

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 1 of 69

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Prairie Doc: That darned runny nose](#)
- [3- Weekly Vikings Recap - Week 4](#)
- [4- Weather Pages](#)
- [9- Daily Devotional](#)
- [10- 2022 Community Events](#)
- [11- Subscription Form](#)
- [12- News from the Associated Press](#)

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.

Tuesday, Oct. 4

Senior Menu: Honey glazed chicken breast, parsley buttered potatoes, beets, fruit, whole wheat bread.

6 p.m.: Youth Football Equipment Hand In in wrestling room

State Golf Meet at Moccasin Creek CC

Volleyball at Mobridge-Pollock

Pantry at Community Center open 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store Open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. at 209 N Main.

UMC: Bible Study at 10 a.m.; The Walk Bible Study by Pastor Brandon in Conde, 7 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Ladies Aid LWML, 1 p.m.

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

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

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

"For those who are willing to make an effort, great miracles and wonderful treasures are in store."

Isaac Bashevis Singer

Chicken Soup
for the Soul

Wednesday, Oct. 5

Senior Menu: Baked fish, au gratin potatoes, 3 bean salad, peach cobbler, whole wheat bread.

Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult Bible Study begins at 7 pm

UMC: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Bible Study, 2:45 p.m.; Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 6

Senior Menu: Ham loaf, sweet potatoes, peas, acini depepi fruit salad, whole wheat bread.

Fall Picture Day

1 p.m.: NEC Cross Country at Webster

Volleyball at Milbank (7th at 4 p.m. in elementary gym, 8th at 4 p.m. in Armory gym, C match starts at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity.

UMC: Bible Study with Ashley, 6:30 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Nigeria Circle, 2 p.m.

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Sniff, sniff, sniff. That darned runny nose.

When your nose runs, although it may not slow you down, it can be annoying. This time of year it's difficult to know if your runny nose is from a cold, allergies, or another reason.

Rhinitis can be broadly defined as inflammation of the nasal membrane.

Sometimes a runny nose is from allergies, caused by allergens in the air, such as trees, grass, weeds, molds, dust mites, or pet dander. Allergy symptoms often include sneezing, an itchy or runny nose, and itchy, watery or red eyes.

A runny nose can also be caused by a virus, like a cold. As the weather changes and with school back in session, people tend to spend more time indoors which allows airborne viruses to spread more easily. Cold symptoms may include a runny nose, as well as sneezing, sore throat, cough, and congestion.

Be careful with nasal decongestants. While sprays may temporarily treat rhinitis, regular use of them can cause a rebound effect called rhinitis medicamentosa. Subsequently, a person may use the sprays more, causing a vicious circle. To avoid the rebound effect, try to limit the use of decongestant sprays to less than five days.

Sometimes a runny nose will not ever seem to go away. If allergy pills, steroid nasal sprays, or a change in environment do not help your chronic runny nose, it may be time to consider other causes.

For many of these causes, your primary care provider can help you sort them out and come up with a treatment plan. There are other treatments beyond avoidance and steroid nasal sprays, such as certain inhalers. As always, talk with your doctor to determine if other factors such as polyps, tumors, or a systemic disease could be causing your condition.

Accounting for more than half of all non-allergic rhinitis is vasomotor rhinitis. Vasomotor rhinitis is an exaggerated reaction to irritants such as air pollution, perfumes, or temperature changes, especially cold, dry air.

Cigarette smoke, alcohol, cocaine, and occupational exposures may cause a runny nose along with different medications, such as aspirin or some blood pressure pills. Certain conditions such as pregnancy, acid reflux, as well as the use of your CPAP machine for sleep apnea have been known to affect the nasal membranes.

Personally, I know that if I eat something spicy or hot in temperature, I am going to need a Kleenex, for my gustatory rhinitis. While there might not be a cure for your runny nose, sometimes it is just nice knowing the cause, because I am not going without my favorite pad Thai meal.

Andrew Ellsworth, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show celebrating its twentieth season of truthful, tested, and timely medical information, broadcast on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



Based on Science, Built on Trust



Andrew Ellsworth, MD.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 3 of 69

Weekly Vikings Recap - Week 4

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

For the second week in a row, the Vikings found a way to win despite a somewhat ugly performance overall. Coming into the game Sunday, the Vikings had all things in their favor as the Saints were missing their starting quarterback, running back, and wide receiver. And as the game progressed, the Vikings seem to also have the favor of the referees on their side. Despite all of this, the Vikings failed to dominate the Saints the way a good team should under those circumstances. However, thanks to a "double-doink" by Saints' kicker Will Lutz, the Vikings managed to come away with a win, and will now head back home from London with a 3-1 record.

The player of the game for the Vikings was Justin Jefferson. After two sub-par performances over the last two weeks, Jefferson put on a show for the fans in London with a 10 reception, 147-yard game. And, when the game was on the line late in the 4th quarter, Jefferson was able to get by Saints' pro bowl cornerback, Marshon Lattimore, on a deep route and put the Vikings in position to kick the eventual game-winning field goal.

After four games, I think it is safe to say that the Vikings' special teams unit has been the most reliable, consistent unit on the team. First, kicker Greg Joseph was a perfect 5/5 on his field goal attempts today. Coming into the game, Joseph had never made five field goals in one game in his entire career. Also, punter Ryan Wright punted the ball well today and even completed a 13-yard pass to Jalen Nailor on a fake punt in the third quarter. Although it is nice to have a special teams unit that consistently takes advantage of its opportunities, the hope now for the Vikings is that both its offensive and defensive units will start to do the same soon.

As for the Vikings' offense, they have failed to be as crisp as you would want from a unit that has so much talent on it. For some reason, they have managed to leave many points on the board this season. Today, the Vikings had multiple drives that should have ended in touchdowns but instead resulted in field goals because of simple mistakes. First, Johnny Mundt dropped a pass on third-down that would have put the Vikings in first-and-goal territory. Later in the game, Kirk Cousins threw the ball behind Justin Jefferson in the end zone, which caused Jefferson to miss an easy touchdown. If the Vikings can clean these things up, the offense could finally reach its true explosive potential.

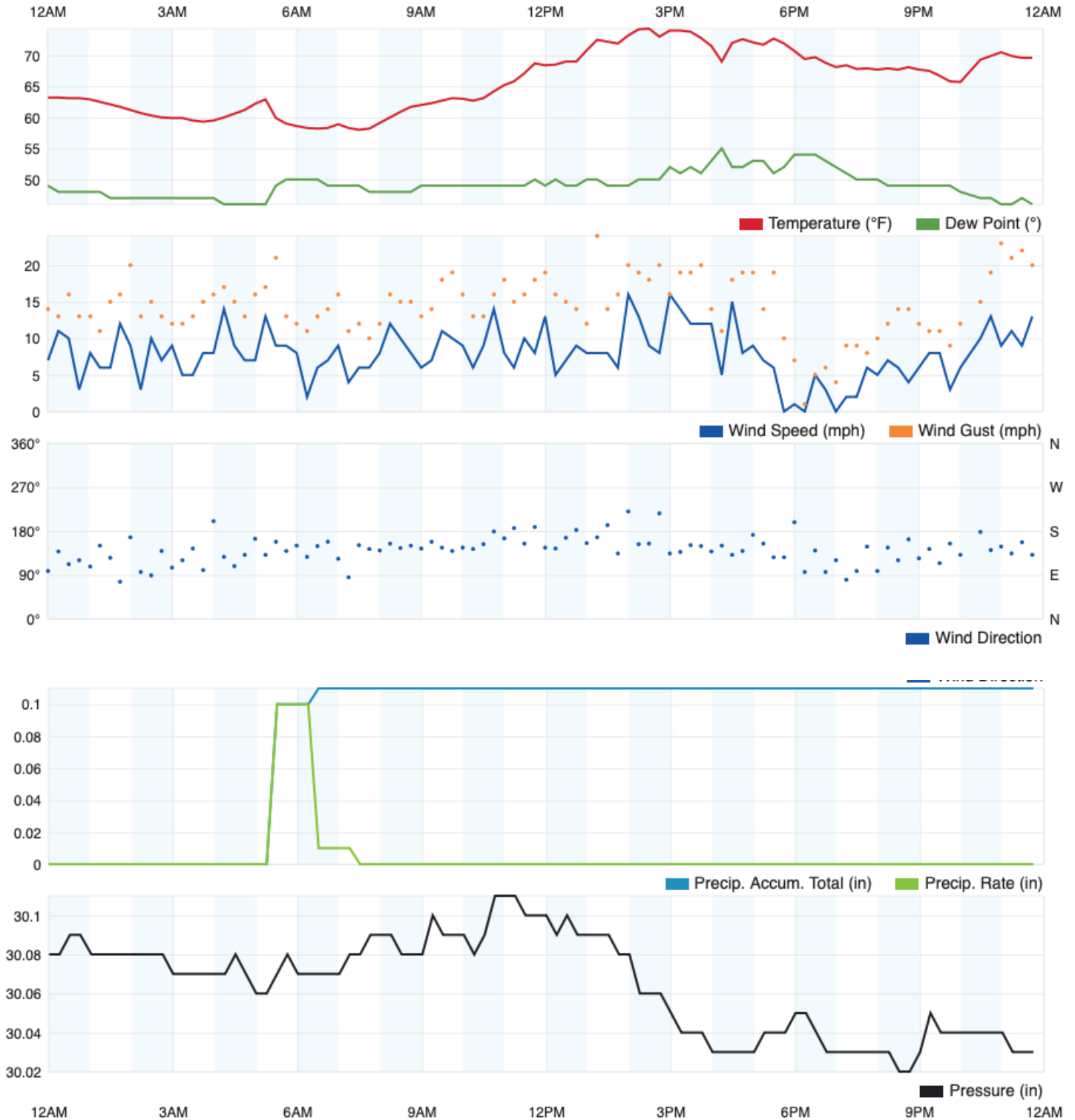
In other news, the Vikings will sadly be without Lewis Cine for the rest of the season. The first-round rookie suffered a broken ankle on a punt return during the game and had to be carted off the field. Although injuries are a part of football, it is sad to see such a young, energetic player have such a brutal injury this early into his career.

Now, the Vikings head home from their four-day trip to London with their eyes set on a division rival, the Chicago Bears. Like the Vikings, the Bears have both a new head coach and general manager calling the shots for their team. However, unlike the Vikings, the Bears came into this season more interested in rebuilding for the future rather than this season. Despite that, the Bears have managed to win a couple of games and prove to be a competitive football team. If the Vikings look past the Bears, there is a chance they could be in for another stressful game that comes down to the wire.

Groton Daily Independent

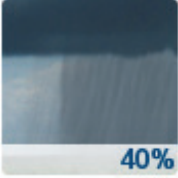


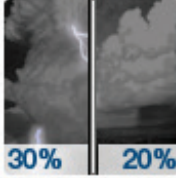

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 4 of 69

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Broton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 5 of 69

Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
				
Chance Showers	Chance Showers then Slight Chance T-storms	Chance Showers then Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms then Slight Chance Showers	Sunny
High: 73 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 70 °F	Low: 49 °F	High: 75 °F

Rain Chances Continuing Through The Early Week

- A slow moving system continues to bring a chance of rain (isolated thunderstorms possible) today through early Wednesday.
- No severe weather expected
- Total rain amounts will range from a trace to 0.65 of an inch.
- Mostly Cloudy



	Probability of Precipitation Forecast														Maximum			
	10/3 Mon						10/4 Tue						10/5 Wed					
	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm		12am	3am	6am
Aberdeen	25	16	26	42	42	36	26	21	37	37	47	47	47	24	24	8	8	47
Britton	22	15	21	31	32	29	24	25	39	39	47	47	47	28	28	10	10	47
Eagle Butte	15	14	15	30	32	31	25	19	30	30	32	32	32	5	5	1	1	32
Eureka	19	9	24	48	47	36	25	19	33	33	38	38	38	11	11	2	2	48
Gettysburg	16	21	33	51	51	39	28	20	33	33	38	38	38	12	12	3	3	51
Kennebec	27	46	64	57	48	38	35	37	40	40	44	44	44	18	18	7	7	64
McIntosh	17	13	13	22	29	30	26	17	25	25	25	15	15	2	2	0	0	30
Milbank	7	10	10	16	18	20	24	29	40	40	48	48	48	41	41	25	25	48
Miller	33	42	58	48	42	38	34	34	43	43	51	51	51	26	26	14	14	58
Mobridge	11	10	23	42	37	32	25	17	31	31	32	32	32	6	6	1	1	42
Murdo	18	40	46	43	41	36	33	33	36	36	41	41	41	13	13	2	4	46
Pierre	17	37	43	47	45	38	32	33	36	36	41	41	41	14	14	4	4	47
Redfield	25	32	47	39	35	35	31	28	40	40	50	50	50	28	28	14	14	50
Sisseton	8	11	17	27	24	25	24	28	37	37	47	47	47	34	34	15	15	47
Watertown	5	9	13	19	23	26	25	33	49	49	49	48	48	39	39	26	26	49
Webster	7	13	18	27	27	27	26	29	44	44	48	48	48	34	34	17	17	48
Wheaton	7	8	11	17	17	19	22	23	28	28	50	50	50	33	33	16	16	50

A slow moving system continues to bring a chance of rain and isolated thunderstorms to the area today and tonight. As the low moves east, we will continue to have chances of rain through early Wednesday morning. Highs for today range from the upper 60s to the mid-70s with the warmest temps across south-central SD. Overnight lows will stay mild with temps ranging in the upper 40s to the upper 50s.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 7 of 69

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 75 °F at 3:10 PM

Low Temp: 58 °F at 6:32 AM

Wind: 24 mph at 1:10 PM

Precip: : 0.11

Day length: 11 hours, 38 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 95 in 1922

Record Low: 20 in 1894

Average High: 67°F

Average Low: 39°F

Average Precip in Oct.: .24

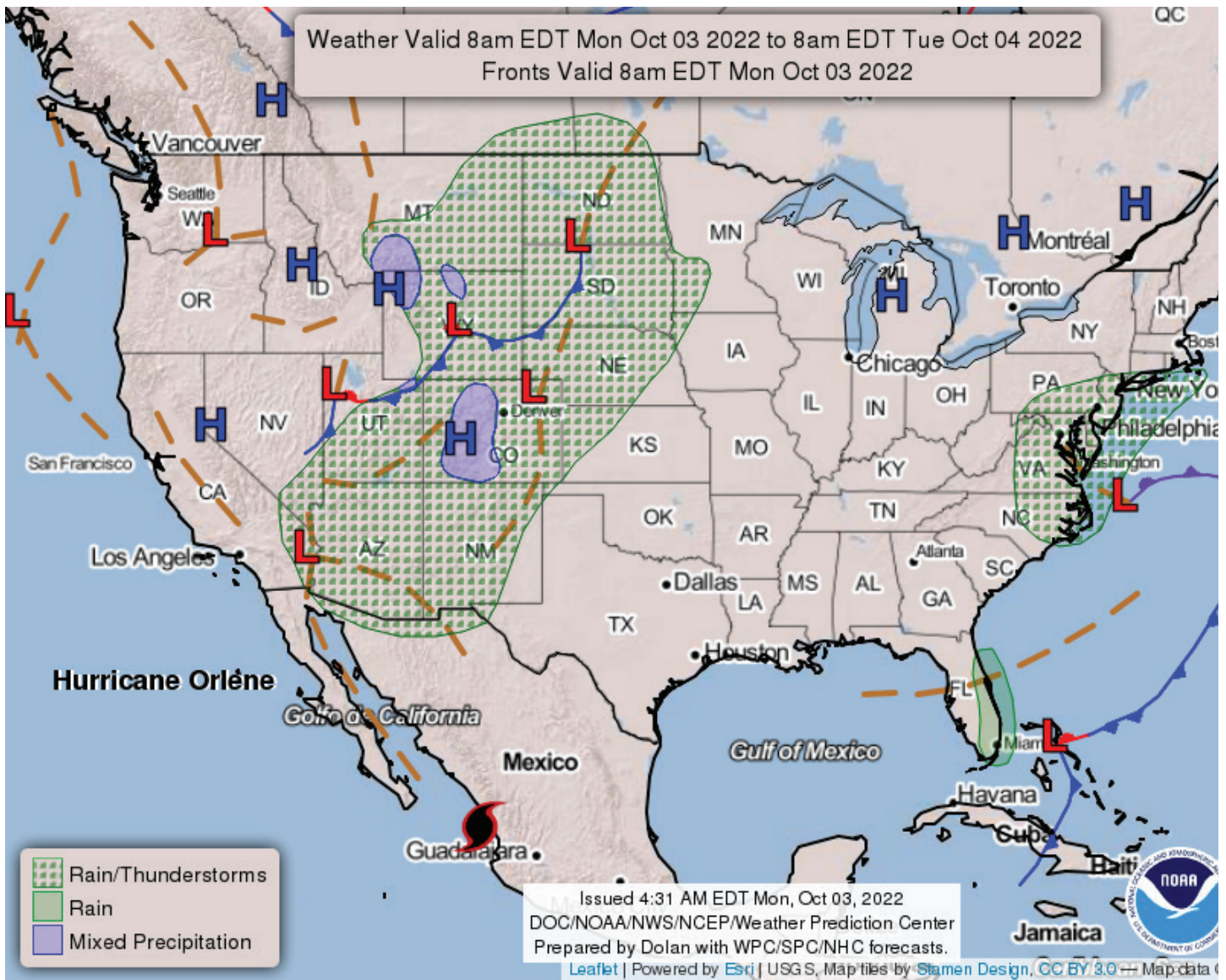
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.11

Average Precip to date: 18.57

Precip Year to Date: 16.16

Sunset Tonight: 7:10:38 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:33:17 AM



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 8 of 69

Today in Weather History

October 3, 1985: High winds of 60 to 75 mph occurred across much of western South Dakota from the late afternoon of the 3rd into the early morning hours of the 4th. The winds blew down power lines and caused power outages for many locations in the Black Hills. The strong winds uprooted trees in Rapid City and blew the roof off of a barn near Newell in Butte County.

