

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 1 of 77

[1- Upcoming Events](#)

[1- Water Restrictions start tomorrow](#)

[3- Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller](#)

[7- Weather Pages](#)

[11- Daily Devotional](#)

[12- 2022 Community Events](#)

[13- Subscription Form](#)

[14- News from the Associated Press](#)

Friday, Sept. 9

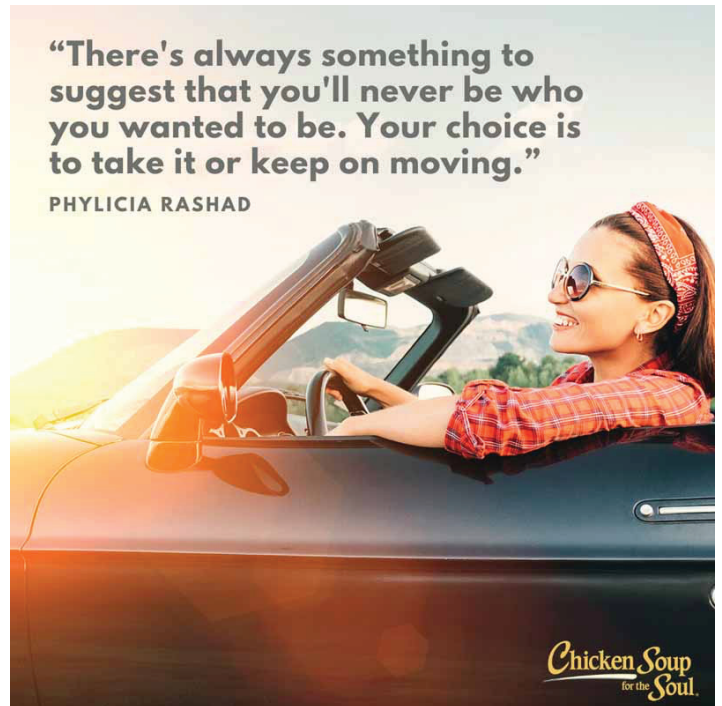
Senior Menu: Hamburger and cabbage dish, mixed vegetables, pears, muffin.

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

Brevin Flihs was a medalist at the Groton Golf Meet held Thursday at the Olive Grove Golf Course. The team overall placed third. We'll have more details in tomorrow's edition.



“There's always something to suggest that you'll never be who you wanted to be. Your choice is to take it or keep on moving.”

PHYLICIA RASHAD

Chicken Soup
for the Soul

**Starting Tomorrow
Sat., Sept. 10, 2022
NO OUTDOOR
WATERING!
Work will begin on
the painting of the
reservoir.**

**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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Roncalli netters beat Groton Area in three sets

Groton Area's volleyball team lost to Aberdeen Roncalli in three sets on Thursday, 25-19, 25-20 and 25-18. The match was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM sponsored by Bahr Spray Foam, John Sieh Agency, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Locke Electric, Dacotah Bank, SD Army National Guard with Brent Wienk, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc. and the Groton Area Chamber of Commerce. Justin Hanson and Ryan Tracy did the play-by-play calling of the match.

Sydney Leicht had six kills and two ace serves, Emma Kutter had six kills and one block, Aspen Johnson five kills and two blocks, Lydia Meier three kills and one ace, Elizabeth Ffliehs three kills, Jaedyn Penning two aces and two kills, Anna Fjeldheim had one kill and Laila Roberts and Jerica Locke each had an ace.

Ella Hanson led the Cavaliers with 14 kills, two ace serves and one block, Ava Hanson had 10 kills, one block and one ace, Maddie Huber had four kills and one block, Jazmine Hart-Crissman two kills and two blocks, McKenna O'Keefe three aces and two kills, Jaidyn Feickert had two blocks and one kill and Faith Danielson and Camryn Bain each had an ace serve.

The Cavaliers had 81 digs compared to 61 for the Tigers. Carly Guthmiller had 14 digs while Sydney Leicht had 12 and Laila Roberts 10. Camryn Bain led Roncalli with 23 digs.

Groton Area won the junior varsity match, 25-20 and 25-15. That match was also broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM with an anonymous sponsor. Jaedyn Penning had 12 kills, Jerica Locke had six ace serves, Kella Tracy three kills and one block, Faith Trpahagen two kills, Chesney Weber a kill and an ace serve, and Talli Wright and Rylee Dunker each had a kill.

The Tigers won the C match, 25-10 and 25-13.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 3 of 77

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

Weekend reporting's been rough for a long time; long-weekend reporting's worse yet. I want to get this posted because I'm going to be out of touch for a few days while traveling, and so I'm working here with the latest data I have, which is from yesterday at midday. There is, overall, not much change with a slow drift downward in everything but deaths. I have a seven-day, new-case average of 87,185 and a pandemic total of 94,551,200. Hospitalizations are holding steady to slightly down at 36,671. And deaths hang in there stubbornly around 500. The current seven-day average is 492 with a pandemic total of 1,043,402.

Here's a piece of what looks to be good news. We've been talking about new subvariants, and you may recall from my last update that we're seeing signs BA.4.6 is starting to push back against BA.5 in some parts of the US as it has here and there around the world. You may also recall that, where BA.4.6 has spread, it has been almost immediately supplanted by BA.2.75, which really takes over fast. This news is about BA.2.75.

Recent work done at Karolinska Institutet in Sweden using a pseudovirus with BA.2.75's genetic markers and serum from patients in Stockholm taken both before and after the Omicron variant turned up assesses BA.2.75's susceptibility to current antibodies, and this is where the good news part comes in: All indications are that this new subvariant is just as susceptible to our current arsenal of antibodies as BA.5. That means the current churn in subvariants circulating is not likely to result in new susceptibility on the part of patients; the antibodies most of us already have are going to work just fine against it.

Furthermore, a collaboration of the Karolinska Institutet, the University of Capetown in South Africa, ETH Zürich, Karolinska University Hospital, and Imperial College London investigated the susceptibility of this new subvariant to the current monoclonal antibody preparations we are using and published findings in *The Lancet* on Thursday. Here too, the antibodies appear to be working well. In fact, one of the monoclonals, tixagevimab, which showed reduced activity against BA.2 seems to have its effectiveness restored against BA.2.75, possibly because one position on the spike in BA.2.75 has reverted to the ancestral amino acid. If these findings hold up in further studies, we're probably going to dodge a bullet there—unless, of course, some new variant comes our way. But so far, so good.

Also related to the Omicron subvariants, I read a study in preprint, that is, not yet peer-reviewed, from the University of Toyama and Kobe University in Japan that evaluated the relationship between evolutionary distance from the original Wuhan variant of SARS-CoV-2 based on S gene sequence (spike protein structure) and what they're calling docking affinity for ACE2 (angiotensin-converting enzyme-2), that is, the binding ability of the virus with ACE2, the cell site where the virus enters and infects the host cell. So first, they calculated the absolute evolutionary distance (how genetically distant they are from the wild-type virus that emerged all those months ago in Wuhan) for the variants which have emerged since then: Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, Omicron BA.1, BA.2, BA.4/5, and BA.2.75. Then they applied their previously-constructed mathematical model for running docking simulations that predict the infectivity (docking affinity) of the variants. This sort of retrospective work with all of the earlier variants provides a good evaluation of that simulation model: We can check how accurately the model predicts their infectivity by comparing the predictions made by the model to the data we now have about each of these variants' past performance in the real world. We look at how on-target the predictions are and base our assessment of the model on that. When the simulation modeling matches our experience with the variants—and this one looks pretty good, we have a solid basis for a comparative analysis of the variants' ability to infect a host's cells. Earlier work concludes that this model is performing well, so the docking simulations are looking like a good basis for predicting docking affinity for new variants. In addition to predicting docking affinity, evolutionary

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 4 of 77

distance from the Wuhan variant is important because our vaccines to date are all based on that variant; a more recent variant that is evolutionarily distant from that one is probably going to be better at evading our antibodies. So evolutionary distance has more than one use.

In this work, findings were, in the authors' words, "The variants with longer evolutionary distances from the Wuhan variant had a tendency toward causing more epidemics. The Omicron BA.2.75 variant had the highest docking affinity of the spike protein with the ACE2 protein," and "BA.2.75 had not only a longer evolutionary distance, but also a much higher docking affinity than did BA.2." They concluded with this: "Our results indicate that Omicron BA.2.75 poses a greater risk to global health than other variants and that we must pay close attention to the Omicron BA.2.75 infection trends." Good idea. Also a good idea to get that bivalent booster.

And on that subject, I have a little more in the way of recommendations from experts on the timing of this bivalent booster. Here's a distillation.

You should probably wait at least two months since your most recent dose of vaccine to get this new booster. Most folks think you should also wait three months since your most recent infection; count the three months from first symptoms or, if you were asymptomatic, since your positive test.

If you are elderly or immunocompromised, you should probably get in for a boost as soon as that two months has elapsed. If you're young and healthy, you have a little more margin for error. In fact, the longer you wait, the more potent that booster is going to be but you don't want to wait so long that you get reinfected before you can get the boost, so there's a balancing act here. More infections is not better. Still, some research shows it's probably safe to wait up to six months after your last dose or latest infection if you're healthy; the downside is that no one knows exactly how long protection lasts after an infection. I think I would err on the side of doing it a little sooner than six months, maybe four-ish.

Bottom line: If you're elderly or immunocompromised—or at risk for severe disease—get the new booster at least two months after your last dose of vaccine or your last infection, and don't wait around much past that. If you're younger and healthy, assess your tolerance for risk and willingness to take precautions, and get the new booster between two and six months after your last dose or your last infection. And I'm still encouraging everyone to take precautions to protect yourself in the interim. While many of us have come to regard Covid-19 as just another hazard of living, the immediate consequences of an infection for a few of us and of long-Covid for all of us are nothing to sneeze at.

Here's what we know: This virus surges in the cooler months. Low humidity and colder weather seem to favor its spread; this is much like other respiratory viruses, for example, cold viruses and influenza virus. We do not currently expect Covid-19 rates this winter to be as brutal as the last couple of winters have been because of high rates of immunity due to vaccination and prior infection; but that immunity appears to wane with time, and it's not going to be perfectly protective, especially as time passes. Without a new variant, we're probably going to see a late-fall surge. If a new variant emerges, we'll probably see a peak around three months after, so something new this month would drive a peak in December and a new variant next month would push that back to January. I'll update you as new variants emerge, and we can all track this together.

Vaccines have, so far, been very effective in reducing hospitalization and infection fatality rates, and they're probably our best bet for keeping a lid on this virus. But precautions like distancing, avoiding indoor crowds, and masking in public will significantly enhance the effect of vaccination. Once federal funding dries up and people without insurance or independent means are unable to access vaccination, precau-

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 5 of 77

tions, and appropriate care, the risk to all of us will rise. We're not going to make this virus disappear; but our actions do still have the real possibility of reducing rates to a point where even the vulnerable can resume something resembling normal life. If we choose to ignore the threats, then probably we're going to deal with this much longer, and vulnerable folks will be trapped by the decisions of others. I am still very nervous at the high rates of new infections we're seeing—and we know we're missing a huge proportion of the real numbers of new infections.

I've had a look at a study from a group at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and published in Nature last week. The team had a look at mucosal antibody responses to SARS-CoV-2. Mucosal responses (secretory or SigA antibodies) are important because they occur in the respiratory tract where the virus enters; these kinds of responses are much more likely to prevent infection than those seen in the bloodstream which require the virus to first set up shop in the respiratory tract before the immune response will reach it. The team paired repeated saliva and serum samples from 29 adult participants over a period of 200-372 days. Eighteen of these participants were seropositive for SARS-CoV-2 prior to vaccination (history of infection between March and April 2020 at the very beginning of the pandemic); the others had no history of infection, confirmed by their seronegative status. All participants received two doses of an mRNA vaccine.

Findings are that vaccination alone can induce SigA antibodies under certain circumstances, but that the response is going to be weak compared to those pre-existing mucosal antibody response due to infection. Previously-infected individuals are going to show a quicker and larger SigA response. I'm not the expert here, but it seems to me that a vaccine administered directly to the respiratory tract, if we can develop one that induces a good response, might be an excellent way to protect those who have not yet been infected. Of course, given the dwindling numbers of those folks, maybe this isn't a productive line of inquiry.

We may have the chance to find out based on what happens in China over the next several months. That government has just authorized a nasal vaccine. There are some significant questions about its effectiveness; given the opacity of the Chinese authorities' deliberations on anything related to this pandemic, it could be this vaccine is the best thing since sliced bread or just a big bust. But if it works, then we may learn how worthwhile efforts to develop that sort of vaccine here may be.

The CDC has published provisional data for life expectancy in the US for 2021, and the news is awful. Life expectancy at birth plunged again last year to 76.1 years, the lowest level since 1995; what we have here (2.7 year decline from 78.8) is the largest two-year drop in 100 years. We know Covid-19 contributed hugely to a big drop in life expectancy in 2020. In the forefront again last year was Covid-19, which drove half of that year's decline; considering we had more Covid-19 deaths last year than in 2020, it makes sense we're still falling off a cliff. The second-leading cause may well be related to the pandemic too—deaths from unintentional injuries, half of them due to drug overdose, a number which set a record last year and which is arguably related to the pandemic too. Because these deaths tend to occur in younger people, they contribute disproportionately to a decrease in life expectancy. (When a 75-year-old dies from whatever cause, that is going to have a negligible effect on life expectancy; but if a lot of 40-year-olds start dying, we can watch the number plunge. Life expectancy is an average, after all; and averages are disproportionately influenced by outliers—values that lie far outside the usual range.) Other causes of death that increased include deaths from heart disease, chronic liver disease, and cirrhosis. Things would have looked even worse except that deaths from pneumonia and influenza dropped again last year; if these had been anywhere near the usual, the overall drop in life expectancy would've been greater.

The norm is to see life expectancy changes on the order of months in a given year, not on the order of years; this sort of drop is unprecedented. This looks worse if we place these data against 21 peer countries.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 6 of 77

All of those took a hit in 2020 and came back last year, experiencing a slight increase in life expectancy in 2021; none of them dropped even more in 2021. We did. Why? They vaccinated while we resisted, citing our freedoms. They took precautions, such as masking, while we resisted, hollering about liberty. I guess they're right when they say "freedom ain't free." Turns out it's expensive in terms of lives.

The decline was particularly pronounced among Native American and Alaska Native people; these groups have lost 6.6 years just since 2019 and four years in 2020 alone. They are now at 65.2 years, the same as it was for the overall US population in 1944 and lower than every country in the Americas except for Haiti. It's hard to wrap your head around that. No group in the US should be worse off than the entire hemisphere, not with our resources and technology. I can't think of an excuse for that. What's happening is that the pandemic is exacerbating already-existing health disparities between Natives and others, and with our health care system and its built-in inequities, that was probably inevitable.

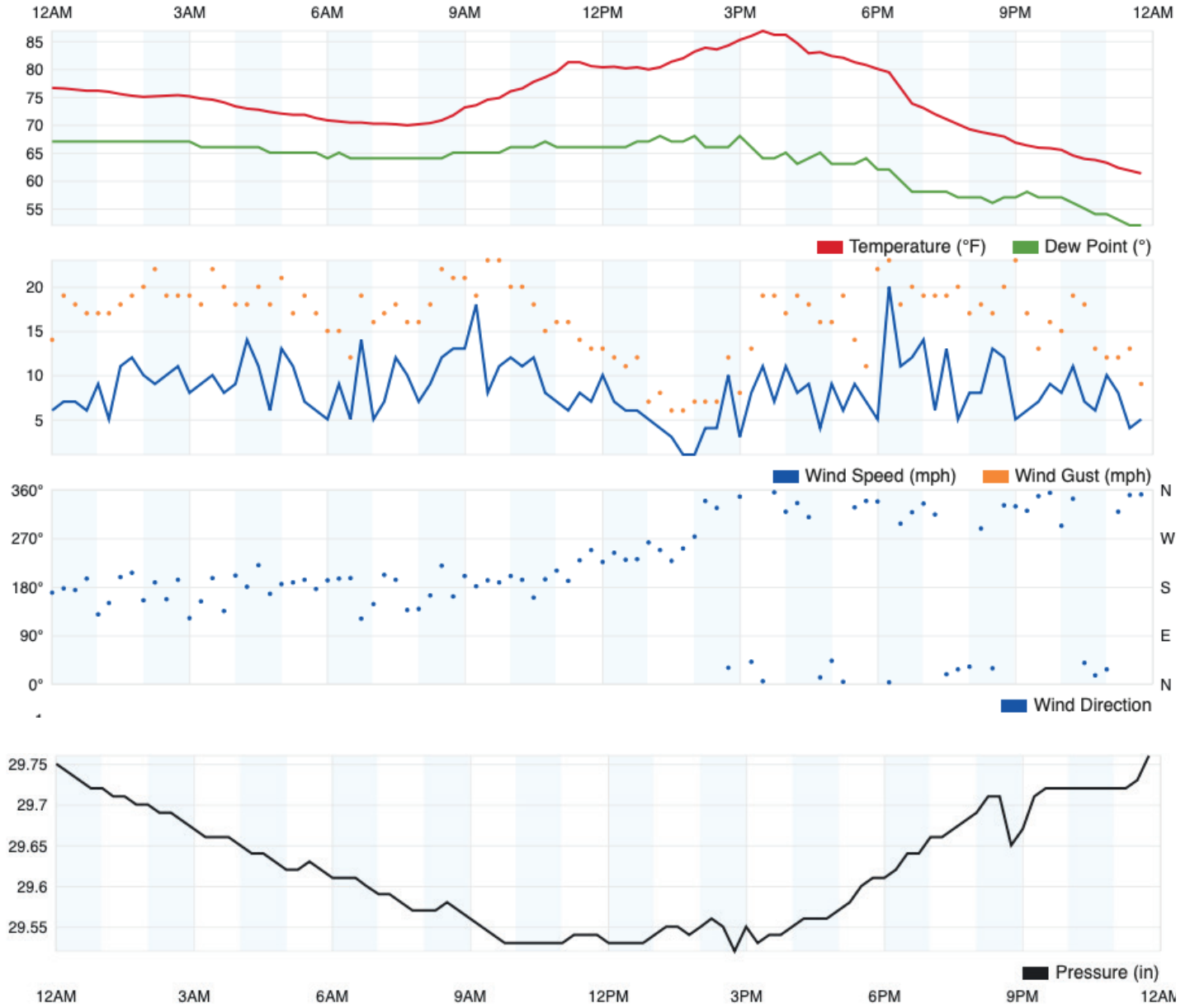
Interestingly, while White people experienced the lowest decline of all US racial and ethnic groups in life expectancy in 2020, deaths due to Covid-19 contributed more to the drop in White people in 2021 as they did in any other racial or ethnic group. White people's loss in life expectancy in 2021 was second only to Native Americans and Alaska Natives. This may be related to the fact that, despite greater access to vaccines and health care in general, White people are now less vaccinated than Black, Hispanic, or Asian populations. Life expectancy also decreased more among men than among women, which widens an already-existing disparity to almost six years (73.2 compared to 79.1 years). There's a lot to process here. Maybe when we've done that, we'll actually act to remedy it. Remains to be seen.

I'm traveling the rest of the week, so I'll have to catch you up on anything new that breaks after I return. In the meanwhile, please keep yourself safe. That speaks to me at the moment since I'm not entirely comfortable traveling at this time; if weren't important, I'd probably be staying home until I can get that new booster. Let's hope I'm not sorry later. Be well. We'll talk again.

Groton Daily Independent






Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 7 of 77

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs






Broton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 8 of 77

Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
				
Shows Likely then Slight Chance Shows	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 70 °F	Low: 44 °F	High: 71 °F	Low: 44 °F	High: 74 °F

Weekend Outlook

Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		
Light Showers & Breezy		
Highs: 65-72°	Highs: 67-74°	Highs: 72-80°



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

www.weather.gov/abr

Light rain showers are expected across the area through the afternoon with a north northwest breeze keeping temperatures relatively cool compared to recent weather. Mild temperatures continue through the weekend with sunny skies.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 9 of 77

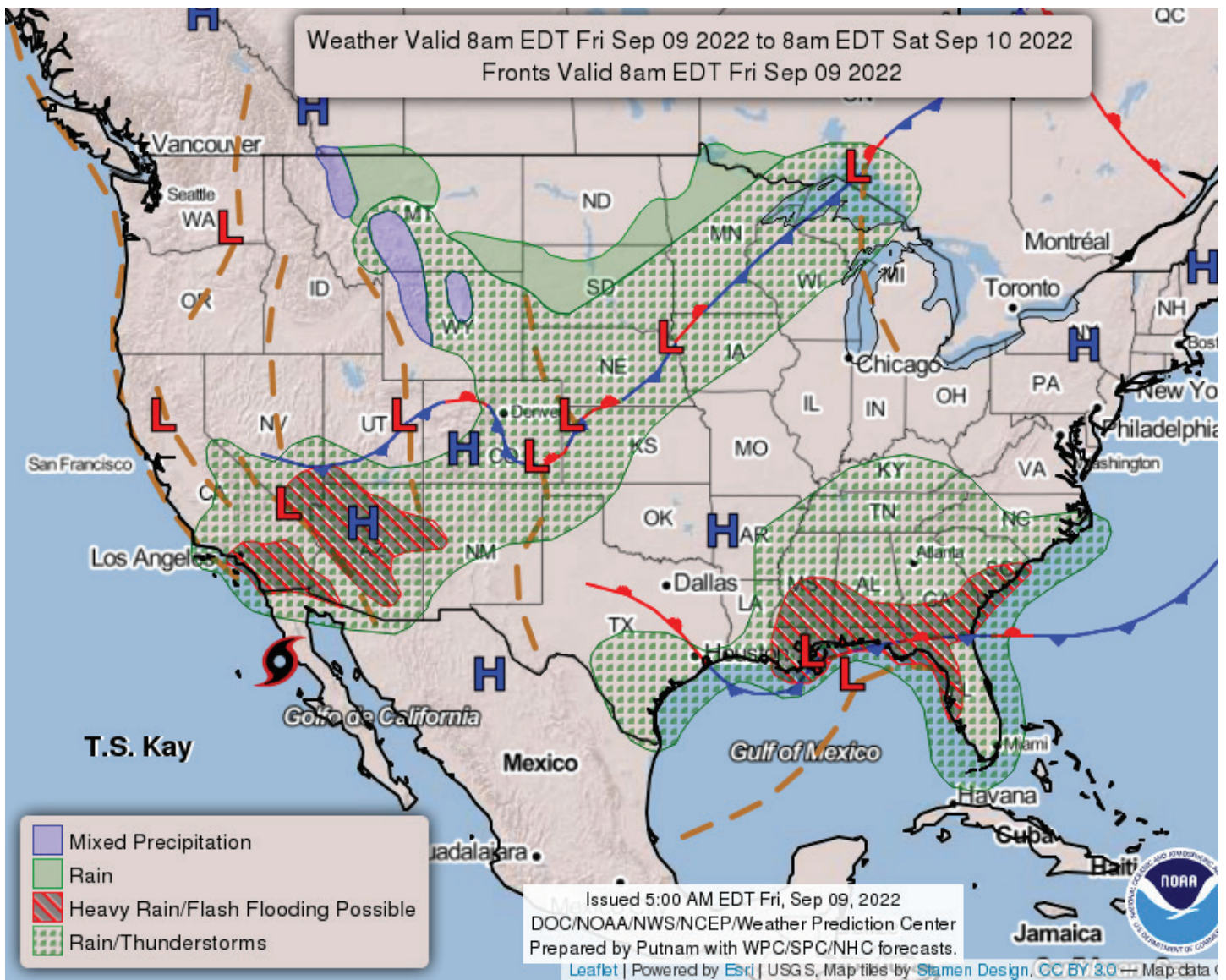
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 86.8 °F at 3:30 PM
Low Temp: 61.3 °F at 11:45 PM
Wind: 23 mph at 6:15 PM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 12 hours, 54 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 101 in 1931
Record Low: 26 in 1898
Average High: 78°F
Average Low: 50°F
Average Precip in Sept.: 0.61
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 16.95
Precip Year to Date: 15.96
Sunset Tonight: 7:56:47 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:03:41 AM



Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 10 of 77

Today in Weather History

September 9, 1961: A young girl in Bullhead, Corson County, was killed by lightning on the afternoon while walking on the highway. Her little brother was slightly injured.

September 9, 1983: High winds from the late evening into the early morning hours of the 10th blew through east central South Dakota damaging crops, downing hundreds of trees, breaking windows, damaging roofs and buildings, downing power poles and damaging vehicles. Gusts to 75 mph in Huron moved a semi-trailer a half block. Scattered power outages of up to 24 hours were reported in numerous areas as branches fell across power and telephone lines. Thirty power poles were downed in Kingsbury County alone. Corn, beans, and sunflowers suffered extensive damage in many areas with up to 50 percent losses reported. Gusts up to 90 mph were reported at Lake Poinsett, Lake Norden, and Estelline, where roofs and shingles were ripped from buildings and numerous windows, were broken. At Lake Poinsett, extensive damage was done to boats, docks, and automobiles.

1775: The Independence Hurricane slammed into Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Many ships were sunk and buildings demolished. 4,000 people died in what is considered to be Canada's deadliest hurricane disaster.

1821: A tornadic outbreak affected the New England states of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont on this day. Five tornadoes reportedly touched down from this event. One storm in New Hampshire had a path width of a half mile and tracked an estimated 23 miles. This tornado killed at least six individuals, which could be the deadliest tornado in New Hampshire history.

1926 - A hurricane came inland near Daytona Beach, FL. The hurricane caused 2.5 million dollars damage in eastern Florida, including the Jacksonville area. (David Ludlum)

1939 - The temperature at Lewiston, ID, hit 117 degrees to establish an all-time record high for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1943 - On a whim, and flying a single engine AT-6, Lieutenant Ralph O'Hair and Colonel Duckworth were the first to fly into a hurricane. It started regular Air Force flights into hurricanes. (The Weather Channel)

1965: Hurricane Betsy slammed into New Orleans on the evening of September 9, 1965. 110 mph winds and power failures were reported in New Orleans. The eye of the storm passed to the southwest of New Orleans on a northwesterly track. The northern and western eyewalls covered Southeast Louisiana and the New Orleans area from about 8 PM until 4 AM the next morning. In Thibodaux, winds of 130 mph to 140 mph were reported. The Baton Rouge weather bureau operated under auxiliary power, without telephone communication.

1987 - Thunderstorms in Minnesota spawned a tornado which moved in a southwesterly direction for a distance of thirty miles across Rice County and Goodhue County. Trees were uprooted and tossed about like toys, and a horse lifted by the tornado was observed sailing horizontally through the air. Thunderstorms drenched La Crosse, WI, with 5.26 inches of rain, their second highest 24 hour total of record. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Hot weather prevailed in the north central U.S. Williston, ND, reported a record high of 108 degrees. Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the eastern U.S., and in southeastern Texas. Richland County, SC, was soaked with up to 5.5 inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced locally heavy rains in the southwestern U.S. Yuma, AZ, experienced their most severe thunderstorm of record. Strong thunderstorm winds, with unofficial gusts as high as 95 mph, reduced visibilities to near zero in blowing dust and sand. Yuma got nearly as much rain in one hour as is normally received in an entire year. The storm total of 2.55 inches of rain was a record 24 hour total for July. Property damage due to flash flooding and high winds was in the millions. (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from Wisconsin and northern Illinois to New England, with 103 reports of large hail and damaging winds through the day. Thunderstorms in Wisconsin produced hail three inches in diameter near Oshkosh, and wind gusts to 65 mph at Germantown. (The National Weather Summary)

2013: Historical rainfall occurred in northern Colorado from September 9 to September 16 and resulted in severe flash flooding along the northern Front Range of Colorado and subsequent river flooding downstream along the South Platte River and its tributaries. The heaviest rain fell along the Front Range northwest of Denver on September 11-12.



A Heavenly Reunion

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 (NIV)

Believers Who Have Died

13 Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. 14 For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 15 According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words..

Insight By: J.R. Hudberg

In 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18, Paul writes to believers in Jesus at the church in Thessalonica about the fate of believers who'd already died. The apostle's words were driven by the practical concerns of his readers. These early believers had expected Christ to return in the near future, and—much like the disciples—they thought He'd set up an earthly kingdom. For them, that meant that those who died before His return would miss out on the kingdom of God. This concern caused them grief, so Paul wrote to them about the hope of the resurrection so they wouldn't grieve without hope (v. 13). Instead, they were to have hope that the brothers and sisters who'd died in Jesus would indeed experience life with Him. In fact, at Christ's return, they'd precede the living to join Him forever (v. 17)..

Comment By: Xochitl Dixon

When writing my mom's obituary, I felt that the word died seemed too final for the hope I had in our promised reunion in heaven. So, I wrote: "She was welcomed into the arms of Jesus." Still, some days I grieve when looking at the more current family photos that don't include my mom. Recently, though, I discovered a painter who creates family portraits to include those we've lost. The artist uses the photos of loved ones who have gone before us to paint them into the picture of the family. With strokes of a paintbrush, this artist represents God's promise of a heavenly reunion. I shed grateful tears at the thought of seeing my mom smiling by my side again.

