

Groton Daily Independent

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Saturday, Sept. 17

SEAS Confession: 3:45-4:15 p.m., SEAS Mass: 4:30 p.m.
3/4 and 5/6 football jamboree in Groton
Volleyball Tourney at Hamlin
9 a.m.: JH Volleyball at Redfield
9 a.m.: Groton Youth FB Jamboree (3rd-4th, 5th-6th)
Emmanuel: 9am 2nd Confirmation retreat for 9th graders



NO OUTDOOR WATERING!

Effective immediately, no outdoor watering is permitted in the City of Groton until further notice. (About 4-6 weeks)

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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Deuel wins its homecoming game over Groton Area

Groton Area came up against some stiff competition Friday as the Tigers took on the Deuel Cardinals at their homecoming game. The Cardinals won, 27-0.

Groton Area did score one touchdown, but it was recalled due to a penalty.

The Cardinals had more first downs, 17-6.

In rushing, Groton Area was 26 for 31 yards with Andrew Marzahn having 15 carries for 28 yards and Teylor Diegel and Christian Ehresmann each had eight yards rushing. The Cardinals had 49 carries for 254 yards with Owen Quail having 95 yards rushing.

The Tigers were five of 16 in passing for 111 yards. The Cardinals were four of eight for 55 yards as they did most of their offensive attack on the ground and up the middle.

Both teams had 40 yards in penalties.

Receivers for the Tigers were Tate Larson with three catches for 55 yards while having one catch each were Teylor Diegel for 46 yards and Andrew Marzahn for 10 yards.

Diegel and Marzahn were the defensive leaders with 13 tackles apiece while Ehresmann had 12, Holden Sippel had 11 and Tate Larson with 10.

Owen Quail scored on touchdown runs of two and 14 yards, Carrer Nothem had a nine yard pass reception and Domonic Constant had a 69 yard run.

The Tigers are 2-3 on the season and will host Sisseton in Groton Area's homecoming game. Deuel, now 4-1, will host Dakota Hills on Friday.

Preschool Developmental Screening

Groton Area Schools #06-6

Preschool Developmental Screening is for children ages 3-4 who reside in the Groton Area School District. The child needs to be 3 years of age before the screening date/day. This screening is not required to enter Kindergarten.

The screening consists of adaptive, personal/social, communicating/speaking, motor, and concepts skills. If you believe your child has difficulties in any of these areas please contact the school.

If your child is already receiving services or enrolled at Groton Elementary School they will not need to be screened. If your child has already been screened but you have concerns please contact the elementary school. If you are new to the district and have a child under the age of 5, we also ask you to contact the elementary school.

Screenings will be held on Friday, September 30 8:00-3:30. Information will be sent to families who have already been identified. Please contact Heidi Krueger at 605-397-2317 to schedule a screening time.

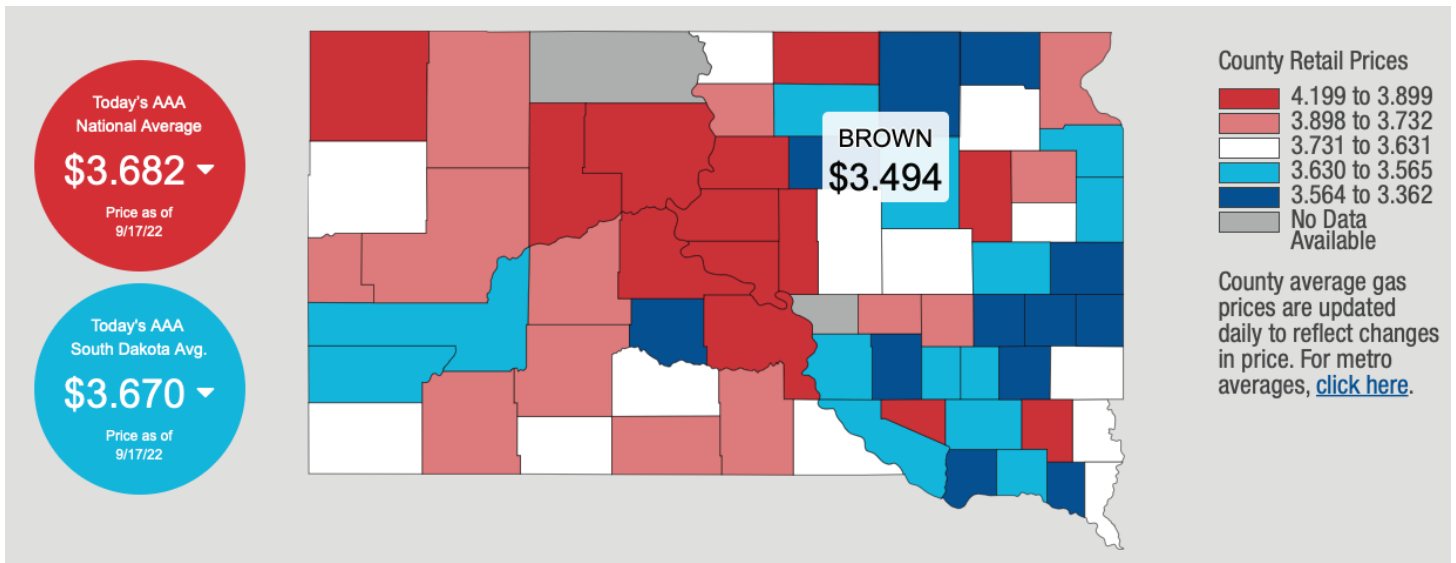
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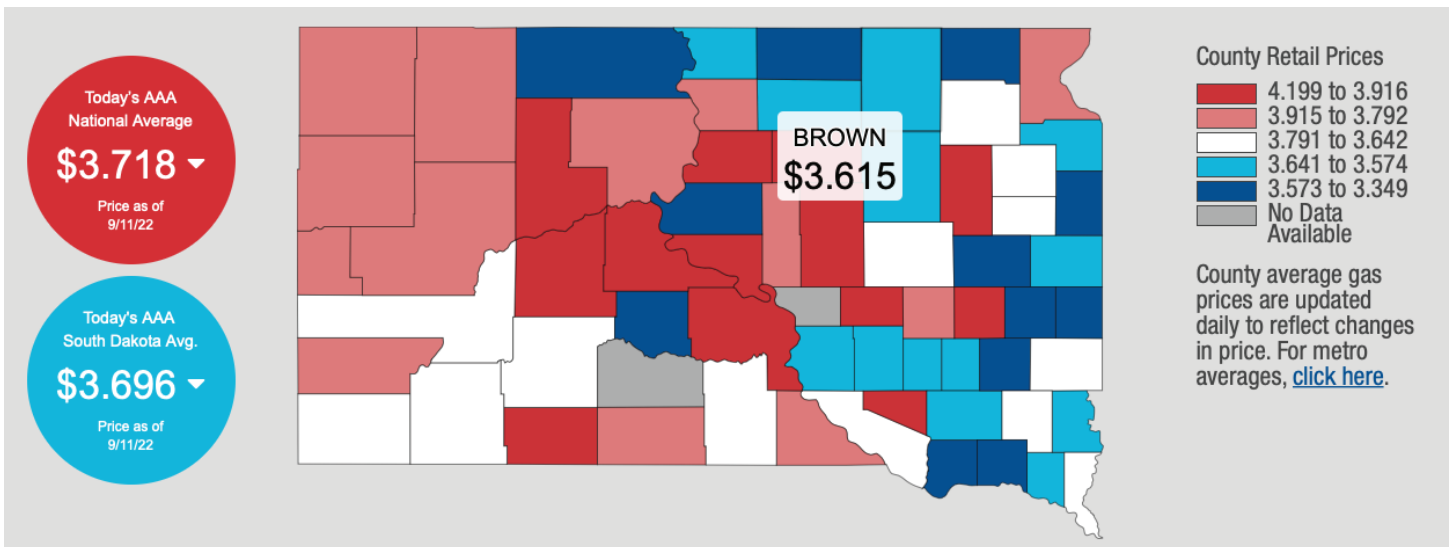
South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$3.670	\$3.828	\$4.285	\$4.790
Yesterday Avg.	\$3.677	\$3.834	\$4.290	\$4.804
Week Ago Avg.	\$3.708	\$3.859	\$4.310	\$4.851
Month Ago Avg.	\$3.909	\$4.114	\$4.578	\$4.805
Year Ago Avg.	\$3.163	\$3.297	\$3.664	\$3.248

This Week



Last Week



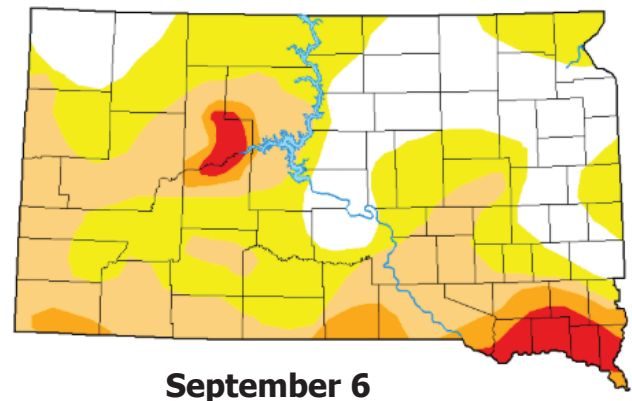
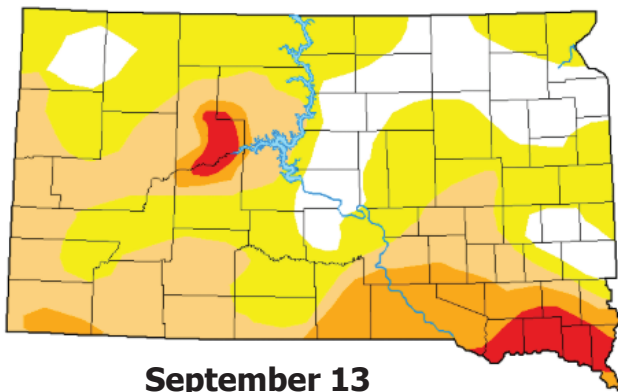
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Drought Classification



Drought Monitor

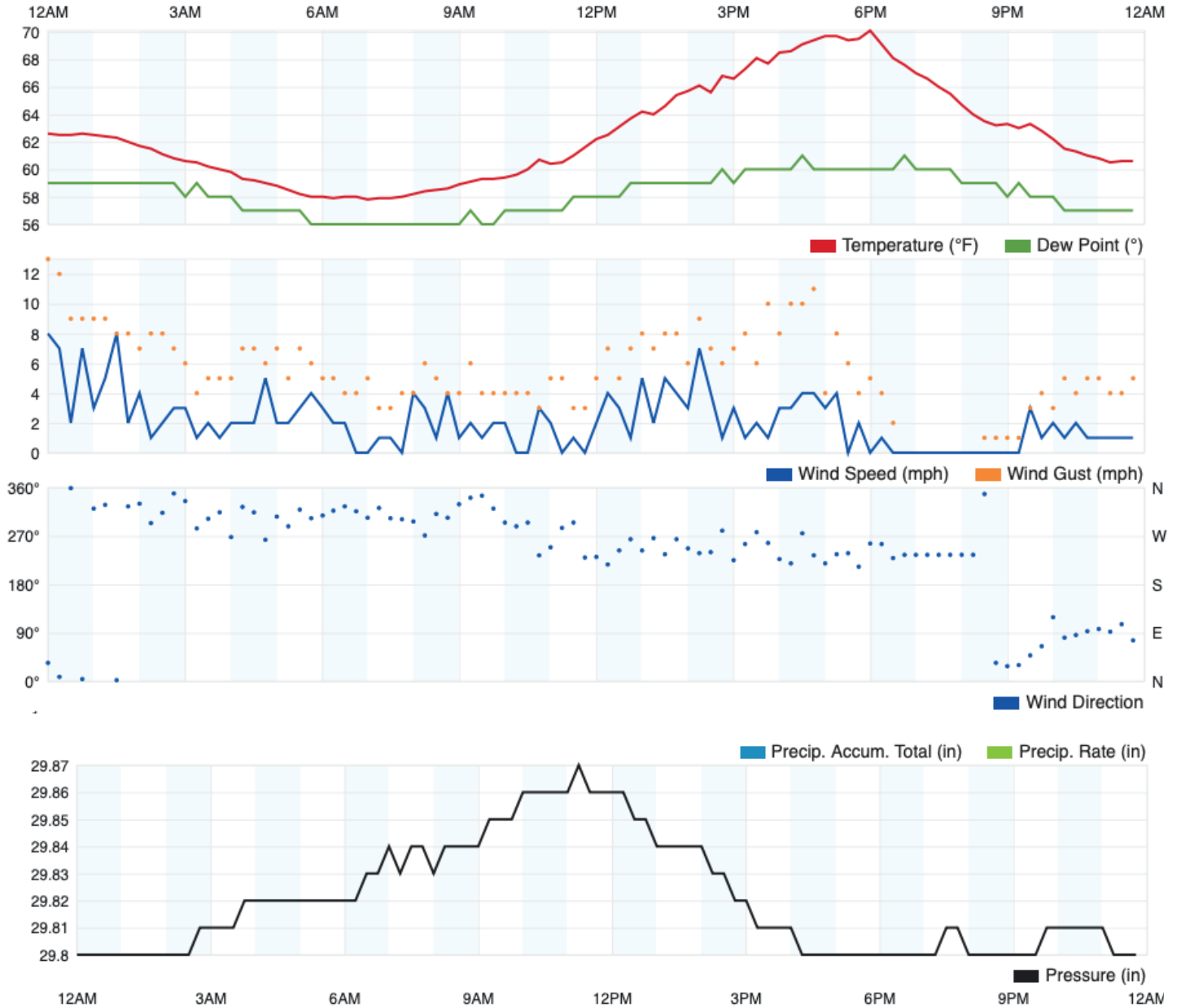


On this week's map, degradations were made in areas of Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and North Dakota in response to continued dryness, decreased soil moisture, poor pasture and rangeland conditions, and impacts to dryland crops. In Kansas and Nebraska, the latest 7-day streamflow levels were showing widespread well-below-normal flows, especially in Nebraska. In southern Nebraska, numerous gaging stations on rivers and creeks were observing flows in the 1st to 2nd percentile range, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. For the week, average temperatures were above normal in the Dakotas (1 to 4 deg F) while Nebraska, eastern Wyoming, and Kansas were near normal to slightly below normal. According to NOAA NCEI, the Great Plains Region saw its 5th warmest (+2.7 deg F) and 19th driest June-August on record. Statewide, Nebraska experienced its 3rd driest June-August as well as its 2nd driest August on record.

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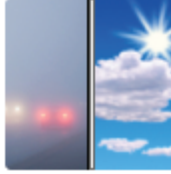


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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
				
Slight Chance T-storms and Patchy Fog then Partly Sunny	Partly Cloudy then Patchy Fog	Patchy Fog then Mostly Sunny	Mostly Clear	Slight Chance Showers
High: 72 °F	Low: 49 °F	High: 74 °F	Low: 53 °F	High: 84 °F

Slight Risk

of severe thunderstorms

1 2 3 4 5

Hazards

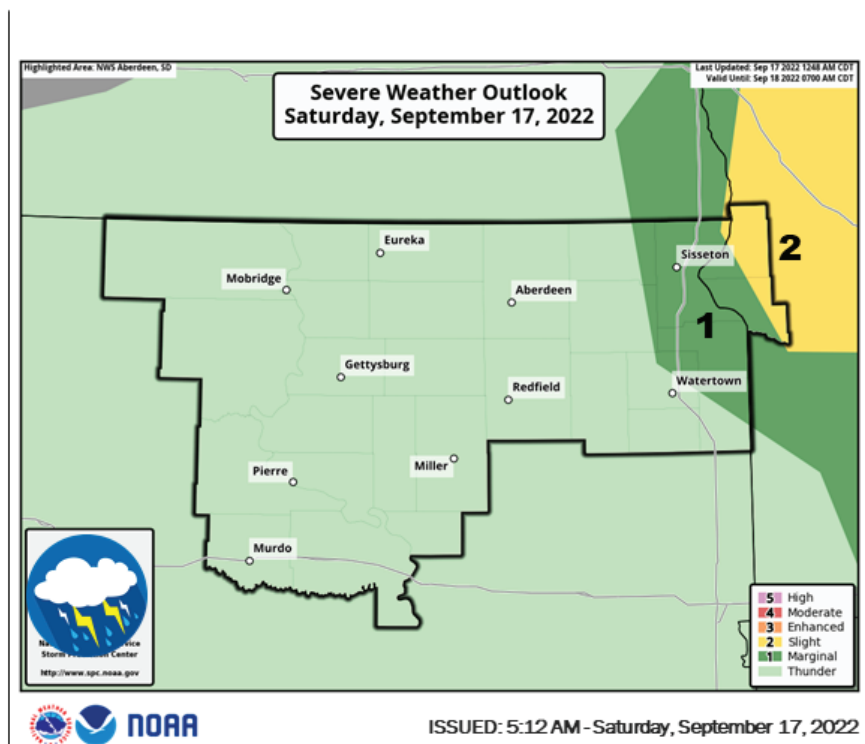
Thunderstorms have the potential to produce large hail, damaging winds and a tornado or two.

Where

The greatest risk is near and east & north of a line from Ortonville to Wheaton, MN (yellow shading on the map).

Timing

Mid afternoon into the early evening. The highest risk period will be from 4–7 pm.



Morning cloud cover will give way to partly cloudy skies this afternoon, as temperatures warm into the upper 60s (north central SD) to mid to upper 70s (south central and northeastern SD and west central MN). A few strong to severe thunderstorms are possible late this afternoon across far northeastern SD into west central MN thanks to a passing area of low pressure, but the threat will quickly shift east and away by this evening. Have a way to receive warning information if in these areas! Fog may develop tonight into Sunday morning, as low drop into the low 50s to upper 40s.

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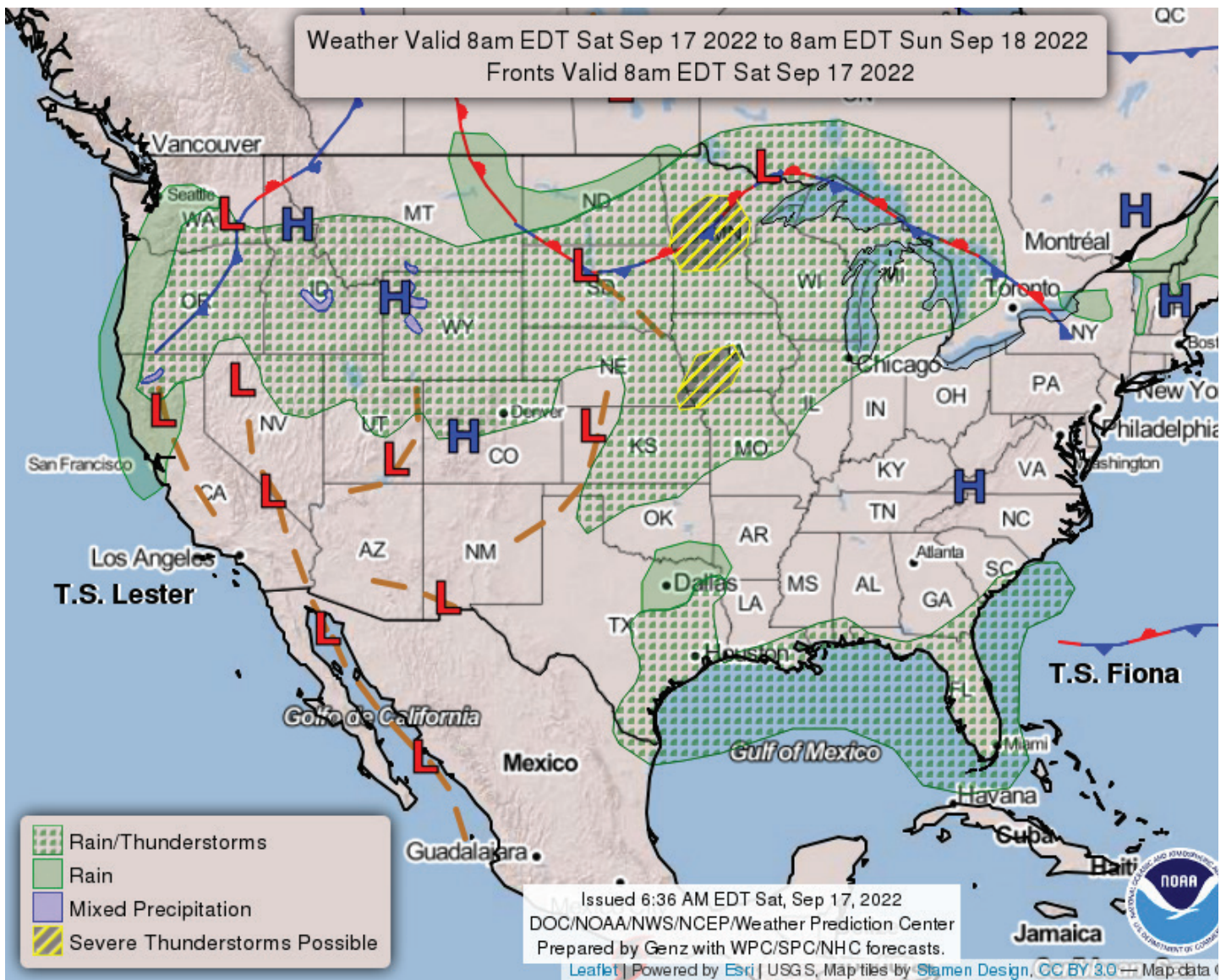
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 70 °F at 5:05 PM
Low Temp: 58 °F at 6:51 AM
Wind: 12 mph at 12:02 AM
Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 97 in 1955
Record Low: 28 in 1903
Average High: 75°F
Average Low: 46°F
Average Precip in Sept.: 1.14
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.07
Average Precip to date: 17.48
Precip Year to Date: 16.05
Sunset Tonight: 7:41:22 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:13:26 AM

Day length: 12 hours, 29 minutes



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Today in Weather History

September 17, 1911: Pipestone, Minnesota is hit with baseball-sized hail that smashes numerous windows at the Calumet Hotel and high school. The local observer measured hail three inches deep.

September 17, 1969 : In the late afternoon 16 miles east of Pierre in Hughes County, 60 mph wind-driven penny size hail-damaged crops and buildings in the area. Unofficial amounts of 5 to 6 inches of rain also occurred with the storms.

September 17, 1975: Heavy rain and hail fell in the Pierre area during the night flooding streets and some basements. The high winds downed power lines. The damage estimate was more than 100,000 dollars.

September 17, 1975: Lightning started a grass fire in western Stanley County in the early morning hours of the 17th. With the arid and windy conditions, the fire quickly spread and consumed 25,000 acres of grassland before it was under control. Smoke from the fire was seen from 40 miles away. The fire also destroyed six outbuildings and an old unoccupied farmhouse. Some roads had to be closed due to the fire and smoke. Several electrical poles were also burned. Many residents were notified of possible evacuations. The fire was finally put out in the early morning hours of the 18th.

1829: A typhoon, Japan's most catastrophic storm, inflicts widespread damage over much of the country. On the southern island of Kyushu, the storm surge off the Ariake Sea kills over 10,000. The German physician Philipp Franz von Siebold was present during this storm and succeeded in taking barometric pressure readings around Nagasaki at the risk of drowning.

1923: A devastating fire threatens the University of California at Berkeley on this day. This fire killed two and caused \$10 million in damages. While the exact cause is unknown, the fire began in the dry forest northeast of Berkeley. Strong northeasterly winds blew cinders into the air which lead to the rapid-fire growth.

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)

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: Hurricane Hugo hit the Virgin Islands, producing wind gusts to 97 mph at Saint Croix. Hurricane Hugo passed directly over the island of Saint Croix causing complete devastation and essentially cutting off the island from communications. A storm surge of five to seven feet occurred at Saint Croix. The only rain gauge left operating, at Caneel Bay, indicated 9.40 inches in 24 hours. Hurricane Hugo claimed the lives of three persons at Saint Croix and caused more than 500 million dollars damage.

