he may no longer be in the city.

"Although we don't know his whereabouts we are still looking not only in the city of Regina but expanded into the province as well," Bray said.

New UK PM Truss vows to tackle energy crisis, ailing economy

By DANICA KIRKA and JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Liz Truss became U.K. prime minister on Tuesday and immediately faced up to the enormous tasks ahead of her: curbing soaring prices, boosting the economy, easing labor unrest and fixing a national health care system burdened by long waiting lists and staff shortages.

Truss quickly began appointing senior members of her Cabinet as she tackles an inbox dominated by the energy crisis triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which threatens to push energy bills to unaffordable levels, shuttering businesses and leaving the nation's poorest people shivering at home this winter.

Truss — Britain's third female prime minister — named a top team diverse in gender and ethnicity, but loyal to her and her free-market politics. Kwasi Kwarteng becomes the first Black U.K. Treasury chief, and Therese Coffey its first female deputy prime minister. Other appointments include James Cleverly as foreign secretary and Suella Braverman as home secretary, responsible for immigration and law and order.

Making her debut speech outside her new Downing Street home in a break between torrential downpours, Truss said she would cut taxes to spur economic growth, bolster the National Health Service and

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 39 of 65

"deal hands on" with the energy crisis, though she offered few details about how she would implement those policies. She is expected to unveil her energy plans on Thursday.

British news media reported that Truss plans to cap energy bills. The cost to taxpayers of that step could reach 100 billion pounds (\$116 billion).

"We shouldn't be daunted by the challenges we face," Truss said in her first speech as prime minister. "As strong as the storm may be, I know the British people are stronger."

Truss, 47, took office earlier in the day at Balmoral Castle in Scotland, when Queen Elizabeth II formally asked her to form a new government in a ceremony dictated by centuries of tradition. Outgoing Prime Minister Boris Johnson formally resigned during his own audience with the queen a short time earlier, two months after he had announced his intention to step down.

It was the first time in the queen's 70-year reign that the handover of power took place at Balmoral, rather than Buckingham Palace in London. The ceremony was moved to Scotland to provide certainty about the schedule, because the 96-year-old queen has experienced problems getting around that have forced palace officials to make decisions about her travel on a day-to-day basis.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy received a call from Truss on her first day. She spoke with U.S. President Joe Biden, too.

Zelenskyy wrote on Twitter: "I was the first among foreign leaders to have a conversation with the newly elected British Prime Minister, Liz Truss. I invited her to Ukraine. I thanked the people of Britain for their leadership in the military and economic support of Ukraine."

Biden, who worked closely with Johnson in confronting Russia's invasion of Ukraine, was quick to congratulate Truss.

"I look forward to deepening the special relationship between our countries and working in close cooperation on global challenges, including continued support for Ukraine as it defends itself against Russian aggression," he said on Twitter.

Truss' office said she and Biden discussed the Ukraine war and defense cooperation, as well as economic issues and maintaining the British-Irish Good Friday Agreement. The leaders were expected to meet in person soon — likely around this month's U.N. General Assembly meeting in New York.

Truss became prime minister a day after the ruling Conservative Party chose her as its leader in an election where the party's 172,000 dues-paying members were the only voters. As party leader, Truss automatically became prime minister without the need for a general election because the Conservatives still have a majority of lawmakers in the House of Commons.

But as a national leader selected by less than 0.5% of British adults, Truss is under pressure to show quick results.

Ed Davey, leader of the opposition Liberal Democrats, on Tuesday called for an early election in October — something that Truss and the Conservative Party are highly unlikely to do since the Tories are slumping in the polls.

Johnson, 58, became prime minister three years ago after his predecessor, Theresa May, failed to deliver Britain's departure from the European Union. Johnson later won an 80-seat majority in Parliament with the promise to "get Brexit done."

But he was forced out of office by a series of scandals that culminated in the resignation of dozens of Cabinet secretaries and lower-level officials in early July.

Always colorful, Johnson said he was "like one of those booster rockets that has fulfilled its function."

"I will now be gently re-entering the atmosphere and splashing down invisibly in some remote and obscure corner of the Pacific," he said.

Many people in Britain are still learning about their new leader, a one-time accountant who entered Parliament in 2010.

Unlike Johnson, who made himself a media celebrity long before he became prime minister, Truss rose quietly through the Conservative ranks before she was named foreign secretary, one of the top Cabinet posts, just a year ago.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 40 of 65

Truss is under pressure to spell out how she plans to help consumers pay household energy bills that are set to rise to an average of 3,500 pounds (\$4,000) a year — triple the cost of a year ago — on Oct. 1 unless she intervenes.

Rising food and energy prices, driven by the invasion of Ukraine and the aftershocks of COVID-19 and Brexit, have propelled U.K. inflation above 10% for the first time in four decades. The Bank of England forecasts it will hit 13.3% in October, and that the U.K. will slip into a prolonged recession by the end of the year.

Train drivers, port staff, garbage collectors, postal workers and lawyers have all staged strikes to demand that pay increases keep pace with inflation, and millions more, from teachers to nurses, could walk out in the next few months.

In theory, Truss has time to make her mark: She doesn't have to call a national election until late 2024. But opinion polls already give the main opposition Labour Party a steady lead, and the worse the economy gets, the more pressure will grow.

In addition to Britain's domestic woes, Truss and her new Cabinet will also face multiple foreign policy crises, including the war in Ukraine and frosty post-Brexit relations with the EU.

Truss, as foreign secretary, was a firm supporter of Ukraine's resistance to Russia.

Truss has also pledged to increase U.K. defense spending to 3% of gross domestic product from just over 2% — another expensive promise.

Rebecca Macdougall, 55, who works in law enforcement, said outside the Houses of Parliament that time will tell whether Truss can turn things round.

"She's making promises for that, as she says she's going to deliver, deliver, deliver," Macdougall noted. "But we will see in, hopefully, the next few weeks there'll be some announcements which will help the normal working person."

Uvalde students go back to school for 1st time since attack

By PAUL J. WEBER Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Gilbert Mata woke up excited Tuesday for the first day of school since a gunman's bullet tore through his leg three months ago in a fourth grade classroom in Uvalde.

The 10-year-old has healed from his physical wounds, but burning smells still remind him of gunfire and the sight of many police officers recalls the day in May that an assailant killed 19 of his classmates and two teachers.

On a morning that many Uvalde families had dreaded, a new school year began in the small South Texas town with big hugs on sidewalks, patrol cars parked at every corner and mothers wiping away tears while pulling away from the curb in the drop-off line.

Mata was ready to return, this time with his own cellphone. His mother, Corina Comacho, had a tougher time letting her child go back to class.

"There's a certain time he can get his phone out and text us he's OK," she said after walking him into a new school, Flores Elementary, and dropping him off behind doors with new locks. "That's like, 'OK, that's good. Now I feel better.'"

Outside Uvalde Elementary, teachers in matching turquoise shirts emblazoned with "Together We Rise & Together We Are Better" gently led students through a newly installed 8-foot (2.4-meter) fence and past a state trooper standing outside the front entrance.

"Good morning, sunshine!" greeted one teacher. "You ready to have a good school year?"

Robb Elementary, where the attack unfolded on May 24, is permanently closed and will eventually be demolished.

A large memorial of stuffed animals, victims' photographs and crosses remains outside the scene of one of the deadliest mass shootings in U.S. history.

Outside the other schools in Uvalde — which are only a short drive away — some added safety measures that the district rushed to implement after the attack were incomplete.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 41 of 65

Security cameras are still in the works. New metal fencing surrounds some campuses, partially encloses others and isn't up at all at Flores Elementary, where many Robb students are enrolled this year.

The attack lasted more than 70 minutes before police finally confronted the gunman and killed him. The delay infuriated parents and led to a damning report by state lawmakers. Now more police are on patrol, but distrust is rampant.

"There's a big ol' gap right here. Anyone can walk through," said Celeste Ibarra, 30, pointing to the new barrier around Uvalde Elementary while standing in her front yard across the street.

Ibarra's older daughter, 9-year-old Aubriella Melchor, was in Robb Elementary during the shooting and seemed to drag out Tuesday morning as long as possible, taking longer than usual to get dressed and poking at her breakfast. When back-to-school shopping rolled around, she didn't want to go to Walmart, and the glittery pencils Ibarra bought to get her daughter excited didn't work.

"She kind of just played with her cereal," Ibarra said after dropping her off. "She was thinking. I know she was scared."

Uvalde is off to a late start for school: Classes resumed weeks ago in many parts of Texas, where other districts encouraged students and teachers Tuesday to show support by wearing Uvalde's maroon colors.

"We are all standing with you," first lady Jill Biden tweeted.

Uvalde pushed back the first day of class after a summer of heartache, anger and revelations that nearly 400 officers who rushed to the scene waited so long to go inside the classroom.

Steve McCraw, the head of the Texas Department of Public Safety, called the response an "abject failure," and the district fired school Police Chief Pete Arredondo last month after he was blamed for the slow law enforcement response.

As the new school year got underway, the DPS said Tuesday that five of its officers had been referred to the agency's inspector general over their action during the shooting. The referrals are the result of an internal review, spokesman Travis Considine said. Two of the five have been suspended with pay pending the outcome of the inspector general's investigation.

The department had more than 90 troopers and officers at the scene of Robb Elementary, more than any other agency.

The agency also made public a letter McCraw sent in July, saying that DPS officers should treat anyone who opens fire at a school as an active shooter, not a "barricaded subject."

"We will provide proper training and guidelines for recognizing and overcoming poor command decisions at an active shooter scene," the letter said.

Over the summer, more than 100 students in Uvalde signed up for virtual learning. Others transferred to private schools. Elsa Avila, a fourth grade teacher who was shot in the abdomen and survived, missed the first day of school Tuesday for the first time in 30 years.

For Mata's family, virtual school wasn't really in the conversation: Gilbert didn't do well with online classes during the pandemic. And besides, he wanted to go to Flores Elementary with his friends, said his mother and Michael Martinez, his stepfather.

Mata is one of 11 survivors of the classroom whose families stay in touch, Comacho said. A ricocheted bullet went through his ankle and calf in Room 112.

The extra security measures have brought little comfort to Martinez, who tried to put off everything when it came to the first day. "I wasn't ready for him to go back to school, but he says he was," Martinez said.

During an open house at Flores Elementary, Martinez said when he pressed a teacher about how the staff would protect students this time, the response was an unsatisfactory rundown about new locks.

"He didn't answer me what I really asked him. Like, how are you going to help? How are you going to save my kid if something happens?" Martinez said. "He didn't give me what I wanted to hear."

Admittedly, Martinez said, he wasn't sure what he wanted to hear. He just knows he wasn't reassured. "I just wanted to hear something to make my mind change," he said.

UN agency calls for safety zone around Ukraine nuclear plant

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 42 of 65

By HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The U.N. atomic watchdog agency urged Russia and Ukraine on Tuesday to establish a “nuclear safety and security protection zone” around the Zaporizhzhia power plant amid mounting fears the fighting could trigger a catastrophe in a country still scarred by the Chernobyl disaster.