The apostle Paul affirms that believers in Jesus don't have to grieve "like the rest of mankind" (1 Thessalonians 4:13). "We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him" (v. 14). Paul acknowledges Jesus' second coming and proclaims that all believers will be reunited with Jesus (v. 17).

God's promise of a heavenly reunion can comfort us when we're grieving the loss of a loved one who has trusted Jesus. Our promised future with our risen King also provides enduring hope when we face our own immortality, until the day Jesus comes or calls us home..

Reflect and Prayer: How has God used the promise of a heavenly reunion to comfort you in your grief? Why does the promise of a heavenly reunion give you great hope?

Loving Savior, thank You for giving me an enduring hope to share with others until the day You call me home or come again.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 12 of 77

2022-23 Community Events

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

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 13 of 77

The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

Subscription Form

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Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 14 of 77

News from the  Associated Press

Thursday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Groton Area, 25-18, 25-20, 25-19

Belle Fourche def. Winner, 25-17, 25-12, 25-12

Bridgewater-Emery def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-14, 25-22, 19-25, 25-21

Canton def. Elk Point-Jefferson, 18-25, 25-11, 25-18, 22-25, 15-5

Chester def. Baltic, 25-22, 25-13, 25-13

Dell Rapids def. Tea Area, 25-7, 25-21, 25-15

Deuel def. Britton-Hecla, 25-17, 25-19, 25-19

Edgemont def. Guernsey-Sunrise, Wyo., 25-12, 25-7, 25-18

Elkton-Lake Benton def. Oldham-Ramona/Rutland, 25-7, 25-16, 25-21

Ethan def. Menno, 18-25, 25-15, 25-21, 25-23

Faulkton def. Potter County, 29-27, 25-22, 25-21

Freeman def. Gayville-Volin, 26-24, 24-26, 25-18, 25-18

Garretson def. Beresford, 25-18, 25-19, 25-21

Great Plains Lutheran def. Wilmot, 25-15, 25-18, 25-19

Hamlin def. Milbank, 25-21, 19-25, 15-25, 27-25, 15-11

Harrisburg def. Mitchell, 25-12, 25-14, 25-9

Howard def. Sioux Falls Lutheran, 25-19, 23-25, 25-11, 25-19

Ipswich def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-14, 25-7, 25-9

James Valley Christian def. Corsica/Stickney, 25-17, 25-23, 25-21

Kadoka Area def. Wall, 25-22, 25-14, 25-15

Madison def. Lennox, 25-17, 26-28, 25-22, 25-21

McCook Central/Montrose def. Garretson, 13-25, 25-20, 25-21, 25-20

Mobridge-Pollock def. Leola/Frederick, 18-25, 26-24, 25-13, 25-16

Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Hanson, 25-12, 25-18, 26-24

New Underwood def. Lyman, 25-17, 25-23, 28-26

North Central Co-Op def. McLaughlin, 25-19, 25-8, 25-19

Platte-Geddes def. Bon Homme, 25-17, 25-12, 25-19

Rapid City Christian def. Hill City, 25-19, 25-14, 25-21

Redfield def. Sisseton, 25-19, 25-12, 21-25, 25-12

Scotland def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 25-10, 25-14, 25-11

Sioux Falls Christian def. West Central, 25-10, 25-16, 25-18

Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 26-24, 25-23, 25-23

Sioux Falls Washington def. Yankton, 25-17, 25-11, 25-13

St. Mary's, Neb. def. Burke, 26-24, 15-25, 23-25, 29-27, 15-13

Tripp-Delmont/Armour def. Kimball/White Lake, 23-25, 27-25, 25-19, 25-15

Vermillion def. Tri-Valley, 27-25, 20-25, 12-25, 25-23, 15-13

Wagner def. Gregory, 25-10, 25-14, 25-15

Warner def. Northwestern, 25-14, 28-30, 25-16, 25-17

Waubay/Summit def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-17, 30-32, 25-12, 20-25, 15-9

Webster def. Clark/Willow Lake, 27-25, 25-13, 25-21

Wolsey-Wessington def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-17, 25-10, 25-13

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS=

Timber Lake vs. Herreid/Selby Area, ppd.

The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL

Standing Rock, N.D. 60, Crow Creek 12

Todd County 60, Flandreau Indian 0

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

Woman's death in Sioux Falls fire ruled a homicide

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A fire that killed a woman in Sioux Falls two months ago has now been ruled a homicide.

Police spokesman Sam Clemens said investigators were waiting for autopsy results. The coroner has ruled the death of 53-year-old Charice Marie Admire as a homicide by smoke inhalation.

Clemens said a 34-year-old woman killed Admire when she set a fire in an apartment hallway July 17. Admire was transported to a Minneapolis hospital, where she died the next day.

The suspect, who was also in the apartment, is still in the hospital and has not been formally charged.

"If she is able to get out of the hospital, there likely would be charges at that point in time," Clemens said.

According to police, the suspect set the fire after a disagreement with others inside the apartment. There were several people inside, and most of them were able to get out.

The fire started in the hallway before the suspect ran into the apartment. Clemens said he didn't know why the suspect and the victim were unable to get out of the apartment.

According to Admire's obituary, she is survived by three children and seven grandchildren.

Britain mourns Queen Elizabeth as Charles becomes king

By DANICA KIRKA, JILL LAWLESS and SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Bells tolled around Britain on Friday and mourners flocked to palace gates to honor Queen Elizabeth II, as the country prepared for a new age under a new king.

King Charles III, who spent much of his 73 years preparing for the role, planned to meet with the prime minister and address a nation grieving the only British monarch most of the world had known. He takes the throne in an era of uncertainty for both his country and the monarchy itself.

As the country began a 10-day mourning period, people around the globe gathered at British embassies to pay homage to the queen, who died Thursday in Balmoral Castle in Scotland. A 96-gun salute was planned in London — one for each year of the queen's long life. In Britain and across its former colonies, the widespread admiration for Elizabeth herself was occasionally mixed with scorn for the institution and the imperial history she represented.

On the king's first full day of duties Friday, he left Balmoral and took off from Aberdeen, Scotland, for London, where he's expected to meet Prime Minister Liz Truss, appointed just this week. In the evening, he will deliver a speech to the nation as many Britons are preoccupied with an energy crisis, the soaring cost of living, the war in Ukraine and the fallout from Brexit.

Hundreds of people arrived through the night to leave flowers outside the gates of Buckingham Palace, the monarch's London home, or simply to pause and reflect.

Finance worker Giles Cudmore said the queen had "just been a constant through everything, everything good and bad."

"She's just been the foundation of my life, the country," he said.

Everyday politics was put on hold, with lawmakers set to pay tribute to the monarch in Parliament over two days, beginning with a special session where Truss said the queen's death has caused a "heartfelt outpouring of grief" in Britain and around the world.

She called the monarch "the nation's greatest diplomat" and said her devotion to duty was an example to everyone. When the queen appointed Truss, the prime minister said, "she generously shared with me

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 16 of 77

her deep experience of government, even in those last days.”

Meanwhile, many sporting and cultural events were canceled as a mark of respect, and some businesses — including Selfridges department store and the Legoland amusement park — shut their doors. The Bank of England postponed its meeting by a week.

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby said the queen’s death marked an “enormous shift” for Britain and the world.

“A part of our lives we’ve taken for granted as being permanent is no longer there,” he said.

But while Elizabeth’s death portends a monumental shift, day-to-day life in Britain went on Friday, with children in school and adults at work and facing concerns about soaring prices.

Elizabeth was Britain’s longest-reigning monarch and a symbol of constancy in a turbulent era that saw the decline of the British empire and disarray in her own family. Members of the royal family had rushed to her side at the family’s summer residence in Balmoral after her health took a turn for the worse.

On Friday, Truss and other senior ministers are expected to attend a remembrance service at St. Paul’s Cathedral in London. Charles, who became the monarch immediately upon his mother’s death, will then be formally proclaimed king at a special ceremony Saturday.

After a vigil in Edinburgh, the queen’s coffin will be brought to London, and she will lie in state for several days before her funeral in Westminster Abbey.

As the second Elizabethan Age came to a close Thursday, the BBC played the national anthem, “God Save the Queen,” over a portrait of the monarch in full regalia as her death was announced. The flag over Buckingham Palace was lowered to half-staff. And in the one of first of many shifts to come, the anthem played Friday was “God Save the King.”

The impact of Elizabeth’s loss will be unpredictable for Britain. She helped stabilize and modernize the monarchy across decades of enormous social change, but its relevance in the 21st century has often been called into question. The public’s abiding affection for the queen had helped sustain support for the monarchy during the family scandals, but Charles is nowhere near as popular.

“Charles can never replace her, you know, and that makes sense,” said 31-year-old Londoner Mariam Sherwani.

Like many mourners, she referred to Elizabeth as a grandmother figure. Others compared her to their mothers or great-grandmothers.

But around the world, her passing revealed conflicting emotions about the nation and institutions she represented.

In Ireland, some soccer fans cheered.

In India, once the “jewel in the crown” of the British empire, entrepreneur Dhiren Singh described his own personal sadness at her death, but added, “I do not think we have any place for kings and queens in today’s world.”

For some, Elizabeth was a queen whose coronation glittered with shards of a stunning 3,106-carat diamond pulled from grim southern African mines, a monarch who inherited an empire they resented.

In the years after she became queen in Kenya, scores of thousands of ethnic Kikuyu were rounded up in camps by British colonizers under threat from the local Mau Mau rebellion. Across the continent, nations rejected British rule and chose independence in her first decade on the throne.

She led a power that at times was criticized as lecturing African nations on democracy but denying many of their citizens the visas to visit Britain and experience it firsthand.

The changing of the guard also comes at a fraught moment for Britain — with the country facing recession and just after a brand-new prime minister took the reins. Truss, appointed by the queen 48 hours earlier, called Elizabeth “the rock on which modern Britain was built.”

Some people gathered outside Buckingham Palace wept when officials carried a notice confirming the queen’s death to the wrought-iron gates on Thursday. Hundreds gathered in the rain, and mourners laid heaps of colorful bouquets at the gates.

World leaders extended condolences and paid tribute to the queen.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 17 of 77

In Canada, where the British monarch is the country's head of state, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's eyes were red with emotion as he saluted her "wisdom, compassion and warmth." Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted: "She personified dignity and decency in public life. Pained by her demise."

U.S. President Joe Biden called her a "stateswoman of unmatched dignity and constancy who deepened the bedrock alliance between the United Kingdom and the United States."

Since Feb. 6, 1952, Elizabeth had reigned over a Britain that rebuilt from a destructive and financially exhausting war and lost its empire; joined the European Union and then left it; and made the painful transition into the 21st century. She was a reassuring presence even for those who ignored or loathed the monarchy.

She became less visible in her final years as age and frailty curtailed many public appearances. But she remained at the center of national life as Britain celebrated her Platinum Jubilee with days of parties and pageants in June.

On Tuesday, she presided at a ceremony at Balmoral Castle to accept the resignation of Boris Johnson as prime minister and appoint Truss as his successor.

Jailed Kremlin critic: Government has 'failed to shut me up'

By DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — Russian opposition politician Ilya Yashin may be in jail, but he refuses to be silenced.

His social media accounts are regularly updated with anecdotes about his life in detention or video commentary criticizing President Vladimir Putin's rule. He gives interviews to media outlets by providing written answers to questions through his lawyers from behind bars.

He uses court appearances as an opportunity to speak out against the Kremlin's devastating war in Ukraine — which is exactly what he is being prosecuted for.

"So far the authorities have failed to shut me up," Yashin told The Associated Press in a lengthy handwritten letter from a pre-trial detention center in Moscow, passed on via his lawyers and associates last week.

"The opposition should speak the truth and stimulate a peaceful anti-war resistance ... It is very important to help people overcome their fear. But one can only truly motivate people with their own personal example," the politician added.

Yashin, 39, is one of the few prominent opposition figures who has refused to leave Russia despite the unprecedented pressure the authorities have mounted on dissent in recent years. He says leaving Russia would have affected his authority and value as a politician.

A sharp critic of the Kremlin, a vocal ally of imprisoned opposition leader Alexei Navalny and an uncompromising member of a Moscow municipal council, Yashin was arrested in June. The authorities charged him with spreading false information about the Russian military — a new criminal offense for which he faces up to 10 years in prison if convicted.

The charges against Yashin reportedly relate to a YouTube livestream video in which he talked about Ukrainians being killed in the Kyiv suburb of Bucha. He rejects the charges as politically motivated.

On Friday, a court in Moscow extended Yashin's detention for two more months, until Nov. 12. "Don't worry, everything's fine. Russia will be free," the politician said as he was being escorted out of the courtroom by police.

Yashin wrote answers to the AP's questions in his small cell in Moscow's notorious Butyrskaya prison that he shares with several other people.

His day there starts at 6 a.m. and ends at 10 p.m., he wrote, and consists of a walk, three meals, a couple of inspections and lots of free time. So he writes and reads a lot to make use of it.

Last week, his parents visited him in detention. His mother, Tatyana, told the AP in a phone interview that he was "holding up well and not regretting anything."

She said the risk of her son getting arrested has been there for years — since 2012, when arrests followed mass protests in Moscow over reports of widespread rigging at a parliamentary election. "But you

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 18 of 77

know how it is: You always hope for the best," Tatyana Yashina said. "Nevertheless, we were, of course, prepared."

Yashin said he, too, was ready for the arrest.

After the authorities adopted a law that criminalized the spread of false information about the military, effectively outlawing all criticism of what the Kremlin calls "a special military operation" in Ukraine, "it became obvious: The security forces will come after all public opponents of Putin who refuse to emigrate," Yashin said.

"So yes, I tried to prepare for prison as much as it was possible. I got my health in order, completed my dental treatments. Explained the situation, explained the risks to my family and loved ones. Prepared my home for a raid, gathered a team of lawyers in advance. And most importantly — I mentally prepared to take the heat."

What did surprise him, Yashin said, was how much respect law enforcement officers treated him with — they called his lawyers for him and after the raid allowed him to pack personal belongings to take with him to jail. One expressed respect for his decision to stay in Russia despite the risk of arrest, while another one called him "a worthy enemy."

In detention, both the inmates and the guards are genuinely puzzled to hear that the politician is facing 10 years in prison "for a few words against the war," Yashin wrote: "In Russia, courts hand down shorter sentences for theft, assaults, rapes and sometimes even murders."

With all protests suppressed by a brutal crackdown and most opposition leaders leaving the country, spreading the word has become the main effort for many.

Even though Navalny is in jail, his team continues to post video exposes of corruption and regular livestreams on the politician's YouTube channels. The three most popular channels combined currently have more than 10 million subscribers.

Yashin's own YouTube channel, regularly updated even after his arrest with news analysis and political commentary, has nearly 1.4 million subscribers. Most of his videos over the past six months have been dedicated to the war and criticizing the Kremlin for it.

"Demand for an alternative point of view has appeared in society," Yashin told the AP.

Denis Volkov, director of Russia's top independent pollster Levada center, told the AP that the influence of independent sources of information in Russia has grown in recent years thanks to popular video blogs on YouTube as an alternative to state television.

"People read little, but watch a lot," Volkov said.

Yashin urged ordinary Russians to help spread the word.

"Show your grandmother, who is used to watching TV, a couple of interesting channels on YouTube. Teach your relative from a small town to use VPN so that he can read the news on a blocked independent news site. Create a chat with friends and neighbors, share links, anti-corruption investigations and opinions there."

Yashin said that both before his arrest and in detention, he has seen very little support for the war in Ukraine, despite the authorities' vast effort to control the narrative and weed out any criticisms or dissenting voices.

The Kremlin has insisted for months that there is overwhelming support for the invasion. Just this week, President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov reiterated once again that "the absolute majority" of Russians were behind the decision to send troops into Ukraine.

Behind bars, the war is widely and actively discussed, Yashin said, but there is either an understanding among those discussing it that Russia has been drawn into a major crisis, or disappointment at Moscow's modest successes on the battlefield.

"I'm convinced that by getting involved in the war, Putin has started the countdown of his time in power. He went all in, but miscalculated..."

The final lines of his letter from prison offer his hope for the future. "I am convinced that my country, after all, will become part of a free and civilized world," he says. "But no one will win this battle for us. It is only our responsibility."

UN chief asks world to 'massively' help flood-hit Pakistan

By MUNIR AHMED Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the world owes impoverished Pakistan "massive" help recovering from devastating floods because other nations have contributed more to the climate change thought to have triggered the deluge.

Months of monsoons and flooding have killed 1,391 people and affected 3.3 million in the Islamic nation. A half-million people there have become homeless. Planeloads of aid from the U.S., the United Arab Emirates and other countries have begun arriving. But there's more to be done, Guterres said.

Nature, the U.N. chief said in Islamabad, has attacked Pakistan, which contributes less than 1% of global emissions, according to multiple experts. Nations "who are more responsible for climate change...should have faced this challenge," Guterres said, seated next to Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

"We are heading into a disaster," Guterres added. "We have waged war on nature and nature is tracking back and striking back in a devastating way. Today in Pakistan, tomorrow in any of your countries."

The U.N. chief's trip comes less than two weeks after Guterres appealed for \$160 million in emergency funding to help those affected by the monsoon rains and floods that Pakistan says have caused at least \$10 billion in damages. International aid is arriving, including the first planeload of what the U.S. has pledged will be \$30 million in assistance.

Earlier, the U.N. chief took to Twitter, saying, "I appeal for massive support from the international community as Pakistan responds to this climate catastrophe."

U.N. chief said Friday other nations contributing to climate change are obligated to reduce emissions and help Pakistan. He assured Sharif that his voice was "entirely at the service of the Pakistani government and the Pakistani people" and that "the entire U.N. system is at the service of Pakistan."

He said "Pakistan has not contributed in a meaningful way to climate change, the level of emissions in this country is relatively low. But Pakistan is one of the most dramatically impacted countries by climate change."

Later, Guterres directed his words to the "international community," saying that by some estimates, Pakistan needs about \$30 billion to recover.

So far, U.N. agencies and several countries have sent nearly 60 planeloads of aid, and authorities say the United Arab Emirates is one of the most generous contributors, as it has sent so far 26 flights carrying aid or flood victims.

Also Friday, USAID Administrator Samantha Power met with Pakistan's Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in Islamabad.

The floods have touched all of Pakistan, including heritage sites such as Mohenjo Daro, a UNESCO World Heritage Site considered one of the best-preserved ancient urban settlements in South Asia. The civilization that dates back 4,500 years, coinciding with those of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.

The U.N. heritage agency on Thursday announced it would send \$350,000 to help recover flood-damaged cultural heritage sites.

Since June, heavy rains and floods have added new burdens to cash-strapped Pakistan and highlighted the disproportionate effect of climate change on impoverished populations. Experts say Pakistan is responsible for only 0.4% of the world's historic emissions blamed for climate change. The U.S. is responsible for 21.5%, China for 16.5% and the EU 15%.

The floods in Pakistan have also injured 12,722 people, destroyed thousands of kilometers of roads, toppled bridges and damaged schools and hospitals, according to the National Disaster Management Agency.

Ukrainian nuke plant operating tenuously as war persists

By HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine's state nuclear energy operator said Friday that Europe's largest nuclear power plant, caught in the Ukraine-Russia war, is operating in emergency mode with elevated risk.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 20 of 77

The six-reactor Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant came under the control of Russian forces early in the war that started in February, but is being operated by Ukrainian staff. The plant and surrounding areas have been repeatedly hit by shelling that Russia and Ukraine blame on each other's forces.

The last power line connecting the plant to the Ukrainian electricity grid was cut on Monday, leaving the plant without an outside source of electricity and receiving power for its own safety systems from the only one of the six reactors that remains operational.

Energoatom, the state nuclear operator, said Friday that repairs to the outside lines are impossible because of the shelling and that operating in the so-called "island" carries "the risk of violating radiation and fire safety standards."

"Only the withdrawal of the Russians from the plant and the creation of a security zone around it can normalize the situation at the Zaporizhzhia NPP. Only then will the world be able to exhale," Petro Kotin, the head of Energoatom, said Friday on Ukrainian TV.

Fighting continued Friday in parts of southern and eastern Ukraine and in the north where Ukraine claims to have recently pushed Russian forces out of some areas.

Russian planes bombed the hospital in the town of Velika Pysarivka, on the border with Russia, said Dmytro Zhyvytskyi, governor of the Sumy region. He said the building was destroyed and there were an unknown number of casualties.

Four people were killed in shelling in the Kharkiv region, two of them in Kharkiv city, Ukraine's second-largest, according to regional governor Oleh Syniehubov. Ukraine this week claimed to have regained control of more than 20 settlements in the Kharkiv region, including the small city of Balakliya.

Social media posts showed weeping and smiling Balakliya residents embracing Ukrainian soldiers.

In the Donetsk region in the east — one of two that Russia declared to be sovereign states at the outset of the war — eight people were killed in the city of Bakhmut over the past day and the city is without water and electricity for the fourth straight day, said governor Pavlo Kyrylenko.

Biden to tell Ohioans his policies will revive manufacturing

By JOSH BOAK, AAMER MADHANI and ANDREW WELSH-HUGGINS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden wants to put the spotlight on a rare bipartisan down payment on U.S. manufacturing when he visits Ohio on Friday for the groundbreaking of a new Intel computer chip facility.

Biden heads to suburban Columbus to take a victory lap just as voters in the state are starting to tune in to a closely contested Senate race between Democratic Rep. Tim Ryan and Republican author and venture capital executive JD Vance. They're competing in a former swing state that has trended Republican over the last decade.

Intel had delayed groundbreaking on the \$20 billion plant until Congress passed the bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act. Both Ryan and Ohio Republican Gov. Mike DeWine, who is facing Democrat Nan Whaley in his reelection bid, plan to be at Friday's groundbreaking.

In his State of the Union address last March, Biden envisioned the Intel plant as a model for a U.S. economy that revolves around technology, factories and the middle class. The plant speaks to how the president is trying to revive American manufacturing nationwide, including in states that are solidly Republican or political toss-ups.

Chipmaker Micron committed \$15 billion for a factory in Idaho, Corning will build an optical fiber facility in Arizona and First Solar plans to construct its fourth solar panel plant in the Southeast, all announcements that stemmed from Biden administration initiatives.

As part of Biden's visit, Intel will announce that it's providing \$17.7 million to Ohio colleges and universities to develop education programs focused on the computer chips sector.

Factory work is one of the few issues going into November's midterm elections that has crossover appeal at a time when issues such as abortion, inflation and the nature of democracy have dominated the contest to control Congress.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 21 of 77

Ryan had largely been hesitant to share a stage with Biden, as appearing with the country's top Democrat could hurt his chances in a state that backed Republican Donald Trump by eight points in both 2016 and 2020.

Ryan skipped the president's July 6 visit to Cleveland to plug his administration's efforts to shore up troubled pension programs for blue-collar workers. Biden nonetheless referred to him as the "future Senator Tim Ryan" and thanked him for his "incredible work" on the legislation.

The Youngstown-area congressman committed to appearing with Biden this week because of the importance of the Intel facility in a state that has long defined itself through its factories, mills and working-class sensibilities.

"This is a huge opportunity," Ryan told CNN on Sunday. "The CHIPS Act that we passed is all about reshoring high-end manufacturing jobs."

Yet in a Thursday TV interview with Youngstown's WFMJ on the eve of Biden's visit, Ryan said he is "campaigning as an independent." When asked if Biden should seek a second term, Ryan said, "My hunch is that we need new leadership across the board, Democrats, Republicans, I think it's time for like a generational move."

The open Senate seat in Ohio, currently held by the retiring Republican Sen. Rob Portman, is one of several hotly contested races that could determine whether Democrats can hold their slim majority in the chamber for the second half of Biden's term.

Several Democrats in competitive races have at moments sought to maintain some distance from Biden, whose public approval ratings have ticked up in recent weeks but remain underwater.

A spokesman said DeWine also plans to attend the groundbreaking, making him among the few Republicans on the ballot this year who are willing to share a stage with the president. Biden has in recent weeks said that extremist Republican lawmakers who refuse to accept the results of the 2020 election are a threat to democracy, a charge that has only intensified partisan tensions with control of the House and the Senate on the line.

Vance, the Republican Senate candidate in Ohio, hailed the Intel plant in a statement at as "a great bipartisan victory" for the state. He specifically applauded the "hard work" of GOP lawmakers including DeWine and Portman, but Vance pointedly made no mention of Biden.

The shortage of semiconductors has plagued the U.S. and global economies. It cut into production of autos, household appliances and other goods in ways that fueled high inflation, while creating national security risks as the U.S. recognized its dependence on Asia for chip production.

The mix of high prices and long waits for basic goods has left many Americans feeling disgruntled about Biden's economic leadership, a political weakness that has lessened somewhat as gasoline prices have fallen and many voters have grown concerned about the loss of abortion protections after the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*.

The new law would provide \$28 billion in incentives for semiconductor production, \$10 billion for new manufacturing of chips and \$11 billion for research and development. The funding follows similar efforts by Europe and China to accelerate chip production, which political leaders see as essential for competing economically and militarily.

Biden has pitched the legislation as a "once-in-a-generation investment in America" that could reduce U.S. dependence on Taiwan and South Korea at a time when China is seeking to expand its presence across Asia and its shipping lanes.

Lawmakers crafted the semiconductor investments to favor areas outside the wealthier coastal cities where tech dominates. That means change will be coming to the Ohio city of New Albany, where the Intel plant is being constructed, as well as nearby Johnstown.

Don Harvey, a sporting goods store owner and longtime Johnstown resident, likes the idea of a company making things again in the United States, and also providing potentially high-paying jobs for his five grandchildren down the road. Intel has said pay will average \$135,000 for its 3,000 Ohio workers.

"What an opportunity in my eyes for Ohio and the United States as a whole," said the 63-year-old Harvey. Elyse Priest lives in a subdivision just up the road from the plant, and received a firsthand taste of the

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 22 of 77

construction recently as she watched a huge cloud of dust roll up from the 1,000-acre site currently being leveled. Priest, 38, also knows the road-widening and added traffic will affect her commute to downtown Columbus where she works as a legal assistant.

"I'm concerned about losing the small town feel I've always had and loved about Johnstown," Priest said. "But I know it's going to be a greater good for the whole state."

2 decades later, 9/11 self-professed mastermind awaits trial

By LARRY NEUMEISTER, JENNIFER PELTZ and CARRIE ANTLFINGER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Hours before dawn on March 1, 2003, the U.S. scored its most thrilling victory yet against the plotters of the Sept. 11 attacks — the capture of a disheveled Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, hauled away by intelligence agents from a hideout in Rawalpindi, Pakistan.

The global manhunt for al-Qaida's No. 3 leader had taken 18 months. But America's attempt to bring him to justice, in a legal sense, has taken much, much longer. Critics say it has become one of the war on terror's greatest failures.

As Sunday's 21st anniversary of the terror attacks approaches, Mohammed and four other men accused of 9/11-related crimes still sit in a U.S. detention center in Guantanamo Bay, their planned trials before a military tribunal endlessly postponed.

The latest setback came last month when pretrial hearings scheduled for early fall were canceled. The delay was one more in a string of disappointments for relatives of the nearly 3,000 victims of the attack. They've long hoped that a trial would bring closure and perhaps resolve unanswered questions.

"Now, I'm not sure what's going to happen," said Gordon Haberman, whose 25-year-old daughter Andrea died after a hijacked plane crashed into the World Trade Center, a floor above her office.

He's traveled to Guantanamo four times from his home in West Bend, Wisconsin, to watch the legal proceedings in person, only to leave frustrated.

"It's important to me that America finally gets to the truth about what happened, how it was done," said Haberman. "I personally want to see this go to trial."

If convicted at trial, Mohammed could face the death penalty.

When asked about the case, James Connell, an attorney for one of Mohammed's co-defendants — one accused of transferring money to 9/11 attackers — confirmed reports both sides are still "attempting to reach a pretrial agreement" that could still avoid a trial and result in lesser but still lengthy sentences.

David Kelley, a former U.S. attorney in New York who co-chaired the Justice Department's nationwide investigation into the attacks, called the delays and failure to prosecute "an awful tragedy for the families of the victims."

He called the effort to put Mohammed on trial before a military tribunal, rather than in the regular U.S. court system, "a tremendous failure" that was "as offensive to our Constitution as to our rule of law."

"It's a tremendous blemish on the country's history," he said.

The difficulty in holding a trial for Mohammed and other Guantanamo prisoners is partly rooted in what the U.S. did with him after his 2003 capture.

Mohammed and his co-defendants were initially held in secret prisons abroad. Hungry for information that might lead to the capture of other al-Qaida figures, CIA operatives subjected them to enhanced interrogation techniques that were tantamount to torture, human rights groups say. Mohammed was waterboarded — made to feel that he was drowning — 183 times.

