

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Friday, Sept. 30

Senior Menu: Chicken tetrazzine, mixed vegetables, honey fruit salad, whole wheat bread.  
No School - Faculty Inservice  
7 p.m.: Football hosts Webster Area  
Pre-School Screening, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

## Saturday, Oct. 1

Youth Football at Waubay Jamboree  
1 p.m.: Girls Soccer hosts Garretson  
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Pumpkin Fest at City Park  
Common Cents Community Thrift Store Open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 209 N Main.

## Sunday, Oct. 2

Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Worship Service at 10:45 a.m.  
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m., SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.  
St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion (St. John's 9:00 am, Zion 11:00 am)

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

UMC: Conde worship with communion, 8:30 p.m.; Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton Worship with communion, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday school after children's sermon during worship.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Sunday School, 10:15 a.m.; Worship at Avantara, 3 p.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.

## Monday, Oct. 3

Senior Menu: Goulash, green beans, baked apples, whole wheat bread.

State Golf Meet at Moccasin Creek CC  
4 p.m.: 7th/8th FB Combined game vs. Roncalli at Groton  
4:30 p.m.: JV FB game vs. Dakota Hills at Waubay.  
Pantry at Community Center open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

UMC: The Walk Bible Study by Pastor Brandon, 7 p.m.  
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

**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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## South Dakota Secretary of State Letter to the Editor

To the editor:

I wanted to take this opportunity to share important information regarding the upcoming general election, which will be held November 8th. South Dakota voters have the choice of voting in-person on Election Day or by casting an absentee ballot.

South Dakota's absentee voting processes have long been in place and provide numerous security measures for voters. Only registered South Dakota voters are eligible to vote absentee. Voters choosing to cast an absentee ballot are encouraged to account for mail processing and delivery times by allowing sufficient time for the return of the ballot to their county auditor.

To request an absentee ballot, voters must submit an absentee ballot application form to your county auditor. Absentee ballot application forms may be requested from your county auditor or downloaded from the Secretary of State's website at [www.sdsos.gov](http://www.sdsos.gov). County auditor contact information is also available on our website. As required by state statute, the application form must be notarized or include a photocopy of an acceptable identification card. Acceptable photo identification cards include a South Dakota driver's license or non-driver ID card, tribal photo ID, passport or other picture ID issued by the United States government, or a current student photo ID issued by a South Dakota high school or postsecondary education institution. Voters also have the option to in-person absentee vote with your county auditor up to the day before the election. Please contact your county auditor for office hours.

The deadline for voter registration in South Dakota is 15 days prior to any election in which you wish to participate. The voter registration deadline for the general election is October 24th. If needed, voter registration forms are available on our website or from your county auditor.

South Dakota's Election Day processes are open to the public to observe and participate. If you haven't served as an election worker in the past, I'd encourage you to contact your county auditor. These positions offer a rewarding opportunity to serve your community and help strengthen our democracy by playing a crucial role in ensuring free, fair, and accessible elections for all South Dakotans.

Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. local time on Election Day. As a result of the legislative redistricting process at the state and local levels, some of your voting district information may have changed. To verify your polling location, please contact your county auditor or visit the Voter Information Portal (VIP) page on our website at [www.sdsos.gov](http://www.sdsos.gov). The VIP page also provides your sample ballot and absentee ballot information.

Our state has a great history of civic engagement that continues today with over 654,000 South Dakota residents currently registered to vote. The goal of all election officials in our state is to ensure every South Dakota voter has access to exercise their right to vote in fair and honest elections. Citizens exercising their right to vote is the foundation of our democracy and I encourage everyone to participate.

Sincerely,

Steve Barnett  
South Dakota Secretary of State

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## Heartland Energy Letter to the Editor

Editor's Note: Heartland Energy, formerly known as Heartland Consumers Power District, supplies the City of Groton with electricity.

Power with Purpose. The delivery of reliable electricity with a greater purpose in mind: the development of communities, increased quality of life and excellent service.

Heartland Energy, formerly Heartland Consumers Power District, is Groton's wholesale power provider. We strive to be a partner of choice to our customers, with our dedication to service and reliable energy solutions taking the forefront of operations every day.

If you live in the city of Groton, you are served by a community-owned, customer-focused, locally controlled public power electric utility.

Each year, during the first week of October, we celebrate Public Power Week, and recognize the many benefits that come with living in a public power community.

Community owned: Living in a public power community means you have local ownership and returns go right back into the community.

Local control: Decisions are made right at home in Groton with the best interest of customers in mind.

Customer focused: Public power serves its member-owners, not stockholders.

Heartland Energy would like to recognize the hard-working and dedicated employees in Groton ensuring you have reliable electricity day in and day out.

We tip our hats to those who keep your community running and thank them for their tireless efforts to keep the lights on, no matter the circumstances. That's power with purpose.

Russell Olson, CEO  
Heartland Energy

## 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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## ANOTHER JARK/WORLIE AUCTION



## RETIREMENT CEMENT TOOLS & EQUIPMENT AUCTION

**Saturday, Oct. 1, 2022**  
**Sale Time: 10:00 AM**

**507 E. RR Ave, Groton, SD**



### SKID STEER – WHEEL LOADER

• Mustang 2056 Turbo w/2 speed Cab, AC/Heat, Hydr. Tach, 6' Bucket, 2302 hours, ('10) • 5' Mustang Skid Steer Bucket (cement) • Kobelco LK300A Wheel Loader w/Bucket, Forks, 16.9-24 Tires, Eng. Overhauled 4084 hrs ago (\$23,000)– Runs/Works.

### GUN SAFE - TOOLS – EQUIP – TANKS

- Safari 24 Gun Safe (NIB)
- Husqvarna FS309 Cement Saw -Nice
- Subaru Robin Ex17 Cement Saw
- DP-75ASB Diesel Generator (New)
- Wen 5500 Generator (New)!
- Screeds w/Honda & B&S Motors
- BNT-40 14.4v Lithium Rebar Cutter
- Honda Drive Motor w/Vibrating Cable & Water Pump
- Impala 30 ton Hydr. Press
- Mikasa MVC-88GH Packer (Honda)
- Wacker VPA1750 Packer (Honda)
- Wacker Power Float (Honda)
- DeWalt & Jet Table Saws
- Insulated Concrete Blankets
- 8 Sets of Scaffolding
- Bosch Elec. Jack Hammer
- Stihl TS 400 & TS 500 Cement Saws
- Weldmark 135+ Welder
- DP Air Compressor
- Older Floats, Packers & Screeds
- Hammer Drills
- Hand Tools, Trowels, Air Hose Reel
- 5/8" Rod (4', 8', 20')
- 4) 6"x6"x15' St. Tubes (1/4")
- 90) 4x8 Wall Forms
- 4' & 8' Corner Forms
- Newer 2' Forms
- Stakes & Wire Ties
- 2x4's, 2x6's, 2x10's,
- Several 2x12's (15' & 20')
- 500 gal. Propane Tank (needs valve)
- 500 gal. Diesel Tank (1/2 full)
- Lots of Hand Tools

### TRACTOR – LOADER – SNOWMOBILE

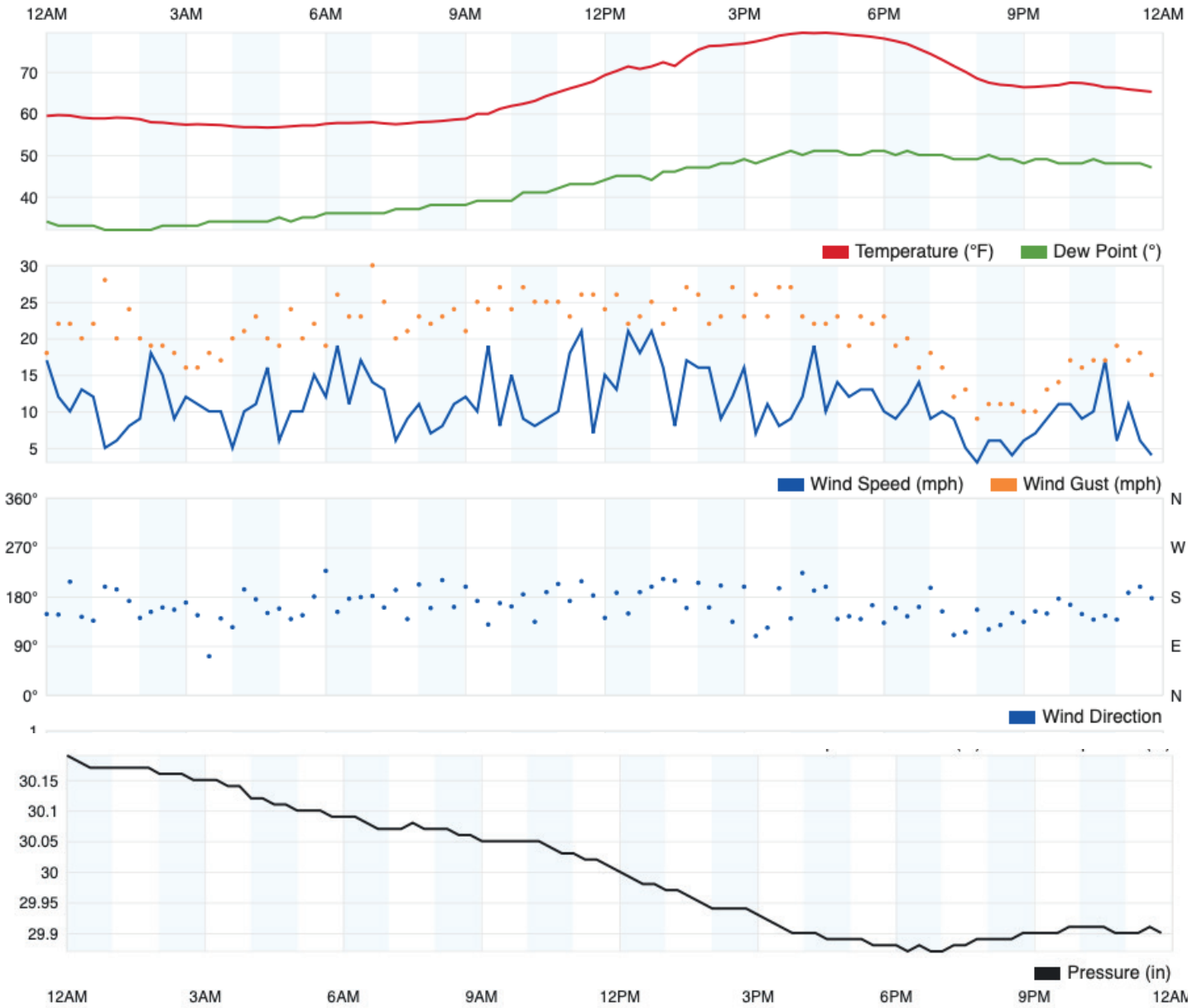
Case IH 50 CVT FWA Tractor w/L350 Loader, Bucket, Forks, 3 pt, PTO, 2 Hydr, 575 hours! • Case IH BS172H 6' Snow Blower (Nice) • Case IH TLX180H 80" 3 pt. Tiller • Farm King 847 7' Leveler • Fimco 3 pt. Sprayer w/ 50 gal. Tank, Folding Booms • King Kutter 3 pt. 6' Disk • Field Svc Tank • '08 Polaris RMK 700 Snowmobile w/155" Track/ 2 1/4" Lugs (all consigned)



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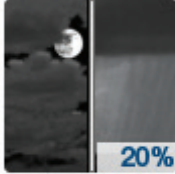

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
				
Partly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy then Slight Chance Showers	Slight Chance Showers
High: 79 °F	Low: 52 °F	High: 77 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 75 °F

## Breezy, Warm, & Mostly Dry Friday, Sept 30<sup>th</sup>



Winds out of the southeast  
10-20 mph with gusts up to around 30 mph



Highs in the mid 70s to mid 80s



High to very high grassland fire danger



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

### Increased Fire Concerns

#### WILDFIRE SAFETY

- Know your wildfire risk & prepare an emergency plan in advance
- Don't drive your vehicle onto dry grass or brush
- Practice safe towing
- Avoid power equipment that creates sparks
- Properly discard cigarettes
- Obey burn bans
- Evacuate if ordered to do so by local officials

Breezy southeasterly winds once again today will combine with dry air and fuels to create elevated grassland fire danger across the area. There is a low chance for rain showers this morning and afternoon along and east of the James River Valley and then tonight across portions of central SD, but this activity should be light.

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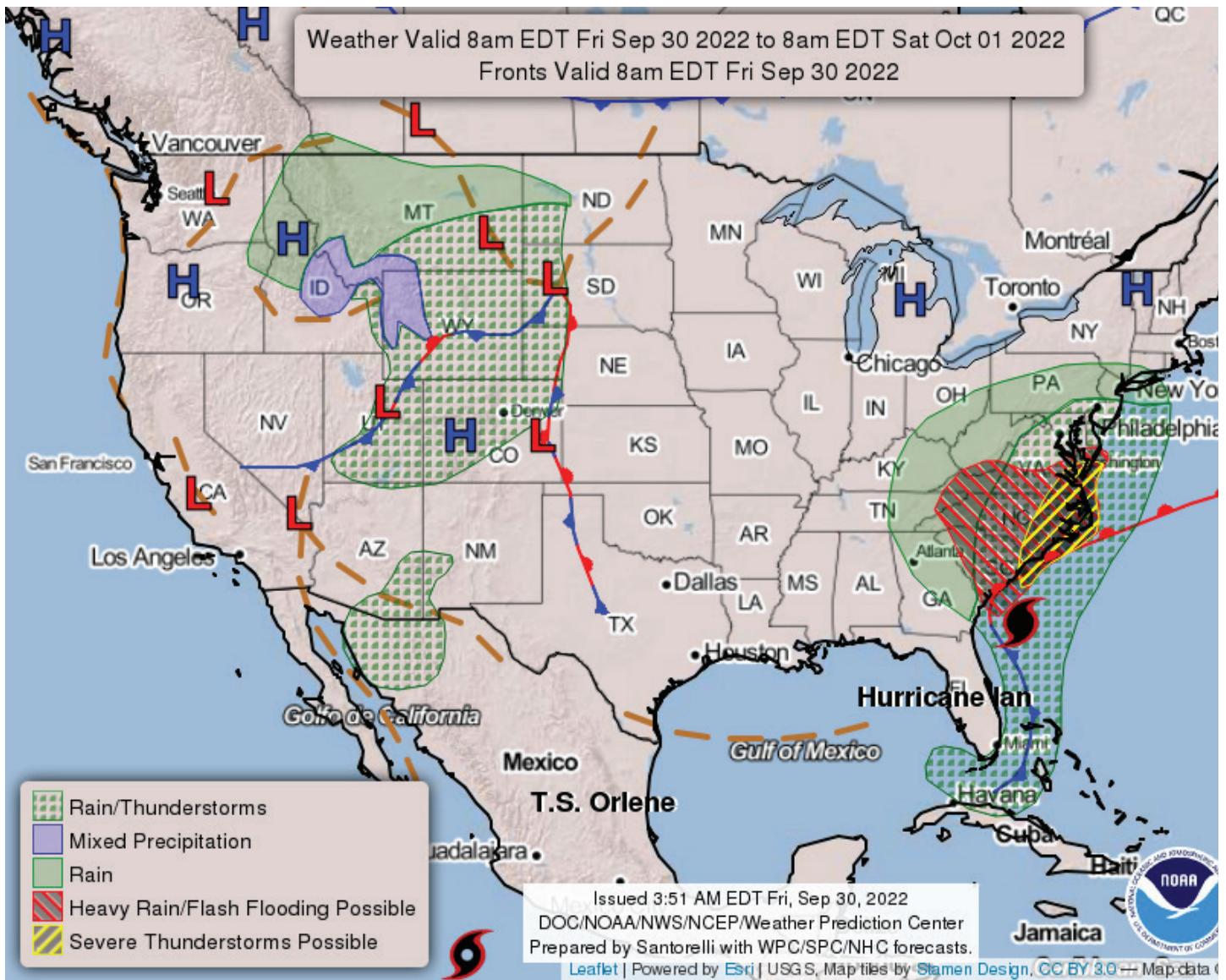
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 80 °F at 4:18 PM**  
**Low Temp: 57 °F at 4:31 AM**  
**Wind: 31 mph at 6:34 AM**  
**Precip: : 0.00**

Day length: 11 hours, 48 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 92 in 1989  
Record Low: 15 in 1939  
Average High: 69°F  
Average Low: 41°F  
Average Precip in Sept.: 1.99  
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.07  
Average Precip to date: 18.33  
Precip Year to Date: 16.05  
Sunset Tonight: 7:16:19 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:29:30 AM



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## Today in Weather History

September 30, 2006: Severe to exceptional drought conditions improved dramatically by the end of the month across central and north central South Dakota as above normal rainfall was recorded for the month of September.

1896: A hurricane formed on September 22 and lasted until September 30. It formed directly over the Lesser Antilles and hit Cuba, Florida, Georgia, South and North Carolina, Virginia, Washington D.C., and Pennsylvania. Its maximum sustained winds were at 130 mph. The heaviest rainfall deposited in association with the storm was 19.96 inches at Glennville, Georgia. This hurricane was responsible for an estimated 130 deaths and \$1.5 million in damage (1896 dollars).

1959 - Three tornadoes spawned by the remnants of Hurricane Gracie killed 12 persons at Ivy VA. (The Weather Channel)

1970 - A nineteen month drought in southern California came to a climax. The drought, which made brush and buildings tinder dry, set up the worst fire conditions in California history as hot Santa Anna winds sent the temperature soaring to 105 degrees at Los Angeles, and to 97 degrees at San Diego. During that last week of September whole communities of interior San Diego County were consumed by fire. Half a million acres were burned, and the fires caused fifty million dollars damage. (David Ludlum)

1977 - The temperature at Wichita Falls, TX, soared to 108 degrees to establish a record for September. (The Weather Channel)

1986 - Thunderstorms, which had inundated northern sections of Oklahoma with heavy rain, temporarily shifted southward producing 4 to 8 inches rains from Shawnee to Stilwell. Baseball size hail and 80 mph winds ripped through parts of southeast Oklahoma City, and thunderstorm winds caused more than half a million dollars damage at Shawnee. (Storm Data)

1987 - Afternoon thunderstorms in Michigan produced hail an inch in diameter at Pinckney, and wind gusts to 68 mph at Wyandotte. A thunderstorm in northern Indiana produced wet snow at South Bend. Seven cities in the northwestern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including readings of 98 degrees at Medford OR and 101 degrees at downtown Sacramento CA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Unseasonably warm weather prevailed over Florida, and in the western U.S. The afternoon high of 94 degrees at Fort Myers FL was their tenth record high for the month. Highs of 98 degrees at Medford OR and 99 degrees at Fresno CA were records for the date, and the temperature at Borrego Springs CA soared to 108 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thirteen cities reported record high temperatures for the date, as readings soared into the upper 80s and 90s from the Northern and Central High Plains Region to Minnesota. Bismarck ND reported a record high of 95 degrees, and the temperature reached 97 degrees at Broadus MT. Afternoon thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced wind gusts to 60 mph at Wendover UT. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1992: The past month was the coldest September ever recorded in interior Alaska. Fairbanks averaged a frigid 31.7° which was 13.2° below normal and the first below freezing September ever. Beginning on the 9th and on every day for the rest of the month, a new record low was set for either low minimums or low maximums, or both. On this date, the city plunged to 3° to set a new all-time record low for September. Snowfall for the month totaled 24.4 inches which was more than three times the previous record for September.



Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### **"IF YOU REALLY LOVE ME..."**

Corporal punishment of children is not considered to be an enlightened way of disciplining children. Actually, it is in direct opposition to the majority of the theories of psychology and ways to change behavior. But God does in fact include it as part of His program of parenting skills that can lead a child to maturity. Parents who choose not to use this form of discipline do not demonstrate that they possess a "higher degree" of parenting skills or that they love their children more than other parents. In essence, according to God's program of child rearing, they do not love their children as much as those who "use a rod."

The words "hate" and "love" in this verse are not to be seen as comparing love and hate in an emotional sense. In other words, to withhold a spanking is not a sign that "I love my child more than you do yours." It could be a sign that "I am willing to sacrifice my child's future well-being because I want him to like me," or "I would rather have the approval of society than God," or "I know of other children who were spanked and they did not end up so good." We must always be cautious about whose approval we are seeking: our child's, man's or God's.

Disciplining children is painful - especially corporal discipline which is clear from this passage of Scripture. But if the discipline is associated with breaking the teachings of God's laws - lying, stealing, and being disrespectful of others - then it is appropriate. Children must be informed that "If you lie to me, then you will be spanked" is in keeping with God's laws. Discipline is to bring conformity to God's ways.

Prayer: Father, help us to discipline our children with love and respect when they disregard Your laws and willingly choose evil. But first, let us be their example. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Those who spare the rod of discipline hate their children. Those who love their children care enough to discipline them. Proverbs 13:24



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  
11/19/2022: Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm  
11/24/2022 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)  
12/03/2022 Tour of Homes & Holiday Party at Olive Grove Golf Course  
12/10/2022: Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-12pm  
01/29/2023 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am-1pm, Community Center  
01/29/2023 85th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)  
04/01/2023 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)  
04/22/2023 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)  
04/23/2023 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)  
05/06/2023 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)  
05/29/2023 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)  
07/04/2023 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration, 10am Start (4th of July)  
07/09/2023 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)  
09/09/2023 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)  
10/31/2023 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)  
10/31/2023 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm  
11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)

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## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

### Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

- Black & White ..... \$48.99/year
- Colored ..... \$79.88/year
- Colored ..... \$42.60/6 months
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\* The E-Weekly is a PDF file emailed to you each week. It does not grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

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## Groton Daily Independent

[www.397news.com](http://www.397news.com)

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This option will grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

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News from the  Associated Press

## Thursday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Central def. Brandon Valley, 25-21, 26-24, 18-25, 25-23

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Clark/Willow Lake, 25-18, 25-22, 25-13

Baltic def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-17, 25-16, 23-25, 25-15

Bon Homme def. Menno, 19-25, 25-20, 26-24, 23-25, 16-14

Canton def. Tea Area, 25-23, 25-19, 25-15

Centerville def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-22, 25-22, 25-16

Chester def. Beresford, 25-19, 25-12, 25-10

Dell Rapids St. Mary def. Iroquois/ Lake Preston Co-op, 25-13, 25-14, 25-21

Dell Rapids def. Lennox, 25-12, 25-7, 25-11

Deubrook def. Oldham-Ramona/Rutland, 25-23, 25-17, 25-20

Douglas def. Sturgis Brown, 25-11, 26-28, 25-14, 25-20

Dupree def. Bison, 22-25, 18-25, 25-22, 25-14, 15-11

Elkton-Lake Benton def. Arlington, 25-18, 25-10, 25-14

Estelline/Hendricks def. DeSmet, 25-17, 25-20, 25-10

Faulkton def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-10, 25-7, 25-19

Florence/Henry def. Tri-State, N.D., 25-11, 25-10, 25-22

Great Plains Lutheran def. Deuel, 29-27, 22-25, 25-16, 25-22

Gregory def. Chamberlain, 25-21, 25-18, 25-22

Hamlin def. Redfield, 25-15, 25-12, 25-18

Harrisburg def. Sioux Falls Jefferson, 26-24, 25-19, 21-25, 25-22

James Valley Christian def. Sanborn Central/Woonsocket, 11-25, 22-25, 25-22, 25-23, 15-8

Jones County def. Kadoka Area, 25-17, 25-15, 20-25, 25-20

Kimball/White Lake def. Hanson, 17-25, 25-14, 25-23, 25-18

Langford def. Waubay/Summit, 14-25, 25-19, 26-24, 19-25, 15-7

Little Wound def. Marty Indian, 25-16, 25-14, 23-25, 25-11

Milbank def. Britton-Hecla, 25-10, 25-15, 25-21

Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Winner, 25-14, 25-15, 25-22

Platte-Geddes def. Lyman, 25-9, 25-9, 25-10

Sioux Falls Christian def. Elk Point-Jefferson, 25-16, 28-26, 25-14

Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Huron, 25-22, 25-16, 25-15

Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Pierre, 27-25, 25-19, 25-15

Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Mitchell, 25-16, 27-25, 25-22

Sioux Valley def. Flandreau, 25-16, 25-21, 23-25, 25-10

St. Thomas More def. Red Cloud, 25-15, 25-10, 25-21

Strasburg-Zeeland, N.D. def. North Central Co-Op, 25-15, 25-14, 25-15

Tri-Valley def. McCook Central/Montrose, 3-0

Tripp-Delmont/Armour def. Corsica/Stickney, 25-9, 25-12, 25-8

Warner def. Herreid/Selby Area, 25-12, 25-14, 25-10

Wilmot def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-21, 17-25, 25-20, 25-14

Yankton def. Vermillion, 26-24, 25-19, 21-25, 25-18

Pierce Triangular=

Pierce, Neb. def. Dakota Valley, 25-17, 18-25, 25-19, 16-25, 15-10

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PREP FOOTBALL=

Lower Brule 52, Marty Indian 0

Red Cloud 27, Little Wound 20

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

## Editorial Roundup: South Dakota

By The Associated Press undefined

Yankton Press & Dakotan. September 27, 2022.

Editorial: A Giant Leap Toward Protecting The Earth

For some people, it probably wasn't earthshaking news — and if all goes as hoped, that will be the point. Monday, a NASA probe crashed into a small asteroid, but the impact was intentional. And in a few weeks, we will know if it made an impact of a far more important nature.

The probe was called Dart (Double Asteroid Redirection Test) and it was designed specifically to intercept an object in space to determine if a crash impact could alter its trajectory. The effort is part of a loftier goal of enhancing earth's defenses against possible asteroid strikes that could have catastrophic consequences for the planet.

The \$325 million Dart mission was mankind's first attempt to alter the path of a space object — in this case, a football-field sized rock called Dimorphos, which was sailing past earth about 6.8 million miles away. The probe hit the asteroid very close to its intended target, an accomplishment which itself brought cheers from NASA officials.

Whether the impact of the small probe could move a 5.5-billion-ton object will not be known for several weeks. But even a minute change in course would represent a major step forward in protecting the planet.

As stated at the top, some people will dismiss this mostly as something more closely akin to science fiction and fantasy — or movies like "Deep Impact" and "Armageddon" — than pressing news.

It represents a lot more than that.

First, it must be acknowledged that the chances of the earth being struck by such objects are mathematically remote. Right now, scientists say there are no known objects that appear on a trajectory to hit the planet in the next century. But that comes with a big caveat: It's estimated that only 40% of those potential asteroids have been discovered.

Secondly, asteroids have hit the earth in the past. Scientists believe a massive impact 65 million years ago in what is now Mexico may have led to the extinction of dinosaurs, as well as 70% of all life on earth. That object was estimated as being up to nine miles long, but many smaller objects — even one the size of Dimorphos — could have major consequences, such as suffocating dust plumes, tsunamis and devastating earthquakes.

If we have successfully taken our first step toward establishing a planetary defense, it's game-changing news. Lori Glaze, NASA's planetary science division director, said Dart's success marked a "new era of humankind," adding: "(It's) an era in which we potentially have the capability to protect ourselves from something like a dangerous, hazardous asteroid impact.

"What an amazing thing. We've never had that capability before."

And that's overwhelming news — even if it's a system we hope we never have to use.

END

## Inflation hits record 10% in 19 EU countries using euro

By DAVID McHUGH Associated Press

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — Inflation in the European countries using the euro currency has broken into double digits as prices for electricity and natural gas soar, signaling a looming winter recession for one of the globe's major economies as higher prices undermine consumers' spending power.

Consumer prices in the 19-country eurozone rose a record 10% in September from a year earlier, up

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from an annual 9.1% in August, EU statistics agency Eurostat reported Friday. Only a year ago, inflation was as low as 3.4%.