“We are playing with fire, and something very, very catastrophic could take place,” Rafael Grossi, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, warned the U.N. Security Council, days after leading an inspection visit to the plant.

In a detailed report on its visit, the IAEA said shelling around the Europe’s largest nuclear power plant should stop immediately. “This requires agreement by all relevant parties to the establishment of a nuclear safety and security protection zone” around the plant, it said.

At the Security Council meeting, U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres likewise demanded that Russian and Ukrainian forces commit to halting all military activity around the plant and agree on a “demilitarized perimeter.”

Guterres said this would include “a commitment by Russian forces to withdraw all military personnel and equipment from that perimeter and a commitment by Ukrainian forces not to move into it.”

Asked by reporters about establishing a demilitarized zone, Russia’s U.N. ambassador, Vassily Nebenzia, said the proposal “is not serious.”

“The Ukrainians will immediately step in and ruin the whole thing. We’re defending, we’re protecting the station,” he said. “In fact, it is not militarized. There is no equipment at the station.”

Speaking to journalists later, Nebenzia said Russia wanted to see details of the proposals for demilitarized and protection zones.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said his country needs to look at the specifics of the protection-zone proposal and could support the measure if it envisions the demilitarization of the plant.

In his nightly address to the nation, Zelenskyy praised the IAEA report’s “clear references” to the presence of Russian troops and military equipment at the plant. He urged the agency to explicitly back Kyiv’s long-held position that Russian forces need to withdraw from the facility and its surroundings.

Shelling continued around the plant on Tuesday, a day after it was again knocked off Ukraine’s electrical grid and put in the precarious position of relying on its own power to run its safety systems.

Normally the plant relies on power from the outside to run the critical cooling systems that keep its reactors and its spent fuel from overheating. A loss of those systems could lead to a meltdown or other release of radiation.

“For radiation protection professionals, for the Ukrainian and even the Russian people, and those of central Europe, this is a very worrying time — and that’s an understatement,” said Paul Dorfman, a nuclear safety expert at the University of Sussex in England.

Russia and Ukraine accused each other of shelling Enerhodar, the city where the plant is situated. The Ukrainians also charged that the Kremlin’s forces fired on a town across the Dnieper River from the power station.

The Ukrainian mayor of Enerhodar, Dmytro Orlov, reported a powerful blast in the city around midday. The explosion left the city of 53,000 cut off from its power and water supplies. It wasn’t immediately clear what caused the blast.

World leaders have called for the demilitarization of the plant, which has been occupied by Russian forces since the early days of the war but is being run by Ukrainian engineers.

In its report, the IAEA did not assign blame for the shelling at the plant. The agency has sought to keep out of the political fray.

It did note that on several occasions, the plant lost, fully or in part, its off-site power supply because of military activity in the area. The U.N. agency said a backup power supply line should be reestablished and asked that “all military activities that may affect the power supply systems end.”

In addition, the IAEA warned that the Ukrainian staff operating the plant under Russian military occupation is “under constant high stress and pressure, especially with the limited staff available” — a situation

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 43 of 65

that could "lead to increased human error with implications for nuclear safety."

It recommended that "an appropriate work environment, including family support," be reestablished.

The IAEA also said the staff is not being given unrestricted access to some parts of the plant and must get permission from the Russian occupying forces to reach the cooling ponds where spent fuel is kept. Grossi expressed concern that that could hamper the staff's response in an emergency.

The report said the team saw Russian military personnel, vehicles and equipment at various locations, including several military trucks on the floor of two turbine halls. It called for "the removal of vehicles from areas that could interfere with the operation of safety and security systems and equipment."

Two inspectors from the IAEA mission remained at the plant, a decision welcomed by Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak.

"There are Russian troops now who don't understand what's happening, don't assess the risks correctly," Podolyak said. "There is a number of our workers there, who need some kind of protection, people from the international community standing by their side and telling (Russian troops): 'Don't touch these people, let them work.'"

On Monday, the IAEA said Ukrainian authorities reported that the plant's last transmission line linking it to the nation's power grid was disconnected to allow workers to put out a fire caused by shelling.

Ukrainian Energy Minister Herman Halushchenko told Ukrainian television: "Any repairs are impossible at this point — there are ongoing hostilities around the plant."

In the meantime, the plant's only remaining operational reactor will "generate the power the plant needs for its safety and other functions," the IAEA said.

Mycle Schneider, an independent analyst in Canada on nuclear energy, said that means the plant was probably functioning in "island mode," or producing electricity for its own operations.

"Island mode is a very shaky, unstable and unreliable way to provide continuous power supply to a nuclear plant," Schneider said. He said that "many if not most islanding attempts fail."

The Zaporizhzhia plant has diesel emergency backup generators to produce power to run the place if the outside source is disrupted. But Schneider said the plant's operators may have decided to go into island mode first.

If the plant turns to the diesel generators as a last resort and they fail, the reactor and the spent fuel could rapidly overheat, he said.

Experts say the reactors at Zaporizhzhia are designed to withstand natural disasters and even plane crashes, but the unpredictable fighting has repeatedly threatened the cooling systems. Ukraine in 1986 was the site of the world's worst nuclear accident, the explosion at Chernobyl.

Ukrainian intelligence reported that residents of Enerhodar were fleeing the city out of fear. Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said Russia should organize safe corridors for women and children living nearby.

"People en masse are reaching out to us for help. They are trying to leave the dangerous territory, but there are no corridors," Vereshchuk told Ukrainian TV.

Meanwhile, gunfire and explosions were heard Tuesday afternoon in the Russian-occupied city of Berdyansk in southeastern Ukraine, with Russia's state-run media reporting that the car of the Kremlin-installed "city commandant" had been blown up. The RIA Novosti news agency said that the official, Artem Bardin, was in serious condition and that a shootout followed the assassination attempt.

The agency quoted Russian-backed local officials as saying they had launched a manhunt for the "Ukrainian saboteurs" responsible.

Students return to campus amid water crisis in Jackson

By MICHAEL GOLDBERG Associated Press/Report for America

JACKSON, Miss (AP) — While its water crisis continued, students in Mississippi's capital were able to return to class for the first time in a week Tuesday with assurances that the toilets and sinks in their buildings would finally work.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 44 of 65

Jackson remained under a boil water advisory, but the drop in water pressure that had brought the system to near collapse appeared to be resolved, officials said.

Sherwin Johnson, a spokesperson for Jackson Public Schools, confirmed in a statement to The Associated Press on Tuesday that schools had re-opened after a drop in water pressure forced a move to virtual instruction.

A line of cars snaked around the block in front of Spann Elementary in northeast Jackson as parents arrived to pick up their children. Syreeta Tatum waited for her fourth grader to emerge from the building and lamented the uncertainty Jackson's water woes had foisted upon parents and students.

"It was very frustrating," said Tatum. "As a mother, you want to make sure your child is getting the best education possible, especially knowing that my child functions better in person."

In a statement posted to Twitter on Monday, the school district said it had "checked water pressure at each school" and found that "nearly all are suitable" for students and staff to return. Air conditioning systems at several schools depend on the water system to run effectively. The district said it anticipated delays in cooling buildings as temperatures reached the mid-80s on Tuesday.

"We are continuing to monitor and have portable fans and air conditioners to reduce temperatures in warm or hot areas," Johnson said.

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. The school district said Forest Hill High School in south Jackson still didn't have water pressure. Johnson said students who attend Forest Hill were transported to alternative sites Tuesday.

In a Tuesday news conference, Jackson Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba said the water storage that was built over the weekend has decreased some over the past 24 hours.

"The safety net that has been built up has decreased and has diminished," Lumumba said. "That is why we're prayerful that everything remains consistent."

If a challenge arises with plant operation Tuesday, it will likely impact customers, the mayor said.

In a Monday news conference, Gov. Tate Reeves said water distribution at schools would be scaled down in preparation for students' return to campuses.

"We are moving those resources to our other water distribution mega-sites," Reeves said. "Those sites have slowed down in demand a bit, but we have still put out about 5 million bottles of water over the last several days."

Soon after water stopped flowing through the pipes of many households throughout Jackson, officials rolled a tanker into Forest Hill's parking lot for water distribution. Santiago Matthews, a maintenance worker for the high school, had a garbage container filled to the brim with water last week to fill toilets for the staff working inside. He hauled the garbage container up a short incline back to the high school with water sloshing over the sides.

Reeves said Monday that the city had "zero water tanks at low levels." He also said repairs resulting in cleaner water do not eliminate every risk.

"There may be more bad days in the future," Reeves said.

Liz Oviede, a student at Delta Technical College, picked up her 10-year old brother Tuesday so her mother wouldn't have to miss work. Her mother missed work at least three days last week to supervise the boy as Spann shifted to virtual learning. Recounting a recent weekend trip to Houston, Texas, she longed for cleaner water.

"My face cleared up, my hair was so much softer and my hair is always so crunchy here and it doesn't feel clean," Oviede said. "I just wish they'd get it together and stop bringing politics into it."

Biden touts legislative record as midterms approach

By CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden ended the summer on a legislative winning streak, chalking up victories that once appeared out of reach in this polarized capital. Now he wants to make sure voters

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 45 of 65

reward him for that when they cast ballots in November's big congressional elections.

It's a tough task with gas and grocery prices still painfully high and the daily political news awash with contentious investigations into his predecessor and with repercussions in the states from the Supreme Court's ruling on abortion.

In an attempt to cut through it all, the White House is escalating its campaign to promote new laws designed to repair the economy and help consumers on a personal level, boosting crucial computer chip manufacturing, lowering prescription drug prices, expanding clean energy and revamping the country's infrastructure.

Biden, in a meeting with his Cabinet on Tuesday, said his administration has passed "extraordinary parts of our economic agenda" and provided "proof that democracy can deliver for the people."

His schedule is filling up with trips to promote his policies — Ohio on Friday, Michigan next week — in battleground states where Democrats are facing tight races with Republicans. And his administration is rolling out plans to distribute hundreds of billions of dollars authorized by legislation he has signed.

The president chose John Podesta, a veteran of Democratic administrations, to lead the \$375 billion plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to fight climate change. The money is included in a huge bill — dubbed the Inflation Reduction Act by the White House — which also generates new tax revenue to reduce the deficit and limits the cost of prescription drugs.

"People believe that the legislative accomplishments are meaningful when they can feel them or see them," William Galston, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who served as a domestic policy adviser to President Bill Clinton, said in an interview.

Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo announced Tuesday that the administration is preparing to divvy up \$50 billion in federal assistance to the computer chip industry, part of a new law known as the CHIPS and Science Act. Companies can apply by February, she said, and the money will be distributed after that.

"With this funding, we're going to make sure the United States is never again in a position where our national security interests are compromised or key industries are immobilized due to our inability to produce essential semiconductors here at home," Raimondo said at a White House briefing.

Many of the policies won't pay dividends for months or years to come. Grant applications must be filed and vetted, new bridges have to be designed, regulations written.