A Senate investigation later concluded the interrogations didn't lead to any valuable intelligence. But it has sparked endless pretrial litigation over whether FBI reports on their statements can be used against them — a process not subject to speedy trial rules used in civilian courts.

The torture allegations led to concerns that the U.S. might have ruined its chance to put Mohammed on trial in a civilian court.

But in 2009, President Barack Obama's administration decided to try, announcing that Mohammed would

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 23 of 77

be transferred to New York City and put on trial at a federal court in Manhattan.

"Failure is not an option," Obama said.

But New York City balked at the cost of security and the move never came. Eventually, it was announced Mohammed would face a military tribunal. And then over a dozen years passed.

Kelley said talk of military tribunals two decades ago surprised many in the legal community who had been successfully prosecuting terrorism cases in the decade before. The concept of a tribunal, he said, "came out of the blue. Nobody knew it was coming."

Then-Attorney General John Ashcroft was not in favor of tribunals and had been supportive of the Manhattan federal terrorism prosecutions, he said.

Now, Kelley said, with the passage of time it will be much more difficult to prosecute Mohammed in a tribunal, much less a courtroom. "Evidence goes stale, witness memories fail."

The passage of time hasn't dulled the memories of the victims' families or dampened their interest in witnessing justice.

Eddie Bracken's sister Lucy Fishman was killed at the trade center. The New Yorker opposed Obama's proposal to move the trial to federal court — Mohammed is charged with "a military act," and should be tried by the military, he reasoned. And while he is somewhat frustrated by the delays, he understands them.

"The whole world is looking at us and saying, 'What are they doing after all this time?'" he said. But he realizes the case is "a process that the world is seeing, that needs to be done under a microscope. ... It's up to the United States to do their due diligence, make sure it's done right."

"The wheels of justice turn. They turn slowly, but they turn. And when the time comes, and it's said and done, the world will know what happened," he adds.

While Mohammed has lingered at Guantanamo, the U.S. killed al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden in a 2011 raid and deputy-turned-successor Ayman al-Zawahri in a drone strike just this August.

Investigators with the military commission at Guantanamo Bay said he plotted the 9/11 attacks for three years. They cited a computer hard drive seized at his arrest which they said contained photographs of the 19 hijackers, three letters from bin Laden and information about some hijackers.

Mohammed, at his tribunal hearing, conceded in a written statement that he swore allegiance to Osama bin Laden, that he was on al-Qaida's council and that he served as operational director for bin Laden for the organizing, planning, follow-up and execution of the Sept. 11 plot "from A to Z."

According to the statement, he also took credit for the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center; an attempt to down U.S. jetliners using bombs hidden in shoes; the bombing of a nightclub in Indonesia; and plans for a second wave of attacks after the 2001 attacks targeting landmarks like the Sears Tower in Chicago and Manhattan's Empire State Building.

He also claimed credit for other planned attacks, including assassination attempts against then-President Bill Clinton in 1994 or 1995 and an assassination plot against Pope John Paul II at about the same time, the statement said.

Mohammed's nearly two decades in legal limbo differs from the fate of his nephew, Ramzi Yousef, the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing that killed six people, injured 1,000 others and left a crater in the parking garage beneath the twin towers.

Yousef is serving life in prison after being convicted at two separate civilian trials. He was also captured in Pakistan, in 1995, but was brought to the United States for trial.

At the time, Yousef said his right to kill people was comparable to the U.S. decision to drop a nuclear bomb in World War II. Mohammed has offered a similar justification, saying through an interpreter at a Guantanamo proceeding that killing people was the "language of any war."

Bracken traveled to Guantanamo in 2012 to watch one hearing for Mohammed and his co-defendants, and would probably go again if a trial ever happened.

"I don't know if I want to go there again to bring back all the hurt and pain. But if I'm allowed to go, then I guess I would go. Yeah. My sister would do that for me."

"She's that type of a woman," he added. Then he corrected himself: "She was that type of a woman."

Slain Las Vegas reporter spent career chasing corruption

By KEN RITTER and JOHN SEEWER Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — In four decades of writing about the Las Vegas underworld and government corruption, investigative reporter Jeff German took on plenty of powerful and dangerous people. The hard-bitten newsman was once punched by an organized crime associate and received veiled threats from mobsters.

Nothing seemed to faze him as he doggedly went about his work.

So German (GEHR'-man) characteristically didn't express concern when Clark County Public Administrator Robert Telles, a virtually unknown politician in charge of an obscure and small government office, took to Twitter last spring to angrily denounce the reporter.

German, who worked for the Las Vegas Review-Journal, had written about bullying and favoritism in the public administrator's office and an inappropriate relationship by Telles with a female subordinate.

Authorities say German's initial investigation and follow-up stories were the motivation for Telles to fatally stab German last week at the reporter's home. DNA at the scene linked Telles to the killing as did shoes and a distinctive straw hat found at his home that matched those worn by a suspect caught on video, investigators said Thursday.

Police arrested Telles on Wednesday after a brief standoff at his home. Telles was hospitalized for what Clark County Sheriff Joe Lombardo described as non-life-threatening, self-inflicted wounds.

Glenn Cook, executive editor of the Review-Journal, said there was talk within the newspaper about Telles being "unhinged" but he never made any physical threats against German and the reporter never said he was worried.

The thought this was the story that would put German's safety at risk seemed implausible, he said, remembering how the reporter recounted once being punched by an organized crime associate.

"He cut his teeth covering the mob," Cook said. "Jeff spent over 40 years covering the worst of the worst of Las Vegas. This was a guy who ran down mobsters, wise guys and killers."

Killings of journalists in the U.S. in retaliation for their work are extremely rare. Up until German's death, eight journalists have been killed in the U.S. since 1992, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists. The deadliest attack came in 2018 when a shooting at the Capital Gazette in Maryland left five dead.

"Jeff's death is a sobering reminder of the inherent risks of investigative journalism," said Diana Fuentes, executive director of the organization Investigative Reporters & Editors. "Journalists do their jobs every day, digging deep to find information the public needs to know and has a right to see."

German joined the Review-Journal in 2010 after more than two decades at the Las Vegas Sun, where he was a columnist and reporter who covered courts, politics, labor, government and crime. He was 69, but never talked with his boss about retirement, Cook said.

Former co-workers along with attorneys and government officials German counted on as sources called him a hard-nosed, tenacious journalist who could be gruff at times, especially if someone didn't know him or was holding back information.

"He was not someone who was easily intimidated," said Geoff Schumacher, who worked with German at the Sun until the late 1990s. "Getting to the truth, that was more important to him than his own well-being or being popular."

The pair recently worked together on a podcast called "Mobbed Up."

German talked about receiving veiled threats from mobsters in the early 1980s at a time when people were disappearing as law enforcement cracked down on organized crime. The warnings definitely got German's attention, but he never went to police, said Schumacher, who now works at The Mob Museum in Las Vegas

Alan Feldman, a former executive with MGM Resorts International, said getting a call from German was like hearing from the CBS news show, "60 Minutes." He didn't talk tough or threaten anyone, Feldman said, but he never backed down.

And he always followed the story even if it didn't go in the direction he expected, he said.

"The last thing I would say about Jeff is that anything scared him or that he was afraid," Feldman said.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 25 of 77

"He was prepared to go after anyone who was doing something not in the public interest."

Telles, a Democrat who apparently had never served in public office until he was elected in 2018, oversaw less than 10 people and was paid about \$120,000 a year to run an office that deals with estates and the property of people after they die. Before that he was a lawyer practicing probate and estate law.

In the weeks before the June primary, German bylined reports about an office "mired in turmoil and internal dissension" between longtime employees and new hires under Telles' leadership. Following the stories, county officials hired a consultant to help oversee the office.

Telles blamed "old-timers" for exaggerating the extent of his relationship with a female staffer and falsely claiming that he mistreated them. He posted complaints on Twitter about German, saying he was a bully who was "obsessed" with him.

Telles ended up finishing last in the three-way primary and was serving out the remainder of his term at the time of the killing.

The articles "ruined his political career, likely his marriage, and this was him lashing out at the cause," Chief Deputy Clark County District Attorney Richard Scow said Thursday.

German's family called him "a loving and loyal brother, uncle and friend who devoted his life to his work exposing wrongdoing in Las Vegas and beyond."

"We're shocked, saddened and angry about his death," they said in a statement. "Jeff was committed to seeking justice for others and would appreciate the hard work by local police and journalists in pursuing his killer. We look forward to seeing justice done in this case."

After a lifetime of preparation, Charles takes the throne

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Prince Charles has been preparing for the crown his entire life. Now, at age 73, that moment has finally arrived.

Charles, the oldest person to ever assume the British throne, became King Charles III on Thursday following the death of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II. No date has been set for his coronation.

After an apprenticeship that began as a child, Charles embodies the modernization of the British monarchy. He was the first heir not educated at home, the first to earn a university degree and the first to grow up in the ever-intensifying glare of the media as deference to royalty faded.

He also alienated many with his messy divorce from the much-loved Princess Diana, and by straining the rules that prohibit royals from intervening in public affairs, wading into debates on issues such as environmental protection and architectural preservation,

"He now finds himself in, if you like, the autumn of his life, having to think carefully about how he projects his image as a public figure," said historian Ed Owens. "He's nowhere near as popular as his mother."

Charles must figure out how to generate the "public support, a sense of endearment" that characterized the relationship Elizabeth had with the British public, Owens said.

In other words, will Charles be as loved by his subjects? It's a question that has overshadowed his entire life.

A shy boy with a domineering father, Charles grew into a sometimes-awkward, understated man who is nevertheless confident in his own opinions. Unlike his mother, who refused to publicly discuss her views, Charles has delivered speeches and written articles on issues close to his heart, such as climate change, green energy and alternative medicine.

His accession to the throne is likely to fuel debate about the future of Britain's largely ceremonial monarchy, seen by some as a symbol of national unity and others as an obsolete vestige of feudal history.

"We know the monarch and certainly the monarch's family — they're not meant to have political voices. They're not meant to have political opinions. And the fact that he's been flexing, if you like, his political muscle is something that he will have to be really careful with ... lest he be seen as unconstitutional," said Owens, who wrote "The Family Firm: Monarchy, Mass Media and the British Public, 1932-53."

Charles, who will be the head of state for the U.K. and 14 other countries, including Australia, Canada,

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 26 of 77

New Zealand and Papua New Guinea, has defended his actions.

"I always wonder what meddling is, I always thought it was motivating," he said in "Prince, Son and Heir: Charles at 70," a 2018 documentary. "I've always been intrigued if it's meddling to worry about the inner cities, as I did 40 years ago and what was happening or not happening there, the conditions in which people were living. If that's meddling, I'm very proud of it."

In the same interview, however, Charles acknowledged that as king, he wouldn't be able to speak out or interfere in politics because the role of sovereign is different from being the Prince of Wales.

Charles has said he intends to reduce the number of working royals, cut expenses and better represent modern Britain.

But tradition matters, too, for a man whose office previously described the monarchy as "the focal point for national pride, unity and allegiance."

That has meant a life of palaces and polo, attracting criticism that Charles was out of touch with everyday life, being lampooned for having a valet who purportedly squeezed toothpaste onto his brush.

But it was the disintegration of his marriage to Diana that made many question his fitness for the throne. Then, as he aged, his handsome young sons stole the limelight from a man who had a reputation for being as gray as his Saville Row suits.

Biographer Sally Bedell Smith, author of "Prince Charles: the Passions and Paradoxes of an Improbable Life," described him as being constantly overshadowed by others in the family, despite his destiny.

"I think the frustrations are not so much that he's had to wait for the throne," Smith told PBS. "I think his main frustration is that he has done so much and that ... he has been sort of massively misunderstood. He's sort of been caught between two worlds: the world of his mother, revered, now beloved; and Diana, the ghost of whom still shadows him; and then his incredibly glamorous sons."

It took years for many in Britain to forgive Charles for his admitted infidelity to Diana before "the people's princess" died in a Paris car crash in 1997. But the public mood softened after he married Camilla Parker Bowles in 2005 and she became the Duchess of Cornwall.

Although Camilla played a significant role in the breakup of Charles and Diana, her self-deprecating style and salt-of-the-earth sense of humor eventually won over many Britons.

She helped Charles smile more in public by tempering his reserve and making him appear approachable, if not happier, as he cut ribbons, visited houses of worship, unveiled plaques and waited for the crown.

Her service was rewarded last February, when Queen Elizabeth II said publicly that it was her "sincere wish" that Camilla should be known as "Queen Consort" after her son succeeded her, answering questions once and for all about her status in the Royal Family.

Prince Charles Philip Arthur George was born Nov. 14, 1948, in Buckingham Palace. When his mother acceded to the throne in 1952, the 3-year-old prince became the Duke of Cornwall. He became Prince of Wales at 20.

His school years were unhappy, with the future king being bullied by classmates at Gordonstoun, a Scottish boarding school that prides itself on building character through vigorous outdoor activities and educated his father, Philip.

Charles studied history at Cambridge University's Trinity College, where in 1970 he became the first British royal to earn a university degree.

He then spent seven years in uniform, training as a Royal Air Force pilot before joining the Royal Navy, where he learned to fly helicopters. He ended his military career as commander of the HMS Bronington, a minesweeper, in 1976.

Charles' relationship with Camilla began before he went to sea, but the romance foundered and she married a cavalry officer.

He met Lady Diana Spencer in 1977 when she was 16 and he was dating her older sister. Diana apparently didn't see him again until 1980, and rumors of their engagement swirled after she was invited to spend time with Charles and the royal family.

They announced their engagement in February 1981. Some awkwardness in their relationship was im-

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 27 of 77

mediately apparent when, during a televised interview about their betrothal, a reporter asked if they were in love. "Of course," Diana answered immediately, while Charles said, "Whatever 'in love' means."

Although Diana giggled at the response, she later said that Charles' remark "threw me completely."

"God, it absolutely traumatized me," she said in a recording made by her voice coach in 1992-93 that was featured in the 2017 documentary "Diana, In Her Own Words."

The couple married on July 29, 1981, at St. Paul's Cathedral in a globally televised ceremony. Prince William, now heir to the throne, was born less than a year later, followed by his brother, Prince Harry, in 1984.

The public fairy tale soon crumbled. Charles admitted to adultery to a TV interviewer in 1994. In an interview of her own, Diana drew attention to her husband's relationship with Camilla, saying: "There were three of us in this marriage."

The revelations tarnished Charles' reputation among many who celebrated Diana for her style as well as her charity work with AIDS patients and landmine victims.

William and Harry were caught in the middle. While the princes revered their late mother, they said Charles was a good father and praised him as an early advocate for issues like the environment.

Tensions persist inside the royal family, underscored by the decision of Harry and his wife, Meghan, to step away from their royal duties and move to California in 2020. In a televised interview, they later said a member of the royal family had raised "concerns and conversations" about the color of their baby's skin before he was born. The explosive revelation forced William to publicly declare the family wasn't racist.

Charles soldiered on, increasingly standing in for the queen in her twilight years. In 2018, he was named the queen's designated successor as head of the Commonwealth, an association of 54 nations with links to the British Empire. The process accelerated after the death of her husband, Prince Philip, on April 9, 2021.

As Elizabeth declined, he sometimes stepped in at the last moment.

On the eve of the state opening of Parliament this year, on May 10, the queen asked Charles to preside, delegating one of her most important constitutional duties to him -- evidence that a transition was underway.

Camilla said in a 2018 documentary that Charles was comfortable with the prospect of being king.

"I think his destiny will come," she said. "He's always known it's going to come, and I don't think it does weigh heavily on his shoulders at all."

Global shares higher on Wall Street rise, Fed Chair comments

By YURI KAGEYAMA AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Global stock benchmarks rose Friday, as comments from the U.S. Federal Reserve chairman assured markets that interest rate increases will likely be within expectations.

France's CAC 40 added 0.7% in early trading to 6,168.33, while Germany's DAX gained 0.9% to 13,014.33. Britain's FTSE 100 rose nearly 1.1% to 7,338.96. U.S. shares were set to move higher with Dow futures up 0.4% at 31,902.00. S&P 500 futures rose 0.5% to 4,025.50. Oil prices rose.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 rose 0.5% to finish at 28,214.75. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 added 0.7% to 6,894.20. Hong Kong's Hang Seng jumped 2.8% to 19,389.03, while the Shanghai Composite added 0.8% to 3,262.05. Trading was closed in South Korea for a holiday.

"Ongoing recovery in the risk environment could provide a positive backdrop for the Asia session to end the week, although Chinese equities still seem to be finding some difficulty in tapping on the improved environment for some relief," said Yeap Jun Rong, market strategist at IG in Singapore.

China has been releasing a slew of economic data, with more expected next week. Interest is high because of how China's "zero-COVID" policy has impacted economic activity in the world's second-largest economy.

Investors are also eyeing interest rates, as the European Central Bank made its largest-ever rate increase to fight inflation. The move is in line with steps taken by the U.S. Federal Reserve and other central banks.

Investors also heard from Fed Chair Jerome Powell, who reaffirmed the central bank's commitment to keep rates high as long as necessary to get inflation under control. Some market observers remain skeptical.

"Given the tremendous challenges ahead on the energy front, the war front, and with broad-based

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 28 of 77

inflation already impacting people's lives, it might be wiser to maintain rates at slightly stimulatory levels to help offset the general economic pain rather than adding to it," said Clifford Bennett, chief economist at ACY Securities.

Stocks have been mostly losing ground in recent weeks after the Federal Reserve indicated it will not let up anytime soon on raising interest rates to bring down the highest inflation in decades. The interest rate policies of the Fed and other central banks, which also have a powerful influence on stock and bond markets, have become a major focus for investors.

On the same day the European Central Bank delivered its big rate increase, Powell told a conference on monetary policy hosted by the Cato Institute, a think tank that promotes libertarian ideas, that the Fed would keep rates high "until the job is done" in getting inflation back down to its 2% goal.

"There is a record of failed attempts to get inflation under control, which only raises the ultimate costs to society," Powell said.

The Fed has already raised rates four times this year and markets expect it to deliver another jumbo-sized increase of three-quarters of a percentage point at its next meeting in two weeks.

Powell "sounded very resolute in the (Fed's) mission to squelch inflation, and as a result probably gave more credence to the possibility of a 75-basis point hike at the September meeting," said Sam Stovall, chief investment strategist at CFRA.

"But once investors realized that he wasn't really saying anything different than what he had said before, the markets swung back," he said.

In energy trading, benchmark U.S. crude rose 92 cents to \$84.46 a barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, added \$1.08 to \$90.23 a barrel.

In currency trading, the U.S. dollar fell to 142.29 yen from 144.09 yen. The euro cost \$1.0098, up from \$1.0002.

Shaken and stirred: Ukraine war hits James Bond's glassmaker

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

LA CHAPELLE-SAINT-MESMIN, France (AP) — For the glassmakers at iconic French tableware brand Duralex, the mornings have become a horror show. Daily updates from energy traders drop into their email inboxes, showing the asphyxiating upward climb of prices for the natural gas and electricity that power their energy-devouring business.

Before Europe's energy crisis — which took off after the COVID-19 pandemic and became a full-blown economic threat with Russia's war in Ukraine — the price charts were reassuringly stable. They have since become a terrifying succession of peaks and troughs, with Russia choking off cheap natural gas deliveries in a battle of wills with European leaders over their support for Ukraine.

For Duralex, each price spike represents another bite from the bottom line of the 77-year-old company that counts generations of French families, Mongolian yak herders, Afghan diners and African tea drinkers among worldwide users of its glasses, bowls and plates. Actor Daniel Craig drank from one its "Picardie" tumblers, with a scorpion on his wrist, when playing James Bond in "Skyfall."

With energy costs burning through the firm's cash reserves and viability, Duralex President José-Luis Llacuna is taking radical but, he hopes, business-saving action: He's stopping production. The thunderous machines that turn incandescent blobs of molten glass into hundreds of thousands of tableware items each day will fall silent for a few months on Nov. 1.

Duralex will join a growing array of European firms that have reduced and halted production because they're hemorrhaging money on the energy needed to keep running.

"The first thing I do when I wake up in the morning is look at the daily change in electricity and gas prices," Llacuna said in an interview at the plant outside Orléans in central France.

"Needless to say, there's an incredible amount of volatility," he added. "It's truly a rollercoaster, and the outlook for the future is a complete unknown."

Facing the risks of power shortages, rationing and blackouts when demand surges this winter and of

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 29 of 77

an expected recession as businesses shut down, Europe is scrambling for energy alternatives, stockpiling gas and urging consumers to save. European Union energy ministers are holding emergency talks Friday on the bloc's latest proposals for alleviating the crisis.

At Duralux, the costs of heating the furnace to above 1,400 degrees Celsius (above 2,500 Fahrenheit) with roaring torrents of flaming gas and of transforming the molten glass into tableware on the production lines manned by sweating workers are set to burn through 40% of the company's revenue if it keeps producing, "which is untenable," Llacuna said.

The production shutdown will last at least four months. The glass furnace can't be switched off entirely because that could destroy it. Instead, it will be maintained in a hot slumber, slashing the firm's energy use by half. The aim is to then fire it back up by the spring.

In the meantime, the 250 employees will work fewer days, with drops in pay just as inflation is gnawing at household budgets.

"It's very hard to stomach," said Michel Carvalho, a production line crew chief who has been with the company for 17 years.

"Around the world, everyone is suffering from this war," he said. "We're hostages. Absolutely. We're being used. Because being asked to stop work is hard. And we're not responsible for what is happening."

Duralux will fall back on its stockpiles to keep customers supplied during the stoppage. But competitors are circling, using the production halt as an argument to try to lure away the company's customers, Llacuna said. He is knocking on government doors for financial help, speaking by phone to the French economy minister last week.

A prolonged energy crisis, Llacuna warned, could be grim.

"It must not last three years," he said. "Because then European industry will die, and that will be dramatic."

Biden is 13th and final US president to meet Queen Elizabeth

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — With the death of Queen Elizabeth II, Joe Biden gained the distinction of being the 13th and final U.S. president to meet the woman whose reign spanned seven decades.

The queen, who died Thursday at her summer residence in Scotland at age 96, had met every American president since Dwight Eisenhower, with the exception of Lyndon Johnson, who did not visit Britain during his presidency.

She was still a princess when she met President Harry Truman in Washington.

Every living former U.S. president — Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump — joined Biden in mourning her passing and sending condolences to her family.

Biden and first lady Jill Biden said the queen's "legacy will loom large in the pages of British history, and in the story of our world."

Obama and his wife, Michelle, recalled the queen welcoming them, America's first Black president and first lady, to the world stage "with open arms and extraordinary generosity."

Biden first met the queen in 1982 as a U.S. senator traveling in the U.K. with a delegation from Congress. He last saw her in 2021, several months after he became president, when he attended a world leaders' summit in southwestern England.

She mingled with Group of Seven leaders at a reception that she and other royals hosted at an indoor rainforest. After the summit, the Bidens traveled to Windsor Castle, near London, at the queen's invitation for a private audience.

The queen was a 25-year-old princess when she came to Washington in 1951 and stayed with Truman and his family. She met Herbert Hoover in 1957, more than 20 years after he left office.

Here are highlights of some of her meetings, on both sides of the pond, with past American presidents:
JOE BIDEN

Biden and his trademark aviator sunglasses met the queen at Windsor Castle on a sweltering afternoon in June 2021.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 30 of 77

Biden emerged from a black car wearing his shades, stepped onto a covered dais where the queen waited, and, with his wife, posed with the queen as the two countries' national anthems played.

After walking around the courtyard to inspect the honor guard, he entered the castle for tea.

Back at the airport, Biden told journalists that the queen was "very gracious" and had asked him about the leaders of China and Russia.

While it's generally frowned upon to discuss one's private talks with the queen, Biden continued.

"I don't think she'll be insulted, but she reminded me of my mother," he said.

Biden said he also had invited the queen to visit the White House.

DONALD TRUMP

Trump and the queen met in July 2018 at the castle during a visit to Britain that drew large anti-Trump protests to downtown London, including the hoisting of a balloon depicting Trump in a diaper.

He was criticized for breaking protocol by briefly walking in front of the queen — instead of alongside her — and turning his back on her as they reviewed an honor guard.

Trump later said he thought of his late mother, Mary Anne, who was born in Scotland and who loved the royal family, when he and his wife, Melania, sipped tea with the queen.

Trump's subsequent comment that the queen told him that Brexit — Britain's break from the European Union — was complex also created a stir. Most heads of state don't reveal their private conversations with the queen. She also doesn't discuss political matters.

The Trumps and the royals met again during the D-Day commemoration in 2019.

BARACK OBAMA

Obama and the queen had their first of three meetings in April 2009 at a reception for world leaders attending the Group of 20 nations summit in London.

It was there that first lady Michelle Obama broke protocol by briefly putting an arm around the queen's back as they commiserated about their achy feet. It's generally a no-no to touch the queen, but she returned Mrs. Obama's gesture.

The queen invited the Obamas for a state visit in 2011 that included a two-night stay at Buckingham Palace and a lavish banquet in the president's honor.

As Obama delivered a toast to the queen, he didn't miss a beat when the band assumed that a pause in his remarks meant he had concluded and launched into a rendition of "God Save the Queen." Obama kept talking over the music until the band quieted down.

The couples saw each other again in 2016 when Obama visited the queen at Windsor Castle a day after her 90th birthday during another swing through Europe.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Bush detested stuffy, formal affairs, but he donned a white tie-and-tails tuxedo after the queen pulled out all the stops for a state dinner in his honor at Buckingham Palace in November 2003.

A few years later, Bush's slip of the tongue generated ripples of laughter at a White House welcoming ceremony for the queen, who was touring the U.S. in May 2007.

Stumbling on a line in his speech, Bush said the queen had dined with several of his predecessors and had helped the United States "celebrate its bicentennial in 17- ..." Bush caught himself and corrected the date to 1976, and paused to see if she had taken offense.

"She gave me a look that only a mother could give a child," Bush said with a smile.

The queen later turned the tables on Bush with her toast at a dinner she hosted for the president at the British Embassy in Washington.

"I wondered whether I should start this toast by saying, 'When I was here in 1776,'" she said to laughter.

BILL CLINTON

The queen hosted Clinton and his wife, Hillary, aboard her royal yacht, Britannia, in June 1994.

The ship, 412 feet (125 meters) long and 55 feet (17 meters) wide, was docked at the Portsmouth Naval Base and was home base for the Clintons as they attended the queen's dinner at Guildhall for leaders of Allied nations whose troops participated in the D-Day invasion of Normandy 50 years earlier.

The Clintons spent one night aboard the boat. The next day, the Britannia ferried Clinton to the USS

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 31 of 77

George Washington aircraft carrier as it prepared to sail across the English Channel, from Portsmouth to Normandy, for D-Day anniversary celebrations.

GEORGE H.W. BUSH

One of the more memorable images from the monarch's third state visit to the U.S. came in 1991 when only her white-striped purple hat could be seen above the microphones when she spoke at an arrival ceremony on the White House grounds.

Someone forgot to adjust the lectern after the much taller Bush spoke.

The queen stayed strong and carried on, later making light of the incident as she opened an address to a joint meeting of Congress.

"I do hope you can see me today from where you are," she deadpanned. Bush later apologized and said he felt badly for not pulling out a step for her to stand on.

RONALD REAGAN

Reagan and the queen bonded over a mutual love of horseback riding.

They rode side by side on an 8-mile (13-kilometers), hourlong tour on the grounds of Windsor Castle when Reagan visited her there in June 1982. Reagan was the first president to sleep over at the British royal family's historic home, an 11th-century estate overlook the River Thames.

While in the U.S. in 1983, the monarch and Philip stayed with the president and first lady Nancy Reagan at their ranch in Santa Barbara, California. She wanted to ride horses again, but a rainstorm wouldn't allow it. The Reagans served a lunch of regional staples, including enchiladas, chiles rellenos, refried beans, tacos, rice and guacamole.

They also hosted a state dinner for the queen in San Francisco at the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum.

JIMMY CARTER

The queen hosted Carter in May 1977 on his first overseas trip at a dinner for NATO leaders at Buckingham Palace. At one point, as Carter stood with the queen and other guests, he noticed the arrival of the queen mother.

Ever the Southern gentleman, Carter broke away, took her by the hand and escorted her to the assembled line of guests.

The no-frills Georgia peanut farmer-turned-president ate chicken mousse off a gold plate and seemed excited by his dinner seating between the queen and her sister, Princess Margaret, and across from her son, Prince Charles, Prince Philip and the queen mother.

GERALD FORD

Ford threw a gala state dinner for the Brits in 1976 to mark the bicentennial of the American Revolution. The queen was resplendent in a diamond-studded tiara that sparkled for a crowd that included diplomats, star athletes and celebrities such as Cary Grant and Julie Harris.

The mood evaporated when Ford led the queen to the dance floor while the song "The Lady Is a Tramp" echoed throughout the State Dining Room.

N. Korea says it will never give up nukes to counter US

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un stressed his country will never abandon the nuclear weapons it needs to counter the United States, which he accused of pushing to weaken the North's defenses and eventually collapse his government, state media said Friday.