2004: The remnants of Hurricane Ivan submerged Pittsburgh in 5.95 inches of rain in one day. That is the most rainfall Pittsburgh has seen in a 24-hour period since records began in 1876.

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

WHERE DO YOU STAND?

There's not much "middle ground" when it comes to attitudes about "teachers' pets" in the classroom or for those who are "the bosses' most trusted friends." If a student has found "special favor" with a teacher or an employee has gained "special recognition" by someone in authority at work, the rest of the class or work force often resent the attention they receive or the benefits they get. And, why not?

Often there seems to be "secret" or "hidden" paths to such status. How they got there, or what they did to get "rewarded" is not always obvious. At one time it was an "apple" or "box of candy" for the teacher. Perhaps it was a "cup of coffee" to begin the day or a "special gift" on a holiday for "the boss." But the way to gain this status is not published in a student handbook or organization's policy manual.

With God it's very different. He has no favorites. There are no hidden secrets if anyone wants Him to recognize them at any time or from any place. He is always waiting anxiously for us to call on Him. His ears can hear the faintest whisper from the weakest voice.

Solomon gave us some great advice: "A good man obtains favor from the Lord; but the Lord condemns a crafty man." A "good man" in the "eyes of the Lord" is one who lives to honor God; one who does what he does because he is motivated by God to serve Him and help others. A man who is "crafty" is one who "devises evil" or hides the facts, is not open and honest, nor truthful in his dealings with or service to others.

Want God's favor? Follow Solomon's advice! Honor God, serve others, and be rewarded!

Prayer: Lord, Your instructions for success are always direct, easily understood, though difficult. Give me Your strength to be faithful to Your teachings in all I do. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: A good man obtains favor from the Lord; but the Lord condemns a crafty man. Proverbs 12:2



We all need the encouragement, comfort, and peace that comes through God's grace. Our daily devotionals, known as Seeds of Hope, have been a means through which thousands of people have experienced this grace. Each devotional comes from God's Word and we pray this good "seed" finds good soil in your heart. Our aim is that the Seeds of Hope will be a great source of daily encouragement to you and that God will use them to draw you near to Him

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2022-23 Community Events

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

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- Colored \$42.60/6 months
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News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

15-30-35-38-66, Mega Ball: 12, Megaplier: 4

(fifteen, thirty, thirty-five, thirty-eight, sixty-six; Mega Ball: twelve; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$277,000,000

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: 225,000,000

Friday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL=

Aberdeen Central 27, Mitchell 13

Aberdeen Roncalli 56, Mobridge-Pollock 6

Alcester-Hudson 38, Chester 27

Belle Fourche 20, Chamberlain 6

Beresford 20, Flandreau 12

Bon Homme 43, Stanley County 7

Brandon Valley 38, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 7

Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan 36, Sioux Valley 32

Brookings 33, Spearfish 20

Castlewood 50, North Central Co-Op 7

Clark/Willow Lake 28, Parker 0

Dakota Valley 33, Milbank 6

Dell Rapids 28, Canton 22

Dell Rapids St. Mary 44, Arlington 20

Deubrook 16, Iroquois/ Lake Preston Co-op 12

Deuel 27, Groton Area 0

Elkton-Lake Benton 38, Canistota 30

Estelline/Hendricks 47, Colman-Egan 14

Faith 26, Lemmon/McIntosh 20

Faulkton 36, Northwestern 6

Flandreau Indian def. Omaha Nation, Neb., forfeit

Florence/Henry 50, Waverly-South Shore 30

Great Plains Lutheran 42, Sunshine Bible Academy 7

Gregory 46, Irene-Wakonda 11

Hamlin 48, Leola/Frederick 6

Harding County/Bison Co-op 54, Newell 0

Harrisburg 41, Sioux Falls Lincoln 22

Herreid/Selby Area 44, Ipswich 26

Hitchcock-Tulare 52, Avon 0

Howard 51, Freeman/ Marion/ Freeman Academy Co-op 0

Huron 34, Sturgis Brown 32

Jim River 31, Baltic 6

New Underwood 49, Bennett County 0

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Parkston 50, Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 0
Philip 60, Dupree 12
Pierre 55, Yankton 10
Platte-Geddes 35, Viborg 18
Platte-Geddes 35, Viborg-Hurley 18
Potter County 48, Langford 14
Sioux Falls Christian 34, Madison 28
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 49, Rapid City Stevens 7
Sioux Falls Washington 30, Watertown 0
Sully Buttes 24, Colome 6
Tea Area 42, Douglas 0
Timber Lake 46, Jones County 6
Tiospa Zina Tribal 52, St. Francis Indian 0
Todd County 36, Winnebago, Neb. 20
Wagner 14, Sisseton 0
Wall 50, White River 0
Webster 43, Dakota Hills 0
West Central 33, Vermillion 0
Wolsey-Wessington 28, DeSmet 6
Woonsocket/Wessington Springs/Sanborn Central 36, Miller/Highmore-Harold 0

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Rapid City Central def. Sioux Falls Jefferson, 25-11, 25-16, 25-8
Rapid City Stevens def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 25-14, 25-19, 30-28

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

Gov. Kristi Noem silent on possible appeal to ethics board

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem faced a Friday deadline to appeal a state ethics board's finding that there was evidence she improperly intervened in her daughter's application for a real estate appraiser license.

The Government Accountability Board voted unanimously last month that there was enough evidence to believe the Republican governor had committed malfeasance and engaged in a conflict of interest.

Noem has maintained she did nothing wrong, but so far the process has been conducted in private. Neither her office nor her reelection campaign answered questions Friday on whether she would proceed to a contested case hearing that would give her a chance to make her case publicly.

The board took unspecified "action" against the governor, and board member Gene Kean said last month that Friday would be the deadline for Noem to respond.

If there is no public hearing, it's not clear whether the board will release details of the action it took. The board closed the complaint last month but suggested it could be reopened.

A lawyer who has represented the governor before the board also did not respond to questions.

The Associated Press first reported that shortly after a state agency moved in July 2020 to deny Noem's daughter, Cassidy Peters, an appraiser license, the governor held a meeting with Peters and key decision-makers in her licensure. Days after the meeting, Peters signed an agreement that gave her another opportunity to meet the licensing requirements. The South Dakota Legislature's audit committee, controlled by Republicans, unanimously approved a report in May that found Noem's daughter got preferential treatment.

Noem previously requested the ethics complaint be dismissed without a hearing by arguing that the person who brought it, former Republican Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg, was out for revenge after she

successfully pushed for his impeachment and removal from office for his conduct in a 2020 fatal car crash.

In that April motion to the board, Noem's attorneys also said she could counter the accusations against her. Her campaign spokesman, Ian Fury, on Friday referred a reporter to an August statement that branded the board's action as "illegal."

But declining to fight the evidence in a contested case hearing would allow the board's "action" against her while potentially avoiding further public scrutiny.

The Government Accountability Board, which has never handled such a high-profile case since its inception in 2017, has not publicly said what action it has taken. It has deliberated over the complaints for nearly a year in a series of closed-door meetings, navigating untested laws.

Board member David Gienapp, at the board's August meeting, verbally moved to invoke a statute — SDCL 3-24-7 — that states the board "shall" hold a contested case hearing "to afford the accused person the opportunity to respond to the allegation." But the board's draft minutes, posted two days later, make no mention of that statute. Instead, the draft minutes state that the board acted to "make an initial determination" that the complaint "alleges facts" that the governor engaged in misconduct.

The board's minutes state that it took "appropriate action," but the board has kept that action a secret so far. The board is allowed under state law to issue a private reprimand. But the statute says it may take that action at the conclusion of a contested case hearing and after it has determined, by a majority vote, that there has been misconduct.

"Their official actions, whatever they may be, should be a public record," said David Bordewyk, who directs the South Dakota Newspaper Association and advocates for open records and meeting laws.

"Given the nature of this board, which is to hold public officials accountable, the public has a right to know what those accountability measures are, regardless of the official."

Board members this week either declined to comment or did not return a request for comment. An attorney hired by the board, Mark Haigh, has previously said it "fully complied" with all the requirements in the laws governing it.

Thousands wait in cold to pay respects to Queen Elizabeth II

By JILL LAWLESS, DANICA KIRKA and MIKE CORDER Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Thousands of people spent London's coldest night in months huddled in line to view the coffin of Queen Elizabeth II, and authorities warned Saturday that arriving mourners face a 16-hour wait.

Police arrested a man after what the force described as a "disturbance" Friday night in Parliament's Westminster Hall, where the queen's coffin is lying in state, draped in her Royal Standard and capped with a diamond-studded crown.

Parliamentary authorities said someone got out of the queue and tried to approach the coffin on its platform. The Metropolitan Police force said a man was detained for a suspected public-order offense.

The tide of people wanting to say goodbye to the queen has grown steadily since the public was first admitted to the hall on Wednesday. On Friday, authorities temporarily halted letting more visitors join the end of the line, which snakes around Southwark Park some 5 miles (8 kilometers) from Parliament.

Overnight, volunteers distributed blankets and cups of tea to people in line as the temperature fell to 6 degrees Celsius (43 degrees Fahrenheit). Despite the weather, mourners described the warmth of a shared experience.

"It was cold overnight, but we had wonderful companions, met new friends. The camaraderie was wonderful," Chris Harman of London said. "It was worth it. I would do it again and again and again. I would walk to the end of the earth for my queen."

People had myriad reasons for coming, from affection for the queen to a desire to be part of a historic moment. Simon Hopkins, who traveled from his home in central England, likened it to "a pilgrimage."

"(It) is a bit strange, because that kind of goes against my grain," he said. "I've been kind of drawn into it."

Members of the public kept silently streaming into Westminster Hall even as the queen's four children — King Charles III, Princess Anne, Prince Andrew and Prince Edward — stood vigil around the flag-draped

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coffin for 15 minutes on Friday evening. A baby's cry was the only sound.

Before the vigil, Edward said the royal family was "overwhelmed by the tide of emotion that has engulfed us and the sheer number of people who have gone out of their way to express their own love, admiration and respect (for) our dear mama."

All eight of Queen Elizabeth II's grandchildren are due to stand vigil beside her coffin on Saturday. Charles' sons, Prince William and Prince Harry, will attend along with Princess Anne's children, Zara Tindall and Peter Philips; Prince Andrew's daughters, Princess Beatrice and Princess Eugenie; and the two children of Prince Edward – Lady Louise Windsor and James, Viscount Severn.

William, who after his grandmother's death is now the heir to the throne, will stand at the head of the coffin and Harry at the foot. Both princes, who are military veterans, will be in uniform.

Most senior royals hold honorary military roles and have worn uniforms to commemorate the queen. Harry, who served in Afghanistan as a British army officer, wore civilian clothes during the procession of the queen's coffin from Buckingham Palace because he is no longer a working member of the royal family. He and his wife Meghan quit royal duties and moved to the United States in 2020.

The king, however, has requested that both William and Harry wear their military uniforms at the Westminster Hall vigil.

People queuing to see the queen have been of all ages and come from all walks of life. Many bowed before the coffin or made a sign of the cross. Several veterans, their medals shining in the spotlights, offered sharp salutes. Some people wept. Many hugged one another as they stepped away, proud to have spent hours in line to offer a tribute, even if it lasted only a few moments.

On Friday, the waiting time swelled to as long as 24 hours. The mourners included former England soccer captain David Beckham, who lined up for almost 12 hours to pay his respects. Wearing a white shirt and black tie, he bowed briefly to the coffin before moving out of Westminster Hall.

"We have been lucky as a nation to have had someone who has led us the way her majesty has led us, for the amount of time, with kindness, with caring and always reassurance," Beckham told reporters afterwards.

The lying-in-state is due to continue until Monday morning, when the queen's coffin will be borne to nearby Westminster Abbey for a state funeral, the finale to 10 days of national mourning for Britain's longest-reigning monarch. Elizabeth, 96, died at her Balmoral Estate in Scotland on Sept. 8 after 70 years on the throne.

Hundreds of heads of state, royals and political leaders from around the world are flying to London to attend the funeral, including U.S. President Joe Biden and Japanese Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako.

After the service at the abbey, the late queen's coffin will be transported through the historic heart of London on a horse-drawn gun carriage. It will then be taken in a hearse to Windsor, where the queen will be interred alongside her late husband, Prince Philip, who died last year.

Hundreds of troops from the British army, air force and navy took part in an early-morning rehearsal on Saturday for the final procession. As troops lined The Long Walk, a picturesque path leading to Windsor Castle, the thumping of drums echoed into the night as marching bands walked ahead of a hearse.

London police said the funeral will be the largest single policing event the force has ever handled, surpassing even the 2012 Summer Olympics and the Platinum Jubilee in June celebrating the queen's 70-year rein.

"The range of officers, police staff and all those supporting the operation is truly immense," said Metropolitan Police Deputy Assistant Commissioner Stuart Cundy.

Follow AP coverage of Queen Elizabeth II at <https://apnews.com/hub/queen-elizabeth-ii>

Pressure on Russian forces mounts after Ukraine's advances

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Western defense officials and analysts on Saturday said they believed the Russian forces were setting up a new defensive line in Ukraine's northeast after Kyiv's troops broke through the

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previous one and tried to press their advances further into the east.

The British Defense Ministry said in a daily intelligence briefing that the line likely is between the Oskil River and Svatove, some 150 kilometers (90 miles) southeast of Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city.

The new line comes after a Ukrainian counteroffensive punched a hole through the previous front line in the war and recaptured large swaths of land in the northeastern Kharkiv region that borders Russia.

Moscow "likely sees maintaining control of this zone as important because it is transited by one of the few main resupply routes Russia still controls from the Belgorod region of Russia," the British military said, adding that "a stubborn defense of this area" was likely, but that it remained unclear whether the Russians would be able to withstand another concerted Ukrainian assault.

Ukrainian forces, in the meantime, continue to cross the key Oskil River in the Kharkiv region as they try to press on in a counteroffensive targeting Russian-occupied territory, according to the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War.

The Institute said in its Saturday report that satellite imagery it examined suggest that Ukrainian forces have crossed over to the east bank of the Oskil in Kupiansk, placing artillery there. The river, which flows south from Russia into Ukraine, had been a natural break in the newly emerged front lines since Ukraine launched its push about a week ago.

"Russian forces are likely too weak to prevent further Ukrainian advances along the entire Oskil River if Ukrainian forces choose to resume offensive operations," the institute said.

After the Russian troops retreated from the city of Iziurm, Ukrainian authorities discovered a mass grave site, one of the largest so far discovered. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Friday that more than 440 graves have been found at the site but that the number of victims is not yet known.

Zelenskyy said the graves contained the bodies of hundreds of civilian adults and children, as well as soldiers, and some had been tortured, shot or killed by artillery shelling. He cited evidence of atrocities, such as a body with a rope around its neck and broken arms.

Videos circulating online on Saturday indicated that Ukrainian forces are also continuing to take land in the country's embattled east.

One video showed a Ukrainian soldier walking past a building, its roof destroyed, then pointing up over his shoulder at a colleague hanging the blue-and-yellow Ukrainian flag over a mobile phone tower. The soldier in the video identified the seized village as Dibrova, just northeast of the city of Sloviansk and southeast of the embattled city of Lyman in Ukraine's Donetsk region.

Another online video showed two Ukrainian soldiers in what appeared to be a bell tower. A Ukrainian flag hung as a soldier said they had taken the village of Shchurove, just northeast of Sloviansk.

The Ukrainian military and the Russians did not immediately acknowledge the change of hands of the two villages.

Elsewhere in Ukraine, Russian forces continued to pound cities and villages with missile strikes and shelling.

A Russian missile attack early Saturday started a fire in Kharkiv's industrial area, said Oleh Syniehubov, the regional governor. Firefighters extinguished the blaze.

Syniehubov said remnants of the missiles suggest the Russians fired S-300 surface-to-air missiles at the city. The S-300 is designed for striking missiles or aircraft in the sky, not targets on the ground. Analysts say Russia's use of the missiles for ground attacks suggest they may be running out of some precision munitions as the monthslong war continues.

In the southern Zaporizhzhia region, a large part of which is occupied by the Russians, one person was wounded after the Russian forces shelled the city of Orikhiv, Zaporizhzhia's Ukrainian governor Oleksandr Starukh reported on Telegram. Starukh said the Russian troops also shelled two villages in the region, destroying several civilian facilities there.

The central Dnipropetrovsk region also came under fire overnight, according to its governor, Valentyn Reznichenko. "The enemy attacked six times and launched more than 90 deadly projectiles on peaceful cities and villages," Reznichenko said.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's atomic energy operator, Energoatom, said a convoy of 25 trucks has brought diesel

fuel and other critical supplies to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant — Europe's largest, which was shut down a week ago amid fears that fighting in the area could result in a radiation disaster.

The trucks were allowed through Russian checkpoints on Friday to deliver spare parts for repairs of damaged power lines, chemicals for the operation of the plant and additional fuel for backup diesel generators, Energoatom said in a statement.

The six-reactor plant was captured by Russian forces in March but is still operated by Ukrainian engineers. Its last reactor was switched off Sunday after repeated power failures due to shelling put crucial safety systems at risk.

Karl Ritter in Kyiv contributed to this report.

Follow AP war coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine>

Cyprus hails US decision to fully lift weapons embargo

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Cyprus on Saturday hailed the full lifting of a U.S. arms embargo on the ethnically divided island nation as a milestone reaffirming increasingly tighter bilateral bonds that serve to bolster stability in the turbulent east Mediterranean region.

President Nicos Anastasiades tweeted his gratitude to the chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, New Jersey Democrat Robert Menendez, for helping to lift the embargo.

Turkey, which maintains more than 35,000 troops in the northern third of Cyprus, condemned the decision. Turkey's Foreign Ministry urged the U.S. to reconsider, warning that the move would harm efforts for a Cyprus peace deal, lead to an arms race on the island and undermine regional stability.

U.S. State Department spokesperson Ned Price said in a statement that Secretary of State Antony Blinken determined Cyprus met the conditions to allow for "exports, re-exports and transfers of defense articles ... for the fiscal year 2023."

The U.S. will assess annually whether Cyprus complies with conditions for the embargo lift, including implementing anti-money laundering regulations and denying Russian military vessels access to ports for refueling and servicing.

Cyprus barred Russian warships from using its ports in early March following the invasion of Ukraine.

The conditions are enshrined in the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act that the U.S. Congress passed in 2019. The law underscores U.S. support for closer ties among Greece, Cyprus and Israel based on recently discovered offshore gas deposits.

The U.S. enacted the embargo in 1987 to prevent a potential arms race from harming peace talks with the Mediterranean island nation's breakaway Turkish Cypriots. Cyprus was split in 1974 when Turkey invaded following a coup aimed at union with Greece.

Barred access to U.S. weapons, Cyprus turned to Russia to procure Mi-35 attack helicopters, T-80 tanks and Tor-M1 anti-aircraft missile systems.

Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan hold talks to end border fighting

MOSCOW (AP) — The security chiefs of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan sat down for talks Saturday to stop fighting on the border between the two countries that so far has killed at least 24 people and wounded over 100.

The Kyrgyz border service announced the new round of talks as the two ex-Soviet nations traded blame for shelling that resumed Saturday morning after what appeared to be a brief respite overnight.

The fighting, which started Wednesday for no obvious or publicly announced reason, intensified on Friday. Kyrgyzstan's Health Ministry said early Saturday that the bodies of 24 people killed in the clashes were delivered to hospitals in the Batken region that borders Tajikistan.

Kyrgyz hospitals and clinics also treated 103 people wounded in the shelling, the ministry said. It wasn't immediately clear whether there were any casualties on Tajikistan's side.

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Tajik authorities, however, accused Kyrgyz forces of destroying a mosque and targeting civilian infrastructure, including residential buildings. Tajikistan's security officials also charged that Kyrgyzstan was amassing troops and military equipment near the border in preparation for "provocations."

It wasn't immediately clear what prompted the fighting on the tense border between the two former Soviet Central Asian neighbors. An attempt to establish a cease-fire on Friday afternoon quickly failed and artillery shelling resumed later in the day.

Kyrgyzstan's Emergencies Ministry said 136,000 people were evacuated from the area engulfed by the fighting.

The border guard chiefs of the two countries met around midnight and agreed to create a joint monitoring group to help end the hostilities.

In 2021, a dispute over water rights and the installation of surveillance cameras by Tajikistan led to clashes near the border that killed at least 55 people.

The presidents of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Sadyr Zhaparov and Emomali Rakhmon, met Friday at the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Uzbekistan. According to a statement on Zhaparov's website, the two leaders discussed the border situation and agreed to task the relevant authorities with pulling back troops and stopping the fighting.

Zhaparov said Saturday in an online statement that "the issue of disputed borders has always been accompanied with conflicts and casualties".

"But, we will not give anyone a single meter of our land, which we inherited from our ancestors," Zhaparov said. "We will firmly defend national interests."

Hungary faces reckoning with EU that could cost it billions

By JUSTIN SPIKE Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — After his headline performance at Hungary's Sziget Festival last month, pop star Justin Bieber held a grandiose party for his staff in a luxurious countryside setting — a 19th century castle owned by the son-in-law of the country's prime minister.

The castle, to the critics of Prime Minister Viktor Orban, is emblematic of the corruption, nepotism and largesse of which the populist leader and his government have been accused for years — the kinds of behavior which now threaten to cost Hungary billions in European Union funding.

Standing beside the iron gates of Schossberger Castle this week, an independent Hungarian lawmaker who has made a name for himself as an anti-corruption crusader snapped pictures of the structure and its expansive manicured grounds.

A former member of Orban's ruling Fidesz party, Akos Hadhazy left the nationalist-populist party in 2013 after becoming aware of what he describes as a clientelistic system of unchecked corruption taking shape in the Central European nation.

"When Fidesz came to power, I saw more and more that a very serious organization was beginning to develop throughout the country, whose main task was to steal as much of the European Union's money as possible," Hadhazy told The Associated Press.

Now, Orban is facing a reckoning with the EU, which appears set to impose financial penalties on his government over corruption concerns and alleged rule-of-law violations that could cost Budapest billions and cripple its already ailing economy.

The EU's executive arm, the European Commission, has for nearly a decade accused Orban of dismantling democratic institutions, taking control of the media and infringing on minority rights. Orban, who has been in office since 2010, denies the accusations.

The longstanding conflict could culminate Sunday when the commission is expected to announce a funding cut for Hungary, one of the 27-nation EU's largest net beneficiaries, if the country does not change course.

Peter Kreko, director of the Budapest-based think tank Political Capital, said the EU appeared to be hardening its stance against Orban after previous disciplinary measures failed to bring Europe's longest-serving leader into compliance with its values.

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"EU institutions learn slowly, but they learn. More and more people in the Commission and in the European Union know about the negotiation deception tactics of Hungary, as well as about the nature of the Hungarian political regime," Kreko said.

While it is not clear how much money Hungary stands to lose, funds cut from its 22 billion-euro (dollar) share of the EU's 2021-27 budget could affect around 70% of funding from some programs, according to an internal July document by Budget Commissioner Johannes Hahn.

Many of the potential cuts are related to public procurements — purchases by the state of goods and services or for the execution of projects using EU funds.

According to Hadhazy, improper processes for awarding of such contracts have allowed Orban's government to channel large sums of EU money into the businesses of politically connected insiders.

"Huge fortunes were made from such things, and they are essentially the source of this astonishing luxury mansion behind us," Hadhazy said of the castle in the town of Tura. "The system is about having its tentacles ... in the highest levels of government."

EU commissioner Hahn's memo also pointed to irregularities in public procurements in Hungary and to "an increase of the odds of winning of politically connected companies."

Hadhazy, who has investigated and documented hundreds of cases of alleged corruption, borrowed a car from his mother to visit several places this week where he suspects EU funds were misused.

One was the site of a planned server farm near Budapest where the government said it would store the state's most important data. Receiving more than \$50 million in EU funding, construction of the facility — awarded to a company owned by a childhood friend of Orban who is Hungary's richest man — began in 2016, and completion was set for the following year.

But when Hadhazy visited the site on Wednesday, only a concrete skeleton stood where the server park was planned — a sign, he said, that the funds may have been misused.