Price increases were beyond what market analysts had expected and are at their highest level since record-keeping for the euro started in 1997. Energy prices were the main culprit, rising 40.8% over a year ago. Food, alcohol and tobacco prices jumped 11.8%.

"I'm already looking a lot more for special offers," said Myriam Maierhofer, a 64-year-old trainer and coach for staff development, who was shopping Thursday at weekly outdoor market in Cologne, Germany. "I don't throw away so much so quickly, so I've become more economical with food. And this morning, I also turned down the heating in the rooms again."

Inflation has been fueled by steady cutbacks in supplies of natural gas from Russia and bottlenecks in getting supplies of raw materials and parts as the global economy bounces back from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Russian cutbacks have sent gas prices soaring to the point where energy-intensive businesses such as fertilizer and steel say they can no longer make some products at a profit.

Meanwhile, high prices for utility bills, food and fuel are leaving consumers with less money to spend on other things. That is the main reason economists are predicting a recession, or a severe and long-lasting downturn in economic activity, for the end of this year and the first months of next year.

The European Central Bank is raising interest rates to combat inflation by keeping higher prices from being baked into people's expectations for wages and prices, it but can't by itself lower energy prices.

Friday's inflation reading was likely to be a matter of "grave concern" for the ECB, said Jessica Hinds, senior Europe economist at Capital Economics. She said the central bank's rate-setting council was likely to raise its benchmark rates by an outsized three-quarters of a percentage point at its next meeting Oct. 27.

Higher interest rates make it more expensive for people and businesses to borrow, invest and spend, dampening demand for goods and thus restraining inflation. Inflation is far above the ECB's goal of 2% considered best for the economy.

Central banks around the world are rapidly raising rates, led by the U.S. Federal Reserve, which is aiming to bring down inflation that hit 8.3% in August. Eurozone inflation has eclipsed the United Kingdom's 9.9% registered last month.

European officials call the natural gas cutbacks from Russia energy blackmail aimed at pressuring and dividing European governments over Western sanctions and their support for Ukraine. Russia blames technical problems.

The rising gas prices that have resulted mean higher heating bills and higher electricity costs because natural gas is used to generate power, heat homes and run factories.

European Union energy ministers on Friday adopted a windfall levy on profits by fossil fuel companies and other measures to ease the energy crisis, while individual countries also have allocated hundreds of billions to provide relief to households and businesses.

With consumer prices in Germany rising by 10.9%, hitting double digits for the first time in decades, the government announced plans to spend up to 200 billion euros (\$195 billion) to help with surging gas bills in Europe's largest single economy.

Chancellor Olaf Scholz said Thursday that the government was reactivating an economic stabilizing fund previously used during the global financial crisis and the coronavirus pandemic.

Christian Schrader, 35, who was shopping at the market in Cologne, was less worried about food prices but said that "you start to think about which rooms need to be heated in the flat and try to explain to the children that we only play in one room."

A bigger worry was "the social dimension," he said. "Inflation has often been a driver for social division, for extreme tendencies, for populism. This dimension worries me more."

## Russian strike kills 25 as Kremlin to annex Ukraine regions

By JON GAMBRELL and HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia pounded Ukrainian cities with missiles, rockets and suicide drones, with one

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strike reported to have killed 25 people, as it moved Friday to annex Ukrainian territory into Russia and put it under the protection of Moscow's nuclear umbrella, opening an internationally condemned phase of the seven-month war.

But even as it prepared to celebrate the incorporation of four occupied Ukrainian regions, the Kremlin was on the verge of another stinging battlefield loss. Russian and Western analysts reported the imminent Ukrainian encirclement of the eastern city of Lyman. Retaking the city could open the path for Ukraine to push deep into one of the regions Russia is absorbing in a move widely condemned as illegal.

The salvos of Russian strikes reported in Ukrainian cities together amounted to the heaviest barrage that Russia has unleashed for weeks. They followed analysts' warnings that Russian President Vladimir Putin was likely to dip more heavily into his dwindling stocks of precision weapons and step up attacks as part of a strategy to escalate the war to an extent that would shatter Western support for Ukraine.

The Kremlin preceded its scheduled annexation ceremonies Friday with another warning to Ukraine that it shouldn't fight to take back the four regions. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Moscow would view a Ukrainian attack on the taken territory as an act of aggression against Russia itself.

The annexations are Russia's attempt to set its gains in stone, at least on paper, and scare Ukraine and its Western backers with the prospect of an increasingly escalatory conflict unless they back down — which they show no signs of doing. The Kremlin paved the way for the land-grabs with "referendums," sometimes at gunpoint, that Ukraine and its Western backers universally dismissed as rigged shams.

"It looks quite pathetic. Ukrainians are doing something, taking steps in the real material world, while the Kremlin is building some kind of a virtual reality, incapable of responding in the real world," former Kremlin speechwriter turned political analyst Abbas Gallyamov said.

"People understand that the politics is now on the battlefield," he added. "What's important is who advances and who retreats. In that sense, the Kremlin cannot offer anything comforting to the Russians."

A recent Ukrainian counter-offensive backed by Western-supplied weapons has deprived Moscow of mastering its fate on the military fields of battle. Its hold of the Luhansk region appears increasingly shaky, as Ukrainian forces make inroads there, with the pincer assault on Lyman. Ukraine also still has a large foothold in the neighboring Donetsk region.

Luhansk and Donetsk — wracked by fighting since separatists there declared independence in 2014 — form the wider Donbas region of eastern Ukraine that Putin has long vowed, but so far failed, to make completely Russian. Peskov said that both Donetsk and Luhansk will be incorporated Friday into Russia in their entirety.

All of Kherson and parts of Zaporizhzhia, two other regions being prepared for annexation, were newly occupied in the invasion's opening phase. It's unclear whether the Kremlin will declare all, or just part, of that occupied territory as Russia's. Peskov wouldn't say in a call Friday with reporters.

In the Zaporizhzhia region's capital, anti-aircraft missiles that Russia has repurposed as ground-attack weapons rained down Friday on people who were waiting in cars to cross into Russian-occupied territory so they could bring family members back across the front lines, the deputy head of Ukraine's presidential office, Kyrylo Tymoshenko, said.

The general prosecutor's office said 25 people were killed and 50 wounded. The strike left deep impact craters and sent shrapnel tearing through the humanitarian convoy's lined-up vehicles, killing their passengers. Nearby buildings were demolished. Trash bags, blankets and, for one victim, a blood-soaked towel, were used to cover bodies.

Russian-installed officials in Zaporizhzhia blamed Ukrainian forces for the strike, but provided no evidence.

Russian strikes were also reported in the city of Dnipro. The regional governor, Valentyn Reznichenko, said at least one person was killed and five others were wounded by Russian Iskander missiles that slammed into a transportation company, destroying buses, and that also damaged high-rise buildings.

Ukraine's air force said the southern cities of Mykolaiv and Odesa were also targeted again with Iranian-supplied suicide drones that Russia has increasingly deployed in recent weeks, seemingly to avoid losing more pilots who don't have control of Ukraine's skies.

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Putin was expected to give a major speech at the Kremlin ceremony to fold Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia into Russia. The Kremlin planned for the region's pro-Moscow administrators to sign annexation treaties in the ornate St. George's Hall of the palace in Moscow that is Putin's seat of power.

Putin also issued decrees recognizing the supposed independence of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, steps he previously took in February for Luhansk and Donetsk and earlier for Crimea, seized from Ukraine in 2014.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, meanwhile, called an emergency meeting of his National Security and Defense Council and denounced the latest barrage of Russian strikes.

"The enemy rages and seeks revenge for our steadfastness and his failures," he posted on his Telegram channel. "You will definitely answer. For every lost Ukrainian life!"

The U.S. and its allies have promised to pile even more sanctions on Russia and to offer billions of dollars in extra support for Ukraine as the Kremlin duplicates the annexation playbook used for Crimea.

With Ukraine vowing to take back all occupied territory and Russia pledging to defend its gains, and threatening nuclear-weapon use to do so, the two nations are on an increasingly escalatory collision course.

That was underscored by the fighting for the city of Lyman, some 160 kilometers (100 miles) southeast of Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city.

A key node for Russian military operations in the contested Donbas region, Lyman is a sought-after prize in the Ukrainian counteroffensive that has had spectacular success since its launch in late August. Retaking the city could allow Kyiv to push into deeper into Russian-occupied Luhansk province, which would be a stinging blow for Moscow after its stage-managed "referendum" there.

The Washington-based Institute for the Study of War said the city's fall to Ukrainian forces "is imminent" unless Russia can ward off the collapse with speedy reinforcements, which appeared "highly unlikely."

## Hurricane Ian heads for Carolinas after pounding Florida

By MEG KINNARD and ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON Associated Press

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) — A revived Hurricane Ian set its sights on South Carolina's coast Friday and the historic city of Charleston, with forecasters predicting a storm surge and floods after the megastorm caused catastrophic damage in Florida and left people trapped in their homes.

With all of South Carolina's coast under a hurricane warning, a steady stream of vehicles left Charleston on Thursday, many likely heeding officials' warnings to seek higher ground. Storefronts were sandbagged to ward off high water levels in an area prone to inundation.

Along the Battery area at the southern tip of the 350-year-old city's peninsula, locals and tourists alike took selfies against the choppy backdrop of whitecaps in Charleston Harbor as palm trees bent in gusty wind.

With winds holding at 85 mph (140 kph), the National Hurricane Center's update at 5 a.m. Friday placed Ian about 145 miles (235 km) southeast of Charleston and forecast a "life-threatening storm surge" and hurricane conditions along the Carolina coastal area later Friday.

The hurricane warning stretched from the Savannah River to Cape Fear, with flooding likely across the Carolinas and southwestern Virginia, the center said. The forecast predicted a storm surge of up to 7 feet (2.1 meters) into coastal areas of the Carolinas, and rainfall of up to 8 inches (20 centimeters).

In Florida, rescue crews piloted boats and waded through riverine streets Thursday to save thousands of Floridians trapped amid flooded homes and buildings shattered by Hurricane Ian.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said at least 700 rescues, mostly by air, were conducted on Thursday involving the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Guard and urban search-and-rescue teams.

Ian had come ashore Wednesday on Florida's Gulf Coast as a monstrous Category 4 hurricane, one of the strongest storms ever to hit the U.S. It flooded homes on both the state's coasts, cut off the only road access to a barrier island, destroyed a historic waterfront pier and knocked out electricity to 2.6 million Florida homes and businesses — nearly a quarter of utility customers. Some 2.1 million of those customers remained in the dark days afterward.

Climate change added at least 10% more rain to Hurricane Ian, according to a study prepared immedi-



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ately after the storm, said its co-author, Lawrence Berkeley National Lab climate scientist Michael Wehner.

At least six people were confirmed dead in Florida, including two who died Thursday afternoon when their car hydroplaned and overturned in a water-filled ditch in north Florida's Putnam County, while three other people were reported killed in Cuba after the hurricane struck there on Tuesday.

In the Fort Myers area, the hurricane ripped homes from their slabs and deposited them among shredded wreckage. Businesses near the beach were completely razed, leaving twisted debris. Broken docks floated at odd angles beside damaged boats. Fires smoldered on lots where houses once stood.

"I don't know how anyone could have survived in there," William Goodison said amid the wreckage of a mobile home park in Fort Myers Beach where he'd lived for 11 years. Goodison said he was alive only because he rode out the storm at his son's house inland.

The hurricane tore through the park of about 60 homes, leaving many destroyed or mangled beyond repair, including Goodison's single-wide home. Wading through waist-deep water, Goodison and his son wheeled two trash cans containing what little he could salvage — a portable air conditioner, some tools and a baseball bat.

The road into Fort Myers was littered with broken trees, boat trailers and other debris. Cars were left abandoned in the road, having stalled when the storm surge flooded their engines.

Lee County Sheriff Carmine Marceno said his office was scrambling to respond to thousands of 911 calls in the Fort Myers area, but many roads and bridges were impassable.

Emergency crews sawed through toppled trees to reach stranded people. Many in the hardest-hit areas were unable to call for help because of electrical and cellular outages.

A chunk of the Sanibel Causeway fell into the sea, cutting off access to the barrier island where 6,300 people live.

Hours after weakening to a tropical storm while crossing the Florida peninsula, Ian regained hurricane strength Thursday evening over the Atlantic. The National Hurricane Center predicted it would hit South Carolina as a Category 1 hurricane Friday.

National Guard troops were being positioned in South Carolina to help with the aftermath, including any water rescues. And in Washington, President Joe Biden approved an emergency declaration for the state, a needed step to speed federal assist for recovery once Ian passes.

The storm was on track to later hit North Carolina, forecasters said. North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper urged residents to prepare for torrents of rain, high winds and potential power outages.

Visiting the state's emergency operations center Thursday, Cooper said that up to 7 inches (17.8 centimeters) of rain could fall in some areas, with the potential for mountain landslides and tornadoes statewide.

## **Nobel Prize season arrives amid war, nuclear fears, hunger**

By VANESSA GERA Associated Press

This year's Nobel Prize season approaches as Russia's invasion of Ukraine has shattered decades of almost uninterrupted peace in Europe and raised the risks of a nuclear disaster.

The secretive Nobel committees never hint who will win the prizes in medicine, physics, chemistry, literature, economics or peace. It's anyone's guess who might win the awards being announced starting Monday.

Yet there's no lack of urgent causes deserving the attention that comes with winning the world's most prestigious prize: Wars in Ukraine and Ethiopia, disruptions to supplies of energy and food, rising inequality, the climate crisis, the ongoing fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The science prizes reward complex achievements beyond the understanding of most. But the recipients of the prizes in peace and literature are often known by a global audience and the choices — or perceived omissions — have sometimes stirred emotional reactions.

Members of the European Parliament have called for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and the people of Ukraine to be recognized this year by the Nobel Peace Prize committee for their resistance to the Russian invasion.

While that desire is understandable, that choice is unlikely because the Nobel committee has a history

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of honoring figures who end conflicts, not wartime leaders, said Dan Smith, director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Smith believes more likely peace prize candidates would be groups or individuals fighting climate change or the International Atomic Energy Agency, a past recipient.

Honoring the IAEA again would recognize its efforts to prevent a radioactive catastrophe at the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia atomic power plant at the heart of fighting in Ukraine, and its work in fighting nuclear proliferation, Smith said.

"This is really difficult period in world history and there is not a lot of peace being made," he said.

Promoting peace isn't always rewarded with a Nobel. India's Mohandas Gandhi, a prominent symbol of non-violence in the 20th century, was never so honored.

But former President Barack Obama was in 2009, sparking criticism from those who said he had not been president long enough to have an impact worthy of the Nobel.

In some cases, the winners have not lived out the values enshrined in the peace prize.

Just this week the Vatican acknowledged imposing disciplinary sanctions on Nobel Peace Prize-winning Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo following allegations he sexually abused boys in East Timor in the 1990s.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed won in 2019 for making peace with neighboring Eritrea. A year later a largely ethnic conflict erupted in the country's Tigray region. Some accuse Abiy of stoking the tensions, which have resulted in widespread atrocities. Critics have called for his Nobel to be revoked and the Nobel committee has issued a rare admonition to him.

The Myanmar activist Aung San Suu Kyi won the peace prize in 1991 while being under house arrest for her opposition to military rule. Decades later, she was seen as failing in a leadership role to stop atrocities committed by the military against the country's mostly Muslim Rohingya minority.

The Nobel committee has sometimes not awarded a peace prize at all. It paused them during World War I, except to honor the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1917. It didn't hand out any from 1939 to 1943 due to World War II. In 1948, the year Gandhi died, the Norwegian Nobel Committee made no award, citing a lack of a suitable living candidate.

The peace prize also does not always confer protection.

Last year journalists Maria Ressa of the Philippines and Dmitry Muratov of Russia were awarded "for their courageous fight for freedom of expression" in the face of authoritarian governments.

Following the invasion of Ukraine, the Kremlin has cracked down even harder on independent media, including Muratov's Novaya Gazeta, Russia's most renowned independent newspaper. Muratov himself was attacked on a Russian train by an assailant who poured red paint over him, injuring his eyes.

The Philippines government this year ordered the shutdown of Ressa's news organization, Rappler.

The literature prize, meanwhile, has been notoriously unpredictable.

Few had bet on last year's winner, Zanzibar-born, U.K.-based writer Abdulrazak Gurnah, whose books explore the personal and societal impacts of colonialism and migration.

Gurnah was only the sixth Nobel literature laureate born in Africa, and the prize has long faced criticism that it is too focused on European and North American writers. It is also male-dominated, with just 16 women among its 118 laureates.

The list of possible winners includes literary giants from around the world: Kenyan writer Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Japan's Haruki Murakami, Norway's Jon Fosse, Antigua-born Jamaica Kincaid and France's Annie Ernaux.

A clear contender is Salman Rushdie, the India-born writer and free-speech advocate who spent years in hiding after Iran's clerical rulers called for his death over his 1988 novel "The Satanic Verses." Rushdie, 75, was stabbed and seriously injured at a festival in New York state on Aug. 12.

The prizes to Gurnah in 2021 and U.S. poet Louise Glück in 2020 have helped the literature prize move on from years of controversy and scandal.

In 2018, the award was postponed after sex abuse allegations rocked the Swedish Academy, which names the Nobel literature committee, and sparked an exodus of members. The academy revamped itself but

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faced more criticism for giving the 2019 literature award to Austria's Peter Handke, who has been called an apologist for Serbian war crimes.

Some scientists hope the award for physiology or medicine honors colleagues instrumental in the development of the mRNA technology that went into COVID-19 vaccines, which saved millions of lives across the world.

"When we think of Nobel prizes, we think of things that are paradigm shifting, and in a way I see mRNA vaccines and their success with COVID-19 as a turning point for us," said Deborah Fuller, a microbiology professor at the University of Washington.

The Nobel Prize announcements this year kick off Monday with the prize in physiology or medicine, followed by physics on Tuesday, chemistry on Wednesday and literature Thursday. The 2022 Nobel Peace Prize will be announced on Oct. 7 and the economics award on Oct. 10.

The prizes carry a cash award of 10 million Swedish kronor (\$880,000) and will be handed out on Dec. 10.

## S. Korea, US and Japan hold anti-N. Korean submarine drills

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea, U.S. and Japanese warships launched their first trilateral anti-submarine drills in five years on Friday, after North Korea renewed missile tests this week in an apparent response to bilateral training by South Korean and U.S. forces.

The North's recent five missiles launches, the first such tests in a month, also came before and after U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris visited South Korea on Thursday and reaffirmed the "ironclad" U.S. commitment to the security of its Asian allies.

The one-day three-nation training off the Korean Peninsula's east coast is meant to cope with a North Korean push to advance its ability to fire missile from submarines, according to a South Korean navy statement.

North Korea has been building bigger submarines including a nuclear-powered one and testing sophisticated missiles that can be fired from them in recent years. That's an alarming development for its rivals because it's harder to detect underwater-launched missiles in advance.

South Korean officials said last weekend that they had detected signs that North Korea was preparing to test-fire a missile from a submarine.

Friday's drills involve the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan as well as U.S., South Korean and Japanese destroyers, the navy statement said. During the training, the navy ships from the three nations were to search and track a U.S. nuclear-powered submarine posing as a North Korean submarine while exchanging related information, according to media reports.

"We will respond and neutralize any forms of North Korean provocations in an overwhelming and decisive manner," Capt. Cho, Chung-ho, commander of South Korean navy troops who took part in the training, was quoted as saying in the statement.

In addition to its submarine-launched missiles, North Korea has also a variety of nuclear-capable missiles that place both the United States and its allies South Korea and Japan within striking distance. This year, North Korea has performed a record number of missile tests as it refuses to resume long-stalled nuclear diplomacy with the United States.

Friday's training comes as South Korea and Japan are looking to mend ties frayed over history and trade disputes. The two Asian countries together host a total of 80,000 American troops. Earlier this week, the Reagan took part in joint U.S.-South Korean drills near the peninsula, the first such bilateral involving a U.S. aircraft carrier since 2017.

The North's most recent missile tests happened on Thursday, hours after Harris left South Korea. During her visit to the Demilitarized Zone separating the two Koreas, Harris said: "In the South, we see a thriving democracy. In the North, we see a brutal dictatorship."

## Taliban say suicide bombing in Shiite area of Kabul kills 19

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By EBRAHIM NOROOZI and RAHIM FAIEZ Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — A suicide bomber struck an education center in a Shiite area of the Afghan capital on Friday, killing 19 people and wounding 27, a Taliban-appointed spokesman for the Kabul police chief said.

The explosion inside the center in the Dashti Barchi neighborhood of Kabul — populated mostly by members of Afghanistan's minority Shiite community — took place in the morning hours, said the spokesman, Khalid Zadran.

The victims included high school graduates, both girls and boys, who were taking a practice university entrance exam when the blast went off, Zadran said. The center is known as the Kaaj Higher Educational Center and helps students prepare and study for college entrance exams, among its activities.

Zadran said education centers in the area will need to ask the Taliban for additional security when they host events with big gatherings, such as the study prep on Friday.

One eyewitness, 19-year-old high school student Shafi Akbary, had been attending the center for the past six months. The center had invited students to come at around 6:30 a.m. on Friday for the practice exam, and Akbary said around 300 students were present.

"First, we heard the sounds of a few gunshots at the main gate. Everyone was worried and tried to run to a different direction. Soon after that, a huge explosion occurred inside the center," said Akbary, speaking to The Associated Press over the phone.

Akbary, who was unharmed in the explosion, said he saw dozens of bodies and wounded people scattered around him. "I was so afraid and couldn't even move myself to help them. Later, other people ran inside and took us out," he added.

The suicide bombing was the latest in a steady stream of violence since the Taliban seized power. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

The Islamic State group — the chief rival of the Taliban since their takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021 — has in the past targeted the Hazara community, including in Dashti Barchi.

"Our teams have dispatched at the site of the blast to find out more details," Abdul Nafi Takor, a Taliban-appointed spokesman for the Interior Ministry, said earlier.

The U.S. chargé d'affaires for Afghanistan, Karen Decker, condemned the attack in a tweet.

"Targeting a room full of students taking exams is shameful; all students should be able to pursue an education in peace & without fear," she said. "We hope for a swift recovery for the victims & we grieve with the families of the deceased."

Afghanistan's Hazaras, who are mostly Shiite Muslims, have been the target of a brutal campaign of violence for the past several years, blamed on the regional affiliate of the Islamic State group. Militants have carried out several deadly attacks in Dashti Barchi, including a horrific 2020 attack on a maternity hospital that killed 24 people, including newborn babies and mothers.

The United Nations children's fund said it was appalled by Friday's horrific attack, adding that violence in or around educational establishments was never acceptable.

"This heinous act claimed the lives of dozens of adolescent girls and boys and severely injured many more," UNICEF tweeted. "Children and adolescents are not, and must never be, the target of violence."

## Methane blast in Baltic Sea highlights global problem

CATHY BUSSEWITZ AP Energy Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — As serious as the methane escaping from ruptured pipelines on the floor of the Baltic Sea may be, there are alarming incidents of massive methane releases around the world frequently.

Climate scientists have found that methane emissions from the oil and gas industry are far worse than what companies are reporting, despite claims by some major firms that they've reduced their emissions. That matters because natural gas, a fossil fuel widely used to heat homes and provide electricity, is made up of methane, a potent climate warming gas. It escapes into the atmosphere from well sites and across

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the natural gas distribution network, from pipelines and compressor stations, to the export terminals that liquefy gas to ship it overseas.

Scientists measuring methane from satellites in space have found that methane emissions from oil and gas operations are usually at least twice what companies reported, said Thomas Lauvaux, a scientist at University of Reims in France. In Permian Basin, the largest oil and gas field in the United States, methane emissions were two to three times higher than what companies reported, he said.

"Everybody claims they have reduced their emissions, but it's not true," Lauvaux said.

Governments around the world, especially in the U.S., are also notorious for underestimating how much methane escapes into the air, said Cornell University ecology and biology professor Robert Howarth, who studies natural gas emissions.

In the U.S., the Environmental Protection Agency uses voluntary self-reporting from industry, instead of independent verification, which is what's needed, Howarth said.

Globally, Turkmenistan is among the worst offenders for releasing methane into the atmosphere, while Saudi Arabia is among the best at capturing it, based on satellite observations, Lauvaux said. The U.S. falls somewhere in the middle, with some companies capturing methane pretty well and others performing terribly.

Lauvaux and other scientists have observed more than 1,500 major methane leaks globally, and potentially tens of thousands of smaller leaks, using satellites, he said.

Most of the oil and gas industry's methane emissions come from pipelines and compressor stations, according to Kayrros, a company which analyzes satellite data.

Many of those so-called leaks are not accidental; they occur when companies perform routine maintenance. For example when a pipeline needs repair, operators need to bleed gas out so they can weld without an explosion. But instead of capturing the gas, most companies just open the pipeline and release the methane into the air, a practice which is legal in the U.S. and elsewhere. Some companies do capture methane instead of just releasing it, but more could adopt the practice, scientists said.

One way the oil and gas industry tries to reduce methane emissions is by flaring, or burning off, what they consider excess gas. Companies might employ a flare when they're drilling for oil, and gas comes up along with the oil. If they don't have the pipeline infrastructure to transport it to customers, or if they've decided that gas, which is generally cheaper than oil, isn't worth the effort, they may send the gas up a flare stack to burn it off.

In Turkmenistan, scientists found flares malfunctioning for as long as three years. "This gas is just pouring into the atmosphere," Lauvaux said.

A study released Thursday by scientists at the University of Michigan found that flaring releases five times more methane in the U.S. than previously thought. Flares, they found, are often unlit or not working, allowing gas to escape directly into the atmosphere.

Reducing flaring or making sure flares are working properly would go a long way, said Genevieve Plant, a lead author of the study and climate scientist at University of Michigan.

"If we take action soon, it will have a large climate impact," Plant said.

Fossil fuels are by no means the only source of methane. The gas can come from decaying garbage in landfills and livestock agriculture, even plants breaking down in reservoir dams. Fossil methane may make up some 30% of the total.

David Archer is a professor in the geophysical sciences department at University of Chicago and focuses on the global carbon cycle. He thinks much of the methane that has escaped from the Baltic Sea pipelines dissolved in the water.

The leak is dramatic, but it doesn't compare to the daily impact of methane emitters such as agricultural operations, Archer said.

The amounts "from oil wells and cattle are much larger, just harder to visualize. If the explosion in the Baltic looks large, it's because it's concentrated," he said.

## Dining in the dark: Brussels eateries tackle energy crunch

By SYLVAIN PLAZY Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — While European Union nations are still mulling a cap on gas prices, some businesses are more in a hurry for solutions to the continent's energy crisis.

In Brussels, the epicenter of the EU, restaurant owners have imagined how a future without gas and electricity would look like for gourmets.

The guests at the dinner served at the Brasserie Surrealiste and cooked by Racines employees this week were the first to experience it: No ovens, no stoves, no hot plates, no coffee machines and no light bulbs. Still, great food.

Just cold entrees, or slightly grilled over the flaming charcoal grill of a Japanese barbecue, served at candle-lit tables.

"The idea is to go back to the cave age," said Francesco Cury, the Racines owner. "We prepared a whole series of dishes that just need to be grilled for a few seconds ... But the search for taste, for the amazing, for the stunning, is still part of our business."

On the menu: brioche with anchovies, porchetta and focaccia cooked on a wood fire, raw white tuna, grilled pork with beans, and ricotta cream with pumpkin jam and pistachios as desert.

But what sounds like a romantic atmosphere and a one-time experience is actually what customers could face more permanently if energy bills keep increasing.

"People see price increases of 30% to 40% in the supermarket. And we, restaurant owners, buy the same raw material, the same products. So what do we do? We increase the prices. But then on top comes the price of gas and electricity. Can we do our job without energy sources? The answer is no," Cury said. "So we have to think a little bit more, and society has to realize how critical the situation is."

The dramatic rise of inflation in Belgium could have been a deterrent, but 50 guests took part in the dinner Thursday organized as part of the "Brussels in the Dark" initiative involving a dozen of restaurants.