Kim made the comments during a speech Thursday at North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament, where members passed legislation governing the use of nuclear weapons, which Kim described as a step to cement the country's nuclear status and make clear such weapons will not be bargained.

The law spells out conditions where North would be inclined to use its nuclear weapons, including when it determines that its leadership is facing an imminent "nuclear or non-nuclear attack by hostile forces." The law requires North Korea's military to "automatically" execute nuclear strikes against enemy forces, including their "starting point of provocation and the command," if Pyongyang's leadership comes under

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 32 of 77

attack.

The law also says North Korea could use nukes to prevent an unspecified "catastrophic crisis" to its government and people, a loose definition that experts say reflect an escalatory nuclear doctrine that could create greater concerns for neighbors.

Kim also criticized South Korea over its plans to expand its conventional strike capabilities and revive large-scale military exercises with the United States to counter the North's growing threats, describing them as a "dangerous" military action that raises tensions.

Kim has made increasingly provocative threats of nuclear conflict toward the United States and its allies in Asia, also warning that the North would proactively use its nuclear weapons when threatened. His latest comments underscored the growing animosity in the region as he accelerates the expansion of his nuclear weapons and missiles program.

"The purpose of the United States is not only to remove our nuclear might itself, but eventually forcing us to surrender or weaken our rights to self-defense through giving up our nukes, so that they could collapse our government at any time," Kim said in the speech published by the North's official Korean Central News Agency.

"Let them sanction us for 100 days, 1,000 days, 10 years or 100 years," Kim said. "We will never give up our rights to self-defense that preserves our country's existence and the safety of our people just to temporarily ease the difficulties we are experiencing now."

Kim also addressed domestic issues, saying North Korea would begin its long-delayed rollout of COVID-19 vaccines in November. He didn't specify how many doses it would have, where they would come from, or how they would be administered across his population of 26 million people.

GAVI, the nonprofit that runs the U.N.-backed COVAX distribution program, said in June it understood North Korea had accepted an offer of vaccines from China. GAVI said at the time the specifics of the offer were unclear.

North Korea rejected previous offers by COVAX, likely because of international monitoring requirements, and has also ignored U.S. and South Korean offers of vaccines and other COVID-19 aid.

Kim last month declared victory over COVID-19 and ordered preventive measures eased just three months after his government for the first time acknowledged an outbreak. Experts believe the North's disclosures on its outbreak are manipulated to help Kim maintain absolute control.

The North Korean report about Kim's speech came a day after South Korea extended its latest olive branch, proposing a meeting with North Korea to resume temporary reunions of aging relatives separated by the 1950-53 Korean War, which were last held in 2018.

Experts say it's highly unlikely North Korea would accept the South's offer considering the stark deterioration in inter-Korean ties amid the stalemate in larger nuclear talks between Washington and Pyongyang. The U.S.-North Korean diplomacy derailed in 2019 over disagreements in exchanging the release of crippling sanctions against the North and the North's denuclearization steps.

Kim was combative toward South Korea in Thursday's speech and urged his country to expand the operational roles of its tactical nuclear weapons and accelerate their deployment to strengthen the country's war deterrent. Those comments appeared to align with a ruling party decision in June to approve unspecified new operational duties for front-line troops, which analysts say likely include plans to deploy battlefield nuclear weapons targeting rival South Korea along their tense border.

Cheong Seong Chang, a senior analyst at South Korea's Sejong Institute, said Kim's comments and the new North Korean law amount to a warning that it would launch immediate nuclear strikes on the United States and South Korea if they ever attempt to decapitate Pyongyang's leadership.

The North is also communicating a threat that it could use its nuclear weapons during conflicts with South Korea's conventional forces, which would raise the risk of accidental clashes escalating into a nuclear crisis, Cheong said.

North Korea has been speeding its development of nuclear-capable, short-range missiles that can target South Korea since 2019. Experts say its rhetoric around those missiles communicates a threat to proactively

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 33 of 77

use them in warfare to blunt the stronger conventional forces of South Korea and the United States. About 28,500 U.S. troops are stationed in the South to deter aggression from the North.

The U.S.-led diplomatic push to defuse the nuclear standoff has been further complicated by an intensifying U.S.-China rivalry and Russia's war on Ukraine, which deepened the divide in the U.N. Security Council, where Beijing and Moscow have blocked U.S. efforts to tighten sanctions on Pyongyang over its revived long-range missile tests this year.

Kim has dialed up weapons tests to a record pace in 2020, launching more than 30 ballistic weapons, including the first demonstrations of his intercontinental ballistic missiles since 2017.

U.S. and South Korean officials say Kim may up the ante soon by ordering the North's first nuclear test in five years as he pushes a brinkmanship aimed at forcing Washington to accept the idea of the North as a nuclear power and negotiating concessions from a position of strength.

Experts say Kim is also trying to strengthen his leverage by strengthening his cooperation with China and Russia in an emerging partnership aimed at undercutting U.S. influence.

North Korea has repeatedly blamed the United States for the crisis in Ukraine, saying the West's "hegemonic policy" justified Russian military actions in Ukraine to protect itself. U.S. officials said this week the Russians are in the process of purchasing North Korean ammunition, including artillery shells and rockets, to ease their supply shortages in the war against Ukraine.

North Korea also has joined Russia and Syria as the only nations to recognize the independence of two pro-Russia breakaway territories in eastern Ukraine and has discussed send its construction workers to those regions to work on rebuilding.

GOP candidates in Georgia split over Trump's election lies

By BILL BARROW and JEFF AMY Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — When asked about his decision to rebuff Donald Trump and certify Joe Biden's narrow victory in his state, Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger says he has no option but to defend his actions.

"We are all held accountable by the voters," the Republican said as he seeks a second term, noting that he hears from voters who backed Trump's effort to overturn the election and those aghast at the former president's actions.

"I give them the facts," Raffensperger said, because "Americans and Georgians are smart people."

Yet other Georgia Republicans take a different tack. Burt Jones, the lieutenant governor nominee who signed on as a fake elector for Trump, defends his role in the defeated president's scheme; the two men atop the Georgia ticket — Gov. Brian Kemp and Senate nominee Herschel Walker — don't say much about the 2020 election or the man who lost it.

The varied approaches reflect perilous fault lines for Republicans as they weigh the former president's influence against Democrats' assertions that a Trump-dominated party threatens democracy. Trump's serial lies that the election was stolen cast a pall nationwide. But nowhere is the dynamic trickier than Georgia, epicenter of Trump's plan after he personally pressured Raffensperger to "find" more votes. Winning battleground-state elections amid the fallout means coaxing votes from Trump sympathizers and more moderate voters he's alienated.

The pressure is intensified by pending investigations: a Justice Department inquiry; a congressional examination of the U.S. Capitol attack of Jan. 6, 2021; and special grand jury proceedings in Georgia's Fulton County, the seat of state government. District Attorney Fani Willis, a Democrat, is focusing on Trump's pressure campaign against Raffensperger, Kemp and others to ignore voters' will.

Biden, meanwhile, has stepped up his warnings about "MAGA Republicans" in recent speeches, and some Democrats in Georgia amplify that message.

"I got a question to the entire Republican ticket: How can you say you love this country, and you embrace and support a man that attacks its very foundations?" lieutenant governor candidate Charlie Bailey declared at Democrats' summer convention.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 34 of 77

Jones, Bailey's opponent, denies that faux electors were part of any such attack. "That was never anything that we said," Jones said of the slate that convened at the Georgia Capitol as if it were a legitimate share of the Electoral College.

Biden won Georgia by less than 12,000 votes out of 5 million cast. The result was affirmed by multiple counts, one partially done by hand. Jones and others have said they were merely preserving Trump's legal options, a claim undermined by evidence that later emerged of a coordinated effort to impanel unauthorized electors in multiple states. Elections officials and Trump's own attorney general have said there is no evidence Biden's win was tainted. Many courts, including judges Trump appointed, rejected his claims of fraud.

In Georgia's marquee races, Kemp and Walker avoid the topic.

Kemp, locked in a tight race with Democratic challenger Stacey Abrams, acknowledges Trump only when he must. It's the approach he's taken since he ratified 16 Democratic electors after Raffensperger certified Biden's win, a sharp contrast from 2018, when he accepted Trump's endorsement during a hotly contested GOP primary for governor. Now, as when Trump raged at him publicly in 2020, Kemp explains that he was "following the Constitution" when he blessed Biden's electors.

That sidestepping strategy was girded first when Kemp crushed Trump's hand-picked candidate, former Sen. David Perdue, in a May primary. The governor got another boost in August when a state judge ruled Kemp won't have to testify about 2020 before the Georgia special grand jury until after the fall election.

The spring primary results show the risks. Kemp and Raffensperger, who also had a contested primary, benefited from tens of thousands of Democratic-leaning voters crossing over to cast anti-Trump GOP primary ballots. But Perdue still garnered 236,000 votes — a sign that a pro-Trump GOP faction hasn't forgotten about 2020. Kemp's margin over Abrams in 2018 was about 55,000 votes.

Kemp aides acknowledge those splits, saying any credit Kemp has gotten from independents or swing-voting Democrats is already settled and there's nothing to gain by talking about Trump. That's why Kemp's legal team wanted to delay the public spectacle of him entering and exiting the grand jury.

Walker, a first-time candidate trying to unseat Sen. Raphael Warnock, won't say whether Biden won legitimately. "I don't know, did he? ... We need to ask my opponent did (Biden) win fair and square," Walker told reporters.

Warnock, indeed, does not question the results.

Despite a close relationship with Trump — the former president urged Walker to run and then endorsed him — Walker has insisted on camera that he's never heard Trump claim the election was stolen. Trump has said so repeatedly, including his most recent appearances ahead of the midterms. "The 2020 election was rigged and stolen ... by people who got into office through cheating and through fraud," Trump falsely declared last week in Pennsylvania.

Walker, though, doesn't raise the subject on his own. His mentions of Biden and Democrats revolve around inflation or cultural issues, and he largely eschews Trump.

"Never thought about it," Walker said, when asked whether he'd invite Trump to campaign in Georgia.

Abrams and Warnock perhaps help their opponents by not stoking 2020 embers themselves.

Warnock has concentrated on defending himself against Walker's argument that he's a Biden lackey; the Democrat tailors counterattacks around Walker's exaggerations of his business and academic record, rather than associating him with Trump.

The two gubernatorial camps, meanwhile, name the economy as the most important issue, while agreeing that abortion could give Democrats an opening. Abrams' paid advertising, especially, hits Kemp for signing a law banning abortions at six weeks of pregnancy, before many women know they're pregnant.

Lauren Groh-Wargo, Abrams' campaign manager, said Abrams "will remind people that (Kemp) pals around with election deniers" but emphasized that her first task is to sell voters on what she'd do as chief executive.

Kemp's advisers say they might be more worried about Trump fallout if Bailey had more money in the lieutenant governor's race to use paid advertising to magnify his all-out assault on Jones and if Raffensperger's opponent, Bee Nguyen, had a larger advertising megaphone.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 35 of 77

Despite Jones' protestations, he was a top advocate for a post-election special session in Georgia, with the intent of shifting electoral votes to Trump. Jones, whom Trump called "a man of courage" in a December 2020 rally in Valdosta, signed papers supporting a court case by Texas to overturn Georgia's results. On Jan. 5, 2021, Jones personally urged Vice President Mike Pence to delay Biden's constitutional designation as president-elect.

"He got on his daddy's plane and flew to Washington D.C., the day before the insurrection, met with the vice president, with a letter in his pocket, to convince the vice president not to count the electoral vote," Bailey said in an interview, adding that Jones' demands aligned him with "the violent mob" that stormed the Capitol.

Jones also visited Arizona to watch a Republican-backed recount that only reaffirmed Biden's win.

"If you think that's okay, then I'm not your candidate," Bailey said, "because that's the actions of an authoritarian."

Raffensperger, for his part, said his interactions with Jones are "great." But it's notable the secretary of state and governor, at least for now, are running campaigns distinct from other Republican nominees, including Jones.

"That's a process of what happens all the time, and I don't think the other side is 100% unified either," Raffensperger said. "What I'm really more focused on is what I can control, and that's myself."

Chief Justice John Roberts to speak at Colorado conference

By COLLEEN SLEVIN Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Chief Justice John Roberts is set to make his first public appearance since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, speaking Friday night at a judicial conference in Colorado.

Roberts is scheduled to be interviewed by two judges from the Denver-based 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which is hosting the conference in Colorado Springs. Two judges from the court, Timothy M. Tymkovich and Jerome A. Holmes will have a discussion with Roberts during the conference's traditional "fireside chat" event, which has featured a current or past Supreme Court justice since its inception in 2004.

While the conference offers lawyers and judges a chance to learn more about emerging legal issues, the chat, sponsored by the circuit's historical society, usually focuses on the historic view of their career, rather than discussing current events, Gregory Kerwin, the society's counselor, said.

The Supreme Court has been busy making history this year. In May, there was an unprecedented leak of Justice Samuel Alito's draft opinion that suggested the court was poised to overturn the *Roe v. Wade* decision, which provided women constitutional protections for abortion for nearly 50 years. Roberts ordered an investigation into how the opinion got out.

Justice Clarence Thomas, the longest tenured member of the court, said the court had been irrevocably harmed by the leak. The leaked draft was largely incorporated into Alito's final opinion in June that overturned *Roe* in a case upholding Mississippi's law banning abortion after 15 weeks.

In June's ruling, Roberts, appointed to the court in 2005 by former President George W. Bush, voted to uphold Mississippi's law but he did not join the conservative justices in also overturning *Roe* as well as *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, the 1992 decision that reaffirmed the right to end a pregnancy. He wrote that there was no need to overturn the broad precedents to uphold the state law, saying he would take "a more measured course."

The overturning of *Roe* has paved the way for severe abortion restrictions or bans in nearly half of U.S. states.

Roberts has spoken out repeatedly about the importance of the judiciary's independence and to rebut perceptions of the court as a political institution not much different than Congress or the presidency.

Opinion polls since the leak and the release of the final abortion decision, though, have shown a sharp drop in approval of the court and confidence in the institution.

Swiatek, Jabeur will meet in 1st US Open final for both

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 36 of 77

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Getting to a Grand Slam final is no longer new to Ons Jabeur. She figures it's time to add a major trophy to her list of groundbreaking accomplishments.

And she's sure she is more ready to do it at the U.S. Open than she was at Wimbledon two months ago. Jabeur reached a second consecutive Slam title match without needing to produce her best tennis Thursday night, taking full advantage of a shaky showing by Caroline Garcia to win their semifinal at Flushing Meadows 6-1, 6-3.

"Feels more real, to be honest with you, just to be in the final again. At Wimbledon, I was kind of just living the dream, and I couldn't believe it," Jabeur said after ending No. 17 Garcia's 13-match winning streak, which included a victory over Coco Gauff. "Now maybe I know what to do."

On Saturday, with a championship on the line, Jabeur will go up against No. 1-ranked Iga Swiatek, who grabbed the last four games, and 16 of the last 20 points, to come back and beat No. 6 Aryna Sabalenka 3-6, 6-1, 6-4.

The first step for Swiatek to turn things around came when she headed to the locker room after the first set — to use the bathroom and think about what to adjust on court.

"I needed to get it together," said Swiatek, a 21-year-old from Poland who already owns two trophies from the French Open's red clay, including one this June, but never had been past the fourth round on New York's hard courts.

Sabalenka, meanwhile, dropped to 0-3 in Slam semifinals for her career and 12-11 in three-setters this year. She broke for a 4-2 lead in the third set — and 17 minutes later, it was over, as Swiatek surged to the finish.

"She was just going for it," said Sabalenka, who wore large blue mirrored sunglasses and a black cap pulled low to her news conference. "She was hitting every ball and putting me under pressure and playing really aggressively."

Swiatek has emerged as a dominant figure in women's tennis, with a 37-match winning streak that brought her six titles in one stretch. If she can defeat Jabeur, Swiatek will become the first woman since Angelique Kerber in 2016 to win two majors in one season.

The No. 5-seeded Jabeur, a 28-year-old from Tunisia, was the runner-up at the All England Club in July and now will be the first African woman to participate in a final at the U.S. Open in the professional era, which dates to 1968.

"After Wimbledon, (there was) a lot of pressure on me," Jabeur said following a win that took barely more than an hour, "and I'm really relieved that I can back up my results."

The men's semifinals are Friday: No. 3 Carlos Alcaraz of Spain vs. No. 22 Frances Tiafoe of the United States, and No. 5 Casper Ruud of Norway vs. No. 27 Karen Khachanov of Russia.

With four-time major champion Arantxa Sánchez Vicario in her guest box — they traded thumbs-up signals at match's end — Jabeur improved to 6-0 in semifinals this season and earned her tour-leading 92nd victory in all since the start of 2021. No. 91 came when she defeated Ajla Tomljanovic, who eliminated Serena Williams in the third round.

To Jabeur's surprise, and delight, she heard Tuesday's victory over Tomljanovic on Tuesday was drawing viewers back home, even though it there also was a Champions League game between Juventus and Paris St. Germain on TV.

"In Tunisia, it's all about soccer," she said. "But people were not watching (that) game, they were watching my game, which is impressive to me."

Just one example of how she is changing views about tennis in her country — and on a continent.

Since pro players were first admitted to major tennis tournaments, never had an African woman or Arab woman been to a Slam final until she did that at the All England Club before losing to Elena Rybakina.

At the 2020 Australian Open, she became the first Arab woman to reach the quarterfinals at a major. Last year, she was the first Arab player to break into the top 10 of the men's or women's rankings and first with a WTA title.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 37 of 77

"Definitely saying out loud what I want to do is part of me achieving things," said Jabeur, who dropped to her knees and let out a yell when Thursday's semifinal ended, then layed on her back.

"I'm sure it's a lot of pressure on her shoulders," said Garcia, a 28-year-old from France. "But she looks like to be managing it really well."

On this 75-degree (24 Celsius) evening under the lights in Arthur Ashe Stadium, Jabeur finished with 21 winners — after one was aided by a fortuitous net cord, Jabeur put up a hand to apologize, then blew a kiss to the sky — and just 15 unforced errors.

She delivered eight aces. She went 4 for 4 on break chances and didn't face any.

After a moment of silence to commemorate the death of Queen Elizabeth II, Garcia won the coin toss and chose to serve. She got broken right away, thanks to four mistakes. Most concerning and perhaps most reflective of nerves Garcia later acknowledged were there: She dumped what should have been an easy put-away volley into the bottom of the net.

It was a rather inauspicious start for Garcia, who hadn't lost a set on the way to her debut in a Slam semifinal.

"Mentally," said Jabeur, who travels with a sports psychologist, "I was so ready."

She plans to be again on Saturday. Swiatek will stand in the way.

South Carolina senators reject a near-total abortion ban

By JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — South Carolina senators rejected a ban on almost all abortions Thursday in a special session called in the aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v. Wade after five Republicans, including all the chamber's women, refused to support it.

The 30 Republicans in the 46-member chamber had a majority to pass the ban, but did not have the extra votes to end a threatened filibuster by Republican Sen. Tom Davis.

Davis, the chief of staff for former Gov. Mark Sanford before being elected to the Senate in 2009, was joined by the three Republican women in the Senate, a fifth GOP colleague and all Democratic senators to oppose the proposed ban.

Davis said he promised his daughters he would not vote to make South Carolina's current six-week abortion ban stricter because women have rights, too.

"The moment we become pregnant we lost all control over what goes on with our bodies," Davis said, recalling what his daughters told him. "I'm here to tell you I'm not going to let it happen.

After a recess to work through their options, Senate Majority Leader Shane Massey conceded the abortion ban likely couldn't pass.

"We were never going to pass a total abortion ban," Massey said. "We never had the votes to pass even what the House passed."

Senators did pass a few changes to the six-week ban, including cutting the time that victims of rape and incest who become pregnant can seek an abortion from 20 weeks to about 12 weeks and requiring that DNA from the aborted fetus be collected for police. The bill goes back to the House, which passed a ban with exceptions for rape or incest.

South Carolina's six-week ban is currently suspended as the state Supreme Court reviews whether it violates privacy rights. In the meantime, the state's 2016 ban on abortions 20 weeks after conception is in effect.

South Carolina's General Assembly was meeting in a special session to try to join more than a dozen other states with abortion bans.

Most of them came through so-called trigger laws designed to outlaw most abortions when the U.S. Supreme Court threw out the constitutional right to end a pregnancy in June. Indiana's Legislature passed a new ban last month that has not taken effect.

The debate started Wednesday with the three Republican women in the South Carolina Senate speaking back to back, saying they couldn't support the bill unless the rape or incest exceptions were restored.

Sen. Katrina Shealy said the 41 men in the Senate would be better off listening to their wives, daughters,

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 38 of 77

mothers, granddaughters and looking at the faces of the girls in Sunday School classes at their churches.

"You want to believe that God is wanting you to push a bill through with no exceptions that kill mothers and ruins the lives of children — lets mothers bring home babies to bury them — then I think you're miscommunicating with God. Or maybe you aren't communicating with Him at all," Shealy said before senators added a proposal allowing abortions if a fetus cannot survive outside the womb.

Massey helped broker the compromise among Republicans that briefly returned the exceptions to the bill. He pointed out state health officials recorded about 3,000 abortions in 2021 within the first six weeks of a pregnancy.

"Heartbeat is great, but this I think is better," Massey said. "I don't think abortion should be used as birth control."

Senate Minority Leader Brad Hutto said Republican women stood up for all women in South Carolina, while Republican men let them down. He said Democrats didn't want any changes to current laws.

"There may be a sentiment that this is the same as what we already had. It's not. It's worse in many regards," Hutto said.

Republican Gov. Henry McMaster, who has said before he would be happy if there were no abortions in the state, thought the Senate version struck an appropriate balance, governor's spokesman Brian Symmes said

"It is the governor's hope that the House and Senate will soon come to an agreement and send a bill to his desk for signature," Symmes said.

Republican Sen. Sandy Senn, who didn't vote for the six-week ban in 2021, said a total ban would be an invasion of the privacy against every woman in the state.

"If what is going on in my vagina isn't an unreasonable invasion of privacy for this legislature to get involved in, I don't know what is," Senn said.

Queen Elizabeth II, a monarch bound by duty, dies at 96

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — On her 21st birthday in 1947, Princess Elizabeth went on the radio and made a promise to Britain and its Commonwealth nations: She pledged that "my whole life, whether it be short or long, will be devoted to your service."

Over her very long life, Queen Elizabeth II fulfilled that vow.

Through 15 prime ministers, from Winston Churchill to Liz Truss. Through Britain's postwar deprivations, crippling labor unrest and Brexit. Through the messy divorces, embarrassments and scandals of her family. She endured through it all — a reassuring anchor in a fast-changing world.

The longest-reigning monarch that Britain has ever known, Elizabeth died Thursday at 96 at Balmoral Castle, her beloved summer home in Scotland, after having steadied and modernized the royal institution through seven decades of huge social change.

Truss pronounced the country "devastated" and called Elizabeth "the rock on which modern Britain was built."

Her passing ends an era, the modern Elizabethan age. Her 73-year-old son, Charles, automatically became king upon her death. He will be known as King Charles III, although his coronation might not take place for months.

Through countless public events in her 70 years as monarch, Elizabeth likely met more people than anyone in history. Her image — on stamps, coins and bank notes — was among the most reproduced in the world.

But her inner life and opinions remained mostly an enigma. The public saw only glimpses of her personality: her joy watching horse racing at Royal Ascot or being with her beloved Welsh corgi dogs.

Yet Elizabeth had an intuitive bond with many of her subjects that seemed to strengthen over time, keeping a sense of perspective that served her well in most instances, said royal historian Robert Lacey.

"A lot of it comes from her modesty, the fact that she's very conscious that she's not important, that she's there to do a job, that it's the institution that matters," he said.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 39 of 77

The impact of her loss will be huge and unpredictable, both for the nation and for the monarchy, an institution whose relevance in the 21st century has often been called into question.

World leaders paid tribute to her long reign. U.S. President Joe Biden called her a "stateswoman of unmatched dignity and constancy."

She strongly felt the burden of her role as queen, though she was not destined for the crown from birth.

Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor was born in London on April 21, 1926, the first child of the Duke and Duchess of York. Her father's elder brother, Prince Edward, was first in line for the throne, to be followed by any children he had.

But in 1936, when she was 10, King Edward VIII abdicated to marry twice-divorced American Wallis Simpson, and Elizabeth's father became King George VI.

Her younger sister, Princess Margaret, recalled asking Elizabeth whether this meant that she would one day be queen. "Yes, I suppose it does," Margaret quoted Elizabeth as saying. "She didn't mention it again."

Like many of her generation, Elizabeth was shaped by World War II.

She was barely in her teens when Britain went to war with Germany in 1939. While the king and queen stayed at Buckingham Palace during the Blitz and toured the bombed-out neighborhoods of London, Elizabeth and Margaret stayed for most of the war at Windsor Castle, west of the capital. Even there, 300 bombs fell in an adjacent park, and the princesses spent many nights in an underground shelter.

Her first public broadcast, made in 1940 when she was 14, was a wartime message to children evacuated to the countryside or overseas.

"We children at home are full of cheerfulness and courage," she said with a blend of stoicism and hope that would echo throughout her reign. "We are trying to do all we can to help out gallant soldiers, sailors and airmen. And we are trying, too, to bear our own share of the danger and sadness of war. We know, every one of us, that in the end all will be well."

In 1945, after months of urging her parents to let her do something for the war effort, the heir to the throne became Second Subaltern Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor in the Auxiliary Territorial Service. She enthusiastically learned how to drive and service heavy vehicles.

On the night the war ended in Europe, May 8, 1945, she and Margaret managed to mingle, unrecognized, with celebrating crowds in London — "swept along on a tide of happiness and relief," as she told the BBC decades later. She described it as "one of the most memorable nights of my life."

Two years later, at Westminster Abbey in November 1947, she married Royal Navy officer Philip Mountbatten, a prince of Greece and Denmark whom she had first met in 1939 when she was 13 and he 18. Postwar Britain was experiencing austerity and rationing, and so street decorations were limited, and no public holiday was declared. But the bride was allowed 100 extra ration coupons for her trousseau.

The marriage lasted more than 73 years, until Philip's death last year at age 99.

The first of their four children, Prince Charles, was born on Nov. 14, 1948. He was followed by Princess Anne on Aug. 15, 1950, Prince Andrew on Feb. 19, 1960, and Prince Edward on March 10, 1964. Besides them, the queen is survived by eight grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

Elizabeth and Philip lived for a time in Malta, where he was stationed and Elizabeth enjoyed an almost-normal life as a navy wife.

Then in February 1952, George VI died in his sleep at age 56 after years of ill health. Elizabeth, on a visit to Kenya, was told she was now queen.

"In a way, I didn't have an apprenticeship," Elizabeth told a BBC documentary in 1992 that gave a rare view into her emotions. "My father died much too young, and so it was all a very sudden kind of taking on and making the best job you can."

Her coronation took place more than a year later at Westminster Abbey, a grand spectacle viewed by millions through the new medium of television.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill's first reaction to the king's death was to complain that the new queen was "only a child," but he was won over within days and became an ardent admirer.

"All the film people in the world, if they had scoured the globe, could not have found anyone so suited to

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 40 of 77

the part," Churchill's biographer, Lord Moran, reported the prime minister gushing about the young monarch.

In Britain's constitutional monarchy, the queen is head of state but has little direct power; in her official actions, she does what the government orders. However, she was not without influence.

Officially the head of the Church of England, she once reportedly commented that there was nothing she could do legally to block the appointment of a bishop, "but I can always say that I should like more information. That is an indication that the prime minister will not miss."

The extent of the monarch's political influence sparked occasional speculation, but not much criticism. The views of Charles, who has expressed strong opinions on everything from architecture to the environment, might prove more contentious.

The queen was obliged to meet weekly with the prime minister, and they generally found her well-informed, inquisitive and up to date. The one possible exception was Margaret Thatcher, with whom her relations were said to be cool, if not frosty, though neither ever commented.

The queen's views in those private meetings became a subject of intense speculation and fertile grounds for dramatists like Peter Morgan, author of the play "The Audience" and hit TV series "The Crown." Those semi-fictionalized accounts were the product of an era of declining deference and rising celebrity, when the royal troubles became public property.

And there were plenty of troubles in the royal family, an institution known within the palace as "The Firm." In Elizabeth's first years on the throne, Princess Margaret provoked a national controversy through her romance with a divorced man.

In what the queen called the "annus horribilis" of 1992, her daughter, Princess Anne, got divorced, Prince Charles and Princess Diana separated, and so did Prince Andrew and his wife, Sarah. That was also the year Windsor Castle, a residence she far preferred to Buckingham Palace, was seriously damaged by fire.

The public split of Charles and Diana — "There were three of us in that marriage," Diana said of her husband's relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles — was followed by the shock of Diana's death in a Paris car crash in 1997. For once, the queen appeared out of step with her people. Amid unprecedented national mourning, Elizabeth's failure to make a public show of grief appeared to many to be unfeeling. After several days, she made a televised address to the nation.