1780: A hurricane, which formed on October 1st, destroyed the port city of Savanna-la-Mar on the island of Jamaica on this day. By some estimates, this storm caused 3,000 deaths. This storm is documented in the Jamaica Archives and Record Department.

1841 - An October gale, the worst of record for Nantucket, MA, caught the Cap Cod fishing fleet at sea. Forty ships were driven ashore on Cape Cod, and 57 men perished from the town of Truro alone. Heavy snow fell inland, with 18 inches near Middletown, CT. (David Ludlum)

1903: An unusual late-season tornado moved northeast from west of Chatfield, Minnesota, passing through and devastating St. Charles, Minnesota. Seven people were killed, and 30 injured as 50 homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed.

1912 - The longest dry spell of record in the U.S. commenced as Bagdad, CA, went 767 days without rain. (David Ludlum)

1964 - Hurricane Hilda struck Louisiana spawning many tornadoes, and claimed twenty-two lives. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders)

1979 - The first killer tornado of record in October in Connecticut destroyed sixteen vintage aircraft at the Bradley Air Museum in Windsor Locks. The tornado damaged more than one hundred homes causing 200 million dollars damage. Three persons were killed, and 500 others were injured. (The Weather Channel)

1986 - Remnants of Hurricane Paine deluged Oklahoma and southeastern Kansas with 6 to 10 inch overnight rains. Hardy, OK, was drenched with 21.79 inches. Heavy rain between September 26th and October 4th caused 350 million dollars damage in Oklahoma. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Twenty-five cities in the Upper Midwest, including ten in Iowa, reported record low temperatures for the date. Duluth MN, Eau Claire, WI, and Spencer, IA, dipped to 24 degrees. Temperatures warmed into the 80s in the Northern and Central High Plains Region. At Chadron, NE, the mercury soared from a morning low of 29 degrees to an afternoon high of 88 degrees. Temperatures soared above 100 degrees in southern California. The high of 108 degrees at Downtown Los Angeles was a record for October. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Cold Canadian air invaded the north central U.S. bringing an end to the growing season across those states. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed in the southwestern U.S. Phoenix, AZ, reported a record high of 105 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Unseasonably cold weather prevailed from the Pacific Northwest to the Upper Mississippi Valley. A dozen cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Bismarck, ND, and Williston, ND, with readings of 16 degrees above zero. An upper level weather disturbance brought snow to parts of Idaho, Wyoming and Montana, with five inches reported at West Yellowstone, MT. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2002: Hurricane Lili made landfall between White Lake and Vermilion Bay, Louisiana as a Category 1 storm.

2015: Unprecedented rainfall fell throughout South Carolina from October 1st — 5th, 2015. Storm total amounts greater than 20" were observed in Columbia and Sumter.

2017: The City of Houston had the wettest year on record with 73.51 inches. The previous wettest year was in 1900 when 72.86 inches were measured.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 9 of 69

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

A DIFFERENCE

It was a heated argument: "Your mind is so closed that no one could get a new thought in there even if they used a sharp wedge." "Oh yeah," he replied. "You're so open-minded that your brain can't hold anything that makes sense!"

Each of us has developed our own way of thinking about and looking at things. Solomon once said that the way we think falls between two bookmarks "Simple minded and prudent." Being "simple minded" means anything from being overly gullible, too hot-headed, arrogant, reckless, foolish or crafty. On the other hand, some people are "prudent."

The "simple minded" are so confused that they are willing to believe anything said by anybody at any time. Whatever they hear makes sense to them, and if it is a popular idea that most people embrace, it's always right. They lack insight, sound judgment and clear thinking.

The "prudent person," however, has both evil and good intentions. Evil intentions would be using one's knowledge in a way that is sinister, shrewd, or misleading. Good intentions would be using one's knowledge to discern the truth, understand people, know what is going on, looking for opportunities to serve others, and how to make wise decisions.

The wisdom of a prudent person comes from "giving thought to their steps," or, what they plan to do. They carefully consider choices and consequences, weigh every option and opinion, and make their decisions on wisdom they have gained from their teachers. However, not all teachers honor God. So, the Christian must make decisions according to God's Word.

Prayer: Lord, may we choose wisely those who we allow to influence our thoughts and guide our thinking. May we choose our teachers carefully before we trust them. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: The simple believe anything, but the prudent give thought to their steps. Proverbs 14:15



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

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 10 of 69

2022-23 Community Events

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

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 11 of 69

The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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News from the Associated Press

Indonesian recalls stinging tear gas in deadly soccer melee

By EDNA TARIGAN Associated Press

MALANG, Indonesia (AP) — Dicky Kurniawan felt the sharp sting in his eyes as Indonesian police fired tear gas into the football stadium.

From his seat near an exit, he said he watched the melee unfold Saturday night as angry fans poured into the field to demand answers after host Arema FC of East Java's Malang city lost to Persebaya Surabaya, its first defeat ever on its home turf. The mob threw bottles and other objects, and the violence spread outside the stadium, where police cars were overturned and torched.

Kurniawan, 22, was shocked when police fired tear gas at spectators in the stands. As the stinging gas spread through the stadium, Kurniawan grabbed his girlfriend and — like everyone else — dashed to the exits.

The mass rush led to a stampede that killed nearly three dozen people almost instantly. The death toll reached 125 and hundreds more were injured in one of the world's deadliest tragedies at a sporting event. More than 40,000 spectators were at the match, all Arema fans because the organizer had banned Persebaya Surabaya supporters due to Indonesia's history of violent soccer rivalries.

"The chaos was on the field, but they fired the tear gas into the stadium stands," Kurniawan said as he described the tragedy from his hospital bed. He received bruises on his face but said he was fortunate to survive.

"Now I am done watching soccer in the stadium," Kurniawan said.

In the bed next to Kurniawan, teenager Farel Panji also had a lucky escape.

Panji, 16, had just left his seat to go to the exit when the tear gas came. As people ran past him to get to the exit, Panji said he got pushed down by the crowd and collapsed.

"I fainted for a while. When I woke up, I was still in the stadium seating area," Panji said. He got home safely and was taken to the hospital the next day. Wearing an Arema jersey, Panji said Saturday's incident did not stop him from loving the club.

Malang's Dr. Saiful Anwar General Hospital, one of several used to treat victims, was filled Sunday with grieving relatives waiting to identify bodies in the morgue or for information about their loved ones.

Police say 323 people were injured in the crush, with some still in critical condition. At least 17 children were among the dead and seven other children are being treated at hospitals, according to the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection.

Arema's Chilean coach, Javier Roca, led the players and other officials in paying respect to the dead in a ceremony Monday.

Wearing black shirts, the team gathered at the statue of a lion head outside Kanjuruhan Stadium. Dozens of Arema supporters also attended, and started to cry when the players poured rose petals around the statue and prayed together.

"We came here as a team, asking forgiveness from the families impacted by this tragedy, those who lost their loved ones or the ones who are still being treated in the hospital," Roca said.

He said soccer violence must stop.

"We feel like we got a punishment," he said. "One match result is not worth paying with the lives of people, let alone more than 100 people."

Ukrainian troops claim gains in Russia annexed region

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian troops continued to push forward Monday with their offensive that has embarrassed Moscow, with Kyiv officials and foreign observers hinting at new gains in the strategic southern region of Kherson that the Kremlin wants to annex.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 13 of 69

Kherson has been one of the toughest battlefields for the Ukrainians, with slower progress when compared with Ukraine's breakout offensive around the country's second largest city of Kharkiv, in the north-east, that began last month.

Kherson is one of the four regions illegally annexed by Moscow last week after a "referendum" orchestrated by the Kremlin. The lower house of the Kremlin-controlled parliament is set to ratify the treaties Monday, and the upper house will follow the next day.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Monday that two of those regions, Donetsk and Luhansk, are joining Russia with their administrative borders that existed before a conflict erupted there in 2014 between pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian forces. He noted that the issue of the borders of the two other regions — Zaporizhzhia and Kherson — remains open.

"We will continue to discuss that with residents of those regions," Peskov said in a conference call with reporters. He did not provide additional details.

Ukrainian media outlets on Monday highlighted an image of Ukrainian troops displaying flags at a marker for the village of Khreshchenivka, which is in the same area of Kherson where troops apparently have broken through Russian lines.

Ukraine has pressed its counteroffensive in the Kherson region since the summer, relentlessly pummeling Russian supply lines and making inroads into the areas west of the Dnieper River held by the Russians.

The Ukrainian military has successfully used U.S.-supplied HIMARS multiple rocket launchers to repeatedly hit the main bridge across the Dnieper in the city of Kherson and a dam that served as a second main crossing. It also has struck pontoon bridges that Russia has used to supply its troops on the western bank of the river after the main crossings were made inoperable.

Despite the successful strikes on supply lines, Ukrainian offensive operations in the south so far have been slower and less successful compared with the northeast, as the open terrain easily exposed the attacking force to Russian artillery fire and airstrikes.

Russian military bloggers close to Moscow have increasingly acknowledged that Ukraine has superior manpower, backed by tank units, in the area.

A Russian-installed official in the Kherson region, Kirill Stremousov, admitted in a video statement on Monday morning that the Ukrainian forces "have broken through a little deeper." However, he insisted that "everything is under control" and that Russia's "defense system is working" in the region.

Russia attacked Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelenskyy's hometown and other targets Sunday with suicide drones, and Ukraine took back full control of a strategic eastern city in a counteroffensive that has reshaped the war.

Russia's recent loss of the eastern city of Lyman, which it had been using as a transport and logistics hub, was a new blow to the Kremlin as it seeks to escalate the war by illegally annexing the four regions of Ukraine and heightening threats to use nuclear force.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's land grab has threatened to push the conflict to a dangerous new level. It also prompted Ukraine to formally apply for fast-track NATO membership.

In his nightly address Sunday, Zelenskyy discussed the recent liberation of Lyman, a key Russian node for logistics on the front line in the northeast.

"The story of the liberation of Lyman in the Donetsk region has now become the most popular in the media — but the successes of our soldiers are not limited to Lyman," Zelenskyy said.

Lyman, which Ukraine recaptured by encircling Russian troops, is in the Donetsk region near the border with Luhansk.

In his broadcast, Zelenskyy also thanked troops from his hometown near Kherson.

"To the soldiers of the 129th Brigade of my native Kryvy Rih, who distinguished themselves with good results and liberated, in particular, Arkhanhelske and Myroliubivka," he said.

Those two villages are in the same area where Ukrainian troops have been making advances. A photo emerged at the weekend showing Ukrainian forces' operation southwest of Novovorontsovka on the banks of the Dnieper River.

Ukraine's presidential office said Monday that Russian shelling of eight Ukrainian regions over the past

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 14 of 69

24 hours killed two civilians and injured 14 more.

It also reported advances in the Kherson region and said that the Russian authorities in response restricted people from leaving the city of Kherson, introducing special permits for those who want to leave.

Since the Russian offensive started in February, Ukrainian forces have recently managed to retake swaths of territory, notably in the northeast around Kharkiv, in a counteroffensive in recent weeks that has embarrassed the Kremlin and prompted rare domestic criticism of Putin's war.

Nobel prize in medicine awarded for research on evolution

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Swedish scientist Svante Paabo won this year's Nobel Prize in medicine Monday for his discoveries on human evolution that provided key insights into our immune system and what makes us unique compared with our extinct cousins, the award's panel said.

Paabo has spearheaded the development of new techniques that allowed researchers to compare the genome of modern humans and that of other hominins — the Neanderthals and Denisovans.

While Neanderthal bones were first discovered in the mid-19th century, only by unlocking their DNA — often referred to as the code of life — have scientists been able to fully understand the links between species.

This included the time when modern humans and Neanderthals diverged as a species, determined to be around 800,000 years ago, said Anna Wedell, chair of the Nobel Committee.

"Paabo and his team also surprisingly found that gene flow had occurred from Neanderthals to Homo sapiens, demonstrating that they had children together during periods of co-existence," she said.

This transfer of genes between hominin species affects how the immune system of modern humans reacts to infections, such as the coronavirus. About 1-2% of people outside Africa have Neanderthal genes.

Paabo, 67, performed his prizewinning studies in Germany at the University of Munich and at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig. Paabo is the son of Sune Bergstrom, who won the Nobel prize in medicine in 1982.

The medicine prize kicked off a week of Nobel Prize announcements. It continues Tuesday with the physics prize, with chemistry on Wednesday and literature on Thursday. The 2022 Nobel Peace Prize will be announced on Friday and the economics award on Oct. 10.

Last year's medicine recipients were David Julius and Ardem Patapoutian for their discoveries into how the human body perceives temperature and touch.

The prizes carry a cash award of 10 million Swedish kronor (nearly \$900,000) and will be handed out on Dec. 10. The money comes from a bequest left by the prize's creator, Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel, who died in 1895.

In Hurricane Ian's wake, dangers persist, worsen in parts

By BOBBY CAINA CALVAN and MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP) — People kayaking down streets that were passable just a day or two earlier. Hundreds of thousands without power. National Guard helicopters flying rescue missions to residents still stranded on Florida's barrier islands.

Days after Hurricane Ian carved a path of destruction from Florida to the Carolinas, the dangers persisted, and even worsened in some places. It was clear the road to recovery from this monster storm will be long and painful.

And Ian was still not done. The storm doused Virginia with rain Sunday, and officials warned of the potential for severe flooding along its coast, beginning overnight Monday.

Ian's remnants moved offshore and formed a nor'easter that is expected to pile even more water into an already inundated Chesapeake Bay and threatened to cause the most significant tidal flooding event in Virginia's Hampton Roads region in the last 10 to 15 years, said Cody Poche, a National Weather Service meteorologist.