"We are at a point when one needs to choose between being warm at home or eating out," said Stephane Lepla, on a night out with his girlfriend. "Finding the balance is complicated. So yes, of course, there is a reflection on a daily basis. There are habits that need to change, that we try to change anyway, even if it is not always easy."

## EXPLAINER: A deep dive into risks for undersea cables, pipes

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Deep under water, the pipes and cables that carry the modern world's lifeblood — energy and information — are out of sight and largely out of mind. Until, that is, something goes catastrophically wrong.

The suspected sabotage this week of gas pipelines that tied Russia and Europe together is driving home how vital yet weakly protected undersea infrastructure is vulnerable to attack, with potentially disastrous repercussions for the global economy.

It isn't known who detonated explosions, powerful enough to be detected by earthquake monitors across the Baltic Sea, that European governments suspect were the cause of multiple punctures in the Nord Stream pipelines. The leaks released frothing torrents of methane, a potent greenhouse gas.

The Kremlin has denied involvement, calling suspicions that it sabotaged the pipelines "predictable and stupid."

Analysts found that hard to believe, saying that gas-producer Russia seemingly had most to gain from driving up market prices with such a strike and to punish Europe, by creating fear and uncertainty, in retaliation for its switching to other gas suppliers because of the Kremlin's invasion of Ukraine.

Because underwater sabotage is harder to detect and easier to deny than more readily visible attacks on the ground and in the air, the blasts also seemed to fit Russia's military playbook for "hybrid war." That's the use of an array of means — military, nonmilitary and subterfuge — to destabilize, divide and

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pressure adversaries.

A look at undersea infrastructures that military and economic analysts say need stronger protection:  
WHAT'S DOWN THERE?

Gas networks form just part of the globe's dense mesh of undersea pipes and cables that power economies, keep houses warm and connect billions of people.

More than 1.3 million kilometers (807,800 miles) of fiber optic cables — more than enough to stretch to the moon and back — span the oceans and seas, according to TeleGeography, which tracks and maps the vital communication networks.

The cables are typically the width of a garden hose. But 97% of the world's communications, including trillions of dollars of financial transactions, pass through them each day.

Without them, modern life could suddenly freeze, economies would crash and governments would struggle to communicate with each other and their troops, British lawmaker Rishi Sunak warned in a 2017 report, laying out the risks before he became the U.K.'s Treasury chief.

Power cables also run underwater. Lithuania alleged in 2015 that a Russian naval ship repeatedly tried to hinder the laying of an undersea power cable linking the country to Sweden. Lithuania's energy minister was quoted as saying he regarded Russia's actions as "hostile."

HOW VULNERABLE ARE THEY?

The gas pipeline blasts showed that striking seabed infrastructure and escaping seemingly undetected is possible, even in the crowded Baltic Sea. Relatively shallow, with lots of maritime traffic and unexploded bombs on its floor from both world wars, the sea is viewed as a challenge to navigate undetected.

Even the Kremlin agreed it seemed unlikely to be the work of amateurs.

"It looks like a terror attack, probably conducted on a state level," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Thursday.

Dozens of breakages each year to submarine communication cables, often caused by fishing vessels and anchors, testify to their fragility. Their locations on the seafloor aren't secret, they're not robustly protected by international law and it doesn't take vast expertise or resources to damage them, Sunak's report said.

"Our infrastructure is fragile," said Torben Ørting Jørgensen, a retired admiral with the Danish navy. The Baltic gas leaks "have sharpened our attention on these vulnerabilities being the internet, power cables or gas pipes," he said.

Internet giants such as Amazon, Facebook parent Meta, Google and Microsoft have been among those driving the spreading web of cabling, with ownership stakes in a growing number of subsea cables. That avoids the need to spend taxpayer dollars on laying the networks. But because private firms don't think about national security as broadly as governments do, they've not been alert to the "aggressive new threat" to cables from places like Russia, Sunak's report said.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

After the Cold War, nations in the NATO military alliance shrank their anti-submarine warfare forces, trimming defense budgets and judging the threat from Russia diminished.

"The ability of many Western nations to reliably detect, track, deter, and counter Russian undersea activities has atrophied," said a 2016 study, "Undersea Warfare in Northern Europe," that was led by Kathleen Hicks, now No.2 in the U.S. Defense Department.

Retired French Vice Adm. Michel Olhagaray, a former head of France's center for higher military studies, said Western nations "allowed themselves to fall asleep" and that they must now throw themselves into better protecting undersea cables and pipes that Russia has identified as both vital and vulnerable.

They "certainly have fallen behind," Olhagaray said of Western defenses against undersea attack.

"The ocean floors are a far more important and obvious domain" than exploring space, he added. "Rather than going to Mars, we should be better protecting the infrastructure."

## 'Big impact': UK economic chaos, pound plunge hit businesses

By SYLVIA HUI and KELVIN CHAN Associated Press

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LONDON (AP) — Like many small business owners in Britain, Harry Niazi hoped for government help to keep his south London fish and chip shop going in the face of rocketing energy bills and soaring inflation.

But an economic stimulus plan announced last week by Prime Minister Liz Truss' new government brought no relief — far from it.

For Niazi and millions across the United Kingdom, things went from bad to worse after the promise of huge unfunded tax cuts sparked turmoil in financial markets and sent the British pound tumbling to a record low against the U.S. dollar this week.

"Everything's based on the dollar — diesel for the vessels to catch the fish, trucks to deliver our products. It has a big impact," Niazi said from his takeout shop, Olley's Fish Experience.

The pound's slide is hitting many businesses hard because imported materials and commodities like natural gas that are priced in dollars will be more expensive. Businesses will likely be forced to pass the costs on to consumers, which would further push up inflation — already close to a 40-year high at 9.9%.

That would worsen the squeeze on people facing yet another hike in their household energy bills Saturday, even though Truss' plan capped a more devastating 80% rise as natural gas prices soar.

"I'm terrified of putting my prices up. We have a good volume of customers coming in, we don't want to lose them, but every day something goes up in price. I don't know how we're going to cope," Niazi said.

The haddock, cod and other white fish he imports are priced in dollars, and that cost had already surged since July, when Britain's government imposed a 35% tariff on Russian seafood imports as part of sanctions over the war in Ukraine.

Niazi's concerns about the sliding pound are echoed by other businesspeople like Sanjay Aggarwal, co-founder of Spice Kitchen. The Liverpool-based company sells Indian spice mix gift sets packaged in steel tins from Indian manufacturers.

Tins and shipping — his business's two biggest costs — are both priced in dollars.

Aggarwal said he's already been forced to hike his prices this year because of rising steel prices. Shipping costs, too, have spiraled since bottoming out amid the depths of the coronavirus pandemic. The cost to ship a container from India to Britain has quadrupled since 2020 to about \$8,000 to \$9,000, he said.

His latest shipment is already en route in time for Christmas, but he's bracing for a price shock when he has to place his next order.

"We are affected because we're playing on a global scale," said Aggarwal. "So any future orders we now place, it's going to cost us 20% more."

Beyond Britain, the dollar has hammered many other world currencies, fueled by the U.S. economy performing better than others and aggressive Federal Reserve interest rate hikes drawing investors. The dollar's strength also has pushed the euro below parity and sent China's yuan to a 14-year low. The U.S. Dollar Index, which measures the greenback against six other major currencies, has surged 18% this year.

Britain's Wine and Spirit Trade Association warned that the falling pound is "set to raise prices for consumers and threaten hundreds of British jobs in bottling plants across the U.K."

The trade group said a fifth of all bulk wine imported to the U.K. for bottling comes from the United States.

Miles Beale, the group's chief executive, said that although the government's measures included "laudable" plans to freeze alcohol duties, "the pound tanking against the dollar has both usurped them and delivered a significant blow for U.K. wine businesses and consumers."

The mood of uncertainty has heightened since the government unveiled a plan to cut 45 billion pounds (\$48 billion) in taxes but no details on spending reductions, meaning they will be funding by public borrowing. Officials also want to spend billions more to subsidize steeply climbing energy bills for people and businesses.

The plans were met with widespread concern from economists and investors about ballooning government debt, and the International Monetary Fund warned that the moves could worsen inflation and the cost-of-living crisis.

The Bank of England has so far refrained from an emergency interest rate hike to offset the inflationary impact of the slide in the pound, but many expect the central bank to sharply raise rates soon.



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That has sparked panic among many homeowners used to interest rates that have stayed low, at around 2%, for years. A sudden sharp rise in borrowing costs will make mortgages unaffordable for many.

Dee Corsi, chief executive of the New West End Company, a group representing hundreds of shops, hotels and restaurants in London's famous Oxford Street shopping district, said she is certain those worries will loom large for consumers.

"We may benefit in the short term with a boost of tourists, especially from the U.S." because of the weaker pound, Corsi said.

"But in the long term, the lower pound will push up the cost of all imports for business," she added. "And with the cost-of-living crisis — we can't not talk about that — and with mortgages going up, I absolutely think people will be more cautious with their spending."

For some business owners, the Conservative Party's divisive economic plan might be alienating them in other ways, too.

Niazi, the fish and chip shop owner, is a Conservative Party voter but said he is disappointed in the government and "most probably" would not back the party in the next election.

"I don't know anything about running the country, but I know what the government is doing is hurting everybody," he said.

"It's not working, something's gone wrong," he added. "They need to fix it."

## Lebanon's dwindling rain leaves farmers struggling for water

By KAREEM CHEHAYEB Associated Press

HARF BEIT HASNA, Lebanon (AP) — Farmers in a small town perched on a northern Lebanese mountain have long refused to accept defeat even as the government abandoned them to a life off the grid.

Harf Beit Hasna receives almost no basic services. No water or sewage system, no streetlight or garbage collection. The only public school is closed. The nearest pharmacy is a long drive down a winding mountain road.

"We live on another planet," said Nazih Sabra, a local farmer. "The state has completely forgotten us, and so have the politicians and municipalities."

Its around 2,500 residents have gotten by because of an ingenious solution: They dug trenches, lined them with plastic and use them to collect rainwater. For decades, the rainwater enabled them to grow enough crops for themselves, with a surplus to sell.

But where government neglect didn't kill Harf Beit Hasna, the combination of climate change and economic disaster now threatens to.

In recent years, rainfall in Lebanon has decreased, straining even the most water-rich country in the Middle East. At the same time, the country's economy has fallen apart the past two and a half years; families whose livelihoods have been wrecked struggle to afford basics as prices spiral.

Harf Beit Hasna, on a remote mountain plateau above steep valleys, has taken pride in making it on its own with its rain-water pools. The town is dotted with them, most of them the size of a backyard swimming pool.

Sabra said he remembers in his childhood how his grandfather and other farmers could raise livestock and sustain a decent living.

But recent years have gotten harder. As rain declined and temperatures warmed, farmers adapted. They grew less of water-demanding produce like tomatoes and cucumbers and planted tobacco, a more drought-resistant plant.

Now they can barely grow enough to get by.

"If there isn't rain, you use whatever you have left stored and work with a deficit," Sabra said. "You can't even afford to farm anymore."

Sabra's field is barren and dry, save some tobacco plants and potatoes. He tried to plant a small patch of tomatoes for his family's use. But to save water, he had to let them die. The rotting tomatoes swarm with pests.

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"There's nothing we can do with them", Sabra said, before taking a long drag off his cigarette.

He has a small patch of eggplants surrounded by barren, cracking soil. He hopes he can sell them in the nearby city of Tripoli to buy more potable water for his family this month.

"Those eggplants wouldn't have been there without the ponds," he says with a smile. His pool, which can hold around 200 cubic meters of water, was only about a quarter full. The water was green, because he's been drawing on it slowly, trying to ration out what's left.

From his field, Sabra can see the Mediterranean Sea on the horizon and, below him, a valley where there are freshwater springs. But gasoline is too expensive for him to drive daily to get water from there. He struggles to afford school for his children. His home hasn't had electricity for weeks because no power comes from the state network, and he can't afford fuel for his personal generator.

Government services and infrastructure across Lebanon are decrepit and faltering. But Harf Bait Hasna's situation is particularly bad.

It's remote and hard to reach. Administratively, it's caught between two different municipalities, neither of which wants to deal with it. And, residents say, it has no political patron — a crucial need for any community to get anything in Lebanon's factionalized politics. Sabra and other farmers say politicians for years have ignored their requests for a well or a connection to the state's water network.

At Harf Beit Hasna, government neglect and climate change have combined to leave "an area very challenged with water security," said Sammy Kayed, at the American University of Beirut's Nature Conservation Center.

The disaster in the town is "much more profound (because) you have an entire community that is reliant on rain-fed agriculture" but can no longer rely on rain, he said.

Kayed, the co-founder and managing director of the Conservation Center's Environment Academy, is trying to find donors to fund a solar-powered well for the town and to draw officials' attention to get it connected to the state water network.

Across Lebanon, periods of rainfall have shrunk and the number of consecutive days of high temperatures have increased, said Vahakn Kabakian, the U.N. Development Program's Lebanon climate change adviser.

A recent report by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization said water scarcity, pollution, and inequitable water usage add to the difficulties of Lebanon's agricultural communities. The agriculture sector amounts only to a tiny fraction of the country's economy and so is often overlooked, and it like the rest of Lebanon's producers and consumers are struggling with skyrocketing costs.

In Lebanon's breadbasket in the eastern Bekaa Valley, farmers say their work is disrupted by strange weather patterns because of climate change.

"Rain has declined in its usual period, and we're seeing our soil dry up and crack. But then we somehow got more rain than usual in June," Ibrahim Tarchichi, head of the Bekaa Farmers Association told the AP. "We haven't seen anything like this before in the Bekaa."

He doesn't expect anything from Lebanon's politicians. "Here, you can only expect help from God."

The government for years has pledged to diversify its economy and invest more in the ailing agriculture sector. But since the economy fell out, the divided ruling clique has hardly been able to formulate any policies, failing to pass a 2022 budget so far and resisting reforms demanded for an International Monetary Fund bailout.

In the meantime, Sabra takes some water from one of his ponds and sighs. He has almost run out of water from the last rainy season in the winter. This is his only lifeline to last until the rains come again.

"There is nothing left for us but the ponds," he said.

## Explainer: Tua Tagovailoa, fencing response and NFL protocol

By ROB MAADDI AP Pro Football Writer

Tua Tagovailoa stumbled to the ground, his legs wobbly and unable to walk to the huddle after banging his head Sunday. And then Thursday night, he was carried off the field by stretcher after another hit caused his head to violently slam against the turf and his hands to freeze up.

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The Dolphins said the third-year quarterback was conscious and had movement in all his extremities. He was taken to University of Cincinnati Medical Center but was released and expected to return to Miami with the team.

"It was a scary moment. He was evaluated for a concussion and he's in the concussion protocol," Dolphins coach Mike McDaniel said.

Some who watched the scary injury want to know why Tagovailoa was playing just four days after his quick return Sunday prompted a joint review by the NFL and NFL Players Association.

Many former players were critical of the decision to allow Tagovailoa to return against Buffalo and start against Cincinnati.

"Player health and safety is at the core of the union's mission," the NFLPA wrote on Twitter. "Our concern tonight is for Tua and we hope for a full and speedy recovery. Our investigation into the potential protocol violation is ongoing."

NFL executive vice president Jeff Miller said the review usually takes a week or two.

"Every indication from our perspective is that it was," Miller said about the team and its doctors following concussion protocol on Sunday. "I know the player, the coach and others have spoken to this. And we are engaged in that review now. So we'll come back with a formal answer to that question, something that we want to engage in."

Before the game, Chris Nowinski, a founder of the Concussion Legacy Foundation who played football at Harvard, wrote on Twitter: "If Tua takes the field tonight, it's a massive step back for concussion care in the NFL. If he has a 2nd concussion that destroys his season or career, everyone involved will be sued and should lose their jobs, coaches included. We all saw it, even they must know this isn't right."

## HOW WAS TAGOVAILOA CLEARED TO RETURN SUNDAY?

Tagovailoa appeared to be disoriented by what the team originally said was a head injury after taking a hard hit from Bills linebacker Matt Milano late in the first half. He missed just three snaps and returned after halftime. Tagovailoa and the team said a back injury was the reason for his instability after the hit and he wasn't in concussion protocol. He was questionable to play on Thursday but started the game.

## WHAT IS THE NFL'S CONCUSSION PROTOCOL?

A player who exhibits or reports symptoms or signs suggestive of a concussion or stinger enters protocol.

During each game, independent certified athletic trainers (ATC spotters) monitor the players on the field. If they see an impact to the head, they call a timeout and the player must be removed from the game, examined and evaluated. Team trainers, coaches or physicians, teammates, NFL game officials, sideline unaffiliated neurotrauma consultants (UNC) or booth ATCs also can initiate the protocol.

Any player in concussion protocol undergoes a six-step evaluation by a team physician and UNC to determine the severity of the injury and whether or not they're fit to return to the field. The final step is a neurological evaluation featuring a cervical spine exam, including range of motion/pain, evaluation of speech, observation of gait, eye movements and pupillary exam.

If any elements are positive, inconclusive or suspicious of concussion, the player is escorted to locker room.

In the locker room, a team physician and UNC conducts a full neurological exam and complete NFL Standardized Concussion Assessment Tool.

If abnormal, the player doesn't return to play, undergoes periodic evaluation by a medical team and has a follow-up neurological exam.

The league instituted the system in 2011 after Cleveland Browns quarterback Colt McCoy took a helmet-to-helmet hit in a game and returned without being tested for a concussion. The Browns said that the team's trainers didn't see the hit because they were tending to other players and that no one told them about it. After the game, McCoy was diagnosed with a concussion.

## WHAT IS FENCING RESPONSE?

According to healthline.com, "when a person experiences an impact that's strong enough to cause traumatic brain injury, such as a concussion, their arms often go into an unnatural position."

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Tagovailoa appeared to take that position, his fingers flexed awkwardly in front of his facemask for several seconds as he laid on the turf.

"The fencing response is often seen when a player is knocked down or knocked out during full-contact athletic competitions such as football, martial arts, boxing, rugby, and hockey," per healthline.com.

It happened to Los Angeles Chargers tight end Donald Parham during a Thursday night game against Kansas City last Dec. 17. Parham was removed on a stretcher and stayed overnight at a hospital for observation after being diagnosed with a concussion.

## WHAT'S NEXT FOR TAGOVAILOA?

The severity of Tagovailoa's concussion is not known, but it's seemingly encouraging he was allowed to fly with the team. He must undergo a five-step process before being allowed to take the field again. The fifth phase is a full practice followed by clearance from the team physician. After that, he must be examined by an independent neurological consultant.

## Small protests appear in Havana over islandwide blackout

By ANDREA RODRÍGUEZ Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — A few hundred Cubans took to the streets Thursday night in Havana demanding the restoration of electricity, protesting more than two days after a blackout hit the entire island following the passage of Hurricane Ian.

An Associated Press journalist saw a total of about 400 people gathered in at least two spots in the Cerro neighborhood shouting, "We want light, we want light," and banging pots and pans.

It was the first public outpouring of anger after electricity problems spread from western Cuba, where Ian hit, and knocked out all of the island's power grid Tuesday night, leaving its 11 million people in the dark. The storm also left three people dead and caused still unquantified damage.

In addition to power problems Thursday in Havana, internet service was out and cellphones did not work.

Groups that monitor internet access confirmed to the AP the internet disruption in the island.

"We can confirm the near-total internet blackout in Cuba," said Alp Toker, director of Netblocks, a London-based internet monitoring firm. He said that what his group sees is different than what happened right after the hurricane hit the island.

"We believe the incident is likely to significantly impact the free flow of information amid protests," he said.

Doug Madory, director of internet analysis at Kentik Inc., a network intelligence company, describes it as a "total internet blackout" that started at 00:30 GMT.

At a protest on Primellef Street, police arrived but demonstrators remained on one of the corners. About 10 blocks away, on the Calzada del Cerro, other protesters surrounded a work team trying to repair a pole and a light transformer.

The two groups of protesters were still in the streets late into the night, but the gatherings remained peaceful.

In July 2021, Cuba saw its largest social protests in decades. Thousands of people, weary of power failures and shortages of goods exacerbated by the pandemic and U.S. sanctions, turned out in cities across the island to vent their anger and some also lashed out at the government. Hundreds were arrested and prosecuted, prompting harsh criticism of the administration of President Miguel Diaz-Canel.

The government has not said what percentage of the population remained without electricity, but electrical authorities said only 10% of Havana's 2 million people had power Thursday.

Earlier Thursday, Ivette Garrido shared how she hurried last week to get the 6 kilograms (13 pounds) of subsidized chicken allotted to her family by Cuba's government and put it in the freezer, happy to have meat to get through Hurricane Ian.

Now she is considering giving the chicken to her three dogs before it goes bad as a huge power blackout caused by the storm extends beyond two days and everything in her freezer thaws amid scorching temperatures.

"We are not having a very good time, trying to survive, to keep things from thawing," said Garrido, who

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lives with her mother and a 19-year-old daughter in the town of Cojimar on the outskirts of Havana.

Electricity returned in some parts of Cuba on Wednesday, while it came on then shut off again in other parts. Experts said the total blackout showed the vulnerability of Cuba's power grid and warned that it will require time and sources — things the country doesn't have — to fix the problem.

Authorities have promised to work without rest to address the issue.

"We have never been so long without electricity," Garrido said. "They put it at 24 hours, at 36, but it's already been more than 48. It's criminal. Who is responsible for this?"

She has placed bottles of frozen water that had been in the freezer next to the chicken, along with some pork and sausages, to try to preserve the meat longer. A fan and television also await the return of electricity.

Calls by AP to a dozen people in Cuba's main cities — Holguín, Guantánamo, Matanzas, Ciego de Ávila, Camagüey and Santiago — found similar problems to Havana, with most reporting their neighborhoods were still without electricity.

Authorities say the total blackout happened because of a failure in the connections between Cuba's three regions — west, center and east — caused by Ian's winds.

Cuba's power grid "was already in a critical and immunocompromised state as a result of the deterioration of the thermoelectric plants. The patient is now on life support," said Jorge Piñon, director of the Center for International Energy and Environmental Policy's Latin America and Caribbean program at the University of Texas.

Cuba has 13 power generation plants, eight of which are traditional thermoelectric plants, and five floating power plants rented from Turkey since 2019. There is also a group of small plants distributed throughout the country since an energy reform in 2006.

But the plants are poorly maintained, a phenomenon the government attributed to the lack of funds and U.S. sanctions. Complications in obtaining fuel is also a problem.

## Water crisis tests Mississippi mayor who started as activist

By EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — The mayor of Mississippi's capital was 5 years old when his parents moved their family from New York to Jackson in 1988 so that his father, who had been involved in a Black nationalist movement in the 1970s, could return to the unfinished business of challenging inequity and fighting racial injustice.

"Instead of shielding their most precious resource, their children, from the movement or movement work, they felt that they would give us to it," said Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba, now 39.

Lumumba describes himself as a "radical" who is "uncomfortable with oppressive conditions." A Democrat in his second term as mayor, he faces a high-pressure leadership test as Jackson struggles to consistently produce a basic necessity of life — safe, clean drinking water.

The city has had water problems for decades. Most of Jackson was recently without running water for several days after heavy rains exacerbated problems at a water treatment plant. For a month before that happened, the city was under a boil-water notice because state health officials found cloudy water that could cause illness. Thousands of people lost running water during a cold snap in 2021.

Jackson's population and tax base eroded as mostly white middle-class residents started moving to the suburbs about a decade after public schools integrated in 1970. More than 80% of Jackson's 150,000 residents are Black. The city's poverty rate of 25% is almost double the national rate.

"I see a community that has often been left out of the equation, that has been treated disproportionately in terms of equity of resources," Lumumba told The Associated Press. "And so I believe that it is imperative that someone stand up for them and someone speak to those issues."

Emergency repairs are being done at Jackson's two water treatment plants. Water pressure has been restored. And although Republican Gov. Tate Reeves announced Sept. 15 that people can once again drink water from the tap after seven weeks of the boil order, the state health department says pregnant

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women or young children should take precautions because of lead levels previously found in some homes on the Jackson water system.

Lumumba's supporters say the mayor cares deeply for Jackson but faces opposition from Republican state leaders, and he inherited extensive problems from previous city administrations, including an unreliable billing system that has undercut revenue for repairs and maintenance.

Critics, though, say Lumumba has failed to provide clear leadership — allowing dangerous levels of understaffing at the treatment plants, obscuring concerns raised by the Environmental Protection Agency and not providing detailed budget proposals for fixing the water system.

Othor Cain, a Jackson radio host, is among the critics. Cain taught Lumumba in Sunday school at a Methodist church when Lumumba was young. He described the mayor as "a nice guy" and a talented orator. But he said Lumumba has not surrounded himself with strong managers and has faltered in building work relationships with other elected officials.

"You can't blame him for the age-old water system and the age-old infrastructure," Cain said. "But you can blame him from 2017, when he was elected, for doing nothing."

Robert Lockett, a civil rights historian, was appointed by Lumumba to serve on the Jackson school board. Lockett said he respects the mayor and believes he's doing a good job. Like many friends and acquaintances, Lockett calls Lumumba by his middle name.

"When Antar first ran for mayor and lost, and then ran and won, there was an idealism to his campaign that was the hallmark of early-career politicians," Lockett said. "In his first term as mayor, the shine on that idealism was kind of taken off a little bit."

Republicans control the Mississippi Legislature and all statewide offices. Lumumba and most other Jackson officials are Democrats. The mayor and Gov. Reeves rarely talked before Jackson's latest water crisis, and they've only made a few appearances together since it started.

The day after announcing the end of the boil-water notice in Jackson, the governor spoke at the opening of a business in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

"I've got to tell you, it is a great day to be in Hattiesburg. It's also, as always, a great day to not be in Jackson," Reeves said. "I feel I should take off my emergency management director hat and leave it in the car, and take off my public works director hat and leave it in the car."

Lumumba is an attorney and has been a community organizer. He said he's able to work with people who have different vantage points.

"If you can only organize people who think like you, you're not much of an organizer," he said.

Lumumba is the second person in his family to be mayor of Jackson. The man he calls his hero, his father Chokwe Lumumba, was elected mayor in 2013 after serving four years on the city council. Chokwe Lumumba persuaded Jackson voters to approve a 1% local sales tax to fund infrastructure improvements. He died in 2014, after less than nine months in office.

The elder Lumumba, a Michigan native, had lived in Mississippi in the 1970s and was active in a Black nationalist organization, the Republic of New Afrika. After he practiced law in the North for several years, he and his wife, Nubia, moved their family back to Mississippi.

The younger Lumumba said he spent part of his childhood working at Jackson's Malcolm X Grassroots Center for Self-Determination and Self-Defense. He said the center had summer programs for young people, offering them political lessons and leisure activities such as swimming.

"I'm grateful to my parents for giving me that value system in my work today," Lumumba said.

After his father died, the younger Lumumba ran unsuccessfully in a special mayoral election in 2014.

He won his first term as mayor in 2017 and easily won a second term in 2021. Lumumba said as he was growing up and earning a law degree, he did not aspire to become mayor but prayed God would use him to do big work.

"I believe that the Lord keeps our prayers stored up in vials and they're like a sweet-smelling aroma to him," said Lumumba, who attends a nondenominational Christian church. "So, the prayer that I made at like around 8 years old, He remembered and I think that is why I'm in position here."

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Corey Lewis of Gulfport, Mississippi, said he and Lumumba are best friends. They met in 2001 when Lewis was a student at Tougaloo College and Lumumba was graduating from Jackson's Callaway High School.

"He cares about the city of Jackson — like, that is a passion," Lewis said. "We could be out having fun or going on a trip and he'd be like, 'Man, I just don't know what I'm going to do about this situation.'"

Cain, though, said he thinks leading a city is a larger job than the current Mayor Lumumba anticipated.

"I just believe there is a difference between a politician or an elected official than an advocate or an activist," the radio host said. "I don't think this guy has been able to make the transition."