But Biden is seizing opportunities to argue that the legislation is already having an impact. On Friday, he's going to Ohio for the groundbreaking of Intel's new computer chip factory, which Biden called "the biggest investment of its kind ever in our nation."

The factory was announced earlier this year, but the company said in June that it would be delayed because Congress had not yet passed the CHIPS Act.

"We're finally bringing home jobs that had been overseas for a while," he said Tuesday.

Rep. Tim Ryan, a Democrat who is running against Republican J.D. Vance for the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Sen. Sherrod Brown, plans to join Biden at the event.

Biden makes another trip on Sept. 14 to the Detroit Auto Show to talk about manufacturing electric vehicles in the U.S. as he tries to pair ambitious goals for reducing emissions with promises of new jobs.

His big-money Inflation Reduction Act includes rebates for the purchase of electric cars, although many vehicles won't qualify because they must include batteries built in North America with minerals mined or recycled here.

This summer's legislative victories helped Biden vanquish the hardening narrative that Democrats were failing to accomplish much of significance despite controlling the White House and both chambers of Congress. The president plans to hold still another event to celebrate the Inflation Reduction Act, even though he signed it last month.

However, holding voters' attention could prove difficult. Inflation has cooled somewhat but prices remain high, eating away at pocketbooks despite low unemployment and rising wages.

"Compared to where the administration was at the beginning of 2022, the accomplishments are impressive and several of them were accomplished against the odds," Galston observed. "That said, I continue to

believe that circumstances on the ground, as experienced by voters and citizens, are much more influential in determining voter choice than lists of legislative accomplishments.”

Biden has also been leaning on other issues in hopes of driving up Democratic turnout in November. He delivered a speech last Thursday in Philadelphia where he described Donald Trump as a threat to democracy, and he’s focused on the proliferation of abortion restrictions in states run by Republicans. The new laws have taken effect in the wake of the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, the landmark 1973 ruling that legalized abortion nationwide.

At the same time, Biden’s approval rating has been ticking upward. The latest Gallup poll showed him with an approval rating of 44%, up from his lowest level of 38% in July.

“These are not good numbers,” Galston said. “But at least he’s not sinking and drowning. And there’s hope that his nostrils will clear the water line in the not-too-distant future.”

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen will embark on a month-long tour touting Biden’s achievements ahead of the midterms, starting in Detroit on Thursday.

She’s expected to meet with business owners and local leaders before delivering a speech. In addition to talking about modernizing the IRS and cracking down on tax evasion among the rich and big corporations, Yellen plans to address “the existential threat posed by climate change.”

“In the process of boosting domestic clean energy production, the law will support our energy security and insulate us from the type of fossil fuel-driven energy volatility that we’ve seen in the past year,” Yellen will say, according to speech excerpts provided to The Associated Press.

Yellen’s September tour includes stops planned in North Carolina, the Washington, D.C., area. Then there’s an October speech at the 157th anniversary of the Freedman’s Bank Forum to talk about how the president’s economic agenda “advances equity and makes our economy stronger as a result.”

Freedman’s Savings and Trust Company was created by Abraham Lincoln in 1865 to provide economic opportunity for newly emancipated slaves.

Video fills in details on alleged Ga. election system breach

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Two months after the 2020 presidential election, a team of computer experts traveled to south Georgia to copy software and data from voting equipment in an apparent breach of a county election system. They were greeted outside by the head of the local Republican Party, who was involved in efforts by then-President Donald Trump to overturn his election loss.

A security camera outside the elections office in rural Coffee County captured their arrival. The footage also shows that some local election officials were at the office during what the Georgia secretary of state’s office has described as “alleged unauthorized access” of election equipment.

Security footage from two weeks later raises additional alarms — showing two people who were instrumental in Trump’s wider efforts to undermine the election results entering the office and staying for hours.

The security video from the elections office in the county about 200 miles (320 kilometers) southeast of Atlanta offers a glimpse of the lengths Trump’s allies went in service of his fraudulent election claims. It further shows how access allegedly was facilitated by local officials entrusted with protecting the security of elections while raising concerns about sensitive voting technology being released into the public domain.

Georgia wasn’t the only state where voting equipment was accessed after the 2020 presidential election. Important information about voting systems also was compromised in election offices in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Colorado. Election security experts worry the information obtained — including complete copies of hard drives — could be exploited by those who want to interfere with future elections.

“The system is only as secure as the people who are entrusted to keep it secure,” said lawyer David Cross, who represents plaintiffs in a long-running lawsuit over Georgia’s voting machines.

The Coffee County security footage was obtained through that lawsuit, which alleges that Georgia’s touchscreen voting machines are vulnerable to attack and should be replaced by hand-marked paper ballots. The suit long predates and is unrelated to false allegations of widespread election fraud pushed by

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 47 of 65

Trump and his allies after the 2020 election.

The alleged breach in Coffee County's elections office also has caught the attention of Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis, who is overseeing an investigation into whether Trump and his allies illegally tried to influence the 2020 election results in Georgia.

Last month, Willis cited the Coffee County activity, among other things, when she sought to compel testimony from Sidney Powell, an attorney who was deeply involved in Trump's effort to undo the election results.

Emails and other records show Powell and other attorneys linked to Trump helped arrange for a team from data solutions company SullivanStrickler to travel to Coffee County, which Trump won by nearly 40 percentage points.

The surveillance video, emails and other documents that shed light on what happened there in January 2021 were produced in response to subpoenas issued in the voting machine lawsuit and were obtained by The Associated Press. Parts of the security video appear to contradict claims by some of the local officials:

— Footage captures Cathy Latham, then chair of the Coffee County Republican Party, arriving at the elections office shortly after 11:30 a.m. on Jan. 7, 2021, the day after the violent assault on the U.S. Capitol. Just a few weeks earlier, she was one of 16 Georgia Republicans who signed a certificate falsely stating that Trump had won the state and declaring that they were the state's "duly elected and qualified" electors.

A few minutes after her arrival, she is seen outside greeting SullivanStrickler Chief Operating Officer Paul Maggio and two other people. Less than 10 minutes later, she escorts two other men into the building.

The video shows her leaving the elections office just before 1:30 p.m., roughly two hours after she greeted the SullivanStrickler team. She returns a little before 4 p.m. and then leaves around 6:15 p.m.

Latham said under oath during a deposition in August that she stopped by the elections office that evening for "just a few minutes" and left before 5 p.m. Pressed on whether she had been there earlier in the day, Latham said she couldn't recall but suggested her schedule as a teacher would not have allowed it.

A lawyer for SullivanStrickler said in an email attached to a court filing that Latham was a "primary point of contact" in coordinating the company's work and "was on site" while that work was done.

Robert Cheeley, a lawyer for Latham said in an emailed statement that his client doesn't remember all the details of that day. But he said she "would not and has not knowingly been involved in any impropriety in any election" and "has not acted improperly or illegally."

— The video also shows Eric Chaney, a member of Coffee County's election board, arriving shortly before 11 a.m. the same day and going in and out several times before leaving for the night around 7:40 p.m. Lawyers for the plaintiffs in the voting machine lawsuit wrote in a court filing that a photo produced by SullivanStrickler's COO shows Chaney in the office as the copying is happening.

During a deposition last month, Chaney declined to answer many questions about that day, citing the Fifth Amendment. But when an attorney representing the county reached out to him in April regarding questions from the The Washington Post, Chaney wrote, "I am not aware of nor was I present at the Coffee County Board of Elections and Registration's office when anyone illegally accessed the server or the room in which it is contained." Chaney resigned from the elections board last month, days before his deposition.

Attempts to reach Chaney by phone were unsuccessful, and his lawyer did not respond to an email seeking comment.

— About two weeks after the initial breach, video shows Misty Hampton — then the county elections director — arriving at the elections office at 4:20 p.m. on Jan. 18, when it was closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. She unlocked the door and let in two men — Doug Logan and Jeff Lenberg, who have been active in efforts to challenge the 2020 election results.

Logan founded Cyber Ninjas, which participated in a partisan and ultimately discredited review of the 2020 election in Maricopa County, Arizona. The two men remained inside until just after 8 p.m. and then spent more than nine hours there the next day. Lenberg returned for brief visits on at least three more days later that month.

Hampton resigned as elections supervisor in February 2021 after elections board officials said she falsified her timesheets. Attempts by the AP to reach her were unsuccessful.

In a statement released by its attorney, SullivanStrickler said the company was retained by attorneys to

forensically copy voting machines used in the 2020 election and had no reason to believe they would ask its employees to do anything improper.

The Georgia secretary of state's office said it opened an investigation in March and asked the Georgia Bureau of Investigation for assistance last month. State officials have said the system remains secure because of multiple protections in place.

Rents are starting to come down, but the trend may not hold

By ADRIANA MORGA Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Rents are starting to come down after spiking to record levels this past summer, but experts are uncertain if the slowdown will continue.

Christopher Mayer, professor of real estate at Columbia Business School, said people looking for an apartment now might have a better experience than they did in May or June.

"We're not seeing rents go up as quickly, the rental market is softening a little bit," he said.

The national median asking rent was up 14% in July over July the previous year, the smallest annual increase since November 2021, according to a new report from Redfin. While that percentage is still high, it has decreased from 15% in June and 16% in May.

Experts say the market could slow further toward the end of the year, but there's still a lot of uncertainty.

"I would not be surprised if we get to 2023 before things really get back to normal," said Brian Carberry, senior managing editor of Rent.com, an apartment search website owned by Redfin.

Much depends on where you live. Cities in Florida such as Boca Raton and West Palm Beach have seen rents decrease -0.1% and -0.5% respectively compared to last month. But according to Apartment List, rents in California coastal cities such as San Diego have continued to increase over the past year.

In Rochester, New York, rent was up 15.3% in August over the same month the previous year, according to data from Apartment List. An average two-bedroom apartment in the Rochester area was \$1,318 in August, compared with \$1,116 a year ago.

Bank of America CEO Brian Moynihan said high rents are a concern because they can account for a big chunk of a household's take-home pay.

"Gas prices are coming back down, but rents are going up 10, 12, 15%. And rent can end up taking 40% of these households' income," Moynihan said in a recent Associated Press interview.

While things are looking a bit better for renters than a few months ago, it's still a landlords' market, Mayer said.

If your lease is up, staying put and negotiating with your landlord might be a better option than trying to move, at least until the rental market slows down further, said Paula Munger, assistant vice president for industry research and analysis at the National Apartment Association.

"When you renew your lease, you're definitely not paying the same as someone new moving in," Munger said. "If you can, stay in your apartment."

A major reason for rent spikes has been increasing demand from people priced out of a booming housing market. That market is starting to slow, which could mean more people can afford to buy and won't need to rent, but with interest rates rising, some may not want to take on mortgages.

"With inflation now all throughout the market, there's not enough supply so the prices are going up," Munger said. "That's the downside for people, just not having enough options and choices for what they would like in a housing unit."

That was the experience of Erika Tascon, a 22-year-old Los Angeles resident who was living with roommates but wanted to find an apartment with her boyfriend.