The island town of Chincoteague declared a state of emergency Sunday and strongly recommended that

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 15 of 69

residents in certain areas evacuate. The Eastern Shore and northern portion of North Carolina's Outer Banks were also likely to be impacted.

At least 68 people have been confirmed dead: 61 in Florida, four in North Carolina and three in Cuba.

With the death toll rising, Deanne Criswell, administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, said the federal government was ready to help in a huge way, focusing first on victims in Florida, which took the brunt of one of the strongest storms to make landfall in the United States. President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden plan to visit the state on Wednesday.

Flooded roadways and washed-out bridges to barrier islands left many people isolated amid limited cell-phone service and a lack of basic amenities such as water, electricity and the internet. Officials warned that the situation in many areas isn't expected to improve for several days because the rain that fell has nowhere to go because waterways are overflowing.

Fewer than 620,000 homes and businesses in Florida were still without electricity by early Monday, down from a peak of 2.6 million.

Criswell told "Fox News Sunday" that the federal government, including the Coast Guard and Department of Defense, had moved into position "the largest amount of search and rescue assets that I think we've ever put in place before."

Still, recovery will take time, said Criswell, who visited the state Friday and Saturday to assess the damage and talk to survivors. She cautioned that dangers remain with downed power lines in standing water.

More than 1,600 people have been rescued statewide, according to Florida's emergency management agency.

Rescue missions were ongoing, especially to Florida's barrier islands, which were cut off from the mainland when storm surges destroyed causeways and bridges.

The state will build a temporary traffic passageway for the largest one, Pine Island, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said Sunday, adding that an allocation had been approved for Department of Transportation to build it this week and construction could start as soon as Monday.

"It's not going to be a full bridge, you're going to have to go over it probably at 5 miles an hour or something, but it'll at least let people get in and off the island with their vehicles," the governor said at a news conference.

Coast Guard, municipal and private crews have been using helicopters, boats and even jetskis to evacuate people over the past several days.

In rural Seminole County, north of Orlando, residents donned waders, boots and bug spray to paddle to their flooded homes Sunday.

Ben Bertat found 4 inches (10 centimeters) of water in his house by Lake Harney after kayaking there.

"I think it's going to get worse because all of this water has to get to the lake" said Bertat, pointing to the water flooding a nearby road. "With ground saturation, all this swamp is full and it just can't take any more water. It doesn't look like it's getting any lower."

Elsewhere, power remained knocked out to at least half of South Carolina's Pawleys Island, a beach community roughly 75 miles (115 kilometers) up the coast from Charleston. In North Carolina, the storm downed trees and power lines.

Indonesian police probe tear gas firing at soccer match

By AGOES BASOEKI and EDNA TARIGAN Associated Press

MALANG, Indonesia (AP) — Indonesian police said they were investigating over a dozen officers responsible for firing tear gas that set off a crush that killed 125 people at a soccer match, as families and friends grieved Monday for the victims that included 17 children.

Distraught family members were struggling to comprehend the sudden loss of loved ones at the match in East Java's Malang city that was watched only by hometown Arema FC fans. The organizer had banned visiting Persebaya Surabaya's supporters due to Indonesia's history of violent soccer rivalries.

The crush was among the world's deadliest disasters at a sporting event.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 16 of 69

Witnesses said fans flooded the pitch and demanded that Arema management explain why, after 23 years of undefeated home matches against Persebaya, Saturday night's ended in a 3-2 defeat. Some of the 42,000 Arema fans threw bottles and other objects at players and soccer officials. At least five police vehicles were toppled and set ablaze outside the stadium.

But most of the deaths occurred when riot police, trying to stop the violence, fired tear gas, including toward the spectator stands, triggering the disastrous crush of fans making a panicked, chaotic run for the exits. Most of the 125 people who died were trampled upon or suffocated.

At least 17 children were among the dead and seven were being treated in hospitals, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection said. Police said 323 people overall were injured in the crush, some of them still in critical condition.

National Police spokesperson Dedy Prasetyo said in a news conference that 18 officers responsible for firing tear gas, ranging from middle- to high-ranking, were being investigated along with "internal matters related to security management."

He said police were still questioning witnesses and analyzing footage from 32 security cameras inside and outside the stadium and nine mobile phones owned by the victims as part of the investigation to also identify suspected vandals. Two police officers were among the dead.

Arema players and officials laid wreaths Monday in front of the stadium. "We came here as a team asking forgiveness from the families impacted by this tragedy, those who lost their loved ones or the ones still being treated in the hospital," head coach Javier Roca said.

At the home of Faiqotul Hikmah, 22, her parents and relatives wailed when an ambulance arrived with her body wrapped in white cloth and a black blanket. An Aremania — the moniker for Arema fans — she died while fleeing to exit 12 at Kanjuruhan Stadium.

A dozen friends traveled to see the match but Hikmah was one of only four who entered the stadium because tickets were sold out, her friend, Abdul Mukid, said Monday in an Associated Press interview. He later bought a ticket separately from a broker then learned of the chaos that had erupted inside the stadium.

"I have to find her, save her ... that's kept me from thinking anything else," Mukid recalled. "The situation is really ... really terrible!"

Mukid found Hikmah's body laid at a building in the stadium compound, her face full of bluish bruises and broken ribs. He learned a second friend had died from other friends who called him while he was in the ambulance carrying Hikmah's body to a hospital. Noval Putra Aulia, 19, was an orphan who had been cared for by his brother since their parents died five years ago, Mukid said.

"I can't put into words how much my sorrow is to lose my sister," said Nur Laila, Hikmah's older sibling. "She was just a big Arema fan who wanted to watch her favorite team play. She shouldn't die just for that," she said, wiping tears.

President Joko Widodo ordered the premier soccer league suspended until safety is reevaluated and security tightened. Indonesia's soccer association has also banned Arema from hosting soccer matches for the rest of the season.

Arema FC President Gilang Widya Pramana expressed his sadness and deepest apologies to the victims and the Indonesian people, and said he is ready to take full responsibility for the tragedy at his team's stadium.

He said that the management, coach and players were in shock and speechless.

"I am ready to provide assistance, even though it will not be able to return the victim's life," Pramana said in a news conference Monday at Arema's headquarters in Malang.

"This incident was beyond prediction, beyond reason ... in a match watched only by our fans, not a single rival's supporter," he said, sobbing. "How can that match kill more than 100 people? An incident that probably wouldn't exist in the world."

He said that Arema FC was ready to accept any sanctions from Indonesia's Soccer Association and the government, and "hopefully, it will be a very valuable lesson."

Security Minister Mohammad Mahfud said he will lead a separate inquiry to investigate violations of

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 17 of 69

law in the disaster. The team will also determine what victims' compensation should be provided and will complete the task in three weeks.

Rights group Amnesty International urged Indonesia to investigate the use of tear gas and ensure that those found responsible are tried in open court. While FIFA has no control over domestic games, it has advised against the use of tear gas at soccer stadiums.

Despite Indonesia's lack of international accolades in the sport, hooliganism is rife in the soccer-obsessed country where fanaticism often ends in violence. Data from Indonesia's soccer watchdog, Save Our Soccer, showed 78 people have died in game-related incidents over the past 28 years.

Saturday's game was among the world's worst crowd disasters in sports, including the 1996 World Cup qualifier between Guatemala and Costa Rica in Guatemala City where over 80 died and over 100 more were injured. In April 2001, more than 40 people are crushed to death during a soccer match at Ellis Park in Johannesburg, South Africa.

UK scraps tax cut for wealthy that sparked market turmoil

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, England (AP) — The British government on Monday dropped plans to cut income tax for top earners, part of a package of unfunded cuts unveiled only days ago that sparked turmoil on financial markets and sent the pound to record lows.

In a dramatic about-face, Treasury chief Kwasi Kwarteng abandoned plans to scrap the top 45% rate of income tax paid on earnings above 150,000 pounds (\$167,000) a year.

He and Prime Minister Liz Truss have spent the last 10 days defending the cut in the face of market mayhem and increasing alarm among the governing Conservative Party.

"We get it, and we have listened," Kwarteng said in a statement. He said "it is clear that the abolition of the 45p tax rate has become a distraction from our overriding mission to tackle the challenges facing our country."

The pound rose after Kwarteng's announcement to around \$1.12 — about the value it held before the Sept. 23 budget announcements.

The U-turn came after a growing number of Conservative lawmakers, including former ministers with broad influence, turned on the government's tax plans.

"I can't support the 45p tax removal when nurses are struggling to pay their bills," Tory lawmaker Maria Caulfield said.

It also came hours after the Conservatives released advance extracts of a speech Kwarteng is due to give later Monday at the party's annual conference in the central England city of Birmingham. He had been due to say: "We must stay the course. I am confident our plan is the right one."

Truss defended the measures Sunday but said she could have "done a better job laying the ground" for the announcements.

Truss took office less than a month ago, promising to radically reshape Britain's economy to end years of sluggish growth. But the government's announcement of a stimulus package that includes 45 billion pounds (\$50 billion) in tax cuts, to be paid for by government borrowing, sent the pound tumbling to a record low against the dollar.

The Bank of England was forced to intervene to prop up the bond market, and fears that the bank will soon hike interest rates caused mortgage lenders to withdraw their cheapest deals, causing turmoil for homebuyers.

The package proved unpopular, even among Conservatives. Reducing taxes for top earners and scrapping a cap on bankers' bonuses while millions face a cost-of-living crisis driven by soaring energy bills was widely seen as politically toxic.

Truss and Kwarteng insist that their plan will deliver a growing economy and eventually bring in more tax revenue, offsetting the cost of borrowing to fund the current cuts. But they also have signaled that public spending will need to be slashed to keep government debt under control.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 18 of 69

Kwarteng has promised to set out a medium-term fiscal plan on Nov. 23, alongside an economic forecast from the independent Office for Budget Responsibility.

Axing the top-earners tax rate would have cost about 2 billion pounds, a small share of the government's overall tax-cutting plan. Kwarteng said Monday that the government was sticking to its other tax policies, including a cut next year in the basic rate of income tax and a reversal of a corporation tax hike planned by the previous government.

Tony Danker, who heads business group the Confederation of British Industry, said he hoped the government U-turn would bring stability to the markets.

"None of this growth plan will work unless we have stability. Let's hope this is the beginning of it," he told broadcaster LBC.

Opposition parties said the government should scrap its whole economic plan.

"UK gov U-turns on top tax rate abolition because it's a 'distraction,'" Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon of the Scottish National Party wrote on Twitter. "Morally wrong and hugely costly for millions is a better description. Utter ineptitude."

Black representation in Alabama tested before Supreme Court

By KIM CHANDLER, MARK SHERMAN and GARY FIELDS Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — The invisible line dividing two of Alabama's congressional districts slices through Montgomery, near iconic sites from the civil rights movement as well as ones more personal to Evan Milligan.

There's the house where his grandfather loaded people into his station wagon and drove them to their jobs during the Montgomery Bus Boycott as Black residents spurned city buses to protest segregation. It's the same home where his mother lived as a child, just yards from a whites-only park and zoo she was not allowed to enter.

The spot downtown where Rosa Parks was arrested, igniting the boycott, sits on one side of the dividing line while the church pastored by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., who led the protests, sits on the other.

The lines are at the center of a high-stakes redistricting case bearing Milligan's name that will go before the U.S. Supreme Court on Tuesday, setting up a new test of the Voting Rights Act and the role of race in drawing congressional boundaries.

At the center of the case is a challenge by various groups arguing that the state violated the federal Voting Rights Act by diluting the political power of Black voters when it failed to create a second district in which they make up a majority, or close to it. African Americans account for about 27% of the state's population but are the majority in just one of the state's seven congressional districts.

"Our congressional map is not reflective of the population that lives in Alabama," said Milligan, 41, one of several voters who joined interest groups in filing the lawsuit.

The case the Supreme Court will take up Tuesday centers on whether congressional districts in Alabama were drawn to reduce the political influence of Black voters, but it's also part of a much broader problem that undermines representative government in the U.S. Both major political parties have practiced gerrymandering — drawing congressional and state legislative boundaries to cement their hold on power — but Republicans have been in control of the process in far more states since after the 2010 elections. That has allowed them to win an outsized share of statehouse and U.S. House seats and means GOP policies — including on abortion restrictions — often don't reflect the will of most voters.

An Associated Press analysis from 2017 showed that Alabama had one of the most gerrymandered congressional maps in the country.

Republicans dominate elected office in Alabama and are in charge of redistricting. They have been resistant to creating a second district with a Democratic-leaning Black majority that could send another Democrat to Congress.

A three-judge panel that included two appointees of President Donald Trump ruled unanimously in January that the Alabama Legislature likely violated the Voting Rights Act with the map. "Black voters have

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 19 of 69

less opportunity than other Alabamians to elect candidates of their choice to Congress," the panel said. The judges ordered state lawmakers to draw new lines for this year's election and create a second district where Black voters either made up a majority or near majority of the population. But on a 5-4 vote in February, the Supreme Court sided with Alabama to allow this year's congressional elections to take place without adding a second predominantly Black district. Two justices suggested it was too close to spring primaries to make a change.

The lawsuit claims the Alabama congressional map dilutes the voting strength of Black residents by packing a large number of them into a single district — the 7th, where 55% of voters are Black — while fragmenting other communities. That includes the state's Black Belt region and the city of Montgomery.

The current districts leave the vast majority of Black voters with no realistic chance to elect their preferred congressional candidates anywhere outside the 7th district, the lawsuit contends.

"This is just about getting Black voters, finally, in Alabama the opportunity to elect their candidates of choice. It's not necessarily guaranteeing that they will have their candidate elected," said Deuel Ross, senior counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, which is representing the plaintiffs.

The groups contend that the state's Black population is large enough and geographically compact enough to create a second district. Milligan, who is six generations removed from enslaved ancestors who lived in the Black Belt, ticked off the consequences for Black residents who are not able to have representation that aligns with their needs: addressing generational poverty, the lack of adequate internet service, Medicaid expansion and the desire for a broader array of health care services.

"In choosing not to do that, you're denying the people of the Black Belt the opportunity to elect an additional person that can really go to the mat on their interests," said Ross, who is one of the attorneys who will argue the case in a challenge backed by the Biden administration.

African Americans served in Alabama's congressional delegation following the Civil War in the period known as Reconstruction. They did not return until 1993, a year after the courts ordered the state to reconfigure the 7th Congressional District into a majority-Black one, which has since been held by a succession of Black Democrats. That 1992 map remains the basis for the one in use today.

"Under numerous court challenges, the courts have approved this basic plan. All we did is adjust it for population deviation," said state Rep. Chris Pringle, a Republican and chairman of the legislative committee that drew the new lines.

Alabama argued in court filings that the state's Black population is too spread out to be able to create a second majority district without abandoning core redistricting principles such as keeping districts compact and keeping communities of interest together. Drawing such a district, the state argued, would require mapping acrobatics, such as connecting coastal areas in southwest Alabama to peanut farms in the east.

In a statement to The Associated Press, Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall said the map is "based on race-neutral redistricting principles that were approved by a bipartisan group of legislators." He said it looks similar to three prior maps, including one cleared by the Justice Department and another enacted in the 2000s by "the Democrat-controlled Legislature."

"The Voting Rights Act does not force states to sort voters based on race," Marshall said in a statement. "The VRA is meant to prohibit racial gerrymanders, not require them."

Standing in a meeting room at the Alabama Statehouse and pointing to a poster-size version of the map, Pringle said lawmakers prioritized a race-neutral approach. The lawsuit alleges the Republican lawmakers packed Black voters into certain areas, but Pringle said when they were drawing lines they "turned race off" as an option on the computer. Only later did they apply the racial data points.

"I think the Supreme Court is going to back us up that we complied with existing law," Pringle said.