In a 2017 speech at Millsaps College in Jackson, Lumumba said that as a child of two activists, he tends to talk about big issues like social justice and self-determination.

"But as I quickly learned on the campaign trail," he said, "when you knock on a gentleman or a lady's door and you talk about these great big ideas, you're confronted with a brother or sister who says, 'Yeah, yeah, that's good, young brother, but how are you going to fix that pothole in the middle of my street?'"

## After Ian, the effects in southwest Florida are everywhere

By TIM REYNOLDS Associated Press

Hurricane Ian was over southwest Florida for only a few hours.

It will take months to clean up all the damage. Maybe longer. And some of the destruction can't be cleaned up at all.

From trees getting ripped out of the ground to signs being ripped apart, traffic lights crashing onto roadways and some buildings simply being destroyed, the impact was everywhere and almost nothing was spared. The only difference between one place and the next was the severity of the problems.

"We will get through this," said Vice Mayor Richard Johnson of Sanibel, Florida. "And we'll come out on the other side better than we were going in."

Perhaps, but it will be a massive undertaking, ranging from the cosmetic to the crucial and everything in between.

Fort Myers Beach is, quite simply, destroyed. Businesses are gone. Jobs are obviously lost, at least temporarily. The cleanup will take weeks and that will almost certainly have to precede any rebuilding efforts.

"Our entire staff is safe and although the restaurant sustained incredible damage the structure of the building is intact," the ownership of Nervous Nellie's, a seafood restaurant on the beach, said in a statement. "We are hoping to work our way through this and be back stronger than ever."

Around the region — Naples, Fort Myers, Sanibel — the magnitude of the damage is impossible to ignore. Along U.S. 41, the main road in the region, countless signs outside businesses are damaged, torn or just gone. The steel posts holding street signs in the ground are bent backward, no match for Ian's wind and force. The doors to storage-unit garages were twisted, sending the belongings inside some of the spaces flying into the air. The majority of traffic lights are out, wires dangling to the road below in some cases.

And in one instance, a metal traffic sign directing drivers toward Interstate 75 got crushed by an electronic traffic sign warning drivers about a closed lane.

"I've seen some things," said Clark Manchin, a construction project manager, as he assessed the mess. "I've never seen that."

Patience was quickly wearing thin. A 7-Eleven worker pleaded with people who filled her store: No \$20s, please. Small bills only. "If I run out of change, we have to close," she pleaded. There was no gas, no hot food and — because there was no running water — no coffee or bathrooms, either.

"I didn't take this as seriously as I should have," Mark Crow of Naples said. "I didn't stock up. I didn't board up. It's a mess, man. It's bad."

Much of the damage, thankfully, was just cosmetic. The 150-foot-high (50-meter), 250-yard (220-meter) deep nets ringing a Top Golf facility in Fort Myers were shredded, swaying in the afternoon breeze, not far from where a shredded American flag remained atop a pole at an office complex. At Florida Gulf Coast University, a set of bleachers — once on the sideline of the soccer field — blew halfway across the pitch and wound up crushing one of the goals.

Other damage was far worse. At an RV park in Fort Myers, debris from a destroyed golf cart floated in deep standing water Thursday, long after the storm cleared. Downed power lines and the destroyed poles they were attached to blocked the entrance. And down the street was a barn-style building that had been under construction. Its walls collapsed, the roof pinning the shredded lumber on the ground.

The damage assessments, and the cleanup, are just beginning.

"We have to be patient," Sanibel Councilmember John Henshaw said. "We have to start looking at where are we going to stay and live for a significant period of time. Don't know exactly what that is. We'll learn more as we go through this process."

## Dolphins QB Tua Tagovailoa stretchered off with head injury

By MITCH STACY AP Sports Writer

CINCINNATI (AP) — Miami Dolphins quarterback Tua Tagovailoa sustained neck and head injuries after being slammed to the ground Thursday night against the Cincinnati Bengals and was stretchered from the field.

The Dolphins said Tagovailoa was conscious, had movement in all his extremities and was taken to University of Cincinnati Medical Center for further evaluation. The Dolphins said after their 27-15 loss to the Bengals that Tagovailoa was expected to be released from the hospital and fly home with the team.

Tagovailoa was chased down and sacked by 6-foot-3, 340-pound Josh Tupou with about six minutes left in the first half. He was spun around and thrown to the turf. While on the ground, his hands froze in front of his face. He remained down for more than seven minutes before being loaded on a backboard, stabilized and strapped to a stretcher after his facemask was removed.

Dolphins players gathered around as Tagovailoa was rolled off the field and the crowd chanted "Tua! Tua!"

Miami coach Mike McDaniel said Tagovailoa called for him when he went down.

"I could tell it wasn't the same guy that I was used to seeing," McDaniel said. "It was a scary moment. He was evaluated for a concussion. He's in the concussion protocol, but he's being discharged."

"It's an emotional moment. It's not a part of the deal you sign up for. His teammates and myself were very concerned, but he got checked out and it's nothing more serious than a concussion."

Teddy Bridgewater, who replaced the injured Tagovailoa, said the Miami sideline went quiet when the starting QB was on the turf.

"Complete silence," Bridgewater said. "He's one of us. At the end of the day, it's only a football game. In that moment, you saw how we feel about Tua. He's our captain. He's our leader. It was great to see the doctors handling the situation."

Bengals coach Zac Taylor had an emotional reaction to Tagovailoa going down, saying: "It's a heavy moment. You hate to see that happen. It's a tough moment for everybody."

Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow hoped Tagovailoa makes a quick return.

"It's always scary when somebody goes out like that," Burrow said. "It's a dangerous game and something like that can happen at any time, but it's always scary when it does. ... Hopefully, he has a speedy recovery. I'm gonna text him after a bit and see how he's doing."

Reaction came swiftly from around the NFL. Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes and Broncos QB Russell Wilson promptly tweeted with concern for Tagovailoa's well-being.

"Praying for you Tua," Wilson wrote.

The 24-year-old Tagovailoa was suffering from a sore back and was listed as questionable for most of the week ahead of the game.

Tagovailoa briefly left Sunday's 21-19 victory over the Buffalo Bills after appearing to be disoriented by what the team originally said was a head injury after taking a hard hit from Bills linebacker Matt Milano late in the first half. He missed just three snaps and returned after halftime, a decision that prompted a joint review by the NFL and National Football League Players Association of what went into the decision to allow him to return to the game.

The team and Tagovailoa said after Sunday's game the quarterback had a back injury that caused his



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awkward stumble and fall after he was slammed into the turf in the second quarter. The team said Monday that Tagovailoa was not in concussion protocol.

He said he "hyper-extended" his back after getting his legs caught under someone on a quarterback sneak.

McDaniel said Thursday that he didn't think an injury from last week made him fall the same way this week.

After Tagovailoa's injury Thursday, the NFLPA tweeted: "Player health and safety is at the core of the union's mission. Our concern tonight is for Tua and we hope for a full and speedy recovery. Our investigation into the potential protocol violation is ongoing."

Some criticized the decision to play Tagovailoa so soon after his injuries in Sunday's game.

Hall of Famer Shannon Sharpe tweeted: "That's a serious injury. Tua shouldn't have been out there with Sunday Thursday turn around. Sometimes players need protecting from themselves. Dolphins failed Tua."

Before leaving Thursday's game, Tagovailoa was 8 for 14 for 100 yards and an interception. Bridgewater threw a touchdown pass to Chase Edmonds with 15 seconds left in the half.

The play of Tagovailoa, who won a national championship at Alabama, has been key for the 3-0 Dolphins. He came into the game second in the NFL with 925 passing yards.

## At a Florida trailer park, survivors speak of Ian's wrath

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON The Associated Press

NORTH FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP) — When Ian's winds swept into this Gulf coast trailer park, they howled with such force that residents felt they would be lifted off the ground, even blown away.

Now many homes in this community in North Fort Myers are crumpled and splintered. Hurricane Ian pulled, twisted and bent their metal roofs and broke apart their wooden structures.

"I literally watched my house disappear with everything in it, right before my eyes," said James Burdette, 62. "I watched things start to fly, part of the roof went off, the rest of the roof went off, the walls caved in."

Burdette sat back on a brown leather chair Thursday, the debris from what was once his living room scattered all about. Along with the chair, a remote control was still intact.

A carpenter by trade, Burdette moved to Florida from Virginia five years ago.

He said his original plan for Ian was to stay in his home and brave out the storm. But the winds were too strong, and at one point, as it roared through, he felt his house being lifted off the ground — up a few inches (centimeters) and then dropped forcefully back down.

"I stayed here for as long as I could until I got scared for my life and ran across the street," said Burdette. He likened his escape to the children's book tale of the Three Little Pigs — running as if from a house made of sticks.

A garden statue of Jesus was knocked down by the wind. Burdette struggled to lift it up and place it back in its original spot.

"It's heavy," he said.

Now he and his wife don't know what they will do next. They have no plans for where to go.

Burdette said he felt angry for all that happened. Yet, he added, he had considered himself a good-natured person who helped his neighbors, mowing the lawn of an older lady nearby and helping to improve their properties.

"I am the type of person who doesn't like to watch others struggle," he said.

"I am questioning my faith, which may not be right, but this isn't either," he said of Ian's damage.

At another homestead nearby, Eduardo David, 68, was clearing debris piled up by the storm against the front of his home. David also rode out the storm at home after finding himself unable to find flights out to Chicago, where he has family.

He said he was boarding up windows from the inside even as the storm was coming through. The winds kept knocking the sliding doors and pushing the windows off track.

"It was heavy winds. The house was shaking," David said.

## Stacey Abrams looks to win Black men in bid for Ga. governor

By JEFF AMY and BILL BARROW Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Democrat Stacey Abrams was on stage for an hour with radio and television host Charlamagne tha God and rapper 21 Savage when she faced a question from a skeptical audience member.

"A lot of politicians speak about their plan and what they plan to do, but I also notice that I never hear a clear turnaround of when their plan will go into effect," said Soheem Perry, who lives in suburban Atlanta. "If it doesn't happen within the time that's been promised, how should we feel about our vote?"

Perry captured the alienation some Black Americans feel about the political process. Democrats court their votes every election year yet sometimes struggle to deliver on certain promises. But in her bid to become America's first Black woman governor, Abrams needs support even from disillusioned voters.

The concern is especially acute when it comes to Black men, who some analysts suggest have trickled recently to Republicans. A large majority of Black men have still cast votes for Democrats in recent elections, meaning the bigger fear in a tight race is that they won't vote at all.

Abrams acknowledges the possibility. She built her national profile by insisting Democrats can compete in Georgia, a longtime Republican stronghold, if they attract marginal or disaffected voters, including Black men.

"If Black men turn out in the numbers and support me at the levels they're capable of, I can win this election, because we know Black men sometimes punch below their weight class," Abrams said at the event. "They've got reasons to be distrustful, and they've got reasons to be disconnected. And it is not only disingenuous, it would be bad practice, for me to not do the work to show that I understand."

To maximize Black male support, Abrams has held a series of events targeting them. A recent gathering in an un-air-conditioned warehouse featured free food and T-shirts.

Abrams delivered bits of her standard speech in response to questions from Charlemagne, 21 Savage and civil rights lawyer Francys Johnson. But the topics were tilted toward the audience, with discussions of how Abrams opposes letting prosecutors use rap lyrics in gang prosecutions, how she wants to decriminalize — but not legalize — marijuana because she fears federal criminal charges, and how she believes Republican Gov. Brian Kemp has abandoned efforts to make Georgia's criminal justice system less punitive.

"We need leadership that sees us, that serves us and that believes in us," Abrams said. "The current governor has proven on every one of those metrics that he does not care."

Black voters made up 29% of the general electorate during Abrams' 2018 gubernatorial bid, according to Georgia voting records.

Abrams won 94% of Black votes, according to AP VoteCast data, and still lost to Kemp by about 55,000 votes out of 4 million cast. In 2020, President Joe Biden topped Donald Trump in Georgia by less than 12,000 votes out of 5 million. Strong turnout among white voters meant Black voters accounted for 27% of that electorate, with VoteCast showing that Biden won 92% of the Black vote.

In Georgia's 2021 runoffs, which elected two Democrats to the U.S. Senate, Black voters cast 28% of ballots.

Yet in these and other elections, a significantly larger share of Black women voted than Black men.

Abrams' team identifies 3.9 million Georgia voters as its universe of potential support, but knows she won't get them all, said campaign manager Lauren Groh-Wargo. About 2.5 million are Black, Groh-Wargo said. Biden, at almost 2.5 million votes in 2020, won more votes than any Democrat ever before in Georgia. Abrams got 1.92 million votes in 2018.

A subtext in Abrams' effort is that Black men may be overshadowed in the Democratic Party by Black women.

Black women have long been an anchor of Democrats' coalition. They were credited with putting Alabama Democrat Doug Jones over the top in an upset U.S. Senate victory in 2017. Abrams' 2018 near-miss forced a rethinking by white-dominated donor circles and media about Black women's viability as statewide candidates.

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Biden's path to the White House further affirmed Black women's political power. In the Democratic primaries, Biden lost badly in overwhelmingly white Iowa and New Hampshire before surging to the nomination largely by sweeping Southern states with larger Black populations, driven by strong turnout in particular from Black women.

With that in mind, Biden, as president, has elevated women of color. Kamala Harris, his vice president, is Black and of Jamaican and Indian descent, and the first woman to hold the office. Biden also delivered on a campaign promise to nominate the first Black woman to the Supreme Court, resulting in Ketanji Brown Jackson becoming the court's 116th justice.

Nsé Ufot, who leads the New Georgia Project, a voting rights group Abrams founded as a state lawmaker, said it would be "disingenuous" to say the newfound attention on Black women is "not a factor" in how some Black men view politics currently. But Ufot said any resentments "are not as big a deal as the hand-wringing class" might think. "The question is whether she can make the hard sell, taking the case directly to Black men."

Abrams herself disputes any characterization that her focus on Black men reveals a "weakness" in her campaign.

"Every candidate, every campaign has to work hard to make certain that people believe it's worth voting, and that's what I'm doing," she told a gathering of Black journalists this week in Washington, adding that she's trying to address "distrust and despair" among voters who "are not seeing the results they thought they would see."

Indeed, it's not that Black men aren't overwhelmingly faithful Democrats, said Leah Wright Rigueur, a Johns Hopkins University expert on African American political power.

"The majority of Black men are exactly where they were a couple of years ago, which is that they're consistent and loyal and partisan voters and supporters of Democratic candidates," she said.

But Wright Rigueur said former President Barack Obama maxed out support from Black men, drawing some Black Republicans who've since moved back toward the GOP. She also said others are frustrated that previous Democratic victories haven't had a big impact on their lives.

"There is a cross section of Black men that manifest their frustration with failures of the Democratic Party by saying, 'You have to earn my vote,'" she said.

One of those is Tim Black, a Washington commentator who says he's an independent. He warned in a recent video that it would be a "slap in the face" to blame Black men if Abrams loses, and that no one has an "obligation" to back her.

"We're tired as hell of being talked down to," Black said. "Here's a radical idea: Instead of telling us who to vote for, give us some tangible reasons to vote for you."

Abrams seemed to sense that criticism at her event, holding up her policy ideas as ways to help people directly. "There's a Twitter universe that presumes that if you don't say exactly what they want to hear, you don't have an agenda for Black men. I get it," Abrams said. "It just so happens that I know that if the agenda for Black men works, it works for everyone."

Groh-Wargo described voters overall as "exhausted" by the 2020 campaign, including the Senate runoffs two months after the presidential election. She acknowledged frustrations among less habitual Democratic voters who "showed up" to defeat Trump only to face a pandemic economy, inflation and nonstop campaigning.

"There's a Black men's Democratic problem in California. It's not just us," Groh-Wargo said. "There is softness because Black voters in America are having this collective experience. ... People do not feel seen and heard." But, she insisted, "They don't feel that way about Stacey," because Abrams is "showing up."

For Perry, the voter who asked whether Abrams could keep her promises, that may be enough. He said Abrams didn't fully answer his question, but his "gut feeling about her ... is genuineness." And, he added, "That's what I normally feel like I don't feel from politicians."

## Brazil's decisive debate on eve of presidential election

By MAURICIO SAVARESE and DAVID BILLER Associated Press

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SAO PAULO (AP) — Tens of millions of Brazilians were glued to their TVs late Thursday for the final presidential debate before Sunday's elections.

Far-right incumbent Jair Bolsonaro needed a strong performance to ensure a runoff against leftist former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the front-runner in the polls. Five other candidates also participated.

Hours before the debate on the Globo network, a poll by Datafolha indicated a first-round victory was within reach for da Silva, which would require him to get more votes than all other candidates combined.

For that reason, Mauro Paulino, the former head of Datafolha, said Thursday's debate was "the most important since Brazil's redemocratization" in 1985.

"A small group of people will decide whether this election has two rounds or one," Paulino told GloboNews. "The performances of those candidates in front of so many viewers will matter a lot."

Here are some of the key moments from the debate: \_\_\_\_

Da Silva, whose performance in the first debate weeks ago was called tepid by analysts, tried to show more energy in his answers to Bolsonaro.

But the debate quickly devolved into a fierce back-and-forth between the two, with each lobbing personal insults and the moderator granting them repeated opportunities to respond.

"Him talking about gangs, he should look in the mirror," da Silva said.

"Liar. Ex-convict. Traitor to the nation," Bolsonaro fired back. "Be ashamed of yourself, Lula."

"It is insane that a president comes here and says what he says," da Silva said. "That is why people will send you home on Oct. 2."

The moderator, William Bonner, eventually asked for civility: "Out of respect for the public, please maintain the level of calm for a democratic environment that we are trying to have for this debate." \_\_\_\_

Simone Tebet, a senator who is close to agribusiness leaders and considered a moderate in the race, attacked Bolsonaro over his environmental record in a segment related to climate change.

"Your administration is the one that made biomes, forests and my Pantanal wetlands burn. Your administration cared for miners and loggers, and protected them," she said. "You, in this regard, were the worst president in Brazil's history."

Bolsonaro defended his record, noting he deployed the army to the Amazon to fight fires.

She commented that "he believes his own lies" and that low rainfall was hurting agricultural output.

"So the lack of rain is my responsibility? Congratulations," he replied, with a grin. He noted that he had traveled to Russia to negotiate supply of fertilizers.

"People love me, and the countryside will vote for me again," he added. \_\_\_\_

Brazilian social media was set afire by exchanges involving Father Kelmon Luís da Silva Souza, a candidate whose claim to be a Catholic orthodox priest has been contested. His appearance began by lobbing a softball question to Bolsonaro. That display, plus his past debate performance, prompted candidates to accuse him of working on behalf of Bolsonaro's candidacy.

Da Silva referred to him as a "shell candidate" and demanded to know at which church he supposedly ministers. The two exchanged heated words that prompted Globo to cut away and silence their mics for an extended time while Bonner, the moderator, pleaded for silence.

But candidate Soraya Thronicke's jabs at Kelmon — in three separate face-offs — were the greatest driver of attention and memes. She first feigned inability to even remember his name, then called him "Candidate Father" and said he looked like the costumed priests who perform mock weddings at traditional June parties.

Even Bonner showed open frustration with Kelmon. He repeatedly admonished the candidate for ignoring debate rules and speaking out of turn.

## Civil rights lawyer John Burris confronts police narratives

By JANIE HAR Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Before John Burris became the go-to lawyer for Northern California families grieving a loved one killed by police, the civil rights legend was a child suspicious of the Santa Claus narrative.

He didn't understand why Santa was white. He was confused by Santa's modus operandi — landing on

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rooftops to slide down chimneys to deliver presents? The Burris family had no chimney.

"I could not accept it," he said, "because it didn't make sense to me."

For nearly 50 years, the San Francisco Bay Area native has poked holes into narratives that did not add up, namely those of law enforcement accused of using excessive force. He estimates he has represented more than 1,000 victims of police misconduct, in California and elsewhere.

He helped win a civil jury verdict of \$3.8 million for the late Rodney King, a Black motorist whose 1991 beating by four Los Angeles police officers — captured on grainy camcorder video — shocked a public unaware of the brutality routinely inflicted on Black people. His practice also negotiated nearly \$3 million for the family of Oscar Grant, a young Black man killed by a Bay Area transit officer in 2009 in one of the first police shootings recorded on cellphone.

But Burris prides himself on the smaller cases that have made up his career, and even at 77, he still travels to stand with clients at news conferences. Video evidence has helped enormously in altering public opinion, legal observers say, but so have attorneys like Burris who refuse to stop pushing, one police department at a time.

"The police were untouchable," said retired U.S. Northern California Judge Thelton Henderson. "John was a part of changing all of that, changing and showing what the police department is like."

As Burris prepares to hand the reins of his practice to a younger generation, he sat for interviews with The Associated Press and reflected on a career that started with accounting before landing on police accountability as a way to improve his community.

Burris grew up in the working-class city of Vallejo, the oldest of six.

DeWitt Burris was a tool room mechanic at a naval shipyard with side businesses in landscaping and fruit-picking, which John Burris did not enjoy. Imogene Burris was a psychiatric nurse technician at a state hospital who taught her children that everyone deserved fair treatment.

John Burris was a big reader and as the Civil Rights era progressed, a speech class at Solano Community College showed him that people listened to what he had to say. He later graduated with advanced degrees in business and law from the University of California, Berkeley, yearning to do more.

It bothered him that the proud men he admired, including his father and uncles, had served in the U.S. Navy but in menial roles because of their race. It burned him to learn, as a lawyer, that police beat and belittled Black fathers in front of their children.

"Police didn't have to do certain things," Burris said. "I could see how Black men were treated in the criminal justice system. I understood it was the destruction of the African American family that was taking place."

San Francisco Mayor London Breed, 48, grew up in public housing and recalled Burris as someone the Black community could go to for help.

"There were certain attorneys that had a solid reputation, and he was one of them," she said. "It was a big deal that he was African American."

Now, prospective clients crowd into the small waiting area of his law firm before they're ushered into a conference room with expansive views of west Oakland.

The walls are studded with news articles chronicling legal achievements, proclamations of honor, and court illustrations of significant trials. One section is dedicated to Rosa Parks, the late U.S. Rep. John Lewis, and other civil rights heroes.

"I cannot be tired, I cannot quit," Burris said, "because they did not quit."

Rodney King's first pick to represent him in his civil case was Johnnie Cochran, but the assistant who took the call at Cochran's office said the lawyer was tied up for several months. ("Obviously he was furious when he found out about this," Burris said.) The case went to Milton Grimes, who pulled in Burris for his expertise in police brutality.

Burris recalls King as a regular guy unable to handle a media frenzy that relentlessly cast him in a negative light. Close friends called him by his middle name, Glen.

"He never got to the point of being able to handle being Rodney King," Burris said. "He wanted to be

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Glen.”

He represented Tupac Shakur in a lawsuit against the Oakland Police Department after two officers stopped him for jaywalking and mocked his name, infuriating the late rapper. (“Tupac was a difficult guy to handle because he didn’t follow directions well,” Burris said.)

His profile grew throughout the 1990s, with regular appearances on television as a commentator during the O.J. Simpson murder trial.

In 1996, Burris received his only disciplinary mark with the State Bar of California when his license was suspended for 30 days over ethical violations. He said he should have maintained closer supervision of a growing staff that sent out misleading mailers to victims of mass disasters. He also admitted to bouncing a check to another lawyer and failing to file lawsuits on time for two clients.

Perhaps his greatest achievement was in reforming the Oakland Police Department, the result of a class-action lawsuit he and attorney Jim Chanin filed in 2000 against a rogue unit that planted drugs and made false arrests. The Oakland “Riders” case resulted in the department coming under federal oversight for nearly two decades as it slowly implemented dozens of reforms.

The reforms included collecting racial data on stops of motorists, and reporting and investigating when officers used force. Burris met with the police department and federal monitor at least once a month, and in recent years without pay — “a testament to his not being in this just for money,” said Oakland Police Chief LeRonne Armstrong.

Lawyers trained or mentored by Burris say he uses a different scale than other attorneys when weighing potential cases.

“He’s like, ‘What is the principle of this?’” said Oakland attorney Adante Pointer. “There might not be a bunch of money. But you know you’re going to make a world of difference in someone’s life.”

Not everyone appreciates his knack for publicity, even if they admire his legal skills.

“I think it stirs up public sentiment unfairly. If he feels he has a viable civil case, the courtroom is where it should play out,” said Michael Rains, a Bay Area attorney who regularly defends police.

But Robert Collins is among clients who say the attorney provides invaluable guidance in a world where police usually dictate the narrative.

In December 2020, Collins’ stepson Angelo Quinto died after Antioch police rolled him on his stomach, pressed a knee to his neck and cuffed him. Police said that Quinto, who was in psychological distress, was combative and on drugs when he was neither, the family said.

At a recent news conference, Burris blasted Contra Costa County District Attorney Diana Becton’s decision not to criminally charge the officers. He comforted family members with hugs.

“Having somebody of John’s caliber, with that much experience, is really, really helpful. Because it lets you know that you’re not going crazy,” Collins said.

Burris has promised to slow down and this summer, reorganized his solo practice to add law partners.

His wife of two decades, Cheryl Burris, recently retired from teaching at the School of Law at North Carolina Central University, a historically Black university. Both are active in mentoring Black youth.

He marvels at the changes, from a time when the public insisted Rodney King was the villain to George Floyd, whose death sparked global outrage. But shootings, racial profiling, and inadequate response to mental health emergencies will continue without pressure for reform, he said.

“I know they don’t have a lot of people who speak for them,” he said of his clients. “I feel very fortunate that I can be their champion, if you will, and be their go-to person.”

## Asian stocks sink on German inflation, British tax cuts

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Asian stocks sank again Friday after German inflation spiked higher, British Prime Minister Liz Truss defended a tax-cut plan that rattled investors and Chinese manufacturing weakened.

Shanghai, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Sydney retreated. Oil prices edged lower.

Wall Street’s benchmark S&P 500 index fell 2.1% on Thursday to its lowest level in almost two years

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after strong U.S. jobs data reinforced expectations the Federal Reserve will stick to plans for more interest rate hikes.

Investors increasingly worry the global economy might tip into recession following interest rate hikes by the Fed and central banks in Europe and Asia to cool inflation that is at multi-decade highs. Global export demand is weakening and Russia's attack on Ukraine has disrupted oil and gas markets.

Markets slipped Thursday after Germany reported September inflation accelerated to 10.9% and Chancellor Olaf Scholz said the world's fourth-biggest economy faces a "double whammy" as energy prices surge. "We'd be inclined to argue that we haven't yet seen the bottom," said ING economists in a report.

The Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.6% to 3,023.91 after surveys of manufacturers showed production and new orders declined in September.

The Nikkei 225 in Tokyo fell 1.7% to 25,979.75 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong declined by 0.2% to 17,126.01. The Kospi in Seoul added 0.2% to 2,173.71.

Sydney's S&P ASX 200 sank 0.7% to 6,506.20. New Zealand and Southeast Asian markets declined.

Investors already were uneasy about signs global activity was weakening before Truss's government announced multibillion-dollar tax cuts. Traders worry that will push up already high inflation, forcing the British central bank to cool economic growth by raising interest rates further.

Stock markets and the value of the British pound rebounded Wednesday after the Bank of England said it would buy government bonds to support their price. But markets resumed their slide Thursday after Truss shrugged off criticism and defended her tax-cut plan despite a plea from the International Monetary Fund to reverse course.

On Wall Street, the S&P 500 fell to 3,640.47. More 90% of the stocks in the index declined, putting it on track to end September with an 8% loss for the month.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 1.5% to 29,225.61 and the Nasdaq composite lost 2.8% to 10,737.51.

The S&P 500 is down more than 20% for the year as investors wait for a break in inflation that has prompted the Fed to raise interest rates five times.

The yield on a two-year U.S. Treasury, or the difference between its market price and the payout at maturity, widened to 4.2% from Wednesday's 4.14%.