After visiting more than 10 units, the couple picked a 500-square-foot one-bedroom apartment in Beverly Hills where they pay \$2,750 per month. The median rent for a one-bedroom in the area is \$2,773, up 14% from last year, according to data from Zumper.

"I think landlords are taking advantage of tenants right now," said Tascon, who is paying \$200 more per month than for her previous apartment.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 49 of 65

In Britni Eseller's case, the high demand meant that she had to rush to fill out her application to beat the other 10 people who toured the apartment she wanted.

"Because everyone is in scarcity mode, you're willing to find a place that might be somewhat affordable and you're unfortunately okay with overlooking chipped floors or a broken appliance," said Eseller, who lives in North Park, a neighborhood of San Diego.

Developers have ramped up construction of apartment buildings this year, which could eventually help to ease the crunch. But it's likely to take a while before that's reflected in the market.

Meanwhile, high rents are disproportionately hurting low-income residents across the country, said Ben Martin, research director of Texas Housers, a non-profit organization that works on housing justice.

In May, rental prices in Dallas and Fort Worth were up 21.6% from last year, according to Redfin data. In Austin they were up 48.4%. One major reason is that high-income people from coastal areas like California and New York moved to Texas during the coronavirus pandemic, when they realized they could work remotely and live more cheaply. In December of last year, for example, Tesla moved its headquarters from Silicon Valley to Austin.

"People who make the lowest incomes are paying more of their total pie of money," Martin said. "Which means that they don't have money for anything else: school supplies, groceries, gas, clothing, all of the essential stuff that you need to live."

In addition to cutting basic expenses, renters are also cramming more people into apartments, Martin said.

Increasingly, people can't afford their homes at all and are now facing eviction. Governments have ended eviction moratoriums and rental assistance programs that allowed people to stay in their homes during the pandemic.

The Eviction Lab, a research organization at Princeton University, is seeing record numbers of evictions that have surpassed pre-pandemic levels.

In Houston, where the eviction moratorium ended in July 2021, there were 7,242 eviction filings in July of this year, 51% above average, according to The Eviction Lab. Other cities such as Los Angeles have extended eviction moratoriums until the end of this year.

Tenants who can't afford rent increases but also can't afford to move are often forced to choose between paying rent and covering basic necessities. An eviction stays on a renter's record, making it harder to find housing in the future.

"The threat of eviction is the looming problem," said Nick Graetz, a postdoctoral research associate at The Eviction Lab. "Part of the reason renters sacrifice so many other things to try to pay unreasonable high rents every month is because of the constant threat of being evicted from their home."

AP Top 25: Georgia moves up to No. 2, passing Ohio State

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Football Writer

Georgia moved up to No. 2 in the first Associated Press college football poll of the regular season, passing Ohio State, after the defending national champions dominated their opener.

Alabama remained No. 1 in the AP Top 25 presented by Regions Bank released Tuesday, receiving 44 of 63 first-place votes from the media panel and 1,552 points.

The Bulldogs narrowed the gap on the Crimson Tide after beating Oregon 49-3 on Saturday. Georgia received 17 first-place votes.

Ohio State slipped to No. 3 and received two first-place votes. Michigan moved up four spots to No. 4.

Clemson dropped a spot to No. 5.

Florida debuted at No. 12 after its thrilling victory at home against Utah on Saturday night. The Utes slipped six spots to No. 13 after the loss.

The rest of the top 10 was Texas A&M at No. 6, followed by Oklahoma, Notre Dame, Baylor and Southern California.

USC is in the top 10 for the first time since the final regular-season poll of 2017, when the Trojans were eighth.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 50 of 65

The eighth-ranked Fighting Irish dropped three spots out of the top five after losing 21-10 at Ohio State.
POLL POINTS

Georgia has been ranked No. 1 or 2 in 15 of the last 17 polls, with the other two weeks at No. 3.

Since 2017, Georgia has been ranked No. 2 in the country 13 times and No. 1 nine times, all last season.

From 1981 — the season after Georgia won the national title — to 2016, the Bulldogs were ranked in the top two a total of 10 times.

IN

— Florida's jump from unranked to No. 12 is the biggest for an unranked team since the first regular-season poll of 2016, when Texas landed at No. 11 and Wisconsin at No. 10 after Week 1 victories.

— No. 24 Tennessee is ranked for the first time under second-year coach Josh Heupel.

OUT

— Oregon's humbling loss to Georgia sent the Ducks all the way out of the rankings. It's the first time Oregon has been unranked in a poll for which it was eligible since the last regular-season AP Top 25 of 2020.

— Cincinnati dropped out after losing at Arkansas by a touchdown, its first regular-season loss since late in the 2019 season.

For the Bearcats, who made the College Football Playoff last year, it snapped a run of 45 consecutive poll appearances, which was the fifth-longest active streak in the country.

CONFERENCE CALL

Florida and Tennessee moving into the rankings gives the SEC eight ranked teams, the most for a conference since the SEC had eight three times in 2020.

The record for ranked teams from one conference is 10 by the SEC early in the 2018 season. From 2011-18, the SEC had eight teams ranked in a AP Top 25 a total of 14 times.

SEC — 8 (Nos. 1, 2, 6, 12, 16, 20, 22, 24).

ACC — 5 (Nos. 5, 15, 17, 18, 23).

Big Ten — 4 (Nos. 3, 4, 14, 19).

Big 12 — 3 (Nos. 7, 9, 11).

Pac-12 — 2 (Nos. 10, 13).

Independents — 2 (Nos. 8, 21).

American — 1 (No. 25).

RANKED vs. RANKED

No. 9 Baylor at No. 21 BYU. Future Big 12 matchup.

No. 20 Kentucky at No. 12 Florida. The first time both will be ranked when they play since 2007.

No. 24 Tennessee at No. 17 Pitt. First SEC/ACC ranked nonconference matchup of the season.

States' plans to make school safer reflect political divides

By ANDREW DeMILLO Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — In the aftermath of the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, governors around the country vowed to take steps to ensure their students would be kept safe.

Months later, as students return to classrooms, money has begun to flow for school security upgrades, training and other new efforts to make classrooms safer.

But the responses have often reflected political divisions: Many Republicans have emphasized school security spending, while Democrats have called for tighter gun control.

At every step, the actions have stirred debate over whether states are doing the right things to address the scourge of school shootings.

In a special legislative session in Arkansas last month, lawmakers set aside \$50 million for a school safety fund proposed by Republican Gov. Asa Hutchinson. The rules for distributing the money haven't been finalized, but Hutchinson has said he wants it to help implement recommendations from a school safety commission he reinstated following the May shooting in Texas, where 19 students and two teachers were killed.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 51 of 65

The shooting "served as a reminder that the threat of violence in our schools has not abated," Hutchinson said. "It continues to be real, and we have to act with a renewed sense of urgency to protect our children."

Texas was among several other states that set aside money for school security. Gov. Greg Abbott and other top Republican leaders announced \$105.5 million for school safety initiatives. Nearly half of that was slated for bullet-resistant shields for school police and \$17.1 million was for districts to purchase panic-alert technology.

Other Republican governors who made money available for security upgrades include Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, who announced \$100 million for school security three days after the Uvalde shooting, and Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp, whose state is giving \$2.6 million to increase training capacity and classes for school resource officers.

"While these are the latest measures we're taking to ensure our children's safety, I can assure you they will not be the last. I will work with anyone, even in the midst of a heated election cycle, to protect our students," Kemp, who is running for reelection, said in June.

Some of the Republican governors who have moved aggressively to bolster school security have ruled out any kind of gun control measures.

Hutchinson had said there should be a conversation about raising the age to purchase an AR-15-style rifle — the type of weapon used in Uvalde — but didn't pursue such a measure during the session. Abbott also has pushed back on calls for more gun control by families of the Uvalde shooting victims. Oklahoma Republican Gov. Kevin Stitt vowed to fight any firearms restrictions when he signed an executive order on training for law enforcement and risk assessment at schools.

In California, which already had some of the nation's toughest gun laws, Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom has signed a dozen more this legislative session and even took out ads in Texas newspapers criticizing the state's stances on guns.

"We're sick and tired of being on the defense in this movement," Newsom said in July.

In New Jersey, Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy signed legislation last month requiring the state's nearly 600 school districts to set up assessment teams aimed at stemming violence in schools. One of the bill's sponsors recounted hearing of an Uvalde victim who pretended to have been killed in the attack to escape the shooter.

"Does anybody want to teach this — how to play dead?" Assemblywoman Pamela Lampitt, a Democrat, said during a hearing in June.

Despite the partisan divisions on gun violence, a group of governors says it will attempt to find common ground. A task force created by the National Governor Association following the Uvalde shooting will develop recommendations to stop mass shootings, with an emphasis on school safety. Hutchinson, a former chairman of the association, has said the task force will focus in part on how states might use money coming to them through the bipartisan gun control bill President Joe Biden signed in June.

Teachers, political opponents and others have raised questions about the scope and effectiveness of state leaders' plans.

In Arkansas, Democratic lawmakers questioned whether districts taking the new grant program's money would be required to have an armed presence on campus, one of the initial recommendations from the state's school safety commission.

"It's one thing to say 'school safety,' but that runs the gamut of so much," said Democratic Sen. Linda Chesterfield, a retired educator and the only legislator to vote against the grant program. "What specifically do you have in mind, and what price is it going to cost? I guess I'm just tired of having to fly by the seat of my pants and not know a thing about what's going to go into that (commission's) report."

In Ohio, teachers unions say one-time funding that's for equipment like door locks and radio systems — but not ongoing needs like personnel — is helpful but not enough.

Schools need money for staffing, too, including for safety and mental health personnel, said Scott DiMauro, president of the Ohio Education Association.

"Ideally, you're gonna use funding to ensure that every school that wants to hire well-trained school

resource officers, as part of their school safety plan, can do that," DiMauro said. "And from that perspective, you know, the \$100 million isn't going to solve the problem in the long run."

Harry Styles evolves from heartthrob to fashion icon

By NARDOS HAILE Associated Press

Harry Styles will never be just a singer-songwriter, he's now an actor and a fashion powerhouse as well. The former member of British pop boy band "One Direction" has shed his musician's skin for the male lead role alongside Oscar nominee Florence Pugh in the highly anticipated dystopian thriller film "Don't Worry Darling," directed by Olivia Wilde.

The film had its buzzy world premiere at the Venice International Film Festival on Monday, taking the internet and the world by storm with behind-the-scenes controversies and most of all, fashion.

Styles arrived on the Venice carpet dripping in a navy blue Gucci suit with bold broad shoulders and a very peaked collar, Sarah Karmali, executive editor (digital) at Harper's Bazaar, described to The Associated Press.

Laura Jordan, fashion & lifestyle features director at Grazia magazine, said Styles' partnership with his stylist Harry Lambert has created "absolute magic."

"(Styles' fashion) always got this kind of retro bit camp vibe. He loves the big collar, the tinted shades, lots and lots of Gucci," Jordan said.

In 2018, Styles began to build his personal style and brand by becoming one of the ambassadors for the Italian fashion house Gucci. Styles has worn the brand in several editorial campaigns but more noteworthy was the dress he sported for the November 2020 Vogue cover. The musician-actor was the fashion magazine's first solo male cover star.