Alabama's 7th Congressional District snakes a winding path from the western neighborhoods of Birmingham through the state's Black Belt — a swath of land named for the rich soil that once gave rise to antebellum plantations — to sections of Montgomery.

Democratic Rep. Terri Sewell, who has represented the district, has been the lone Democrat among the

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 20 of 69

state's seven House members since she took office in 2011. The state's other six districts have reliably elected white Republicans for the last decade.

Sewell was the only member of Alabama's delegation to support restoring the most effective anti-discrimination provision of the Voting Rights Act, which was gutted in a 2013 Supreme Court decision that also arose from an Alabama case. The provision, referred to as preclearance, forced Alabama, other states and some counties with a history of voting discrimination to get Justice Department or federal court approval before making any election-related changes.

Some Black voters outside Sewell's district say they feel their concerns are overlooked because there is no motivation for Republican officeholders in districts that favor the GOP to pay attention to their issues.

"Fair representation and full representation of the voters in the state of Alabama would mean that a third of the population should get a third of the representation in Congress, and that at least includes one additional seat," Sewell said. "Look, I think that I would welcome the opportunity to have another seat where I have a colleague that will fight for, you know, voting rights and civil rights, that that will understand that this country has gotten far when it comes to diversity. But we have a long ways to go."

Alabama's congressional delegation voted unanimously for the CARES Act, which provided federal aid to state and local governments during the Trump administration as the COVID-19 outbreak was erupting across the country. But that unity vanished when President Joe Biden took office.

Sewell was alone in the delegation in supporting the American Rescue Plan, legislation passed by a Democratic-controlled Congress and signed by Biden. Among other things, she said, the bill benefited community health centers and the health care response at historically Black colleges.

One of them, Alabama State University, was founded two years after the Civil War and in an area where the districts divide. Sewell also was alone in supporting other significant legislation since Biden took office — including the \$1 trillion infrastructure bill and the recent Inflation Reduction Act, which, among other provisions, capped out-of-pocket drug costs for Medicare recipients and helped millions of Americans afford health insurance by extending coverage subsidies.

Those types of priorities speak to the Rev. Murphy Green, a local political activist who is supporting the long shot bid by the Democratic candidate in the race for the 2nd Congressional District, where the Republican incumbent won with 65% of the vote two years ago.

He particularly pointed to the health care price controls enacted by Democrats, including for insulin. While diabetes also is a problem for white residents, it is especially systemic among Black people and the cost of drugs to combat it is a priority, Green said in an interview.

"I am a diabetic," he said. "My congressman voted against price controls on the cost of insulin."

Montgomery, which is split into two congressional districts, is a municipal version of the state when it comes to redistricting.

From customers at a well-known barbershop to shoppers at a convenience store, from groups sitting in empty lots and residents in some of the neighborhoods that are being shifted, the question of who represents them in Congress and who will be on the ballot in November brings a range of answers.

The 2nd Congressional District seat has been held by white Republicans for decades, except for two years when a conservative white Democrat got a bounce from turnout related to Democrat Barack Obama's presidential campaign in 2008.

Of dozens of people approached, the majority are aware there is an Alabama case going to the Supreme Court, but they don't know details of the racial gerrymandering behind the case. Some are unaware of who their congressional representative has been.

In Heritage Barber and Style Shop, a local Black barbershop that rides the line between the 2nd and 7th congressional districts and sits across from Alabama State, Stephen Myers, 77, talks about the state's maps and attempts to minimize Black voting strength.

"What's different?" he said.

In the decades he has lived in his home, Myers said he has never had the opportunity to cast a "mean-

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 21 of 69

ingful" vote for a Democrat. Keeping people motivated under those conditions is a challenge, he said.

The operator of a civil rights site tour, Myers said he passed along the significance of voting to his children and grandchildren, but motivating the current generation? "That's a good question," he said.

The frustration is shared by the Rev. Benjamin Jones, who heads the St. James Missionary Baptist Church, a congregation of about 300 tucked into the former farmlands of east Montgomery County.

He recalled the sacrifices of older generations during the civil rights movement. His father, for example, would attend protests and marches that sometimes ended with him going to jail, while his mother would stay home so she could bail him out.

"So it is frustrating to know that people went through those type things, but seemingly in 2022 there hasn't been that much progress in the voting arena in terms of being able to elect people," he said. "It's not about someone who shares your same skin tone, but someone who at least cares enough about your politics to be concerned about your issues."

The strategy to challenge a map with a safe majority-Black district comes with risks. As the case goes before the Supreme Court, which has a 6-3 conservative majority, advocates fear an adverse ruling could affect future redistricting cases.

Five conservative justices were in the majority in the February vote blocking the use of the map during this year's elections. A sixth, Chief Justice John Roberts, objected to the procedure his colleagues used to prevent the districts from being redrawn.

But Roberts has a long history of opposition to the Voting Rights Act and wrote the opinion in the 2013 Supreme Court decision that dismantled part of the law.

The February decision by the court is "a troubling sign of what may be to come," said Michael Li, senior counsel in the Democracy Center for the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University.

He said there is a real chance the Supreme Court could further gut the Voting Rights Act and "make it all but impossible to use."

"If the VRA doesn't apply in the Black Belt of Alabama, it is hard to see it applying in many places," Li said.

The effects of a decision in favor of Alabama could be widespread, potentially allowing states to dismantle or alter districts that have elected Black, Latino and other minority candidates.

Standing by King's former church in downtown Montgomery, one of the lawsuit's plaintiffs acknowledges the risk.

"I am nervous and I'm not afraid to say that," said 26-year-old Khadidah Stone. "I think the nervous part is looking at what happened in the summer with Roe v. Wade. When I'm looking at that, I look at what else is up to possibly being attacked."

Even if the plaintiffs prevail, the Alabama Legislature could redraw the lines in a way that actually could jeopardize the one majority Black, Democratic-leaning district. Lowering the percentage of Black voters in Sewell's district could take an overwhelmingly safe district to one that is less so.

Hank Sanders, a Democrat and former longtime state senator who helped draw the congressional map Alabama put in place 20 years ago, said there is a risk that "you could end up losing both."

But he said the risks have always been there in pursuing civil and voting rights. That is especially true in Alabama and more specifically Montgomery, where memorials to those advances coexist within sight of statues and memorials honoring the Confederacy.

"If we didn't take risks and we didn't take a chance, we'd still be in segregation now," he said.

Supreme Court welcomes the public again, and a new justice

By JESSICA GRESKO and MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court is beginning its new term, welcoming the public back to the courtroom and hearing arguments for the first time since issuing a landmark ruling stripping away women's constitutional protections for abortion.

Monday's session also is the first time new Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, the court's first Black female

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 22 of 69

justice, will participate in arguments. And the public is back for the first time since the court closed in March 2020 because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The court's overturning of the nearly 50-year-old Roe v. Wade abortion decision is still reverberating in legal fights over state abortion bans and other restrictions. But a new stack of high-profile cases awaits the justices. Several cases the court has agreed to hear involve race or elections or both, and the court has also agreed to hear a dispute that returns the issue of free speech and LGBTQ rights to the court.

Also hanging over the justices is some unfinished business from last term: the leak of a draft of the abortion decision seven weeks before it was formally announced. Chief Justice John Roberts ordered an investigation, but the court has yet to provide an update.

Jackson, for her part, has been waiting for months to fully begin her new role since being confirmed in April. She was sworn in when Justice Stephen Breyer retired in June, at the end of a term where the court dominated 6-3 by conservatives also expanded gun rights, reined in the government's ability to fight climate change and blocked a Biden administration effort to get workers at large companies vaccinated against COVID-19. Breyer, a liberal, was on the losing side of those cases, and Jackson is also expected to be in dissent in many of the court's most prominent cases.

Since she was sworn in, however, the court has largely been on a summer break. The justices met privately last week to consider a long list of appeals that piled up over the summer. On Friday, the justices took the bench for a brief ceremony in which Roberts wished Jackson a "long and happy career in our common calling," the traditional welcome for a new justice.

But Jackson also joins the court at a time of declining public support for the court. Polls following the court's abortion decision have shown a sharp drop in the court's approval rating and in people's confidence in the court as an institution. A poll over the summer found 43% of Americans saying they have hardly any confidence in the court, up from 27% earlier in the year.

On Monday, the court is considering an important water rights case that could limit federal regulation under the nation's main water pollution law, the Clean Water Act.

Other significant cases include a controversial Republican-led appeal that could dramatically change the way elections for Congress and the presidency are conducted by handing more power to state legislatures. There's also the case of a Colorado website designer who says her religious beliefs prevent her working with same-sex couples on their weddings. Next month, the justices will hear a challenge to the consideration of race in college admissions.

'We're with you,' Biden tells Puerto Rico ahead of visit

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE and DANICA COTO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden on Monday will survey damage from Hurricane Fiona in Puerto Rico, where tens of thousands of people are still without power two weeks after the storm hit.

The Category 1 hurricane knocked out electrical power to the U.S. territory of 3.2 million people, 44% of whom live below the poverty line.

Power has been restored to about 90% of the island's 1.47 million customers, but more than 137,000 others, mostly in the hardest hit areas of Puerto Rico's southern and western regions, continue to struggle in the dark. Another 66,000 customers are without water.

Biden has pledged that the U.S. government will not abandon Puerto Rico as it starts to rebuild again, five years after the more powerful Hurricane Maria devastated the island in 2017.

During his visit, Biden planned to announce the administration will provide \$60 million through last year's bipartisan infrastructure law to help Puerto Rico shore up levees, strengthen flood walls and create a new flood warning system so the island will be better prepared for future storms, the White House said.

"We see what you're going through, and we're with you," Biden told Puerto Ricans and Floridians in a message Sunday on his official Twitter account.

Florida is cleaning up after Hurricane Ian churned across that state last week, killing more than 60 people, decimating some coastal communities and flooding others. Biden plans to visit Florida on Wednesday to

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 23 of 69

survey damage.

The president, accompanied by first lady Jill Biden and Deanne Criswell, the Federal Emergency Management Agency administrator, was to touch down Monday in Ponce, Puerto Rico, a city on the southern coast. Most of the storm damage is in southern Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico Gov. Pedro Pierluisi said he would update Biden on recovery efforts.

"We will make sure to keep working together to ensure the continuity of a reconstruction already underway," the governor tweeted on Sunday.

Fiona caused catastrophic flooding, tore apart roads and bridges, and unleashed more than 100 landslides when it hit Puerto Rico on Sept. 18. At least two people died after being swept away by floods, and several others were killed in accidents related to the use of candles or generator during the island-wide power outage.

Government officials have estimated some \$3 billion in damages, but warn that costs could rise significantly as evaluations continue.

Some people in Puerto Rico wondered whether Biden's visit would change anything as they recalled how President Donald Trump visited after Hurricane Maria hit as a more powerful Category 4 storm in 2017, and tossed rolls of paper towels into a crowd in a display that riled many.

Manuel Veguilla, a 63-year-old retired mechanic who lives in a remote community in the hard-hit northern mountain town of Caguas, said he didn't expect his life to improve in the aftermath of Fiona, which cut off his neighborhood from any help for a week.

"They always offer the lollipop to the kids," he said, referring to Biden's visit. "But in the end, the outcome is always the same. The aid goes to those who have the most."

Criswell, who discussed the aftermath of Fiona and Ian on four Sunday TV news programs, echoed Biden's promise to Fiona's victims.

"We have not left Puerto Rico," she said on CBS' "Face the Nation."

Criswell said on ABC's "This Week" that FEMA personnel were sent to the island before the storm hit and that "they're going to stay with the people of Puerto Rico" through the recovery efforts.

Biden recently told Pierluisi that he authorized 100% federal funding for a month for debris removal, search and rescue efforts, power and water restoration, shelter and food.

The lack of electrical power on the island led to the temporary closure of businesses, including gas stations and grocery stores, as fuel supplies dwindled amid heavy generator use. As a result, many cheered the Biden administration's decision to temporarily waive a federal law so that a British Petroleum ship could deliver 300,000 barrels of diesel.

Many also have begun demanding that Puerto Rico be fully exempted from the law, known as the Jones Act, that requires that all goods transported to Puerto Rico be aboard a ship built in the U.S., owned and crewed by U.S. citizens and flying the U.S. flag. This drives up costs for an island that already imports 85% of its food.

Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., also said Puerto Ricans would not be forgotten.

Rubio said the island appeared to be "in better position to respond this time around" due to the prepositioning of personnel and supplies before the storm hit and because part of Puerto Rico's electrical grid had been rebuilt after Hurricane Maria.

"We will do everything we can, we always have, to support Puerto Rico now in the recovery after this, yet another devastating storm," Rubio said on CNN's "State of the Union."

Stadium tragedy exposes Indonesia's troubled soccer history

By JOHN DUERDEN Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Gaining the right to host next year's Under-20 World Cup was a major milestone in Indonesia's soccer development, raising hopes that a successful tournament would turn around long-standing problems that have blighted the sport in this country of 277 million people.

The death of at least 125 people at a league game between host Arema FC of East Java's Malang city

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 24 of 69

and Persebaya Surabaya on Saturday is a tragic reminder, however, that Indonesia is one of the most dangerous countries in which to attend a game.

"Do remember that the FIFA U-20 World Cup will be the worldwide spotlight since the event will be joined by 24 countries from five continents," Indonesia's President Joko Widodo said last month as he pushed for thorough preparations for the tournament.

Since Saturday, the domestic league has been suspended. Widodo has ordered the sports minister, the national police chief and the soccer federation to conduct a thorough investigation into the deadly stadium crush.

Indonesia was the first Asian team ever to play at a World Cup — participating in 1938 as Dutch East Indies — but despite an undoubted national passion for the sport, it has never returned to the global stage because of years of corruption, violence and mismanagement.

Data from Indonesia's soccer watchdog, Save Our Soccer, showed 78 people have died in game-related incidents over the past 28 years.

Those accused are often associated with supporter groups that attach themselves to clubs, with the biggest boasting hundreds of thousands of members.

Arema's intense rivalry with Surabaya meant that no visiting fans were allowed in the stadium on the weekend. Yet violence broke out when the home team lost 3-2 and some of the 42,000 Arema fans, known as "Aremania," threw bottles and other objects at players and soccer officials.

Restrictions on visiting fans also have failed in the past. In 2016, despite Persib Bandung supporters being banned from a game with bitter rival Persija Jakarta, they were blamed for the death of a Jakarta supporter.

A month earlier, a Persib fan had been beaten to death by Jakarta followers.

In 2018, local media reported a seventh death in six years related to Indonesia's biggest soccer rivalry.

Soccer fans have accused security officials of being heavy-handed in the past and on the weekend, with witnesses describing officers beating them with sticks and shields before shooting tear gas canisters directly into the crowds. In 2016, police were accused of killing 16-year-old supporter Muhammad Fahreza at a game between Persija and Persela Lamongan, resulting in mass demonstrations demanding an end to police brutality.

"The police who were in charge of security violated FIFA stadium safety and security regulations," soccer analyst Akmal Marhali told Indonesian media on Sunday, referring to the use of tear gas on Malang fans who entered the pitch after their team's defeat. That sparked a rush for exits in an overcrowded stadium.

"The Indonesia Football Association may have been negligent for not informing the police that security procedures at a football match are not the same as those at a demonstration."

FIFA, soccer's world governing body, advises against the use of tear gas at stadiums by on-field security or police who control and have responsibility for safety operations.

Indonesia's national soccer association, known locally as PSSI, has long struggled to manage the game domestically.

In 2007, Nurdin Halid was imprisoned on corruption charges but was able to continue as the organization's president until 2011. After Halid was banned from running for another term, a rival league, federation and national team emerged.

But chaotic administration continued until FIFA suspended Indonesia in 2015, a sanction that was lifted the following year.

In 2019, when FIFA awarded Indonesia hosting rights for the Under-20 World Cup, it was seen as a vote of confidence.