Stronger than expected U.S. employment data Thursday reinforced expectations the Fed will feel comfortable sticking to plans to raise interest rates further and keep them elevated through next year.

Fewer workers filed for unemployment benefits last week than forecast.

In China, surveys of manufacturers by business news magazine Caixin found production and new orders declined. That was in line with expectations that a Chinese manufacturing boom would fade due to weak global demand.

The Caixin monthly purchasing managers' index declined from its August level while a separate index by the China Federation of Logistics & Purchasing edged above a break-even point that shows activity increasing.

"The downturn in external demand looks set to deepen," said Zichun Huang of Capital Economics in a report.

In energy markets, benchmark U.S. crude lost 9 cents to \$81.14 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York mercantile Exchange. The contract fell 92 cents Thursday to \$81.23. Brent crude, used to price international oils, shed 10 cents to \$87.08 per barrel in London. It lost 83 cents the previous session to \$88.49.

The dollar rose to 144.70 yen from Thursday's 144.43 yen. The euro rose to 98.05 cents from 97.90 cents.

## Floods trap many in Florida as Ian heads to South Carolina

By TERRY SPENCER, ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON and TIM REYNOLDS Associated Press

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP) — Rescue crews piloted boats and waded through inundated streets Thursday to save thousands of Floridians trapped amid flooded homes and shattered buildings left by Hurricane Ian, which crossed into the Atlantic Ocean and churned toward South Carolina.

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Hours after weakening to a tropical storm while crossing the Florida peninsula, Ian regained hurricane strength Thursday evening over the Atlantic. The National Hurricane Center predicted it would hit South Carolina as a Category 1 hurricane Friday, with winds picking up to 80 mph (129 kph) near midnight Thursday.

The devastation inflicted on Florida came into focus a day after Ian struck as a monstrous Category 4 hurricane, one of the strongest storms ever to hit the U.S. It flooded homes on both the state's coasts, cut off the only road access to a barrier island, destroyed a historic waterfront pier and knocked out electricity to 2.67 million Florida homes and businesses — nearly a quarter of utility customers.

Four people were confirmed dead in Florida. They included two residents of hard-hit Sanibel Island along Florida's west coast, Sanibel city manager Dana Souza said late Thursday. Three other people were reported killed in Cuba after the hurricane struck there on Tuesday.

In the Fort Myers area, homes had been ripped from their slabs and deposited among shredded wreckage. Businesses near the beach were completely razed, leaving twisted debris. Broken docks floated at odd angles beside damaged boats and fires smoldered on lots where houses once stood.

"I don't know how anyone could have survived in there," William Goodison said amid the wreckage of the mobile home park in Fort Myers Beach where he'd lived for 11 years. Goodison rode out the storm at his son's house inland.

The hurricane tore through the park of about 60 homes, many of them destroyed or mangled beyond repair, including Goodison's single-wide home. Wading through waist-deep water, Goodison and his son wheeled two trash cans containing what little he could salvage — a portable air conditioner, some tools and a baseball bat.

The road into Fort Myers was littered with broken trees, boat trailers and other debris. Cars were left abandoned in the road, having stalled when the storm surge flooded their engines.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said at least 700 rescues, mostly by air, have been conducted so far and involving the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Guard and urban search-and-rescue teams.

After leaving Florida as a tropical storm Thursday and entering the Atlantic Ocean north of Cape Canaveral, Ian spun up into a hurricane again with winds of 75 mph (120 kph).

A hurricane warning was issued for the South Carolina coast and extended to Cape Fear on the southeastern coast of North Carolina. With tropical-storm force winds reaching about 415 miles (665 kilometers) from its center, Ian was forecast to shove storm surge of 5 feet (1.5 meters) into coastal areas in Georgia and the Carolinas. Rainfall of up to 8 inches (20 centimeters) threatened flooding from South Carolina to Virginia.

National Guard troops were being positioned in South Carolina to help with the aftermath, including any water rescues. On Thursday afternoon, a steady stream of vehicles left Charleston, a 350-year-old city.

Sheriffs in southwest Florida said 911 centers were inundated by thousands of stranded callers, some with life-threatening emergencies. The U.S. Coast Guard began rescue efforts hours before daybreak on barrier islands near where Ian struck, DeSantis said. More than 800 federal urban search-and-rescuers were also in the area.

In the Orlando area, Orange County firefighters used boats to reach people in a flooded neighborhood. Patients from a nursing home were carried on stretchers across floodwaters to a bus.

In Fort Myers, Valerie Bartley's family spent desperate hours holding a dining room table against the patio door, fearing the storm "was tearing our house apart."

"I was terrified," Bartley said. "What we heard was the shingles and debris from everything in the neighborhood hitting our house."

The storm ripped away patio screens and snapped a palm tree in the yard, Bartley said, but left the roof intact and her family unharmed.

Long lines formed at gas stations in Fort Myers and a Home Depot hardware store opened, letting in a few customers at a time.

Frank Pino was near the back of the line, with about 100 people in front of him.



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"I hope they leave something," Pino said, "because I need almost everything."

A 72-year-old man in Deltona died after falling into a canal while using a hose to drain his pool in the heavy rain, the Volusia County Sheriff's Office said. A 38-year-old man from Lake County died Wednesday in an accident after his vehicle hydroplaned, according to authorities.

Lee County Sheriff Carmine Marceno said his office was scrambling to respond to thousands of 911 calls in the Fort Myers area, but many roads and bridges were impassable.

Emergency crews sawed through toppled trees to reach stranded people. Many in the hardest-hit areas were unable to call for help because of electrical and cellular outages.

A chunk of the Sanibel Causeway fell into the sea, cutting off access to the barrier island where 6,300 people live.

South of Sanibel Island, the historic beachfront pier in Naples was destroyed, with even the pilings torn out. "Right now, there is no pier," said Collier County Commissioner Penny Taylor.

In Port Charlotte, a hospital's emergency room flooded and fierce winds ripped away part of the roof, sending water gushing into the intensive care unit. The sickest patients — some on ventilators — were crowded into the middle two floors as the staff prepared for storm victims to arrive, said Dr. Birgit Bodine of HCA Florida Fawcett Hospital.

Ian struck Florida with 150 mph (241 kph) winds that tied it for the fifth-strongest hurricane ever to hit the U.S.

While scientists generally avoid blaming climate change for specific storms without detailed analysis, Ian's watery destruction fits what scientists have predicted for a warmer world: stronger and wetter hurricanes, though not necessarily more of them.

"This business about very, very heavy rain is something we've expected to see because of climate change," said MIT atmospheric scientist Kerry Emanuel. "We'll see more storms like Ian."

## Study finds that climate change added 10% to Ian's rainfall

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

Climate change added at least 10% more rain to Hurricane Ian, a study prepared immediately after the storm shows.

Thursday's research, which is not peer-reviewed, compared peak rainfall rates during the real storm to about 20 different computer scenarios of a model with Hurricane Ian's characteristics slamming into the Sunshine State in a world with no human-caused climate change.

"The real storm was 10% wetter than the storm that might have been," said Lawrence Berkeley National Lab climate scientist Michael Wehner, study co-author.

Forecasters predicted Ian will have dropped up to two feet (61 centimeters) of rain in parts of Florida by the time it stopped.

Wehner and Kevin Reed, an atmospheric scientist at Stony Brook University, published a study in *Nature Communications* earlier this year looking at the hurricanes of 2020 and found during their rainiest three-hour periods they were more than 10% wetter than in a world without greenhouse gases trapping heat. Wehner and Reed applied the same scientifically accepted attribution technique to Hurricane Ian.

A long-time rule of physics is that for every extra degree of warmth Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit), the air in the atmosphere can hold 7% more water. This week the Gulf of Mexico was 0.8 degrees warmer than normal, which should have meant about 5% more rain. Reality turned out to be even worse. The flash study found the hurricane dropped double that — 10% more rain.

Ten percent may not sound like a lot, but 10% of 20 inches is two inches, which is a lot of rain, especially on top of the 20 inches that already fell, Reed said.

Other studies have seen the same feedback mechanisms of stronger storms in warmer weather, said Princeton University atmospheric scientist Gabriel Vecchi, who wasn't part of the study.

MIT hurricane researcher Kerry Emanuel said in general, a warmer world does make storms rainier. But he said he is uncomfortable drawing conclusions about individual storms.

"This business above very very heavy rain is something we've expected to see because of climate change," he said. "We'll see more storms like Ian."

Princeton's Vecchi said in an email that if the world is going to bounce back from disasters "we need to plan for wetter storms going forward, since global warming isn't going to go away."

## ALS drug wins FDA approval despite questionable data

By MATTHEW PERRONE AP Health Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — A much-debated drug for Lou Gehrig's disease won U.S. approval Thursday, a long-sought victory for patients that is likely to renew questions about the scientific rigor behind government reviews of experimental medicines.

The Food and Drug Administration approved the drug from Amylyx Pharmaceuticals based on results from one small, mid-stage study in which patients with the debilitating disease appeared to progress more slowly and survive several months longer. Typically, the FDA requires two large studies or one study with "very persuasive" survival results for approval.

"This approval provides another important treatment option for ALS, a life-threatening disease that currently has no cure," FDA's neurology drug director Dr. Billy Dunn said in a statement.

The drug, Relyvrio, is the third U.S.-approved medicine for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, which destroys nerve cells needed for basic functions like walking, talking and swallowing. About 20,000 people in the U.S. are living with the disease.

The FDA's review has become a flashpoint in broader debates about the regulatory agency, including how flexible it should be when reviewing drugs for deadly diseases and how much weight it should give to appeals from patients and other outside voices.

"I think it demonstrates the FDA's ability to be facile and I think it demonstrates a lot of tenacity on the part of ALS patients and advocates," said Dr. Catherine Lomen-Hoerth, an ALS specialist at the University of California San Francisco. "The company really tried to do everything possible to get this potentially promising drug out to patients."

Amylyx's drug is the latest in a string of neurological drugs that have won FDA approval despite questionable effectiveness data. The agency is still facing two government probes into its approval of the Alzheimer's drug Aduhelm last year, which has not yet been shown to slow the disease.

In an online memo summarizing its decision, the FDA said "regulatory flexibility" was appropriate for approving Relyvrio, "given the serious and life-threatening nature of ALS and the substantial unmet need."

The latest approval followed a remarkably turbulent path, including two negative reviews by the FDA's internal scientists, who called the company's results "borderline" and "not persuasive." A panel of outside advisers backed that negative opinion in March, narrowly voting against the drug.

But the FDA has faced intense pressure from ALS patients, advocates and members of Congress. In recent weeks the agency received more than 1,300 written comments from the ALS community supporting the treatment.

That outpouring helped sway the same expert panel when FDA reconvened them earlier this month to revisit Amylyx's drug. The second time around, they backed the drug, 7-2. The vote was not binding, but it seemed to open the door for FDA approval.

Several panelists said they were also reassured by an extraordinary exchange at the meeting in which FDA's Dr. Dunn requested — and Amylyx affirmed — that the company would voluntarily pull its drug from the market if a large, ongoing study doesn't confirm its benefit.

That 600-patient study is expected to report results in 2024.

But experts have pointed to the many potential problems with such an informal commitment. The FDA and the company could disagree on whether the final data supports the drug; or a company that acquires the drug in the future may not feel bound by Amylyx's pledge.

The powder-based drug is a combination of two older ingredients: a prescription medication for liver disorders and a dietary supplement associated with traditional Chinese medicine. Cambridge, Massachu-

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setts-based Amylyx has patented the combination and says the chemicals work together to shield cells from premature death.

Some ALS patients already take both drugs separately, sometimes paying \$5,000 a month for the prescription component, according to physicians. FDA approval is expected to compel insurers to cover Amylyx's medication.

Amylyx did not immediately disclose the price Thursday but said it planned to announce the information on a call with investors Friday morning. In Canada, where the drug received approval in June, the company has proposed a price equating to \$165,000.

One outside group that analyzes the cost effectiveness of new treatments pegged the drug's value at between between \$9,100 and \$30,700 per year. The Institute for Clinical and Economic Review also noted that many patients are expected to take Amylyx's drug in combination with an older therapy, which costs over \$170,000 per year.

Sunny Brous was diagnosed with ALS in 2015 and hopes to add Relyvrio to the two older FDA-approved medications she already takes for the disease.

"I've made it this far without this drug and I'm hoping having it now will extend my life further," said Brous, who is 35 and lives near Fort Worth, Texas.

Amylyx's data came from a 6-month study in 137 patients that showed some benefit in slowing the disease, based on functionality questionnaires completed by patients. Patients who continued taking Relyvrio after the study concluded appeared to survive longer than patients who originally received a placebo, the FDA noted.

"The ALS community has proven that our advocacy can impact decisions that are being made about our health," said Larry Falivena, an ALS Association board member who was diagnosed with the disease in 2017, in an emailed statement. The group invested \$2.2 million in Amylyx's early research and stands to recoup \$3.3 million from drug sales.

## **Biden vows US commitment to Pacific Islands at summit**

By AAMER MADHANI, MATTHEW LEE and DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden on Thursday told visiting leaders from more than a dozen Pacific Island countries that the U.S. was committed to bolstering its presence in their region and becoming a more collaborative partner as they face the "existential threat" of climate change.

The president addressed the leaders who gathered in Washington for a summit as the White House looks to improve relations in the Pacific amid growing U.S. concern about China's growing military and economic influence.

"A great deal of history of our world is going to be written in the Indo-Pacific over the coming years and decades," Biden said at the start of a meeting with island leaders at the State Department. "And the Pacific Islands are a critical voice in shaping the future, and that's why my administration has made it a priority to strengthen our partnership with your countries."

Biden delivered his remarks as his administration unveiled its Pacific strategy, an outline of the White House's plan to assist the region's leaders on pressing issues like climate change, maritime security and protecting the area from overfishing. The administration also pledged that the U.S. would add \$810 million in new aid for Pacific Island nations over the next decade, including \$130 million on efforts to stymie the impacts of climate change.

"We're seeing the consequences of climate change around the world very vividly, including in the United States right now, and I know your nations feel it acutely," Biden said.

Leaders from Fiji, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, the Cook Islands, French Polynesia and New Caledonia are attending the two-day summit that Secretary of State Antony Blinken kicked off Wednesday. Vanuatu and Nauru sent representatives, and Australia, New Zealand and the secretary-general of the Pacific Island Forum sent observers, according to the White House. The president hosted leaders for a dinner Thursday evening at the White House.

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The summit comes amid worrying signs to the U.S. that Beijing has grown its influence in the region. Earlier this year, the Solomon Islands signed a new security pact with Beijing, and ahead of the summit signaled it would be hesitant to sign any end-of-summit statement critical of China.

The Marshall Islands this month suspended talks to renew its security partnership with the U.S., citing the longstanding impact of U.S. nuclear testing in the area some 70 years ago.

A joint declaration issued at the end of the summit included a nod to those concerns. It stated that the U.S. was "committed to addressing the Republic of the Marshall Islands' ongoing environmental, public health concerns, and other welfare concerns" and "to the safe removal and disposal of unexploded ordnance."

Among the new initiatives the White House announced are plans to ask Congress to appropriate \$600 million over 10 years to support economic development, promote climate resilience efforts for Pacific fisheries and more. The administration says it will also establish a regional mission of the U.S. Agency for International Development in Suva, Fiji. The White House also reiterated previously announced plans to open embassies in the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Kiribati.

The White House also announced plans to recognize the Cook Islands and Niue as sovereign states, after "appropriate consultations." The U.S. currently recognizes the islands as self-governing territories.

Meg Keen, the director of the Pacific Islands program for the Australia-based Lowy Institute, said the recognition means the Cook Islands and Niue would be eligible for some of the U.S. funding announced by Biden on Thursday.

The 16-page document notes "heightened geopolitical competition impacts" for the Pacific Island countries that also directly affect the United States.

"Increasingly those impacts include pressure and economic coercion by the People's Republic of China, which risks undermining the peace, prosperity, and security of the region, and by extension, of the United States," the strategy document says. "These challenges demand renewed U.S. engagement across the full Pacific Islands region."

Among the broad strategy aims laid out by the Biden administration in the document are expanding the number of U.S. diplomatic missions from six to nine across the Pacific and completing work to renew strategic partnership agreements with the Pacific Island nations of Palau, Micronesia and the Marshall Islands that are set to soon expire. The strategy also calls for increasing the presence in the region of the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Pentagon.

White House officials acknowledge that U.S. inattentiveness toward the region since the end of the Cold War has left an opening for Beijing to exert its influence.

Plans for the summit were announced earlier this month, just days after the Solomon Islands called on the U.S. and Britain not to send naval vessels to the South Pacific nation until approval processes are overhauled. The Solomons in April signed a new security pact with China.

Ahead of the summit, the Solomon Islands signaled it was unlikely to sign on to an end-of-summit joint statement, according to a diplomat familiar with summit planning. The diplomat, who was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity, said the resistance was driven in part by the Solomon Islands' tightening relationship with Beijing.

But in the end, the Solomon Islands signed on to the joint declaration. The statement instead included calls for bolstering the Pacific economy, tackling climate change, maintaining peace and security across the Pacific, and more, but avoided any direct mention of China.

Besides their meeting with Biden, island leaders met Thursday with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

## **GOP states sue Biden administration over student loan plan**

By SEUNG MIN KIM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Six Republican-led states are suing the Biden administration in an effort to halt its plan to forgive student loan debt for tens of millions of Americans, accusing it of overstepping its executive powers.

It's at least the second legal challenge this week to the sweeping proposal laid out by President Joe

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Biden in late August, when he said his administration would cancel up to \$20,000 in education debt for huge numbers of borrowers. The announcement, after months of internal deliberations and pressure from liberal activists, became immediate political fodder ahead of the November midterms while fueling arguments from conservatives about legality.

As the lawsuit was being filed, the Biden administration quietly scaled back eligibility rules for the debt relief, eliminating a relatively small group of borrowers who are the subject of legal debate in the suit. Those borrowers, whose loans are backed by the federal government but owned by private banks — a relic of defunct lending programs — are now ineligible for Biden's debt cancellation, the Education Department said.

In the lawsuit, being filed Thursday in a federal court in Missouri, the Republican states argue that Biden's cancellation plan is "not remotely tailored to address the effects of the pandemic on federal student loan borrowers," as required by the 2003 federal law that the administration is using as legal justification. They point out that Biden, in an interview with CBS' "60 Minutes" this month, declared the COVID-19 pandemic over, yet is still using the ongoing health emergency to justify the wide-scale debt relief.

"It's patently unfair to saddle hard-working Americans with the loan debt of those who chose to go to college," Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge, who is leading the group, said in an interview.

She added: "The Department of Education is required, under the law, to collect the balance due on loans. And President Biden does not have the authority to override that."

The states of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and South Carolina joined Arkansas in filing the lawsuit. Iowa has a Democratic attorney general, but the state's Republican governor, Kim Reynolds, signed on the state's behalf. The states argue that Missouri's loan servicer is facing a "number of ongoing financial harms" because of Biden's decision to cancel loans. Other states that joined the lawsuit argue that Biden's forgiveness plan will ultimately disrupt revenue to state coffers.

In particular, the suit alleges that Missouri's loan servicer will lose revenue from loans it owns through the Federal Family Education Loan Program — a program that allowed private banks to issue and manage federally backed student loans until the program was disbanded in 2010.

The Education Department updated its website Thursday saying borrowers with federal loans that are owned by private banks, including the FFEL program and Perkins loans, will now be ineligible unless they already consolidated their loans into the government's direct lending program before Thursday. The change will reverse eligibility for about 770,000 borrowers, the department said.

"Our goal is to provide relief to as many eligible borrowers as quickly and easily as possible, and this will allow us to achieve that goal while we continue to explore additional legally-available options to provide relief to borrowers with privately owned FFEL loans and Perkins loans," the department said in a statement.

Still, the administration has long said it was confident the forgiveness program would survive court challenges.

"Republican officials from these six states are standing with special interests, and fighting to stop relief for borrowers buried under mountains of debt," White House spokesman Abdullah Hasan said Thursday. "The president and his administration are lawfully giving working and middle class families breathing room as they recover from the pandemic and prepare to resume loan payments in January."

Biden's forgiveness program will cancel \$10,000 in student loan debt for those making less than \$125,000 or households with less than \$250,000 in income. Pell Grant recipients, who typically demonstrate more financial need, will get an additional \$10,000 in debt forgiven.

The administration also said it would extend the current pause on federal student loan repayments — put on hold near the start of the pandemic more than two years ago — once more through the end of the year.

The administration faced threats of legal challenges to its plans almost immediately, with conservative attorneys, Republican lawmakers and business-oriented groups asserting that Biden was overstepping his authority in taking such sweeping action without the assent of Congress.

Democratic lawmakers battling in tough reelection contests also distanced themselves from the student loan plan, as Republican officials called it an unfair government giveaway for relatively affluent people at the expense of those who didn't pursue higher education.

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In their lawsuit, the Republican attorneys general also contend that the forgiveness program violates the Administrative Procedure Act, which lays out how federal agencies should make regulations in order to ensure executive branch policies are well-reasoned and explained.

"The president does not have the authority to put himself in the place of Congress," Rutledge said in the interview. "These actions must be taken by Congress and he can't override that."

To justify the plan's legality, the Biden administration is relying on a post-Sept. 11, 2001, law meant to help members of the military that the Justice Department says allows Biden to reduce or erase student loan debt during a national emergency. But Republicans argue the administration is misinterpreting the law because, in part, the pandemic no longer qualifies as a national emergency.

Another lawsuit against Biden's student loan program was filed this week in an Indiana federal court by the Pacific Legal Foundation, a libertarian legal advocacy group that employs a lawyer who says he would be harmed by the forgiveness plan. The lawyer, Frank Garrison, says erasing his current debt load will trigger a tax liability from the state of Indiana, which is among at least a half dozen states where the forgiven loan amounts will be subject to state taxes.

A federal judge on Thursday rejected Garrison's request to temporarily block Biden's plan, saying there's no evidence he will be "irreparably harmed" by the cancellation. Garrison was given until Oct. 10 to revise his argument.

The White House dismissed the lawsuit as baseless because any borrower who does not want the debt relief can opt out. The Education Department is still on track to unveil the application for the forgiveness plan in early October, and it sent an email to borrowers Thursday explaining how to prepare to apply. The email noted that applicants do not have to submit any supporting documents.

Republicans have also seized on the Biden plan's price tag and its impact on the nation's budget deficit. The Congressional Budget Office said this week that the program will cost about \$400 billion over the next three decades. The White House countered that the CBO's estimate of how much the plan will cost just in its first year, \$21 billion, is lower than what the administration initially believed.

## Hurricane Ian sweeps away homes, memories on barrier islands

By TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

FORT MYERS BEACH, Fla. (AP) — On the road into Fort Myers Beach, cars are left abandoned in the roadway, where they stalled when Hurricane Ian's storm surge flooded their engines and their drivers couldn't continue. Broken trees, boat trailers and other debris litter the road.

It's even worse in the seaside tourist town, much of which was flattened by the fierce winds and powerful storm surge generated by the Category 4 hurricane.

The barrier islands along the southwest Florida coast, famed for their seashells, fishing and laid-back lifestyle, took major hits from Ian when it came ashore Wednesday. Sanibel and Captiva are both cut off from vehicle traffic because the only bridge to the mainland partially collapsed. Nearby Pine Island was also ravaged.

At the Cottage Point mobile home park in Fort Myers Beach, William Goodison and his son, Kurtis, wheeled two garbage cans filled with what was left of his belongings through knee-high water Thursday. A portable air conditioner. Some tools. And a baseball bat.

But his furniture and family mementoes were gone, submerged when a 5-foot (1.5-meter) surge of water plowed across the 60-home community of retirees and working people. Goodison's single-wide trailer that he called home for 11 years — he had only one payment left — was destroyed. Because of the location, he couldn't get insurance.

"I own the land, but I'll have to scrap the trailer," said Goodison, a carpenter. "To rebuild now ..." he said, his voice trailing off at the thought. "But you've got to have some place to live."

Goodison rode out the storm at Kurtis' house inland. Otherwise, he said, he'd probably be dead.

"I don't know how anyone could have survived in there," he said.

Goodison said he lost numerous family photos and mementoes. "We'll have to start building new ones,"

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he said.

At a small strip mall nearby, Darbana Patel and her family were wrapping yellow caution tape around the 10-foot (3-meter) pile that had been their gas station's pumping area. The wooden awning that had covered the pumps and protected customers from rain had collapsed, smashing the pumps. Inside the store, the roof had also collapsed. She believes the business, which the family had owned for two years, is a total loss, but it is insured.

Patel said she was stunned when she arrived at the store Thursday to see it reduced to twisted metal and a pile of wood.

"I was like, 'Where's my store?'" she said. The other six stores in the strip mall also appeared to suffer extensive roof damage, and a motor home in the parking lot had been flipped on its side.

At the Get Away Marina, the storm surge lifted a dozen large boats — up to 48 feet (14 meters) long — and carried them across the parking lot and a four-lane road before depositing them in a mangrove preserve. The surge also blasted the walls off the marina's offices and flattened its second floor.

"It must have been a strong storm," said Robert Leisure, who has owned the marina for two years. He said he and his employees had put in a lot of work improving the docks, which are now mostly gone, and beautifying the property.

"We had a Tiki hut over there," he said, pointing to an empty spot. "It was really cute," he said about his business, "but no more." He thought for a moment as he considered the rebuilding job ahead, "But where do you start?"

As he spoke, charter fishing captain Larry Conley walked up and asked Leisure if he'd seen Conley's 24-foot (7.3-meter) boat.

"No, but it must be over there someplace," Leisure said, pointing to the mangroves.

Conley said he has insurance for the boat, but that's not enough — he needs to take anglers out. "That's how I pay the bills and survive," he said.

Eric Siefert, 62, a fulltime resident of Sanibel, was one of dozens of people being evacuated from the barrier island Thursday. Rescue workers were taking equipment over to the island on small boats and bringing people back, a half-dozen or so at a time.

"I thought that given that I have a concrete home with hurricane shutters and storm-grade windows, everything would hold," Siefert said. "And for the most part it did. We just didn't think we'd get an 18-foot storm surge."

Siefert's home is more than a block from the beach and about 6 feet (2 meters) above sea level, he estimated. His house is also elevated so the living space is about 10 feet (3 meters) off the ground.

The water ended up rising to about a foot above the base of Siefert's brand new storm sliding doors, with only about an inch of water leaking into the home, Siefert said. Despite the interior staying relatively free from water, Siefert said fear and uncertainty prompted him to lift his disabled wife onto a dresser.

"It was literally like being in the middle of the Gulf of Mexico," Siefert said. "The water came across multiple football fields and over a street and a half, and it was coming right at us, and it was rising, and it wouldn't stop rising."

## Hurricane Ian 'street shark' video defies belief

By GRAPH MASSARA and ALI SWENSON Associated Press

Photos and videos of sharks and other marine life swimming in suburban floodwaters make for popular hoaxes during massive storms. But a cellphone video filmed during Hurricane Ian's assault on southwest Florida isn't just another fish story.

The eye-popping video, which showed a large, dark fish with sharp dorsal fins thrashing around an inundated Fort Myers backyard, racked up more than 12 million views on Twitter within a day, as users responded with disbelief and comparisons to the "Sharknado" film series.

Dominic Cameratta, a local real estate developer, confirmed he filmed the clip from his back patio Wednesday morning when he saw something "flopping around" in his neighbor's flooded yard.

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"I didn't know what it was — it just looked like a fish or something," he told The Associated Press. "I zoomed in, and all my friends are like, 'It's like a shark, man!'"

He guessed the fish was about 4 feet in length.

Experts were of mixed opinion on whether the clip showed a shark or another large fish. George Burgess, former director of the Florida Museum of Natural History's shark program, said in an email that it "appears to be a juvenile shark," while Dr. Neil Hammerschlag, director of the University of Miami's shark conservation program, wrote that "it's pretty hard to tell."