"The whole process is a charade," Hadhazy said of Hungary's public procurement process, which ordinarily should involve competition between several bidding companies. "It's decided at the very beginning who can win, and it's decided who will do the work at the end."

He pointed to a case involving Istvan Tiborcz, the owner of the castle in Tura who is married to Orban's daughter. The European Anti-Fraud Office found serious irregularities in the awarding of funds to a company he owned.

As a result of the office's investigation, the EU demanded the return of more than 40 million euros (dollars). The sum was ultimately footed by Hungarian taxpayers, not Tiborcz's company, and an investigation into the case by Hungarian authorities was dropped for lack of evidence of a crime.

Tiborcz was Hungary's 36th wealthiest person this year, according to an analysis by Forbes Hungary.

Orban's government recently made conciliatory efforts to unlock nearly 6 billion euros (dollars) in pandemic recovery funds that the EU withheld over corruption concerns, and to head off further cuts to Hungary's portion of the EU budget.

Earlier this month, the Hungarian government pledged to set up its own anti-corruption agency. It has reportedly prepared additional legislation aimed at increasing transparency in public procurements.

But the European Commission faces pressure from EU lawmakers to fully enforce rules on corruption and rule of law requirements. In a resolution passed Thursday with an overwhelming majority, the European Parliament said the Hungarian government had become "a hybrid regime of electoral autocracy" that could no longer be considered a democracy.

Hungary's Ministry of Justice did not respond to a request for comment. Speaking in Serbia on Friday, Orban dismissed the resolution as a "joke" and maintained that his government's conservative credentials were the reason for the EU's tough stance.

Kreko, the analyst, said it was doubtful Orban's government was serious about changing its ways.

"I would say that the engine of the Orban regime is nepotistic corruption," he said. "So I think we can be rather skeptical about that how much the government really wants to step up against corruption, which is part of the nature of the regime."

In 2021, Hungary's government opted out of joining the European Public Prosecutors Office — an in-

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dependent EU body tasked with combating crimes affecting the financial interests of the bloc. It argued that joining would amount to a loss of national sovereignty.

But Hadhazy said that unless Orban's government agrees to join the office, there will be no real guarantee that graft reforms will be able to achieve any meaningful results.

"I say that if the EU gives Hungary one eurocent without us having joined the EU prosecutor's office, then the EU really is as stupid as Orban says it is," he said.

Live updates: Military rehearse queen's Windsor procession

By The Associated Press undefined

WINDSOR, England -- Hundreds of troops from the British army, air force and navy have taken part in the first full rehearsal of the procession that will bring the coffin of Queen Elizabeth II to its final resting place.

With troops lining The Long Walk, a picturesque path leading to Windsor Castle, the thumping of drums echoed as marching bands walked ahead of a hearse early Saturday.

On Monday, they will do the same, only surrounded by thousands of people expected to travel to Windsor for a final farewell to the queen, who died last week at age 96.

Her funeral is to be held at Westminster Abbey on Monday before some 2,000 guests, including visiting heads of state. After the church service, the late queen's coffin will be transported through the historic heart of London on a horse-drawn gun carriage.

It will then be taken by hearse to Windsor, where the queen will be interred alongside her late husband, Prince Philip, who died last year.

Some people who won't be in Windsor on Monday decided to wake up early to watch Saturday's rehearsal.

Local resident Katharine Horsfall said she set her alarm for 3:15 a.m. She said: "I think it will be an amazing tribute to the queen, a great send off, with all the pageantry that she so well deserves."

KEY DEVELOPMENTS:

- Crowds paying respects to queen boost London tourism amid slump
- In Yemen, queen's death recalls oppression under British colonial rule
- Queen's death a reminder of UK's disappearing World War II generation
- What to know about the queen's lying in state
- Reflections from the queue to mourn the queen
- Palace reveals details of queen's state funeral on Monday
- Find more AP coverage here: <https://apnews.com/hub/queen-elizabeth-ii>

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

BEIJING — China announced Saturday that Vice President Wang Qishan would attend the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II as the special representative of President Xi Jinping.

A group of British legislators sanctioned by China have expressed concern that the Chinese government has been invited to the funeral. One told the BBC the invitation should be rescinded because of human rights abuses in the treatment of the Uyghur ethnic group in China's far-western region of Xinjiang.

Wang, who is close to Xi, was a member of the ruling Communist Party's all-powerful, seven-member Politburo Standing Committee from 2012 to 2017. During those years, he led a crackdown on corruption that has been one of Xi's signature initiatives as China's leader.

Wang was named to the largely ceremonial post of vice president in 2018 and often attends events on Xi's behalf.

TOKYO — Japanese Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako left for Britain on Saturday to attend Queen Elizabeth II's funeral to pay respects to her and the British royal family who considered as a model for Japan's monarchy in modern history.

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The decision for the emperor and empress to attend the queen's funeral underscores the importance and the deep bond between the royal families. Traditionally, a Japanese emperor stays away from funerals except for those of their own parents because of a cultural belief based in the Shinto religion that considers death impure.

Former Emperor Akihito, as crown prince, attended the Queen's 1953 coronation and her Diamond Jubilee in 2012. Queen Elizabeth visited Japan in 1975.

Naruhito and Masako's trip to Britain is their first as the Emperor and Empress. The Queen's invitation for them to visit following Naruhito's 2019 ascension to the Chrysanthemum Throne had to be postponed due to the pandemic.

LONDON — King Charles III and his three siblings have stood vigil around their mother's coffin as it lies in state at Westminster Hall in London.

Charles, Princess Anne, Prince Andrew and Prince Edward stood with their backs to the flag-draped coffin of Queen Elizabeth II, their heads bowed.

Members of the public who had lined up for hours to pay their last respects continued to file past as the royals stood vigil in the historic event.

On Saturday, the queen's eight grandchildren will hold a similar vigil.

In Yemen, Queen's death recalls memories of colonial past

By ALAA NOMAN and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

ADEN, Yemen (AP) — In 1954, large crowds turned out for a historic visit by Queen Elizabeth II to Aden. At the time, this city on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula was a colony of the British Empire and was one of the busiest and most important ports in the world.

Now the queen's death after a 70-year reign has prompted some Yemenis to remember a part of history not often evoked.

Her death has brought waves of grief and sympathy from around the globe. But it has also raised calls for a re-examination of the death and deprivation inflicted by Britain's colonial rule in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.

In Aden, now the second largest city in Yemen, many remember colonial rule as a time of oppression that entrenched some of the problems still plaguing the city and the country, which has been devastated by civil war since 2015.

Some today still remember Elizabeth's visit with admiration and credit British rule with advances in the country. Hassan al-Awadi, a university student, knows his grandfather was among those waving from the street when the queen and her husband, Prince Phillip, passed by.

But al-Awadi says his generation now knows better.

"In the context of the 21st century, such practices are seen as a reflection of contemporary global issues like racism, inequality and white supremacy," he said.

"They cracked down on people who wanted to end the colonial occupation of this land. Thousands of people were killed in the struggle to root out colonialism. They should be prosecuted and pay for their crimes."

Aden was the only Arab territory to have been a British colony. Other British outposts in the Middle East like Egypt, Palestine and in the Gulf were mandates or protectorates, not outright colonies.

Aden was first occupied by the British in 1839. Britain went on to seize surrounding parts of southern Yemen as protectorates, clashing with the other colonizers of the peninsula, the Ottomans.

Finally, the two established a border splitting north and south Yemen — a division that has endured throughout the country's modern history and has flared again in the current civil war.

Aden was officially declared a Crown Colony in 1937. Positioned just outside the Red Sea, the city was a vital refueling and commercial port between Europe and Asia, particularly Britain's colony of India.

Elizabeth stopped by on the way back from Australia, part of her first tour of the Commonwealth two

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years after ascending to the throne.

Photos of the visit on the website of the British-Yemeni Society, a U.K. charity, show British officers, dignitaries and Yemeni leaders greeting the young queen and her husband.

Large numbers of Yemenis met them wherever they went. A ceremony was held for the queen to award a knighthood to local leader Sayyid Abubakr bin Shaikh al-Kaff. To receive it, al-Kaff knelt on a chair in what was explained as a refusal to bow before the queen because of his Muslim faith.

The royals also watched a military parade featuring British and local Yemeni forces.

But not long after the visit, an uprising emerged, fueled by pan-Arab nationalism and backed by Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser, an arch-foe of colonial powers in 1950s and 1960s. After years of fighting, the British were finally forced to withdraw.

When the last batch of British troops left Aden in late November 1967, the People's Republic of South Yemen was born with Aden its capital. It would be the only Marxist country to ever exist in the Arab world, lasting until unification with the north in 1990.

Some in Aden recall British rule as bringing order and development.

Bilal Gulamhussein, a writer and researcher of the modern history of Aden, said many "long for the past they lived during the days of British rule, because everything was going in order, as if you were living in Britain exactly."

He said that much of the beginnings of infrastructure and basic services, including health and education, date to the colonial time.

"Britain laid the foundations of the civil administration in Aden from the first beginnings of the occupation," he said.

A few small reminders remain.

A statue of Queen Victoria stands in a main square, nicked by bullets that grazed it during crossfires in the current civil war. A clocktower resembling London's Big Ben overlooks the city from a hilltop. A plaque commemorates Queen Elizabeth's laying of the founding stone of a main hospital.

The current civil war has torn Yemen into a north run by Houthi rebels and a south led by the internationally recognized government and a host of allied militias. Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries have intervened to back the government, seeing the Houthis as a proxy for Iran. The fighting has thrown Yemen into one of the world's worst humanitarian crisis, pushing it into deeper poverty and near famine.

Salem al Yamani, a schoolteacher in the southern province of Abyan, said that even amid the current chaos, nostalgia for colonial times sparked by Elizabeth's death is misplaced.

"The idea of having good roads and services does not mean they (the colonizers) were good. They were occupiers who served their own interest at the first place," he said.

"That the situation now is dire doesn't mean we want them back again," he said. "This is our own problem, and it will be resolved if foreign powers stopped meddling in our affairs."

Royal fans give London tourism a bump amid UK economic woes

By KELVIN CHAN AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — Royal fans have poured into the heart of London to experience the flag-lined roads, pomp-filled processions and, above all, brave a mileslong line for the once-in-a-lifetime chance to bid adieu to Queen Elizabeth II, who died after an unprecedented seven decades on the throne. And while they're here, they're packing hotels, restaurants and shops.

Visitors crowding into central London from as far away as the U.S. and India for the historic moment are giving a boost to businesses at a time when the British economy is facing a cost-of-living crisis fueled by the highest inflation in four decades and predictions of a looming recession.

"This is the history, you know, this happens once in the lifetime," said Kanakkantt Benedict, who was visiting from India with his wife and filed past the queen's flag-draped coffin this week. "So we became a part of it."

The pomp and pageantry leading up to the funeral for Britain's longest-reigning monarch underscored

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the royal family's power as a global attraction, from an elaborate military procession for her crown-topped coffin drawing live viewers around the world to piles of flowers filling up Green Park near Buckingham Palace and gift shops hastily churning out souvenirs commemorating the queen's life as people clamor for mementos.

Hundreds of thousands are expected to pay tribute to the queen in the four days that her body lies in state ahead of her state funeral Monday, pushing up demand for hotel rooms in central London that in some cases have doubled in price.

Hundreds of world leaders, from U.S. President Joe Biden to Japan's emperor and empress, plus their entourages need places to stay as they arrive for the queen's funeral. So do police officers coming from around Britain to help with security.

Occupancy levels could reach an all-time high of 95%, according to London-based group-booking platform Hotelplanner.com.

"That's not surprising when you consider that the eyes of the world really are on the capital and the media, dignitaries and members of the public, just like myself, who just want to be part of such a historic occasion," said Thomas Emanuel, senior director of hotel analytics firm STR.

All 35 rooms at the two-star Corbigoe Hotel in London's Victoria neighborhood, near Buckingham Palace, were booked, duty manager Riaz Badar said.

"Nowadays, rooms are full in this area, not only in our hotel but around all the hotels in this area," Badar said.

On the Thames, the Riverside Cafe that's next to the mileslong, round-the-clock line for people to get a glimpse of the queen's coffin, has been "extremely busy," manager Zab Istanik said. He's been opening two hours earlier than normal, at 7 a.m.

"We were busy like this when the Queen Mum passed away in 2002. But it wasn't as busy as it is ... this week," Istanik said.

Also on the route, Jason Rich's food stall, Fed By Plants, was doing brisk business selling lentil burgers. "It's a long queue," Rich said. "So definitely it had a good boost on the business."

The U.K. was already an attractive place to visit as demand rebounds for international travel since the COVID-19 pandemic and the weakened pound, especially for American visitors, makes transatlantic travel more affordable.

University professor Chad Broughton, 51, who was visiting London from Chicago with two friends after a long pandemic delay, said their hotel room in the tourist-heavy Covent Garden neighborhood was pricey at 400 pounds (\$456) a night.

But the trip to London was unique. "Seeing all these people queued up, seeing the reaction on BBC and just feeling this, you get a sense of how important it is to the people here," he said.

Plus, costs were offset by the currency's fall, friend Josh Walsman said.

"We've found everything to be a pretty surprising value," Walsman, 51-year-old musician, said as they walked by Westminster Hall, where mourners inside paid homage to the queen and tourists outside snapped photos on streets closed to traffic.

Walsman said they went to a Champions League soccer match, had tickets for a play and a dinner reservation at the upscale Cinnamon Club Indian restaurant.

"We've been mostly spending our money at pubs," he said. "The conversion rate has meant that each time a bill comes, it's like, 'Oh, I thought it was about 30% more.'"

The pound briefly slumped to a 37-year low against the dollar on Friday after U.K. retail sales volumes slid more than expected in August — a fresh sign of economic weakness.

The British economy is reeling from rising energy prices spurred by Russia's war in Ukraine, driving the worst cost-of-living crisis in a generation. The government said it will cap energy bills for households and businesses, but prices are still painfully high. Inflation is the highest in the Group of Seven economies, at 9.9%.

With that backdrop, the money being spent by visitors offered a glimmer of hope.

"Speaking to our hospitality sector, not just our hotels, but restaurants, bars and pubs, they've had an awful three years because of this pandemic," London Mayor Sadiq Khan said.

Budget hotel operator Travelodge said it's ordered extra breakfast supplies for its 78 London hotels for Monday, saying it expects many mourners to start their day with a "traditional full English" breakfast. Pub chain JD Wetherspoon says it will keep its pubs in central London open Monday during the queen's funeral.

Some analysts predicted the overall economic boost for the U.K. from the royal mourning period would be limited. That's because it would be offset by supermarkets, retailers, hardware stores and other businesses closing for the funeral Monday, which has been made a public holiday.

However, renewed interest in the royal family could give an extended boost to the travel and tourism industry, said Tim Hentschel, co-founder and CEO of Hotelplanner.com.

"Yes, short term, the bank holiday will probably cut down productivity a little bit," Hentschel said. But "the overall momentum that the U.K. is going to gain from all the tourism that's going to flock here over the next few days and then over the next few months will far outweigh" the short-term loss.

AP journalists Kwiyeon Ha, Jeffrey Schaeffer and Tian Macleod Ji contributed from London.

Follow AP coverage of Queen Elizabeth II at <https://apnews.com/hub/queen-elizabeth-ii>.

Biden meets with families of Whelan, Griner at White House

By SEUNG MIN KIM and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden met Friday with family members of WNBA star Brittney Griner and another American detained in Russia, Paul Whelan, the first face-to-face encounter that the president has had with the relatives.

In a statement after the meetings, which were held separately, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Biden stressed to the families his "continued commitment to working through all available avenues to bring Brittney and Paul home safely."

"He asked after the well-being of Elizabeth and Cherelle and their respective families during this painful time," Jean-Pierre said. "The President appreciated the opportunity to learn more about Brittney and Paul from those who love them most, and acknowledged that every minute they are being held is a minute too long."

Still, administration officials have said the meetings were not an indication that negotiations with Russia for their release have reached a breakthrough.

Earlier Friday, John Kirby, a spokesman for the National Security Council, said that Russia has not responded to what administration officials have called a substantial and serious offer to secure Griner and Whelan's release.

"The president is not going to let up," Kirby told reporters. "He's confident that this is going to remain in the forefront of his mind and his team's mind, and they're going to continue to work as hard as they can."

Griner has been held in Russia since February on drug-related charges. She was sentenced last month to nine years in prison after pleading guilty and has appealed the punishment. Whelan is serving a 16-year sentence on espionage-related charges that he and his family say are false. The U.S. government regards both as wrongfully detained, placing their cases with the office of its top hostage negotiator.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken took the unusual step of announcing two months ago that the administration had made a substantial proposal to Russia. Though he did not elaborate on the proposal, a person familiar with the matter has said the U.S. has offered to release convicted Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout.

The administration carried out a prisoner swap last April, with Moscow releasing Marine veteran Trevor Reed in exchange for the U.S. releasing a Russian pilot, Konstantin Yaroshenko, convicted in a drug trafficking conspiracy.

Jake Sullivan, the president's national security adviser, participated in both meetings. Biden sat down with Elizabeth Whelan, the sister of Paul Whelan. Then the president met with Cherelle Griner, the wife of

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Brittney Griner, as well as the player's agent, Lindsay Colas, according to the White House.

Cherelle Griner thanked Biden for the meeting in a statement late Friday.

"It was an honor to speak with him directly about the Brittney we know and love, and to thank him for the Administration's efforts to secure her release," she said. "I've felt every minute of the grueling seven months without her. I look forward to the day my wife is back home."

Voter challenges, records requests swamp election offices

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

Spurred by conspiracy theories about the 2020 presidential election, activists around the country are using laws that allow people to challenge a voter's right to cast a ballot to contest the registrations of thousands of voters at a time.

In Iowa, Linn County Auditor Joel Miller had handled three voter challenges over the previous 15 years. He received 119 over just two days after Doug Frank, an Ohio educator who is touring the country spreading doubts about the 2020 election, swung through the state.

In Nassau County in northern Florida, two residents challenged the registrations of nearly 2,000 voters just six days before last month's primary. In Georgia, activists are dropping off boxloads of challenges in the diverse and Democratic-leaning counties comprising the Atlanta metro area, including more than 35,000 in one county late last month.

Election officials say the vast majority of the challenges will be irrelevant because they contest the presence on voting rolls of people who already are in the process of being removed after they moved out of the region. Still, they create potentially hundreds of hours of extra work as the offices scramble to prepare for November's election.

"They at best overburden election officials in the run-up to an election, and at worse they lead to people being removed from the rolls when they shouldn't be," said Sean Morales-Doyle of The Brennan Center for Justice, which has tracked an upswing in voter challenges.

The voter challenges come as activists who believe in the election lies of former President Donald Trump also have flooded election offices across the country with public records requests and threats of litigation, piling even more work on them as they ready for November.

"It's time-consuming for us, because we have to consult with our county attorneys about what the proper response is going to be," said Rachel Rodriguez, an elections supervisor in Dane County, Wisconsin, which includes Madison, the state capital.

She received duplicate emails demanding records about two weeks ago: "It's taking up valuable time that we don't necessarily have as election officials when we're trying to prepare for a November election."

Michael Henrici, the Democratic commissioner of elections in New York's Otsego County, received a single-line email last week warning of unspecified "election integrity" litigation, then a follow-up complaining he hadn't responded.

"These aren't people with specific grievances," Henrici said. "They're getting a form letter from someone's podcast and sometimes filling in the blanks."

Multiple investigations and reviews, including one by Trump's own Department of Justice, found no significant fraud in the 2020 presidential election, and courts rejected dozens of lawsuits brought by Trump and his allies. But Trump has continued to insist that widespread fraud cost him re-election. That has inspired legions of activists to become do-it-yourself election sleuths around the country, challenging local voting officials at every turn.

In Linn County, Iowa, which includes the city of Cedar Rapids, Miller said he and the auditors who run elections in the state's other 98 counties have been deluged with both records requests and voter challenges.

"The whole barrage came in a two-week period," Miller said, following the tour by Frank, who uses mathematical projections to make claims of a vast conspiracy to steal the election from Trump, "and it's happening to auditors across the state."

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Election offices routinely go through their voter rolls and remove those who have moved or died. Federal law constrains how quickly they can drop voters, and conservative activists have long complained that election officials do not move swiftly enough to clean up their rolls.

The recent challenges stem from activists comparing postal change-of-address and other databases to voter rolls. Election officials say this is redundant, because they already take the same steps.

Sometimes the challenges come after election conspiracists go door-to-door, often in heavily minority neighborhoods, seeking evidence that votes were cast improperly in 2020.

Texas' heavily Democratic Harris County, which includes Houston, received nearly 5,000 challenges from a conservative group that went door-to-door checking voter addresses. The election office said it dismissed the challenges it legally had to review before the election and will finish the remainder after Nov. 8.

Activists in Gwinnett County, which stretches across the increasingly Democratic northern Atlanta suburbs, spent 10 months comparing change-of-address and other databases with the county's voter rolls. They submitted eight boxes of challenges last month. About 15,000, they said, were complaints that specific voters improperly received mail ballots in 2020. Another 22,000 were for voters they contend are no longer at their registered address.

There are so many challenges that election officials have yet to even count them all. But Zach Manifold, Gwinnett's election supervisor, said that, in every single mail ballot complaint the office has sampled, the voter properly received a mailed ballot.

But if any of the address-challenged voters do try to cast a ballot in November, the county's elections board will need to decide whether that vote should count. They'll only have six days to make a decision, as they have to certify their vote total by the Monday after Election Day under Georgia law.

Manifold estimated his office has a month to log and research the challenges, before mail ballots go out for the November elections: "It is a tight window to get everything done," he said.

Many of the large counties facing voter roll challenges are places where President Joe Biden beat Trump in 2020, including Gwinnett and Harris. Yet those behind the effort dispute the notion that they are targeting Democratic-leaning counties and say they're working on behalf of all voters. In Florida's Nassau County, for example, Trump won with more than 72% of the vote.

"They should be glad that the voter rolls are being cleaned up so they can make sure their votes count," said Garland Favorito, a conservative activist who has teamed up with supporters of Trump's election lies and is helping with voter challenges in Georgia.

Favorito said more challenges are coming in other Georgia counties.

Under legislation passed last year by the Republican-controlled Legislature, there are no limits on the number of voter challenges that can be filed in Georgia. Most states implicitly set restraints on challenges, said Morales-Doyle of the Brennan Center. They require a complainant to have specific, personal information about the voters they target and establish penalties for making frivolous challenges.

Florida is an example. Its voter challenge law only permits the filing of challenges 30 days before an election, requiring election officials to contact each voter challenged before Election Day. It is a misdemeanor to file a "frivolous" challenge. But voter challenges almost derailed Florida's primary last month in heavily-Republican Nassau County, in the northeastern part of the state.

Two women who belonged to a conservative group, County Citizens Defending Freedom, dropped off the nearly 2,000 challenges at the county elections office six days before the Aug. 23 primary.

Luckily for the office, the challenges were filed in an incorrect format. Elections Supervisor Janet Adkins told the activists they would review them, anyway — after the primary.

"To take away a person's right to vote is a very serious thing," Adkins said.

—
Holly Ramer in Concord, New Hampshire, contributed to this report.

Abrams' strategy to boost turnout: Early voting commitments

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

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DECATUR, Ga. (AP) — Stacey Abrams, Georgia Democrats' nominee for governor, is launching an intensive effort to get out the vote by urging potential supporters to cast in-person ballots the first week of early voting as she tries to navigate the state's new election laws.

The strategy, outlined to The Associated Press by Abrams' top aides, is a shift from 2018, when she spent generously in her first gubernatorial bid to encourage voters to use mail ballots. It also moves away from Democrats' pandemic-era emphasis on mail voting, a push that delivered Georgia's electoral votes to President Joe Biden and helped Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff win concurrent U.S. Senate runoffs to give Democrats control of Capitol Hill.

Republicans, including Abrams' opponent, Gov. Brian Kemp, answered in 2021 with sweeping election changes that, among other provisions, dramatically curtailed drop boxes for mail ballots, added wrinkles to mail ballot applications and ballot return forms, and made it easier to challenge an individual voter's eligibility. But it also expanded in-person voting.