In June, a FIFA panel inspected the country's soccer facilities and planning for the May 20-June 11 tournament and proclaimed its satisfaction.

"We are very pleased to see the preparations in Indonesia," Roberto Grassi, Head of Youth Tournaments for FIFA said. "A lot of refurbishment work has been done already. We have had an encouraging visit and are confident of support from all stakeholders involved."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 25 of 69

Kanjuruhan Stadium, the site of the disaster on Saturday, is not among the six venues listed for the Under-20 World Cup, although nearby Surabaya Stadium is scheduled to host games.

FIFA has not yet commented on any potential impact on the Under-20 World Cup but the weekend tragedy is likely to damage Indonesia's bid to host the 2023 Asian Cup. It is vying with South Korea and Qatar to become host of the continental championship after China relinquished its staging rights in May.

Indonesia has already co-hosted the tournament, sharing the event in 2007 with Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam and hosting the final in Jakarta, where Iraq beat Saudi Arabia for the title.

That was the last time Indonesia staged a major international soccer tournament. The Asian Football Confederation is expected to announce its decision on the 2023 tournament on Oct. 17.

There is unlikely to be any soccer played before then as people in Indonesia, and football followers around the globe, come to terms with one of the deadliest disasters ever at a sporting event.

Families and friends of some of the people who died after the match wailed in grief as the bodies of the victims were returned home Monday. Seventeen children were among the dead.

What if Musk loses the Twitter case but defies the court?

By MATT O'BRIEN AP Technology Writer

Twitter wants a Delaware court to order Elon Musk to buy the social media service for \$44 billion, as he promised back in April. But what if a judge makes that ruling and Musk balks?

The Tesla billionaire's reputation for dismissing government pronouncements has some worried that he might flout an unfavorable ruling of the Delaware Court of Chancery, known for its handling of high-profile business disputes.

Musk hopes to win the case that's headed for an October trial. He's scheduled to be deposed by Twitter attorneys starting Thursday.

But the consequences of him losing badly — either by an order of "specific performance" that forces him to complete the deal, or by walking away from Twitter but still coughing up a billion dollars or more for breach of contract — has raised concerns about how the Delaware court would enforce its final ruling.

"The problem with specific performance, especially with Elon Musk, is that it's unclear whether the order of the court would be obeyed," retired Delaware Supreme Court Justice Carolyn Berger told CNBC in July. "And the courts in Delaware — courts all over — are very concerned about issuing a decision or issuing an order that then is ignored, flouted."

Berger, who was also a vice chancellor of the Chancery Court in the 1980s and 1990s, stood by those concerns in an interview with The Associated Press but said she doubted the Delaware institution would go so far as to make him complete the deal.

"The court can impose sanctions and the court can kind of coerce Musk into taking over the company," she said. "But why would the court do that when what really is at stake is money?"

Berger said she expects Twitter to prevail, but said a less tumultuous remedy for the company and its shareholders would make Musk pay monetary damages. "The court doesn't want to be in a position to step in and essentially run this company," she said.

Musk and his lawyers didn't respond to requests for comment.

Other legal observers say such defiance is almost impossible to imagine, even from a famously combative personality such as Musk. He acknowledged he might lose in August in explaining why he suddenly sold nearly \$7 billion worth of Tesla shares.

"I take him at his word," said Ann Lipton, an associate law professor at Tulane University. "He wants to win. Maybe he's got his own judgment as to what the odds are. But he's also being sort of practical about this. He's getting some cash ready so he doesn't have to dump his Tesla shares if it turns out he is ordered to buy the company."

A ruling of specific performance could force Musk to pay up his \$33.5 billion personal stake in the deal; the price increases to \$44 billion with promised financing from backers such as Morgan Stanley.

The Delaware court has powers to enforce its orders, and could appoint a receivership to seize some of

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 26 of 69

Musk's assets, namely Tesla stock, if he doesn't comply, according to Tom Lin, a law professor at Temple University.

The court has made such moves before, such as in 2013 when it held Chinese company ZTS Digital Networks in contempt and appointed a receiver with power to seize its assets. But after coercive sanctions didn't work, the receiver asked the court five years later to issue bench warrants calling for the arrest of two senior executives the next time they visited the U.S.

Speculation that Musk could be threatened with jail time for failing to comply with a ruling is unrealistic, said Berger. "At least, not for the Court of Chancery," said the former judge. "That's not the way the court operates."

But more important, Lin said Musk's legal advisers will strongly urge him to comply with the rulings of a court that routinely takes cases involving Tesla and other firms incorporated in the state of Delaware.

"If you are an executive at a major American corporation incorporated in Delaware, it's very hard for you to do business and defy the chancery court's orders," Lin said.

Concerns about Musk's compliance derive from his past behavior dealing with various arms of the government. In a long-running dispute with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, he was accused of defying a securities fraud settlement that required that his tweets be approved by a Tesla attorney before being published. He publicly feuded with California officials over whether Tesla's electric car factory should remain shut down during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

He's also taken a combative approach in Delaware Chancery Court, calling an opposing attorney a "bad human being" while defending Tesla's 2016 acquisition of SolarCity against a lawsuit that blamed Musk for a deal rife with conflicts of interest and broken promises. He and his lawyers have other Delaware cases still pending, including one involving his compensation package at Tesla.

"I think we've got a whole lot of players who, as loose a cannon as Elon Musk is, rely on the goodwill of the Delaware courts on an ongoing basis for their businesses," Lipton said.

Musk's argument for winning his latest Delaware case largely rests on his allegation that Twitter misrepresented how it measures the magnitude of "spam bot" accounts that are useless to advertisers. But most legal experts believe he faces an uphill battle in convincing Chancellor Kathaleen St. Jude McCormick, the court's head judge who is presiding over the case, that something changed since the April merger agreement that justifies terminating the deal.

The trial begins Oct. 17 and whichever side loses can appeal to the Delaware Supreme Court, which is expected to act swiftly. Musk and Twitter could also settle the case before, during or after the trial, lawyers said.

Delaware's courts are well-respected in the business world and any move to flout them would be "shocking and unexpected," said Paul Regan, associate professor of Widener University's Delaware Law School who has practiced in Delaware courts since the 1980s. "If there was some kind of crisis like that, I think the reputational harm would be all on Musk, not the court."

Brazil's Bolsonaro and the right outperform, defying polls

By DIANE JEANTET and CARLA BRIDI Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Jair Bolsonaro considerably outperformed expectations in Brazil's presidential election, proving that the far-right wave he rode to the presidency remains a force and providing the world with yet another example of polls missing the mark.

The most-trusted opinion polls had indicated leftist former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva was far out front, and potentially even clinching a first-round victory. One prominent pre-election poll gave da Silva a 14 percentage point lead. In the end, Bolsonaro surprised to the upside and came within just 5 points. He will face da Silva in a high-stakes Oct. 30 presidential runoff.

On Sunday, da Silva, known universally as Lula, obtained 48.4% of valid votes, which excludes blank and null ballots, while Bolsonaro got 43.2%, according to Brazil's electoral authority. The first round's nine other candidates received a fraction of the frontrunners' support.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 27 of 69

"This is a big defeat for the democratic center that saw its voters migrate to Bolsonaro in a polarized scenario," said Airlton Freres, director of Curitiba-based Instituto Opinião. "Lula starts ahead, but it won't be easy for him."

The vote was virtually free from the political violence that many had feared. Alexandre de Moraes, the Supreme Court justice who also leads the electoral authority, congratulated Brazil for the "safe, calm, harmonious and peaceful" election that demonstrated its democratic maturity.

Yet tensions remain high, as are the stakes. The election will determine whether the country returns a leftist to the helm of the world's fourth-largest democracy or keeps Bolsonaro in office for another term.

The past four years have been marked by his incendiary speech, testing of democratic institutions, widely criticized handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and the worst deforestation of the Amazon rainforest in 15 years. But he has built a devoted base by defending conservative values and presenting himself as protecting the nation from leftist policies that he says infringe on personal liberties and produce economic turmoil.

"I understand there is a desire from the population for change, but some changes can be for the worse," Bolsonaro told reporters after the results were released. Bolsonaro, who has repeatedly claimed without evidence that the nation's electronic voting machines are vulnerable to fraud, didn't challenge the result.

Da Silva is credited with building an extensive social welfare program during his 2003-2010 tenure that helped lift tens of millions into the middle class and saw exports surge amid the global commodities boom. He is also remembered for his political party's involvement in corruption scandals and his own convictions, which were later annulled by the Supreme Court that ruled the judge had been biased. That freed him from imprisonment and cleared the way for his presidential run.

Just ahead of the election, da Silva made a plea for support, saying a small number of votes could mean the difference between an outright victory and a runoff.

Bolsonaro outperformed in Brazil's southeast region, which includes highly populous Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais states, according to Rafael Cortez, who oversees political risk at consultancy Tendencias Consultoria.

"The polls didn't capture that growth," he said. "It leaves a bitter taste for the left, if we consider what the polls were showing."

Bolsonaro and allies have repeatedly cast doubt on the reliability of pollsters like Datafolha, and pointed instead to his street rallies with great turnouts. Supporters like retired engineer Ramon Almeida agreed.

"I don't believe these polls by the Datafolha group. I believe the 'Data-people' poll I see everywhere Bolsonaro goes," Almeida, 72, said Sunday after casting his vote at a school in Sao Paulo's upmarket Pinheiros neighborhood. "I think there's going to be a runoff in the end."

Analysts noted that also-rans did worse than anticipated, and their voters appeared to jump ship on the election's eve, decamping to Bolsonaro's side.

"What is most likely is people changed their preferences strategically before the vote, and that really favored Bolsonaro," said Nara Pavão, who teaches political science at the Federal University of Pernambuco. "People who were originally voting for Simone Tebet or Ciro Gomes (the third and fourth place finishers) decided at the last minute to vote for Bolsonaro."

The difference between Bolsonaro and da Silva in the first round amounted to 6.1 million votes. Tebet and Gomes together earned 8.5 million votes, and more than 30 million people abstained.

Speaking after the results, da Silva betrayed the fact he didn't even know for which date the runoff is scheduled. But he said he was excited for another few weeks of campaigning, and the opportunity to go face-to-face with Bolsonaro and "make comparisons between the Brazil he built with the Brazil we built during our administrations."

"During this whole campaign, we were ahead in the opinion polls of all the institutes, even those that didn't want us to win," da Silva said. "I always thought that we were going to win these elections. And I tell you that we are going to win this election. This, for us, is just an extension."

The right's positive night extended to races for governorships and congressional seats, especially candidates with Bolsonaro's blessing. His former infrastructure minister surprised by finishing first in the race

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 28 of 69

to govern Sao Paulo. The governor of Rio de Janeiro, an ally, vanquished his opponent to win reelection outright.

Sergio Moro, the former judge who temporarily jailed da Silva and was Bolsonaro former justice minister, defied polls to win a Senate seat.

Bolsonaro's Liberal Party will surpass da Silva's Workers' Party to become the biggest in the Senate. In the Lower House, Bolsonaro's Liberal Party and the coalition led by da Silva's Workers' Party will be the chamber's two largest forces.

Among its victors were Bolsonaro's former ministers of regional development and science and technology. In the Lower House, his former health minister, a general who oversaw the pandemic's troubled management, and his former environment minister, who resigned amid an investigation into whether he had aided the export of illegally cut timber in the Amazon, also secured seats.

"The far-right has shown great resilience in the presidential and in the state races," said Carlos Melo, a political science professor at Insper University in Sao Paulo.

Bolsonaro told reporters that his party's showing in Congress could bring fresh support ahead of the Oct. 30 vote, as other parties strike alliances in exchange for support in the runoff.

"Brazil is much more polarized than many people thought, and governing will be difficult for whomever wins," said Brian Winter, vice president for policy at the Americas Society/Council of the Americas. "I think the next few weeks will put heavy strain on Brazil's democracy as these two men fight it out. Expect an ugly race that will leave scars."

It's flu vaccine time and seniors need revved-up shots

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

Doctors have a message for vaccine-weary Americans: Don't skip your flu shot this fall -- and seniors, ask for a special extra-strength kind.

After flu hit historically low levels during the COVID-19 pandemic, it may be poised for a comeback. The main clue: A nasty flu season just ended in Australia.

While there's no way to predict if the U.S. will be as hard-hit, "last year we were going into flu season not knowing if flu was around or not. This year we know flu is back," said influenza specialist Richard Webby of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis.

Annual flu shots are recommended starting with 6-month-old babies. Flu is most dangerous for people 65 and older, young children, pregnant women and people with certain health problems including heart and lung diseases.

Here's what to know:

REVVED-UP SHOTS FOR SENIORS

As people get older, their immune system doesn't respond as strongly to standard flu vaccination. This year, people 65 or older are urged to get a special kind for extra protection.

There are three choices. Fluzone High-Dose and Flublok each contain higher doses of the main anti-flu ingredient. The other option is Fluad Adjuvanted, which has a regular dosage but contains a special ingredient that helps boost people's immune response.

Seniors can ask what kind their doctor carries. But most flu vaccinations are given in pharmacies and some drugstore websites, such as CVS, automatically direct people to locations offering senior doses if their birth date shows they qualify.

Webby advised making sure older relatives and friends know about the senior shots, in case they're not told when they seek vaccination.

"They should at least ask, 'Do you have the shots that are better for me?'" Webby said. "The bottom line is they do work better" for this age group.

If a location is out of senior-targeted doses, it's better to get a standard flu shot than to skip vaccination, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

All flu vaccines in the U.S. -- including types for people younger than 65 -- are "quadrivalent," meaning

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 29 of 69

they guard against four different flu strains. Younger people have choices, too, including shots for those with egg allergies and a nasal spray version called FluMist.

WHY FLU EXPERTS ARE ON ALERT

Australia just experienced its worst flu season in five years and what happens in Southern Hemisphere winters often foreshadows what Northern countries can expect, said Dr. Andrew Pekosz of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

And people have largely abandoned masking and distancing precautions that earlier in the pandemic also helped prevent the spread of other respiratory bugs like the flu.

"This poses a risk especially to young children who may not have had much if any previous exposure to influenza viruses prior to this season," Pekosz added.

"This year we will have a true influenza season like we saw before the pandemic," said Dr. Jason Newland, a pediatric infectious disease specialist at Washington University in St. Louis.

He said children's hospitals already are seeing an unusual early spike in other respiratory infections including RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus, and worries flu likewise will strike earlier than usual — like it did in Australia.

The CDC advises a flu vaccine by the end of October but says they can be given any time during flu season. It takes about two weeks for protection to set in.

The U.S. expects 173 million to 183 million doses this year. And yes, you can get a flu shot and an updated COVID-19 booster at the same time — one in each arm to lessen soreness.

FLU SHOTS OF THE FUTURE

The companies that make the two most widely used COVID-19 vaccines now are testing flu shots made with the same technology. One reason: When influenza mutates, the recipes of so-called mRNA vaccines could be updated more quickly than today's flu shots, most of which are made by growing influenza virus in chicken eggs.

Pfizer and its partner BioNTech are recruiting 25,000 healthy U.S. adults to receive either its experimental influenza shot or a regular kind, to see how effective the new approach proves this flu season.

Rival Moderna tested its version in about 6,000 people in Australia, Argentina and other countries during the Southern Hemisphere's flu season and is awaiting results.

Europe faces 'unprecedented risk' of gas shortage, IEA says

By DAVID McHUGH AP Business Writer

Europe faces "unprecedented risks" to its natural gas supplies this winter after Russia cut off most pipeline shipments and could wind up competing with Asia for already scarce and expensive liquid gas that comes by ship, the International Energy Agency said.

The Paris-based IEA said in its quarterly gas report released Monday that European Union countries would need to reduce use by 13% over the winter in case of a complete Russian cutoff amid the war in Ukraine. Much of that cutback would have to come from consumer behavior such as turning down thermostats by 1 degree and adjusting boiler temperatures as well as industrial and utility conservation, the group said.