Nevertheless, some Twitter users dubbed the hapless fish the "street shark."

The surge worsened in Fort Myers as the day went on. Cameratta said the flooding had only just begun when the clip was taken, but that the waters were "all the way up to our house" by the time the AP reached him by phone Wednesday evening.

He said the fish may have made its way up from nearby Hendry Creek into a retention pond, which then overflowed, spilling the creature into his neighbor's backyard. A visual analysis of nearby property confirmed it matches the physical landmarks in the video.

Leslie Guelcher, a professor of intelligence studies at Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pennsylvania, was among the online sleuths who initially thought the video was fake.

"Don't think this is real. According to the index on the video it was created in June 2010. Someone else posted it at 10 AM as in Fort Myers, but the storm surge wasn't like that at 10 AM," she tweeted Wednesday.

Guelcher acknowledged later, though, that online tools she and others were using to establish the video's origins didn't actually show when the video itself was created, merely when the social media profile of the user was created.

The AP confirmed through the original clip's metadata that it was captured Wednesday morning.

"It makes a bit more sense from a flooding standpoint," she said by email, when informed the fish was spotted near an overflowing pond. "But how on earth would a shark go from the Gulf of Mexico to a retention pond?"

Yannis Papastamatiou, a marine biologist who studies shark behavior at Florida International University, said that most sharks flee shallow bays ahead of hurricanes, possibly tipped off to their arrival by a change in barometric pressure. A shark could have accidentally swum up into the creek, he said, or been washed into it.

"Young bull sharks are common inhabitants of low salinity waters — rivers, estuaries, subtropical embayments — and often appear in similar videos in FL water bodies connected to the sea such as coastal canals and ponds," Burgess said. "Assuming the location and date attributes are correct, it is likely this shark was swept shoreward with the rising seas."

Cameratta sent the video to a group chat on WhatsApp on Wednesday morning, according to his friend John Paul Murray, who sent the AP a timestamped screenshot.

"Amazing content," Murray wrote in reply.

## 1/6 chairman: Ginni Thomas reiterates false election claims

By FARNOUSH AMIRI and MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Virginia "Ginni" Thomas, the wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, stood by the false claim that the 2020 election was fraudulent during an interview Thursday with the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection, the panel's chairman said.

"It's a work in progress," Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., told reporters after the more than four-hour interview ended. "At this point, we're glad she came."

The committee — comprised of seven Democrats and two Republicans — has for months sought an interview with Thomas in an effort to know more about her role in trying to help former President Donald Trump overturn his election defeat. The conservative activist texted with White House chief of staff Mark Meadows and contacted lawmakers in Arizona and Wisconsin in the weeks after the election.

Thomas answered some of the questions from congressional investigators Thursday as she sought to portray herself as among the many Americans who still believe the baseless claim that the 2020 election was



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stolen, according to a person familiar with the investigation who was not authorized to discuss it publicly.

But she did not provide any evidence or specific reasoning to back up her belief, the person said.

"As she has said from the outset, Mrs. Thomas had significant concerns about fraud and irregularities in the 2020 election," Mark Paoletta, her attorney, said in a statement. "And, as she told the Committee, her minimal and mainstream activity focused on ensuring that reports of fraud and irregularities were investigated."

"Beyond that, she played no role in any events after the 2020 election results," he added.

The testimony from Thomas was one of the last remaining for the panel as it eyes the completion of its work. The panel has already interviewed more than 1,000 witnesses and shown some of that video testimony in its eight hearings over the summer.

The extent of her involvement in the Capitol attack is unclear. In the days after The Associated Press and other news organizations called the presidential election for Biden, Thomas emailed two lawmakers in Arizona to urge them to choose "a clean slate of Electors" and "stand strong in the face of political and media pressure." The AP obtained the emails earlier this year under the state's open records law.

She has said in previous interviews that she attended the initial pro-Trump rally the morning of Jan. 6 but left before Trump spoke and the crowds headed for the Capitol.

Thomas, a Trump supporter long active in conservative causes, has repeatedly maintained that her political activities posed no conflict of interest with the work of her husband.

"Like so many married couples, we share many of the same ideals, principles, and aspirations for America. But we have our own separate careers, and our own ideas and opinions too. Clarence doesn't discuss his work with me, and I don't involve him in my work," Thomas told the Washington Free Beacon in an interview published in March.

Justice Thomas was the lone dissenting voice when the Supreme Court ruled in January to allow a congressional committee access to presidential diaries, visitor logs, speech drafts and handwritten notes relating to the events of Jan. 6.

Ginni Thomas has been openly critical of the committee's work, including signing onto a letter to House Republicans calling for the expulsion of Reps. Liz Cheney of Wyoming and Adam Kinzinger of Illinois from the GOP conference for joining the Jan. 6 congressional committee.

## Space telescopes capture asteroid slam with striking clarity

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — The world now has stunning new photos of this week's asteroid strike, the first planetary defense test of its kind.

NASA on Thursday released pictures of the dramatic event taken by the Hubble and Webb space telescopes.

A few hours later, SpaceX joined NASA in announcing that they're studying the feasibility of sending a private mission to Hubble, potentially led by a billionaire, to raise the aging telescope's orbit and extend its life.

Telescopes on all seven continents watched as NASA's Dart spacecraft slammed Monday into the harmless space rock, 7 million miles (11 million kilometers) from Earth, in hopes of altering its orbit.

Scientists won't know the precise change until November; the demo results are expected to instill confidence in using the technique if a killer asteroid heads our way one day.

"This is an unprecedented view of an unprecedented event," Johns Hopkins University planetary astronomer and mission leader Andy Rivkin said in a statement.

All these pictures will help scientists learn more about the little asteroid Dimorphos, which took the punch and ended up with a sizable crater. The impact sent streams of rock and dirt hurtling into space, appearing as bright emanating rays in the latest photos.

The brightness of this double asteroid system — the 525-foot (160-meter) Dimorphos is actually the moonlet around a bigger asteroid — tripled after the impact as seen in the Hubble images, according to

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NASA.

Hubble and Webb will keep observing Dimorphos and its large companion Didymos over the next several weeks.

The \$325 million Dart mission was launched last year. The spacecraft was built and managed by Johns Hopkins' Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Maryland.

As for Hubble, NASA officials stressed Thursday that the observatory launched 32 years ago is in good shape and might have another decade of life left.

Hubble's orbit constantly is decaying, but the telescope could have even more years ahead if it were boosted from its current 335 miles (540 kilometers) above Earth to 375 miles (600 kilometers) or more. The six-month technical feasibility study also will consider whether any parts could be replaced, presumably by a crew.

Jared Isaacman, a Pennsylvania tech entrepreneur who bankrolled his own SpaceX flight last year with contest winners, said a Hubble mission, if approved, would fit nicely into his planned series of spaceflights. But he stopped short of saying whether he was volunteering.

"We're working on crazy ideas all the time," NASA's science mission chief, Thomas Zurbuchen, told reporters. "Frankly, that's what we're supposed to do."

## Trump records probe: Tensions flare over special master

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The parallel special master process spawned by the FBI search of Donald Trump's Florida estate has slowed the Justice Department's criminal investigation and exposed simmering tensions between department prosecutors and lawyers for the former president.

As the probe into the presence of top-secret information at Mar-a-Lago continues, barbed comments in recent court filings have laid bare deep disagreements related to the special master's work — not just among lawyers but judges, too. And the filings have made clear that a process the Trump team initially asked for has not consistently played to the ex-president's advantage.

A look at where things stand:

**WHO IS THE SPECIAL MASTER AND WHAT IS HIS ROLE?**

A federal judge in Florida appointed at the Trump team's request an independent arbiter to inspect the thousands of documents seized from Mar-a-Lago and to weed out from the investigation any that might be protected by claims of either attorney-client privilege or executive privilege.

That arbiter, formally known as a special master, is Raymond Dearie. He's a former federal prosecutor who was appointed a U.S. District judge in Brooklyn by then-President Ronald Reagan. He also has served on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.

He was initially tasked by U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon, a Trump appointee, with reviewing all of the records taken from Mar-a-Lago. But a federal appeals court shrunk the scope of his duties last week, ruling that the Justice Department did not have to share with him the roughly 100 documents with classified markings that were taken during the Aug. 8 search. That leaves for his evaluation the roughly 11,000 other, unclassified documents — which a Trump lawyer said actually total roughly 200,000 pages — recovered by the FBI.

Cannon, meanwhile, has also reined in some of Dearie's work.

**WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THEN REGARDING CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS?**

The past week has revealed stark divisions in how both sides envision the process playing out, as well as the precise role the special master should have.

An early hint surfaced when the Trump team resisted Dearie's request for any information to support the idea that the documents had been declassified, as Trump has repeatedly asserted. A lawyer for Trump, James Trusty, said that inquiry was "premature" and "a little beyond" what Cannon had in mind at the time she appointed the special master.

The following day, in a setback for the Trump team, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit over-

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ruled an order from Cannon that had temporarily halted the Justice Department's ability to use the seized classified documents in its probe. Besides restoring the department's access, the order also lifted Cannon's mandate that investigators give the special master those records.

More conflict followed, this time related to the scanning and processing of non-classified government records that were seized.

Government lawyers revealed in a letter Tuesday that none of the five document-review vendors they had recommended for the job was "willing to be engaged" by the Trump team. The Justice Department said it was confident it would be able to secure the arrangements on its own while noting that it continued to expect the Trump team to pay.

But Trusty responded with his own letter Wednesday attributing the difficulty in securing a vendor to the sheer quantity of documents, which he said totaled roughly 200,000 pages — a number the Justice Department has not itself stated in court filings.

He said the department's deadlines for the production of documents was overly "aggressive" — "It would be better to base deadlines on actual data and not wistful claims by the Government," he noted at one point — and scolded the department for what he said were "antagonistic" comments.

"DOJ continues to mistake itself as having judicial authority. Its comments are not argument, but proclamations designed to steamroll judicial oversight and the Plaintiff's constitutional rights," Trusty wrote.

## WHAT IS LIKELY TO HAPPEN NEXT?

The FBI's investigation took a major step forward when the appeals court lifted Cannon's hold on its ability to scrutinize the seized classified documents as it evaluates whether Trump or anyone else should face criminal charges.

Dearie's work as special master will continue alongside that probe, though there's little chance any action he takes at this point could substantially alter the outcome of the FBI investigation or affect major decisions that lie ahead.

But early disagreements between Cannon and Dearie over the scope of his duties also bear watching. For instance, Cannon on Thursday overturned a directive from the special master that would have required the Trump team to say whether it had any objections to a detailed FBI property inventory cataloging all of the items agents removed from the home.

That response could have been illuminating given that Trump and some of his allies have raised unsupported suggestions that the agents who searched his home may have planted evidence. If his lawyers were to affirm the inventory's accuracy, they would likely be contradicting their own client's claims while also acknowledging the presence of classified materials in the home.

The Justice Department this week made what it called minor revisions to the inventory, but said it was an otherwise full and accurate accounting of what was taken.

Yet newly disclosed correspondence showed the Trump team balking at being forced to assess the inventory's accuracy. Trusty said in a letter Sunday that the directive that it do so goes beyond what Cannon had envisioned when she appointed Dearie. Cannon herself agreed, canceling Dearie's requirement Thursday and writing that her "appointment order did not contemplate that obligation."

The Justice Department, for its part, had earlier suggested that the Trump team should not be able to avoid stating its position on the record or following other of Dearie's directives.

"The Special Master needs to know that he is reviewing all of the materials seized from Mara-Lago on August 8, 2022 — and no additional materials — before he categorizes the seized documents and adjudicates privilege claims," the department said in one filing.

The letter Tuesday ended with this tart reminder to Trump and his lawyers: "Plaintiff brought this civil, equitable proceeding. He bears the burden of proof."

## Russia to annex more of Ukraine on Friday at the Kremlin

By JON GAMBRELL and ADAM SCHRECK Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia planned to annex more of Ukraine on Friday in an escalation of the seven-

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month war that was expected to isolate the Kremlin further, draw more international punishment and bring Ukraine extra military, political and economic support.

The annexation — and planned celebratory concerts and rallies in Moscow and the occupied territories — would come just days after voters supposedly approved Moscow-managed “referendums” that Ukrainian and Western officials have denounced as illegal, forced and rigged.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters Thursday that four regions of Ukraine — Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia — would be folded into Russia during a Kremlin ceremony attended by President Vladimir Putin, who is expected to give a major speech. Peskov said the regions’ pro-Moscow administrators would sign treaties to join Russia in the Kremlin’s ornate St. George’s Hall.

In an apparent response, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called an emergency meeting Friday of his National Security and Defense Council.

Zelenskyy also sought to capitalize on anti-war sentiment in Russia by issuing a special video directed at Russia’s ethnic minorities, especially those in Dagestan, one of the country’s poorer regions in the North Caucasus.

“You do not have to die in Ukraine,” he said, wearing a black hoodie that read in English “I’m Ukrainian,” and standing in front of a plaque in Kyiv memorializing what he called a Dagestani hero. He called on the ethnic minorities to resist mobilization.

The U.S. and its allies have promised to adopt even more sanctions than they’ve already levied against Russia and to offer millions of dollars in extra support for Ukraine as the Kremlin duplicates the annexation playbook it followed when it incorporated Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula in 2014.

Putin early Friday issued decrees recognizing the independence of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, steps he had taken in February regarding Luhansk and Donetsk and earlier for Crimea.

Ukraine has repeated its vows to recapture the four regions, as well as Crimea. For its part, Russia pledges to defend all its territory — including newly annexed regions — by all available means, including nuclear weapons.

Heightening the tensions are Russia’s partial military mobilization and allegations of sabotage of two Russian pipelines on the Baltic Sea floor that were designed to feed natural gas to Europe. Adding to the Kremlin’s woes are Ukraine’s success in recapturing some of the very land Russia is annexing and problems with the mobilization that President Vladimir Putin acknowledged Thursday.

Ukraine’s Western supporters have described the stage-managed referendums on whether to live under Russian rule as a bald-faced land grab based on lies. They say some people were forced to vote at gunpoint in an election without independent observers on territory from which thousands of residents have fled or been forcibly deported.

In unusually strong language, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters Thursday in New York that Russia’s annexation would violate the U.N. Charter and has “no legal value.” He described the move as “a dangerous escalation” and said it “must not be accepted.”

“Any decision by Russia to go forward will further jeopardize the prospects for peace,” Guterres said.

As a veto-wielding permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, Russia bears “a particular responsibility” to respect the U.N. Charter, the secretary-general said.

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said Guterres conveyed the message to Russia’s U.N. ambassador, Vassily Nebenzia, on Wednesday.

The European Union also objected strongly.

“It’s absolutely unacceptable,” said Czech Foreign Minister Jan Lipavsky, whose country holds the European Union presidency. “We reject such one-sided annexation based on a fully falsified process with no legitimacy.”

Lipavsky described the pro-Russia referendums as “theater play” and insisted the regions remain “Ukrainian territory.”

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said Russia’s moves were “the opposite of peace.”

“As long as this Russian diktat prevails in the occupied territories of Ukraine, no citizen is safe. No citizen

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is free," he said.

In what would be a major blow to Moscow's war effort, the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War said Ukrainian forces may soon encircle Lyman, 160 kilometers (100 miles) southeast of Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city.

"The collapse of the Lyman pocket will likely be highly consequential to the Russian grouping" in the northern Donetsk and western Luhansk regions and "may allow Ukrainian troops to threaten Russian positions along the western Luhansk" region, the institute said, citing Russian reports.

Elsewhere on the battlefield:

— Rescuers pulled a sleeping 12-year-old girl alive from rubble after a Russian missile attack on Dnipro, local administrator Valentyn Reznichenko said.

— Moscow-installed officials in Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region reported that about 30 people were killed when the Ukrainian military shelled a refugee convoy.

— A Russian rocket attack on Kramatorsk, an eastern Donetsk city that Ukraine still holds, wounded 11 people and inflicted damage, Mayor Oleksandr Honcharenko said.

— More fighting near the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant — Europe's biggest — was another source of concern. Russian forces occupy the plant, but Ukrainian technicians are running it. A suspected land mine explosion on the plant's perimeter fence, likely triggered by wild animals, damaged electrical lines, according to Ukraine's atomic power agency, Energoatom.

Russia's partial mobilization has been chaotic and unpopular, triggering protests and violence. Russian men have formed miles-long lines trying to leave the country, and Moscow set up draft offices at its borders to intercept some of those fleeing.

In an apparent effort to calm the population in the face of domestic criticism and confusion, Putin told Russia's Security Council on Thursday that mistakes had been made in the mobilization. He said Russian men mistakenly called up should be sent home and that only reservists with proper training and specialties should be summoned to serve.

Multiple reports have surfaced of Russian men outside the eligible categories being forced to serve, and of reservists being provided inadequate training and equipment.

British military intelligence claimed the number of Russian military-age men fleeing likely exceeds the forces Moscow used to invade Ukraine in February, and said many of those leaving are well educated, causing a "brain drain."

Finland closed one of the last ways out for Russians. It's banning Russian citizens with tourist visas from entering the country starting Friday. With the exception of Norway, which has only one border crossing with Russia, Finland has provided the last easily accessible land route for Russian holders of Schengen visas, which allow free movement across much of Europe.

Regarding the sabotage that hit Russian gas pipelines to Europe this week, Peskov claimed Thursday it "looks like a terror attack, probably conducted on a state level."

"It's a very dangerous situation that requires a quick investigation," he said, dismissing media reports about Russian warships detected in the area as "stupid and biased," claiming that many more NATO aircraft and ships "have been spotted" there.

NATO warned Thursday that it would retaliate for any attacks on the critical infrastructure of its 30 member countries and joined other Western officials in citing sabotage as the likely cause of the pipeline damage.

## High stakes for O'Rourke in Texas governor's debate Friday

By PAUL J. WEBER Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Beto O'Rourke spent his 50th birthday this week behind the wheel of his pickup in Texas, fast approaching a big moment in his uphill climb for governor.

While a road trip through college campuses showed how the Democrat continues to draw big crowds — a photo line at the University of Texas snaked across an outdoor plaza in 90-degree heat — O'Rourke is still trying to close in on Republican Gov. Greg Abbott with six weeks until Election Day, Nov. 8.

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That raises the stakes for O'Rourke on Friday night in his only debate against Abbott, who has tried to refocus the race to his hard-line immigration measures on the U.S.-Mexico border as anger in Texas over a new abortion ban and the Uvalde school massacre continues flaring.

With early voting set to begin in just over three weeks, some O'Rourke supporters are looking for significant swings during the debate, which the former 2020 presidential candidate knows better than most can leave a lasting impression.

"Here's the way I see it: Most Texans are just beginning to tune into this election," O'Rourke said in an interview. The Democrat emphasized that Abbott started running television spots before his campaign, which has pulled in at least \$30 million and has put the two-term governor in the rare position of being outraised.

Abbott, who wants to stomp out Democrats' latest attempt to flip America's biggest Republican-led state, isn't ready to say this may be his tightest race.

"This game ain't over yet, and we'll see how close it is when all is said and done," he told reporters this month.

Like many Democrats running in November, O'Rourke is drawing on outrage over abortion access and mass shootings, issues that have energized voters elsewhere. But as Texas Democrats also know, those same issues have failed to carry them in past elections.

A new Texas abortion ban is threatening GOP support with women and has already caused stumbles for Abbott over unpopular restrictions that make no exceptions for rape victims. The Uvalde school shooting that killed 19 children and two teachers has also elevated emotions in the race, with grieving parents scolding Abbott and O'Rourke swearing at a heckler who laughed over gun control.

O'Rourke, shrugging off recent polls that showed him trailing, pointed to traditionally conservative Kansas rejecting an abortion ban and Democrats winning special congressional elections in New York and Alaska as a sign of a shift in the electorate heading into November's midterms.

To say O'Rourke has been here before would be true of just about anywhere in Texas.

Just as he did in his breakthrough U.S. Senate campaign in 2018, O'Rourke has spent months visiting nearly every corner of the almost 800-mile-wide state, driving into the most strongly Republican counties in an effort to weaken the wall of rural support that has helped the GOP offset losses in booming big cities and suburbs.

He stunned both parties four years ago by finishing within 3 percentage points of unseating Republican Sen. Ted Cruz. In the governor's race, O'Rourke has run a more attacking campaign but also has been forced to confront his past positions, none more than his promise to ban AR-15-style weapons during a Democratic presidential debate in 2019.

In the aftermath of the Uvalde shooting, O'Rourke has called to raise the minimum age to purchase such weapons to 21, something Abbott has already ruled out.

"If Beto can coax Abbott into a moment where there's a stark difference on, say, gun control I think that can have a big impact," said Jason Villalba, a former Republican state lawmaker. "But to do that you have to be aggressive and take large risks."

Villalba, who now runs the Texas Hispanic Policy Foundation, said O'Rourke has had to overcome "baggage" from his presidential campaign. Villalba believes the fortunes of the former El Paso congressman are in the hands of newly registered women voters and whether he can close the gap in rural counties.

Friday's debate is in Edinburg, along the southern border, where Abbott and Republicans are trying to make aggressive inroads with Hispanic voters after the region, traditionally a Democratic stronghold, made big swings toward then-President Donald Trump in 2020. It will be the first time the two candidates have been face to face since O'Rourke confronted Abbott in Uvalde after the shooting, which drew a mix of boos and cheers from the crowd at the time.

"I think he just feels like, 'I've had enough' and we all feel that way," said Mary Zambrano, 32, who dropped in to see O'Rourke at an Austin gymnasium on Saturday. "At this point, you have to go all in."

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## 'Crown,' 'Interview With the Vampire' among TV highlights

By LYNN ELBER AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — What's fall got to do with the fall TV season? Summer had yet to roll up its Labor Day beach blanket when two major series, "The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power" and "House of the Dragon" arrived.

While the broadcast pattern of a strict September-to-May season has been undermined by streaming and cable efforts to keep audiences in thrall year-round, there remains a certain industry loyalty to tradition — and the expectation that people watch more TV when days grow shorter and colder.

That means viewers still have new shows to sample and favorites to rediscover, including some that have been gone too long. (OK, "The Crown" is worth the two-year wait.) To help sort through the clutter, here's a curated list of series that have proven their entertainment value or show promise.

### "THE CROWN"

Season five tackles the British royal family's Roaring '90s, when Prince Charles and Princess Diana's ill-fated marriage boiled over into bitter public recriminations. The real-life reign of Queen Elizabeth II ended with her death at age 96 in September, but her character (newcomer Imelda Staunton) remains the drama's steady center. Respect also is due to the power behind the TV throne, "The Crown" creator Peter Morgan, who compellingly weaves together history (with some storytelling adjustments) and the imagined nuances of life behind palace doors. Helen Mirren, who won a best actress Oscar for 2006's "The Queen," written by Morgan, calls him a fearless writer with a "real sense of the importance of research holding the whole thing up." Debuts Nov. 9 on Netflix.

### "INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE"

Vampires are having their moment in the sun — apologies, moon. Joining "Vampire Academy" and "What We Do in the Shadows" is the O.G. of modern blood-sucker dramas, "Interview with the Vampire." Based on the Anne Rice novel adapted for the Tom Cruise-Brad Pitt hit 1994 movie, the series stars Jacob Anderson and Sam Reid as Louis and Lestat and Bailey Bass as their teen protege, Claudia. Eric Bogosian plays the title's interviewer, intent on drawing out Louis' centuries-long history. Rather than a horror story, creator-producer Rolin Jones says he sees it as a gothic romance, a "very excitable, aggressive, toxic, beautiful love story" that includes "queer sexuality" and aesthetics. It's already renewed for season two. Debuts Oct. 2 on AMC and AMC+.

### "ALASKA DAILY"

The journalism maxim of "names make news" can be applied to TV shows generally and "Alaska Daily" in particular. It stars two-time Oscar winner Hilary Swank ("Boys Don't Cry," "Million Dollar Baby") and was created by another Oscar winner: Tom McCarthy, co-writer of the fact-based journalism movie "Spotlight." In "Alaska Daily," Swank's New York investigative reporter moves to Anchorage to rebuild a shredded reputation and finds stories that demand coverage, including the ongoing crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women. McCarthy says the Alaska setting was partly inspired by reporting on the issue and it would be "almost negligent" to overlook it. Debuts Oct. 6 on ABC.

### "FROM SCRATCH"

Adapting an autobiography for the screen is a delicate task, but "From Scratch" was in good hands. Actor Tembi Locke ("Never Have I Ever," "Eureka"), the author of "From Scratch: A Memoir of Love, Sicily and Finding Home," created and produced the series with her sister Attica Locke, a producer on "Little Fires Everywhere." The pair decided that Tembi Locke's story of her marriage to an Italian man, over his mother's resistance to the American interloper, and its aftermath would benefit from fictionalizing the characters. "Having that bit of distance gave us great latitude to play," Tembi Locke says. Zoe Saldana stars opposite Eugenio Mastrandrea. Debuts Oct. 21 on Netflix.

### "ANDOR"

Who doesn't love a good origin story, especially one set in the "Star Wars" galaxy? "Andor," which tells the backstory of future rebel hero Cassian Andor, will "walk you right into 'Rogue One'" in 24 episodes, said series creator-executive producer Tony Gilroy, who was the 2016 movie's co-writer. The first dozen

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episodes that comprise season one will cover a pivotal year for Cassian, with season two bridging the remaining four years to connect to the film. Diego Luna reprises his big-screen role and says he intends to "challenge everything you think about Cassian." Streaming now on Disney+.

## "SHERMAN'S SHOWCASE"

Sherman McDaniels is the fictitious host of the long-running (also fictitious) musical variety series in the mode of "Soul Train" and "Solid Gold." In reality, "Sherman's Showcase" is a sketch show that gives creators, executive producers and stars Bashir Salahuddin and Diallo Riddle free reign to satirize any and everything, from funk (music that involves "way too many people") to fashion to celebrities, including series co-executive producer John Legend; supermodel Iman as played by Issa Rae, and the questionably over-confident Sherman himself (Salahuddin). For those who loved Morris Day in "Purple Rain," Riddle says his guest appearance is a season two highlight. Debuts Oct. 26 on IFC.

## "THE CALLING"

Writer-producer David E. Kelley, whose Emmy-winning track record includes "Ally McBeal," "Boston Legal" and "Big Little Lies," is switching it up with a police drama based on Israeli crime writer Dror Mishani's character of inspector Avraham "Avi" Avraham. In "The Calling," Avi is a NYPD detective whom Kelley describes as a "deeply mysterious, spiritual and compelling detective unlike any protagonist I've encountered before." Israeli actor Jeff Wilbusch ("Unorthodox") leads the cast that includes Juliana Canfield ("Succession") and Karen Robinson ("Schitt's Creek"). Also on board are two Oscar-winners: director Barry Levinson ("Rain Man") and composer Hans Zimmer ("Dune," "The Lion King"). Debuts Nov. 10 on Peacock.

## Father: Jones Sandy Hook lies forced move from Connecticut

By DAVE COLLINS and PAT EATON-ROBB Associated Press

WATERBURY, Conn. (AP) — Robbie Parker says he can tell when conspiracy theorist Alex Jones has said something on his show about the Sandy Hook school massacre, because that's when another round of abuse begins.

Parker, whose 6-year-old daughter Emilie was killed, testified Thursday at Jones' defamation trial in Connecticut about becoming the face and target for conspiracy theorists who believe the lie that the 2012 shooting that killed 20 first graders and six educators was a hoax.

The harassment began, he said, after Jones featured on his Infowars show a video of Parker smiling just before a news conference the day after the shooting. Jones and his guests would repeatedly point to the video as proof that Parker and others were "crisis actors."

Parker said that has led to a decade of abuse and forced his family to move about 3,000 miles (4,828 kilometers) away to Washington state.

"It would come in these waves," Parker said of the harassment. "It was almost like I knew when Alex Jones said something, because we would get a huge wave of stuff."

Parker said it all began the day after Emilie died when reporters besieged their family and friends to get information about her. He wanted to make his own statement about who his oldest daughter had been.