"It's self-evident we have to have a big early vote in-person," said Abrams campaign manager Lauren Groh-Wargo, arguing the new mail ballot procedures make it risky for Democrats to rely too heavily on that option. "What's not self-evident," Groh-Wargo continued, "is how the hell you do that."

Primary elections this midterm season have suggested a national decline in mail balloting, which spiked in 2020 because of COVID-19. Still, Abrams' approach, which is shared by some liberal voting rights activists, represents a pivot from Democrats' pre-COVID tactics and demonstrates how the left intends to try to maximize their votes in jurisdictions where Republicans remain in control of election procedures.

Abrams' push, timed to begin a month before early voting begins, comes with some polls suggesting she trails Kemp slightly after losing their first matchup by about 55,000 votes out of 4 million.

Beginning Sunday, the Democrat's campaign will ask supporters to commit to vote at in-person polling sites during the first week of early voting, which opens Oct. 17. The campaign will send digital commitment cards to targeted supporters via email and texts, with direct mail to follow. Field workers will ask voters to fill out commitment cards, with 2 million households slated for in-person visits. And the Abrams campaign will make pledge cards a standard part of its campaign events.

The week-one commitment, with a voter going beyond simply committing to cast a ballot before early voting ends on Nov. 4, is intentional. After adding an individual's commitment to their profile in the campaign's voter database, Abrams' team will use publicly available turnout data to identify anyone who hasn't followed through or had trouble casting a ballot. Anyone denied early ballot access will be routed to Georgia Democrats' voter protection operation, with "lots of time left" to rectify the situation, Groh-Wargo said.

She said that's better than the alternative options: having mail ballots rejected or waiting until Election Day and, under new laws, not getting a provisional ballot until late on Nov. 8, with no other recourse.

Georgia Democrats aren't abandoning mail voting altogether. The state party and Abrams campaign together have targeted 500,000 reliable Democratic voters to cast mail ballots. They were identified based on their long history of using that method, rather than anything they did from 2018 forward when Democrats ratcheted up an emphasis on a mail and absentee process that Georgia Republicans had dominated previously.

In her first campaign against Kemp, Abrams took the unusual step of sending nearly completed mail ballot applications to 1.6 million Georgians her campaign identified as sporadic but Democratic-aligned voters — a tactic that exceeded even the most ambitious one-time mailers sent by earlier Democratic presidential campaigns. With a cost approaching seven figures, Abrams knew it would be inefficient; such applications generally coax participation from less than 10% of participants.

But the campaign identified tens of thousands of new voters from the effort. Abrams ended up outpacing Kemp in mail support by 53,709 votes, though she lost the early in-person vote by 19,895 and the Election Day vote by nearly 94,000. She won about two-thirds of 10,000-plus provisional ballots. She ended up about 19,000 votes short of forcing a runoff, since Georgia law requires a majority to win statewide offices.

Republicans 2021 voting overhaul prohibits the kind of mailer that Abrams sent, allowing only blank state-issued forms. Those now require voter ID — a state ID number or photocopy of the ID — and a voter's

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birthday. Much of the information must be repeated with the returned ballot, creating the possibility of more mismatches that could result in the ballot being tossed out.

Groh-Wargo wouldn't offer a specific early voting turnout goal. But she said Abrams' 2018 early in-person support — 930,131 of her 1.92 million votes — fell short of internal targets. Yet Abrams' overall total, even in defeat, exceeded any Democrat in Georgia history at the time. It was eclipsed by Biden, Warnock and Ossoff as the overall electorate continued to grow.

"All of that makes early voting that much more important," said Nsé Ufot, who now leads the New Georgia Project, a voting rights group Abrams founded when she was a young state lawmaker.

Ufot said her outlet and others like it are pressing early in-person voting in their outreach efforts. New Georgia Project, she said, has registered 30,000 new voters and knocked on 1.3 million doors since the 2021 Senate runoffs, with 1 million more planned before Nov. 8.

Redesigning voter turnout plans, Groh-Wargo said, doesn't change Democrats' underlying necessity to expand the electorate if they hope to win in a historically conservative-leaning state like Georgia. That means many of the 1.6 million households who got Abrams' mail ballot application in 2018 and didn't vote will still be getting a visit about early in-person voting.

That expansion strategy, Ufot said, still runs into skepticism among some Democratic donors. "It's so clear that people have no idea how 2020 happened or 2018 for that matter," Ufot said.

Behind-the-scenes pressure has intensified, Ufot said, with polls conducted since the beginning of July suggesting a tight race or narrow Kemp lead. Groh-Wargo said she hears the narrative of Abrams "struggling." She acknowledged a "nasty environment" for Democrats given global inflation and Biden being less popular in Georgia than when he won the state. But the worry, she said, remains rooted in misunderstanding Abrams' path.

"A lot of our constituencies are 'persuasion voters,'" Groh-Wargo said. That doesn't mean swing voters, she said, because they're not choosing between Abrams and Kemp — they're deciding whether to back Abrams or not vote at all.

Still, Ufot said, the dynamics put enormous pressure on Abrams and her campaign to succeed so the left's donor base doesn't start short-changing voter turnout networks she said are necessary to tap diverse electorates in traditionally Republican states.

"This is going to be a game of inches," she said. "We just have to widen the aperture to see what's at play here."

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Alaska braces for floods, power outages as huge storm nears

By BECKY BOHRER, MARK THIESSEN and JOHN ANTCZAK Associated Press

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — Residents on Alaska's vast and sparsely populated western coast braced Friday for a powerful storm that forecasters said could be one of the worst in recent history, threatening hurricane-force winds and high surf that could knock out power and cause flooding.

The storm is the remnants of what was Typhoon Merbok, which University of Alaska Fairbanks climate specialist Rick Thoman said is also influencing weather patterns far from Alaska — a rare late-summer storm now is expected to bring rain this weekend to drought-stricken parts of California.

"All this warm air that's been brought north by this ex-typhoon is basically inducing a chain reaction in the jet stream downstream from Alaska," he said.

"It's a historic-level storm," Thoman said of the system steaming toward Alaska. "In 10 years, people will be referring to the September 2022 storm as a benchmark storm."

Hurricane-force winds were forecast in parts of the Bering Sea, while in the small communities of Elim and Koyuk, around 90 miles (145 kilometers) from the hub community of Nome, water levels could be up to 18 feet (5 meters) above the normal high tide line, according to the National Weather Service. Flood

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warnings were in effect until Monday in parts of northwest Alaska.

In Nome, which has about 3,500 residents, Leon Boardway was working as usual Friday at the Nome Visitors Center, a half-block from the Bering Sea. "I just want to keep my door open and the coffee pot on," he said after it had begun to rain and the winds picked up.

But few people were coming by. Residents, visitors and businesses in the town, famous for being at the end of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race and the setting for the dredging-for-gold reality show "Bering Sea Gold," were boarding up windows and otherwise bracing for the storm.

"The ocean is getting worse out there," said Boardway, 71, as he checked out the center's webcam, which from its high perch has a good view of the swells.

"I hope everybody stays calm and everybody just gets in a good, safe position," he said.

Typhoon Merbok formed farther east in the Pacific Ocean than where such storms typically appear. Water temperatures are unusually warm this year so the storm "was able to spin up," Thoman said.

Meanwhile, a low-pressure system was expected to drop from the Gulf of Alaska and park off the coast of Northern California, producing gusty ridgetop winds before rains set in late Saturday, the National Weather Service said.

In the Sierra Nevada foothills northeast of the state capital of Sacramento, fire crews have been fighting what has become the largest wildfire in that state so far this year. While rain is needed, the storm was predicted to also bring winds that could spread the Mosquito Fire.

The storm will slow but not end California's fire season because fuels are critically dry and a period of warmer, drier weather will follow, said Courtney Carpenter, a National Weather Service meteorologist.

Forecasters said the weather system will spread rain down the state's central coast but little if any is expected in most of Southern California, where mountain and desert communities are dealing with the aftermath of too much rain.

Crews were clearing head-high mud flows in the San Bernardino Mountains east of Los Angeles, following flash-flooding Monday. Downpours from remnants of a Pacific hurricane caused the devastation in Southern California, with winds topping 100 mph (160 kph) last weekend.

First responders on Thursday found the body of a woman missing since the mudslides tore through her mountain town. Her remains were discovered buried under mud, rocks and other debris near her home.

The deluges added to road and infrastructure damage in desert national parks from the summer's punishing monsoonal thunderstorms.

Thiessen reported from Anchorage, Alaska. Antczak reported from Los Angeles.

US asks appeals court to lift judge's Mar-a-Lago probe hold

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department asked a federal appeals court Friday to lift a judge's order that temporarily barred it from reviewing a batch of classified documents seized during an FBI search of former President Donald Trump's Florida home last month.

The department told the 11th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in Atlanta that the judge's hold, imposed last week, had impeded the "government's efforts to protect the nation's security" and interfered with its investigation into the presence of top-secret information at Mar-a-Lago. It asked the court to remove that order so work could resume, and to halt a judge's directive forcing the department to provide the seized classified documents to an independent arbiter for his review.

"The government and the public would suffer irreparable harm absent a stay" of the order, department lawyers wrote in their brief to the appeals court.

U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon's appointment of a so-called special master to review the documents, and the resulting legal tussle it has caused, appear certain to slow by weeks the department's investigation into the holding of classified documents at the Florida property after Trump left office. The Justice Department has been investigating possible violations of multiple statutes, including under the Espionage

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Act, but it remains unclear whether Trump — who has been laying the groundwork for a potential presidential run — or anyone else might be charged.

The FBI says it took about 11,000 documents, including roughly 100 with classification markings found in a storage room and an office, while serving a court-authorized search warrant at the home on Aug. 8. Weeks after the search, Trump lawyers asked a judge to appoint a special master to conduct an independent review of the records.

Cannon granted the request last week, assigning a special master to review the records and weed out any that may be covered by claims of attorney-client or executive privilege. She directed the department to halt its use of the classified documents for investigative purposes until further court order, or until the completion of the special master's work.

On Thursday night, she assigned Raymond Dearie, the former chief judge of the federal court based in Brooklyn, to serve in the role. She also declined to lift her earlier order, citing ongoing disputes about the nature of the documents that she said merited a neutral review by an outside arbiter.

"The Court does not find it appropriate to accept the Government's conclusions on these important and disputed issues without further review by a neutral third party in an expedited and orderly fashion," she wrote.

The Justice Department on Friday night told the appeals court that Cannon's injunction "unduly interferes with the criminal investigation," prohibiting investigators from "accessing the seized records to evaluate whether charges are appropriate." It also prevents the FBI from using the seized records in its criminal investigation to determine which documents, if any, were disclosed and to whom, the department said.

Though Cannon has said investigators are free to do other investigative work that did not involve a review of the documents, the department said Friday that that was largely impractical. Noting the discovery of dozens of empty folders at Mar-a-Lago marked classified, it said the judge's hold appeared to bar it from "further reviewing the records to discern any patterns in the types of records that were retained, which could lead to identification of other records still missing."

The department also asked the appeals court to reject Cannon's order that it provide the newly appointed special master with the classified documents, suggesting there was no reason for the arbiter to review highly sensitive records that did not involve questions of legal privilege.

"Plaintiff has no claim for the return of those records, which belong to the government and were seized in a court-authorized search," department lawyers wrote. "The records are not subject to any possible claim of personal attorney-client privilege. And neither Plaintiff nor the court has cited any authority suggesting that a former President could successfully invoke executive privilege to prevent the Executive Branch from reviewing its own records."

Cannon has directed Dearie to complete his work by Nov. 30 and to prioritize the review of the classified documents. She directed the Justice Department to permit the Trump legal team to inspect the seized classified records with "controlled access conditions" — something government lawyers said Friday was needless and harmful.

On Friday, Dearie, a former federal prosecutor, scheduled a preliminary conference with Trump lawyers and Justice Department lawyers for Tuesday afternoon.

Associated Press writer Jill Colvin in New York contributed to this report.
Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

Putin vows to press attack on Ukraine; courts India, China

SAMARKAND, Uzbekistan (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin vowed Friday to press his attack on Ukraine despite Ukraine's latest counteroffensive and warned that Moscow could ramp up its strikes on the country's vital infrastructure if Ukrainian forces target facilities in Russia.

Speaking to reporters Friday after attending a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Uzbekistan, Putin said the "liberation" of Ukraine's entire eastern Donbas region remained Russia's main

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military goal and that he sees no need to revise it.

"We aren't in a rush," the Russian leader said, adding that Moscow has only deployed volunteer soldiers to fight in Ukraine. Some hard-line politicians and military bloggers have urged the Kremlin to follow Ukraine's example and order a broad mobilization to beef up the ranks, lamenting Russia's manpower shortage.

Russia was forced to pull back its forces from large swaths of northeastern Ukraine last week after a swift Ukrainian counteroffensive. Ukraine's move to reclaim control of several Russian-occupied cities and villages marked the largest military setback for Moscow since its forces had to retreat from areas near the capital early in the war.

In his first comment on the Ukrainian counteroffensive, Putin said: "Let's see how it develops and how it ends."

He noted that Ukraine has tried to strike civilian infrastructure in Russia and "we so far have responded with restraint, but just yet."

"If the situation develops this way, our response will be more serious," Putin said.

"Just recently, the Russian armed forces have delivered a couple of impactful strikes," he said in an apparent reference to Russian attacks earlier this week on power plants in northern Ukraine and a dam in the south. "Let's consider those as warning strikes."

He alleged, without offering specifics, that Ukraine has attempted to launch attacks "near our nuclear facilities, nuclear power plants," adding that "we will retaliate if they fail to understand that such methods are unacceptable."

Russia has reported numerous explosions and fires at civilian infrastructure in areas near Ukraine, as well as munitions depots and other facilities. Ukraine has claimed responsibility for some of the attacks and refrained from commenting on others.

Putin also sought Friday to assuage India's concern about the conflict in Ukraine, telling Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi that Moscow wants to see a quick end to the fighting and alleging that Ukrainian officials won't negotiate.

"I know your stand on the conflict in Ukraine and the concerns that you have repeatedly voiced," the Russian leader told Modi. "We will do all we can to end that as quickly as possible. Regrettably, the other side, the leadership of Ukraine, has rejected the negotiations process and stated that it wants to achieve its goals by military means, on the battlefield."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says it's Russia that allegedly doesn't want to negotiate in earnest. He also has insisted on the withdrawal of Russian troops from occupied areas of Ukraine as a precondition for talks.

Putin's remarks during the talks with Modi echoed comments the Russian leader made during Thursday's meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping when Putin thanked him for his government's "balanced position" on the Ukraine war, while adding that he was ready to discuss China's unspecified "concerns" about Ukraine.

Speaking to reporters Friday, Putin said he and Xi "discussed what we should do in the current conditions to efficiently counter unlawful restrictions" imposed by the West. The European Union, the United States and other Western nations have put sanctions on Russian energy due to the war in Ukraine.

Xi, in a statement released by his government, expressed support for Russia's "core interests" but also interest in working together to "inject stability" into world affairs. China's relations with Washington, Europe, Japan and India have been strained by disputes about technology, security, human rights and territory.

Zhang Lihua, an international relations expert at Tsinghua University, said the reference to stability "is mainly related to China-U.S. relations," adding that "the United States has been using all means to suppress China, which forced China to seek cooperation with Russia."

China and India have refused to join Western sanctions against Russia over its war in Ukraine while increasing their purchases of Russian oil and gas, helping Moscow offset the financial restrictions imposed by the U.S. and its allies.

Putin also met Friday with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to discuss bolstering economic coop-

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eration and regional issues, including a July deal brokered by Turkey and the United Nations that allowed Ukrainian grain exports to resume from the country's Black Sea ports.

Speaking at the Uzbekistan summit on Friday, Xi warned his Central Asian neighbors not to allow outsiders to destabilize them. The warning reflects Beijing's anxiety that Western support for democracy and human rights activists is a plot to undermine Xi's ruling Communist Party and other authoritarian governments.

"We should prevent external forces from instigating a color revolution," Xi said in a speech to the leaders of Shanghai Cooperation Organization member nations, referring to protests that toppled unpopular regimes in the former Soviet Union and the Middle East.

Xi offered to train 2,000 police officers, to set up a regional counterterrorism training center and to "strengthen law enforcement capacity building." He did not elaborate.

His comments echoed longtime Russian grievances about the color-coded democratic uprisings in several ex-Soviet nations that the Kremlin viewed as instigated by the U.S. and its allies.

Xi is promoting a "Global Security Initiative" announced in April following the formation of the Quad by the U.S., Japan, Australia and India in response to Beijing's more assertive foreign policy. U.S. officials complain it echoes Russian arguments in support of Moscow's actions in Ukraine.

Central Asia is part of China's multibillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative to expand trade by building ports, railways and other infrastructure across an arc of dozens of countries from the South Pacific through Asia to the Middle East, Europe and Africa.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was formed by Russia and China as a counterweight to U.S. influence. The group also includes India, Pakistan and the four ex-Soviet Central Asian nations of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Iran is on track to receive full membership.

Follow all AP stories about the war in Ukraine at <https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine>.

Surprise is key part of migrant travel from Florida, Texas

By RODRIQUE NGOWI, GISELA SALOMON and CLAUDIA TORRENS Associated Press

EDGARTOWN, Mass. (AP) — The chief executive of Martha's Vineyard Community Services was wrapping up work when she looked outside to see 48 strangers at her office with luggage, backpacks and red folders that included brochures for her organization.

The Venezuelan migrants who were flown to the wealthy Massachusetts island from San Antonio on Wednesday by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said they were told they were going to Boston.

DeSantis took from the playbook of a fellow Republican, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, by surprising Democratic strongholds with large influxes of migrants and providing little or no information.

"They were told that they would have a job and they would have housing," said Elizabeth Folcarelli, who leads Martha's Vineyard Community Services and described the scramble for shelter as a "huge challenge."

Julio Henriquez, an attorney who met with several migrants, said they "had no idea of where they were going or where they were."

Two flights to Martha's Vineyard stopped in the Florida Panhandle, Henriquez said. While on board, migrants got brochures and maps of Massachusetts.

An unsigned letter told migrants to notify U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services of address changes, though U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is actually responsible for tracking migrants, Henriquez said. "This is terrible advice," he said.

Many immigrants have appointments with ICE on Monday in San Antonio. Others were ordered to report to immigration authorities in two weeks to three months in cities including Philadelphia and Washington.

U.S. officials told immigration attorneys that required check-ins would be postponed, Henriquez said. Homeland Security officials didn't immediately respond to a request for comment Friday.

In San Antonio, a Latina woman approached migrants at a city-run shelter and put them up at a nearby La Quinta Inn, where she visited daily with food and gift cards, Henriquez said. She promised jobs and three months of housing in Washington, New York, Philadelphia and Boston.

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The woman, who introduced herself to migrants as Perla, promised jobs, housing and support for their immigration cases, said Oren Sellstrom of Lawyers for Civil Rights, which offered free consultations.

The city of San Antonio was unaware of the flights, said Maria Villagomez, deputy city manager.

Pedro Luis Torrelaba, 36, said he was promised work, food and housing. He thought he was going to New York.

"I am not a victim," he said Friday, expressing gratitude to residents of Martha's Vineyard for their hospitality. "I simply feel misled because they told a lie and it has come to nothing."

The migrants were being moved voluntarily Friday to a military base on nearby Cape Cod. Republican Gov. Charlie Baker said he would activate up to 125 National Guard members to assist the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency.

DeSantis said Friday that most migrants intended to come to Florida and that the trip to Martha's Vineyard was voluntary. He did not address the migrants' claims that they were told they were going elsewhere.

Florida's governor defended picking up migrants in Texas and vowed to continue transportation to immigrant-friendly "sanctuary" jurisdictions.

"Our view is that you've got to deal with it at the source, and if they're intending to come to Florida or many of them are intending to come to Florida, that's our best way to make sure they end up in a sanctuary," he said.

Texas has bused about 8,000 migrants to Washington since April, including more than 100 Thursday to Vice President Kamala Harris' home. It also has bused about 2,200 to New York and 300 to Chicago.

Arizona has bused more than 1,800 migrants to Washington since May, but has kept officials on the receiving end informed of the plans. The city of El Paso, Texas, has sent at least 1,135 migrants on 28 buses to New York since Aug. 23 and, like Arizona, shares passenger rosters and other information.

Last week, a 2-year-old who arrived in New York from Texas was hospitalized for dehydration and a pregnant woman on the same bus was in severe pain, according to advocates and city officials.

Volunteer groups often wait hours for buses arriving from Texas in a designated space of Manhattan's Port of Authority Bus Terminal. They rely on tipsters for help.

"It's a problem because we don't know when the buses are coming, how many buses are coming, if anyone on these buses has medical conditions that they will need help with, if they need a wheelchair," said Manuel Castro, commissioner of the New York City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. "We at least want to know that so that we can best help people as they arrive."

A contractor that Texas hired to bus migrants signed an agreement that prohibits them from talking to New York officials, Castro said.

Some fathers have arrived in New York while their spouses and children were sent to Washington, said Ilze Thielmann, a volunteer director with TLC NYC, a group working to reunite them.

Illinois Democratic Gov. J.B. Pritzker said his administration has reached out to Texas but gets no information. The first migrants arrived at Chicago's Union Station from Texas on Aug. 31.

Abbott's office dismissed complaints about lack of coordination and keeping cities guessing about the governor's next moves as he tries to stoke opposition to President Joe Biden's border policies.

"Instead of complaining about fulfilling their sanctuary city promises, these Democrat hypocrites should call on President Biden to do his job and secure the border — something the president continues failing to do," spokeswoman Renae Eze said Thursday.

Arizona has been working since May through the Regional Center for Border Health, which runs clinics for low-income patients in Yuma. Several days a week, a bus heads east from a clinic office in suburban Somerton.

Amanda Aguirre, the health care provider's CEO, said she told Republican Gov. Doug Ducey's staff that she wouldn't participate without close coordination. Arizona established information-sharing protocols from the start with Carecen, a nonprofit group that assists migrants in Washington, Aguirre said.

"I will never allow people just being dropped in the street because that's what I'm trying to prevent here in Yuma, being just dropped in the street," Aguirre said.

Some migrants seem unaffected by the chaos.

Cleiver Rodriguez of Venezuela said he appreciated the free ride from Texas to New York, where he came looking for work.

"I don't have any kind of opinion because at least they helped me get here," Rodriguez, 24, said as he left a shelter.

Salomon reported from Miami and Torrens from New York. Associated Press writers Anthony Izaguirre in Tallahassee, Florida; Elliot Spagat in Somerton, Arizona; Jake Bleiberg in Dallas; Morgan Lee in Santa Fe, New Mexico; and Paul Weber in Austin, Texas, contributed to this report.

Ukrainian president: Burial site contains torture victims

By VASILISA STEPANENKO Associated Press

IZIUM, Ukraine (AP) — Investigators searching through a mass burial site in Ukraine have found evidence that some of the dead were tortured, including bodies with broken limbs and ropes around their necks, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Friday.

The site near the northeastern city of Iziium, recently recaptured from Russian forces, appears to be one of the largest discovered in Ukraine.

Zelenskyy spoke in a video he rushed out just hours after the exhumations began, apparently to underscore the gravity of the discovery. He said more than 440 graves have been found at the site but that the number of victims was not yet known.

Digging in the rain, workers hauled body after body out of the sandy soil in a misty pine forest near Iziium. Protected by head-to-toe suits and rubber gloves, they gently felt through the decomposing remains of the victims' clothing, seemingly looking for identifying items.

Associated Press journalists who visited the site saw graves marked with simple wooden crosses. Some of the markers bore people's names and had flowers hanging from them.

Before digging, investigators with metal detectors scanned the site for explosives, and soldiers strung red and white plastic tape between the trees.

Zelenskyy said hundreds of civilian adults and children, as well as soldiers, had been found near Iziium's Pishchanske cemetery after being tortured, shot or killed by artillery shelling.