The dent in her popularity was brief. She was by now a sort of national grandmother, with a stern gaze, a kind smile and an inexhaustible repertoire of brightly colored outfits with matching hats.

She took the monarchy from the black-and-white era to the digital age and was a cautious modernizer: She ended the presentation of debutantes at court and instituted garden parties with a cross section of her subjects; her children were sent to school, rather than being privately tutored as she was; she was the first monarch to give the annual royal Christmas speech on television, and the first to send an email and post a tweet.

Financial pressures led to staff reductions, cutbacks in repairs and maintenance at some of her palaces, and the removal of the royal yacht from active service. In the 1990s, she voluntarily but prudently agreed to pay taxes, and her dignity survived the necessity of topping up her income by opening a souvenir shop at Buckingham Palace.

Despite being one of the world's wealthiest people, Elizabeth had a reputation for frugality and common sense. She was known as a monarch who took care to turn off lights in empty rooms, a country woman who didn't flinch from strangling pheasants.

A newspaper reporter who went undercover to work as a palace footman reinforced that down-to-earth image, taking photos of the royal Tupperware on the breakfast table and a rubber duck in the bath.

"Dogs and horses, courtesy, kindness and community service, count with her," biographer Giles Branthwaite wrote.

Her sangfroid was not dented when a young man aimed a pistol at her and fired six blanks as she rode by on a horse in 1981, nor when she discovered an intruder sitting on her bed in Buckingham Palace in 1982.

The image of the queen as an exemplar of ordinary British decency was satirized by the magazine *Private Eye*, which called her Brenda. Anti-monarchists dubbed her "Mrs. Windsor." But the republican cause

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 41 of 77

gained limited traction.

On her Golden Jubilee in 2002, she said the country could “look back with measured pride on the history of the last 50 years.”

“It has been a pretty remarkable 50 years by any standards,” she said in a speech. “There have been ups and downs, but anyone who can remember what things were like after those six long years of war appreciates what immense changes have been achieved since then.”

A reassuring presence at home, she was also an emblem of Britain abroad — a form of soft power, consistently respected whatever the vagaries of the country’s political leaders on the world stage. It felt only fitting that she attended the opening of the 2012 London Olympics alongside another icon, James Bond, as portrayed by Daniel Craig. Through some movie magic, she appeared to parachute into the Olympic Stadium.

Despite Britain’s complex and often fraught ties with its former colonies, Elizabeth was widely respected and remained head of state of more than a dozen countries, from Canada to Tuvalu. She headed the 54-nation Commonwealth, built around the U.K. and its former British colonies.

In 2015, she overtook Queen Victoria, her great-great-grandmother, as the longest-serving monarch in British history, and this year she became the second longest-reigning monarch in world history, behind 17th century French King Louis XIV, who took the throne at age 4.

She kept working well into her 10th decade, though Prince Charles and his elder son, Prince William, took over most of the visits, ribbon-cuttings and investitures that form the bulk of royal duties. The loss of Philip was a heavy blow, as she poignantly sat alone at his funeral in the chapel at Windsor Castle.

The family troubles kept coming. Her son, Prince Andrew, was entangled in the sordid tale of sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, an American businessman who had been a friend. Andrew denies accusations that he had sex with one of the women who said she was trafficked by Epstein.

The queen’s grandson, Prince Harry, walked away from Britain and his royal duties after marrying American actress Meghan Markle in 2018. He alleged in an interview that some in the family — but pointedly not the queen — had been less than welcoming to his wife.

She enjoyed robust health well into her 90s, though frailty eventually caught up with her. In October, she spent a night in a London hospital for tests, and was later said by the palace to be experiencing “episodic mobility issues.”

She kept up virtual meetings with diplomats and politicians from Windsor Castle, but public duties grew rarer, though she made several appearances as the U.K. celebrated her Platinum Jubilee in June.

Pragmatic to the end, she began to prepare the country for the transition to come. She let it be known that she wanted Charles’ wife Camilla to be known as “Queen Consort” when her son became king. It removed a question mark over the future role of the woman some blamed for the breakup of Charles’ marriage to Princess Diana in the 1990s.

In May, she asked Charles to stand in for her and read the Queen’s Speech at the State Opening of Parliament, one of the monarch’s most central constitutional duties.

But she remained firmly in control of the monarchy and at the center of national life as Britain marked her Platinum Jubilee with parties and pageants. Just 48 hours before her death, she presided at a ceremony at Balmoral Castle to appoint Truss as the 15th prime minister of her reign.

Seven decades after World War II, Elizabeth was again at the center of the national mood amid the uncertainty and loss of COVID 19 — a disease she came through herself in February.

In April 2020 — with the country in lockdown and Prime Minister Boris Johnson hospitalized with the virus — she made a rare video address, urging people to stick together.

She summoned the spirit of World War II, that vital time in her life, and the nation’s, by echoing Vera Lynn’s wartime anthem “We’ll Meet Again.”

“We should take comfort that while we may have more still to endure, better days will return. We will be with our friends again. We will be with our families again. We will meet again,” she said.

At Queen Square in London’s Bloomsbury neighborhood stands an urn erected to commemorate Eliza-

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 42 of 77

beth's Silver Jubilee. Etched on the ground around it are the words of poet Philip Larkin, written for that event in 1977, but which remained true decades later:

"In times when nothing stood
But worsened or grew strange,
There was one constant good
She did not change."

Trump documents probe: US ready to appeal judge's hold

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department is preparing to appeal a judge's decision granting the appointment of an independent arbiter to review records seized in a criminal investigation by the FBI from former President Donald Trump's Florida home.

Citing national security concerns and other factors, the department also asked U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon to put on hold her directive prohibiting it from using the seized classified records for investigative purposes while it contests her ruling.

"Without a stay, the government and public also will suffer irreparable harm from the undue delay to the criminal investigation," department lawyers said in a motion Thursday in which they announced their intent to appeal the order to the Atlanta-based 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The 21-page Justice Department filing lays bare the government's concern about the impact it believes will be caused by the judge's order, which temporarily halted core aspects of its criminal investigation, and its continued objections to the planned appointment of a "special master" to conduct an independent review of the records taken from Mar-a-Lago. Already, the department said, the intelligence community has paused its separate risk assessment that the judge had permitted to continue because of "uncertainty regarding the bounds of the Court's order."

The department gave the judge until next Thursday to stay her original order, saying it would otherwise ask the federal appeals court to do so. Though such an appeal will almost certainly result in further delays to its underlying investigation, the department made clear throughout its motion its belief that it would be "injured" beyond repair if the judge's order was permitted to stand.

The judge gave the Trump team until Monday morning to respond to the Justice Department motion.

The FBI has been investigating for months what it says was the unlawful retention of national defense information at Mar-a-Lago as well as efforts to obstruct the probe. It is not clear whether Trump or anyone else will face charges.

Reacting to Thursday's motion, Trump renewed his attacks on the entire investigation.

"So now the FBI and Biden Department of 'Justice' leakers are going to spend Millions of Dollars, & vast amounts of Time and Energy, to appeal the order on the 'Raid of Mar-a-Lago document hoax,'" he wrote on his Truth Social platform.

The FBI seized 33 boxes and containers with more than 100 documents with classified markings, including some designated top-secret, during an Aug. 8 search of the property. Those records have been segregated from the thousands of non-classified documents that were taken, the department said.

The Trump legal team had asked the judge, a Trump appointee, to name a special master — in many cases, a lawyer or retired judge — to examine the seized documents to ensure that personal materials are returned to him and that any privileged records are weeded out from the rest of the investigation.

In a procedural win for the ex-president, Cannon granted that request, agreeing to appoint an arbiter to inspect the records and filter out any that may be protected by claims not only of attorney-client privilege but executive privilege too. She also directed the FBI to temporarily stop using those documents in its investigation until a report from the special master or "further court order."

Though she did permit the intelligence community to continue with an assessment of the security risk posed by the improper retention of classified secrets, that work has been paused in consultation with the Justice Department. The FBI's chief counterintelligence official, Alan E. Kohler Jr., said in a declaration

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 43 of 77

accompanying the court filing that the classification review and national security risk assessment were “inextricably linked with the criminal investigation” and that it made no sense to “bifurcate” the FBI officials in both of those endeavors.

On Thursday, the Justice Department lambasted anew the idea that any of the classified records could be protected by such claims, or that Trump could be entitled to the return of any government documents since he is no longer president. It also asked the judge to lift her directive that highly classified records be shared with a special master.

“The classification markings establish on the face of the documents that they are government records, not Plaintiff’s personal records. The government’s review of those records does not raise any plausible attorney-client privilege claims because such classified records do not contain communications between Plaintiff and his private attorneys,” the motion states.

It adds that “no potential assertion of executive privilege could justify restricting the Executive Branch’s review and use of the classified records at issue here.”

The judge’s ruling carries the prospect of substantially delaying the criminal investigation though it seems unlikely to have significant long-term effects that would take the probe off course. The department, for instance, said it did not interpret the order as a prohibition against interviewing witnesses about how the records were relocated from the White House to Mar-a-Lago or how they were stored — suggesting that at least that investigative work would continue. Nor did it think there was a bar against the department from briefing members of Congress.

“Even so,” department lawyers wrote, “the prohibition on the review and use of the classified records is uniquely harmful here, where the criminal investigation concerns the retention and handling of those very records, with the concomitant national security concerns raised by that conduct.”

The two sides were directed to submit proposed names of a special master by Friday.

The department said it planned to “provide its views” by that deadline, and that its filing on Friday would confirm its plans to make available to the Trump team copies of all unclassified documents taken during the search and to return personal records that were not commingled with classified materials.

The department earlier in the week said that the seized records included “medical documents, correspondence related to taxes, and accounting information.”

Queen Elizabeth II dead at 96 after 70 years on the throne

By DANICA KIRKA, JILL LAWLESS and SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Queen Elizabeth II, Britain’s longest-reigning monarch and a symbol of stability in a turbulent era that saw the decline of the British empire and disarray in her own family, died Thursday after 70 years on the throne. She was 96.

The palace announced she died at Balmoral Castle, her summer residence in Scotland, where members of the royal family had rushed to her side after her health took a turn for the worse.

A link to the almost-vanished generation that fought World War II, she was the only monarch most Britons have ever known.

Her 73-year-old son Prince Charles automatically became king and will be known as King Charles III, it was announced. British monarchs in the past have selected new names upon taking the throne. Charles’ second wife, Camilla, will be known as the Queen Consort.

A funeral was to be held after 10 days of official mourning.

The BBC played the national anthem, “God Save the Queen,” over a portrait of Elizabeth in full regalia as her death was announced, and the flag over Buckingham Palace was lowered to half-staff as the second Elizabethan age came to a close.

The impact of her loss will be huge and unpredictable, both for the nation and for the monarchy, an institution she helped stabilize and modernize across decades of enormous social change and family scandals, but whose relevance in the 21st century has often been called into question.

The public’s abiding affection for the queen has helped sustain support for the monarchy during the

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 44 of 77

scandals. Charles is nowhere near as popular.

In a statement, Charles called his mother's death "a moment of the greatest sadness for me and all members of my family," adding: "I know her loss will be deeply felt throughout the country, the Realms and the Commonwealth, and by countless people around the world."

The changing of the guard comes at a fraught moment for Britain, which has a brand-new prime minister and is grappling with an energy crisis, double-digit inflation, the war in Ukraine and the fallout from Brexit.

Prime Minister Liz Truss, appointed by the queen just 48 hours earlier, pronounced the country "devastated" and called Elizabeth "the rock on which modern Britain was built."

British subjects outside Buckingham Palace wept when officials carried a notice confirming the queen's death to the wrought-iron gates of the queen's London home. Hundreds soon gathered in the rain, and mourners laid dozens of colorful bouquets at the gates.

"As a young person, this is a really huge moment," said Romy McCarthy, 20. "It marks the end of an era, particularly as a woman. We had a woman who was in power as someone to look up to."

World leaders extended condolences and paid tribute to the queen.

In Canada, where the British monarch is the country's head of state, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's eyes were red with emotion as he saluted her "wisdom, compassion and warmth." In India, once the "jewel in the crown" of the British empire, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted: "She personified dignity and decency in public life. Pained by her demise."

U.S. President Joe Biden called her a "stateswoman of unmatched dignity and constancy who deepened the bedrock alliance between the United Kingdom and the United States."

Since Feb. 6, 1952, Elizabeth reigned over a Britain that rebuilt from a destructive and financially exhausting war and lost its empire; joined the European Union and then left it; and made the painful transition into the 21st century.

She endured through 15 prime ministers, from Winston Churchill to Truss, becoming an institution and an icon -- a reassuring presence even for those who ignored or loathed the monarchy.

She became less visible in her final years as age and frailty curtailed many public appearances. But she remained firmly in control of the monarchy and at the center of national life as Britain celebrated her Platinum Jubilee with days of parties and pageants in June.

That same month she became the second longest-reigning monarch in history, behind 17th-century French King Louis XIV, who took the throne at age 4. On Tuesday, she presided at a ceremony at Balmoral Castle to accept the resignation of Boris Johnson as prime minister and appoint Truss as his successor.

When Elizabeth was 21, almost five years before she became queen, she promised the people of Britain and the Commonwealth that "my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service."

It was a promise she kept across more than seven decades.

Despite Britain's complex and often fraught ties with its former colonies, Elizabeth was widely respected and remained head of state of more than a dozen countries, from Canada to Tuvalu. She headed the 54-nation Commonwealth, built around Britain and its former colonies.

Married for more than 73 years to Prince Philip, who died in 2021 at age 99, Elizabeth was matriarch to a royal family whose troubles were a subject of global fascination -- amplified by fictionalized accounts such as the TV series "The Crown." She is survived by four children, eight grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

Through countless public events, she probably met more people than anyone in history. Her image, which adorned stamps, coins and banknotes, was among the most reproduced in the world.

But her inner life and opinions remained mostly an enigma. Of her personality, the public saw relatively little. A horse owner, she rarely seemed happier than during the Royal Ascot racing week. She never tired of the companionship of her beloved Welsh corgi dogs.

Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor was born in London on April 21, 1926, the first child of the Duke and Duchess of York. She was not born to be queen -- her father's elder brother, Prince Edward, was destined for the crown, to be followed by any children he had.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 45 of 77

But in 1936, when she was 10, Edward VIII abdicated to marry twice-divorced American Wallis Simpson, and Elizabeth's father became King George VI.

Princess Margaret recalled asking her sister whether this meant that Elizabeth would one day be queen. "Yes, I suppose it does," Margaret quoted Elizabeth as saying. "She didn't mention it again."

Elizabeth was barely in her teens when Britain went to war with Germany in 1939. While the king and queen stayed at Buckingham Palace during the Blitz and toured the bombed-out neighborhoods of London, Elizabeth and Margaret spent most of the war at Windsor Castle, west of the capital. Even there, 300 bombs fell in an adjacent park, and the princesses spent many nights in an underground shelter.

She made her first public broadcast in 1940 when she was 14, sending a wartime message to children evacuated to the countryside or overseas.

"We children at home are full of cheerfulness and courage," she said with a blend of stoicism and hope that would echo throughout her reign. "We are trying to do all we can to help out gallant soldiers, sailors and airmen. And we are trying, too, to bear our own share of the danger and sadness of war. We know, every one of us, that in the end all will be well."

In 1945, after months of campaigning for her parents' permission to do something for the war effort, the heir to the throne became Second Subaltern Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor in the Auxiliary Territorial Service. She enthusiastically learned to drive and service heavy vehicles.

On the night the war ended in Europe, May 8, 1945, she and Margaret managed to mingle, unrecognized, with celebrating crowds in London — "swept along on a tide of happiness and relief," as she told the BBC decades later, describing it as "one of the most memorable nights of my life."

At Westminster Abbey in November 1947 she married Royal Navy officer Philip Mountbatten, a prince of Greece and Denmark whom she had first met in 1939 when she was 13 and he 18. Postwar Britain was experiencing austerity and rationing, and so street decorations were limited and no public holiday was declared. But the bride was allowed 100 extra ration coupons for her trousseau.

The couple lived for a time in Malta, where Philip was stationed, and Elizabeth enjoyed an almost-normal life as a navy wife. The first of their four children, Prince Charles, was born in 1948. He was followed by Princess Anne in 1950, Prince Andrew in 1960, and Prince Edward in 1964.

In 1952, George VI died at 56 after years of ill health. Elizabeth, on a visit to Kenya, was told that she was now queen.

Her private secretary, Martin Charteris, later recalled finding the new monarch at her desk, "sitting erect, no tears, color up a little, fully accepting her destiny."

"In a way, I didn't have an apprenticeship," Elizabeth reflected in a BBC documentary in 1992 that opened a rare view into her emotions. "My father died much too young, and so it was all a very sudden kind of taking on, and making the best job you can."

Her coronation took place more than a year later, a grand spectacle at Westminster Abbey viewed by millions through the still-new medium of television.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill's first reaction to the king's death was to complain that the new queen was "only a child," but he was won over within days and eventually became an ardent admirer.

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The extent of the monarch's political influence occasionally sparked speculation -- but not much criticism while Elizabeth was alive. The views of Charles, who has expressed strong opinions on everything from architecture to the environment, might prove more contentious.

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Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 46 of 77

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And there were plenty of troubles within the family, an institution known as "The Firm." In Elizabeth's first years on the throne, Princess Margaret provoked a national controversy through her romance with a divorced man.

In what the queen called the "annus horribilis" of 1992, her daughter, Princess Anne, was divorced, Prince Charles and Princess Diana separated, and so did her son Prince Andrew and his wife, Sarah. That was also the year Windsor Castle, a residence she far preferred to Buckingham Palace, was seriously damaged by fire.

The public split of Charles and Diana -- "There were three of us in that marriage," Diana said of her husband's relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles -- was followed by the shock of Diana's death in a Paris car crash in 1997. For once, the queen appeared out of step with her people.

Amid unprecedented public mourning, Elizabeth's failure to make a public show of grief appeared to many to be unfeeling. After several days, she finally made a televised address to the nation.

The dent in her popularity was brief. She was by now a sort of national grandmother, with a stern gaze and a twinkling smile.

Despite being one of the world's wealthiest people, Elizabeth had a reputation for frugality and common sense. She turned off lights in empty rooms, and didn't flinch from strangling pheasants.

A newspaper reporter who went undercover to work as a palace footman reinforced that down-to-earth image, capturing pictures of the royal Tupperware on the breakfast table and a rubber duck in the bath.

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The image of the queen as an exemplar of ordinary British decency was satirized by the magazine *Private Eye*, which called her Brenda, apparently because it sounded working-class. Anti-monarchists dubbed her "Mrs. Windsor." But the republican cause gained limited traction while the queen was alive.

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In 2015, she overtook her great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria's reign of 63 years, seven months and two days to become the longest-serving monarch in British history. She kept working into her 10th decade, though Prince Charles and his elder son, Prince William, increasingly took over the visits, ribbon-cuttings and investitures that form the bulk of royal duties.

The loss of Philip in 2021 was a heavy blow, as she poignantly sat alone at his funeral in the chapel at Windsor Castle because of coronavirus restrictions.

And the family troubles continued. Her son Prince Andrew was entangled in the sordid tale of sex offender businessman Jeffrey Epstein, an American businessman who had been a friend. Andrew denied accusations that he had sex with one of the women who said she was trafficked by Epstein.

The queen's grandson Prince Harry walked away from Britain and his royal duties after marrying American TV actress Meghan Markle, who is biracial, in 2018. He alleged in an interview that some in the family — but pointedly not the queen — had been less than welcoming to his wife.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 47 of 77

She enjoyed robust health well into her 90s, although she used a cane in an appearance after Philip's death. Months ago, she told guests at a reception "as you can see, I can't move." The palace, tight-lipped about details, said the queen was experiencing "episodic mobility issues."

She held virtual meetings with diplomats and politicians from Windsor Castle, but public appearances grew rarer.

Meanwhile, she took steps to prepare for the transition to come. In February, the queen announced that she wanted Camilla to be known as "Queen Consort" when "in the fullness of time" her son became king. It removed a question mark over the role of the woman some blamed for the breakup of Charles' marriage to Princess Diana in the 1990s.

May brought another symbolic moment, when she asked Charles to stand in for her and read the Queen's Speech at the State Opening of Parliament, one of the monarch's most central constitutional duties.

Seven decades after World War II, Elizabeth was again at the center of the national mood amid the uncertainty and loss of COVID 19 -- a disease she came through herself in February.

In April 2020 -- with the country in lockdown and Prime Minister Boris Johnson hospitalized with the virus -- she made a rare video address, urging people to stick together.

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Prosecutor: Official's DNA in slain reporter's fingernails

By KEN RITTER Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The DNA of a jailed elected official who was angered by past and upcoming newspaper stories was found on the hands of a Las Vegas investigative reporter who fought for his life while being stabbed to death outside his home, authorities said Thursday.

County Public Administrator Robert Telles stood handcuffed in court with bandages on his wrists and police officers at his elbows while a prosecutor told a judge that Las Vegas Review-Journal reporter Jeff German's death was a planned attack by an assailant who left his own cellphone at home and waited in a vehicle outside German's home.

"The published articles regarding a public figure, the public administrator's office, ruined his political career, likely his marriage, and this was him lashing out at the cause," Chief Deputy Clark County District Attorney Richard Scow said of Telles.

Scow said German was stabbed seven times. His body was found Saturday.

Las Vegas Justice of the Peace Elana Lee Graham called a police report detailing the attack "chilling," including the discovery of wounds on German's arms and DNA believed to be from Telles in German's fingernails.

"He was fighting for his life," the judge said of the 69-year-old longtime journalist. "It appears from this report that Mr. Telles was waiting ... and called (German) over to the side of his own home."

Graham ordered Telles, 45, jailed without bail pending arraignment next Tuesday on a murder charge.

Clark County District Attorney Steve Wolfson called German's death "brutal and meaningless" and the case against Telles important for the community. Wolfson said a decision about whether to seek the death penalty will be made in coming months.

Earlier Thursday, police officials described Telles' arrest late Wednesday after a brief police standoff at his home.

Clark County Sheriff Joe Lombardo said Telles was hospitalized for what the sheriff called "self-inflicted" wounds, hours after investigators served a search warrant and confiscated vehicles in the criminal probe of German's killing.

Telles had been a focus of German's reporting about turmoil, including complaints of administrative bullying, favoritism and Telles' relationship with a subordinate staffer in the county office that handles

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 48 of 77

property of people who die without a will or family contacts. Telles, a Democrat, went on to lose his bid for reelection in the June primary.

"This has been an unusual case from the beginning," Lombardo told reporters at a news conference, "the murder of an investigative journalist, and the main suspect an elected official here in Clark County."

Lombardo is the elected head of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and is running as a Republican for governor. He said Telles was quickly identified as a suspect with the help of media, including the Review-Journal.

"Every murder is tragic. But the killing of a journalist is particularly troublesome," Lombardo said.

Telles was identified early in the investigation as a person "upset about articles that were being written by German, as an investigative journalist, that exposed potential wrongdoing," Las Vegas Police Capt. Dori Koren said.

"Telles had publicly expressed his issues with that reporting," Koren said. "We found out later there was additional reporting that was pending."

In addition to Telles' suspected DNA at the crime scene, Koren said investigators serving a search warrant at Telles' home found shoes and a distinctive wide straw hat.

Koren said the items matched those worn by a person captured on security camera video wearing a blaze orange shirt and walking toward German's home. He showed photos of the shoes and the hat and said they had been cut up.

A murder weapon has not been found, but Lombardo said police have "distorted" video that shows the attack. He said investigators were attempting to enhance it.

Investigators said a distinctive maroon GMC Yukon Denali SUV was seen driving around German's neighborhood Sept. 2, the morning of the killing, stopping several times. That vehicle, registered to Telles' wife, departed Telles' home around 9 a.m. and returned around noon, Koren said.

Police believe German was attacked about 11:15 a.m., and his garage door was open.

Telles was questioned by police Wednesday and then returned home, where he ignored reporters' questions as he entered and did not respond to officers at his door until SWAT units and an ambulance arrived in the evening.

German joined the Review-Journal in 2010 after more than two decades at the Las Vegas Sun, where he was a columnist and reporter who covered courts, politics, labor, government and organized crime.

In a statement, German's family called him "a loving and loyal brother, uncle and friend who devoted his life to his work exposing wrongdoing in Las Vegas and beyond."

"We're shocked, saddened and angry about his death," the statement said. "Jeff was committed to seeking justice for others and would appreciate the hard work by local police and journalists in pursuing his killer. We look forward to seeing justice done in this case."

Glenn Cook, executive editor of the Review-Journal, said the newsroom had mixed emotions following Telles' arrest.

"We are relieved Robert Telles is in custody and outraged that a colleague appears to have been killed for reporting on an elected official," the statement said. "Journalists can't do the important work our communities require if they are afraid a presentation of facts could lead to violent retribution."

"Hopefully, the Review-Journal, the German family and Jeff's many friends can begin the process of mourning and honoring a great man and a brave reporter," it said.

Telles, a lawyer who practiced probate and estate law, won his elected position in 2018, replacing a three-term public administrator. He lost his June party primary to Assistant Public Administrator Rita Reid, who faces a Republican challenger in November. Telles' term expires Dec. 31.

Clark County officials said Thursday that Telles was suspended and banned from county offices or property pending a review of his position as an elected official.

"County employees of the administrator's office are currently working from home, and the office will remain closed until a determination is made about when it can reopen," the statement said.

In the weeks before the June 14 primary, German bylined reports about an office "mired in turmoil and

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 49 of 77

internal dissension" between longtime employees and new hires under Telles' leadership.

Telles blamed "old-timers" for exaggerating the extent of his relationship with a female staffer and falsely claiming that he mistreated them.

Telles later posted Twitter complaints about German, the Review-Journal reported, including claims in June that German was a bully who was "obsessed" with him.

German, widely known and respected for his tenacity, was working on follow-up reports, the newspaper said Wednesday. He recently filed public records requests for emails and text messages between Telles and three other county officials, including Reid and consultant Michael Murphy.

Murphy, the former Clark County coroner hired to address complaints about leadership in the public administrators' office, did not immediately respond to a telephone message.

Michigan's high court puts abortion question on Nov. ballot

By JOEY CAPPELLETTI, SARA BURNETT and ED WHITE Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Voters will determine whether to place abortion rights in the Michigan Constitution, the state Supreme Court declared Thursday, settling the issue a day before the fall ballot must be completed.

Abortion rights would be guaranteed if the amendment passes on Nov. 8. A 1931 state law makes it a crime to perform most abortions, but the law was suspended in May and a judge this week followed up by striking it down as unconstitutional.

Though appeals of that decision are likely, the law would be trumped if voters approve the amendment in the fall election.

There are political implications beyond the ballot question.

Democrats say the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade* is mobilizing voters and will help Democratic candidates this fall, when top races including governor, secretary of state and attorney general are on the Michigan ballot. They point to conservative Kansas, where voters overwhelmingly defeated a measure that would have allowed the Republican-controlled Legislature to tighten restrictions or ban the procedure outright.

In Michigan, a state elections board on Aug. 31 deadlocked along party lines on whether the abortion initiative should appear on the ballot, with Republicans voting no and Democrats voting yes. The 2-2 tie meant the measure wasn't certified for the ballot.

Supporters submitted more than 700,000 signatures, easily clearing the minimum threshold. But Republicans and abortion opponents argued the petitions had improper or no spacing between certain words and were confusing to voters.

"What a sad marker of the times," Chief Justice Bridget McCormack said in a brief statement that accompanied the Supreme Court's 5-2 order.

McCormack said "there is no dispute" that every word was legible and in the correct order.

Republican members of the Board of State Canvassers "would disenfranchise millions of Michiganders not because they believe the many thousands of Michiganders who signed the proposal were confused by it, but because they think they have identified a technicality that allows them to do so, a game of gotcha gone very bad," McCormack said.

The majority was made up of McCormack, three other Democratic justices and a Republican justice. Two Republicans dissented.

The court directed state canvassers, who meet again Friday, to sign off on the ballot question. Tony Daunt, a Republican who had voted against the proposal, last week said that the board would obey a court order.

Attorney General Dana Nessel, a Democrat who supports abortion rights, hailed the decision.

"Our state Constitution provides the people with direct access to the democratic process and that access should not be limited by appointed individuals acting beyond the scope of their duty," Nessel said.

A group called Citizens to Support MI Women and Children said it will campaign against the amendment. Right to Life of Michigan also will be a major opponent.

"Current events continue showing us that any nation that sees the next generation as an existential threat — rather than an existential necessity — has no future," Right to Life said on Facebook.

There was no immediate comment from Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, who is in favor of the ballot question and is seeking reelection. Her Republican opponent, Tudor Dixon, opposes abortion rights except to save the life of the mother.

Results of a poll published this week by The Detroit News and WDIV-TV showed abortion and women's rights was the top issue motivating Michigan residents to vote in November, ahead of inflation and cost of living, education, and the economy and jobs. The poll also showed a majority of likely voters support a proposed constitutional amendment guaranteeing abortion rights.