Just before going to the microphones, Robbie Parker's father had encouraged him to "go get 'em" and then called him by the name of a mascot that Robbie had portrayed during high school at athletic events. Parker chuckled for a moment before reading his statement, he testified.

He now can't bear to watch the video, because of how it came to be used. He pointed to the testimony of Ian Hockley, the father of another slain child, Dylan Hockley. Ian Hockley talked about an abusive flier that was placed on the windshield of his car showing a smiling Parker and suggesting the shooting didn't happen.

"I was so ashamed in my belief that I had brought this on everybody," Parker testified.

The trial is scheduled to resume Tuesday with more testimony by victims' relatives. It is being held in Waterbury, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) from the site of the school shooting in Newtown.

A judge last year found Jones and Infowars' parent company, Free Speech Systems, liable by default for defaming and inflicting emotional distress on the plaintiffs — eight families who lost loved ones and an FBI agent who was among the first responders. The jury of three men and three women will be determining



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how much in damages Jones and his company should pay them.

Parker is among a dozen victim family members who have taken the stand and in emotional testimony detailed death and rape threats, mail from conspiracy theorists that included photos of dead children and in-person confrontations with people telling them their children or wives or mothers never existed.

Slain teacher Vicki Soto's brother, Matthew, testified Thursday, the trial's 11th day, that he was approached at his own high school by someone questioning whether his family was real and if his sister really died, less than a month after the shooting.

"I don't even remember what I said to the person, but I went down to my guidance counselor's office and I sat in his office and I had a panic attack for hours," he said.

Soto also said he dropped a history class at Southern Connecticut State University several years ago when the professor, on the first day of the class discussing the media, asked how many students believed the Sandy Hook shooting actually happened, and some did not raise their hands.

Relatives said the harassment has not stopped, despite nearly 10 years having passed since the shooting.

Parker testified that a few years ago he was berated by a man who recognized him while walking on the streets of Seattle. The man kept following him and insisting he was lying about Emilie's murder.

"I turned around and I looked at him and I'm paraphrasing at this point, but just 'How dare you? You are talking about my daughter. She was killed. Who do you think you are? How do you sleep at night?'"

Jones' lawyer, Norman Pattis, is trying to limit any damages the jury awards. In cross-examining witnesses, he has tried to show that Jones wasn't directly linked to many instances of harassment and threats, and he has accused the victims' relatives of exaggerating.

Jones in recent years has acknowledge the shooting happened, but claims the families are being used to push a gun-control and anti-free speech agenda. He also believes free speech rights allow him to question events.

He testified earlier in the trial that he is "done apologizing" for promoting the conspiracy theory.

He is expected to return to the stand next week as a defense witness.

In a similar trial last month in Austin, Texas, home to Jones and Infowars, a jury ordered Jones to pay nearly \$50 million in damages to the parents of one of the children killed in the shooting, because of the hoax lies. A third such trial in Texas involving two other parents is expected to begin near the end of the year.

## Senate passes stopgap bill to avert shutdown, aid Ukraine

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate passed a short-term spending bill on Thursday that would avert a partial government shutdown when the current fiscal year ends at midnight Friday and provide another infusion of military and economic aid to Ukraine as it seeks to repel Russia's brutal invasion.

The bill finances the federal government through Dec. 16 and buys lawmakers more time to agree on legislation setting spending levels for the 2023 fiscal year. It passed by a vote of 72-25 and now goes to the House for consideration. All of the no votes came from Republicans.

As has become routine, lawmakers waited until the final hours before the shutdown deadline to act. But passage of a bill to fund the government was hardly in doubt, particularly after Democrat Sen. Joe Manchin agreed to drop provisions designed to streamline the permitting process for energy projects and greenlight the approval of a pipeline in his home state of West Virginia. Those provisions had drawn opposition from both sides of the political aisle.

Still, the bill merely puts off for a few months the maneuvering that will be required after the midterm election to pass a massive government funding package, as negotiators will have to bridge their differences over spending on hot-button issues such as abortion, border security and climate change.

The bill approved Thursday, with some exceptions, keeps spending at federal agencies at current levels through mid-December. The most notable of those exceptions is the more than \$12 billion that will be provided to aid Ukraine, on top of more than \$50 billion provided in two previous bills. The money will go

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to provide training, equipment and logistics support for the Ukraine military, help Ukraine's government provide basic services to its citizens and replenish U.S. weapons systems and munitions.

"Seven months since the conflict began, it's crystal clear that American assistance has gone a long way to helping the Ukrainian people resist (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's evil, vicious aggression," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. "But the fight is far from over."

Republican leader Mitch McConnell also voiced support for the Ukraine aid, while admonishing the Biden administration to get it out the door more quickly.

"Assisting Ukraine is not some feel-good, symbolic gesture," McConnell said. "It's literally an investment in our own national security and that of our allies."

Disaster assistance was attached to the stopgap bill, including \$2.5 billion to help New Mexico communities recover from the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire, the largest wildfire in the state's history; \$2 billion for a block grant program that aids the economic recovery of communities impacted by recent disasters and \$20 million for water and wastewater infrastructure improvements previously authorized for Jackson, Mississippi.

An additional \$18.8 billion was included for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to respond to current and future disasters, such as Hurricane Ian, which hit Florida on Wednesday.

The bill would provide an additional \$1 billion for a program that helps low-income households heat their homes. And it would transfer \$3 billion from a Pentagon aid program to the State Department for continued Afghan resettlement operations.

Lawmakers also included a reauthorization of the Food and Drug Administration's user fee agreements for five years, which ensures the agency can continue critical product safety reviews and won't need to issue pink slips for thousands of employees working on drug and medical device applications.

One thing missing from the bill is the billions of dollars in additional funding that President Joe Biden sought to aid the response to COVID-19 and monkeypox. Republicans criticized the health spending as unnecessary. The White House said the money would have been used to accelerate the research and development of vaccines and therapeutics, prepare for future COVID variants and support the global response.

The bill's passage is the last must-do item on lawmakers' list before returning to their home states and districts to campaign before the mid-term elections that will determine which party controls the House and Senate over the next two years. Lawmakers were anxious to get out of Washington and focus on campaigning without the specter of a shutdown.

"The last thing the American people need right now is a pointless government shutdown," Schumer said.

## Russia opens more border draft offices amid call-up exodus

Russian authorities are opening more military enlistment offices near Russia's borders in an apparent effort to intercept some of the Russian men of fighting age who are trying to flee the country by land to avoid getting called up to fight in Ukraine.

A new draft office opened at the Ozinki checkpoint in the Saratov region on Russia's border with Kazakhstan, regional officials said Thursday. Another enlistment center was set to open at a crossing in the Astrakhan region, also on the border with Kazakhstan.

Earlier this week, makeshift Russian draft offices were set up near the Verkhny Lars border crossing into Georgia in southern Russia and near the Torfyanka checkpoint on Russia's border with Finland. Russian officials said they would hand call-up notices to all eligible men who were trying to leave the country.

Over 194,000 Russian citizens have fled to neighboring Georgia, Kazakhstan and Finland — most often by car, bicycle or on foot — since Russian President Vladimir Putin last week announced a partial mobilization of reservists. In Russia, the vast majority of men under age 65 are registered as reservists.

The Kremlin has said it plans to call-up some 300,000 people, but Russian media reported that the number could be as high as 1.2 million, a claim that Russian officials have denied.

Russia's Defense Ministry has promised to only draft those who have combat or service experience, but according to multiple media reports and human rights advocates, men who don't fit the criteria are also being rounded up.

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The official decree on mobilization, signed by Putin last week, is concise and vague, fueling fears of a broader draft.

In an apparent effort to calm the population, Putin told Russia's Security Council on Thursday that mistakes had been made in the mobilization. He said that Russian men mistakenly called up for service should be sent back home, and that only reservists with proper training and specialties should be summoned to serve.

"It's necessary to deal with each such case independently, but if there is a mistake, I repeat, it must be fixed. It's necessary to bring back those who were drafted without proper reason," Putin stressed.

The mass exodus of Russian men — alone or with their families or friends — began Sept. 21, shortly after Putin's address to the nation, and continued all this week. Airline tickets to destinations abroad have sold out days in advance, even at unprecedentedly high prices.

Long lines of cars formed on roads leading to Russia's borders. Russian authorities tried to stem the outflow by turning back some men at the borders, citing mobilization laws, or setting up draft offices at border checkpoints.

The bus stations in Samara and Tolyatti, two large Russian cities in the Samara region, on Thursday halted service to Uralsk, a border city in Kazakhstan.

Finland announced that it would ban Russian citizens with tourist visas from entering the country starting Friday. With the exception of Norway, which has only one border crossing with Russia, Finland has provided the last easily accessible land route to Europe for Russian holders of European Schengen-zone visas. The Nordic country has taken in tens of thousands of people fleeing the military call-up in recent days.

## **EXPLAINER: How do we know when a recession has begun?**

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The economy shrank in the first half of this year, the government confirmed in a report Thursday, underscoring fears of a broad-based slowdown that could lead to a recession.

At the same time, the number of people seeking unemployment benefits — a figure that often reflects the pace of layoffs — fell to a five-month low. The drop suggests that companies are holding onto their staffs, despite the slowdown in growth, and that those who do get laid off are quickly finding new jobs.

Hiring remains strong and the unemployment rate is near a 50-year low. Given the strength of the job market, few economists think we are in a recession now. With consumers managing to keep spending and the trade deficit narrowing, economists expect the economy grew — albeit slowly — in the July-September quarter.

Six months of contraction is a long-held informal definition of a recession. Yet nothing is simple in a post-pandemic economy in which growth is negative but the job market strong. The economy's direction has confounded the Federal Reserve's policymakers and many private economists since growth screeched to a halt in March 2020 as COVID-19 struck and 22 million Americans were suddenly thrown out of work.

Inflation, meantime, remains near its highest level in four decades, though gas costs and other prices have eased in recent weeks. Inflation is still so high that despite pay raises many workers have received, Americans' purchasing power is eroding. The pain is being felt disproportionately by lower-income and Black and Hispanic households, many of whom are struggling to pay for essentials like food, clothes, and rent.

Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell has underscored that the central bank will raise its key interest rate as high as needed to wrestle inflation back down to its 2% target. Powell and other officials have signaled they will do so even if a recession results.

So how, exactly, do we know when an economy is in recession? Here are some answers to such questions:

### **WHO DECIDES WHEN A RECESSION HAS STARTED?**

Recessions are officially declared by the obscure-sounding National Bureau of Economic Research, a group of economists whose Business Cycle Dating Committee defines a recession as "a significant decline in economic activity that is spread across the economy and lasts more than a few months."

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The committee considers trends in hiring as a key measure in determining recessions. It also assesses many other data points, including gauges of income, employment, inflation-adjusted spending, retail sales and factory output. It puts heavy weight on jobs and a gauge of inflation-adjusted income that excludes government support payments like Social Security.

Yet the NBER typically doesn't declare a recession until well after one has begun, sometimes for up to a year.

## DO TWO STRAIGHT QUARTERS OF ECONOMIC CONTRACTION EQUAL A RECESSION?

That's a common rule of thumb, but it isn't an official definition.

Still, in the past, it has been a useful measure. Michael Strain, an economist at the right-leaning American Enterprise Institute, has noted that in each of the past 10 times that the economy shrank for two consecutive quarters, a recession has resulted.

At the same time, job growth remains strong and consumers are still opening their wallets and spending more, trends that rarely occur during recessions.

## DON'T A LOT OF PEOPLE THINK A RECESSION IS COMING?

Yes, because many people now feel more financially burdened. With wage gains trailing inflation for most people, higher prices have eroded Americans' spending power.

Walmart has reported that higher gas and food costs have forced its shoppers to reduce their purchases of discretionary spending such as new clothing, a clear sign that consumer spending, the leading driver of the economy, is weakening. The nation's largest retailer, Walmart has reduced its profit outlook and said it would have to discount more items like furniture and electronics.

And the Fed's rate hikes have helped send the average 30-year fixed mortgage rate surging above 6%, compared with below 3% a year ago, thereby making homebuying increasingly unaffordable.

Higher rates will likely weigh on businesses' willingness to invest in new buildings, machinery and other equipment. If companies reduce spending and investment, they'll also start to slow hiring. Rising caution among companies about spending freely could lead eventually to layoffs. If the economy were to lose jobs and the public were to grow more fearful, consumers would further reduce spending.

## WHAT ARE SOME SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING RECESSION?

The clearest signal that a recession is under way, economists say, would be a steady rise in job losses and a surge in unemployment. Claudia Sahm, an economist and former Fed staff member, has noted that since World War II, an increase in the unemployment rate of a half-percentage point over several months has always resulted in a recession.

Many economists monitor the number of people who seek unemployment benefits each week, which indicates whether layoffs are worsening. Weekly applications for jobless aid have dropped to a five-month low, which means that in the midst of a labor shortage, few employers are resorting to layoffs.

## ANY OTHER SIGNALS TO WATCH FOR?

Many economists also monitor changes in the interest payments, or yields, on different bonds for a recession signal known as an "inverted yield curve." This occurs when the yield on the 10-year Treasury falls below the yield on a short-term Treasury, such as the 3-month T-bill. That is unusual. Normally, longer-term bonds pay investors a richer yield in exchange for tying up their money for a longer period.

Inverted yield curves generally mean that investors foresee a recession that will compel the Fed to slash rates. Inverted curves often predate recessions. Still, it can take 18 to 24 months for a downturn to arrive after the yield curve inverts.

For many weeks, the yield on the two-year Treasury has exceeded the 10-year yield, suggesting that markets expect a recession soon. Many analysts say, though, that comparing the 3-month yield to the 10-year has a better recession-forecasting track record. Those rates are not inverted now.

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WILL THE FED KEEP RAISING RATES EVEN AS THE ECONOMY SLOWS?

The economy's flashing signals — slowing growth with strong hiring — have put the Fed in a tough spot. Chair Jerome Powell is aiming for a "soft landing," in which the economy weakens enough to slow hiring and wage growth without causing a recession and brings inflation back to the Fed's 2% target.

But Powell has acknowledged that such an outcome has grown more difficult to achieve. Last week, he made clear that the Fed will keep raising rates, even amid a weakening economy that could slide into a recession, if that's what's needed to tame inflation.

"No one knows whether this process will lead to a recession, or if so, how significant that recession would be," Powell said at his news conference. "That's going to depend on how quickly we bring down inflation."

## Florida health care facilities evacuate patients after Ian

By BOBBY CAINA CALVAN and ALINA HARTOUNIAN The Associated Press

Thousands of people were evacuated from nursing homes and hospitals across Florida on Thursday even as winds and water from Hurricane Ian began receding. Hundreds of those evacuations were taking place across the hard-hit Fort Myers region, where damage cut off potable water to at least nine hospitals.

Kristen Knapp of the Florida Health Care Association says 43 nursing homes evacuated about 3,400 residents as of Thursday morning, mostly in southwest Florida.

As many as 20 facilities had reported electricity outages, but Knapp says generators are powering those buildings. Water was shut off at some facilities, too. And one area hospital began assessing the full damage from ferocious winds that tore away parts of its roof and swamped its emergency room.

In Orlando, residents of the Avante nursing home were evacuated to ambulances and waiting buses through floodwater in a neighborhood that doesn't typically flood. Paramedics rolled out residents one by one on stretchers and wheelchairs. At the neighboring Palm Island at Baldwin apartment complex, cars were submerged in the parking lot.

Even as the problem was too much water in much of the state, at least nine hospitals in southwest Florida had the opposite problem.

"We have one large health system in southwest Florida that is without water in all of their facilities. And so they are fast approaching a point where they will not be able to safely take care of their patients. So that is an urgent focus to get those patients transferred," said Mary Mayhew, the president of the Florida Hospital Association.

Mayhew said more 1,200 patients were being evacuated.

Meanwhile, other hospitals could find themselves further strained, she said.

"There is considerable effort underway to rescue individuals who also will need medical care. And to identify hospital beds available either in the region or elsewhere," she said.

Hurricane Ian swamped HCA Florida Fawcett Hospital in Port Charlotte - just north of Fort Myers - from both above and below, as the storm surge flooded its lower level emergency room while fierce winds tore part of its fourth floor roof from its intensive care unit, according to a doctor who works there.

Dr. Birgit Bodine spent the night at the hospital, anticipating the storm would make things busy, "but we didn't anticipate that the roof would blow off on the fourth floor," she said.

Water gushed down Wednesday from above onto the ICU, forcing staff to evacuate the hospital's sickest patients — some of them on ventilators — to other floors. Staff members resorted to towels and plastic bins to try to mop up the sodden mess.

The medium-sized hospital spans four floors, but patients were forced into just two because of the damage.

Bodine plans to spend another night at the hospital, when incoming storm injuries could make things worse.

"The ambulances may be coming soon and we don't know where to put them in the hospital at this point," she said. "Because we're doubled and tripled up."

Despite the inundation, Bodine said patients have been mostly understanding and upbeat.

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"For us, as much as everything is terrible and we're exhausted ... as long as our patients do OK and nobody ends up dying or having a bad outcome, that's what matters," Bodine said.

## Family frantically searched for Iranian woman after arrest

By SAMYA KULLAB and SALAR SALIM Associated Press

SULIMANIYAH, Iraq (AP) — When Mahsa Amini was detained in the Iranian capital for wearing her veil too loosely, her family sprang into action, calling relatives, friends, contacts — anyone who could help.

One of her cousins, Irfan Mortezaei, living in neighboring Iraq, got the message from her distraught brother.

"She's been arrested by the morality police," the brother wrote to him from the family's hometown of Saqqez in mainly Kurdish western Iran.

Mortezaei hadn't seen his cousin, who he refers to as Zhina, her Kurdish name, in years. Not since he fled his home country in 2020 to join Iranian Kurdish opposition groups based in Iraq's northern Sulaymaniyah province. But he knew how important it was to try and reach her — he had been arrested in Iran and was in prison there two years before leaving the country.

He joined other family members in calling relatives and friends in Tehran in efforts to try and find a way to see her in custody during those fateful hours.

"We tried by every means to reach her but the Iranian authorities did not let us," he told The Associated Press on Thursday. "I couldn't reach her."

A few days later, on Sept. 16, word came that the 22-year-old Amini was dead.

What happened next stunned Mortezaei and the rest of the family: Her death sparked large-scale protests across Iran that have captured the world attention.

Women protesters in Iran and across the world would make a show of taking off their headscarves and cutting their hair in solidarity with Amini.

Mortezaei said the family is lying low amid the protests, wary of Iranian security agents, but that they are proud Amini has become "a symbol for standing up against injustice and oppression."

The family has said a witness told them that Amini was beaten while in custody and has blamed authorities for her death. Police said she had a heart attack and fell on the floor of the station and died after being in a coma for two days.

Iranian state TV has suggested that at least 41 protesters and police have been killed in the ensuing unrest. An AP count of official statements by authorities tallied at least 13 dead, with more than 1,400 demonstrators arrested.

Mortezaei said he was shocked when the message came to him that his cousin was dead. "I was full of anger, I didn't know what to do, I just wanted revenge."

The 34-year-old Mortezaei is a member of Komala, one of several Kurdish opposition parties based in Sulimaniyah.

While his branch of the family is linked to opposition groups, Amini's side is not, he said.

"She was not political, her father is a normal government employee, and her mother is a housewife, they stayed away from (political) parties," he said.

The last time he saw Mahsa was at a family gathering at his aunt's home in the city of Saqqez, before his departure from Iran. They spoke on the phone not long after that. More recently, he had heard from her family that she had been accepted to a university to study law.

"She was beautiful, always smiling," he said. "Full of life."

## US long-term mortgage rates up for 6th week; 30-year at 6.7%

WASHINGTON (AP) — Average long-term U.S. mortgage rates rose this week for the sixth straight week, marking new highs not seen in 15 years, before a crash in the housing market triggered the Great Recession.

Mortgage buyer Freddie Mac reported Thursday that the average on the key 30-year rate climbed to 6.70% from 6.29% last week. By contrast, the rate stood at 3.01% a year ago.

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The average rate on 15-year, fixed-rate mortgages, popular among those looking to refinance their homes, jumped to 5.96% from 5.44% last week.

Rapidly rising mortgage rates threaten to sideline even more homebuyers after more than doubling in 2022. Last year, prospective homebuyers were looking at rates well below 3%.

Freddie Mac noted that for a typical mortgage amount, a borrower who locked in at the higher end of the range of weekly rates over the past year would pay several hundred dollars more than a borrower who locked in at the lower end of the range.

Last week, the Federal Reserve bumped its benchmark borrowing rate by another three-quarters of a point in an effort to constrain the economy, its fifth increase this year and third consecutive 0.75 percentage point increase.

Perhaps nowhere else is the effect of the Fed's action more apparent than the housing sector. Existing home sales have been in decline for seven straight months as the rising cost to borrow money puts homes out of reach for more people.

The government reported Thursday that the U.S. economy, battered by surging consumer prices and rising interest rates, shrank at a 0.6% annual rate from April through June. That was unchanged from the previous estimate for the second quarter.

Fed officials forecast that they will further raise their benchmark rate to roughly 4.4% by year's end, a full point higher than they envisioned as recently as June. And they expect to raise the rate again next year, to about 4.6%. That would be the highest level since 2007.

By raising borrowing rates, the Fed makes it costlier to take out a mortgage and an auto or business loan. Consumers and businesses then presumably borrow and spend less, cooling the economy and slowing inflation.

Mortgage rates don't necessarily mirror the Fed's rate increases, but tend to track the yield on the 10-year Treasury note. That's influenced by a variety of factors, including investors' expectations for future inflation and global demand for U.S. Treasuries.

## States spend federal COVID aid on roads, buildings, seawalls

By DAVID A. LIEB and KAVISH HARJAI Associated Press

Standing 14 stories tall, the Docking State Office Building is one of Kansas' largest and oldest state workplaces. It's also largely vacant, despite a prime location across from the Capitol.

So Kansas officials are planning to spend \$60 million of federal pandemic relief funds to help finance its demolition and replace it with a slimmed-down, three-story building designed to host meetings and events.

State officials categorized the project as a "public health service" in a report to the U.S. Treasury Department laying out their plans for the money. Though that may be a stretch, it's likely fine under the American Rescue Plan act — a sweeping law signed by President Joe Biden last year that provides broad flexibility for \$350 billion of aid to states and local governments.

The aid was promoted by Democrats in Congress as an unprecedented infusion for cash-strapped governments to respond to the virus, rebuild their economies and shore up their finances. But it came as state tax revenues already were rebounding, leaving many states with record surpluses and enviable decisions about what to do with all the money.

Relatively little of the federal aid has gone toward traditional public health purposes, according to an Associated Press review of reports filed by all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Significantly more has gone toward public infrastructure. States are pouring money into water, sewer and high-speed internet projects, as specifically envisioned by the law. But the AP found that they're also spending billions of dollars on roads, bridges, sidewalks, airports, rail lines and buildings at college campuses and government agencies — justifying all of it under the federal government's generous flexibility.

"We didn't need it, to be quite honest," said Kansas House Appropriations Committee Chairman Troy Waymaster, referring to the \$1.6 billion the state received.

But the Docking building does need to come down, he said, and the new space for events and meetings

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could allow better social distancing during a COVID-19 resurgence or future pandemic.

If "the building itself could be used during a pandemic, then it somewhat justifies the use of ARPA funds for the renovation or infrastructure projects," said Waymaster, a Republican.

A Kansas preservationist group has asked a court to block the demolition, arguing that Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly's administration hasn't followed proper procedures to tear down the 65-year-old structure that was added to the National Register of Historic Places earlier this year.

"There's some wrongheaded action going on here to demolish what really is a perfectly suitable building," said Paul Post, a retired Topeka attorney and member of the Plains Modern preservationist group.

All states recently were required to file annual reports with the Treasury Department detailing their progress under the American Rescue Plan. The documents show states have planned expenditures for about three-fourths of their funds. up significantly from an initial slow pace.

The Treasury asked states to classify projects in seven general categories, with 83 subcategories. It can recoup funds if it determines by the end of 2026 that spending fell outside the law's wide guidelines.

Governments reported more than \$22 billion of planned expenditures for the Treasury's infrastructure category of water, sewer and broadband. But the AP identified a total of about \$36 billion for infrastructure projects — nearly one-quarter of all planned expenditures — when including roads, bridges, buildings and public works projects reported in other categories.

By contrast, governments reported less than \$12 billion of planned expenditures in the Treasury's public health category — even though it was broadly construed to also include such things as "community violence interventions," substance use services and COVID-19 aid to small businesses.

Some state officials may have decided not to use the relief funds for public health because they had other federal funding streams for vaccines, testing and health initiatives. For example, a separate section of the American Rescue Plan provided nearly \$8 billion for state and local health departments. But the large influx of funds may also have stirred concerns about sustainability.

Though public health has historically been underfunded, "a lot of health officials have struggled to get their policymakers and their bosses to commit to hiring people for the long-term because it's one-time money," said Dr. Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association.

Some states reported no public health expenditures with their discretionary American Rescue Plan funds. Those included Florida, which received the fourth largest allotment from the federal government. Florida instead devoted \$1.8 billion for highway, \$1.9 billion for water projects and more than \$2.5 billion for construction and maintenance of public buildings, including the Capitol, university facilities and K-12 schools, according to the AP's analysis.

The state's water initiatives include up to \$700 million for a grant program to fight flooding associated with climate change. The city of Miami was awarded about \$50 million for a half-dozen projects, including one that will nearly double the height of a sea wall in an area devastated by a storm surge from Hurricane Irma in 2017.

The goal of the project is "to protect the residences and the businesses from future storm surge and sea level rise," said Sonia Brubaker, Miami's chief resilience officer.

Louisiana also listed no planned expenditures in the Treasury's public health category. But the state plans to spend \$863 million on roads and bridges, \$750 million on water and sewer infrastructure and \$27 million for improvements to the domed stadium where the New Orleans Saints play football.

Democratic Gov. John Bel Edwards said the stadium subsidy was critical "to keep that venue competitive."

North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper, a Democrat, also defended \$46 million of grants to upgrade grandstands, walkways, bathrooms and infrastructure at racetracks across his state. "Motorsports are part of the fabric of North Carolina," he said earlier this year.

Alabama prisoners have sued the Treasury Department to try to stop the state from spending \$400 million on prison construction. Though the state argues it's OK under the Treasury's flexible rules, the lawsuit contends it's a "a gross and illegal misuse" of pandemic relief funds.

A coalition of more than two dozen construction, business and local government groups is pressing



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Congress to grant even more leeway to use pandemic aid on transportation projects.

"Having a good infrastructure that allows us all to live and thrive" ultimately "leads back into public health," said Stan Brown, past president of the American Public Works Association.

Missouri, which has yet to categorize most of its projects, also is investing heavily in infrastructure by directing hundreds of millions of dollars to buildings at community colleges and public universities. The NextGen Precision Health initiative at the University of Missouri will get nearly \$105 million for improvements that include finishing off the fourth floor of a new building named for retiring U.S. Sen. Roy Blunt.

"A lot of this was already going to happen," although no specific timeline had been set, said university spokesperson Christian Basi. "Then COVID hits, and then ARPA funds are available. It's coincidental odd timing, but it turned out to be a very, very helpful thing for us."

Like Missouri, Utah categorized \$90 million for a new mental health research facility as a replacement of lost revenue for government services. Construction is to begin next year on the building, which will host research on suicide and the effect of social isolation on children's mental health, among other things.

The planned work aligns nicely with the intent of the federal aid, said Mark Rapaport, CEO of the Huntsman Mental Health Institute at the University of Utah.

"A lot of what we're doing is directly related to tackling issues that have been exacerbated by the pandemic itself," he said.

## North Korea fires missiles after Harris leaves South Korea

By CHRIS MEGERIAN and KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

PANMUNJOM, Korea (AP) — In a show of defiance, North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles into the sea on Thursday, hours after U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris flew home from a visit to South Korea during which she traveled to the Demilitarized Zone separating the two Koreas and emphasized the "ironclad" U.S. commitment to the security of its Asian allies.