He cited evidence of atrocities, such as a body with a rope around its neck and broken arms. In another sign of possible torture, one man was found with his hands tied, according to Serhiy Bohdan, the head of Kharikiv police investigations, and Ukraine's commissioner for human rights, Dmytro Lubinets.

Ukrainian authorities warned that their investigation was just beginning, and the scale of the killings could rise dramatically.

"The harsh reality indicates that the number of dead in Iziium may be many times higher than the Bucha tragedy," Oleg Kotenko, an official with the Ukrainian ministry tasked with reintegrating occupied territories, said on Telegram.

Bucha is a Kyiv suburb where authorities have said 458 bodies were found after a 33-day Russian occupation. Authorities say they have uncovered the bodies of more than 1,300 people elsewhere, many in mass graves in the Kyiv-area forest.

Zelenskyy, who visited the Iziium area Wednesday, said the discoveries showed again the need for world leaders to declare Russia a state sponsor of terrorism.

Meanwhile, in his first public comments on Ukraine's recent battlefield gains, Russian President Vladimir Putin vowed to press on with the war and warned that Moscow could ramp up its strikes on the country's vital infrastructure if Ukrainian forces target facilities in Russia.

"If the situation develops this way, our response will be more serious," Putin told reporters Friday after attending a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Uzbekistan.

Russia has reported numerous explosions and fires at civilian infrastructure sites near Ukraine, as well as munitions depots and other facilities. Ukraine has claimed responsibility for some of the attacks and refrained from commenting on others.

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The "liberation" of Ukraine's entire eastern Donbas region remained Russia's main military goal, Putin said. "We aren't in a rush," he said, adding that Russia has only deployed volunteer soldiers to fight in Ukraine. Some hard-line Russian politicians and military bloggers have lamented manpower shortages and urged the Kremlin to follow Ukraine's example and order broad mobilization to beef up the ranks.

Ukrainian forces gained access to the site near Iziium after recapturing the city and much of the wider Kharkiv region in a lightning advance that suddenly shifted the momentum in the nearly seven-month war. Ukrainian officials also found evidence of torture elsewhere in the region.

The U.N. human rights office said it would investigate, and the human rights group Amnesty International said the discovery of the mass burial site confirmed "our darkest fears."

"For every unlawful killing or other war crime, there must be justice and reparation for victims and their families and a fair trial and accountability for suspected perpetrators," said Marie Struthers, the group's director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Most of the people buried at the site were believed to be civilians, but a marker on one mass grave said it contained the bodies of 17 Ukrainian soldiers.

Russian officials distanced themselves from responsibility for the site.

The Kharkiv region's Russian-installed governor, Vitaly Ganchev, told Russia's state-run Tass news agency that Ukrainian, not Russian, forces were responsible for civilian casualties in Iziium. Tass also quoted a member of Russia's parliament, Alexander Malkevich, claiming that Ukrainian troops had abandoned their dead, so Russian forces buried them.

Elsewhere in Ukraine, the war continued to claim lives and wreak destruction.

— Ukraine's presidential office said Russian shelling killed five civilians and wounded 18 in a 24-hour span. Missile strikes were also reported, with Zelenskyy's hometown of Kryvyi Rih among the targets for a third consecutive day Friday. Air raid sirens howled in the capital, Kyiv.

— More killings targeting pro-Russian separatist officials were reported in areas under their control. Separatist authorities said a blast killed the prosecutor-general and his deputy of the self-proclaimed republic in the Luhansk region. Moscow-backed authorities said two Russian-installed officials were also killed in Berdyansk, a city in the Zaporizhzhia region occupied earlier in the war. And local authorities reported three people were killed in a Ukrainian missile strike on an administrative building in Russian-occupied Kherson.

— To bolster the Ukrainian offensive, the Biden administration announced another \$600 million package of military aid.

Iziium resident Sergei Gorodko said that among the hundreds buried in individual graves were dozens of adults and children killed in a Russian airstrike on an apartment building, some of whom he pulled out of rubble "with my own hands."

Iziium was a key supply hub for Russian forces until they withdrew in recent days. Iziium city council member Maksym Strelnikov told reporters that hundreds of people had died during the fighting and after Russia seized the town in March. Many couldn't be properly buried, he said.

His claims could not be immediately verified, but similar scenes have played out in other cities Russian forces captured, including Mariupol.

Ukraine's national police chief, Ihor Klymenko, said "torture chambers" have been found in the Kharkiv region's recaptured towns and villages. The claim could not be independently verified.

Seven Sri Lankan students who fell into Russian hands in Kupiansk, also in the Kharkiv region, have also said that they were held and mistreated, he said.

"They are scared, they were abused," Klymenko said. They include "a woman who can barely speak" and two people with torn toe nails.

This story has been updated to correct that seven, not six, Sri Lankan students said they fell into Russian hands.

Associated Press journalists Hanna Arhirova and Jon Gambrell in Kyiv and Jamey Keaten in Geneva contributed reporting.

Follow AP war coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine>

'The Phantom of the Opera' to close on Broadway next year

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — "The Phantom of the Opera" — Broadway's longest-running show — is scheduled to close in February 2023, the biggest victim yet of the post-pandemic softening in theater attendance in New York.

The musical — a fixture on Broadway since 1988, weathering recessions, war and cultural shifts — will play its final performance on Broadway on Feb. 18, a spokesperson told The Associated Press on Friday. The closing will come less than a month after its 35th anniversary. It will conclude with an eye-popping 13,925 performances.

It is a costly musical to sustain, with elaborate sets and costumes as well as a large cast and orchestra. Box office grosses have fluctuated since the show reopened after the pandemic — going as high as over \$1 million a week but also dropping to around \$850,000. Last week, it hit \$867,997 and producers may have seen the writing on the wall.

Based on a novel by Gaston Leroux, "Phantom" tells the story of a deformed composer who haunts the Paris Opera House and falls madly in love with an innocent young soprano, Christine. Andrew Lloyd Webber's lavish songs include "Masquerade," "Angel of Music," "All I Ask of You" and "The Music of the Night."

"As a producer you dream that a show will run forever. Indeed, my production of Andrew's 'Cats' proudly declared for decades 'Now and Forever.' Yet 'Phantom' has surpassed that show's extraordinary Broadway run. But all shows do finally close," producer Cameron Mackintosh said in a statement.

The first production opened in London in 1986 and since then the show has been seen by more than 145 million people in 183 cities and performed in 17 languages over 70,000 performances. On Broadway alone, the musical has played more than 13,500 performances to 19 million people at The Majestic Theatre.

The closing of "Phantom" would mean the longest running show crown would go to "Chicago," which started in 1996. "The Lion King" is next, having begun performances in 1997.

Broadway took a pounding during the pandemic, with all theaters closed for more than 18 months. Some of the most popular shows — "Hamilton," "The Lion King" and "Wicked" — have rebounded well, but other shows have struggled. Breaking even usually requires a steady stream of tourists, especially for "Phantom" and visitors to the city haven't returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Sarah Sanders undergoes surgery for thyroid cancer

By ANDREW DeMILLO Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — Former White House press secretary Sarah Sanders, who is running for governor in Arkansas, underwent surgery Friday for thyroid cancer.

Sanders announced she underwent the surgery after a biopsy earlier this month revealed that she had thyroid cancer. Sanders was recovering at an Arkansas hospital on Friday, her campaign said.

"Today, I underwent a successful surgery to remove my thyroid and surrounding lymph nodes and by the grace of God I am now cancer-free," Sanders said in a statement released by her campaign. "I want to thank the Arkansas doctors and nurses for their world-class care, as well as my family and friends for their love, prayers, and support."

Sanders, 40, said she looked forward to returning to the campaign trail soon. Sanders' last public event was at the Arkansas Razorbacks football game on Saturday. Spokesman Judd Deere said Sanders went to two fundraisers and held several meetings at the campaign office Thursday.

Sanders, who served as former President Donald Trump's spokeswoman until 2019, is running against Democratic nominee Chris Jones. She is the daughter of former Gov. Mike Huckabee.

"Our hearts go out to you, Sarah. Our family is thinking of you and praying for you and your family," Jones and his wife, Jerrilyn, said in a statement. "It's truly a blessing that you caught this cancer early

and were able to receive world-class treatment so quickly.”

Sanders, who has shattered fundraising records in the race, is heavily favored in the predominantly Republican state of Arkansas. The state’s current Republican governor, Asa Hutchinson, is leaving office in January due to term limits.

Hutchinson said he and first lady Susan Hutchinson wished Sanders a “full and speedy recovery.”

“We hope you’re back on the campaign trail soon!” he tweeted.

A doctor for Sanders said in a statement that he expected her to be back on her feet within the next 24 hours. Dr. John R. Sims, a surgeon at CARTI Cancer Center in Little Rock, said Sanders will need adjuvant treatment with radioactive iodine and continued long-term follow up care.

Sims said Sanders’ cancer was a stage 1 papillary thyroid carcinoma, the most common type of thyroid cancer and said she has an “excellent” prognosis.

“I think it’s fair to say she’s now cancer free, and I don’t anticipate any of this slowing her down,” Sims said.

During Sanders’ nearly two-year tenure at the White House, she scaled back daily televised briefings after repeatedly sparring with reporters and faced questions about her credibility. But she also earned reporters’ respect working behind the scenes to develop relationships with the media.

Sanders was well known in Arkansas politics before launching her governor’s bid, going back to when she appeared in ads for her father’s campaigns. She managed Sen. John Boozman’s 2010 election and worked as an adviser to Sen. Tom Cotton’s in 2014.

She’s run primarily on national issues in the Arkansas race, promising to use the governor’s office to fight President Joe Biden and the “radical left.”

Serious breach at Uber spotlights hacker social deception

By FRANK BAJAK AP Technology Writer

The ride-hailing service Uber said Friday that all its services were operational following what security professionals are calling a major data breach, claiming there was no evidence the hacker got access to sensitive user data.

But the breach, apparently by a lone hacker, put the spotlight on an increasingly effective break-in routine involving social engineering: The hacker apparently gained access posing as a colleague, tricking an Uber employee into surrendering their credentials.

They were then able to locate passwords on the network that got them the level of privileged access reserved for system administrators.

The potential damage was serious: Screenshots the hacker shared with security researchers indicate they obtained full access to the cloud-based systems where Uber stores sensitive customer and financial data.

It is not known how much data the hacker stole or how long they were inside Uber’s network. Two researchers who communicated directly with the person — who self-identified as an 18-year-old to one of them — said they appeared interested in publicity. There was no indication they destroyed data.

But files shared with the researchers and posted widely on Twitter and other social media indicated the hacker was able to access Uber’s most crucial internal systems.

“It was really bad the access he had. It’s awful,” said Corbin Leo, one of the researchers who chatted with the hacker online.

The cybersecurity community’s online reaction — Uber also suffered a serious 2016 breach — was harsh.

The hack “wasn’t sophisticated or complicated and clearly hinged on multiple big systemic security culture and engineering failures,” tweeted Lesley Carhart, incident response director of Dragos Inc., which specializes in an industrial-control systems.

Leo said screenshots the hacker shared showed the intruder got access to systems stored on Amazon and Google cloud-based servers where Uber keeps source code, financial data and customer data such as driver’s licenses.

“If he had keys to the kingdom he could start stopping services. He could delete stuff. He could download

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customer data, change people's passwords," said Leo, a researcher and head of business development at the security company Zelic.

Screenshots the hacker shared — many of which found their way online — showed sensitive financial data and internal databases accessed. Also widely circulating online: The hacker announcing the breach Thursday on Uber's internal Slack collaboration system.

Leo, along with Sam Curry, an engineer with Yuga Labs who also communicated with the hacker, said there was no indication that the hacker had done any damage or was interested in anything more than publicity.

"It's pretty clear he's a young hacker because he wants what 99% of what young hackers want, which is fame," Leo said.

Curry said he spoke to several Uber employees Thursday who said they were "working to lock down everything internally" to restrict the hacker's access. That included the San Francisco company's Slack network, he said.

In a statement posted online Friday, Uber said "internal software tools that we took down as a precaution yesterday are coming back online."

It said all its services — including Uber Eats and Uber Freight — were operational and that it had notified law enforcement. The FBI said via email that it is "aware of the cyber incident involving Uber, and our assistance to the company is ongoing."

Uber said there was no evidence that the intruder accessed "sensitive user data" such as trip history but did not respond to questions from The Associated Press including about whether data was stored encrypted.

Curry and Leo said the hacker did not indicate how much data was copied. Uber did not recommend any specific actions for its users, such as changing passwords.

The hacker alerted the researchers to the intrusion Thursday by using an internal Uber account on the company's network used to post vulnerabilities identified through its bug-bounty program, which pays ethical hackers to ferret out network weaknesses.

After commenting on those posts, the hacker provided a Telegram account address. Curry and other researchers then engaged them in a separate conversation, where the intruder provided the screenshots as proof.

The AP attempted to contact the hacker at the Telegram account, but received no response.

Screenshots posted online appeared to confirm what the researchers said the hacker claimed: That they obtained privileged access to Uber's most critical systems through social engineering.

The apparent scenario:

The hacker first obtained the password of an Uber employee, likely through phishing. The hacker then bombarded the employee with push notifications asking they confirm a remote log-in to their account. When the employee did not respond, the hacker reached out via WhatsApp, posing as a fellow worker from the IT department and expressing urgency. Ultimately, the employee caved and confirmed with a mouse click.

Social engineering is a popular hacking strategy, as humans tend to be the weakest link in any network. Teenagers used it in 2020 to hack Twitter and it has more recently been used in hacks of the tech companies Twilio and Cloudflare, said Rachel Tobac, CEO of SocialProof Security, which specializes in training workers not to fall victim to social engineering.

"The hard truth is that most orgs in the world could be hacked in the exact way Uber was just hacked," Tobac tweeted. In an interview, she said "even super tech savvy people fall for social engineering methods every day."

"Attackers are getting better at by-passing or hi-jacking MFA (multi-factor authentication)," said Ryan Sherstobitoff, a senior threat analyst at SecurityScorecard.

That's why many security professionals advocate the use of so-called FIDO physical security keys for user authentication. Adoption of such hardware has been spotty among tech companies, however.

The hack also highlighted the need for real-time monitoring in cloud-based systems to better detect intruders, said Tom Kellermann of Contrast Security. "Much more attention must be paid to protecting

clouds from within” because a single master key can typically unlock all their doors.

Some experts questioned how much cybersecurity has improved at Uber since it was hacked in 2016.

Its former chief security officer, Joseph Sullivan, is currently on trial for allegedly arranging to pay hackers \$100,000 to cover up that high-tech heist, when the personal information of about 57 million customers and drivers was stolen.

This story has been updated to correct the spelling of the Contrast Security expert’s last name. It’s Kellermann, not Kellerman.

More coaches named in South Carolina cheerleader abuse suit

By JAMES POLLARD Associated Press/Report for America

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — A lawsuit alleging the rampant sexual abuse of underage athletes at a competitive cheerleading gym in South Carolina has been amended to name six more coaches as defendants and three more accusers.

The accusers — now seven female and two male — say in the federal lawsuit amended Thursday that they were sexually abused by coaches at Rockstar Cheerleading and Dance in Greenville, which is in the northwestern corner of the state. The accusers’ lawyers allege that sexual abuse at the gym could date back two decades and that there could be 100 more victims who haven’t come forward.

One of the plaintiffs’ lawyers, Bakari Sellers, likened the case to that of Larry Nassar, the former USA Gymnastics and Michigan State University doctor who is serving a minimum of 40 years in prison after admitting that he molested some of the nation’s top gymnasts for years.

None of the Rockstar coaches have been charged and The Associated Press is not naming them. State and federal law enforcement agencies are investigating the gym and other cheerleading outlets and have seized computers, cellphones and other evidence, one of the accusers’ lawyers, James Bannister, said earlier this month. He said the agencies asked lawyers not to identify them.

According to the lawsuit, the abuse ranged from rape and forced oral sex to molestation and pressuring children as young as 13 to send nude photos of themselves to coaches. The lawsuit also details instances in which coaches gave students alcohol and cannabis at their homes and in hotel rooms during cheerleading competitions.

The allegations first centered on the gym’s founder, Scott Foster, who was found dead in his car on Aug. 22. The coroner determined he died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head.

Kathy Foster, his widow, announced in earlier this month that Rockstar Cheerleading and Dance would close “indefinitely.”

“Although this was a difficult decision, I believe it is the best option under the circumstances,” Foster said in a statement reported by local NBC affiliate WYFF. “Over the past 15 years, our incredible athletes have worked hard to build a winning legacy and I will always be extremely proud of each of them. I ask for privacy for my children and for those personally affected during this difficult time.”

The amended suit details several instances in which it alleges that athletes were abused outside of South Carolina at events sanctioned by Varsity Spirit, which runs competitions, and the U.S. All Star Federation, the country’s cheerleading governing body.

Varsity Spirit President Bill Seely said in a Sept. 1 statement that the accusations detailed “abhorrent criminal, predatory conduct” and were “devastating to hear.” In an Aug. 30 statement, USASF said the organization was “devastated to learn of allegations about potential abuse.” The statement declined to comment on developments while law enforcement investigations are underway and reiterated that members should report any allegations.

The plaintiffs’ attorneys said they expect to file more lawsuits naming other perpetrators at other gyms around the country.

“We’re talking about serious repeated abuse that was reported to everyone including the Greenville County Sheriff’s Department,” attorney Bakari Sellers said in a statement. “For Varsity Spirit, the USASF

and Bain Capital, these survivors didn't matter. Their checks did. They did nothing to stop this abuse then and they're doing nothing now."

James Pollard is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

Breaches of voting machine data raise worries for midterms

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Sensitive voting system passwords posted online. Copies of confidential voting software available for download. Ballot-counting machines inspected by people not supposed to have access.

The list of suspected security breaches at local election offices since the 2020 election keeps growing, with investigations underway in at least three states -- Colorado, Georgia and Michigan. The stakes appeared to rise this week when the existence of a federal probe came to light involving a prominent loyalist to former President Donald Trump who has been promoting voting machine conspiracy theories across the country.

While much remains unknown about the investigations, one of the most pressing questions is what it all could mean for security of voting machines with the midterm elections less than two months away.

Election security experts say the breaches by themselves have not necessarily increased threats to the November voting. Election officials already assume hostile foreign governments might have the sensitive data, and so they take precautions to protect their voting systems.

The more immediate concern is the possibility that rogue election workers, including those sympathetic to lies about the 2020 presidential election, might use their access to election equipment and the knowledge gained through the breaches to launch an attack from within. That could be intended to gain an advantage for their desired candidate or party, or to introduce system problems that would sow further distrust in the election results.

In some of the suspected security breaches, authorities are investigating whether local officials provided unauthorized access to people who copied software and hard drive data, and in several cases shared it publicly.

After the Georgia breach, a group of election security experts said the unauthorized copying and sharing of election data from rural Coffee County presented "serious threats" to the November election. They urged the state election board to replace the touchscreen devices used throughout the state and use only hand-marked paper ballots.

Harri Hursti, a leading expert in voting security, said he is concerned about another use of the breached data. Access to the voting equipment data or software can be used to develop a realistic looking video in which someone claims to have manipulated a voting system, he said.

Such a fake video posted online or to social media on or after Election Day could create chaos for an election office and cause voters to challenge the accuracy of the results.

"If you have those rogue images, now you can start manufacturing false, compelling evidence — false evidence of wrongdoing that never happened," Hursti said. "You can start creating very compelling imaginary evidence."

There has been no evidence that voting machines have been manipulated, either during the 2020 election or in this year's primaries. But conspiracy theories widely promoted among some conservatives have led to calls for replacing the machines with hand-marked and hand-counted ballots and raised concerns that they could be targeted by people working inside election offices or at polling places.

The suspected breaches appear to be orchestrated or encouraged by people who falsely claim the 2020 election was stolen from Trump. In several of the cases, employees of local election offices or election boards gave access to voting systems to people who were not authorized to have it. The incidents emerged into public view after the voting system passwords for Mesa County, Colorado, were posted online, prompting

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a local investigation and a successful effort to replace the county clerk from overseeing elections.

MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell, who has organized or attended forums around the U.S. peddling conspiracy theories about voting machines, said this week that he had received a subpoena from a federal grand jury investigating the breach in Colorado and was ordered to hand over his cellphone to FBI agents who approached him at a fast-food restaurant in Minnesota.

"And they told me not to tell anybody," Lindell said in a video afterward. "OK, I won't. But I am."

Lindell and others have been traveling the country over the past year, holding events where attendees are told that voting machines have been corrupted, that officials are "selected" rather than elected and that widespread fraud cost Trump the 2020 election.

In an interview with the Star Tribune of Minneapolis, Lindell said FBI agents questioned him about the Colorado breach and Dominion Voting Systems. The company provides voting equipment used in about 30 states and has had its machines targeted in the Colorado, Georgia and Michigan breaches.

When agents asked him why he flies between different states, Linden told them, "I'm going to attorney generals and politicians, and I'm trying to get them to get rid of these voting machines in our country."

The Justice Department did not respond when asked for details about its investigation.

Dominion has sued Lindell and others, accusing them of defamation. In a statement this week, the company said it would not comment about ongoing investigations but said its systems are secure. It noted that no credible evidence has been provided to show that its machines "did anything other than count votes accurately and reliably in all states."

The scope of the federal grand jury probe in Colorado isn't known, but local authorities have charged Mesa County clerk Tina Peters in what they described as a "deceptive scheme which was designed to influence public servants, breach security protocols, exceed permissible access to voting equipment and set in motion the eventual distribution of confidential information to unauthorized people."

Peters has pleaded not guilty and said she had the authority to investigate concerns that the voting equipment had been manipulated. She has appeared at numerous events with Lindell over the past year, including Lindell's "cybersymposium" last August in which a digital copy of Mesa County's election management system was distributed.

David Becker, a former U.S. Justice Department attorney who now leads the Center for Election Innovation & Research, notes the irony of those who raise alarms about voting equipment being involved in allegations of breaches of the same systems.

"The people who have been attacking the integrity of elections are destroying the actual integrity of elections," he said.

Associated Press writer Michael Balsamo contributed to this report.

Follow the AP's voting coverage at: <https://apnews.com/hub/voting>

Military intel chief says Putin can't achieve Ukraine goal

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Russia's setbacks and stretched resources in Ukraine show its forces are incapable of achieving President Vladimir Putin's initial aims in invading the country as things stand now, the Pentagon's intelligence chief said Friday.

"We're coming to a point right now where I think Putin is going to have to revise what his objectives are for this operation," Lt. Gen. Scott Berrier, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, told an intelligence and national security conference outside Washington. "Because it's pretty clear right now that he's ... not going to be able to do what he initially intended to do."

Putin sent troops into neighboring Ukraine in February with what U.S. officials say was the objective of unseating Ukraine's Western-friendly government. Ukrainian forces drove Russian fighters from their positions around Ukraine's capital earlier in the war. And Russia suffered another major setback last week,

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when a Ukrainian counteroffensive forced its troops back from large swaths of Ukraine's northeast.

"The Russians planned for an occupation, not necessarily an invasion, and that has set them back," Berrier said, citing Putin's reluctance so far to fully mobilize Russian forces to get more manpower into the fight.

President Joe Biden and other administration officials have taken care not to call Russia's latest retreat a Ukrainian victory or turning point in the war, and analysts caution it's impossible to assess what may lie ahead.

"He's coming to a decision" point," Berrier said of Putin. "What that decision will be we don't know. But that will largely drive how long this conflict lasts."

Berrier spoke at a panel with other senior officials at the intelligence community's Intelligence and National Security Summit at National Harbor in Maryland just outside Washington.

Asked about concerns that Putin could unleash weapons of mass destruction if he's thwarted on the battlefield by U.S. and NATO-backed Ukrainian forces, CIA Deputy Director David Cohen said, "I don't think we should underestimate Putin's adherence to his original agenda, which was to control Ukraine. I don't think we've seen any reason to believe he has moved off that."

Nor should the U.S. underestimate Putin's "risk appetite," Cohen said. Putin and his officials early in the war made allusions to Russia's nuclear arsenal and to massive retaliation in warning NATO not to get involved in the conflict.