In a dissent, Justice Brian Zahra said supporters of the abortion question did not have a "clear legal right" to the ballot.

"Words separated by spaces cease being words or become new words when the spaces between them are removed," Zahra said.

Judge approves \$2.46 billion Boy Scouts reorganization plan

BY DENISE LAVOIE and RANDALL CHASE Associated Press

A bankruptcy judge on Thursday approved a \$2.46 billion reorganization plan proposed by the Boy Scouts of America, which would allow it to keep operating while compensating tens of thousands of men who say they were sexually abused as children while involved in Scouting.

Though legal hurdles remain, the ruling by Judge Laurie Selber Silverstein in Delaware marked an important milestone for the BSA, which sought bankruptcy protection more than two years ago to stave off a flood of lawsuits alleging child sexual abuse by Scout leaders and volunteers.

Lawyers for some of the victims said the amount an individual survivor may receive from the bankruptcy plan depends on multiple factors relating to the alleged abuse. The plan calls for the BSA and its local councils, along with settling insurance companies and troop sponsoring organizations, including Catholic institutions and parishes, to contribute to a fund for survivors. In return, those groups would be shielded from future lawsuits over Scout-related abuse allegations.

More than 80,000 men have filed claims saying they were abused as children by troop leaders around the country.

"Credit to the courageous survivors that this breakthrough in child and scouting safety has been achieved," said attorney Jeff Anderson, whose firm represented more than 800 Boy Scout abuse survivors.

Anderson said most of the \$2.46 billion is to be paid to survivors, but some funds would be set aside in a trust to continue litigation against entities that have not settled, mainly insurance companies.

It will likely take months for any of the abuse claimants to receive compensation.

Anderson said the settlement has drawn mixed reactions from his clients. Many are proud they stood up and demanded a cleanup of the Irving, Texas-based Boy Scouts, while others feel like they were dismissed because the organization "hid behind the statute of limitations" in some states.

The Boy Scouts of America said it is pleased the court has approved its reorganization plan.

"We continue to be enormously grateful to the survivor community, whose bravery, patience, and willingness to share their experiences has been instrumental in the formation of this Plan," the organization said in a statement.

The Boy Scouts said the perspectives and priorities of the survivors "will be ingrained in the BSA's programming moving forward."

The BSA also said that because certain parties have said they plan to appeal the order, the organization will next begin an appeal process in order to emerge from Chapter 11, "which will allow survivors to be equitably compensated and preserve the mission of Scouting for future generations."

A federal district judge must sign off on Silberstein's ruling.

When it filed for bankruptcy, the BSA faced about 275 filed lawsuits and was aware of numerous other potential cases. More than 80,000 abuse claims were eventually filed as part of the bankruptcy.

Attorneys for BSA insurers argued early on that the sheer volume of claims was an indication of fraud

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 51 of 77

and the result of aggressive client solicitation by attorneys and for-profit claims aggregators. While some of those insurers later negotiated settlements, other insurers continued to oppose the plan. They argued that the procedures for distributing funds from the compensation trust would violate their contractual rights to contest claims and set a dangerous precedent for mass litigation.

Record 8 fledged chicks for Louisiana's wild 'whoopers'

By JANET McCONNAUGHEY Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A record eight whooping crane chicks have taken wing in Louisiana after hatching in the wild. It's not just a state record for fledglings of the world's rarest crane, but one for any flock reintroduced to the wild to help save the endangered birds, the state Department of Wildlife and Fisheries said Thursday.

"That is very exciting. We're absolutely thrilled that the Louisiana program has done so phenomenally well," said Anne Lacy, senior manager for North America programs at the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo, Wisconsin.

The previous record was set in 2018, when six wild-hatched birds fledged in the flock that was taught to migrate between Wisconsin and Florida by following ultralight aircraft, Louisiana wildlife biologist Sara Zimorski said in an email. That also was Louisiana's previous record wild fledgling year, at five.

The brown-and-white juveniles which survive to adulthood will be white with red caps and black mustaches and wingtips, and about 5 feet (1.5 meters) tall. Their wingspan can reach 7 feet (2.1 meters) across.

Only about 800 "whoopers" exist, according to the crane foundation. About 500 are in the only natural flock, which winters in Texas and breeds in Alberta, Canada. About 80 are in the Wisconsin-Florida flock, nearly 140 in captivity and seven in an introduced flock that failed in Florida.

Louisiana's flock now totals 76, said a news release from Wildlife and Fisheries.

Three males and three females raised at the Audubon Nature Institute's species survival center in New Orleans will join them in November, said assistant curator Richard Dunn.

A fourth female will remain at Audubon for breeding to be sure her good genes meet up with a good match, Dunn said. That's important because every crane alive is descended from 15 that lived in Texas in 1941. Biologists estimate there were more than 10,000 before habitat loss and overhunting nearly killed them off.

The Louisiana and Wisconsin-Florida flocks are being nurtured in hope of creating a cushion in case anything happens to the natural flock.

Two of the 14 or 15 birds hatched in Wisconsin's wilds this year will survive to fledging and a third, which broke a wing, is being kept for captive breeding, Lacy said.

She said the foundation just released two yearlings that were raised at the Calgary zoo but couldn't be sent to Wisconsin last year because of COVID-19 precautions. Seven bred in captivity are to be released later this year.

The Texas-Canada flock is listed as endangered, though the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is considering whether to change that to threatened. The "experimental" flocks are classified as threatened because that loosens regulations, making reintroductions more feasible.

"We can't point out exactly why this was our best year" for fledglings, Zimorski said in the news release. Experience may have played a part — only one of 17 nesting pairs were first-timers, and that pair's chicks didn't survive, she wrote in an email.

"Three pairs that had nested unsuccessfully in previous years hatched and fledged chicks this year," she wrote.

Zimorski said dry conditions during the breeding season, from February until June, may also have played a part.

"I don't think we've had a nesting season during a drought like we had this year," Zimorski said in the news release. "Intuitively it doesn't seem like that would be good, but according to some colleagues from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, other species of water birds often have really good breeding success in

drought years that follow wet years, which we definitely had last year.”

Last year, 24 pairs mated for what was then a record 14 hatchlings in Louisiana, but only four grew old enough to fly.

Biologists don't know the sex of this year's fledglings or those of two birds that hatched last year. The others are 38 males and 28 females.

Whooping cranes mate for life.

“A few birds that nested in 2021 lost their mate and though I think most of them were repaired they didn't nest with their new mates,” Zimorski said in an email. “Additionally, there were a couple of pairs that nested in 2021 who are still alive and together but just didn't nest this year.”

Federal and state agencies began Louisiana's reintroduction in 2011; the first chick hatched in 2016.

This year was the second in a row and the third since 2016 that twins both fledged, the department said. Whooping cranes lay one or two eggs per nest, but generally only one grows up even if two hatch.

Hunt for shooting suspect shut down much of fearful Memphis

By ADRIAN SAINZ Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Two college campuses locked down. City buses stopped running. A baseball stadium halted a game, and frightened residents stayed indoors as a gunman spent hours cruising around Memphis and shooting people, apparently at random.

Authorities said the assailant suspected of killing four people and wounding three livestreamed some of the carnage using his cellphone. He was arrested late Wednesday after crashing a stolen car while fleeing police.

The violence unfolded just a few months after 19-year-old Ezekiel Kelly was released early from a three-year prison sentence for a pair of shootings in 2020. Now he's charged with first-degree murder.

The bloodshed played out as the city was still reeling from the brutal killing of a jogger who was abducted during her early morning run less than a week earlier.

“This has been a horrific week for the city of Memphis,” Police Director Cerelyn “CJ” Davis said.

Authorities offered no explanation Thursday of a possible motive. Nor did they say how Kelly managed to obtain the gun or guns used in the attacks.

The shootings shut down much of the city, and police warned people to shelter in place. The minor-league Memphis Redbirds cleared the field during a game. Friends and relatives frantically called and texted each other, and TV stations cut into regular programming with updates.

Police said the first victim was killed more than 15 hours before the other shootings occurred.

Just before 1 a.m. Wednesday, at least three witnesses saw Kelly fatally shoot Dewayne Tunstall in the head outside a home in east Memphis, according to a police affidavit. It said Kelly pulled Tunstall to the side, then during their conversation drew a handgun and fired several shots.

Marcus Cash, a close friend and business partner of Tunstall's, came running after he heard the gunshots from his home. One round pierced the window of his child's bedroom.

When he saw Tunstall's body, he laid down in anguish beside the man who had been like a brother. Cash said he was so distraught that police held him as a precaution for several hours to give him time to calm down.

Asked what he told police, Cash said: “You all better catch him before I do.”

The second shooting came hours later at about 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, when officers found a man dead from multiple gunshot wounds inside a vehicle, according to police. A woman who had been shot in the leg was discovered minutes later, still alive.

More shootings were reported over the next 4 1/2 hours. During that time, police received a tip at about 6 p.m. that the suspect was livestreaming himself and threatening to hurt people, Davis said.

In one clip from the video, the suspect casually speaks to the camera before opening the door to an AutoZone store and shooting someone inside with what appeared to be a pistol. That man was taken to a hospital in critical condition.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 53 of 77

In another, a man narrates himself driving — “green light, green light” — and sings “no faking.” At one point, he fires two rapid bursts of gunfire from the driver’s window. Referring to police, he says he’s going to “go down to the valley, shoot it out with them in the valley.”

Three more shootings and two carjackings followed after police sent an alert warning people to be on the lookout for the suspect.

Police said Kelly killed a woman as he took her SUV, then shot and wounded a man nearby. The final victim, another woman, was found dead about an hour later, just before 9 p.m.

Kelly drove across the state line into neighboring Southaven, Mississippi, where he committed another carjacking at gunpoint but left the driver uninjured, police said.

Officers quickly spotted the stolen Dodge Challenger on Interstate 55. Kelly was arrested after he crashed during a high-speed chase, Davis said. Two guns were found in the vehicle.

It was not immediately known Thursday whether Kelly had an attorney.

One of the gunman’s victims, Allison Parker, was a medical assistant with three children, said Debbie Holland, Parker’s mother-in-law. Holland said her grandchildren now have no parents, since their father died a couple of years ago.

“She was beautiful, intelligent, kindhearted, giving — she would help anybody who asked,” Holland said of Parker. “She didn’t deserve to die at the hands of this monster.”

Facebook parent company Meta said Thursday that it removed the suspect’s livestream before Memphis police sent their initial alert, but the company declined to say for how long the live video was streaming. The company said it also removed the suspect’s Facebook account and has continuously removed content such as copies of the video or messages praising the attack.

Memphis has been shaken by several high-profile killings in recent weeks, including the shooting of a pastor during a daylight carjacking in her driveway, the shooting of an activist during an argument over money and the slaying of jogger Eliza Fletcher following her abduction near the University of Memphis.

Mayor Jim Strickland told reporters he was outraged that Kelly had been released early from prison in March after pleading guilty last year to aggravated assault charges.

“This is no way for us to live, and it is not acceptable,” said Strickland, who later pounded the podium as he demanded accountability. He added: “If Mr. Kelly served his full three-year sentence, he would still be in prison today, and four of our fellow citizens would still be alive.”

In February 2020, Kelly, then 17, was charged as an adult with attempted first-degree murder and other crimes in two shootings committed a few hours apart. Both victims survived but didn’t cooperate with prosecutors, according to court records, and Kelly pleaded guilty to reduced charges of aggravated assault in April 2021.

Kelly was sentenced to three years in prison, but was released in March after serving just over two years behind bars, including credit he received for time he was jailed prior to his plea.

Months before his release, Kelly was denied parole in September 2021. He told the Tennessee Board of Parole that he had an “anger management problem,” according to a recording of his parole hearing, and that he was taking medication to help with nightmares.

Strickland thanked legislators for passing Tennessee’s so-called “truth in sentencing” law this year. The statute, which took effect after Kelly was freed, requires inmates to serve entire sentences for certain violent felonies.

The area’s top prosecutor, Shelby County District Attorney Steve Mulroy, is a fellow Democrat who was elected in August after arguing against the sentencing law, saying it drives up prison costs without reducing crime. Mulroy said there was no tension Thursday between him and the mayor.

“Both of us think that all these cases, including the tragic incidents from last night, need to be dealt with strongly,” said Mulroy, who played no role in Kelly’s prior prosecution and sentencing. “The public policy debate can be discussed another day.”

Q&A: John Legend talks still proving his musical relevance

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 54 of 77

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr. AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — John Legend may have multiple Grammys and achieved the rare EGOT status, but the prolific singer still feels the need to prove himself.

That's one of the reasons Legend cut back on traveling early last year to devote more time toward the writing process of his self-titled eighth studio album, "Legend," which releases Friday. It's the first double album project of Legend's extraordinary career, which achieved new heights in 2018 when he became the first Black man to win an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony Award.

After all his accolades, Legend still feels motivated to deliver fresh content about his joys of life, him being inspired by wife Chrissy Teigen and heartbreak after their pregnancy loss a couple years ago. His new album — executive produced by OneRepublic's Ryan Tedder — features several guest appearances including Jazmine Sullivan, Jhené Aiko, Muni Long, JID, Ty Dolla \$ign and Rick Ross.

In a recent interview with The Associated Press, Legend spoke about his reluctance to make a double album, a potential EP with Ross, Las Vegas residency relevance and being nervously excited after Teigen announced she was pregnant last month.

Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: How does feel to be pregnant again after the unfortunate loss of Jack in 2020?

LEGEND: We're excited. I think whenever you lose a pregnancy, your optimism is a little more guarded the next time. But we feel good. We feel excited, and we can't wait to welcome our baby into the world. You know, we have so much fun being parents together and our kids bring so much light into our lives. We're looking forward to another one doing the same thing.

AP: Chrissy talked about being nervous before making the announcement on social media. How did you both navigate everything?

LEGEND: She was going to start to be visibly pregnant. Either you tell people or you just stay in the house and try to hide for quite a long time, which seemed like an untenable way to go. We felt like we should tell people at some point. It's tough to figure out when the right time is, but sooner or later, people are going to start to see it. We felt like we wanted to control the narrative and tell people when we were ready to.

AP: What made you want to do a double album?

LEGEND: I've never done a double album before, and I was always reluctant because it's a lot of material for a fan to digest. But these are separate albums, with different moods.

A lot of this album is joyful, celebratory, fun, and sexy. But particularly on the second disc, we talk a little bit more about what it feels like to struggle and try to come back from a struggle, what it feels like to deal with challenges and how you make it through that together. Some of those songs are written as songs of comfort, as we were dealing with some tough circumstances in our lives.

AP: For this album, how did Chrissy inspire your music?

LEGEND: Quite a few of the songs are inspired by Chrissy. But also, I want them to be songs that you can dedicate to the women in your lives. Whenever I'm writing songs that are inspired by my own life and my own love and my own family, I want it to feel like you can find a way to apply that to your own life. I think particularly when I'm seeing the miracle of pregnancy and childbirth and all those things and knowing how difficult it is for someone carrying a pregnancy, you must marvel at the women in our lives and give them the honor that they're due.

AP: How was it working with Ryan Tedder as your executive producer?

LEGEND: Both of us grew up in the church, and both of us grew up with that as our foundation. But he's more in the pop rock world and I've been more obviously in the soul and hip-hop world with a little bit of pop. I think because we're different, our skills and our sensibilities complement each other well. I'm dealing with a certain palette and a certain set of references, and he is, too. When we bring it together, it's an interesting chemistry and it works well.

AP: How important is collaboration for you?

LEGEND: It's been a part of my music life since the beginning. It was always about collaboration. A lot of it was with hip-hop artists, particularly with Rick Ross. I made more songs with him — either him featured

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 55 of 77

on my project or me featured on his — than any other artists. We're different, but we sync up very well. The kind of beats that we both like. That soulful kind of lush soundscape that we like. We even talked about doing an EP together or something like that. But if you put all the songs together that we've done, it would be pretty much a whole album by now.

AP: You, Usher, Bruno Mars and other big artists have had a residency in Las Vegas. How has the perception of Vegas changed for major acts over the years?

LEGEND: I think people used to look at it as kind of like this is your swan song. This is your retirement residency. But I think of late you really see a lot of artists still in their prime doing it. Some of my favorite artists like Usher, Bruno, Anderson .Paak and so many great kinds of younger artists, but still with enough repertoire to sustain the show are doing it. I think it's a great way in the middle of our careers to say we're so grateful for everything that has come before us. We're going to celebrate that. But also, I've been previewing songs from the new album as well. It's like looking back but also previewing what's to come.

AP: After achieving EGOT status, what keeps you driven?

LEGEND: I don't think about awards as accomplishments I'm trying to achieve. I think about every album and every project that I make that I must prove myself to my fans. I have to prove myself to the world every single time, so I don't take anything for granted. I don't rest on my previous accomplishments. I must prove myself with the music with the creativity and the product that we give people. If we don't do that, then I'll just be kind of a forgotten artist. A has been. I want to keep proving myself to them every single time.

Utah rep. told Mormon bishop not to report abuse, docs show

By MICHAEL REZENDES and JASON DEAREN Associated Press

A Utah lawmaker and prominent attorney for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints advised a church bishop not to report a confession of child sex abuse to authorities, a decision that allowed the abuse to continue for years, according to records filed in a lawsuit.

The records — two pages from a log of calls fielded by a law firm representing the church and the deposition of a church official — show that Utah Republican State Rep. Merrill F. Nelson took the initial call from a bishop reporting that church member Paul Adams had sexually abused his daughters. Nelson also had multiple conversations over a two-year span with two bishops who knew of the abuse, the records show.

Nelson is a conservative lawmaker who was elected to the Utah House of Representatives in 2013 and announced his retirement earlier this year. He was also a lawyer with the Salt Lake City firm Kirton McConkie, which represents the church. He earned his undergraduate and law degree from church-owned Brigham Young University.

A transcript of the deposition and excerpts of the call log were attached to a legal filing in the Arizona Court of Appeals made by lawyers for the plaintiffs. Three of Adams's children are battling the church, widely known as the Mormon church, for access to records the church insists are confidential. The church took the case to the Court of Appeals after a Cochise County judge ruled in favor of the victims.

According to the plaintiff's legal filing, Nelson advised Bishop John Herrod not to report the abuse and told him "that he could be sued if he reported, and the instruction by counsel not to report Paul to the authorities was the law in Arizona and had nothing to do with Church doctrine." But Arizona's child sex abuse reporting law grants blanket legal immunity to anyone reporting child sex abuse or neglect.

The AP reported in August that Adams confessed to Herrod in 2010 that he sexually abused his daughter, identified as MJ.

The church's lawyers have said Herrod, and later bishop Robert "Kim" Mauzy, legally withheld information about MJ's abuse under the state's clergy-penitent privilege. Arizona law generally requires clergy members to report child neglect and sexual abuse but allows them to withhold information obtained during a spiritual confession.

The log of calls filed in the Arizona Court of Appeals shows that Nelson spoke with Herrod and Mauzy multiple times from November of 2011 to February of 2014, a period during which Adams was excommu-

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 56 of 77

nicated. Mauzy presided over a 2013 church disciplinary process after which Adams was expelled.

Although the log doesn't detail the subject of those communications, Roger Van Komen, manager of the church's southeast region family services department, said in a deposition also included with the filing that Nelson discussed the case with Herrod.

The 2021 lawsuit alleges the church conspired to cover up Adam's sexual crimes. The one-time U.S. Border Patrol employee repeatedly raped M.J. and eventually her younger sister at their Arizona home over a period of seven years and posted videos of the abuse on the Internet.

During an interview with the AP before the new court records were filed, Nelson defended the church's actions in the Adams case and the clergy-penitent privilege. He said the church "abuse help line" that Herrod had called for advice was designed to protect children.

"I don't have all the facts, but it seems to me like it did operate as intended," he said. "The bishop called the help line and was advised no duty to report it to civil authorities. In fact, could not report because of the clergy privilege," Nelson said.

"It is intended and always has from the beginning been intended to to help victims get the help they need through social services, professional counseling, medical help, legal help, law enforcement," Nelson said.

Contacted after the new records were made public, Nelson declined further comment and asked that his previous comments be off the record. "I offer no comment on specific cases," he said.

As a lawmaker, Nelson is a genteel but deeply socially conservative, speaking out against repealing a law that banned sex outside of marriage in 2019 and unsuccessfully pushing to block changes to gender markers on birth certificates. This year, he opposed a plan to remove a marriage requirement for surrogacy arrangements.

He also has opposed legislation that would do away with the clergy-penitent privilege. "Without that assurance of secrecy, troubled people will not confide in their clergy. Secrecy is essential to the privilege," he said. "It encourages full disclosure without fear of unauthorized disclosure."

A spokesman for the church declined to comment on the plaintiff's filing.

The church established the help line in 1995 and requires bishops and other church leaders to call it before deciding whether to report the abuse to police or child welfare officials.

According to church documents, those answering the help line refer callers to church attorneys with Kirton McConkie if the allegations of abuse are serious. The attorneys then decide whether the callers should report the abuse.

Nelson, who was a shareholder at Kirton McConkie, took Herrod's first call to the help line reporting Adams's abuse, according to Van Komen's deposition. Nelson told The AP he retired from the firm, though he remains listed on its website as a member of its First Amendment and Religious Organizations section.

The AP investigation published in August found that the help line is part of a system that can easily be misused by church leaders to divert abuse accusations away from law enforcement and instead to church attorneys who may bury the problem, leaving victims in harm's way.

The AP's findings were based in part on 12,000 pages of sealed records in an unrelated child abuse suit against the church filed in West Virginia. Many of the documents describe the operation of the help line, which includes destroying all records at the end of each day

The sealed records included a list of questions that those answering the help line were to ask before referring calls to Kirton McConkie attorneys. The so-called "protocol" listed the names of several Kirton McConkie attorneys and their phone numbers, including Nelson's.

Until now, the church has said that all communications between Herrod and Mauzy and church attorneys are confidential under the attorney-client privilege. But the newly filed log provides some details of Nelson's conversations with the two bishops.

For instance, the log shows that Nelson wrote an "initial case summary" on Nov. 7, 2011 "based on a conversation" with Herrod. The log also notes a "description of legal advice," and notes additional communications with the bishop.

Federal officials arrested Adams in 2017, four years after he was excommunicated, finally stopping the abuse of MJ and her sister, with no help from the church.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 57 of 77

Adams died by suicide in custody before he could stand trial. His wife, Leizza Adams, served more than two years in state prison on child sex abuse charges. Three of their six children, including a boy who was allegedly abused, filed the lawsuit accusing the church of negligence for not reporting their abuse, and for engaging in a wider conspiracy to cover up child sex abuse.

Attorneys for the three children declined to comment on the log and their most recent court filing. In their 2021 lawsuit they referred to Kirton McConkie while accusing the church of directing a system designed to protect the church against potentially costly sexual abuse lawsuits.

"The Mormon Church implements the Helpline not for the protection and spiritual counseling of sexual abuse victims, as professed in Mormon church doctrine and literature, but for Kirton McConkie attorneys to snuff out complaints and protect the Mormon church from costly lawsuits," the lawsuit says.

US may expand monkeypox vaccine eligibility to men with HIV

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. officials are considering broadening recommendations for who gets vaccinated against monkeypox, possibly to include many men with HIV or those recently diagnosed with other sexually transmitted diseases.

Driving the discussion is a study released Thursday showing that a higher-than-expected share of monkeypox infections are in people with other sexually transmitted infections.

Dr. John T. Brooks, chief medical officer for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's monkeypox outbreak response, said the report represents a "call to action."

Brooks told The Associated Press on Thursday that he expected vaccine recommendations to expand and that "the White House, together with CDC, are working on a plan for what that will look like."

Currently, the CDC recommends the vaccine to people who are a close contact of someone who has monkeypox; people who know a sexual partner was diagnosed in the past two weeks; and gay or bisexual men who had multiple sexual partners in the last two weeks in an area with known virus spread.

Shots are also recommended for health care workers at high risk of exposure.

The vast majority of monkeypox cases are in men who have sex with men who reported close contact with an infected person during sex. But the new CDC report suggested infections in people with HIV and other STDs may be a bigger issue than previously realized.

The report looked at about 2,000 monkeypox cases from four states and four cities from mid-May to late July.

It found 38% of those with monkeypox infections had been diagnosed with HIV, far higher than their share of the population among men who have sex with men.

The study also found that 41% of monkeypox patients had been diagnosed with an STD in the preceding year. And about 10% of those patients had been diagnosed with three or more different STDs in the prior year.

There were racial differences. More than 60% of Black Americans with monkeypox had HIV, compared with 41% of Hispanic people, 28% of whites and 22% of Asians.

Jason Farley, an infectious disease expert at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, said men of color who have sex with men should be at the front of the line for monkeypox vaccine doses. Within those racial and ethnic groups, the next priority should be anyone living with HIV or was recently diagnosed with a STD, he said.

The study has several limitations, including that the data may not be nationally representative, the authors said.

Brooks said the findings could lead to vaccines being recommended for people with recent STD infections, people with HIV, people taking pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) medications to prevent HIV infection and, possibly, prostitutes.

Discussions of expanding eligibility will have to take into account supply of the two-dose vaccine. And any substantial expansion of monkeypox vaccination recommendations may also be subject to review by

CDC's outside vaccine advisers, health officials say.

Also on Thursday, the CDC sent a letter to state and local health departments that said federal funds for HIV and STD prevention can also now be used against monkeypox. Cases in the U.S. seem to be declining, officials say.

Bannon pleads not guilty in 'We Build the Wall' scheme

By MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former President Donald Trump's longtime ally Steve Bannon pleaded not guilty Thursday to duping donors who gave money to build a wall on the U.S. southern border. The case, brought by New York prosecutors, is a state-level reboot of a federal case cut short last year by a presidential pardon.

Bannon, 68, was released after his arraignment on money laundering, conspiracy, fraud and other charges related to the "We Build the Wall" campaign. He is the second person pardoned by Trump and later charged by the Manhattan district attorney's office for the same alleged conduct.

"It's all nonsense. They will never shut me up," Bannon said as he left court.

Manhattan prosecutors working in conjunction with the state attorney general's office say that although Bannon promised all donations would go to constructing the wall, he was involved in transferring hundreds of thousands of dollars to third-party entities and used them to funnel payments to two other people involved in the scheme.

The indictment didn't identify those people by name, but the details match those of Brian Kolfage and Andrew Badolato, who pleaded guilty to federal charges in April.

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg said that after Bannon was pardoned, Manhattan prosecutors decided they had to hold him accountable because the alleged scheme ripped off hundreds of Manhattan residents. The top charge against Bannon carries a maximum sentence of five to 15 years in prison.

"The simple truth is: It is a crime to profit off the backs of donors by making false pretenses," Bragg said at a news conference.

Bannon's New York charges stem from the same alleged conduct as an attempted federal prosecution that ended abruptly, before trial, when Trump pardoned Bannon on his last day in office. Manhattan prosecutors also charged WeBuildTheWall, Inc., the nonprofit entity that Bannon and his former co-defendants used to solicit donations. The company pleaded not guilty Thursday.

Presidential pardons apply only to federal crimes, not state offenses. Last year, the Manhattan district attorney's office charged Ken Kurson, a friend of Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, with cyberstalking months after Trump pardoned him in a similar federal case. Like Bannon, Kurson was pardoned early in his federal case, before acquittal or conviction, negating any double jeopardy argument.

Arriving at the Manhattan district attorney's office shortly after 9 a.m. Thursday, Bannon said it was "an irony" that New York City's mayor has been objecting to busloads of migrants sent to the city from Texas while prosecutors "are persecuting people here, that try to stop them at the border."

Bannon accused Bragg of pursuing "phony charges" against him, saying the Democratic prosecutor targeted him ahead of November's midterm elections because he and his radio show are popular among Trump's Republican supporters.

He claimed federal prosecutors had the same intent when he was first charged in August of 2020 ahead of the presidential election.

But New York Attorney General Letitia James said it was about holding "powerful political interests" to account.

"They think they are above the law. And the most egregious of them take advantage of hardworking Americans in the process. Steve Bannon stands out as a perfect example of this blatant inequality," said James, a Democrat.

In 2020, federal agents pulled Bannon from a luxury yacht off the Connecticut coast and arrested him on charges he pocketed more than \$1 million in donations to the wall-building effort. In all, more than \$25 million was raised, prosecutors said.

In that case, federal prosecutors alleged Bannon and his co-defendants capitalized on public fervor over

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 59 of 77

border security — a pillar of Trump's presidential campaign — and tricked thousands of people into thinking 100% of their donations would go to building a wall along the 1,933-mile (3,110-kilometer) U.S.-Mexico line.

Instead, according to federal prosecutors, Bannon used some of the money to pay personal expenses for himself and a secret salary to Kolfage, a "We Build the Wall" co-founder.

"All the money you give goes to building the wall," Bannon told donors at a June 2019 fundraising event, according to the New York indictment unsealed Thursday. Kolfage, who is not charged in the state case, repeatedly pledged: "I won't take a penny from these donations, not a penny," the indictment said.