The highly talked about cover depicted Styles in an open green field under clear skies and dressed in Gucci's Alessandro Michele-designed blue dress that was lined with black lace for a pop of contrast, multiple ruffled tiers and to top it all off — a classic black blazer.

Since his transition from member of a boy band to a solo artist with multiple bestselling albums, he has become synonymous with a flamboyant signature look — a colorful array of oversized 70s-inspired three-piece suits and jumpsuits with flared bellbottoms and an occasional feather boa, mimicking the likes of Elton John.

Each outfit for his "Love On Tour 2022," which currently includes an impressive 15-day residency at New York's Madison Square Garden, sparks a pattern — literally.

Exclusively dressed in Gucci every night, Styles has worn a different pattern-filled two-piece jumpsuit ranging from stripes to dots, all in different colors like bright hues of red, pink, blue and yellow.

If there is a takeaway from Styles' personal wardrobe evolution, it is that it's personal, eclectic and most of all, fun.

"Harry Styles knows exactly who Harry Styles is," Jordan said.

World's second-tallest roller coaster is permanently closing

SANDUSKY, Ohio (AP) — An amusement park in Ohio announced Tuesday it would be permanently closing the world's second-tallest roller coaster.

The decision by Cedar Point comes a year after a small metal object flew off the 420-foot (128-meter) tall Top Thrill Dragster coaster and struck a woman in the head at the park in Sandusky. A state investigation found no evidence that the park acted illegally or had reason to believe the ride was unsafe.

The ride has remained closed since the Aug. 15, 2021 accident. Park officials did not say if the accident influenced their decision to permanently close the coaster, which has operated for 19 years and drawn 18 million riders.

In a statement announcing the closure, the park noted it "legacy of ride innovation continues. Our team is hard at work, creating a new and reimagined ride experience." It said more details about its plans would be disclosed in the future.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 53 of 65

The Kingda Ka roller coaster at Six Flags Great Adventure in Jackson Township, New Jersey, is considered the world's tallest with a 456-foot (139-meter) elevation.

East Med especially at risk as world heats up, report warns

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) —

The eastern Mediterranean and Middle East are warming almost twice as fast as the global average, with temperatures projected to rise up to 5 degrees Celsius (9 degrees Fahrenheit) by the end of the century if no action is taken to reverse the trend, a new report says.

The region will experience "unprecedented" heat waves, more severe and longer-lasting droughts and dust storms and rainfall shortages that will "compromise water and food security" for the region's 400 million people, according to a summary of the report released Tuesday.

The eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East are more susceptible to warming trends because of their unique natural characteristics, like large desert expanses and lower water levels, the study said.

The report was prepared by an international group of scientists overseen by The Cyprus Institute's Climate and Atmosphere Research Center and the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry. Originally published in June in the journal *Reviews of Geophysics*, it aims to underscore the impact of climate change in the region ahead of the United Nations climate summit in Egypt this November.

Arid climate zones will expand northward and snow-capped mountains in more northern climes will diminish during this century, said Dr. George Zittis, who co-authored the report. Although the sea level in the region is projected to rise at a pace similar with other global estimates, many Mediterranean countries are unprepared to deal with it, he said.

"This would imply severe challenges for coastal infrastructure and agriculture and can lead to the salinization of coastal aquifers" warned Zittis. Saltier water from rising sea levels and low rainfall can severely damage crops and fisheries.

The region's most vulnerable groups, including the elderly, children and pregnant people, will face major health challenges, said Max Planck Institute Director Jos Lelieveld, who was part of the study. Many European nations already have initiatives to aid vulnerable people in extreme weather.

The region is rapidly overtaking the European Union as a source of greenhouse gases and becoming a major emitter on a global scale, the paper suggests. China, the U.S., India and the E.U. are currently the world's largest emitters. Several Mediterranean countries are also part of the European bloc.

If the Paris Agreement target of limiting warming to 1.5C (2.7F) is met, it would limit the temperature increase in the region to about 2C (3.6F), the study said. The report urged the region to quickly reduce its reliance on greenhouse gas emissions, especially in the energy and transportation sectors.

The study's projections for the region are in line with other scientific studies, including a major report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change earlier this year. The U.N.'s climate report termed the Mediterranean as a climate change "hotspot" which is vulnerable to droughts, coastal erosion and heat waves.

Typhoon batters S. Korea, preparations minimize casualties

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The most powerful typhoon to hit South Korea in years killed at least six people, dumped a meter (3 feet) of rain, destroyed roads and felled power lines on Tuesday. The death toll could have been higher if not for proactive evacuations and school closures, officials said.

There was also greater public awareness about the storm and its risks. Typhoon Hinnamnor made impact just weeks after heavy rain around the capital, Seoul, caused flooding that killed at least 14 people.

Government officials put the nation on high alert for days as Hinnamnor approached, warning of potentially historic destruction and putting in motion life-saving measures.

After grazing the resort island of Jeju and hitting the mainland near the port city of Busan, Hinnamnor weakened as it blew into waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 54 of 65

South Korea's weather agency said Hinnamnor was over the open sea 400 kilometers (248 miles) northwest of the northern Japanese city of Sapporo as of 9 p.m. and had weakened to a tropical storm.

However, the damage was still severe in the southern city of Pohang, where five people were found dead and at least five others were missing after the storm submerged roads and buildings, triggered landslides and flooded a shopping mall.

Cars with smashed windows and trunks open lay scattered on roads like garbage. An entire two-story pool villa was uprooted from the ground and swept away by flash floods. Troops were deployed to assist with rescue and restoration efforts, moving in armored vehicles through streets turned into chocolate-colored rivers.

Firefighters navigated flooded neighborhoods in rubber boats, rescuing people and their pets. Merchants scrambled to salvage furniture and other belongings at the famous Guryongpo outdoor market, where workers deployed excavators to clear huge piles of debris.

The rain and flooding eroded the foundations of bridges and motorways, which were often broken in chunks or blocked by fallen trees and electricity poles. Factory buildings were tilted, while a shipping container blew away and landed above cars in a parking lot.

"I woke up at 5 a.m. at because of the explosive rain, and I got really concerned because the water rose right up to my doorway," Kim Seong-chang, a Pohang resident, said in an interview with JTBC. "The water was still thigh-high at 7 a.m. and those who parked their cars in the streets were in panic because their vehicles were submerged. ... Other residents were bucketing out water from their homes."

The storm dumped more than 105 centimeters (41 inches) of rain in central Jeju since Sunday, where winds peaked at 155 kph (96 mph). Southern and eastern mainland regions also had damage — knocked-off signboards and roofing, toppled trees and traffic signs, and destroyed roads.

In Pohang, a woman in her 70s died after being swept away in flash floods, while four others were found dead in a submerged basement parking lot, where the search was continuing for five people.

Wading in the parking lot's neck-high waters with ropes tied to their bodies, emergency workers on Tuesday night managed to pull out two people who had been trapped. President Yoon Suk Yeol issued a congratulatory message after the first survivor's rescue, calling it a "miracle."

In the neighboring city of Gyeongju, a woman in her 80s died after her home was buried in a landslide. In Ulsan, another southern city, a 25-year-old man was unaccounted for after falling into a rain-swollen stream, according to the Ministry of the Interior and Safety.

Also in Pohang, firefighters extinguished flames that damaged at least three facilities at a major steel plant operated by POSCO. A presidential official, who spoke on condition of anonymity in a background briefing, said officials were investigating the cause of the fires.

Local fire officials said the flames destroyed a building housing electricity equipment and damaged a separate office building and a coking factory before being put out.

The Safety Ministry said about 3,700 of 4,700 people who had been forced to evacuate returned home Tuesday afternoon. Thousands of homes, buildings and factories were flooded or destroyed, and hundreds of roads, bridges and facilities were damaged.

More than 600 schools were closed or converted to online classes. Workers had managed to restore electricity to most of the 89,203 households that had lost power.

In North Korea, state media reported "all-out efforts" to minimize damage from flooding and landslides. The state Korean Central News Agency reported that leader Kim Jong Un had issued "detailed tasks" at government meetings to improve the country's disaster response capacity but didn't elaborate on the plans.

North Korea sustained serious damage from heavy rains and floods in 2020 that destroyed buildings, roads and crops, hurting the country's already-crippled economy.

Steph Curry aims to inspire with 'I Have a Superpower' book

By GARY GERARD HAMILTON Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — On nearly every basketball court around the world —from NBA arenas to elementary

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 55 of 65

school gyms — you'll see players of all sizes regularly attempting long 3-point shots. There's one man largely credited with transforming basketball from a must-see above the rim game to box office-long range shooting: Stephen Curry.

But the Golden State Warriors megastar who broke the NBA's all-time 3-point record last season is now aiming at a different target: children's books.

"This is our first project out and (we want) to hopefully reach the next generation of kids that are dreaming big, are going to be the next leaders and game changers," said Curry of "I Have a Superpower" illustrated by Geneva Bowers. "We want them to be able to set their sights on what they want to accomplish in the world and really believe that it's possible."

The father of three says the book was partly inspired by his own children's love of reading.

"You kind of have your kids in mind when you're talking about a book, and then you realize that this is kind of a universal opportunity to reach the next generation," explained the four-time NBA champion and reigning Finals MVP.

A member of the NBA's prestigious 75th Anniversary team and executive producer of the "Holey Moley" game show, Curry spoke with The Associated Press about empowering children and the upcoming NBA season. Answers have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: What do you want young people to learn from "I Have a Superpower?"

CURRY: We're all unique and we all have something to offer the world. And if you have a work ethic, if you have a belief and you feel like whatever that requires is already inside of you, then good things will happen.

AP: What would you tell parents who might say it's easy for you to tell kids "just work hard?"

CURRY: You can always go back to when I started playing basketball when I was 5 years old — I first started playing organized basketball at 9. I was undersized, scrawny and never, ever talked about as being the greatest at anything. And (I) had to go through those experiences of trying and failing... I think that's something that most people will hopefully be able to learn from, connect with and be inspired by.

AP: You and your wife, Ayesha, are building a media brand with TV shows and books. Why choose the media space to make an impact?

CURRY: There are a lot of different mediums to story-tell and to inspire. And publishing and writing this book is another example of ways to connect and kind of broaden your horizons... my wife showed me how it's done, so now I got to follow in her footsteps a little bit.

AP: Switching gears, most of this NBA offseason has been focused on the Brooklyn Nets drama with Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving along with the Lakers daily soap opera. Are you aware that much of the talk has not been about the Warriors, despite being the defending champions?

CURRY: We're aware of everything that happens in the League in terms of different storylines and rumors and all that. It is the best place to watch it all happen when you're holding the trophy and enjoying your summer and understanding, as the champs, you're the ones being chased again now.

We don't need anybody to talk about us. We know what we accomplished; it's about getting ready for another run (and) we feel like we can do it again.

AP: Sports fans know that you've probably transformed the way basketball is played forever. Are you personally aware of how you've changed the game?