"That being said, we have not seen concrete evidence of planning for the use of WMD," Cohen said. The more likely form of any Russian retaliation against the United States would be more attempts at interfering with the U.S. political system, other security and intelligence officials said.

Separately, in a major regional summit in Uzbekistan on Friday, Putin vowed to press the attack on Ukraine and warned that Moscow could ramp up its strikes on the country's infrastructure if Ukrainian forces target facilities in Russia.

The conference included the leaders of China, India, Turkey and several other countries.

Putin said the "liberation" of Ukraine's entire eastern Donbas region was Russia's main military goal and that he saw no need to revise it.

"We aren't in a rush," the Russian leader said.

Wall Street falls as FedEx warning adds to market woes

By DAMIAN J. TROISE and ALEX VEIGA AP Business Writers

Wall Street closed out the stock market's worst week in three months with more losses Friday, as a stark warning from FedEx about rapidly worsening trends in the economy rattled already anxious investors.

The S&P 500 fell 0.7%, with all but two of its 11 company sectors ending in the red. The benchmark index sank 4.8% for the week, with much of the loss coming from a 4.3% rout on Tuesday following a surprisingly hot report on inflation. The last time it posted a bigger weekly decline was the week ended June 17.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.5% and the Nasdaq composite dropped 0.9%. The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies took the heaviest losses, falling 1.5%.

All the major indexes have now posted losses four out of the past five weeks.

FedEx sank 21.4% for its biggest single-day sell-off on record after warning investors that profits for its fiscal first-quarter will likely fall short of forecasts because of a dropoff in business. The package delivery service is also shuttering storefronts and corporate offices and expects business conditions to further weaken.

Industrial giant General Electric also helped put traders in a selling mood after its chief financial officer said the company is still bogged down by supply chain problems that were raising costs. GE shares fell 3.7%.

The worrisome corporate updates hit a market already on edge because of stubbornly high inflation as well as the higher interest rates being used to fight it, which will slow the economy. Wall Street is bracing for another hefty interest rate hike from the Federal Reserve next week following a meeting of central bank policymakers.

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"Based on this week's market results there's no question that investors are going into the weekend, No. 1 very concerned about the U.S. economy looking into the balance of this year and No. 2, with all eyes focused on next week's Fed action," said Greg Bassuk, CEO at AXS Investments.

The S&P 500 fell 28.02 points to 3,873.33. It's now down 18.7% so far this year.

The Dow dropped 139.40 points to 30,822.42 and the Nasdaq slid 103.95 points to 11,448.40. The Russell 2000 gave up 27.04 points to 1,798.19.

Technology stocks, banks and energy firms had some of the biggest losses. Adobe fell 3.1%, Bank of America dropped 1.1% and Chevron slid 2.6%.

Makers of household goods, which are typically considered less risky investments, held up better than the rest of the market. Campbell Soup rose 1.3%.

The Federal Reserve is aggressively raising interest rates in an effort to cool the hottest inflation in four decades, but that has raised worries that it could hit the brakes too hard and slide the economy into a recession. The central bank has already raised interest rates four times this year and economists expect another jumbo increase of three-quarters of a point when the Fed's leaders meet next week.

Higher interest rates tend to weigh on stocks, especially the pricier technology sector. Technology stocks within the S&P 500 are down more than 26% for the year and communications companies have shed more than 34%. They are the worst performing sectors within the benchmark index so far this year.

The housing sector is also hurting as interest rates rise. Average long-term U.S. mortgage rates climbed above 6% this week for the first time since the housing crash of 2008. The higher rates could make an already tight housing market even more expensive for homebuyers.

Reports this week from the government showed that prices for just about everything but gas are still rising, the job market is still red-hot and consumers continue to spend, all of which give ammunition to Fed officials who say the economy can tolerate more rate hikes.

"The market is really looking at data in terms of what the Fed is going to do next year and how far they'll have to go," said Scott Wren, senior global market strategist at Wells Fargo Investment Institute. "I think they'll be in a good spot after September, where they'll have plenty of flexibility to get where they want to be by the end of the year."

Treasury yields eased a bit Friday after a report showed expectations for inflation among U.S. households are falling to their lowest levels since last year. That's a positive for markets because the Fed fears a rise in such expectations would make inflation much tougher to fight. But the survey also showed uncertainty remains very high among households about where inflation is heading.

The yield on the 2-year Treasury, which tends to follow expectations for Fed action, fell to 3.85% from 3.92% shortly before the report's release. The 10-year yield fell to 3.45% from 3.49%.

Arizona Legislature won't defend law limiting police filming

By BOB CHRISTIE Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — The Republican leaders of the Arizona Legislature will not try to defend a new law limiting up-close filming of police that has been blocked by a federal judge, a decision that essentially ends the fight over the contentious proposal.

Senate President Karen Fann and House Speaker Rusty Bowers both said they would not intervene in the case by the Friday deadline set by the federal judge when he temporarily blocked the new law from taking effect last week on First Amendment grounds.

And the bill's sponsor, Republican Rep. John Kavanagh, said Friday that he has been unable to find an outside group to defend the law, which was challenged by news media organizations and the American Civil Liberties Union.

The groups will now ask that the law, which was set to take effect next week, be permanently blocked.

Kavanagh said he will review U.S. District Judge John J. Tuchi's ruling and see if he can craft a law that passes constitutional muster. He said the law is needed to keep people from distracting police while they are trying to make an arrest, but Tuchi agreed with the challengers that it runs afoul of precedents that

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say the public and press have a right to film police doing their jobs.

Tuchi noted that there are already Arizona laws barring interfering with police, and that singling out people for taking videos appears to be unconstitutional on its face. And he wrote in his ruling that barring someone from using a phone or news video camera to record — without banning other actions — is a content-based restriction that is illegal.

“If the goal of HB2319 is to prevent interference with law enforcement activities, the Court fails to see how the presence of a person recording a video near an officer interferes with the officer’s activities,” Tuchi wrote.

The law makes it illegal to knowingly film police officers 8 feet (2.5 meters) or closer if the officer tells the person to stop. And on private property, an officer who decides someone is interfering or the area is unsafe can order the person to stop filming even if the recording is being made with the owner’s permission.

Bystander cellphone videos are largely credited with revealing police misconduct — such as with the 2020 killing of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis officers — and reshaping the conversation around police transparency. But Republican Arizona lawmakers say the legislation was needed to limit people with cameras who deliberately impede officers.

Kavanagh and the Legislature were warned repeatedly by the ACLU and the National Press Photographers Association that the proposal would violate the First Amendment, but it passed anyway with only Republican support. The NPPA, on behalf of itself and more than two dozen press groups and media companies including The Associated Press, also wrote to Republican Gov. Doug Ducey after the measure was passed, telling him as well that it was unconstitutional and urging a veto. Ducey signed the bill anyway.

Mickey H. Osterreicher, the general counsel for the photographers association, called the law “an unconstitutional solution in search of a non-existent problem.”

“It’s always a lot easier to write a letter than it is to have to file a lawsuit,” he said. “But some people like to do it the easy way and other people are forced to do it the hard way.”

Once a coalition of media groups and the ACLU sued, Republican Attorney General Mark Brnovich refused to defend the law, as did the prosecutor and sheriff’s office in Maricopa County, home to Phoenix.

Bowers said he and fellow Republicans disregarded opponents who said the bill was unconstitutional and essentially said “let’s just try and see what happens.”

“But when you get right down to where you to have to start spending money, no,” Bowers said. “We’ll just wait till next year.”

King stands vigil; Wait to see queen’s coffin hits 24 hours

By MIKE CORDER, JILL LAWLESS and DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — A surging tide of people — ranging from London retirees to former England soccer captain David Beckham — have lined up to file past Queen Elizabeth II’s coffin as it lies in state at Parliament, so many that authorities had to call a temporary halt Friday to more people joining the miles-long queue.

By late afternoon, a live tracker said the line to get into historic Westminster Hall had reopened, but the British government warned that it would take more than 24 hours of waiting to cover the 5 miles (8 kilometers) from the start of the line in Southwark Park to the coffin at Parliament. The government also warned that “overnight temperatures will be cold.”

The mourners kept silently streaming into Westminster Hall even as King Charles III and his three siblings stood vigil around the flag-draped coffin for 15 minutes on Friday evening. A baby’s cry was the only sound.

Those who came often bowed before the coffin or made a sign of the cross. Several veterans, their medals shining in the spotlights, offered sharp salutes. Some people wept. Many hugged one another as they stepped away, proud to have spent hours in line to offer a tribute, even if it lasted only a few moments.

Beckham was spotted in the line of mourners near Britain’s Houses of Parliament at lunchtime Friday. He’s believed to have joined the queue at 2 a.m. and to have lined up for more than 10 hours. Wearing a white shirt and black tie, he bowed briefly to the coffin before moving out of Westminster Hall.

“We have been lucky as a nation to have had someone who has led us the way her majesty has led us, for

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the amount of time, with kindness, with caring and always reassurance," Beckham said. "I think that's the one thing that we all felt safe and we will continue that with the royal family. But I think her majesty was someone special and will be missed, not just by everyone in our country but everyone around the world."

Helena Larsen, 76, arrived just too late at the park to get into the line.

"We have literally got here and they have shut it in front of us," she said, adding that she would likely hang around until the gates were reopened.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan said viewing the queen's coffin lying in state was an unforgettable experience.

"You're in Westminster Hall in her presence, with a crown on top of her coffin, and it's incredibly emotional," he told The Associated Press.

Meanwhile, a delegation of Chinese officials reportedly was barred from visiting the historic hall in the Houses of Parliament where the late queen's coffin is lying, as geopolitics cast a shadow over the solemn pageantry.

The Chinese ambassador to the U.K. has been banned from Parliament for a year after Beijing sanctioned seven British legislators last year for speaking out against China's treatment of its Uyghur minority in the far-west Xinjiang region.

The offices of Prime Minister Liz Truss and of House of Commons Speaker Lindsay Hoyle declined to comment Friday on a report by news outlet Politico saying the Chinese delegation would not be allowed into Westminster Hall.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said she had not seen the Politico report but that as host of the queen's funeral, the U.K. government should "follow the diplomatic protocols and proper manners to receive guests."

A Chinese delegation is expected to attend the queen's Monday funeral, which is in Westminster Abbey and not Parliament. Organizers of the funeral have not published a guest list.

After a day out of the public eye, King Charles III flew to Wales on Friday on the final leg of his tour of the four nations that make up the United Kingdom.

Charles, who for decades before his accession to the throne was the Prince of Wales, visited Llandaff Cathedral in Cardiff for a prayer service in honor of his late mother. After it, he and Camilla, the Queen Consort, greeted crowds of wellwishers, including flag-waving schoolchildren, as people chanted "God save the king!"

A small group protested his visit, with one person holding up a banner saying: "King? No thanks."

The king later traveled to the Welsh parliament, the Senedd, to receive condolences from legislators. He told them that Wales "could not have been closer to my mother's heart."

Charles said he felt "immense gratitude for the privilege" of serving for decades as Prince of Wales, the title traditionally bestowed on the heir to the throne. His eldest son Prince William now has that title.

Charles returned to London to stand vigil at his mother's coffin in the evening with his three siblings, Princess Anne, Prince Andrew and Prince Edward.

Before the vigil, Edward said the royal family had been "overwhelmed by the tide of emotion that has engulfed us and the sheer number of people who have gone out of their way to express their own love, admiration and respect (for) our dear mama."

On Saturday, all eight of Queen Elizabeth II's grandchildren are expected to stand vigil beside her coffin.

Charles' sons, Prince William and Prince Harry, will attend along with Princess Anne's children, Zara Tindall and Peter Philips; Prince Andrew's daughters, Princess Beatrice and Princess Eugenie; and the two children of Prince Edward – Lady Louise Windsor and Viscount Severn.

William, who after his grandmother's death is now the heir to the throne, will stand at the head of the coffin and Harry at the foot. Both princes, who are military veterans, will be in uniform.

Most senior royals hold honorary military roles and have worn uniforms to commemorate the queen. Harry, who served in Afghanistan as a British army officer, wore civilian clothes during the procession of the queen's coffin from Buckingham Palace because he is no longer a working member of the royal family. He and his wife Meghan quit royal duties and moved to the United States in 2020.

The king, however, has requested that both William and Harry wear their military uniforms at the West-

minster Hall vigil.

London police said the queen's state funeral on Monday will be the largest single policing event the force has ever handled, surpassing even the 2012 Summer Olympics and the queen's Platinum Jubilee in June celebrating her 70 years on the throne.

"The range of officers, police staff and all those supporting the operation is truly immense," said Metropolitan Police Deputy Assistant Commissioner Stuart Cundyhe.

Renata Brio and Jeffrey Schaeffer in London contributed.

Follow AP coverage of Queen Elizabeth II at <https://apnews.com/hub/queen-elizabeth-ii>

Nakate: Leaders are missing the human face of climate change

NARDOS HAILE undefined

NEW YORK (AP) — Vanessa Nakate's climate activism over the past three years has propelled her to the world stage.

Since 2019, Nakate has worked to amplify the voices of African climate activists through a platform she created called Rise Up Movement, spearheaded an initiative to stop the deforestation of African rainforests and launched the Vash Greens Schools Project, which aims to install solar panels in remote areas of her home country, Uganda.

These endeavors led UNICEF to announce her as their new goodwill ambassador this week, with UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell saying Nakate's appointment to the role "will help ensure that the voices of children and young people are never cut out of the conversation on climate change — and always included in decisions that affect their lives."

Despite the global recognition, Nakate says it's not enough — not enough to save the planet or to save the people in the global south she says are suffering significantly from the effects of climate disasters.

"For so long the world has ignored what happens in the global south," the 25-year-old Ugandan native told the Associated Press on Wednesday.

Fresh off a week-long trip to Turkana County, Kenya with UNICEF, Nakate saw the effects of food and water insecurity caused by the worst drought in eastern Africa in four decades.

"To go back to the Horn of Africa — where I was in Turkana — there was a time people talked about it, but now people have forgotten," she said. "It's no longer being talked about, but does that mean that situation has come to an end? No. The drought situation is much worse and many people are suffering right now."

Earlier this year, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development warned that higher temperatures and less than normal rainfall were recorded across the African continent by weather agencies, and rains were further expected to fail — indicating that countries in East Africa, as well as the Horn of Africa, could be facing the most severe drought in 40 years. Over the years, droughts have led to crop failure, livestock deaths and millions of cases of malnutrition.

Countries like Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya could see current famine conditions intensify.

"When it comes to the climate crisis, it has different, horrible realities. One of them is that those being impacted the most right now, they are the ones the least responsible," she said.

According to the Global Carbon Project, a team of scientists that monitor countries' carbon dioxide emissions, Africa — which accounts for about 16% of the world's population — is responsible for only 3.2% of the carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere since 1959.

Carbon dioxide is the primary contributor to climate change. As a natural greenhouse gas, it traps heat in the atmosphere, which in turn causes global temperatures to rise. Where the African continent is a minor contributor to global carbon dioxide emissions, more industrialized countries such as the United States, Russia and China are greater contributors.

For activists like Nakate, tackling the climate crisis isn't just about raising awareness or urging global

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leaders to make swift policy changes addressing climate change that is devastating countries like Pakistan and Kenya — it also requires amplifying the voices of non-western climate activists, who she said are largely ignored in international conversations about climate change.

Looking ahead to COP27 — the United Nations' annual climate summit — which is being held in Egypt this November, Nakate said she notices a significant deficit during these global discussions: the lack of real human experience.

"I think what really misses in these conversations is the human face of the climate crisis and I think its really the human face that tells the story that, tells the experiences of what communities are going through," she said. "It's what also tells the solutions that communities need because many times there's a disconnect between what is being discussed and between what communities are saying."

To Nakate, that is a failure of global leadership. She believes that leaders, specifically western leaders, would take immediate action if they understood and saw the hardships people experienced as a result of the climate crisis.

Ultimately, she said, the responsibility and burden of tackling climate change and ensuring the numerous, nameless faces of the climate crisis are not ignored needs to fall on global leaders — not solely the youth that have built a global movement.

"The question should be like, what should the leaders do? What should governments do? Because this whole time I've done activism, I have realized the youth have done everything," Nakate said.

Still, she tries to look for hope in the situation.

"In all this, you try to look for the hope because it's in that hope that you find the strength to keep saying we want this or we don't want this," she said.

'Sweetie Pie' star found guilty in nephew's shooting death

ST. LOUIS (AP) — A federal jury on Friday convicted a former star of the St. Louis-based reality TV show "Welcome to Sweetie Pie's" of arranging the shooting death of his nephew.

The jury deliberated about 17 hours over three days before reaching its verdict in the murder-for-hire case against James "Tim" Norman, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported. He was charged with conspiracy to commit murder-for-hire, murder-for-hire and conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud.

Norman and his nephew, Andre Montgomery, both starred in the long-running OWN reality show about a popular soul-food business founded in the St. Louis area by Robbie Montgomery — Norman's mother and Andre's grandmother.

Prosecutors are not seeking the death penalty but Norman could be sentenced to up to life in prison. Sentencing is set for Dec. 15.

Federal prosecutors said Norman, 43, hired two people to kill the 21-year-old Montgomery on March 14, 2016, then tried to cash a \$450,000 life insurance policy taken out on his nephew months earlier.

Defense attorney Michael Leonard said after the verdict that he and Norman were "extremely surprised and disappointed in the outcome" of the case. He said they plan to appeal and that Norman continues to be optimistic that he will eventually prevail.

Leonard said the testimony during the trial of two co-conspirators was shown to be "extremely non-credible." And he said Norman testified well during the trial, noting he was not cross-examined.

U.S. Attorney Saylor Fleming said she was "very, very pleased" with the verdict but that her office would make no further statements until after the sentencing.

During closing arguments, Assistant U.S. Attorney Angie Danis said Norman was the architect of the plan to kill Montgomery.

"This plan doesn't exist but for Tim Norman's greed," Danis said.

Leonard argued in his closing argument that the murder plot presented by prosecutors was a "made up theory."

Prosecutors said Norman paid \$10,000 to an exotic dancer, Terica Ellis, to lure his nephew to the site where he was shot and paid \$5,000 to Travell Anthony Hill to shoot Montgomery.

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Ellis and Hill both testified for the prosecution in the case. They have both pleaded guilty to participating in the scheme.

In testimony during the trial, Norman said he helped his nephew move to St. Louis about 18 months before he was killed and supported him financially because he was trying to watch out for Montgomery. He said he sought to be a "father figure" to his brother's son.

Former Sweetie Pie's employees and other character witnesses testified that Norman and his nephew had a close relationship.

Danis said all the testimony from the scheme's co-conspirators was backed up in trial by texts, call records and location data.

She said Norman created "an image of being a mentor and a father figure to all these people, but it's fiction."

Leonard said during his closing argument that Ellis testified to get a shorter sentence and said Hill admitted he was a heavy drug user and that he was "hopped up on drugs that day."

Norman testified Tuesday that he took out the life insurance policy on his nephew to give a longtime customer of the family restaurants, Waiel Rebhi Yaghnam, some business.

Yaghnam pleaded guilty in July to conspiracy to commit murder-for-hire and wire fraud in the case.

Montgomery left St. Louis after at least \$220,000 in cash, jewelry and other items were stolen in a June 2015 burglary at Robbie Montgomery's home.

Norman told jurors he and his mother hired a private investigator to find and confront his nephew about the robbery but he had no intention of hurting him.

Queen's death is reminder of disappearing WWII generation

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The long goodbye for Queen Elizabeth II is a reminder of a broader truth playing out with little fanfare across Britain: The nation is bidding farewell to the men and women who fought the country's battles during World War II.

The queen, who served as a mechanic and truck driver in the last months of the war, was a tangible link to the sailors, soldiers, airmen, marines and others who signed up to do their bit in a war that killed 384,000 service personnel and 70,000 British civilians.

But like the queen, even the youngest veterans of the war are now nearing their 100th birthdays, and a steady stream of obituaries tells the story of a disappearing generation.

"It's extraordinary how that sense of the passing of time is felt very keenly at the moment," said Charles Byrne, director general of the Royal British Legion, the nation's largest armed services charity.

"The queen was a personification of that generation ... and with her passing, it just drives home the sense that time is moving relentlessly, as it does."

That loss is, perhaps, felt more widely in the United Kingdom than a country like the United States, because the U.K.'s very existence was threatened during the war. Bombs fell on cities from London to Belfast, women were conscripted into war work and wartime rationing didn't end until 1954.

Elizabeth, who famously saved ration coupons to make her wedding dress in 1947, led a ceremony of remembrance for all the nation's fallen service personnel each year on the anniversary of the end of World War I.

"She is the epitome of that sense of service and stoic contribution," Byrne said. "And that is treasured more than ever."

British authorities don't know exactly how many World War II veterans are left because the nation's census takers didn't track military service until last year. Those figures are due to be released next month.

The Royal Air Force says it knows of only one surviving Battle of Britain pilot, the man Winston Churchill immortalized as "the few" who helped turn the tide of the war. Group Captain John Hemingway celebrated his 103rd birthday in July.

But the number of survivors is dwindling.

Among those who died this year were Henriette Hanotte, who ferried downed Allied pilots across the

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French border as they made their way home. And Harry Billinge, who was just 18 when he joined the first wave of troops to land on Gold Beach in Normandy on D-Day, as well as Douglas Newham, who survived 60 bombing raids as a Royal Air Force navigator, but was haunted by those who didn't return.

It was a time of shared sacrifice. Then-Princess Elizabeth, like many teenagers, had to persuade her father to let her join the army in 1945.

When Elizabeth turned 18, King George VI exempted her from mandatory military service because he said her training as the heir to the throne took precedence over the wartime need for manpower.

But the princess, who began her war work at 14 with a broadcast to displaced children and later tended a vegetable garden as part of the government's "Dig for Victory" program, got her way.

She enlisted in the Auxiliary Territorial Service in February 1945 and trained to become a military truck driver and mechanic. The ATS was the largest of the auxiliary services deploying women to non-combat rolls such as clerks, drivers and dispatch riders to free up men for front line duties.

The first female member of the royal family to serve in the armed forces, Elizabeth was promoted to honorary junior commander, the equivalent of an army captain, after completing five months of training. But the war ended before she could be assigned to active duty.

On May 8, 1945, Princess Elizabeth appeared in uniform on the balcony of Buckingham Palace as the royal family greeted the crowds celebrating Germany's surrender. That night, she and her sister, Princess Margaret, slipped out of the palace to take part in the festivities.

"We cheered the king and queen on the balcony and then walked miles through the streets," she later recalled. "I remember lines of unknown people linking arms and walking down Whitehall, all of us just swept along on a tide of happiness and relief."

Many of those who took part in that joy are now gone.

Among them is Frank Baugh, a Royal Marine who helped guide a landing craft to Sword Beach during the June 6, 1944, D-Day landings. He later campaigned for a memorial to be built to commemorate the 22,442 men and women who died under British command during the Battle of Normandy.

A few months before his death in June at 98, Baugh toured the British Normandy Memorial, which overlooks the beach where he fought.

"I would like to see children coming all of the time," he said. "Because they're the people we need to tell what's happened, and those lads that didn't get back — to remember them."

Follow all AP stories on Queen Elizabeth II's death at <https://apnews.com/hub/queen-elizabeth-ii>.

Trump openly embraces, amplifies QAnon conspiracy theories

By DAVID KLEPPER and ALI SWENSON Associated Press

After winking at QAnon for years, Donald Trump is overtly embracing the baseless conspiracy theory, even as the number of frightening real-world events linked to it grows.

On Tuesday, using his Truth Social platform, the Republican former president reposted an image of himself wearing a Q lapel pin overlaid with the words "The Storm is Coming." In QAnon lore, the "storm" refers to Trump's final victory, when supposedly he will regain power and his opponents will be tried, and potentially executed, on live television.

As Trump contemplates another run for the presidency and has become increasingly assertive in the Republican primary process during the midterm elections, his actions show that far from distancing himself from the political fringe, he is welcoming it.

He's published dozens of recent Q-related posts, in contrast to 2020, when he claimed that while he didn't know much about QAnon, he couldn't disprove its conspiracy theory.