It was the third round of missile launches by North Korea this week, extending a record pace in weapons testing as it accelerates a push to expand its arsenal and pressure Washington to accept it as a nuclear power.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the missiles were fired nine minutes apart from an area just north of the capital, Pyongyang, and flew toward waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan.

Japan's military said it also detected the launches. North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles on Wednesday, while Harris was in Japan, and one before she left Washington on Sunday.

Harris earlier capped her four-day trip to Asia with a meeting with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and a stop at the Demilitarized Zone, where she addressed the threat posed by the increasingly hostile North.

There are concerns that North Korea may soon conduct a nuclear test, which would move the country closer to being acknowledged as a full-fledged nuclear power.

Visiting the DMZ has become something of a ritual for American leaders hoping to show their resolve to stand firm against aggression.

At the DMZ, Harris went to the top of a ridge, near guard towers and security cameras. She looked through bulky binoculars as a South Korean officer pointed out military installations on the southern side. Then an American officer pointed out some of the defenses along the military demarcation line, including barbed-wire fences and claymore mines. He said American soldiers regularly walk patrols along a path.

"It's so close," Harris said.

Harris then visited one of a row of blue buildings that straddle the demarcation line, where an American officer explained how the buildings are still used to conduct negotiations with North Korea. Sometimes they pass messages back and forth and sometimes they use a megaphone, he said.

"That's high tech," Harris joked, before adding, "We've stepped into history."

"It's still going," the colonel said.

Harris agreed. "The past and present are happening every day."

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She then walked out of the building and up to the demarcation line. On the North Korean side, two figures dressed in what appeared to be hazmat suits peeked out from behind a curtain in a second-floor window. Then they disappeared back inside.

Harris described this week's missile launches as provocations meant to "destabilize the region" and said the United States and South Korea remain committed to the "complete denuclearization" of the North.

"I cannot state enough that commitment of the United States to the defense of the Republic of Korea is ironclad," she said.

"In the South, we see a thriving democracy. In the North, we see a brutal dictatorship," she said before flying out of the border on a U.S. military helicopter.

Earlier, Harris met with President Yoon at his office in Seoul and reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to defend the South with a full range of its military capabilities in the event of war, Yoon's office said.

They expressed concern over North Korea's threats of nuclear conflict and pledged an unspecified stronger response to major North Korean provocations, including a nuclear test.

Harris and Yoon were also expected to discuss expanding economic and technology partnerships and repairing recently strained ties between South Korea and Japan to strengthen their trilateral cooperation with Washington in the region. Their meeting also touched on Taiwan, with both reaffirming their countries' support for "peace and stability" in the Taiwan Strait, according to Yoon's office, which didn't elaborate.

Harris' trip was organized so she could attend the state funeral of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, but her itinerary was dominated by security concerns, a reflection of fears about China's growing power and North Korea's ramped-up testing activity.

In every meeting, Harris tried to lay to rest any fears that the United States was wavering in its commitment to protect its allies, describing American partnerships with South Korea and Japan as the "linchpin" and "cornerstone" of its defense strategy in Asia.

Yoon, who took office earlier this year, had anchored his election campaign with vows to deepen Seoul's economic and security partnership with Washington to navigate challenges posed by the North Korean threat and address potential supply chain risks caused by the pandemic, the U.S.-China rivalry and Russia's war on Ukraine. But the alliance has been marked by tension recently.

South Koreans have decried a new law signed by President Joe Biden that prevents electric cars built outside of North America from being eligible for U.S. government subsidies, undermining the competitiveness of automakers like Seoul-based Hyundai.

During their meeting, Harris told Yoon that Washington will try to address South Korean concerns as the law is implemented, Yoon's office said.

Scott Snyder, an analyst at the Council on Foreign Relations, said the dispute over electric vehicles has swiftly become a firestorm that U.S. officials cannot ignore, although there may not be a simple solution.

"It's taking on a level of urgency that's making it into a political problem that requires management," Snyder said. "I don't know that it's going to be easy for the Biden administration to do that."

There are indications North Korea may up its weapons demonstrations soon. South Korean officials said last week that they detected signs North Korea was preparing to test a ballistic missile system designed to be fired from submarines.

The U.S. aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan was to train with South Korean and Japanese warships in waters near the Korean Peninsula on Friday in the countries' first trilateral anti-submarine exercises since 2017 to counter North Korean submarine threats, South Korea's navy said Thursday.

U.S. and South Korean officials also say North Korea is possibly gearing up for its first nuclear test since 2017. That test could come after China holds its Communist Party convention the week of Oct. 16, but before the United States holds its midterm elections Nov. 8, according to Seoul's spy agency.

In Japan, Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada expressed concern that North Korea was improving its weapons technology through its "unprecedented" testing spree.

The South Korean and Japanese militaries said the missiles launched Thursday traveled 300 to 350 kilometers (180 to 217 miles) and reached a maximum altitude of 50 kilometers (30 miles).

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The low-altitude flight path resembled that of the short-range ballistic missiles North Korea fired earlier in the week.

Some analysts say those launches likely involved a new solid-fuel weapon modeled after Russia's Iskander missiles, which travel at relatively low altitudes and are designed to be maneuverable in flight, making them harder to be intercepted by missile defenses. The missiles are part of a growing arsenal of nuclear-capable short-range systems North Korea has been developing since 2019 as it expands its arsenal targeting rival South Korea.

North Korea has punctuated its testing activity with repeated threats of nuclear conflict. Its rubber-stamp parliament this month authorized the preemptive use of nuclear weapons in a broad range of scenarios where its leadership comes under threat.

Nuclear diplomacy between the U.S. and North Korea remains stalled since 2019 over disagreements over easing crippling U.S.-led economic sanctions against North Korea in exchange for the North's disarmament steps.

## Fans miss 61 HR ball, Jays bullpen coach gets it to Judge

By JORDAN HORROBIN Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — When Aaron Judge's American League record-tying 61st home run dropped into Toronto's bullpen, coach Matt Buschmann picked it up — a souvenir worth potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"Bad news is I'm down here in Florida battling a hurricane, but the good news is I can announce my retirement," tweeted Buschmann's wife, Sara Walsh, a Fox Sports reporter and former ESPN anchor.

Then Buschmann and Blue Jays closer Jordan Romano passed it to Yankees reliever Zack Britton, who made sure it got to Judge.

Walsh then added: "Oh cool. He just handed that back without checking to see if our house is still here? I'd next like to announce our divorce."

And to make perfectly clear that she was just kidding, she went on to tweet: "Just a reporter doing work here... per my sources... Matt Buschmann wasn't forced to give the ball back but he handed it over to Zack Britton" adding he told her "The Judge and Maris family have been flying all over the country. They deserve to have that ball."

Judge entered the Yankees' series at Toronto this week one shy of the AL record of 61 home runs set by Roger Maris in 1961. The only players to surpass Maris — Barry Bonds, Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa — all did so as suspected or confirmed steroid users, leading some to consider Judge's quest a push for the legitimate season record.

When Judge hit a 3-2 pitch from Blue Jays left-hander Tim Mayza toward the lower deck in left field in the seventh inning on Wednesday night, fans wearing gloves readied themselves to try to catch a piece of baseball history. Instead, the ball grazed past two outstretched gloves, bounced off a wall and dropped into Toronto's bullpen.

"The disbelief comes over you and just the shock and the amazement," said Frankie Lasagna, one of the two fans closest to the ball. "I was like, 'Oh my God, I almost had it.'"

Lasagna, a Toronto restaurant owner, knew what was at stake when he bought his front-row ticket. He said he wouldn't typically bring a glove to a game.

"In the front row I felt like you've got the best chance," he said. "Lo and behold, I was just a few feet away."

Next to Lasagna, a Blue Jays fan wearing a Bo Bichette jersey came even closer to catching Judge's drive. He was clearly distraught when it fell from his grasp and declined to be interviewed.

## Brazil election: A clash of titans as Bolsonaro faces Lula

By DIANE JEANTET and CARLA BRIDI Associated Press

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RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazil's presidential election Sunday is being contested by 11 candidates but only two stand a chance of reaching a runoff: former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and incumbent Jair Bolsonaro.

Both are political titans, and eight of 10 Brazilians will vote for one of them, according to pollster Datafolha. That leaves little space for challengers and means that in lieu of fresh proposals and detailed programs, the two frontrunners have mostly harped on their experience and railed against each other.

"Both candidates are very well known, the vote is very crystallized," said Nara Pavão, who teaches political science at the Federal University of Pernambuco, adding that most voters made up their minds long ago.

Sunday's election could signal the return of the world's fourth-largest democracy to a leftist government after four years of far-right politics led by a president criticized for challenging democratic institutions, his handling of the COVID-19 pandemic that killed nearly 700,000 people and an economic recovery that has yet to be felt by the poor.

Polls show da Silva with a commanding lead that could possibly even give him a first-round victory without any need for a runoff.

But even if that doesn't happen, the vote itself marks an improbable political comeback for da Silva, a 76-year-old former metalworker who rose from poverty to the presidency — then just four years ago was jailed as part of a massive corruption investigation that targeted his Workers' Party and upended Brazilian politics.

Da Silva's conviction for corruption and money laundering sidelined him from the 2018 race that polls showed him leading, and allowed Bolsonaro — then a fringe, far-right lawmaker — to cruise to victory.

A year later, however, the Supreme Court annulled da Silva's convictions amid accusations the judge and prosecutors manipulated the case against him, which has allowed him to run again now.

In many ways, Sunday's vote is the race that should have been in 2018. And many voters are acutely aware of that.

Among them is Antônio dos Santos, who voted for Bolsonaro in 2018 but will cast his ballot for da Silva this time.

"What I'm most upset about is when the pandemic started, (Bolsonaro) seemed to be taking it as a joke," said dos Santos, a 55 year-old hairdresser who lives in the working-class Rio neighborhood of Rocinha. "Children dying, women losing their husbands. He's not the man I thought he was."

"What matters to me is to see Brazil doing well, everyone working, everyone eating," he said.

Throughout his campaign, da Silva has sought to remind working class voters like dos Santos that his 2003-2010 presidency was marked by social advancement propelled by a massive social welfare program that helped lift tens of millions into the middle class.

That isn't what Bolsonaro, who frequently refers to da Silva as a "thief" and an "ex-jailbird," wants voters to remember.

A former army captain, he campaigned in 2018 on an anti-corruption platform while defending a show-no-mercy approach to crimefighting, traditional family values and national pride. His 2018 slogan — "Brazil above all, God above everyone" — is back this year.

But this time around Bolsonaro's campaign has met fresh headwinds, in part due to his COVID-19 policies that a Senate investigation said warranted criminal charges to hold him responsible for Brazil's 685,000 pandemic deaths.

Women in particular have turned their backs on him. Many were dismayed by his apparent lack of empathy during the pandemic as he spurned vaccines and largely ignored their plight as the primary caretakers of children and the elderly while Brazil was ravaged by the virus.

"Bolsonaro was already rejected by women in 2018, but it got worse," said Carolina Botelho, a researcher with the Institute of Social and Political Studies at the State University of Rio de Janeiro.

In that demographic, da Silva still enjoys a 20-point lead over Bolsonaro, who has sought to improve his standing among women and others by highlighting his administration's generous pandemic welfare program.

But tough times remain. As elsewhere in the world, Russia's invasion of Ukraine stoked inflation and food

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insecurity in Latin America's largest nation. Bolsonaro has softened the blow by lowering taxes on fuel and supporting Congress' push to extend and increase welfare payments for millions of struggling Brazilians.

Da Silva has denounced the latter measure as a temporary fix, given it ends in December. He promises to fight hunger and poverty the way he did during his presidency, through his globally acclaimed Zero Hunger strategy. His pick for running mate, Geraldo Alckmin, a center-right former rival, was a nod to financial markets — more recently bolstered by an endorsement from a former central bank governor who highlighted sound macroeconomic policy in a previous da Silva administration.

Bolsonaro's four years in office have also been marred by the Amazon rainforest's worst deforestation in 15 years.

But no single Bolsonaro claim has driven moderates to rally around da Silva like the current president's insistence that Brazil's electronic voting system is prone to fraud. His claim, for which he has presented no evidence, has raised concerns that he could reject election results and attempt to cling to power.

Earlier this month, Bolsonaro said in an interview that if he doesn't win Sunday's first round, "something abnormal has happened within the electoral court."

Bolsonaro has even accused top members of the electoral authority, who are also Supreme Court justices, of working against him. Such comments fuel a sense among Bolsonaro's avid supporters that the race is rigged, reflected in comments online and with political violence increasingly spilling into real life.

"Bolsonaro is seen as a threat beyond political divergencies, but also to democracy and institutions," said Mário Braga, political analyst at Control Risks, adding that it helps explain why da Silva has garnered a bevy of endorsements.

Among the few demographics where Bolsonaro is polling in front are evangelical Christians, who represent nearly a third of the population. Evangelicals helped carry him to power in 2018, and he proceeded to tap members of their churches for important ministries and for a Supreme Court nomination.

Bolsonaro has shored up their support this time around with a campaign to portray the nation as spiritually ill and arguing only he can safeguard the Christian faith. His targeting of da Silva includes linking him to the country's Afro-Brazilian faiths.

Bolsonaro and his supporters have argued this year's polls underestimate the far-right leader's popularity.

"The ideas of the right have always been ours: family, religion, education, sexual boundaries. ... We are conservative," said Maria do Carmo, who will vote for Bolsonaro again on Sunday. Echoing many other Bolsonaro backers, do Carmo added that she mistrusted polls and the country's electronic voting machines.

## After Supreme Court backs praying coach, no sweeping changes

By LUIS ANDRES HENAO Associated Press

Across the ideological spectrum, there were predictions of dramatic consequences when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of a public high school football coach's right to pray on the field after games.

Yet three months after the decision — and well into the football season — there's no sign that large numbers of coaches have been newly inspired to follow Joseph Kennedy's high-profile example.

"I don't think there has been a noticeable uptick in these sorts of situations," said Chris Line, an attorney for the Freedom From Religion Foundation, which advocates for the separation of church and state.

"But the real issue is not going to be the number, because there's always going to be people like that who want to use their position to push religion on other people," Line said. "The difference now is whether school districts are going to do the right thing about it."

The Supreme Court ruled 6-3 for Kennedy on June 27, saying the Washington state coach had a constitutional right to pray at the 50-yard-line. The conservative justices were in the majority and the liberals in dissent.

In a phone interview, Kennedy and his attorneys at First Liberty Institute, a Christian legal group, lauded the ruling. But the former assistant coach said he hasn't seen "really any difference, good or bad" since June. As far as football games go, he said, "it seems to be pretty much the same."

"I think everybody's trying to figure out what's next and especially at the high school level 'cause this

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came out right before the season," he said.

A majority of U.S. adults approve of the Supreme Court's decision, according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

The poll shows 54% of Americans approve of the ruling, while 22% disapprove and 23% hold neither opinion. The survey also shows that solid majorities think a coach leading a team in prayer (60%), a player leading a team in prayer (64%) and a coach praying on the field without asking the team to join in (71%) should all be allowed in public high school sports.

Kennedy began coaching at Bremerton High near Seattle in 2008. He initially prayed alone on the 50-yard line at the end of games. Students started joining him, and over time he began delivering short, inspirational talks with religious references. Kennedy did that for years and also led students in locker room prayers. When the school district learned what he was doing in 2015, it asked him to stop out of concerns of a possible lawsuit over students' religious freedom rights.

Kennedy stopped leading prayers in the locker room and on the field, but wanted to continue kneeling and praying on the field after games. The school asked him not to do so while still "on duty" as a coach. When he continued, it put him on paid leave. The head coach of the varsity team later recommended he not be rehired because, among other things, he failed to follow district policy.

The case forced the justices to wrestle with how to balance the religious and free speech rights of teachers and coaches with the rights of students not to feel pressured into participating in religious practices. The liberal justices in the minority said there was evidence that the midfield prayers had a coercive effect on students and allowed Kennedy to incorporate his "personal religious beliefs into a school event."

"The biggest mistake that happened out of the Kennedy decision was that the Supreme Court justices focused so much on the coach's rights ... and they just completely disregarded the view of students," said Line, of the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

Since the ruling, Line's group has received some prayer-related complaints, including one about a North Carolina coach holding a prayer service and a baptism on the field, and several about pregame prayers over public address systems at high schools in Alabama. Line is convinced that more coaches previously cautious about team prayers will be emboldened to emulate Kennedy.

"That's definitely going to happen. I just don't know how widespread it will be," Line said. "In the past, school districts, I think, felt a lot more comfortable to say, 'Hey, knock it off.' And now some school districts may misinterpret this and be afraid to protect their students."

John Bursch, senior counsel for Alliance Defending Freedom, praised the high court's ruling.

"I don't think that in the months since the decision that there's been much conflict in the public square other than by those who want to completely eliminate prayer and religion from the public square altogether," Bursch said.

Rachel Laser is president of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, which represented the Bremerton school board in the case. She lamented that the Supreme Court "adopted the deceitful narrative that Kennedy was praying quietly and to himself." She also worried that it will encourage other coaches and teachers "who view public schools as a mission field."

Laser said it's too early to assess the ruling's impact, and suggested some students may be fearful of speaking up.

"We won't get reports of every case like this because it takes a lot of courage even to file a report online, let alone to pursue it," she said. "Our plaintiffs have had their windows shot through, their pets killed, received death threats and have been ostracized in their community — the full gamut of terrible things."

Some public school coaches in Alabama, Oklahoma and Tennessee acknowledged feeling vindicated by the ruling and said they would continue to pray with students, but declined to be identified publicly because they didn't want to draw attention to their teams.

Others worry the ruling could have a negative impact.

Steve Sell, longtime athletic director and football coach at Aragon High School in San Mateo, California, said athletes competing for playing time could feel pressured to pray to please their coach.

"It's dangerous," Sell said. "I don't like any situation that puts kids in a situation where they really have

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to make that hard choice or they have to choose between going against their personal beliefs and jeopardizing whatever position they have on the team.”

In the highly diverse San Francisco Bay Area, he said, “there’s a strong likelihood that on a given team you could have three or four different religions.” For a coach to presume all their players not only are religious but worship the same God, he added, is “not the case, and it’s something that has no place in our public education.”

Meanwhile, Kennedy, who has not returned to coaching yet, said he has received support from peers across the country.

“One thing they don’t want to do is walk on eggshells and people having to hide their faith or their practices,” he said. “You got enough things to think about. The last thing they should be thinking about is, ‘Are my rights being infringed on?’”

“It was really great to have hundreds of coaches just say, ‘Dude, we did it!’ And it was like a big group effort,” Kennedy added. “And a lot of people prayed for this to happen. And it just shows that the Constitution is alive and well.”

## In Minnesota, abortion key to Keith Ellison’s 2nd term hopes

By STEVE KARNOWSKI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Keith Ellison gave up a safe seat in Congress to run for Minnesota attorney general, saying it was his best chance to push back against the policies of Donald Trump. Now locked in a tough reelection fight, he’s arguing that he’s been far less of a partisan warrior than his critics claim.

Ellison squeaked into office in 2018, taking a post that Democrats had traditionally won easily. But he was a polarizing figure in the eyes of some voters. The outspoken progressive came from the Bernie Sanders wing of the Democratic Party, and Republicans tried to draw attention to his past associations with Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, though Ellison had publicly renounced Farrakhan when he first ran for the U.S. House in 2006.

His bid for a second term as attorney general comes after four tumultuous years that put Minnesota in the world spotlight over the police killings of George Floyd and other Black men. His Republican opponent, hedge fund lawyer Jim Schultz, says Ellison deserves much of the blame for the surge in violent crime that followed.

To fight back, Ellison has used this summer’s U.S. Supreme Court decision rolling back abortion rights to rally Democrats and suburban swing voters. He’s also urged those voters to look at his work on more everyday issues such as affordable health care and prescription drugs, consumer and business fraud protections and protections for workers against wage theft — all things that belie his image, he said.

“They think I’m going to be a firebrand and I end up being a fairly pragmatic guy,” Ellison said in an interview. “That’s true of my entire service.”

Ellison was already leading a major initiative for greater police accountability when Floyd died under the knee of former Minneapolis Officer Derek Chauvin in 2020. Ellison went on to lead the prosecution team that got Chauvin convicted of murder the next year, a verdict that potentially averted another eruption of violence.

Ellison also took a step that his Republican critics are now trying to use against him. He strongly backed a charter amendment in Minneapolis that arose from the “defund the police” movement. It would have replaced the city’s police department with a loosely defined department of public safety, with details to be worked out later. Voters rejected it.

On the campaign trail, Schultz depicts Ellison as being “at the forefront of the defund-the-police movement” and blames that movement for the departures of hundreds of dispirited police officers in Minneapolis and elsewhere. And he blames those losses for the spike in gun violence, carjackings and other crimes since the pandemic.

“Far left, extreme politicians like Keith Ellison have gotten behind really reckless policies like defunding the police,” Schultz said in an interview. “It’s deeply wrong. It’s immoral.”

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Violent crime has been rising across Minnesota since the pandemic began, with Minneapolis accounting for much of the increase, while its police force has fallen about 300 officers short of its authorized strength. Minnesota saw a 21.6% statewide increase in violent crime in 2021 from 2020, with violent crime in greater Minnesota rising by 16% and by 23.9% in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area.

Ellison said he doesn't regret supporting the charter amendment, but he said he never supported "defunding the police" and said it didn't accurately describe the amendment.

He also dismissed Schultz's claim that he's hostile to police, saying he regards policing as a noble profession and that Chauvin did more to invite scorn and demoralize officers than anything he ever did.

"I'm the one who prosecuted him for killing George Floyd," Ellison said. "So I'm the one trying to restore the honor and dignity of policing."

Ellison also led the prosecution of former Brooklyn Center Officer Kim Potter, who said she confused her gun for her Taser when she killed Daunte Wright during a traffic stop last year. She was convicted of manslaughter in December. Schultz has said he would support commuting her two-year sentence.

Crime isn't the only issue that has Schultz, a 36-year-old political newcomer, hopeful of being the first Republican to occupy the attorney general's office since 1971. He also accuses Ellison of "unbelievable incompetence" for failing to stop a massive fraud scheme in its early stages, with 49 people charged so far with stealing at least \$250 million from federal programs administered by the state to provide low-income children with nutritious meals during the pandemic. Ellison has countered that his office helped uncover the fraud.

If Ellison is to survive both that attack and the policing criticism to win a second term, abortion rights is likely to be the issue that does it.

Schultz vowed this spring to do everything in his power as attorney general to aggressively defend the unborn. After Roe's reversal, he joined many other Republicans trying to pivot away from abortion and back to crime in a state where abortion rights are protected under the state constitution.

Meanwhile, Ellison brought New York Attorney General Letitia James to Minnesota in early September to raise money from abortion rights supporters in the legal community. Soon after, he visited an abortion clinic in Moorhead that moved across the border from Fargo, North Dakota, to escape a trigger ban on abortion. Ellison vowed early on that his office won't cooperate if other states seek to prosecute women who come to Minnesota for abortions.

Ellison said the election is about more than abortion rights or crime. Trump's rhetoric, the Jan. 6 insurrection, the Supreme Court's abortion decision and the rise of "MAGA Republicans" have put democracy in doubt, he said.

"Here's what we can't do," Ellison said. "We can't tell people we got this. Quite frankly, I'm glad people see my race as close because it means they're going to show up."

## Today in History: September 30, Berlin Airlift ends

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Friday, Sept. 30, the 273rd day of 2022. There are 92 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 30, 1777, the Continental Congress — forced to flee in the face of advancing British forces — moved to York, Pennsylvania.

On this date:

In 1791, Mozart's opera "The Magic Flute" premiered in Vienna, Austria.

In 1938, after co-signing the Munich Agreement allowing Nazi annexation of Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain said, "I believe it is peace for our time."

In 1947, the World Series was broadcast on television for the first time; the New York Yankees defeated the Brooklyn Dodgers 5-3 in Game 1 (the Yankees went on to win the Series four games to three).

In 1949, the Berlin Airlift came to an end.



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In 1954, the first nuclear-powered submarine, the USS Nautilus, was commissioned by the U.S. Navy.

In 1955, actor James Dean, 24, was killed in a two-car collision near Cholame, California.

In 1960, "The Flintstones," network television's first animated prime-time series, debuted on ABC.

In 1962, James Meredith, a Black student, was escorted by federal marshals to the campus of the University of Mississippi, where he enrolled for classes the next day; Meredith's presence sparked rioting that claimed two lives.

In 1972, Roberto Clemente hit a double against Jon Matlack of the New York Mets during Pittsburgh's 5-0 victory at Three Rivers Stadium; the hit was the 3,000th and last for the Pirates star.

In 1986, the U.S. released accused Soviet spy Gennadiy Zakharov, one day after the Soviets released American journalist Nicholas Daniloff.

In 1988, Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev retired President Andrei A. Gromyko from the Politburo and fired other old-guard leaders in a Kremlin shake-up.

In 2001, under threat of U.S. military strikes, Afghanistan's hard-line Taliban rulers said explicitly for the first time that Osama bin Laden was still in the country and that they knew where his hideout was located.

Ten years ago: Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney, writing in The Wall Street Journal, said President Barack Obama had "misunderstood" American values in his policies toward other countries. Mike Trout of the Los Angeles Angels became the first rookie in Major League history to hit 30 home runs and steal 40 bases in a season as the Angels defeated the Texas Rangers 5-4.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump lashed out at the mayor of San Juan and other officials in storm-ravaged Puerto Rico, saying they "want everything to be done for them." Monty Hall, the long-running host of TV's "Let's Make a Deal," died of heart failure at his home in Beverly Hills at the age of 96.

One year ago: With only hours to spare, Congress passed and President Joe Biden signed legislation to avoid a partial federal shutdown and keep the government funded through Dec. 3. A 22-year-old white supremacist, John Earnest, was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole for bursting into a Southern California synagogue on the last day of Passover in 2019 with a semiautomatic rifle, killing one worshipper and wounding three others. Government researchers reported a big decline in teen vaping in 2021 as many U.S. students were forced to learn from home during the pandemic.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Angie Dickinson is 91. Singer Cissy Houston is 89. Singer Johnny Mathis is 87. Actor Len Cariou is 83. Singer Marilyn McCoo is 79. Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is 77. Pop singer Sylvia Peterson (The Chiffons) is 76. Actor Vondie Curtis-Hall is 72. Actor Victoria Tennant is 72. Actor John Finn is 70. Rock musician John Lombardo is 70. Singer Deborah Allen is 69. Actor Calvin Levels is 68. Actor Barry Williams is 68. Singer Patrice Rushen is 68. Actor Fran Drescher is 65. Country singer Marty Stuart is 64. Actor Debrah Farentino is 63. Former Sen. Blanche Lincoln, D-Ark., is 62. Actor Crystal Bernard is 61. Actor Eric Stoltz is 61. Rapper-producer Marley Marl is 60. Country singer Eddie Montgomery (Montgomery-Gentry) is 59. Rock singer Trey Anastasio is 58. Actor Monica Bellucci is 58. Rock musician Robby Takac (Goo Goo Dolls) is 58. Actor Lisa Thornhill is 56. Actor Andrea Roth is 55. Actor Amy Landecker is 53. Actor Silas Weir Mitchell is 53. Actor Tony Hale is 52. Actor Jenna Elfman is 51. Actor Ashley Hamilton is 48. Actor Marion Cotillard is 47. Actor Christopher Jackson is 47. Author and journalist Ta-Nehisi Coates is 47. Actor Stark Sands is 44. Actor Mike Damus is 43. Actor Toni Trucks is 42. Former tennis player Martina Hingis is 42. Olympic gold medal gymnast Dominique Moceanu is 41. Actor Lacey Chabert is 40. Actor Kieran Culkin is 40. Singer-rapper T-Pain is 38.