The EU on Friday agreed to mandate a reduction in electricity consumption by at least 5% during peak price hours.

Just a trickle of Russian gas is still arriving in pipelines through Ukraine to Slovakia and across the Black Sea through Turkey to Bulgaria. Two other routes, under the Baltic Sea to Germany and through Belarus and Poland, have shut down.

Another hazard in the study was a late winter cold snap, which would be particularly challenging because underground gas reserves flow more slowly at the end of the season due to less gas and lower pressure in the storage caverns. The EU has already filled storage to 88%, ahead of its goal of 80% before winter. The IEA assumed 90% would be needed in its Russian cutoff scenario.

Businesses in Europe have already cut back natural gas use, sometimes simply by abandoning energy-intensive activity such as making steel and fertilizer, while smaller businesses like bakeries are feeling a

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 30 of 69

severe crimp in their costs.

High prices for gas, which is used for heating homes, generating electricity and a host of industrial processes are feeding through to record consumer inflation of 10% in the 19 EU member countries that use the euro and sapping so much consumer purchasing power that economists predict a recession at the end of this year and the beginning of next.

European governments and utilities have made up much of the Russian shortfall by purchasing expensive supplies of liquefied natural gas, or LNG, that comes by ship from countries such as the U.S. and Qatar and by obtaining increased pipeline supply from Norway and Azerbaijan.

The goal is to prevent storage levels from falling so far that governments must ration gas to businesses. Gas storage must remain above 33% for a secure winter, according to the IEA, while levels below that risk shortages if there's a late cold snap.

Lower levels also would make it harder for Europe to refill storage next summer, while higher reserves from conservation would help lower extremely high prices.

European leaders say the cutback in Russian gas is energy blackmail aimed at pressuring governments over their support for Ukraine and sanctions against Moscow.

Since Russia halted flows this month through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline running under the Baltic Sea to Germany, it and the parallel Nord Stream 2 — built but never operated after Germany refused to certify it — were damaged in underwater explosions that European governments say are sabotage.

Demand for liquefied gas has driven up prices and tightened supply to the extent that poorer countries in Asia cannot afford it. Bangladesh is experiencing widespread power blackouts, while Pakistan faces rolling blackouts and has introduced reduced working hours for shops and factories to save electricity.

"Interregional competition in LNG procurement may create further tension, as additional European needs would put more pressure on other buyers, especially in Asia, and conversely cold spells in Northeast Asia could limit Europe's access to LNG," the agency said.

The gas crisis in Europe has also deprived Asian countries of the limited number of floating regasification terminals, which were expected to play a major role in LNG imports in Southeast Asia. Europe has secured 12 of the vessels and plans another nine.

Mahomes throws for 3 TDs, Chiefs overwhelm Buccaneers 41-31

By FRED GOODALL AP Sports Writer

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Patrick Mahomes had all the answers for solving Tampa Bay's stingy defense, winning his latest matchup against Tom Brady in the stadium where the seven-time Super Bowl winner dealt him one of his most disappointing losses.

Mahomes threw for 249 yards and three touchdowns, including an electrifying jump pass to Clyde Edwards-Helaire, to lead the Chiefs to a 41-31 victory over the Buccaneers on Sunday night.

Playing at sold out Raymond James Stadium only four days after Hurricane Ian ravaged portions of Florida, Mahomes had TD throws of 16 yards to Travis Kelce, 1 yard to Edwards-Helaire and 10 yards to Jody Fortson while making NFL history by reaching 20,000 yards passing faster than anyone else.

Edwards-Helaire and tight end Noah Gray rushed for TDs for the Chiefs (3-1), who won the first meeting between Mahomes and Brady since Tampa Bay's 31-9 rout of Kansas City in the Super Bowl — also played at Raymond James Stadium — two seasons ago.

"When I came into the stadium I realized that I hadn't been here and the bad taste I had last time came into effect," Mahomes said. "But it's still not a playoff game. It's a regular-season game, which is important. That Super Bowl will always leave a bad taste for me."

The short pass to Edwards-Helaire was Mahomes at his improvisational best: He escaped two defenders, did a 360-degree spin move and flipped the ball over a crowd to the running back in the back of the end zone.

"I was able to use my speed, my little bit of speed, to get around the edge there. I was gonna run for it, but they kind of flew around me," Mahomes said. "I realized I wasn't going to make it and I saw Clyde,

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 31 of 69

so I kind of flicked it up to him.”

Brady noted it’s fun watching Mahomes, unless he’s on the opposing sideline.

“I love seeing Patrick play. ... Unfortunately we’re on the wrong end of it tonight,” said Brady, who’s 1-2 against the Chiefs quarterback since joining the Bucs in 2020 after two decades with the New England Patriots.

Brady completed 39 of 52 passes for 385 yards and three TDs without an interception for Tampa Bay (2-2). The Bucs, however, played from behind the whole night after rookie Rachaad White fumbled the opening kickoff and Mahomes threw his TD pass to Kelce two plays later.

The Chiefs also got into the end zone on three of their next four possessions, with Mahomes repeatedly shredding the Tampa Bay defense with pinpoint passes and Edwards-Helaire and Isiah Pacheco taking turns running the ball effectively.

“It’s a team sport. We didn’t play great on offense. We didn’t help (the defense) much, either,” Brady said.

“We didn’t do great in the first half. Too many missed opportunities on third downs, turnovers. We gotta play a lot better to be one of the good teams,” the seven-time Super Bowl winner added. “We haven’t played our best yet this year.”

Chiefs cornerback L’Jarius Sneed sacked Brady, forcing a fumble that Mahomes turned into Gray’s TD, with the tight end taking a direct snap from center on the 1-yard plunge that put Kansas City up 28-10.

Brady threw TD passes of 13 yards and 1 yard to Mike Evans, who returned from serving a one-game suspension for his role in a on-field brawl at New Orleans two weeks ago. He had eight receptions for 103 yards.

Evans’ second TD trimmed Kansas City’s lead to 28-17 at halftime. That was as close as the Bucs got until Leonard Fournette’s 5-yard TD reception cut Tampa Bay’s deficit to 41-31 with 3:30 remaining.

Brady wouldn’t get the ball back until less than a minute was left.

Kansas City finished with 417 yards of total offense, including a 189-3 edge on the ground, against a defense that had allowed a league-low 27 points through three games.

“Everything in this game fell on the defensive side of the ball,” Bucs coach Todd Bowles said. “You name it we did it. Missed tackles. Missed assignments. Bad calls.”

The Bucs sacked Mahomes three times and intercepted him once, but it was not the “coming out party” linebacker Shaquil Barrett thought his team could have against an offensive line the Chiefs have overhauled since struggling against Tampa Bay in the Super Bowl loss.

With Hurricane Ian approaching the Florida’s Gulf Coast, the Bucs evacuated for four days to the Miami area, where they practiced Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at the Dolphins’ training facility while the NFL made contingency plans to move the game to Minneapolis if it couldn’t be played in Tampa.

The Glazer family that owns the Bucs has announced it is donating \$1 million for hurricane relief. The NFL Foundation is matching that donation, and the Bucs on Sunday night began a “Florida Strong” campaign to raise funds, as well as honor emergency personnel and first responders.

Players and fans observed a “moment of support” prior the national anthem, and the Bucs also paid tribute to those affected by the hurricane in a video presentation displayed on giant scoreboard screens before the game.

INJURIES

Chiefs kicker Harrison Butker (ankle) was inactive for the third straight game. ... Bucs WRs Chris Godwin (hamstring) and Julio Jones (knee), as well as LT Donovan Smith (elbow), played for the first time since Tampa Bay’s season-opening victory at Dallas. ... Bucs CB Logan Ryan left with a foot injury in the first quarter. ... TE Cameron Brate (concussion) and CB Carlton Davis (stinger) left in the second half.

UP NEXT

Chiefs: Return home to face the Las Vegas Raiders on Monday, Oct. 10.

Buccaneers: Host the Atlanta Falcons next Sunday.

Russia smuggling Ukrainian grain to help pay for Putin’s war

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 32 of 69

By MICHAEL BIESECKER, SARAH EL DEEB and BEATRICE DUPUY Associated Press
BEIRUT (AP) — When the bulk cargo ship Laodicea docked in Lebanon last summer, Ukrainian diplomats said the vessel was carrying grain stolen by Russia and urged Lebanese officials to impound the ship.

Moscow called the allegation “false and baseless,” and Lebanon’s prosecutor general sided with the Kremlin and declared that the 10,000 tons of barley and wheat flour wasn’t stolen and allowed the ship to unload.

But an investigation by The Associated Press and the PBS series “Frontline” has found the Laodicea, owned by Syria, is part of a sophisticated Russian-run smuggling operation that has used falsified manifests and seaborne subterfuge to steal Ukrainian grain worth at least \$530 million — cash that has helped feed President Vladimir Putin’s war machine.

AP used satellite imagery and marine radio transponder data to track three dozen ships making more than 50 voyages carrying grain from Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine to ports in Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and other countries. Reporters reviewed shipping manifests, searched social media posts, and interviewed farmers, shippers and corporate officials to uncover the details of the massive smuggling operation.

— This story is part of an AP/FRONTLINE investigation that includes the War Crimes Watch Ukraine interactive experience and an upcoming documentary, “Putin’s Attack on Ukraine: Documenting War Crimes,” which premieres 10/9c Oct. 25 on PBS.

— The ongoing theft, which legal experts say is a potential war crime, is being carried out by wealthy businessmen and state-owned companies in Russia and Syria, some of them already facing financial sanctions from the United States and European Union.

Meanwhile, the Russian military has attacked farms, grain silos and shipping facilities still under Ukrainian control with artillery and air strikes, destroying food, driving up prices and reducing the flow of grain from a country long known as the breadbasket of Europe.

The Russians “have an absolute obligation to ensure that civilians are cared for and to not deprive them their ability of a livelihood and an ability to feed themselves,” said David Crane, a veteran prosecutor who has been involved in numerous international war crime investigations. “It’s just pure pillaging and looting, and that is also an actionable offense under international military law.”

The grain and flour carried by the 138-meter-long (453 feet) Laodicea likely started its journey in the southern Ukrainian city of Melitopol, which Russia seized in the early days of the war.

Video posted to social media on July 9 shows a train pulling up to the Melitopol Elevator, a massive grain storage facility, with green hopper cars marked with the name of the Russian company Agro-Fregat LLC in big yellow letters, along with a logo in the shape of a spike of wheat.

Russian occupation official Andrey Siguta held a news conference at the depot the following week where he said the grain would “provide food security” for Russia-controlled regions in Ukraine, and that his administration would “evaluate the harvest and determine how much will be for sale.”

As he spoke, a masked soldier armed with an assault rifle stood guard as trucks unloaded wheat at the facility to be milled. Workers loaded flour into large white bags like those delivered by the Laodicea to Lebanon three weeks later.

Siguta, along with four other top Russian occupation officials, was sanctioned by the U.S. government on Sept. 15 for overseeing the theft and export of Ukrainian grain.

Putin signed treaties Friday to annex four occupied regions of Ukraine into the Russian Federation, in defiance of international law. The United States and European Union immediately rejected “the illegal annexation.”

Melitopol Mayor Ivan Fedorov told AP the occupiers are moving vast quantities of grain from the region by train and truck to ports in Russia and Crimea, a strategic Ukrainian peninsula that Russia has occupied since 2014. Despite Russian claims to have annexed Crimea, the United Nations ruled that land grab was also illegal.

Videos posted on social media in recent months show a steady stream of grain transport trucks moving south through occupied areas of Ukraine with the letter “Z” painted on their sides, a wartime symbol for

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 33 of 69

Russia and its military forces. Agro-Fregat train cars have been recorded rolling through the Crimean port town of Feodosia, where satellite imagery shows trucks and trains lined up as grain was being loaded onto ships.

The Kremlin has denied stealing any grain, but Russia's state-run news agency Tass reported on June 16 that Ukrainian grain was being trucked to Crimea, resulting in long lines at border checkpoints. Tass later reported that grain from Melitopol had arrived in Crimea and that additional shipments were expected, bound for customers in the Middle East and Africa.

A July 11 satellite image shows the Laodicea tied up at a pier in Feodosia. The ship's radio transponder was turned off and its cargo holds were open, being filled with a white substance from waiting trucks. Two weeks later, when it arrived at the Lebanese port city Tripoli, it claimed to be carrying grain from a small Russian port on the other side of the Black Sea.

A copy of the ship's manifests obtained by AP claimed its port of origin was Kavkaz, Russia. Its cargo was listed as nearly 10,000 metric tons of "Russian Barley and Russian Flour in Bags." The shipper was listed as Agro-Fregat and the buyer was Loyal Agro Co Ltd., a wholesale grocer headquartered in Turkey.

Agro-Fregat didn't respond to emailed questions and soon after AP's inquiry, the company's website appears to have been taken down. A phone number that had been listed on the website was out of service last week.

A spokesman for Loyal Agro said the company took delivery of 5,000 tons of flour and the rest of the ship's cargo went to Tartus, Syria.

"We reached an agreement with Russia, the flour came from Russia," said Muhammed Cuma, a spokesman for the company. "If the flour was stolen, then the Lebanese authorities would not have allowed it (to be imported)."

But the Laodicea couldn't have picked up its cargo in Kavkaz, the Russian port listed on the manifest. The ship's hull, which reaches 8 meters (26 feet) below the surface, would run aground in the relatively shallow port, which according to Russia's transport regulator can only accommodate ships with a maximum depth of 5.3 meters (17.5 feet).

The port in Feodosia is more than twice as deep — easily able to accommodate the big ship.

The Laodicea is one of three bulk cargo vessels operated by Syriamar Shipping Ltd., a Syrian government-run company under U.S. sanctions since 2015 for its ties to the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

AP tracked 10 voyages made by the Laodicea and her sister ships — Souria and Finikia — from the Ukrainian coast to ports in Turkey, Syria and Lebanon.

Syriamar didn't respond to emails to its headquarters in Latakia, Syria. A call to the phone number on the company's website went unanswered.

Another company involved in smuggling grain is United Shipbuilding Corp., a Russian state-owned defense contractor that builds warships and submarines for Russia's navy. In April, the company and its senior executives were sanctioned by the United States for providing weapons to the Russian war effort.

The company, through its subsidiary Crane Marine Contractor, bought three cargo ships just weeks before Putin invaded Ukraine, in a departure from its core business providing heavy lift platforms to the oil and gas industry.

The three ships have made at least 17 trips between Crimea and ports in Turkey and Syria.

A spokeswoman for United Shipbuilding Corp. in Moscow didn't respond to questions sent via email. When AP called Crane Marine Contractor a receptionist answered by saying the company's name. A man she transferred the call to, however, insisted AP had the wrong number.

"You have reached the wrong place, we do not have such information," said the man, who refused to give his name. "I have no clue what you are talking about and no clue who I can connect you with, do you understand?"

During a typical voyage in mid-June, a 170-meter-long ship (560 feet) called the Mikhail Nenashev was captured on satellite being loaded at the Russian-controlled Avlita Grain Terminal in Sevastopol, Crimea, while its radio transponder was turned off. The ship's crew turned the signal back on two days later while

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 34 of 69

underway in the Black Sea.

It turned south toward the Mediterranean and arrived on June 25 in Dörtüyol, Turkey where exclusive video obtained by AP shows it two days later at a pier owned by MMK Metalurji, a steel producer. Cranes at the dock can be seen scooping up large bucket loads of grain and dropping it into waiting trucks that drive away.

MMK Metalurji is the Turkish subsidiary of Magnitogorsk Iron & Steel Works, a major Russian steel conglomerate controlled by Viktor Rashnikov, a Russian billionaire who is close to Putin. Rashnikov and his company have been sanctioned by the United States, European Union and United Kingdom for providing revenue and equipment in support of Russia's war effort.