Pressed on QAnon theories that Trump allegedly is saving the nation from a satanic cult of child sex traffickers, he claimed ignorance but asked, "Is that supposed to be a bad thing?"

"If I can help save the world from problems, I'm willing to do it," Trump said.

Trump's recent postings have included images referring to himself as a martyr fighting criminals, psycho-

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paths and the so-called deep state. In one now-deleted post from late August, he reposted a "q drop," one of the cryptic message board postings that QAnon supporters claim come from an anonymous government worker with top secret clearance.

A Trump spokesperson did not respond to a request for comment.

Even when his posts haven't referred to the conspiracy theory directly, Trump has amplified users who do. An Associated Press analysis found that of nearly 75 accounts Trump has reposted on his Truth Social profile in the past month, more than a third of them have promoted QAnon by sharing the movement's slogans, videos or imagery. About 1 in 10 include QAnon language or links in their profile bios.

Earlier this month, Trump chose a QAnon song to close out a rally in Pennsylvania. The same song appears in one of his recent campaign videos and is titled "WWG1WGA," an acronym used as a rallying cry for Q adherents that stands for "Where we go one, we go all."

Online, Q adherents basked in Trump's attention.

"Yup, haters!" wrote one commenter on an anonymous QAnon message board. "Trump re-truthed Q memes. And he'll do it again, more and more of them, over and OVER, until (asterisk)everyone(asterisk) finally gets it. Make fun of us all you want, whatever! Soon Q will be everywhere!"

"Trump Sending a Clear Message Patriots," a QAnon-linked account on Truth Social wrote. "He Re-Truthed This for a Reason."

The former president may be seeking solidarity with his most loyal supporters at a time when he faces escalating investigations and potential challengers within his own party, according to Mia Bloom, a professor at Georgia State University who has studied QAnon and recently wrote a book about the group.

"These are people who have elevated Trump to messiah-like status, where only he can stop this cabal," Bloom told the AP on Thursday. "That's why you see so many images (in online QAnon spaces) of Trump as Jesus."

On Truth Social, QAnon-affiliated accounts hail Trump as a hero and savior and vilify President Joe Biden by comparing him to Adolf Hitler or the devil. When Trump shares the content, they congratulate each other. Some accounts proudly display how many times Trump has "re-truthed" them in their bios.

By using their own language to directly address QAnon supporters, Trump is telling them that they've been right all along and that he shares their secret mission, according to Janet McIntosh, an anthropologist at Brandeis University who has studied QAnon's use of language and symbols.

It also allows Trump to endorse their beliefs and their hope for a violent uprising without expressly saying so, she said, citing his recent post about "the storm" as a particularly frightening example.

"The 'storm is coming' is shorthand for something really dark that he's not saying out loud," McIntosh said. "This is a way for him to point to violence without explicitly calling for it. He is the prince of plausible deniability."

Bloom predicted that Trump may later attempt to market Q-related merchandise or perhaps ask QAnon followers to donate to his legal defense.

Regardless of motive, Bloom said, it's a reckless move that feeds a dangerous movement.

A growing list of criminal episodes has been linked to people who had expressed support for the conspiracy theory, which U.S. intelligence officials have warned could trigger more violence.

QAnon supporters were among those who violently stormed the Capitol during the failed Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection.

In November 2020, two men drove to a vote-counting site in Philadelphia in a Hummer adorned with QAnon stickers and loaded with a rifle, 100 rounds of ammunition and other weapons. Prosecutors alleged they were trying to interfere with the election.

Last year, a California man who told authorities he had been enlightened by QAnon was accused of killing his two children because he believed they had serpent DNA.

Last month, a Colorado woman was found guilty of attempting to kidnap her son from foster care after her daughter said she began associating with QAnon supporters. Other adherents have been accused of environmental vandalism, firing paintballs at military reservists, abducting a child in France and even

killing a New York City mob boss.

On Sunday, police fatally shot a Michigan man who they say had killed his wife and severely injured his daughter. A surviving daughter told The Detroit News that she believes her father was motivated by QAnon.

"I think that he was always prone to (mental issues), but it really brought him down when he was reading all those weird things on the internet," she told the newspaper.

The same weekend a Pennsylvania man who had reposted QAnon content on Facebook was arrested after he allegedly charged into a Dairy Queen with a gun, saying he wanted to kill all Democrats and restore Trump to power.

Major social media platforms including YouTube, Facebook and Twitter have banned content associated with QAnon and have suspended or blocked accounts that seek to spread it. That's forced much of the group's activities onto platforms that have less moderation, including Telegram, Gab and Trump's struggling platform, Truth Social.

Veteran judge named special master in Trump documents search

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal judge on Thursday appointed a veteran New York jurist to serve as an independent arbiter in the criminal investigation into the presence of classified documents at former President Donald Trump's Florida home, and refused to permit the Justice Department to resume its use of the highly sensitive records seized in an FBI search last month.

U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon empowered the newly named special master, Raymond Dearie, to review the entire tranche of records taken in the Aug. 8 search of Mar-a-Lago and set a November deadline for his work. In the meantime, she continued to block the department from using for its investigation roughly 100 documents marked as classified that were seized.

The sharply worded order from Cannon, a Trump appointee, will almost certainly slow the pace of the investigation and set the stage for a challenge to a federal appeals court. The department had given Cannon until Thursday to put on hold her order pausing investigators' review of classified records while the special master completes his work. The department said it would ask the Atlanta-based 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to intervene if she did not do so by then.

The Justice Department did not immediately comment on Thursday's ruling.

Cannon, who last week granted the Trump team's request for a special master over the objections of the Justice Department, made clear in her Thursday order that she was not prepared to blindly accept the government's characterizations of the documents, saying "evenhanded procedure does not demand unquestioning trust in the determinations of the Department of Justice."

She turned aside the department's position that Trump could not have any ownership interests in the documents, and said she was receptive to the possibility that the former president could raise valid claims of privilege over at least some of the records. She noted ongoing disagreements between the two sides about the "proper designation of the seized materials" and the "legal implications flowing from those designations."

"The Court does not find it appropriate to accept the Government's conclusions on these important and disputed issues without further review by a neutral third party in an expedited and orderly fashion," she wrote.

The selection of Dearie, a former federal prosecutor who for years served as the chief judge of the federal court based in Brooklyn, came after both the Justice Department and Trump's lawyers made clear they would be satisfied with his appointment as a so-called special master.

As special master, Dearie will be responsible for reviewing the entire inventory of documents taken during the search of Mar-a-Lago — the FBI says it recovered about 11,000 documents from the home during its search, including roughly 100 with classification markings — and segregating out any that may be covered by claims of executive privilege or attorney-client privilege. He is also tasked with identifying any personal materials of Trump's that should possibly be returned to him.

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The Justice Department said last week that it did not believe that the special master should inspect records with classified markings or evaluate the former president's claims of privilege. Cannon rejected both positions Thursday, directing the special master to prioritize in his review the documents marked as classified, "and thereafter consider prompt adjustments to the Court's Orders as necessary." She set a deadline of Nov. 30 for the special master to complete the work.

The Justice Department has been investigating for months the hoarding of top-secret materials and other classified documents at the Florida property after Trump left office. Citing national security concerns, it has said its investigation would be harmed if the judge did not quickly lift her block on the department from continuing to make use of the classified records in its probe.

Cannon rejected that idea Thursday, saying "there has been no actual suggestion by the Government of any identifiable emergency or imminent disclosure of classified information arising from Plaintiff's allegedly unlawful retention of the seized property."

She added, "Instead, and unfortunately, the unwarranted disclosures that float in the background have been leaks to the media after the underlying seizure."

She also said nothing in her order barred the department from "conducting investigations or bringing charges based on anything other than the actual content of the seized materials," saying investigators were welcome to interview witnesses and collect information about the "movement and storage of seized materials."

Trump's lawyers had asked last month for a judge to name a special master to do an independent review of the records and filter out any that may be covered by claims of privilege. The Justice Department argued the appointment was unnecessary, saying it had already done its own review and Trump had no right to raise executive privilege claims that ordinarily permit the president to withhold certain information from the public and Congress.

Cannon disagreed and directed both sides to name potential candidates for the role.

The Trump team recommended either Dearie or a Florida lawyer for the job. The Justice Department said Monday that, in addition to the two retired judges whose names it submitted, it would also be satisfied with a Dearie appointment.

Dearie served as the top federal prosecutor for the Eastern District of New York from 1982 to 1986, at which point he was appointed to the federal bench by then-President Ronald Reagan. He has also served on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, which authorizes Justice Department wiretap applications in investigations involving suspected agents of a foreign power.

Dearie was chief judge of the district from 2007 to 2011, when he took senior status. But the Justice Department has said he remains active and had indicated to officials that he was available for the position and could work expeditiously if appointed to it.

Associated Press writers Michael Balsamo and Zeke Miller in Washington contributed to this report.

Charles' history with US presidents: He's met 10 of past 14

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hanging out with Richard Nixon's daughter Tricia at a White House supper-dance. Swapping stories with Ronald Reagan about horseback riding. Bending the ears of Donald Trump and Joe Biden about climate change.

King Charles III, who became head of state following the death of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II, has made the acquaintance of 10 of the 14 U.S. presidents who have held office since he was born in 1948.

He was just 10 when he checked off his first president in 1959. That was when Dwight Eisenhower visited the queen and her family at Balmoral Castle in Scotland, where she died on Sept. 8 after a 70-year-reign.

"I guess you can't start too early," said Barbara A Perry, director of presidential studies at the University of Virginia's Miller Center. She noted that Charles' grandson, Prince George, was a toddler when Kensington Palace released a photograph of him shaking hands with Barack Obama during the president's trip to

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London in 2016.

Charles never met Harry Truman, Gerald Ford, Lyndon Johnson and John F. Kennedy, Perry said.

His encounters with U.S. presidents included what he recalled as an "amusing" weekend visit to Nixon White House in 1970 with his sister Anne, when the 20-year-old future king — one of the world's most eligible bachelors — sensed there was an effort afoot to set him up.

"That was the time when they were trying to marry me off to Tricia Nixon," he later recalled.

The king has chatted up presidents on his visits to the U.S. and met others when they traveled in the United Kingdom. He was in the company of Donald Trump, Obama, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush when he represented the British monarchy at the state funeral for former President George H.W. Bush in 2018 in Washington.

Charles met President Joe Biden last year at a climate change conference in Glasgow, Scotland.

The royal has visited America about 20 times since that memorable first trip in the Nixon years, he told CNN last year.

The royal siblings had been invited to Washington by Nixon's daughters and son-in-law, Tricia Nixon, Julie Nixon Eisenhower and her husband, David Eisenhower, grandson of President Eisenhower, for that three-day visit in July 1970.

The young VIPs had a packed schedule that included frolicking at the Camp David presidential retreat, a nighttime tour of Washington's monuments, museum visits, a luncheon cruise down the Potomac River to George Washington's estate at Mount Vernon, Virginia, a dance on the South Lawn for 700 guests, and a Washington Senators baseball game.

Charles and Nixon also met in the Oval Office. But if the president had his heart set a union between his family and the royals, it wasn't meant to be.

In June 1971, less than a year after Charles' visit, Tricia married longtime beau Edward Cox in the White House Rose Garden. A decade later, in July 1981, Charles married Lady Diana Spencer. They divorced in 1996.

Nixon, himself, had pushed for Charles to visit the U.S. for the perceived public relations bonanza, according to a January 1970 memo he sent his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger.

"I think this could do an enormous amount of good for U.S.-British relations," Nixon said. He wrote that he'd been told that Charles "is the real gem" of the royal family and "makes an enormously favorable impression wherever he goes."

Charles returned the praise in a thank-you note.

"The kindness shown to us at the White House was almost overwhelming and for that we are immensely grateful," the prince wrote to Nixon. "Both my sister and I take back to Britain the most heartwarming evidence of what is known as the special relationship between our two countries and of the great hospitality shown to us by you and your family."

Many of the former Prince of Wales' conversations with recent U.S. presidents centered on his interest in tackling climate change. Charles has campaigned for the environment for 50 years, but he acknowledged after becoming king that his new role requires that he set aside his activism on that and other issues.

Charles, 73, and Biden, 79, discussed global cooperation on the climate crisis last year while both attended a summit in Glasgow, Scotland. They also met at Buckingham Palace in June 2021 at a reception the queen hosted before a world leaders' summit in Cornwall.

Biden rejoined the 2015 Paris climate agreement after Trump as president withdrew the U.S. from the accord.

Biden and the king spoke on Wednesday, with Biden offering his condolences over the queen.

Trump has said that during his visit with Charles, the former prince "did most of the talking" and pressed him on climate during a scheduled 15-minute meeting that stretched to 90 minutes in 2019 at Charles' residence in London.

During a three-day visit to Washington in 2011, Charles, an advocate of environmentally friendly farming, met with President Obama. In a speech, he praised Michelle Obama's campaign against childhood obesity and hunger, and U.S. manufacturers' efforts to produce healthier foods.

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He criticized U.S. government subsidies for large-scale agriculture and encouraged increased business and government support for organic and environmentally friendly food production.

In his toast at a White House dinner in 2005, the future king told President George W. Bush that the world looks to the United States "for a lead on the most crucial issues that face our planet and, indeed, the lives of our grandchildren.

"Truly, the burdens of the world rest on your shoulders," he said.

In the remarks, Charles also said the trip reminded him of his first visit to America, "when the media were busy trying to marry me off to Tricia Nixon."

Visiting with Reagan in the Oval Office in 1981, the two discussed their interest in horseback riding as a steward brought tea. But it was not served the British way.

Of the experience, Reagan later wrote in his diary:

"The ushers brought him tea -- horror of horrors they served it our way with a tea bag in the cup. It finally dawned on me that he was just holding the cup and finally put it down on the table. I didn't know what to do," Reagan confessed.

AP News Researcher Rhonda Shafner in New York contributed to this report.

Follow the AP's coverage of King Charles III at: <https://apnews.com/hub/king-charles-iii>

Racism seen as root of water crisis in Mississippi capital

By DREW COSTLEY AP Science Writer

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Carey Wooten spent nearly seven weeks hunting for safe drinking water for herself, her two children and three dogs after clocking out each day as a Taco Bell manager, so Gov. Tate Reeves' announcement that the water is clean again in Mississippi's capital came as welcome news.

But the crisis in the city of Jackson isn't over, even if its boil-water advisory was lifted on Thursday. While the state plans to stop handing out free bottled water at sites around the city Saturday night, the city said water pressure still hasn't been fully restored, and state health officials said lead in some pipes remains so worrisome that pregnant women and young children should still use bottled water.

"The water that's coming out of my kitchen sink smells like fresh sewage ... as soon as you turn it on, it hits you right in the face. It's horrible," Wooten said earlier this month. "I've tried to give one of my dogs the water, but when she smells it she won't even touch it. She walks away from it."

Wooten said Friday that the liquid flowing into her kitchen sink still smells like sewage, but not as bad as before, and she's glad she won't have to run to distribution sites before their bottled water supplies run out each day.

Other residents told The Associated Press on Friday that their water remains too discolored to count on, so now they'll have to rely on water distribution by community-run charities or buy water again themselves, adding insult to injury.

Jackson had already been under a state health department boil-water notice for a month when torrential rain fell in August, flooding the Pearl River and overwhelming the treatment system. Water pressure abruptly dropped, emptying faucets for days.

How did this happen? Residents, politicians, experts and activists say systemic racism is the root cause.

Jackson's population has declined since 1980, a decade after the city's schools began integrating. Many white families left for the suburbs, leaving less revenue to maintain the infrastructure. Middle class Black people then moved out to escape urban decay and rising crime. State and federal spending never made up the difference.

"The legacy of racial zoning, segregation, legalized redlining have ultimately led to the isolation, separation and sequestration of racial minorities into communities (with) diminished tax bases, which has had consequences for the built environment, including infrastructure," said Marccus Hendricks, an associate professor of urban studies and planning at the University of Maryland.

Other cities across the United States could face similar challenges with aging water systems that are

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ill-equipped to handle more intense and frequent flooding caused by climate change, experts in water infrastructure and environmental justice told The Associated Press.

And when it comes to water scarcity and contamination, they say working-class communities of color are most vulnerable. Jackson's population is more than 80% Black and the poverty level is 24.5%, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Majority-Black Flint, Michigan, has struggled to remove lead from its water since 2014. Other areas where large poor or nonwhite populations lack reliably safe drinking water include major cities like Baltimore and Honolulu as well as smaller municipalities like Las Vegas, New Mexico; and Benton Harbor, Michigan.

Heather McTeer Toney worked to clean up discolored tap water as mayor of Greenville, Mississippi, before serving as the Environmental Protection Agency's southeast regional administrator from 2014 to 2017. Now she works on environmental justice issues nationwide for the Environmental Defense Fund. She said many majority-minority communities lack consistent access to clean water.

"Any community that is suffering from lack of infrastructure maintenance is dealing with the same problem, maybe just on a different scale," Toney said. "But across the nation, with poor communities that are often Black, brown, Indigenous and on the frontlines of the climate crisis, we see the same thing happening over and over again."

Hendricks and Toney blame systemic racism for government disinvestment in communities of color. Maisie Brown calls Jackson's troubles "the product of environmental racism."

"I don't think we realize how deeply ingrained racism is in all of our structures and systems, including infrastructure," said Brown, a 20-year-old student at Jackson State University who was born and raised in the city.

Brown is a member of the Mississippi Students Water Crisis Advocacy Team, a group of about 30 students delivering water to residents who are disabled, elderly or don't have vehicles. That's what relief has looked like in Jackson — the people most affected doing what they can to help each other. But the limited handouts each day haven't been enough, forcing people to buy water in stores.

The two cases Wooten and nearly 500 others picked up at the site in south Jackson one day contained just under nine gallons (30 liters). That's less than 3% of the roughly 300 gallons (1,136 liters) that the EPA says the average American family uses each day.

Needed improvements at the city's two treatment plants include replacing ineffective pumps, leaky filters, faulty membranes and corroded pipes; removing accumulated sludge and hiring enough qualified staff to properly manage the system. Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba, a Democrat, has pleaded for patience while seeking state and federal help, saying such fixes could cost billions of dollars that the city doesn't have.

EPA Administrator Michael Regan said while visiting Jackson that he wants the city to get its fair share of federal money flowing to the state.

Reeves, a Republican, has not said how much Mississippi should spend on solving this problem. The legislature directed \$400 million of federal pandemic relief funds toward water infrastructure upgrades around the state, but it's unclear how much Jackson will receive because cities are still applying for money. "We cannot perfectly predict what may go wrong with such a broken system in the future," Reeves said Thursday.

Without reliable funding streams, many Jackson residents don't expect to see consistently drinkable water anytime soon.

Karla McCullough, 46, is a Black woman and Jackson native who runs a charity that helped organize the distribution site where Wooten got her water. She told the AP that the city's residents have experienced some level of water scarcity their entire lives.

"I want to be hopeful and optimistic," McCullough said. "In my lifetime, I may not see the infrastructure fixed and it restored to a point where there are not any water issues. But my hope is that my son and his children won't have to deal with this."

Emily Wagster Pettus contributed to this report. Follow Drew Costley on Twitter: @drewcostley.

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Oktoberfest is back but inflation hits brewers, cost of beer

By MICHAEL FAULHABER and DANIEL NIEMANN Associated Press

MUNICH (AP) — Oktoberfest is back in Germany after two years of pandemic cancellations — the same bicep-challenging beer mugs, fat-dripping pork knuckles, pretzels the size of dinner plates, men in leather shorts and women in cleavage-baring traditional dresses.

But while brewers are more than glad to see the return of the Bavarian capital's sudsy tourist centerpiece, both they and visitors are under pressure from inflation in a way that could scarcely be imagined the last time it was held in 2019.

For one thing, the 1-liter (2-pint) mug of beer will cost between 12.60 and 13.80 euros (\$12.84 and \$14.07) this year, which is an increase of about 15% compared with 2019, according to the official Oktoberfest homepage.

The event opens at noon Saturday when Munich's mayor taps the first keg and announces "O'zapft is," or "It's tapped" in Bavarian dialect.

For Germany's brewers, rising costs go much deeper than simply the price of a round at the festival's long wooden benches. They are facing higher prices all along their chain of production, from raw ingredients like barley and hops to finishing touches such as beer caps and packing material.

It's a mirror of the inflation running across the economy: Sky-high natural gas prices caused by Russia's war in Ukraine are boosting what businesses and consumers have to pay for energy, while recovering demand from the pandemic is making parts and raw materials hard to come by.

Brewing equipment is often fueled by natural gas, and prices for barley malt — or grain that has been allowed to germinate by moistening it — have more than doubled, to over 600 euros a ton. Glass bottles have risen by 80%, as glassmakers pay more for energy. Bottle caps are up 60%, and even glue for labels is in short supply.

"Prices for everything have changed significantly this year," said Sebastian Utz, head technician at Munich's historic Hofbraeu Brewery, which traces its roots in the city to 1589. "To brew beer you need a lot of energy ... and for refrigeration. And at the same time, we need raw materials — barley malt, hops — where procurement has increased in price."

The costs of everything — cardboard, stainless steel for barrels, wood pallets, cleaning supplies to keep the brewing tanks spotless — have gone up.

"These are prices that the German brewing industry has never seen before," said Ulrich Biene, spokesman for the historic family-owned Veltins Brewery in Grevenstein, which is not one of the brands sold at Oktoberfest.

Inflation hit an annual 7.9% in Germany in August, and a record 9.1% in the 19 countries that use the euro currency. Rising consumer prices in Europe have been fueled above all by Russia restricting supplies of natural gas, driving prices through the roof. That feeds through to electricity, because gas is used to generate power, and to the cost of a host of industrial processes that run on gas, such as making fertilizer, glass and steel. Farmers also are seeing higher costs for heating buildings and fertilizing crops.

All that gets built into the prices of things people buy, and those higher prices cut into their purchasing power.

Inflation is "running red hot in Germany" and could approach 10% by year's end, said Carsten Brzeski, chief eurozone economist at ING bank. The rate should fall next year as consumer demand weakens — but that is small consolation today.

In any case, Oktoberfest is a much-needed boost for Munich's hotels and food service industry.

"It's beautiful," Mayor Dieter Reiter said. "You can see the enthusiasm has returned." He downplayed concerns about such a big event during the pandemic, saying the spread of COVID-19 is "no longer the decisive factor" and adding, "Let's see how it goes."

Some 487 beer breweries, restaurants, fish and meat grills, wine vendors and others will serve revelers

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at Oktoberfest, and opening hours will be even longer than in the past, with the first beer tents opening at 9 a.m. and closing at 10:30 p.m. The last orders will be taken at 9:30 p.m.

In the years before COVID-19, about 6 million people visited the celebrations annually, many of them dressed in traditional Bavarian garb — the women in Dirndl dresses, the men in Lederhosen, or knee-length leather trousers.

Oktoberfest, first held in 1810 in honor of the marriage of Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria to Princess Therese, has been canceled dozens of times during its more than 200-year history due to wars and pandemics.

AP Business Writer David McHugh contributed from Frankfurt, Germany.

Floods in Italy kill 10; Survivors plucked from roofs, trees

By FANUEL MORELLI and FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

CANTIANO, Italy (AP) — Flash floods swept through several towns Friday in hilly central Italy after hours of exceptionally heavy rain, leaving 10 people dead and at least four missing. Dozens of survivors scrambled onto rooftops or up into trees to await rescue.

Floods invaded garages and basements and knocked down doors. In one town, the powerful rush of water pushed a car onto a second-story balcony, while elsewhere parked vehicles were crumpled on top of each other in the streets. Some farm fields near the sea were meters (yards) under water.

"It wasn't a water bomb, it was a tsunami," Riccardo Pasqualini, the mayor of Barbara, told Italian state radio about the sudden downpour Thursday evening that devastated his town in the Marche region near the Adriatic Sea.

He said the overnight flooding left the town's 1,300 residents without drinking water. A mother and her young daughter were missing after trying to escape the floods, Pasqualini told the Italian news agency ANSA. Elsewhere in town, a boy was swept away from the arms of his mother, who was rescued.