CURRY: I'm aware, but part of it is for me to keep doing what I'm doing in my career and hopefully stay at this level for as long as I can. There is no sense that I've hit my peak. I always feel like I can get better. So, I'm motivated by how far I can stretch this.

The biggest message for how I changed the game is that is possible, how I play is definitely possible... But it requires a crazy amount of work that I've been doing since I was 9 years old. So, I don't want anybody to feel like they can skip steps to get there.

EXPLAINER: Europe struggles with crisis as Russia cuts gas

By DAVID McHUGH AP Business Writer

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — Europe is struggling to contain an energy crisis that could lead to rolling

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 56 of 65

blackouts, shuttered factories and a deep recession.

The primary cause: Russia has choked off the supplies of cheap natural gas that the continent depended on for years to run factories, generate electricity and heat homes. That has pushed European governments into a desperate scramble for new supplies and for ways to blunt the impact as economic growth slows and household utility bills rise.

The crisis deepened when Russia's state-owned exporter Gazprom said the main pipeline carrying gas to Germany would stay closed, blaming an oil leak and claiming the problems could not be fixed because of sanctions barring many dealings with Russia.

European officials say it's energy blackmail, aimed at pressuring and dividing the European Union as it supports Ukraine against Russia's invasion.

Here is the latest on Europe's efforts to avoid an energy disaster:

DID RUSSIA CUT OFF GAS TO EUROPE?

Just about. The halt in the Nord Stream 1 pipeline means Russian gas shipments have fallen 89% from a year ago. Russia used to supply 40% of Europe's natural gas, and even more to Germany, where inexpensive energy was a pillar of the economy.

There's still some Russian gas flowing to Europe through a pipeline passing through Ukraine into Slovakia, and another crossing the Black Sea to Turkey and then to EU member Bulgaria. Russia started cutting back gas as early as last summer, before the war in Ukraine started. That sent gas prices sharply higher.

Then Gazprom cut off a number of European countries after they responded to the outbreak of the war by banning many dealings with Russian banks, businesses and persons.

The reductions have led to soaring natural gas prices, which have hit records in the past few weeks. Given Russia's slow constriction of supplies since last summer, experts say Europe needs to be ready for zero Russian gas this winter.

WHY IS RUSSIAN GAS SO IMPORTANT?

High energy prices are already threatening to cause a recession this winter through record inflation, with consumers having less to spend as costs rise for food, fuel and utilities. A complete cutoff could deal an even heavier blow to an already troubled economy.

Besides heating homes and generating electricity, gas is used to fire a range of industrial processes that most people never think much about — forging steel to go into cars, making glass bottles and pasteurizing milk and cheese.

Companies warn that they often can't switch overnight to other energy sources such as fuel oil or electricity to produce heat. And, with everyone searching for alternate supplies, fuel oil and coal have also risen in price.

In some cases, equipment that holds molten metal or glass is ruined if the heat is turned off, and over the longer term, energy-intensive businesses may simply give up on Europe.

IS THE PROBLEM JUST ABOUT HIGH NATURAL GAS PRICES?

No. Electricity prices also have skyrocketed because gas is a key fuel to generate power. To make matters worse, other sources of power have lagged for reasons not connected to Russia.

Drought has undermined hydroelectric power from rivers and reservoirs. France's fleet of 56 nuclear power plants is running at half-strength because of shutdowns over corrosion problems in key pipes and repairs, updating and safety checks. A heat wave limited use of river water for cooling power plants, and lower water levels on Germany's Rhine River reduced supplies of coal to generators.

In a role reversal, France is talking about sending natural gas to Germany, while Germany is exporting electricity to France. Usually it's the other way around.

Analysts at Rystad Energy say Europe could face a serious electricity shortage as soon as this month. This winter, a worst case of cold weather, low wind generation and a 15% cut in gas use "would prove very challenging for the European power system, and could lead to power rationing and blackouts."

"Regardless of the exact scenario, the coming winter is certain to be the most challenging Europe has seen in decades — and consumers or governments are expected to pay the price," said Carlos Torres-Diaz, head of power at Rystad Energy. "If gas demand needs to be cut, we expect to see power supply issues

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 57 of 65

emerging this month and worsening into 2023.”

WHAT IS EUROPE DOING TO EASE THE CRISIS?

Europe has lined up all the alternative gas supplies it could: shipments of liquefied natural gas, or LNG, that come by ship from the United States and more pipeline gas from Norway and Azerbaijan. LNG is much more expensive than pipeline gas, however.

Germany is keeping coal plants in operation that it was going to shutter to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It also is keeping the option of reactivating two nuclear plants it's set to shut down.

The 27-nation EU has approved a plan to reduce gas use by 15% by next March, roughly the amount experts say will need to make up for the loss of Russian gas. Yet those conservation measures are voluntary in member countries for now.

National governments have approved a raft of measures: bailouts for utilities forced to pay exorbitant prices for Russian gas, cash for hard-hit households and tax breaks.

For example, Germany has approved a third support package with 65 billion euros (\$64.3 billion) in aid for consumers. That kind of spending will add to national deficits but also soften the downturn that economists are predicting for the end of this year and beginning of next year.

More steps are coming. The president of the EU's executive Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, says a new proposal will include a price cap on natural gas and measures that could decouple the price of electricity from gas.

Perhaps most important in the short term, Europe has managed to fill 82% of its storage for winter with the help of LNG and diminished consumption because of high prices. Storage levels have kept rising even after the Nord Stream 1 cutoff.

Partly as result, gas prices have fallen to their pre-cutoff level, although they are still painfully high.

WHAT'S RUSSIA'S GAME?

Even as gas sales dwindled, skyrocketing prices helped maintain Russia's income from those sales. Oil and gas imports were initially exempt from sanctions because Europe was dependent on Russian energy. Europe has banned Russian coal and will ban most Russian oil at the end of the year.

Russia's revenue from fossil fuel exports reached 158 billion euros from February to August, according to the Helsinki-based Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air.

But oil has tended to be the Kremlin's main moneymaker, and unlike gas in fixed pipelines to Europe, can be sold worldwide by tanker. And the gas relationship with Europe may be gone for good — and with it, any influence it might have brought.

“The gas flows from Europe no longer play a role in my calculations,” German Vice Chancellor Robert Habeck said. “The only reliable thing from Russia are lies.”

So if Russian President Vladimir Putin thinks he has any leverage from gas, time is running out for him to use it.

“Russia has lost nothing now that it hadn't lost already ... this winter is the last chance to use the gas weapon, successfully or not,” tweeted Janis Kluge, an expert on the Russian economy at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

Column: Mickelson wins part of the battle, loses the war

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

Much like his style of golf, Phil Mickelson's imagination is only as good as his ability to pull off the shot.

Mickelson has a right to feel somewhat vindicated by the bold and rapid changes coming to the PGA Tour. The idea — his idea, he can argue — is for the top players to compete against each other as often as 17 times, maybe more, for an average purse of \$20 million.

So in that respect, Mickelson won a big part of his battle.

The question now is whether he lost the war.

Mickelson won't be part of a PGA Tour model he always wanted. His tour membership is not being renewed for this season. His name is the first one listed on an antitrust lawsuit against the PGA Tour that has created so much animosity. He is as much a face of the Saudi-funded disruption in golf as Greg Norman.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 58 of 65

Was he right? Does it matter?

"As much as I probably don't want to give Phil any sort of credit at all, yeah, there were certain points that he was trying to make," Rory McIlroy said. "But there's a way to go about them. ... He just didn't approach it the right way."

McIlroy spoke of collaboration. Mickelson likes leverage, and he might have relished that as much as the reported \$200 million signing bonus he got from LIV Golf.

Mickelson wouldn't use the word "vindication" in an interview last week with Morning Read on SI.com. This was Mickelson trying to take the high road, a path he prefers only when he suspects he's right.

"All players should be appreciative of what LIV is doing," Mickelson told Morning Read. "The players on LIV for the opportunity they are getting. And the PGA Tour for the leverage that was provided to get these changes done."

These changes are what Mickelson began preaching some 20 years ago, only then he was more passive than aggressive. Change eventually came in the form of the FedEx Cup, a new model to bring the best players together at the end of the season in a series that culminated with the biggest payoff in golf.

Mickelson wanted more. This was in 2006, long before acronyms like PIP and PIF were part of the golf vernacular.

"Wouldn't it be great if we had 20 events where everybody played together?" he said.

Lefty grudgingly accepted what he saw as baby steps to his big dreams. Most telling from that January day in 2006 was his admiration for Norman — "A brilliant individual," Mickelson called him — and the Shark's ideas for golf.

All these years later, Mickelson became Norman's chief recruiter and had the leverage he needed — an endless supply of Saudi cash from the Public Investment Fund. That enabled LIV Golf to overpay for a roster of players that includes 10 major champions, five of them still among the top 50 in the world, the other five well past their peak years.

There is no meaning to the LIV tournaments — that takes years. There is no television partner yet, only a broadcast crew that artificially raises the hype and thus raises suspicion about the legitimacy of the product.

Even so, the PGA Tour was forced to respond by catering to the stars. The season will be shorter, the prize money higher, the fields smaller. That was in June. And then Tiger Woods and McIlroy led a private meeting of top players last month who pushed for a model where the elite play together all the time.

Odds are there will be more changes before January. What emerged from that meeting were eyes toward 2024. Next year is a bridge to get there.

Mickelson first referred to "leverage" when he was at the Saudi International in February. The damning comments came in his interview with Alan Shipnuck for his unauthorized biography, when Mickelson made it clear he was working both sides of the aisle.

He said the Saudis were "scary mother-(expletives)" who were behind the killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi and who execute gays. The PGA Tour was a dictatorship that prefers to "divide and conquer."

"And the Saudi money has finally given us that leverage," Mickelson said. "I'm not sure I even want (LIV Golf) to succeed, but just the idea of it is allowing us to get things done with the tour."

Such words can't be forgotten. They are at the core of Mickelson's motivation. He's not interested in any ideas but his own. And still to be determined is whether the tour's plan creates its own layer of division and strays from a century-tested ideal of meritocracy.

Commissioner Jay Monahan seized on Mickelson's use of "leverage" by countering with "legacy" only the PGA Tour can provide, without realizing every player has a price and every agent gets a cut of it.

What legacy does Mickelson leave?

The 18-foot birdie putt at Augusta National for the first of his six majors or the egregiously swatting a moving ball on the green at Shinnecock Hills in the U.S. Open? Visionary for the good of the game or high-stakes gambler motivated by greed?

The success of the PGA Tour — and LIV Golf — could determine that.

African nations urged to pile on pressure at climate summit

By WANJOHI KABUKURU Associated Press

MOMBASA, Kenya (AP) — The former Irish President has called on African nations to pile on the pressure on rich, heavily-polluting countries to fulfill their climate pledges to the continent during a visit to Uganda.

Mary Robinson, who is also chair of the Elders group of global leaders who advocate for peace and justice, told The Associated Press on Monday that the Group of 20 "must come up with new plans" to support Africa with its climate change efforts at the upcoming United Nations climate conference in November, known as COP27.