Charitable organizations are allowed to pay their executives, sometimes handsomely, but must disclose that compensation in documents available to the public.

Bannon, who had pleaded not guilty to the federal charges, was dropped from the federal case when Trump pardoned him.

Kolfage, a U.S. Air Force veteran who lost both legs in a mortar attack in Iraq, and Badolato, a Florida financier, 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.

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.

A voice of nationalist, outsider conservatism, Bannon led the conservative Breitbart News before becoming chief executive officer of Trump's 2016 campaign in its critical final months. As the president's chief strategist, he was at the forefront of many of the administration's most contentious policies, including its travel ban on several majority-Muslim countries, but was pushed out after less than a year.

Queen Elizabeth II, UK's longest-serving monarch, dies at 96

By DANICA KIRKA, JILL LAWLESS and SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Queen Elizabeth II, Britain's longest-reigning monarch and a symbol of stability in a turbulent era that saw the decline of the British empire and embarrassing dysfunction in her own family, died Thursday after 70 years on the throne. She was 96.

Buckingham Palace said she died at Balmoral Castle, her summer residence in Scotland, where members of the royal family had rushed to her side after her health took a turn for the worse.

A link to the almost-vanished generation that fought World War II, she was the only monarch most Britons have ever known.

Her 73-year-old son Prince Charles automatically became king and will be known as King Charles III, his office said. Charles' second wife, Camilla, will be known as the Queen Consort.

The BBC played the national anthem, "God Save the Queen," over a portrait of her in full regalia as her death was announced, and the flag over Buckingham Palace was lowered to half-staff as the second Elizabethan age came to a close.

The impact of her loss will be huge and unpredictable, both for the nation and for the monarchy, an institution she helped stabilize and modernize across decades of enormous social change and family scandals, but whose relevance in the 21st century has often been called into question.

The changing of the guard also comes at a fraught moment for Britain, which has a new prime minister and is grappling with an energy crisis, double-digit inflation, the war in Ukraine and the fallout from Brexit.

Charles, who is nowhere near as popular as his mother, called her death "a moment of the greatest sadness for me and all members of my family."

"I know her loss will be deeply felt throughout the country, the Realms and the Commonwealth, and by countless people around the world," he added.

British Prime Minister Liz Truss, appointed by the queen just 48 hours earlier, pronounced the country "devastated" and called Elizabeth "the rock on which modern Britain was built."

Crowds gathered outside Buckingham Palace in the rain and some people wept when officials carried a notice confirming the queen's death to the gates of her London home.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 60 of 77

In Canada, where the British monarch is the country's head of state, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau saluted her "wisdom, compassion and warmth." In India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted: "She provided inspiring leadership to her nation and people. She personified dignity and decency in public life. Pained by her demise."

President Joe Biden called her a "stateswoman of unmatched dignity and constancy who deepened the bedrock alliance between the United Kingdom and the United States."

Since Feb. 6, 1952, Elizabeth reigned over a Britain that rebuilt from a ruinous war and lost its empire; joined the European Union and then left it; and made the painful transition into the 21st century. She endured through 15 prime ministers, from Winston Churchill to Truss — a fixed point and a reassuring presence even for those who ignored or loathed the monarchy.

She became less visible in her final years as age and frailty curtailed public appearances, and she used a cane after the April 2021 death of Philip, her husband of 73 years. She was hospitalized for a night for tests later that year.

But she remained firmly in control of the monarchy and at the center of national life as Britain celebrated her Platinum Jubilee in June. That same month, she became the second-longest-reigning monarch in history, behind 17th century French King Louis XIV, who took the throne at age 4.

In 1947, almost five years before becoming queen, the 21-year-old Elizabeth promised the people of Britain and the Commonwealth that "my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service."

It was a promise she kept across more than seven decades.

Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor was born in London on April 21, 1926, the first child of the Duke and Duchess of York. She was not born to be queen -- her father's elder brother, Prince Edward, was destined for the crown, to be followed by any children he had.

But in 1936, when she was 10, Edward VIII abdicated to marry twice-divorced American Wallis Simpson, and Elizabeth's father became King George VI.

Princess Margaret recalled asking her sister whether this meant that Elizabeth would one day be queen. "Yes, I suppose it does," Margaret quoted her as saying. "She didn't mention it again."

Elizabeth was barely in her teens when Britain went to war with Germany in 1939. Elizabeth and Margaret lived mostly at Windsor Castle, spending many nights in an underground bomb shelter. Eager to help the war effort, the heir to the throne joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1945, learning to drive and service heavy vehicles.

On the night the war ended in Europe, May 8, 1945, she and Margaret mingled, unrecognized, with celebrating crowds in London. She later called it "one of the most memorable nights of my life."

At Westminster Abbey in 1947 she married Royal Navy officer Philip Mountbatten, a prince of Greece and Denmark whom she had first met in 1939 when she was 13 and he 18.

Their first child, Prince Charles, was born on Nov. 14, 1948. He was followed by Princess Anne in 1950, Prince Andrew in 1960, and Prince Edward in 1964. Besides those children, she is survived by eight grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

In February 1952, George VI died after years of ill health at age 56. Elizabeth, visiting Kenya, was told she was now queen.

"In a way I didn't have an apprenticeship," Elizabeth told the BBC in 1992. "My father died much too young, and so it was all a very sudden kind of taking on, and making the best job you can."

Her coronation came over a year later at Westminster Abbey, a spectacle seen by millions through the new medium of television.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill's first reaction was that the new queen was "only a child," but he was won over within days and became an ardent admirer.

She held weekly private meetings with her prime ministers, and they generally found her well-informed, inquisitive and up to date.

Her views in those meetings became a subject of speculation and fertile ground for dramatists like Peter Morgan, author of the play "The Audience" and hit TV series "The Crown." Those semi-fictionalized accounts were the product of an era of declining deference and rising celebrity, when the royal family's

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 61 of 77

troubles became public property.

Early in her reign, Princess Margaret provoked a national controversy through her romance with a divorced man. In 1992, during what the queen called the "annus horribilis," Princess Anne was divorced, Prince Charles and Princess Diana separated, and so did Prince Andrew and his wife, Sarah. That was also the year Windsor Castle was seriously damaged by fire.

The public split of Charles and Diana was followed by the shock of her death in a Paris car crash in 1997. For once, the queen appeared out of step amid unprecedented public mourning, failing to make a public show of grief that was seen by many as unfeeling. After several days, she made a televised address to the nation.

The dent in her popularity was brief. She was by now a sort of national grandmother, with a stern gaze and a kind smile.

She was arguably the most famous person in the world. But her inner life and opinions remained mostly an enigma. The public saw only glimpses of her personality -- her joy watching horse races at Royal Ascot, or her pleasure in the companionship of her beloved Welsh corgi dogs.

In 2015, she overtook her great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria's reign of 63 years, seven months and two days to become the longest serving monarch in British history, and she kept working into her 10th decade. The loss of Philip at age 99 in 2021 was a heavy blow.

And the family troubles kept coming. Her son, Prince Andrew, was entangled in the sordid tale of sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, an American businessman who had been a friend. The queen's grandson Prince Harry walked away from Britain and royal duties after marrying American actress Meghan Markle in 2018.

As the queen entered her mid-90s, she had what the palace called "mobility issues." In May, she asked Charles to stand in for her at the State Opening of Parliament, one of the monarch's key constitutional duties.

On Sept. 6, she presided at a ceremony at Balmoral Castle to accept the resignation of Boris Johnson as prime minister and appoint Truss as his successor.

As Britons endured loss, isolation and uncertainty during the coronavirus pandemic, she made a rare video address in 2020 that urged people to stick together, summoning the spirit of World War II and echoing Vera Lynn's wartime anthem, "We'll Meet Again."

"We should take comfort that while we may have more still to endure, better days will return. We will be with our friends again. We will be with our families again. We will meet again," she said.

Retailers pull lobster from menus after 'red list' warning

By PATRICK WHITTLE Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — Some retailers are taking lobster off the menu after an assessment from an influential conservation group that the harvest of the seafood poses too much of a risk to rare whales and should be avoided.

Whales can suffer injuries and fatalities when they become entangled in the gear that connects to lobster traps on the ocean floor. Seafood Watch, which rates the sustainability of different seafoods, said this week it has added the American and Canadian lobster fisheries to its "red list" of species to avoid.

The organization, based at Monterey Bay Aquarium in California, said in a report that the fishing industry is a danger to North Atlantic right whales because "current management measures do not go far enough to mitigate entanglement risks and promote recovery of the species."

Thousands of businesses use Seafood Watch's recommendations to inform seafood buying decisions, and many have pledged to avoid any items that appear on the red list. A spokesperson for Blue Apron, the New York meal kit retailer, said the company stopped offering a seasonal lobster box prior to the report, and all of the seafood it is currently using follows Seafood Watch's guidelines. HelloFresh, the Germany-based meal kit company that is the largest such company operating in the U.S., also pledged shortly after the announcement to stop selling lobster.

"HelloFresh is committed to responsible sourcing and follows guidelines from the Monterey Bay Aquarium

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 62 of 77

Seafood Watch program," said Saskia Leisewitz, a spokesperson for HelloFresh.

Seafood Watch assigns ratings of "best choice," "good alternative" and "avoid" to more than 2,000 seafood items based on how sustainably they are managed. The organization's recommendations have been influential in the past, such as when it red-listed the Louisiana shrimp fishery, prompting efforts to better protect sea turtles. The fishery was later removed from the red list.

The lobster fishing industry has come under scrutiny from Seafood Watch because of the threat of entanglement in fishing gear. The North Atlantic right whales number less than 340 and entanglement is one of the two biggest threats they face, along with collisions with ships, scientists with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other groups have said. The population of the giant animals, which were decimated during the commercial whaling era generations ago, has fallen in recent years.

Members of the lobster fishing industry, which is also coping with increased federal fishing restrictions to protect the whales, pushed back against the Seafood Watch rating. The lobster industry in Maine, where most of the U.S.'s lobster comes to land, has not had a documented interaction with a right whale in almost two decades, said Patrice McCarron, executive director of the Maine Lobstermen's Association.

"Lobster is one of the most sustainable fisheries in the world due to the effective stewardship practices handed down through generations of lobstermen. These include strict protections for both the lobster resource and right whales," McCarron said.

American and Canadian lobster fishermen target the same species, the American lobster, which is popular as live seafood and in processed products such as lobster rolls and lobster ravioli. The vast majority of the world's American lobster comes to the shore in New England and eastern Canada, and the crustaceans are both a key piece of the economy and a cultural marker in both places.

The U.S. lobster fishery is also one of the most lucrative in the country and was worth more than \$900 million at the docks in 2021, when fishermen caught more than 130 million pounds (59 million kilograms) of the crustaceans.

Seafood Watch partners with numerous major seafood buyers on its recommendations. Some of the buyers, such as Compass Group and Cheesecake Factory, did not respond to requests for comment from The Associated Press. A spokesperson for one, Mars Petcare, said the company doesn't have lobster in its supply chain.

Environmental groups said Seafood Watch's decision places a spotlight on the fishery and the need to do more to protect whales.

"Fishery managers must increase protections to save North Atlantic right whales so seafood retailers, consumers, and restaurants can put American lobster and crab back on the menu," Oceana campaign director Gib Brogan said.

Ukraine energy chief: Russia trying to 'steal' nuclear plant

By HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The head of Ukraine's atomic energy operator accused Russia on Thursday of trying to "steal" Europe's largest nuclear plant by cutting it off from the Ukrainian electricity grid and leaving it on the brink of a radiation disaster.

The Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant has been without an outside source of electricity since Monday and receives power for its own safety systems from the only one of its six reactors that remains operational, Enerhoatom chief Petro Kotin told The Associated Press.

"We are trying to keep this unit running as much as possible, but eventually it will have to be shut down and then the station will switch to diesel generators," he said, adding that such generators are "the station's last defense before a radiation accident."

Ukraine and Russia have traded blame for shelling that has damaged parts of the plant as well as the transmission lines that connect it to Ukraine's electricity network and provide power for the crucial cooling systems that are needed to prevent a meltdown.

The head of the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency, Rafael Grossi, warned the U.N. Security

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 63 of 77

Council this week that "something very, very catastrophic could take place" at the plant and urged Russia and Ukraine to establish a "nuclear safety and security protection zone" around it.

Kotin said the Russians "have a crazy idea to switch the ZNPP to the Russian power system; in fact they are trying to steal the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant of Ukraine and steal all the electricity it produces."

He said the Russians gave the plant management a 10-page plan about three or four weeks ago to connect the plant to the electricity grid in Crimea, which Russia seized from Ukraine in 2014.

On the same day, the Russians started shelling the power lines that connect the plant to the Ukrainian grid, and on Monday, the last line was cut, Kotin said.

This left the plant in "island mode," meaning it receives power from its only operational reactor, a highly unusual and unstable way of operating a nuclear plant that he said shouldn't last for more than two hours but has now been in effect for more than three days.

"At any moment, the unit can be stopped completely, and after that, the only power source for the entire nuclear plant will be a diesel generator," he said. While there are 20 generators on site, "if one of these diesel generators fails, the consequences can be very deplorable and bad for the radiation danger of the ZNPP."

Kotin said the plant has enough diesel fuel for 10 days. After that, about 200 tons of diesel fuel would need to be brought in daily for the generators, which he said was "impossible" while the plant was occupied by Russian forces.

He said connecting the plant to the Russian grid also was practically impossible given the hostilities in the area.

"There is no other solution than the de-occupation of the ZNPP, the transfer of the plant to the control of the Ukrainian side or international security organizations," Kotin told AP.

The ZNPP was seized by Russian forces early in the war but is still run by Ukrainian engineers, who Kotin said are working under heavy psychological pressures.

"I can say that most of the people who work there are pro-Ukrainian. Anyone who openly expressed this pro-Ukrainian position was grabbed, abused, beaten," he said.

Meanwhile, fighting continued near the plant as the towns of Nikopol and Marhanets, which face the plant across the Dnieper River, came under Russian shelling overnight that left apartment buildings, a school, some industrial facilities and power lines damaged, Dnipropetrovsk province Gov. Valentyn Reznichenko said.

"The nuclear threat isn't abating because of Russia's mad actions and we need to consider all possible scenarios, including the worst one," Reznichenko said in televised remarks.

Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk urged residents of Russian-occupied areas near the power plant to evacuate, adding that Ukrainian authorities have urged the Russians to set up humanitarian corridors to evacuate residents but received no response.

In the northeastern Kharkiv region, Ukrainian forces retook portions of Russian-held territory there as a Ukrainian counteroffensive in the south drained some of Moscow's resources in the area, according to a report released Wednesday.

Ukrainian forces in the Kharkiv region are "likely exploiting Russian force reallocation" to areas near the occupied city of Kherson in the south "to conduct an opportunistic yet highly effective counteroffensive" in the province, the Washington-based think tank Institute for the Study of War said.

Ukrainian forces likely used "tactical surprise" to advance at least 12 miles (20 kilometers) into Russian-held territory in the Kharkiv region on Wednesday, recapturing approximately 155 square miles (400 square kilometers), the report said.

Brig. Gen. Oleksiy Gromov, the head of the main operational department of the Ukrainian military's General Staff, said at a briefing Thursday that Ukrainian troops had reclaimed control of over 20 settlements in the Kharkiv region and forged up to 30 miles (50 kilometers) deep into Russian-occupied areas this week.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Thursday said Balakliya, a city of 25,000 and an important railroad junction, was one of the communities Ukrainian forces have recaptured.

"Everything is in its place. The flag of Ukraine in a free Ukrainian city under a free Ukrainian sky!" he said on the Telegram messaging app.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 64 of 77

The gains came as Ukraine continued to mount a counteroffensive in the southern Kherson region.

IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

— Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan expressed agreement on Thursday with Russian President Vladimir Putin's complaint that most of the grain from Ukraine's reopened ports have gone to richer parts of the world. Putin said this week that practically all of the grain exported from Ukraine under a deal brokered by Ankara and the United Nations that lifted Russia's blockade on Ukrainian ports had gone to European Union nations instead of poorer countries. Speaking in Zagreb, Croatia, on the last day of his three-day Balkan tour, Erdogan said Turkey wished for the grain "to be delivered to really poor countries," and urged that the shipment of food and fertilizers from Russia to begin soon.

— The chief of the Ukrainian military, Gen. Valerii Zaluzhnyy, acknowledged in an article that explosions and fires at air bases in the Russian-annexed Crimean Peninsula last month were caused by a "successful series of rocket strikes on Crimean air bases." It marked the first official acknowledgement of responsibility for the attacks by Ukrainian authorities.

Camilla becomes queen, but without the sovereign's powers

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — After seven decades, the United Kingdom has a new woman to call queen.

Charles' wife, Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall, will be known as Queen Consort — a title that came with Queen Elizabeth II's blessing after years of contention, dating back to the days before she even married Prince Charles.

It wasn't always a given that the 75-year-old Camilla would take the title, even though it gives her none of the sovereign's powers.

While the wife of a king is traditionally crowned queen, the question of what title Camilla would hold when Charles became king had been a tricky one for many years. That was due to sensitivity about her status as his second wife — and the wave of grief that washed over Britain following the death of his former wife, Princess Diana, in a car crash in 1997.

Charles and the royal household have moved carefully on the matter, mindful of lingering public perceptions of Camilla as the "third person" that ruined the marriage between Charles and the beloved princess.

But over the decades, Camilla has won over large parts of the British public with her discretion, down-to-earth personality and loyalty to her husband.

When Camilla and Charles married in a low-key civil ceremony in 2005, she was in fact the new Princess of Wales — Diana's title — but she styled herself the Duchess of Cornwall instead.

Palace officials said for years that Camilla "intended" to be known as "Princess Consort" — instead of the traditional "Queen Consort" — when Charles acceded to the throne.

There is no precedent for the title Princess Consort, which was reportedly suggested by royal officials. The similar title of Prince Consort has only been used once — for Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, who reigned from 1837 to 1901.

In a 2010 interview with NBC, Charles was asked if Camilla would become "Queen of England, if and when you become the monarch." He hesitated as he replied, "That's, well ... We'll see, won't we? That could be."

The question was resolved when Elizabeth declared she wanted Camilla to be known as Queen Consort after her son became king. It was an endorsement that formally signified the royal family's acceptance of Camilla as a respected senior member and was widely seen as a move by Elizabeth to pave a smooth transition to Charles' reign.

"When, in the fullness of time, my son Charles becomes king, I know you will give him and his wife, Camilla, the same support that you have given me; and it is my sincere wish that, when that time comes, Camilla will be known as Queen Consort as she continues her own loyal service," Elizabeth said in February 2022, when she marked the 70th anniversary of her rule.

Charles said he and Camilla were "deeply conscious of the honor."

"As we have sought together to serve and support Her Majesty and the people of our communities, my

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 65 of 77

darling wife has been my own steadfast support throughout," he said.

The most recent Queen Consort in British history was George VI's wife Queen Elizabeth, known in later years as the Queen Mother after her daughter became monarch in 1952.

By custom, Camilla will be anointed at Charles' coronation, although that could be omitted.

Born Camilla Rosemary Shand on July 17, 1947, she came from aristocrats with long and close links with Britain's royal family. Her great-grandmother, Alice Keppel, was a romantic partner of King Edward VII.

She met Charles at a polo match in 1970 when she was 23 and he was considered to be the most eligible bachelor in Britain. The two immediately became close, and by the end of 1972, Charles was smitten. But the romance was interrupted by his eight months of naval duty.

In his absence, Camilla married her longtime boyfriend, army officer Andrew Parker Bowles, in 1973. The couple divorced in 1995, shortly after Charles gave an explosive television interview admitting an affair with Camilla. Charles and Diana divorced the next year.

Charles and Camilla waited another nine years, marrying in 2005 in a private ceremony at the Guildhall in Windsor.

Since then, Camilla has taken up dozens of royal duties. She is patron or president of more than 90 charities, and has shown particular interest in work on animals, promoting literacy and empowering women. She also has found her voice as a public speaker, earning respect by campaigning about difficult issues such as sexual violence against women and domestic abuse.

In 2021, she delivered what many called her landmark speech, urging "the men in our lives" to get involved in women's rights and expressing sympathy for the families of women who are murdered.

The same year, Buckingham Palace underlined Camilla's role as a senior royal by making her a Royal Lady of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, the most senior order of chivalry in Britain.

What to know about U.K. accession rules after queen's death

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

The British monarchy's rules state that "a new sovereign succeeds to the throne as soon as his or her predecessor dies."

That means Queen Elizabeth II's eldest son, Prince Charles, became king immediately upon her death.

However, it may be months or even longer before Charles' formal coronation. In Elizabeth's case, her coronation came on June 2, 1953 -- 16 months after her accession on Feb. 6, 1952, when her father, King George VI, died.

A look at the formalities that take place after Charles accedes to the throne:

— Within 24 hours of a monarch's death, a new sovereign is proclaimed formally as soon as possible at St. James's Palace in London by the "Accession Council." This is made up of officials from the Privy Council, which includes senior Cabinet ministers, judges and leaders of the Church of England, who are summoned to the palace for the meeting.

— Parliament is then recalled for lawmakers to take their oaths of allegiance to the new monarch.

— The new monarch will swear an oath before the Privy Council in St. James's Palace to maintain the Church of Scotland, according to the Act of Union of 1707.

— The proclamation of the new sovereign is then publicly read out at St. James's Palace, as well as in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast -- the capital cities of the four nations that make up the United Kingdom.

— Charles must declare to Parliament on the first day of its session following the accession, or at the coronation, whichever is first, that he is a faithful Protestant. The oath is mandated by the Accession Declaration Act of 1910.

— He must also take a coronation oath as prescribed by the Coronation Oath Act of 1689, the Act of Settlement of 1701 and the Accession Declaration Act.

— He must be in communion with the Church of England, a flexible rule which allowed King George I and King George II to reign even though they were Lutherans.

Study: Four major climate tipping points close to triggering

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

Even if the world somehow manages to limit future warming to the strictest international temperature goal, four Earth-changing climate “tipping points” are still likely to be triggered with a lot more looming as the planet heats more after that, a new study said.

An international team of scientists looked at 16 climate tipping points — when a warming side effect is irreversible, self-perpetuating and major — and calculated rough temperature thresholds at which they are triggered. None of them are considered likely at current temperatures, though a few are possible. But with only a few more tenths of a degree of warming from now, at 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) warming since pre-industrial times, four move into the likely range, according to a study in Thursday’s journal *Science*.

The study said slow but irreversible collapse of the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets, more immediate loss of tropical coral reefs around the globe and thawing of high northern permafrost that releases massive amounts of greenhouse gases trapped in now frozen land are four significant tipping points that could be triggered at 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming, which is three-tenths of a degree (half a degree Fahrenheit) warmer than now. Current policies and actions put Earth on a trajectory for about 2.7 degrees Celsius (4.9 degrees Fahrenheit) of warming since pre-industrial times, according to some projections.

“Let’s hope we’re not right,” said study co-author Tim Lenton, an Earth systems scientist at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom. “There’s a distinct chance some of these tipping points are going to be unavoidable. And therefore it’s really important we do some more thinking about how we’re going to adapt to the consequences.”

Timing is a key issue for tipping points in two ways: when they become triggered and when they cause harm. And in many cases, such as ice sheet collapses, they could be triggered soon but their impacts even though inevitable take centuries to play out, scientists said. A few, such as the loss of coral reefs, cause more harm in only a decade or two.

“It’s a future generation issue,” said study lead author David Armstrong McKay, a University of Exeter Earth systems scientist. “That ice sheets collapsing is kind of that thousand-year timescale, but it’s still bequeathing an entirely different planet to our descendants.”

The concept of tipping points have been around for more than a decade but this study goes further looking at temperature thresholds for when they may be triggered and what impacts they would have on people and Earth and in the past 15 years or so “the risk levels just keep going up,” Lenton said.

Lenton likes to think of tipping points like someone leaning back on a folding chair.

“When you start tipping over backwards you have in that case a very simple kind of feedback on the forces of gravity operating on propelling you backwards until SPLAT,” Lenton said.

Study co-author Johan Rockstrom, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany, likened it to someone lighting a fuse on a bomb “and then the fuse will burn up until the big bang and the big bang may be further down the line.”

While the ice sheets with several meters or yards of potential sea rise can reshape coastline over centuries, Rockstrom said to him the loss of coral reefs is his biggest concern because of the “immediate impacts on human livelihoods.” Hundreds of millions of people, especially poorer tropical area residents, depend on fisheries linked to the coral reefs, McKay said.

With just a few more tenths of a degree new tipping points become more possible and even likely that includes a slow down of northern polar ocean circulation that can ripple into dramatic weather changes especially in Europe, loss of certain areas of Arctic sea ice, glaciers collapsing worldwide and utter failure of the Amazon rain forest.

Some of these tipping points, like the permafrost thaw, add to and accelerate existing warming, but don’t think “it’s game over” if temperatures hit 1.5 degrees of warming, which is quite likely, McKay said.

“Even if we do hit some of those tipping points, it will still lock in really substantial impacts we want to avoid, but it doesn’t trigger some sort of runaway climate change process,” McKay said. “That’s not the

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 67 of 77

case at 1.5 degrees. And that means that how much further warming occurs beyond 1.5 is still mostly within our power to effect."

That's a crucial point that these are tipping points for individual regional disasters not the planet as a whole, so it's bad, but not world ending, said climate scientist Zeke Hausfather of the tech company Stripe and Berkeley Earth, who wasn't part of the study, but said it was important nuanced research that quantified tipping points better than before.

"Have we really contemplated what happens when you mess with our global and ecological systems to that degree?" said University of Miami climate risk scientist Katharine Mach, who wasn't part of the study. She said it shows ripples and cascades that are troublesome. "This is a profound reason for concern in a changing climate."

Support of false election claims runs deep in 2022 GOP field

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

Nearly 1 in 3 Republican candidates for statewide offices that play a role in overseeing, certifying or defending elections supported overturning the results of the 2020 presidential race, according to an Associated Press review.

They include contenders from one end of the country to the other, often in pivotal swing states, for positions that are the linchpins of democracy.

In Michigan, Kristina Karamo, a community college professor who signed an affidavit to a lawsuit seeking to throw out President Joe Biden's win, is running to be the state's top elections official. In Arizona, GOP candidates for the three top statewide offices all backed setting aside Biden's victory in their state.

The breadth of election denial among Republicans is a reminder of the grip that Donald Trump has on the party. As the midterm primary season reaches its conclusion next week, Trump has wielded the power of his endorsement with great effect, lifting candidates who parrot his conspiracy theories while largely sidelining those who accepted the legitimacy of Biden's election.

That's raising the stakes for the November vote, particularly for contests that play a vital role in validating election results and ensuring peaceful transfers of power. Governors, for instance, often confirm the results of presidential elections. Most secretaries of state oversee their state's election system. Attorneys general have the power to defend their state's elections or investigate claims of wrongdoing.

Of the 86 Republican candidates vying for those positions in 37 states in the fall, one-third have echoed Trump's lies about widespread fraud costing him reelection, according to the AP review. Only 40% would directly say Biden was legitimately elected.

"The ball is still in the voters' court," said Tammy Patrick, a former Arizona election official who works at Democracy Fund, which advocates for election access. "Depending on who they vote for in November, that may not be the case in the future."

There is no evidence of any widespread fraud or manipulation of voting machines in the 2020 election, underscored by repeated audits, court cases and the conclusions of Trump's own Department of Justice.

The prevalence of candidates who insist otherwise has fueled fears of state officials in 2024 trying to award presidential electors to a candidate who did not win them. But it could also cause disruption and distrust in thousands of other down-ballot races across the country.

Trump's falsehoods propelled the attack on the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Many of the most aggressive candidates see themselves as part of a movement to uncover a grand election conspiracy they blame for Trump's loss.

"We have a fight on our hands," Arizona state Rep. Mark Finchem, the GOP nominee for secretary of state who was at the Jan. 6 protests, told a gathering of several dozen election skeptics in Omaha, Nebraska late last month. "The establishment and the Democrats want to do everything they can to subvert our elections."

That's become an article of faith with much of the Republican electorate. An Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research from 2021 showed that 2 out of every 3 GOP voters believe Biden was

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 68 of 77

not legitimately elected president.

Now, in all but one of the battleground states that decided the 2020 race, there is a Republican candidate on the ticket who, like Finchem, has suggested overturning the Democrat's win. The exception is Georgia, where the GOP incumbents beat back a slate of challengers Trump supported to punish them for not awarding the state to him rather than Biden, the actual winner.

In Pennsylvania, state Sen. Doug Mastriano, the Republican nominee for governor, attended the Jan. 6 rally near the White House shortly before the riot and arranged for buses to bring others from his state who wanted to stop Congress from certifying Biden's victory.

In Wisconsin, Trump-endorsed businessman Tim Michels, who is running for governor, said he is open to exploring how to decertify Biden's win in the state — something lawyers say is legally impossible.