In an email to AP, the company said the grain came from Russia: "The place where the said cargo is loaded is PORT KAVKAZ ... according to the customs declaration and the written declaration made by the shipping agency to us."

As with Laodicea, Nenashev's draught is too deep to dock at the Kavkaz port.

Ami Daniel, CEO of the marine data analytics company Winward, said ships running dark is a red flag that illegal activity is occurring. He said it is also common for smugglers to falsify shipping manifests and customs declarations to hide the true origin of their cargo.

"Illegally falsifying documentation is a tactic used by bad actors to disguise the origin of the goods they are transporting, be it for the purpose of evading sanctions, trafficking illicit goods, or other crimes," said Daniel, a former Israeli naval officer.

Rashnikov, who has a personal fortune estimated at more than \$10 billion, appears to have anticipated the sanctions.

Days before Russia launched its February invasion, his 140-meter-long superyacht (460 feet), the Ocean Victory, cruised from Dubai to the Maldives, a remote archipelago in the Indian Ocean where the government hasn't enforced Western sanctions. Ocean Victory's crew turned off its radio transponder on March 1, and the \$300 million party barge has been running dark ever since.

Since the invasion, global grain prices have skyrocketed, boosting profits for Russian smugglers, while triggering what U.N. World Food Program director David Beasley on Sept. 15 called a "tsunami of hunger" affecting at least 345 million people.

While there is little evidence Ukrainians themselves are under threat of famine, Russia's war of aggression has starved its economy of export revenue. In 2021, before Russia's most recent invasion, Ukraine exported \$5 billion worth of wheat, corn and vegetable oils — primarily in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

The high prices haven't helped Ukrainian farmers in the occupied regions, who have been forced to sell their harvests to Russian-controlled companies for half of what they would have been paid before the war, according to Fedorov, the Melitopol mayor. If a farmer refuses, he said, the Russians just take the grain anyway, paying nothing.

"It is a very low price, and our farmers don't understand what they can do," said Fedorov, who evacuated to Ukrainian-controlled territory after the invasion but keeps in touch with people back home.

Ukrainian agricultural holding company HarvEast reported that Russians had taken about 200,000 metric tons of grain, which CEO Dmitry Skornyakov said cost his company about \$50 million. He said his employees in the occupied Ukrainian city of Mariupol reported the grain was trucked across the border into Russia.

"To steal it, they just drive to Rostov and Taganrog, small Russian ports, then mix it with the Russian grain and say that that is Russian grain," Skornyakov said.

The same appears to be happening at sea.

Satellite imagery and transponder data shows large cargo ships anchored off the Russian coast rendezvousing with smaller ships shuttling grain from both Crimean and Russian ports, obscuring the true origin of the cargo. Those larger ships then carried the blended grain to Egypt, Libya, Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

Daniel, the former naval officer whose company tracks ships globally, said ship-to-ship transfers of cargo at sea are rare, and are usually tied to smuggling. "When you're a sanctioned country, you have a much more limited market," he said. "So if you don't blend your cargoes or if you don't hide your origin, you

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 35 of 69

probably have a much smaller market and therefore much lower price.”

High demand for grain makes it easy for Russians to find buyers, said Oleg Nivievskyi, assistant professor and vice president for economics education at the Kyiv School of Economics.

“There will be no problem to sell the stolen grain from Ukraine whatsoever,” he said.

Yayla Agro, which makes packaged dried goods and ready-to-eat meals regularly stocked on the shelves of Turkish supermarkets, said it bought 8,800 metric tons of corn delivered by the Russian ship Fedor to the Turkish port of Bandirma on June 17. The cargo would be worth about \$2.7 million.

In a statement to AP, Yayla Agro denied it had ever purchased grain from the Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine, and said the bill of lading, certificate of origin and other official documents show the ship had been loaded in the port of Kavkaz.

“We would like to stress that our company is involved in international trade, abides by ethical rules and considers abiding by international law as an absolute priority,” the company said. “In the same vein, (Yayla Agro) meticulously examines whether its commercial partners are the subject of any international sanction.”

Satellite imagery from June 12 shows the Fedor was actually loaded in Sevastopol, Crimea.

AnRussTrans, the Russian company that owns the ship through a subsidiary, didn’t respond to emailed questions. Sergey Dubrov, who answered the phone at the company’s headquarters in Moscow, denied receiving AP’s email and said he would only respond to written questions.

“I can say one thing,” he added. “The ships exclusively work on legal transportation and do not violate international law.”

Yayla also confirmed purchasing 7,000 metric tons of corn from another Russian ship, SV. Nikolay, on June 24. Satellite imagery shows the ship had docked at the grain terminal in Sevastopol six days earlier, but the company said its documentation showing the grain had come from Kavkaz.

As with the other smuggling ships, both the Fedor and SV. Nikolay are too big to dock at Kavkaz.

Turkey’s role in the theft of Ukrainian grain is particularly sensitive because the NATO country has tried to play the role of mediator between the two warring countries.

Turkey helped broker an agreement between Russia and Ukraine in July to allow both countries to export grain and fertilizer through safe corridors in the Black Sea. The deal did not address the grain Russia has taken from occupied areas. In the last two months Ukrainian officials said more than 150 ships carrying grain have departed from ports they still control, including shipments to Somalia and Yemen, war-torn nations currently facing famine.

Yet there are also indications the Turkish government itself may be a recipient of disputed grain from Ukraine. AP and “Frontline” tracked trips from Crimea to Turkey by the smuggling ships Mikhail Nenashev, Laodicea and Souria to docks with seaside silos operated by the Turkish Grain Board, a government-run entity that imports and exports grain and other agricultural products.

The board’s press office and executives did not respond to emails with detailed questions about the suspect shipments.

Though Turkish authorities have pledged to stop illegal smuggling, Turkey’s foreign minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said in a June news conference his country had not found any evidence of theft.

“We’ve received such claims,” he said. “And such information is coming from the Ukrainian side from time to time. We take every claim seriously and investigate it seriously. ... In our investigation on ships’ ports and goods’ origins, following claims about Turkey, we saw the origin records to be Russia.”

Whatever the records say, the smuggling operation continues.

Crane Marine Contractor’s ship Matros Koshka — named for a Russian sailor lauded as a national hero for his bravery during the Crimean War of 1854 — cruised north last week into the Black Sea with a listed destination of Kavkaz before turning off its transponder and running dark.

Satellite imagery taken Thursday showed the 161-meter-long ship (528 feet) had docked once again at the grain terminal in the occupied Ukrainian port of Sevastopol, little more than a mile from a Soviet-era statue honoring its namesake.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 36 of 69

By boat and jet ski, volunteers assist in Ian rescue efforts

By ROBERT BUMSTED and BOBBY CAINA CALVAN Associated Press

SANIBEL ISLAND, Fla. (AP) — There was no time to waste. As Hurricane Ian lashed southwest Florida, Bryan Stern, a veteran of the U.S. military, and others began gathering crews, boats and even crowbars for the urgent task that would soon be at hand: rescuing hundreds of people who might get trapped by floodwaters.

"As soon as the sun came up, we started rolling," said Stern, who last year put together a search-and-rescue team called Project Dynamo, which has undertaken operations in Afghanistan, Ukraine and, now, Florida.

Project Dynamo has rescued more than 20 people, many of them elderly residents who became cut off when the Category 4 storm washed away a bridge connecting the Florida mainland with Sanibel Island, a crescent-shaped sliver of shell-strewn sand popular with tourists that is home to about 7,000 residents.

On a stretch of beach, etched into the sand, there were calls for immediate assistance: "Help," "SOS."

As local authorities continue reaching people isolated on barrier islands or trapped by floodwaters, others unwilling to be bystanders have sprung into action, sometimes risking their own safety or setting aside their own losses and travails to aid official rescue operations. It isn't a new phenomenon: Grassroots rescue groups have responded to past disasters, including after Hurricane Ida pounded Louisiana last year.

Although some officials frown on people running their own rescue operations — especially in the early going if it's not safe enough yet or if the rescuers lack training — others welcome every bit of help.

"It sort of restores your view of humanity. You see people chipping in and they aren't getting paid for it," said Tim Barrett, the training division chief for the Sanibel Fire Department. "There's even people whose homes are destroyed, but they're helping them. They're still helping other people."

It can be dangerous work. Hundreds of buildings were destroyed by the ferocious storm, which lashed some areas with winds of 155 mph (249 kph) or more and pummeled the coast with ocean surge.

"We're still working on rescuing people. I mean, this is just horrible that people have lost their lives. It's horrible that people are still possibly stuck in rubble," Republican Sen. Rick Scott of Florida said Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press."

"But I've been talking to the sheriffs and first responders and they're trying to get to these people as quickly as they can," he said. "They've been working to evacuate people that stayed on, places like Sanibel and Pine Island and Fort Myers Beach."

The storm has killed dozens of people in Florida and more bodies might still be recovered.

Matt Mengel and his friends said they had made seven rescues so far, most of them elderly residents of Sanibel Island whom they reached on jet skis.

"We had gasoline. We had jet skis. We had water. We had food and snacks. And our mission was just to go find them, dead or alive," he said.

He called the destruction of the area, where he has lived for seven years, heartbreaking. "It was sad to see our home get destroyed and our favorite spots get destroyed."

The group's rescue missions began Friday when they hadn't heard from a friend who lives and works on Sanibel Island. That friend was found safe and sound, but they quickly found others who needed help.

Just as they were leaving, Mengel's girlfriend heard a woman calling out for help. They responded and found a couple who desperately wanted to leave the island.

A Coast Guard helicopter was patrolling nearby, and Mengel — with the help of the Project Dynamo crew — began frantically waving for attention. The helicopter spotted him and touched down on the beach to whisk the couple away.

"All I wanted to do was help," Mengel said.

A local television station recounted how three siblings — Leah, Evan and Jayden Wickert — helped save about 30 people from rising floodwaters in a Naples neighborhood.

Water had deepened to about 6 feet (nearly 2 meters) in their neighborhood, and folks were standing on whatever they could to keep their necks above water. The siblings used kayaks and boats to save people.

"There were a lot of people standing on their couches getting out of the water," Leah Wickert told

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 37 of 69

WBBH-TV.

Betty Reynolds, 73, expressed appreciation for the men who came to her rescue after she spent days in her damaged Sanibel Island home.

"You hate to leave a home you've lived in for 47 years," she said, but said it filled with "lots and lots of mud."

She said she didn't evacuate before the storm because she and her home survived previous storms unscathed. But she said this one took her by surprise: "I just didn't believe there was going to be so much storm surge."

Reynolds was taken off the island Saturday while Stern and his Project Dynamo team were on another mission, having received a text from a man who was concerned about his mother.

Stern, whose cohorts are also military veterans, speaks quickly and is full of bravado. On a recent trip to Sanibel Island, he landed a boat directly on the beach, jumped into the water as it hit the sand and ran ashore.

"It's like D-Day," he said afterward.

When there was no answer at the home of the woman whose son had texted, his team used a crowbar to enter, with the son's permission.

Stern said he couldn't stand by. His rescue project was borne out of his frustrations watching Americans and their allies struggle last year to get out of Afghanistan.

He has since turned his attention to helping people flee the war in Ukraine, where Stern and his team plan to return soon after what he called a brief "vacation" in Florida.

Jurors to begin hearing Jan. 6 Oath Keepers sedition case

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER, MICHAEL KUNZELMAN and LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal prosecutors will lay out their case against the founder of the Oath Keepers extremist group and four associates charged in the most serious case to reach trial yet in the Jan. 6, 2021, U.S. Capitol attack.

Opening statements are expected Monday in Washington's federal court in the trial of Stewart Rhodes and others charged with seditious conspiracy for what prosecutors say was a weeklong plot to stop the transfer of power from Republican Donald Trump to Democrat Joe Biden.

Defense attorneys will also get their first chance to address jurors, who were chosen last week after days of questioning over their feelings about the insurrection, Trump supporters and other matters.

The stakes are high for the Justice Department, which last secured a seditious conspiracy conviction at trial nearly 30 years ago.

About 900 people have been charged and hundreds convicted in the Capitol attack. Rioters stormed past police barriers, engaged in hand-to-hand combat with officers, smashed windows and halted the certification of Biden's electoral victory.

But the Oath Keepers are the first to stand trial on seditious conspiracy, a rare Civil War-era charge that carries up to 20 years behind bars. The trial is expected to last several weeks.

Prosecutors will tell jurors that the insurrection for the antigovernment group was not a spontaneous outpouring of election-fueled rage but part of a drawn-out plot to stop Biden from entering the White House.

On trial with Rhodes, of Granbury, Texas, are Kelly Meggs, leader of the Florida chapter of the Oath Keepers; Kenneth Harrelson, another Florida Oath Keeper; Thomas Caldwell, a retired U.S. Navy intelligence officer from Virginia; and Jessica Watkins, who led an Ohio militia group. They face several other charges as well.

Authorities say Rhodes began plotting to overturn Biden's victory just days after the election. Court records show the Oath Keepers repeatedly warning of the prospect of violence — or "a bloody, bloody civil war," as Rhodes said in one call — if Biden were to become president.

By December, authorities say, Rhodes and the Oath Keepers had set their sights on Congress' certification of the Electoral College vote on Jan. 6.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 38 of 69

The Oath Keepers organized trainings — including one in “unconventional warfare” — and stashed weapons at a Virginia hotel so they could get them into the capital quickly if necessary, prosecutors say. Over several days in early January, Rhodes spent an \$15,500 on guns, including an AR-platform rifle, magazines, mounts, sights and other equipment, according to court documents.

On Jan. 6, Oath Keepers equipped with communication devices, helmets, vests and other battle gear were seen on camera storming the Capitol. Rhodes is not accused of going inside, but telephone records show he was communicating with Oath Keepers who did enter around the time of the riot and he was seen with members outside afterward.

And prosecutors say the plot didn't end on Jan. 6. In the days between the riot and Biden's inauguration, Rhodes spent more than \$17,000 on firearm parts, magazines, ammunition and other items, prosecutors say. Around the time of the inauguration, Rhodes told others to organize local militias to oppose the Democratic administration, authorities say.

“Patriots entering their own Capitol to send a message to the traitors is NOTHING compared to what's coming,” Rhodes wrote in a message the evening of Jan. 6.

Defense attorneys have said the Oath Keepers came to Washington only to provide security at events for figures such as Trump ally Roger Stone before the president's big outdoor rally behind the White House. Rhodes has said there was no plan to attack the Capitol and that the members who did acted on their own.

Rhodes' lawyers are poised to argue that jurors cannot find him guilty of seditious conspiracy because all the actions he took before Jan. 6 were in preparation for orders he anticipated from Trump — orders that never came.

Rhodes' attorney has said that his client will eventually take the stand to argue that he believed Trump was going to invoke the Insurrection Act and call up a militia, which Rhodes had been calling on him to do to stop Biden from becoming president. Rhodes' attorneys will argue that what prosecutors have alleged was an illegal conspiracy was merely lobbying the president to use a U.S. law.

Prosecutors say Rhodes' own words show he was going to act regardless of what Trump did. In one message from December 2020, Rhodes wrote that Trump “needs to know that if he fails to act, then we will.”

The last successful seditious conspiracy case was against an Egyptian cleric, Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman, and nine followers convicted in a plot to blow up the United Nations, the FBI's building, and two tunnels and a bridge linking New York and New Jersey.

Bolsonaro, Lula headed to runoff after tight Brazil election

By DIANE JEANTET and MAURICIO SAVARESE Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazil's top two presidential candidates will face each other in a runoff vote after neither got enough support to win outright Sunday in an election to decide if the country returns a leftist to the helm of the world's fourth-largest democracy or keeps the far-right incumbent in office.

With 99.9% of the votes tallied, former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva had 48.4% support and President Jair Bolsonaro had 43.2%. Nine other candidates were also competing, but their support pales to that for Bolsonaro and da Silva, who is commonly known as Lula.