On Monday, European nations pledged a further \$25 billion to the continent to help countries adapt to the effects of climate change. The continent has suffered in an ongoing devastating drought in the east, with flooding and cyclones severely damaging southern countries.

Robinson said that the Elders "feel very strongly that we need COP27 to succeed" and encouraged African leaders "to create political pressure" so that developed countries can fulfill their promises.

Rich countries have so far failed to keep a \$100-billion-a-year pledge to poorer nations to help them adapt to the effects of climate change and transition to greener energy sources. Developed nations are larger emitters than poorer ones, with the African continent contributing just 3% to 4% of global emissions despite being 17% of the global population.

"We do not want to have a situation where promises that are not fulfilled undermine further the existing trust," Robinson said. She added that developed countries should "give more to get clean energy, technology and investments towards African countries."

Robinson is in Uganda for her second visit to the continent this year and is promoting renewable energy initiatives in schools alongside youth climate activist Vanessa Nakate.

Robinson noted that COP27, which will be held in the Egyptian seaside resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, will be regarded as an "African COP."

She added: "It will be more an African COP if there are more voices from Africa and the developing world making this as inclusive as possible" and highlighted the importance of younger and more diverse voices.

California facing chance of blackouts amid brutal heat wave

By ROBERT JABLON Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — California is facing its highest chance of blackouts this year as a brutal heat wave continues to blanket the state with triple-digit temperatures. State energy officials said the electrical load Tuesday afternoon could top 51,000 megawatts, the highest demand the state has ever seen.

As people crank up their air conditioners, the state forecasted record levels of energy use, said Elliot Mainzer, president of California Independent System Operators, which runs the state's electrical grid. The state has additional energy capacity at the moment "but blackouts, rolling, rotating outages are a possibility," Mainzer said, calling additional conservation "absolutely essential."

The CAISO site Tuesday morning showed California could fall more than 5,000 megawatts short of its power supply at peak demand, forecasted for 5:30 pm.

The danger of wildfires was extreme as scorching heat and low humidity turned brush to tinder. Four deaths were reported over the Labor Day weekend as some 4,400 firefighters battled 14 large fires around the state, with 45 new blazes on Sunday alone, said Anale Burlew, a deputy chief with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

In Southern California, two people were killed and one injured by the Fairview Fire, which started Monday near the city of Hemet, the Riverside County Fire Department said. Roughly 50 miles (80 kilometers) southeast of Los Angeles, the fire had quickly spread to at least 2,400 acres (971 hectares), prompting evacuations, and was only 5% contained. Multiple residential structures burned.

The dead people were not immediately identified. Authorities said both were found in the same area but it was not known if they were from the same household. They were apparently trying to flee when

they were overcome.

California's energy grid runs on a mix of mostly solar and natural gas during the day, along with 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. And some of the aging natural gas plants California relies on for backup power aren't as reliable in hot weather.

At CAISO's request on Monday, four temporary emergency power generators deployed by the Department of Water Resources in Roseville and Yuba City were activated for the first time since they were installed last year, providing up to 120 megawatts, enough electricity for 120,000 homes.

CAISO also has issued a Flex Alert call for voluntary conservation between 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. Tuesday, making seven alerts in as many days. Consumers were urged to keep air conditioners at 78 degrees (25.5 degrees C) or higher during the period and avoiding using major appliances such as ovens and dishwashers.

The efforts have worked to keep the lights on "but we have now entered the most intense phase of this heat wave" that could last into the week, and two to three times the level of conservation will be needed from people and businesses, Mainzer said.

CAISO also issued a Stage 2 Energy Emergency Alert from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Monday. The second of three emergency alert stages means taking emergency energy-saving measures "such as tapping backup generators, buying more power from other states and using so-called demand response programs," according to a CAISO website. Stage 3 would be rolling blackouts.

Several hundred thousand Californians lost power in rolling blackouts in August 2020 amid hot weather, but the state avoided a similar scenario last summer. Gov. Gavin Newsom signed legislation on Friday that could allow the state's last remaining nuclear plant to stay open beyond its planned 2025 closure, to ensure more power.

The National Weather Service predicted highs between 100 and 115 degrees (37.7 C and 46.1 C) across inland California, with 80s to 90s (above 26.6 C and below 37.2 C) closer to the coast. Nighttime won't bring much relief, with many places seeing lows in the 80s or even 90s (above 26.6 C and below 37.2 C).

Ironically, unsettled weather also brought the chance of thunderstorms over Southern California and into the Sierra Nevada, with a few isolated areas of rain but nothing widespread. The storms also could produce lightning, forecasters said, which can spark wildfires.

South of the Oregon state line, the Mill Fire was 55% contained Tuesday morning after killing two people, injuring others and destroying at least 88 homes and other buildings since it erupted last week, CalFire said. The bodies of the two women, 66 and 73, were found in the city of Weed on Friday, the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office announced Monday. Details weren't immediately released.

A few miles away, the Mountain Fire grew to nearly 18 square miles (29 square kilometers) square miles and only 20% contained, with winds threatening to renew its eastward spread in steep terrain, fire officials said.

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.

Ruby Bridges, desegregation trailblazer, writes kids book

By JAY REEVES Associated Press

Ruby Bridges was a 6-year-old first-grader when she walked past jeering crowds of white people to become one of the first Black students at racially segregated schools in New Orleans more than six decades ago. Now, with teaching about race in America more complicated than it's ever been, she's authored a picture book about her experience for the youngest of readers.

Bridges, along with three other Black students at a different school, were the first to integrate what had been all-white schools in New Orleans in 1960.

"I Am Ruby Bridges," featuring illustrations by Nikkolas Smith, goes on sale Tuesday. Published by Orchard Books, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., it's aimed at readers as young as 4.

Complete with a glossary that includes the words "Supreme Court" and "law," the book is an uplifting

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 61 of 65

story about opportunities and kids being able to make a difference, Bridges said in an interview with The Associated Press.

"It's a true reflection of what happened through my own eyes," she said.

But books by or about Bridges have been challenged by conservatives in several school districts amid complaints over race-related teaching. Bridges said she hopes the new book winds up in elementary school libraries.

"I've been very, very fortunate because of the way I tell my story that my babies come in all shapes and colors, and my books are bestsellers, and maybe banned in schools," she said. "But I think parents really want to get past our racial differences. They're going to seek out those books."

Bridges was born in 1954, the same year the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that racial segregation of public schools was unconstitutional. Southern school districts, including New Orleans, continued resisting integration for years.

But on Nov. 14, 1960, Bridges — carrying a plaid book satchel and wearing a white sweater — was escorted by four federal marshals past a taunting white crowd into segregated William Frantz Elementary School. The scene was made famous in the Norman Rockwell painting "The Problem We All Live With," which hung in the White House near the Oval Office during the tenure of former President Barack Obama.

The book's theme plays off the author's name: "Ruby" is a precious stone, and "Bridges" are meant to bring people together. Told with a touch of humor from the vantage point of a first-grader, the book captures the wonder of Bridges' experience — rather than just the scariness of that raucous first day at the school.

"It really looks like Mardi Gras to me, but they aren't throwing any beads. What's Mardi Gras without beads?" Bridges writes.

The only parade that day was out of the school. White parents immediately began withdrawing their children, so Bridges spent the entire year by herself with white teacher Barbara Henry, who is still alive and a "very best friend," Bridges said. Henry's acceptance and kindness during a fraught time taught her an important lesson, she said.

"That shaped me into a person that is not prejudiced at all. And I feel like that little girl is still inside of me, and that's it's my calling to make sure kids understand that you can't look at someone and judge them," Bridges said.

Elsewhere in New Orleans on the same day Bridges went to school, Gail Etienne, Leona Tate and Tessie Prevost entered the previously all-white McDonogh No. 19 elementary school. Last year, New Orleans held a weekend of events to remember Bridges and other women.

Bridges, a Mississippi native, still lives in metro New Orleans and has authored or co-authored five books. Two years she published "This Is Your Time," which is intended for older children than her new book.

China's Chengdu enforces strict lockdown despite earthquake

BEIJING (AP) — Authorities in southwestern China's Chengdu have maintained strict COVID-19 lockdown measures on the city of 21 million despite a major earthquake that killed at least 65 people in outlying areas.

Footage circulating online Tuesday showed workers wearing top-to-bottom protective gear preventing residents of apartment buildings from exiting through locked lobby doors following Monday's 6.8 magnitude quake centered in the surrounding province of Sichuan.

Buildings in Chengdu and other parts of western China were shaken by the quake. No damage was reported in the city. The quake struck a mountainous area in Luding county, which sits on the edge of the Tibetan Plateau roughly 200 kilometers (125 miles) from Chengdu, where tectonic plates grind up against each other.

Despite only recording a handful of cases, Chengdu's lockdown is the most severe since China's largest city of Shanghai was placed in isolation over the summer, prompting rare protests in person and online.

In all, 65 million Chinese in 33 cities including including seven provincial capitals are currently under varying levels of lockdown while the government is discouraging domestic travel during upcoming national holidays.

Outbreaks have been reported in 103 cities, the highest since the early days of the pandemic in early 2020.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 62 of 65

Most Chengdu residents are confined to their apartments or residential complexes. In the eastern port city of Tianjin, classes were moved online after a handful of new cases were reported.

China's authoritarian Communist political system demands strict adherence to measures dictated by the central leadership overwhelmingly dominated by party leader Xi Jinping.

Local leaders, including Sichuan's recently appointed provincial party secretary, are often parachuted in from Beijing with little knowledge of local conditions and a firm mandate to carry out Xi's dictates.

The ruthless and often chaotic enforcement of the Shanghai lockdown led to widespread complaints over shortages of food, medication and access to health care. In a sign of how little has changed, at least one district in Chengdu has banned even the ordering of takeout meals and coffee, according to a notice posted on the internet.

China has stuck to its hard-line "zero-COVID" policy of compulsory testing, lockdowns, quarantines and masking despite advice from the World Health Organization and moves by most other countries to open up again since the virus was first detected in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in late 2019.

China on Tuesday reported 1,499 new cases of local infection, most of them asymptomatic. Sichuan accounted for 138 of that total figure.

The quake knocked out power and damaged buildings in the historic mountain town of Moxi in the Tibetan autonomous prefecture of Garze, where 37 people were killed. Tents were erected for more than 50,000 people being moved from homes made unsafe by the quake, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

State broadcaster CCTV showed rescue crews pulling a woman who appeared uninjured from a collapsed home in Moxi, where many of the buildings are constructed from wood and brick. Around 150 people were reported with varying degrees of injuries.

Another 28 people were killed in neighboring Shimian county on the outskirts of the city of Ya'an. State media reported 248 people injured, mainly in Moxi, and another 16 people missing.

Three of the dead were workers at the Hailuoguo Scenic Area, a glacier and forest nature reserve.

Along with the deaths, authorities reported landslides that damaged homes, caused power interruptions and stranded people behind a newly created lake. One landslide blocked a rural highway, leaving it strewn with boulders.

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.

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.