In Michigan, the Republican candidates for governor, secretary of state and attorney general have all repeated Trump's election lies.

"If even one or two of these people win, we're in a full-blown constitutional crisis," said Ellen Kurz, a Democrat whose group, iVote, is involved in the swing state secretary of state races.

Other experts on voting are alarmed but warn against panic.

"I don't want to give them more power than they actually have to undermine us and our faith in the election process," said Sylvia Albert, director of voting and elections for Common Cause, a nonpartisan organization that advocates for expanded voter access. "We have a huge infrastructure with thousands of election officials and checks and balance. In places where there are bad intentions to harm voters, we are all working to ensure those don't happen."

The candidates' views are important in the key presidential states because a governor or secretary of state with a record of not respecting the actual vote count could introduce chaos into the selection of the next president. Some of the statewide candidates are likely to win in November because they are running in overwhelmingly Republican states.

That includes former U.S. Rep. Raul Labrador, the GOP nominee for attorney general in Idaho, and Alabama state Rep. Wes Allen, the nominee for secretary of state. Both candidates said they would have signed onto a 2020 Texas lawsuit to overturn Biden's win. That case was swiftly thrown out by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In Wyoming, state Rep. Chuck Gray, who won last month's GOP primary for secretary of state, faces no opponent from the Democratic Party or any other group in November in a state that Trump won by 43 percentage points. Gray has repeated Trump's lies about 2020 being "rigged," traveled to Arizona to watch a partisan review of ballots that was derided as deeply flawed and proposed additional regular election audits in Wyoming.

In response to Gray's likely ascension, a committee of the Wyoming Legislature late last month voted to draft a bill that would remove the secretary of state from overseeing the state's elections. Dan Zwonitzer, the Republican co-chairman of the committee, said in an interview that it's likely the Legislature cannot finish the effort this year, but may be forced to consider it in the future.

"It's a little bit of a reaction to the gut punch the state took," Zwonitzer said, noting that the government has been holding numerous open forums and demonstrations of its vote counting to assure the public it's secure.

The pushback in Wyoming is a reminder of that, as Trump has tried to make denial of the 2020 election results a litmus test in his party, many Republican elected officials have refused to go along.

"Democracy is not a partisan issue," said Thania Sanchez of States United Action, an organization tracking candidates who deny the 2020 outcome and are running for statewide office. "A lot of Republicans have been consistent about not spreading the lies about the 2020 election."

Sanchez noted that most statewide GOP incumbents did not outright deny the 2020 outcome or use their positions to try to overturn the election. Many faced primary challengers this year, as in Georgia, but Trump's movement knocked out incumbents in only two races — the Idaho attorney general primary and in Indiana's secretary of state race, where Diego Morales won the nomination at the state Republican

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 69 of 77

Party convention after repeating Trump's fraud claims.

The movement had its greatest success in races for open seats, such as Gray in Wyoming or the race for secretary of state in Nevada. A Republican who defended the 2020 election result was prevented by term limits from seeking reelection, and GOP voters then nominated Jim Marchant, who says he would not have certified Biden's win in Nevada.

Rory McShane is a political strategist who advised both candidates and worked for a coalition of like-minded skeptics of the 2020 result who are running for secretary of state; Marchant founded that group.

McShane said candidates such as Gray and Marchant are being maligned.

"If you criticize or talk about election security, they ostracize you and try to throw you out of the mainstream conversation," McShane said. "That leaves Republicans two choices — to run milquetoast candidates or run candidates willing to stand up to the mainstream media."

European Central Bank makes largest-ever interest rate hike

By DAVID McHUGH AP Business Writer

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — The European Central Bank made its largest-ever interest rate increase Thursday, following the U.S. Federal Reserve and other central banks in a global stampede of rapid rate hikes meant to snuff out the inflation that is squeezing consumers and pushing Europe toward recession.

The bank's governing council raised its key benchmarks by an unprecedented three-quarters of a percentage point for the 19 countries that use the euro currency. The ECB usually moves rates by a quarter-point and had not raised its key bank lending rate by three-quarters of a point since the euro's launch in 1999.

Bank President Christine Lagarde said the ECB would keep hiking rates "over the next several meetings" because "inflation remains far too high and is likely to stay above our target for an extended period."

Lagarde stopped short of predicting a recession, though many economists foresee one at the end of the year and beginning of 2023 as high energy and food prices sap people's spending power. The bank's assumption is economic output would not fall outright but "stagnate" later this year and early next, she said.

The bank's jumbo increase is aimed at raising the cost of borrowing for consumers, governments and businesses, which in theory slows spending and investment and cools off soaring consumer prices by reducing the demand for goods.

Analysts say it's also aimed at bolstering the bank's credibility after it underestimated how long and how severe this outbreak of inflation would be. After reaching a record 9.1% in August, inflation may rise into double digits in coming months, economists say.

The war in Ukraine has fueled inflation in Europe, with Russia sharply reducing supplies of cheap natural gas used to heat homes, generate electricity and run factories. That has driven up gas prices by 10 times or more.

European officials decry the cutbacks as blackmail aimed at pressuring and dividing the European Union over its support for Ukraine. Russia has blamed technical problems and threatened this week to cut off energy supplies completely if the West institutes planned price caps on Moscow's natural gas and oil.

The ECB has lagged other central banks in raising rates. Central banks worldwide have scrambled after being wrong-footed by inflation fed by the war in Ukraine and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which have sent energy prices higher and restricted supplies of parts and raw materials.

The sudden campaign to raise interest rates follows years in which borrowing costs and inflation stayed low because of broad trends such as globalization, aging populations and digitalization.

Lagarde rejected comparisons, saying that "we're not trying to mimic any other central bank" and pointing out that the ECB started tightening monetary policy in December, when it decided to phase out its pandemic stimulus through bond purchases.

Some economists say the ECB's interest rate hikes, including a half-point hike at its last meeting in July, could deepen a European recession predicted for the end of this year and the beginning of 2023, caused by higher inflation that has made everything from groceries to utility bills more expensive.

Lagarde said a 2022-23 recession would occur only under a "really dark" worst-case scenario where all

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 70 of 77

Russian natural gas is cut off, alternative supplies are not available and governments have to resort to energy rationing.

She praised efforts by the EU's executive Commission to contain energy prices, such as through electricity market regulation, and noted that while rate hikes send "a strong signal" of the bank's commitment to fight inflation, "I cannot reduce the price of energy."

But the bank has reasoned that rate hikes will prevent higher prices from being baked into expectations for wage and price deals and that decisive action now will forestall the need for even bigger hikes if inflation gets ingrained.

Europe's central bank "wants to fight inflation — and wants to be seen as fighting inflation," said Holger Schmieding, chief economist at Berenberg bank.

However, energy prices and government support programs to shield consumers from some of the pain will "have a much bigger impact on inflation and the depth of the looming recession than monetary policy," he said.

Rate hikes often support a currency's exchange rate — but the euro has been under pressure because of more general fears about recession and economic growth. It has recently fallen under \$1, the lowest level in 20 years. The euro slid about a half-cent after the ECB decision, to around 99.5 U.S. cents.

The ECB's benchmark is now 1.25% for lending to banks. The Fed's main benchmark is 2.25% to 2.5% after several large rate hikes, including two of three-quarters of a point. The Bank of England's key benchmark is 1.75%, and the Bank of Canada raised rates Wednesday by three-quarters of a point, to 3.25%.

Parent-teacher organizations aren't only for the kids

By TRACEE M. HERBAUGH Associated Press

They're known at school as the group of parents who orchestrate everything from Halloween parties to book fairs, but a parent-teacher organization isn't just for the kids.

Parents join a PTO for all kinds of reasons. It has helped some revitalize career skills, share passions, find job opportunities, and assuage the middle-age friend desert, all while making sure the kids have fun.

"I thought it was important for my kids to see I thought they were important and that their education was important," said Judy Walters, 54, of central New Jersey, recalling her stay-at-home-mom days raising two little girls. "But really, I wanted to meet people and have a life."

The PTO was where Walters met some of the people she still considers best friends. "I got close to a number of my room-mom people, and I met a lot of parents who I wasn't close to but still really liked and enjoyed," she says.

PTO is a common acronym for the group of parents and teachers who work together to fundraise, plan activities and provide extra enrichment for students. The term can be used interchangeably with the Parent Teacher Association, a national nonprofit headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, or the PTC, or parent-teacher council.

As kids return to school this fall, you might see flyers or emails pleading for parents to get involved. PTOs play an important role as school boards face tough budget choices, particularly for "extras" non directly related to the curriculum.

Especially as schools and families emerge from pandemic lockdowns, people are looking for ways to connect. PTOs can provide that at a time in life when making new friends typically slows down because of work and family.

Sara Dean, 46, signed up for her school's PTA, nervous about assimilating into what she saw as an established group. But by spring, she was happy to have made new friends.

Dean hosts the podcast "The Shameless Mom Academy," which discusses women's empowerment, and balancing parenthood and work. She devoted an episode to what she learned from working as the PTA president at her child's school outside Seattle.

"The opportunities for bonding happen quicker," she said of working on the PTA. "There is more camaradery and ease of building relationships that I wasn't expecting but that was a lovely experience."

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 71 of 77

She also didn't expect to pick up career-building skills.

Dean was used to working independently, as a writer and podcast host and producer. As PTA president, she was thrown into building teams, helping everyone get along, and finding resolutions to problems the school faced — skills that could easily translate into corporate America or the world of nonprofits.

"That's not why I signed up but it's a benefit that is really cool," she said.

The same goes for Colleen Nolan, 46, of Newton, Massachusetts. The eight years she spent working various roles on an elementary school PTO led, she said, to two nonprofit board positions — at a city food bank and a neighborhood improvement group — and a paid, part-time position as a records keeper.

"I met people in the neighborhood and, over the years, they recognized me as someone who was a 'doer,'" Nolan said. "People saw me as someone who could answer questions and they used me as a resource."

Many parents bring their passion projects to the PTO, said Andy Garlick, an elementary school principal in Needham, Massachusetts. These might include personal finance, diversity, or cultural customs from another country, for example. Parents bring what they know to the table.

"There's a lot of people who want to use the minimal free time they have to do good in their community," he said.

There are criticisms and jokes, of course. In the 2018 comedy "Bad Moms," Christina Applegate and Mila Kunis spar over who is the better PTA presidential candidate. And the Netflix series "Ginny & Georgia" shows a snooty mother from "Wellsbury, Massachusetts" arguing with an outsider from Texas about how to best raise money for the PTA.

In reality, wealthy neighborhoods tend to have far more parental involvement and fundraising power than areas without such affluence. This leads to more enrichment opportunities for students, and more educational necessities like books or tech gadgets. Some argue it compounds inequities in the U.S.

And PTO parents often spend their own money. Some organizations have dues and others don't, but many parent volunteers end up paying for projects and events.

Kimberly Rae Miller, 39, of Suffolk County, New York, joined the PTA to become more involved and was surprised to find how much money it required out of her own pocket.

But, she said, "If you have the time and financial resources to participate, it's a great way to have access to a part of your children's life that you don't always have access to."

School gun case sparks debate over safety and second chances

MARTHA IRVINE AP National Writer

Oak Park, Ill. (AP) — Keyon Robinson was just a month away from graduating from high school when he took a loaded gun, placed it in his backpack and headed to campus.

He'd fought with a relative that morning. He was angry, and scared someone would come after him. The firearm, a Glock-style ghost gun with no serial number that he'd bought via social media, was his security blanket.

"I felt like I just needed it for safety because of the stuff I got myself into," said Robinson, now 19.

He insists he never intended to hurt anyone at his school in Oak Park, a suburb that borders Chicago's West Side. "Realistically, I didn't need a gun at all."

And he never fired it. On May 3 — three weeks before a gunman massacred 19 children and two teachers in Uvalde, Texas — police arrested Robinson near the school's main entrance as he returned from lunch. He told the officers, who were acting on a tip, that he hadn't even taken the gun out of his backpack until they asked him to do so.

Still, in an instant, that one decision changed the trajectory of his young life. It also shook the entire school community, prompting intense discussions about how its young people might be protected.

Most gun incidents in and around campuses are more like Oak Park than Uvalde. They're not planned large-scale shootings, or active-shooter situations. More often, they're smaller altercations that escalate when someone has a gun at or near a school, a game or other event, according to the K-12 School Shooting Database, which tracks incidents from the last five decades.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 72 of 77

All these cases expose a hard truth: Keeping students from bringing guns to school is difficult.

Security staff and metal detectors miss things, experts say. Doors that are supposed to be locked get propped open. Items can be hidden even when schools require clear backpacks.

This fall, leaders at Oak Park and River Forest High, Robinson's school, began training more staff, adding security to the day shift, and moving more experienced team members to hot spots such as cafeterias, where fights are known to break out during lunch. Posters on the massive campus encourage students to be the school's eyes and ears: "If You See Something, Say Something."

The school, known as OPRF, is trying to walk a fine line — to keep students and staff safe without making them feel unwelcome or anxious. In 2020, the School Board voted 6-1 to end the school resource officer program amid national protests over police brutality. Cries for reform escalated that summer after a white Minneapolis police officer killed George Floyd, a Black man, as other officers stood by.

Now some officials are rethinking the decision to cut ties with police. But they're also holding fast to a widely held belief among educators — that connecting with students is the best way to build trust, identify threats and prevent tragedies.

By his own account, and according to school records provided by his attorney, Robinson was a student who bonded with teachers at OPRF, including support staff. One staffer noted his "unbelievable social skills" and respectfulness. He owned his mistakes, staff said, but he also struggled with depression, drug use and occasional impulsivity. Schoolwork was a challenge.

After his arrest, Robinson said he was expelled. But the district offered him the chance to complete his studies, away from his classmates and campus, where he can no longer set foot. A Cook County judge agreed that school in some form was "the best thing for him to do," though she gave him a stern reminder to avoid school grounds and weapons of any kind.

"Yes, your honor," Robinson responded.

With that, the judge allowed him to be released on bond after a few weeks in jail, and he spent most of the summer at his family's Oak Park apartment, wearing ankle monitors to track his movements. He hung out with his mom and siblings, played video games and finished the schoolwork. Eventually, he got his diploma.

"It's restrictive, always," Robinson said of the monitors. "But I got to be grateful."

As he awaits his fate in court, he's been granted permission to work at a fast-food restaurant. Ultimately, he'd like to go to community college or trade school, and maybe play football. He and his family hope felony charges will be deferred because this is a first-time offense.

Meanwhile, students have returned for a new year at OPRF as school officials and the community process what happened.

"It pains me to the core of my being that you have to do this on your jobs," School Board member Ralph Martire told staff after a security update at a recent meeting. "It shouldn't be that we should be this worried about violence at this level in educational setting. But we have to be — the world has to be."

The K-12 database shows that active shooter incidents — when a shooter kills or wounds victims on campus during "a continuous episode of violence" — accounted for 11 of 430 shootings in and around schools from the start of 2021 through August 2022.

Fights that escalate when someone has a gun accounted for 123 of those shootings. In South Carolina, a 12-year-old shot and killed a classmate in a middle school hallway, and in New Orleans, an 80-year-old woman was caught in crossfire at a graduation — both in the same month Robinson was caught with the gun.

Many in the Oak Park community worry. What if another student brings a weapon to school? Maybe they already have.

No one at the School Board meeting spoke Robinson's name, though the incident was on many minds. He is aware that his actions have affected people's sense of safety.

"Because of the mistake that I made, and other mistakes, then I think that it is reasonable to have more tighter security — and have an officer in the school now," he said. "I think that's something that's appropriate."

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 73 of 77

OPRF is among many schools nationwide that have shifted to a restorative justice model, moving away from zero-tolerance policies, which often disproportionately affect students of color. At OPRF, about 44 percent of roughly 3,400 students at the high school identify as Black, Hispanic, multiracial or Asian.

With restorative justice, incidents are dealt with on a case-by-case basis, with more time spent processing what's happened to try to prevent repeat behavior. There are consequences, determined by the severity of the deed. But the goal is for students to spend more time learning and to make better choices, with support.

Superintendent Greg Johnson still sees a chance to rethink the role police could have at the school. Johnson, who is white, told the school board he understands the "very real challenge" people of color face with law enforcement.

"Our belief as a school district, though, is that the way through that is education and relationships," he said. "We need a partnership" with police, he added. "We need a member on our crisis team here."

A federal survey found that 42 percent of public schools had at least one resource officer one day or more a week in the 2015-16 school year, the most recent data available. The National Association of School Resource Officers, which helps train police to work in educational settings, estimates that 14,000 to 20,000 resource officers serve K-12 schools.

Still, at least two OPRF board members balked when another praised efforts to "harden" security this fall. "We want to keep the buildings safe," member Gina Harris said. "But that language is challenging, as well as confronting for me as a Black woman and for families and students."

At one point in the meeting, a frustrated parent stood up to interrupt the board discussion. "This is a scary issue for us parents!" she said. "This is really a critical life-and-death situation that we're dealing with."

Lynda Parker, the school's assistant superintendent and principal, tried to reassure her. "It is as important to us — as we're living in it too," Parker said, gently.

Behavior problems and mental health issues have been on the rise at many schools since students returned to in-person learning, and OPRF is no exception. Having to quarantine at the height of the pandemic also took a toll on Robinson.

"I stopped playing football," he said. "I was not doing good in school over Zoom, so I feel like it had a big impact on my life, a huge impact on my life."

He'd been a running back and cornerback early in his high school career. When in-person school resumed, he'd lost motivation, he said, and got suspended from the team for vaping at school and other infractions.

"I wouldn't say we were goodie kids," he said of himself and his friends. "But, like, just typical teenagers."

But he liked school and the people there, he said, even the security staff, and considered many teachers mentors.

"They were supporting me and still pushing me to do better," he said, even when he was in jail. "Still, to this day, I have teachers texting me, checking on me."

At a recent status hearing for his case, Robinson, wearing jeans and a white dress shirt, sat silently with his mom, Nicole Bryant, who works in child care and drives for Uber to make ends meet. Robinson's attorney updated the court on his client's work schedule and location. One of Robinson's two electronic monitors was removed.

He faces charges including possession of a firearm, a class 3 felony, and aggravated unlawful use of a weapon, a class 4 felony. They could lead to substantial time in prison.

"The news media says 'kid with gun at school' — boom — and that's it. And people draw their conclusions," attorney Thomas Benno said. He's asking the court to consider Robinson's intent in having the gun with him — to protect himself.

Because Robinson had no criminal record, other than a traffic violation, Benno is seeking the deferred sentence, which means probation and other requirements detailed by the court. It's a strict, monitored program with no room for more mistakes, Benno said. He believes that's better than incarceration, in this instance, and that his young client, who school staff say is a leader in his social circles, will share his cautionary tale.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 74 of 77

"He can go and tell kids, 'Hey, don't carry the gun,'" Benno said. "He's going to tell the story."

Some in the community still quietly question whether a second chance would send the right message.

Just four days into this academic year, OPRF had a soft lockdown over a report of a student with a gun. Under the "Secure and Teach" protocol, as the school calls it, teachers lock their doors and try to continue with their lessons while security investigates.

The report turned out to be unfounded. The community breathed a collective sigh of relief.

"I'd rather have them overreact than underreact, because the consequence is so great," said Brian Roman, a university professor and OPRF parent.

He's considered shifting his son to another school because of safety concerns. But he appreciates OPRF and the diversity it offers, and he still hopes his son can graduate from the school in 2024.

Last spring, Robinson's mom had been ready to celebrate her own son, the third of her four children. He had fought so hard to graduate, she told the school — he wanted to show everyone he could do it, despite his struggles. She, too, graduated from OPRF. Now she's just grateful her son was allowed to get his diploma, even if he couldn't walk with his class.

Leon Watson, a family friend, frowned when asked about Robinson, the gun and that day last May. "I was disappointed and surprised and confused," he said. "That's not him. It's not ... but he's kicking himself every day."

Robinson nodded in agreement. "Yeah," he said. "Every day."

His hopes for a second chance are now in the hands of the court.

Police arrest Memphis man in livestreamed shootings; 4 dead

ADRIAN SAINZ Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — A gunman who livestreamed himself driving around Memphis shooting at people, killing four and wounding three others in seemingly random attacks, was finally arrested after crashing a stolen car, police said early Thursday.

The hours-long rampage had police warning people across the city to shelter in place, locking down a baseball stadium and university campuses and suspending public bus services as frightened residents wondered where the man might strike next.

Ezekiel Kelly, 19, a violent felon who was released early from prison this year, was taken into custody at around 9 p.m. in the Memphis neighborhood of Whitehaven, police spokeswoman Karen Rudolph said.

Memphis Police Director Cerelyn "CJ" Davis said during a news conference early Thursday that four people were killed and three others were wounded in seven shootings and at least two carjackings.

The first killing was at 12:56 a.m. Wednesday, and officers responded to three more crime scenes before receiving a tip at 6:12 p.m. that the suspect was livestreaming himself threatening to cause harm to citizens, Davis said.

Police then sent out an alert warning people to be on the lookout for an armed and dangerous man responsible for multiple shootings and reportedly recording his actions on Facebook. In one video, he casually spoke to the camera before opening the door to a store and then immediately shooting at someone with what appeared to be a pistol.

Three more shootings and two carjackings followed. Police said he killed a woman in Memphis as he took her grey Toyota SUV, which he left behind when he stole a man's Dodge Challenger across the state line in Southaven, Mississippi.

Kelly was arrested without incident two hours after the initial police alert when he crashed the Challenger during a high speed chase, and two guns were found in the vehicle, Davis said.

As the shooter terrorized the city, buses stopped running and the Memphis Redbirds cleared the field during their minor-league baseball game. Friends and relatives frantically called and texted each other and TV stations cut into regular coverage with updates.

Police received "numerous tips" from the public during the ordeal, Davis said.

The University of Memphis sent a message to students saying a shooting had been reported near the

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 75 of 77

campus. Rhodes College, which is about 4 miles away from the university, advised students on and off campus to shelter in place. Kelly was ultimately arrested about 11 miles from the two campuses.

"If you do not have to be out, stay indoors until this is resolved," Memphis police said on Twitter, before the arrest.

Police did not discuss a motive or release the identities of those who were killed or wounded. It was too early in the investigation to discuss how the suspect got the gun or guns used in the shootings, said Ali Roberts, acting assistant special agent in charge for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives in Memphis.

Memphis has been shaken by several high-profile killings in recent weeks, including the shooting of a pastor during a daylight carjacking in her driveway, the shooting of an activist during an argument over money, and the slaying of a jogger abducted during her pre-dawn run.

"I understand it feels like so much violence and evil to experience in such a short time," Memphis City Council member Chase Carlisle said on Twitter. "We are SO much more than this."

In February 2020, Kelly, then 17, was charged as an adult with attempted first-degree murder, aggravated assault, using a firearm to commit a dangerous felony and reckless endangerment with a deadly weapon, court records show.

Records show he pleaded guilty to aggravated assault and was sentenced in April 2021 to three years. Kelly was released from prison in March, 11 months after he was sentenced, Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland said.

"This is no way for us to live and it is not acceptable," the mayor said. "If Mr. Kelly served his full three-year sentence, he would still be in prison today and four of our fellow citizens would still be alive."

Strickland thanked legislators for closing what he called a revolving door by passing Tennessee's "truth in sentencing" law this year. The statute, which took effect after Kelly was freed, requires serving entire sentences for various felonies, including attempted first-degree murder, vehicular homicide resulting from the driver's intoxication and carjacking.

"From now on, three years for aggravated assault means three years," the mayor said. "We need the courts and additional state laws to stop this revolving door and I need the public to make their voices heard by those decision makers."

Shelby County District Attorney Steve Mulroy, a fellow Democrat, was elected in August after voicing his opposition to the truth in sentencing law, arguing it does not reduce crime nor help incarcerated people rehabilitate, and drives up Tennessee's prison budget.

"People are frightened, people are angry. In times like this, it's sometimes hard for people to know what to do," Mulroy said at the news conference. "I can tell one thing I'm going to do. I'm going to pray. I'm going to pray for the victims and their families. I'm going to pray for the victims and their families. I'm also going to say a prayer of thanks for law enforcement who acted superbly."

He added that repeat violent offenders "need a strong response," and "that's precisely what they'll get from this DA's office."

Today in History: September 9, Elizabeth's reign is longest

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Friday, Sept. 9, the 252nd day of 2022. There are 113 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 9, 1957, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the first civil rights bill to pass Congress since Reconstruction, a measure primarily concerned with protecting voting rights; it also established a Civil Rights Division in the U.S. Department of Justice.

On this date:

In 1776, the second Continental Congress made the term "United States" official, replacing "United Colonies."

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 76 of 77

In 1850, California became the 31st state of the union.

In 1919, some 1,100 members of Boston's 1,500-man police force went on strike. (The strike was broken by Massachusetts Gov. Calvin Coolidge with replacement officers.)

In 1926, the National Broadcasting Co. (NBC) was incorporated by the Radio Corp. of America.

In 1942, during World War II, a Japanese plane launched from a submarine off the Oregon coast dropped a pair of incendiary bombs in a failed attempt at igniting a massive forest fire; it was the first aerial bombing of the U.S. mainland by a foreign power.

In 1948, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea (North Korea) was declared.

In 1956, Elvis Presley made the first of three appearances on "The Ed Sullivan Show."

In 1960, in the first regular-season American Football League game, the Denver Broncos defeated the Boston Patriots, 13-10.

In 1971, prisoners seized control of the maximum-security Attica Correctional Facility near Buffalo, New York, beginning a siege that ended up claiming 43 lives.

In 1991, boxer Mike Tyson was indicted in Indianapolis on a charge of raping Desiree Washington, a beauty pageant contestant. (Tyson was convicted and ended up serving three years of a six-year prison sentence.)

In 2015, Queen Elizabeth II became the longest reigning monarch in British history, serving as sovereign for 23,226 days (about 63 years and 7 months), according to Buckingham Palace, surpassing Queen Victoria, her great-great-grandmother.

In 2016, Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton, speaking at an LGBT fundraiser in New York City, described half of Republican Donald Trump's supporters as "a basket of deplorables," a characterization for which she ended up expressing regret.

Ten years ago: Two points from defeat, Serena Williams regained her composure and her game to come back to beat Victoria Azarenka, 6-2, 2-6, 7-5, for her fourth U.S. Open championship. Shannon Eastin became the first woman to officiate an NFL regular-season game, serving as a line judge in the St. Louis Rams-Detroit Lions game. (Detroit beat St. Louis 27-23.)

Five years ago: Hurricane Irma hammered Cuba with punishing winds and rain as it headed toward the Florida Keys and the southeastern United States; hundreds of shelters opened in Florida for people looking to escape the potentially deadly winds and storm surge. Dutch officials said Irma had damaged or destroyed 70 percent of the homes on St. Maarten in the Caribbean, leaving it vulnerable to the approach of Hurricane Jose. Sloane Stephens beat her close friend Madison Keys 6-3, 6-0 at the U.S. Open in the first Grand Slam final for both. Guillermo del Toro's "The Shape of Water" won the top prize at the Venice Film Festival.

One year ago: President Joe Biden announced sweeping new federal vaccine requirements affecting as many as 100 million Americans in an all-out effort to curb the surging COVID-19 delta variant; all employers with more than 100 workers would have to require them to be vaccinated or tested for the virus weekly, affecting about 80 million Americans. Biden also signed an executive order requiring vaccination for all employees of the executive branch and contractors who do business with the federal government. The Los Angeles board of education voted to require students 12 and older to be vaccinated against the coronavirus in order to attend in-person classes. Emmy Award-winning character actor Michael Constantine, who reached worldwide fame as the father of the bride in "My Big Fat Greek Wedding," died at 94.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Topol is 87. Singer Inez Foxx is 80. Singer Dee Dee Sharp is 77. College Football Hall of Famer and former NFL player Joe Theismann is 73. Rock musician John McFee (The Doobie Brothers) is 72. Actor Tom Wopat is 71. Actor Angela Cartwright is 70. Musician-producer Dave Stewart is 70. Actor Hugh Grant is 62. Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., is 59. Actor-comedian Charles Esten (formerly Chip) is 57. Actor Constance Marie is 57. Actor David Bennent is 56. Actor Adam Sandler is 56. Rock singer Paul Durham (Black Lab) is 54. Actor Julia Sawalha (suh-WAHL'-hah) is 54. Model Rachel Hunter is 53. Actor Eric Stonestreet is 51. Actor Henry Thomas is 51. Actor Goran Visnjic (VEEZ'-nihch) is 50. Pop-jazz singer Michael Buble' (boo-BLAY') is 47. Latin singer Maria Rita is 45. Actor Michelle Williams is 42. Actor Julie

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Sept. 09, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 064 ~ 77 of 77

Gonzalo is 41. Neo-soul singer Paul Janeway (St. Paul & the Broken Bones) is 39. Actor Zoe Kazan is 39. Author-motivational speaker-businessman Farrah Gray is 38. Actor Kelsey Asbille is 31. Contemporary Christian singer Lauren Daigle is 31. Country singer-songwriter Hunter Hayes is 31.