Premier Mario Draghi told a news conference in Rome that 10 people were dead and four were missing in the flash floods. He thanked rescuers "for their professionalism, dedication and courage." Officials said some 50 people were treated at hospitals for injuries.

Draghi, who is serving in a caretaker role ahead of Italy's Sept. 25 national election, planned to tour some devastated towns later Friday and his government announced 5 million euros (dollars) in aid to the region.

"It was an extreme event, more than an exceptional one," climatologist Massimiliano Fazzini told Italian state TV. He said, based on his calculations, the amount of rain that fell, concentrated over four hours that included an especially heavy 15-minute period, was the most in hundreds of years.

In a space of a few hours, the region was deluged with the amount of rainfall it usually receives in six months, state TV said. A summer of virtually no rain meant hillsides were unusually hard and dry, so the water ran faster down the slopes, increasing its impact.

The fire department tweeted that dozens of people trapped in cars or who had climbed up to rooftops or trees to escape rising floodwaters had been rescued. Police in the town of Sassoferrato, unable to reach a man trapped in a car, extending a long tree branch to him and pulled him to safety.

Helicopter crews rescued seven people in remote towns of the Apennine Mountains.

Hundreds of firefighters struggled Friday to remove toppled tree trunks and branches amid thick mud as they searched for people who could have been buried by debris. They waded through waist-high water in flooded streets, while others paddled in rubber dinghies to scoop up survivors.

In the town of Ostra, a father and his adult son were found dead in their building's flooded garage where they had gone to try to get their car out, and another man who tried to remove his motorcycle from a garage also perished, state TV said. Elsewhere, a man was found dead in his car.

"As it (the flood) played out, it was far, far worse than forecast," said Civil Protection chief Fabrizio Curcio. A bad weather watch had been issued on Thursday, but not at the highest level.

Hundreds of people fled or were evacuated from their homes until the premises could be checked for

safety and mountains of mud cleared away.

Some of the worst flooding hit the town of Senigallia, where the River Misa overflowed its banks. Hamlets in the hills near the Renaissance tourist town of Urbino were also inundated when fast-moving rivers of water, mud and debris rushed through the streets.

In the town of Cantiano, people shoveled mud from stores and homes and an excavating machine was deployed to clear the town square.

"I was lucky because I live in a house up on a slope, so basically, the water didn't reach the point of covering it," said Mirco Santarelli, a Cantiano resident. "But all around here, with the people living in the valley area, it became a bowl (of water). It was panic."

"You could see cars in the middle of the road that drifted away in the flood, debris everywhere, screams. It was chaos," Santarelli told The Associated Press.

Follow all AP stories on climate change at <https://apnews.com/hub/climate-and-environment>.

Flaming Gorge falls as drought felt higher up Colorado River

By MEAD GRUVER Associated Press

FLAMING GORGE RESERVOIR, Wyo. (AP) — Tony Valdez wasn't worried about being left high and dry when he bought Buckboard Marina three years ago, but that's changed with the receding waters of Flaming Gorge Reservoir.

This year, he has already dredged 10 feet (3 meters) so boats could still use the marina. Now, with Flaming Gorge becoming a crucial emergency water supply for the region, Valdez worries the reservoir has nowhere to go but lower still.

"I mean, this is our natural resource and it's going away," he said. "Water is the most precious thing we have."

As a 20-year drought creeps ever farther up the Colorado River Basin and seven Western states vie for their fair share of water under the century-old Colorado River Compact, this boating and fishing paradise on the Wyoming-Utah line is a new flashpoint.

Nobody disputes the root of the problem: The agreement dates to a cooler, wetter time and is based on assumptions about precipitation that simply no longer apply, in part due to climate change.

But as business owners like Valdez are finding out firsthand, recreation is just one of many competing priorities while growing demand in the basin's more populous downstream states — California, Nevada and Arizona — conflicts with dwindling supply from the more rural states upstream — Utah, Colorado, New Mexico and Wyoming.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is part of a collaborative series on the Colorado River as the 100th anniversary of the historic Colorado River Compact approaches. The Associated Press, The Colorado Sun, The Albuquerque Journal, The Salt Lake Tribune, The Arizona Daily Star and The Nevada Independent are working together to explore the pressures on the river in 2022.

Amid jostling by farmers, ranchers, businesses, industries, municipalities and government officials, it's anyone's guess who will come out ahead or get left behind — including natural ecosystems that need water, too.

"It's a complicated mess. And right now the environment is akin to a snake den because everybody is just out for themselves," said Kyle Roerink, director of the Great Basin Water Network conservation group.

In August, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Camille Touton agreed for now to let Upper Basin states keep working together on drought plans that emphasize voluntary water conservation rather than have the bureau dictate reservoir releases.

That's a decision welcomed by Wyoming State Engineer Brandon Gebhart, the state's chief water regulator. "Reclamation reinforced a position that Wyoming has long agreed with," Gebhart said. "The solution to our challenges relies on the bedrock of a century of collaboration and partnership."

Gebhart acknowledged, though, that continued drought could lead to an even lower Flaming Gorge, with the next decision about any new drawdowns due in April.

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Fed by the Green River and rimmed by spectacular cliffs and scrubby desert, Flaming Gorge is by far the biggest reservoir in the Upper Basin, which refers to the vast area covering all waters upstream of Lees Ferry on the Colorado River in northern Arizona.

Built in the 1960s to store and control water in the Green River, which flows into the Colorado in southeastern Utah, Flaming Gorge is the Colorado River system's third-biggest reservoir. It's now about 75% full, compared to just 25% or so in Lake Mead and Lake Powell, the bigger reservoirs downstream.

Snaking over 66 square miles (170 square kilometers) south of Green River, Wyoming, Flaming Gorge remains a renowned spot to catch giant lake trout or take a boat to a secluded cove for a dip in cool, aquamarine waters.

Just be careful about jumping in at places that were deeper a few years ago.

In April, the Bureau of Reclamation announced that under a drought plan for the Upper Basin states, it would release enough water to draw down Flaming Gorge by 15 feet (4.6 meters). The goal is to help ensure that Glen Canyon Dam in northern Arizona can still generate electricity some 450 miles (725 kilometers) downstream.

So far, drawdowns this year and last have left Flaming Gorge about 6 feet (1.8 meters) lower than a year ago and 12 feet (3.7 meters) lower than two years ago, reaching lows unseen since 2005.

Besides boats not being able to use his marina, Valdez worries about the reservoir's kokanee salmon, which are important food for prized lake trout and tasty game fish in their own right.

Lately, kokanee numbers have been down for unknown reasons. The trend could continue as the reservoir falls, reducing spawning habitat and causing lake trout to eat more kokanee, said Wyoming Game and Fish Department Regional Fisheries Supervisor Robert Keith.

"As the reservoir drops, the available habitat for the two species is going to become compacted, so they're going to overlap more," Keith said. "So the opportunity for predation is going to be greater."

Although Wyoming uses only about 60% of the water it's entitled to under the compact, Gebhart says the Upper Basin states have little to spare given recent flows.

The vast majority of Colorado River Basin water used in Wyoming goes to irrigating grass and alfalfa for cattle. Industry — mainly power plants and minerals processing — accounts for about 9% and cities and towns about 3%.

More conservation by southwestern Wyoming's 2,500 water rights holders could help keep water in the system. For example, ranchers can install more efficient irrigation with assistance from government grants and other funding, said Cory Toye with Trout Unlimited.

The fish habitat and angler advocacy group has been working with ranchers on such projects in Wyoming for years and the Flaming Gorge drawdowns have heightened awareness of the problem, Toye said.

States in the compact have been funding efforts to boost snowfall by releasing silver iodide from airplanes and ground-based devices in Wyoming and elsewhere in the Rocky Mountains.

Cloud seeding can increase snow somewhat, research shows. But the technique is unlikely to fully offset or reverse drought or bring Flaming Gorge back up from levels threatening Buckboard Marina.

Lucerne Valley Marina, just south of the Utah line, will need to adapt if levels keep falling but could still operate.

"We're anchoring in 200 feet (61 meters) of water when full," owner Jerry Taylor said. "We have quite a bit of ability for lake drop. But Buckboard does not."

In a worst-case scenario, Buckboard would be stranded some distance away from where the Green River flowed more than 60 years ago.

For now, Valdez hopes to lure back tourists who've stayed home amid high gasoline prices and the lower water. And he says Wyoming residents also need uncrowded places like Buckboard to enjoy.

"People just don't get raised like this anymore, get to hunt and fish," Valdez said. "And have a sustainable source of water."

AP photographer Rick Bowmer contributed to this report.

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Desert farms in Utah flourish with water from Colorado River

By ZAK PODMORE The Salt Lake Tribune

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah (AP) — The second driest state in the country, Utah, doesn't contribute much water to the Colorado River as it flows from Rocky Mountain headwaters through Canyonlands National Park to Lake Powell.

Utah has a unique position in the middle of the river basin, geographically and politically, and it wields less influence than thirstier and more populous states like Colorado, California and Arizona.

Its sprawling urban centers along the Wasatch Front, which are home to 80% of the state's population, are outside of the Colorado River Basin and are less dependent on the river than cities like Phoenix or Las Vegas. Only 27% of the water used in Utah comes from the Colorado River, with the majority of the state's water supply coming from other rivers that feed into the Great Salt Lake.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is part of a collaborative series on the Colorado River as the 100th anniversary of the historic Colorado River Compact approaches. The Associated Press, The Colorado Sun, The Albuquerque Journal, The Salt Lake Tribune, The Arizona Daily Star and The Nevada Independent are working together to explore the pressures on the river in 2022.

Under a 1948 agreement, Utah is entitled to 23% of the water used by the four states in the upper Colorado River Basin — receiving less water than Colorado but more than either Wyoming or New Mexico — and it typically uses around 1 million acre-feet of water from the Colorado annually.

For decades, Utah has sought to develop diversions from the river by pursuing projects like the controversial Lake Powell pipeline, which would transport 86,000 acre-feet of water from the reservoir to St. George and surrounding areas. But the state's use has remained relatively static since 1994 despite its fast-growing population.

Twenty-two years of drought in the basin have caused the Bureau of Reclamation to put more pressure on Utah and the six other Colorado River states to reduce use and abandon development plans, however, and the states are gearing up for renegotiations of water use guidelines that expire in 2026.

Utah's designated representative in the discussions, Colorado River Commissioner of Utah Gene Shawcroft, said the drought has made planning difficult.

"It's hard to look out four or five years if you can't see past next spring," Shawcroft said. "Part of our challenge all along has been to really focus on the renegotiations when we're faced with such a critical day-to-day situation."

Shawcroft said Utah is committed to planning for 2026 while also participating in more immediate water negotiations such as the Bureau of Reclamation's call for water users across the basin to reduce use by as much as 30% next year to stabilize rapidly depleting levels in lakes Powell and Mead.

Utah is aggressively pursuing conservation measures through a broad suite of state legislation passed this year, Shawcroft added, including a law that allows farmers to forgo irrigation without losing their water rights. But he said bringing the system back into balance will likely require the biggest cuts to come from the largest water users in downstream states.

Jack Schmidt, director of the Center for Colorado River Studies at Utah State University, said that since 2001 agriculture has used over two-thirds of the Colorado River water in Utah. An additional 15% is pumped out of the basin, primarily to supply the Wasatch Front.

Over 300,000 acres of land in the state are irrigated with Colorado River water, mostly to grow forage

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crops to feed livestock like alfalfa.

"In light of the fact that 70% of the total Colorado River water is used by (agriculture)," Schmidt said, "it's hard to imagine that agriculture won't be taking the most significant cuts."

But reductions in water use don't necessarily have to hurt farmers' bank accounts. "Agriculture very well might be fairly compensated for fallowing its fields," he said.

Environmental groups like the Utah Rivers Council have pointed to Utah's residential water use — the highest in the basin, per capita — and low water rates as evidence that more conservation in that sector is possible and needed.

The potential retirement of coal plants in Utah in the next decade, which use 6% of the Colorado River water, could also free up some supply for conservation or other uses.

Another consideration is tribal water rights in Utah, which must be satisfied through the state's share of Colorado River water.

A court decree has recognized the Ute Indian Tribe's right to 144,000 acre-feet of water, but the tribe may receive far more water if it settles its water rights claims with the state and the federal government.

The Utah portion of the Navajo Nation settled its water rights in May and has a recognized right to 81,500 acre-feet.

Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez said his administration's priority is to supply the thousands of Navajo homes in Utah that still lack running water, but he said the tribe might consider leasing the remainder of its water to other users.

"If we're going to be sitting on paper water, as they say," Nez said, "and we're not able to use it, we might as well lease it to those that are in need."

All of these factors will likely have a role to play as the basin states renegotiate guidelines before 2026.

Utah's goals in the upcoming discussions, according to Shawcroft, will be to push for greater adaptability while working to ensure that states share water surpluses or cuts equitably as availability changes.

"I think we need to be resilient across a wide range of flows," he said, "whether they be lower ... or higher."

Book ban efforts surging in 2022, library association says

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The wave of attempted book banning and restrictions continues to intensify, the American Library Association reported Friday. Numbers for 2022 already approach last year's totals, which were the highest in decades.

"I've never seen anything like this," says Deborah Caldwell-Stone, director of the ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom. "It's both the number of challenges and the kinds of challenges. It used to be a parent had learned about a given book and had an issue with it. Now we see campaigns where organizations are compiling lists of books, without necessarily reading or even looking at them."

The ALA has documented 681 challenges to books through the first eight months of this year, involving 1,651 different titles. In all of 2021, the ALA listed 729 challenges, directed at 1,579 books. Because the ALA relies on media accounts and reports from libraries, the actual number of challenges is likely far higher, the library association believes.

Friday's announcement is timed to Banned Books Week, which begins Sunday and will be promoted around the country through table displays, posters, bookmarks and stickers and through readings, essay contests and other events highlighting contested works. According to a report issued in April, the most targeted books have included Maia Kobabe's graphic memoir about sexual identity, "Gender Queer," and Jonathan Evison's "Lawn Boy," a coming-of-age novel narrated by a young gay man.

"We're seeing that trend continue in 2022, the criticism of books with LGBTQ subject matter," Caldwell-Jones says, adding that books about racism such as Angie Thomas' novel "The Hate U Give" also are frequently challenged.

Banned Books Weeks is overseen by a coalition of writing and free speech organizations, including the

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National Coalition Against Censorship, the Authors Guild and PEN America.

Conservative attacks against schools and libraries have proliferated nationwide over the past two years, and librarians themselves have been harassed and even driven out of their jobs. A middle school librarian in Denham Springs, Louisiana, has filed a legal complaint against a Facebook page which labeled her a "criminal and a pedophile." Voters in a western Michigan community, Jamestown Township, backed drastic cuts in the local library over objections to "Gender Queer" and other LGBTQ books.

Audrey Wilson-Youngblood, who in June quit her job as a library media specialist in the Keller Independent School District in Texas, laments what she calls the "erosion of the credibility and competency" in how her profession is viewed. At the Boundary County Library in Bonners Ferry, Idaho, library director Kimber Glidden resigned recently after months of harassment that included the shouting of Biblical passages referring to divine punishment. The campaign began with a single complaint about "Gender Queer," which the library didn't even stock, and escalated to the point where Glidden feared for her safety.

"We were being accused of being pedophiles and grooming children," she says. "People were showing up armed at library board meetings."

The executive director of the Virginia Library Association, Lisa R. Varga, says librarians in the state have received threatening emails and have been videotaped on the job, tactics she says that "are not like anything that those who went into this career were expecting to see." Becky Calzada, library coordinator for the Leander Independent School District in Texas, says she has friends who have left the profession and colleagues who are afraid and "feel threatened."

"I know some worry about promoting Banned Books Week because they might be accused of trying to advance an agenda," she says. "There's a lot of trepidation."

Phony document lands on court docket in Trump search case

By MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — When a government document mysteriously appeared earlier this week in the highest profile case in the federal court system, it had the hallmarks of another explosive storyline in the Justice Department's investigation into classified records stored at former President Donald Trump's Florida estate.

The document purported to be from the U.S. Treasury Department, claimed that the agency had seized sensitive documents related to last month's search at Mar-a-Lago and included a warrant ordering CNN to preserve "leaked tax records."

The document remained late Thursday on the court docket, but it is a clear fabrication. A review of dozens of court records and interviews by The Associated Press suggest the document originated with a serial forger behind bars at a federal prison complex in North Carolina.

The incident also suggests that the court clerk was easily tricked into believing it was real, landing the document on the public docket in the Mar-a-Lago search warrant case. It also highlights the vulnerability of the U.S. court system and raises questions about the court's vetting of documents that purport to be official records.

The document first appeared on the court's docket late Monday afternoon and was marked as a "MOTION to Intervene by U.S. Department of the Treasury."

The document, sprinkled with spelling and syntax errors, read, "The U.S. Department of Treasury through the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Marshals Service have arrested Seized Federal Securities containing sensitive documents which are subject to the Defendant Sealed Search Warrant by the F.B.I. arrest."

It cited a federal statute for collecting financial records in federal investigations. The document also included the two supposed warrants, one that claimed to be sent to CNN in Atlanta and another to a towing company in Michigan.

Those supposed warrants, though, are identical to paperwork filed in another case in federal court in Georgia brought by an inmate at the prison medical center in Butner, North Carolina. The case was thrown out, as were the array of other frivolous lawsuits the man has filed from his prison cell.

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The man has been in custody for several years since he was found not competent to stand trial after an arrest for planting a fake explosive outside the Guardian Building, a skyscraper in Detroit. Since his incarceration, he has filed a range of lawsuits and has impersonated the Treasury Department, claimed to be a federal trustee and claimed to be a lawyer for the Justice Department, a review of court records shows.

In the Georgia case, the man alleged that Trump and others had "acquired 'millions of un-redacted classified tax returns and other sensitive financial data, bank records and accounts of banking and tax transactions of several million' Americans and federal government agencies," court documents say.

The judge in that case called his suit "fanatic" and "delusional," saying there was no way to "discern any cognizable claim" from the incoherent filings.

The man has repeatedly impersonated federal officials in court records and has placed tax liens on judges using his false paperwork, two people familiar with the matter told the AP. Because of his history as a forger, his mail is supposed to be subjected to additional scrutiny from the Bureau of Prisons.

It's unclear how the documents — the fake motion and the phony warrants — ended up at the court clerk's office at the courthouse in West Palm Beach, Florida.

A photocopy of an envelope, included in the filing, shows it was sent to the court with a printed return address of the Treasury Department's headquarters in Washington. But a postmark shows a Michigan ZIP code, and a tracking number on the envelope shows it was mailed Sept. 9 from Clinton Township, Michigan, the inmate's hometown.

The AP is not identifying the inmate by name because he has a documented history of mental illness and has not been charged with a crime related to the filing.

"There is simply nothing indicating that he has any authorization to act on behalf of the United States," the judge in the Georgia case wrote.

But despite the clear warning signs — including a stamp noting the Georgia case number on the phony warrants — the filing still made its way onto the docket.

Spokespeople for the Justice Department and the Treasury Department would not comment. They declined to answer on the record when asked if the document was false and why the government had not addressed it.

Representatives in the court clerk's office and the magistrate judge overseeing the search warrant case did not respond to requests for comment.

Associated Press writers Eric Tucker and Fatima Hussein in Washington, Kate Brumback in Atlanta and Anthony Izaguirre in Tallahassee, Florida, contributed to this report.

Today in History: September 17, Camp David Accords

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, Sept. 17, the 260th day of 2022. There are 105 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 17, 1978, after meeting at Camp David, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin (men-AH'-kem BAY'-gihn) and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat signed a framework for a peace treaty.

On this date:

In 1787, the Constitution of the United States was completed and signed by a majority of delegates attending the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

In 1862, more than 3,600 men were killed in the Civil War Battle of Antietam (an-TEE'-tum) in Maryland.

In 1908, Lt. Thomas E. Selfridge of the U.S. Army Signal Corps became the first person to die in the crash of a powered aircraft, the Wright Flyer, at Fort Myer, Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C.

In 1920, the American Professional Football Association -- a precursor of the National Football League -- was formed in Canton, Ohio.

In 1937, the likeness of President Abraham Lincoln's head was dedicated at Mount Rushmore.

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In 1939, the Soviet Union invaded Poland during World War II, more than two weeks after Nazi Germany had launched its assault.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied paratroopers launched Operation Market Garden, landing behind German lines in the Netherlands. (After initial success, the Allies were beaten back by the Germans.)

In 1947, James V. Forrestal was sworn in as the first U.S. Secretary of Defense.

In 1980, former Nicaraguan president Anastasio Somoza (suh-MOH'-sah) was assassinated in Paraguay.

In 1986, the Senate confirmed the nomination of William H. Rehnquist to become the 16th chief justice of the United States.

In 2001, six days after 9/11, stock prices nosedived but stopped short of collapse in an emotional, flag-waving reopening of Wall Street; the Dow Jones industrial average ended the day down 684.81 at 8,920.70.

In 2011, a demonstration calling itself Occupy Wall Street began in New York, prompting similar protests around the U.S. and the world.

Ten years ago: Republican Mitt Romney tried to head off a new distraction for his presidential campaign after a video surfaced showing him telling wealthy donors that 47 percent of all Americans "believe they are victims" entitled to help from the government that permeated their lives; Romney offered no apologies, but conceded his comments were not "elegantly stated" and were spoken "off the cuff."

Five years ago: British authorities said a second suspect was in custody in connection with a bomb that partially exploded two days earlier on a packed London subway, injuring dozens. The top series prizes at the Emmy Awards went to "The Handmaid's Tale," "Veep" and the ever-topical "Saturday Night Live"; the ceremony took almost nonstop aim at President Donald Trump in awards and speeches.

One year ago: A Los Angeles jury convicted Robert Durst of murdering his best friend 20 years earlier; the case had taken on new life after the New York real estate heir participated in a documentary that connected him to the slaying linked to his wife's 1982 disappearance. (Durst who was sentenced to life in prison, died in January 2022 at 78.) Retreating from its defense of a drone strike that had killed multiple civilians in Afghanistan in August, the Pentagon announced that a review revealed that only civilians were killed in the attack, and not an Islamic State extremist as first believed. France recalled its ambassador to the United States in an unprecedented show of anger by America's oldest ally; the action came after the U.S., Australia and Britain shunned France in creating a new Indo-Pacific security arrangement, and Australia scrapped a purchase of French submarines in favor of nuclear subs built with U.S. technology.

Today's Birthdays: Sen. Charles E. Grassley, R-Iowa, is 89. Retired Supreme Court Justice David H. Souter (SOO'-tur) is 83. Singer LaMonte McLemore (The Fifth Dimension) is 87. Retired U.S. Marine Gen. Anthony Zinni is 79. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Phil Jackson is 77. Singer Fee Waybill is 74. Actor Cassandra Peterson ("Elvira, Mistress of the Dark") is 71. Comedian Rita Rudner is 69. Director-actor Paul Feig is 60. Movie director Baz Luhrmann is 60. Singer BeBe Winans is 60. TV personality/businessman Robert Herjavec (TV: "Shark Tank") is 59. Actor Kyle Chandler is 57. Director-producer Bryan Singer is 57. Rapper Doug E. Fresh is 56. Actor Malik Yoba is 55. Rock singer Anastacia is 54. Actor Matthew Settle is 53. Rapper Vin Rock (Naughty By Nature) is 52. Actor-comedian Bobby Lee is 51. Actor Felix Solis is 51. R&B singer Marcus Sanders (Hi-Five) is 49. Actor-singer Nona Gaye is 48. Singer-actor Constantine Maroulis is 47. NASCAR driver Jimmie Johnson is 47. Country singer-songwriter Stephen Cochran is 43. Rock musician Chuck Comeau (Simple Plan) is 43. Actor Billy Miller is 43. Rock musician Jon Walker is 37. NHL forward Alex Ovechkin (oh-VECH'-kin) is 37. Actor Danielle Brooks is 33. Gospel singer Jonathan McReynolds is 33. Actor-singer Denyse Tontz is 28. NHL center Auston Matthews is 25.