Gardening: How to save vegetable seeds for next year

By JESSICA DAMIANO Associated Press

Many of the vegetables we grow in our gardens produce seeds, which, if harvested and stored correctly, have the potential to grace us with free plants. And late summer is the perfect time to start collecting them.

A few notes: Make sure the plants from which you're collecting seeds are heirloom, or open-pollinated, varieties. These are plants in their original forms whose seeds will produce plants with the same qualities as their parent.

Hybridized varieties, on the other hand, are created by breeding two or more different types to capture the best qualities of each. Attempting to grow seeds collected from hybrids will yield a harvest of disappointment, as the resulting plants will not have the expected attributes but rather carry the traits of only one of the parents -- and there's no way to know what that will be. For this reason, it's best not to grow seeds from supermarket produce.

Many plants become cross-pollinated in the garden when pollinators, other insects, animals and wind transfer pollen from one plant to another. To ensure the seeds you collect will grow into plants that match their parent, different varieties of the same crop should be kept anywhere from 100 feet to a mile apart, depending on climate, weather and other variables. This is often impractical, if not impossible, in the home

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 63 of 65

garden.

To avoid cross-pollination surprises, plant only one variety of the category of plants from which you plan to harvest seeds. If you want to save tomato seeds, for example, grow only one type of tomato in your garden.

If that feels too limiting, go ahead and experiment, knowing that even if cross-pollinated, both parents are heirloom varieties you selected and planted. They'll probably be fine even if they're not what you expect.

Store all seeds in a cool, dry place in a covered glass jar or paper envelope away from ripening fruit, which would affect seed germination. The temporary addition of a silica gel packet to the jar will remove any remaining moisture, but take it out after a couple of days to avoid over-drying.

Here's how to collect and save seeds from the most common homegrown crops.

LETTUCE

At the end of the growing season, lettuce will bolt, or send up a flower stalk that will develop seed heads reminiscent of dandelion puffs. When the puffs are dry, remove the entire stem, place it into a paper bag, fold over the top and shake. The seeds will disengage from the flower and fall to the bottom of the bag.

PARSLEY

Parsley is a biennial plant with a two-year life cycle that produces only edible foliage in its first year and leaves and flowers in its second. Allow those flowers to remain on second-year plants until they become brown and brittle. Cut them off the plant and store them in a paper bag to dry completely for a couple of weeks. When you remove them from the bag, rub the flowers between your fingers to separate the seeds, then blow away the lightweight dry plant matter and discard.

BASIL

Basil seeds are tiny, so separating them from the small flower petals and chaff can be tedious. When plants bolt at the end of the season, allow flowers to remain until they fade completely. Clip them off and place them in a mesh sieve or colander, then use your fingers to rub them against the bottom of the sieve.

BEETS AND CARROTS

These biennial plants produce seeds only in their second year, after a period of vernalization, or cold storage. In areas with cold winters, simply leave plants in the ground over winter.

In warm climates, you'll have to create "winter" indoors: At the end of the first season, cut the foliage down to 2 inches, carefully dig up roots, and store them in a refrigerator or cool cellar over winter. Replant them outdoors the following spring.

When the leaves of second-year beet plants turn brown, remove the seed stalk from the top of the plant and place it in a paper bag. Store in a cool, dry place for at least two weeks, then give the bag a good shake to separate the seeds. Pour them onto a plate, then blow on them to separate the chaff.

Allow second-year carrot flowers to dry on the plant, clip them off, and dry them further in a paper bag for a week or two. Shake the bag well and pour seeds out onto a plate, blow on them to separate the chaff.

PEPPERS

Select the nicest-looking pepper from your healthiest plant and allow it to remain on the plant until it is overripe and wrinkled. Slice it in half and remove the seeds, discarding any that are discolored or otherwise undesirable. Spread seeds in a single layer on paper towels and allow them to dry in a warm spot away from direct sunlight. Toss the seeds occasionally to ensure even drying, which should take about a week.

EGGPLANTS

Allow an eggplant to over-ripen on the plant until it becomes hard and wrinkled, and loses its shine and color. Slice it open, remove its seeds and place them in a bowl of water. Agitate the water with your hands to separate seeds from any flesh that is adhered to them. Strain, then pat seeds dry with a towel and spread on a towel or screen to dry, tossing every day for up to a month until completely dry.

GREEN BEANS

Because green beans produce an ongoing harvest throughout the season, enjoy the first flush or two, then leave developing pods on one plant until they are completely dried and brown. You'll know they're ready when they play like maracas. Cut the pods off the plant, place them in a cool, dark spot to dry

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 64 of 65

further, then remove the seeds. Discard any that appear discolored or damaged, and spread the rest on a towel for a few days to harden.

TOMATO

There are two ways to save tomato seeds — the right way and the easy way. Full disclosure: I like it easy, and I've succeeded with the shortcut. Your results may vary.

Start by cutting a tomato in half, then squeeze out its seeds and pulp over a bowl.

Fermentation improves germination rates and kills some seed-borne pathogens that could sicken plants. To ferment seeds:

1. Place a cover slightly askew over the bowl and allow the seeds to sit in their juices undisturbed for three days.

2. Pour the bowl's contents, which may be covered with a white film, into a larger container and add water equal to at least 3 times the seeds' volume.

3. Agitate the water with your hand and pour off the liquid. You'll notice that most of the seeds will have sunk to the bottom of the container; they are the viable seeds.

Any that float are duds, so pour them out with the juice, pulp and water. Repeat the rinsing process two more times.

To make sure pathogens are killed, soak seeds for 30 minutes in a 90% water, 10% bleach solution, then rinse very well. Spread seeds on a towel and allow to dry for about a week, tossing occasionally.

Or, you can simply allow the whole mess of seeds and pulp to dry on a plate in the open air for about a week, then scrape or pick off the seeds.

ZUCCHINI

Allow your chosen fruit to become overgrown, wrinkled and dry on the plant. Remove it, slice it open and scoop out its seeds. If desired, follow the tomato fermentation process above. You'll need to add a bit of water to the first step because there won't be any juice or pulp in the container.

Today in History: September 7, German air attack on London

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Sept. 7, the 250th day of 2022. There are 115 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 7, 1940, Nazi Germany began its eight-month blitz of Britain during World War II with the first air attack on London.

On this date:

In 1901, the Peace of Beijing ended the Boxer Rebellion in China.

In 1943, a fire at the Gulf Hotel, a rooming house in Houston, claimed 55 lives.

In 1968, feminists protested outside the Miss America pageant in Atlantic City, N.J. (The pageant crown went to Miss Illinois Judith Ford.)

In 1977, the Panama Canal treaties, calling for the U.S. to eventually turn over control of the waterway to Panama, were signed in Washington by President Jimmy Carter and Panamanian leader Omar Torrijos (toh-REE'-hohs).

In 1986, Desmond Tutu was installed as the first Black clergyman to lead the Anglican Church in southern Africa.

In 1996, rapper Tupac Shakur was shot and mortally wounded on the Las Vegas Strip; he died six days later.

In 2005, police and soldiers went house to house in New Orleans to try to coax the last stubborn hold-outs into leaving the city shattered by Hurricane Katrina.

In 2007, Osama bin Laden appeared in a video for the first time in three years, telling Americans they should convert to Islam if they wanted the war in Iraq to end.

In 2008, troubled mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac were placed in government conserva-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 07, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 062 ~ 65 of 65

torship.

In 2015, Hillary Clinton, interviewed by The Associated Press during a campaign swing through Iowa, said she did not need to apologize for using a private email account and server while at the State Department because "what I did was allowed."

In 2019, President Donald Trump said he had canceled a secret weekend meeting at Camp David with Taliban and Afghan leaders, just days before the anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks, after a bombing in Kabul that killed 12 people, including an American soldier.

In 2020, India's increasing coronavirus caseload made the Asian giant the world's second-worst-hit country behind the United States.

Ten years ago: The Labor Department reported that employers added just 96,000 jobs in August 2012, down from 141,000 in July; the dismal finding prompted Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney to say, "We're going in the wrong direction," while President Barack Obama, fresh off his nomination for a second term in office, said: "We know it's not good enough." Dorothy McGuire Williamson, 84, who teamed with sisters Christine and Phyllis as the popular McGuire Sisters, died in Paradise Valley, Arizona.

Five years ago: More than a half million people were ordered to leave South Florida as Hurricane Irma approached, while Georgia's governor ordered nearly 540,000 coastal residents to move inland. One of the most powerful earthquakes ever recorded in Mexico struck off the country's southern coast, toppling hundreds of buildings and killing at least 90 people. (A deadlier quake would strike central Mexico nearly two weeks later.) Donald Trump Jr. told a Senate panel that he did not collude with Russia to hurt Hillary Clinton's campaign. Equifax, one of the three major U.S. credit bureaus, announced that hackers had gained access to credit information on 143 million Americans.

One year ago: More than 400,000 homes and businesses in Louisiana remained without power, nine days after Hurricane Ida hit; more than half of the gas stations in New Orleans and Baton Rouge were without fuel. Louisiana health officials revoked the licenses of nursing homes that had evacuated residents to a warehouse where seven of the residents died amid squalid conditions. The Taliban announced an all-male interim government for Afghanistan stacked with veterans of their hard-line rule from the 1990s. The widow of the late Robert F. Kennedy said his assassin, Sirhan Sirhan, should not be released from prison; the statement further roiled a family divide over whether Sirhan should get parole for the 1968 killing. (In January 2022, California Gov. Gavin Newsom rejected a recommendation from a two-person panel of parole commissioners that Sirhan be released.)

Today's Birthdays: Jazz musician Sonny Rollins is 92. Singer Gloria Gaynor is 79. Singer Alfa Anderson (Chic) is 76. Actor Susan Blakely is 74. Rock musician Dennis Thompson (MC5) is 74. Actor Julie Kavner is 72. Rock singer Chrissie Hynde (The Pretenders) is 71. Rock musician Benmont Tench (Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers) is 69. Actor Corbin Bernsen is 68. Actor Michael Emerson is 68. Pianist Michael Feinstein is 66. Singer/songwriter Diane Warren is 66. Singer Margot Chapman is 65. Actor J. Smith-Cameron is 65. Actor W. Earl Brown is 59. Actor Toby Jones is 56. Actor-comedian Leslie Jones (TV: "Saturday Night Live") is 55. Model-actor Angie Everhart is 53. Actor Diane Farr is 53. Actor Monique Gabriela Curnen is 52. Actor Tom Everett Scott is 52. Rock musician Chad Sexton (311) is 52. Actor Shannon Elizabeth is 49. Actor Oliver Hudson is 46. Actor Devon Sawa (SAH'-wuh) is 44. Actor JD Pardo is 43. Actor Benjamin Hollingsworth (TV: "Code Black") is 38. Actor Alyssa Diaz (TV: "Ray Donovan"; "Zoo") is 37. Singer-musician Wes Willis (Rush of Fools) is 36. Actor Evan Rachel Wood is 35. Actor Jonathan Majors is 33. Actor Ian Chen (TV: "Fresh Off the Boat") is 16.