The tightness of the result came as a surprise, since pre-election polls had given da Silva a commanding lead. The last Datafolha survey published Saturday had found a 50% to 36% advantage for da Silva. It interviewed 12,800 people, with a margin of error of 2 percentage points.

“This tight difference between Lula and Bolsonaro wasn't predicted,” said Nara Pavão, who teaches political science at the Federal University of Pernambuco.

Speaking at a post-vote press conference, da Silva referred to the scheduled Oct. 30 runoff vote against Bolsonaro as “extra time” in a soccer game.

“I want to win every election in the first round. But it isn't always possible,” he said.

Bolsonaro told reporters in capital city Brasilia that he understood there was “a desire for change” among the population, hard hit by the economic crisis and high inflation. “But certain changes can be for the worse.”

The president, who has repeatedly questioned the reliability of the country's electronic machines, did not

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 39 of 69

challenge Sunday night's results, although he said he was waiting for more information from the Defense Ministry.

He added that his party's good results in Congress – it won the most seats – could bring fresh support ahead of the Oct. 30 vote.

Bolsonaro outperformed expectations in Brazil's southeast region, which includes populous Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais states, according to Rafael Cortez, who oversees political risk at consultancy Tendencias Consultoria.

"The polls didn't capture that growth," Cortez said.

Carlos Melo, a political science professor at Insper University in Sao Paulo, said: "It is too soon to go too deep, but this election shows Bolsonaro's victory in 2018 was not a hiccup."

Bolsonaro's administration has been marked by incendiary speech, his testing of democratic institutions, his widely criticized handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and the worst deforestation in the Amazon rainforest in 15 years.

But he has built a devoted base by defending conservative values, rebuffing political correctness and presenting himself as protecting the nation from leftist policies that he says infringe on personal liberties and produce economic turmoil.

While voting earlier Sunday, Marley Melo, a 53-year-old trader in Brasilia, sported the yellow of the Brazilian flag, which Bolsonaro and his supporters have coopted for demonstrations. Melo said he is once again voting for Bolsonaro, who met his expectations, and he doesn't believe the surveys that show him trailing.

"Polls can be manipulated. They all belong to companies with interests," he said.

A slow economic recovery has yet to reach the poor, with 33 million Brazilians going hungry despite higher welfare payments. Like several of its Latin American neighbors coping with high inflation and a vast number of people excluded from formal employment, Brazil is considering a shift to the political left.

Bolsonaro has claimed to possess evidence of electoral fraud, but never presented any, even after the electoral authority set a deadline to do so. He said as recently as Sept. 18 that if he doesn't win in the first round, something must be "abnormal."

Analysts fear he has laid the groundwork to reject results.

Da Silva, 76, was once a metalworker who rose from poverty to the presidency and is credited with building an extensive social welfare program during his 2003-2010 tenure that helped lift tens of millions into the middle class.

But he is also remembered for his administration's involvement in vast corruption scandals that entangled politicians and business executives.

Da Silva's own convictions for corruption and money laundering led to 19 months imprisonment, sidelining him from the 2018 presidential race that polls indicated he had been leading against Bolsonaro. The Supreme Court later annulled da Silva's convictions on grounds that the judge was biased and colluded with prosecutors.

Social worker Nadja Oliveira, 59, said she voted for da Silva and even attended his rallies, but since 2018 votes for Bolsonaro.

"Unfortunately the Workers' Party disappointed us. It promised to be different," she said in Brasilia.

Others, like Marialva Pereira, are more forgiving. She said she would vote for the former president for the first time since 2002.

"I didn't like the scandals in his first administration, never voted for the Workers' Party again. Now I will, because I think he was unjustly jailed and because Bolsonaro is such a bad president that it makes everyone else look better," said Pereira, 47.

Bolsonaro grew up in a lower-middle-class family before joining the army. He turned to politics after being forced out of the military for openly pushing to raise servicemen's pay. During his seven terms as a fringe lawmaker in Congress' lower house, he regularly expressed nostalgia for the country's two-decade military dictatorship.

His overtures to the armed forces have raised concern that his possible rejection of election results

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 40 of 69

could be backed by top brass.

On Saturday, Bolsonaro shared social media posts by right-leaning foreign politicians, including former U.S. President Donald Trump, who called on Brazilians to vote for him. Israel's former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expressed gratitude for stronger bilateral relations and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán also praised him.

Leda Wasem, 68, had no doubt Bolsonaro will not just be reelected. Wearing a jersey of the national soccer squad at a polling place in downtown Curitiba, the real estate agent said an eventual da Silva victory could have only one explanation: fraud.

"I wouldn't believe it. Where I work, where I go every day, I don't see a single person who supports Lula," she said.

Feds vow major aid for Hurricane Ian victims amid rescues

By BOBBY CAINA CALVAN and MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP) — With the death toll from Hurricane Ian rising and hundreds of thousands of people without power in Florida and the Carolinas, U.S. officials vowed Sunday to unleash a massive amount of federal disaster aid as crews scrambled to rescue people stranded by the storm.

Days after Ian tore through central Florida, carving a deadly path of destruction into the Carolinas, water levels continued rising in some flooded areas, inundating homes and streets that were passable just a day or two earlier.

With branches strewn across the grounds of St. Hillary's Episcopal Church in Ft. Myers, the Rev. Charles Cannon recognized the immense loss during his Sunday sermon but also gave thanks for what remained. That included the church's stained-glass windows and steeple.

"People think they have lost everything, but you haven't lost everything if you haven't lost yourself," he said.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis was in Arcadia on Sunday afternoon, about 30 miles inland from where Ian made landfall. The rural area didn't get the storm surge experienced by coastal communities, but standing water from floods remained four days after the storm.

"This is such a big storm, brought so much water, that you're having basically what's been a 500-year flood event," DeSantis said.

At least 68 people have been confirmed dead: 61 in Florida, four in North Carolina and three in Cuba.

Fewer than 700,000 homes and businesses in Florida were still without electricity Sunday, down from a peak of 2.6 million.

The weakened storm wreaked havoc as it drifted north, with the remnants forming a nor'easter that is expected to dump rain on parts of Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland and southern Pennsylvania, weather officials said.

In Virginia, rainfall on the already inundated Chesapeake Bay could lead to the most significant tidal flooding event in the Hampton Roads region in the last 10 to 15 years, said Cody Poche, a National Weather Service meteorologist. A handful of coastal Virginia school districts canceled classes Monday, and local officials urged residents to prepare.

Deanne Criswell, administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, said the federal government is focusing first on victims in Florida, which took the brunt of one of the strongest storms to make landfall in the United States. President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden plan to visit Florida on Wednesday.

Flooded roadways and washed-out bridges to barrier islands left many people isolated amid limited cell-phone service and a lack of basic amenities such as water, electricity and the internet. Officials warned that the situation in many areas isn't expected to improve for several days because the rain that fell has nowhere to go.

Criswell told "Fox News Sunday" that the federal government, including the Coast Guard and Department of Defense, had moved into position "the largest amount of search and rescue assets that I think we've ever put in place before."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 41 of 69

Still, she cautioned that dangers remain.

"We see so many more injuries and sometimes more fatalities after the storm," Criswell said. "Standing water brings with it all kinds of hazards — it has debris, it could have power lines."

More than 1,600 people have been rescued statewide, according to Florida's emergency management agency.

In rural Seminole County, north of Orlando, residents donned waders, boots and bug spray to paddle to their flooded homes Sunday.

Ben Bertat found 4 inches (10 centimeters) of water in his house by Lake Harney after kayaking there.

"I think it's going to get worse because all of this water has to get to the lake" said Bertat, pointing to the water flooding a nearby road. "With ground saturation, all this swamp is full and it just can't take any more water. It doesn't look like it's getting any lower."

Gabriel Madlang kayaked through several feet of water on his street, delivering sandbags to stave off water creeping toward his doorstep.

"My home is close to underwater," Madlang said. "Right now, I'm just going to sandbag as much as I can and hope and pray."

The National Guard and the Coast Guard were flying in helicopters to Florida's barrier islands to rescue people. On Sanibel Island, the lone bridge to the crescent-shaped island collapsed, cutting off access by car for its 6,300 residents.

An aerial photo posted on social media of Sanibel's Mad Hatter Restaurant shows a mostly vacant patch of sand where the restaurant used to be.

"The Mad Hatter Restaurant, unfortunately, is out at sea right now," the restaurant's Facebook page reads, adding that the staff are all safe. "The best news from this devastating scene is that there is still land for us to rebuild."

DeSantis said the state will start building a temporary structure this week to restore vehicle access to Pine Island, the largest of southwestern Florida's barrier islands devastated by the storm.

"It's not going to be a full bridge, you're going to have to go over it probably at 5 miles an hour or something, but it'll at least let people get in and off the island with their vehicles," DeSantis said.

Fort Myers Mayor Kevin Anderson on Sunday defended Lee County officials from accusations that they were slow in ordering evacuations Tuesday ahead of the storm, a day later than some other counties in the area.

"Warnings for hurricane season start in June. So there's a degree of personal responsibility here. I think the county acted appropriately. The thing is, a certain percentage of people will not heed the warnings regardless," Anderson said on the CBS show "Face the Nation."

In North Carolina, the storm downed trees and power lines. Two of the four deaths in the state were from storm-related vehicle crashes. The others involved a man who drowned when his truck plunged into a swamp and another killed by carbon monoxide poisoning from a generator in a garage.

Ian is long gone but water keeps rising in central Florida

By MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

GENEVA, Fla. (AP) — Residents in central Florida donned fishing waders, boots and bug spray and canoed or kayaked to their homes on streets where floodwaters continued rising Sunday despite it being four days since Hurricane Ian tore through the state.

The waters flooded homes and streets that had been passable just a day or two earlier.

Ben Bertat found 4 inches (10 centimeters) of water in his house by Lake Harney off North Jungle Street in a rural part of Seminole County, north of Orlando, after kayaking to it Sunday morning. Only a day earlier, there had been no water.

"I think it's going to get worse because all of this water has to get to the lake" said Bertat, pointing to the water flooding the road. "With ground saturation, all this swamp is full and it just can't take any more water. It doesn't look like it's getting any lower."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 42 of 69

Gabriel Madlang kayaked through 3 feet (1 meter) of water on his street, delivering sandbags to stave off water that was 2 inches (5 centimeters) from entering his home.

"My home is close to underwater," Madlang said Sunday morning before paddling to his house. "Right now, I'm just going to sandbag as much as I can and hope and pray."

Two hours later, his house still was not flooded, and he was retrieving more sandbags to cover the back side of the house.

"We will see what happens," he said.

Madlang's street was in a flood zone and most of the residents with mortgages on the street of about 30 houses had flood insurance, but several of the residents who had lived there for decades didn't, Madling said.

Seminole County officials warned residents this weekend that flooding could continue for several days, particularly in areas near the St. Johns River and its tributaries, and said 1,200 residents have been affected by the flooding or other damage from Ian.

"Even as the rain has stopped, we still have the opportunity for more flooding," Alan Harris, director of Seminole's office for emergency management, said at a news briefing.

Tara Casel has never seen flooding on her street near Lake Harney like she did Sunday morning, despite living through multiple hurricanes. She and her husband used a canoe to get to their house and feared it would have water.

"We were here last night and it was pretty bad," she said. "But this morning looks worse."

Yemen's warring sides fail to extend UN-backed truce

By AHMED AL-HAJ Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen (AP) — Yemen's warring sides have failed to reach an agreement to extend a nationwide cease-fire, the U.N. said Sunday, endangering the longest lull in fighting since the country's bloody civil war began.

In a statement, the U.N.'s envoy to Yemen called on all sides to refrain from acts of provocation as the talks continue, after the deadline of Oct. 2 for extending the agreement was missed.

The U.N.-backed truce initially took effect in April, and raised hopes for a longer pause in fighting as Yemen's civil war entered in its eighth year. The devastating conflict began in 2014, when the Iranian-backed Houthis seized the capital of Sanaa and much of northern Yemen and forced the government into exile. A Saudi-led coalition including the United Arab Emirates intervened in 2015 to try to restore the internationally recognized government to power.

In a statement, U.N. envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg said he "regrets that an agreement has not been reached today." He did not call out the Houthis by name for failing to agree to his proposal but thanked the internationally recognized government for "engaging positively" in talks to extend the cease-fire. He called on leaders to continue to endeavor to reach an agreement.

"I urge them to fulfill their obligation to the Yemeni people to pursue every avenue for peace," he said.

The foreign minister for Yemen's internationally recognized government placed the blame for the truce ending on the Houthis. In comments made with the pan-Arab Satellite channel Al-Hadath, Ahmed Awad Bin Mubarak said that Houthis had obstructed the cease-fire and gone against the interest of the Yemeni people.

"The government made many concessions to extend the truce," he said.

There was no immediate comment released from the Houthi rebels following the U.N. statement. But on Saturday, the Houthis said that discussions around the truce had reached a "dead-end," and said that they were continuing to advocate for a full opening of the Sanaa airport, and lifting of the blockade on the key port city of Hodeida.

The Iran-backed hosted a large military parade last month, showcasing rockets and large weaponry, drawing condemnation from observers.

In the hours leading up to the deadline, a Houthi military spokesman threatened private oil companies

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 43 of 69

still working in the country to leave or their facilities would be seized. Yahia Sarea wrote on Twitter that the fossil fuels belong to the people of Yemen and could be used to pay public servants' salaries.

April's truce had originally established a partial opening of the Sanaa airport and the Red Sea port of Hodeida. The ensuing months have seen flights start again from the capital's airport to Jordan and Egypt. It also called for lifting a Houthi blockade on Taiz, the country's third largest city. But little progress has been made there, after talks aimed at reopening local roads stalled. Another sticking point is how salaries of public employees will be funded, many of whom have not been compensated for years.

Sunday's statement came a few days after Grundberg met in Sanaa with the top leader of the Houthis, Abdel-Malek al-Houthi, and other senior officials, who have been pushing for a full opening of the airport. The envoy warned last week that the risk of return to war was a real possibility.

"Millions will now be at risk if airstrikes, ground shelling and missile attacks resume," said Ferran Puig, country director in Yemen for the international charity Oxfam, reacting to the news of the truce expiring.

Analysts say it remains unclear if further talks could make progress, with Houthis feeling empowered and the coalition fighting them splintered by inter-alliance trouble.

Peter Salisbury, an expert on Yemen with Crisis Group, an international think-tank, said the Houthis have been behaving as if they had more leverage throughout the negotiations, because they were more willing than the other side to return to war.

Compared with forces fighting with the Saudi coalition, "they run an effective police state and operate a pretty functional and motivated fighting force," he said.

In recent years, the Houthi forces have deployed increasingly effective weaponry against Saudi Arabia and their rivals, including cruise missiles and drones, drawing accusations that their main backer, Iran, is helping the group obtain them.

Meanwhile, cracks within the anti-Houthi coalition have surfaced in the southern provinces. In August, United Arab Emirates-supported militia groups seized vital southern oil and gas fields controlled by other forces fighting with the Saudi-led coalition. Clashes between them and other forces from within the alliance have killed dozens.

But the truce has led to a significant overall lull of direct warfare despite claims of violations by both sides. International charity Save The Children said that the truce had led to a 60% decrease in displacement and a 34% drop in child casualties in Yemen.

The conflict, which in recent years turned into regional proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran, has killed than 150,000 people have been killed, including over 14,500 civilians, according to The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, and created one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

Haiti reports cholera deaths for first time in 3 years

By EVENS SANON Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Haiti's government on Sunday announced that at least eight people have died from cholera, raising concerns about a potentially fast-spreading scenario and reviving memories of an epidemic that killed nearly 10,000 people a decade ago.

The cases - the first cholera deaths reported in three years - came in a community called Dekayet in southern Port-au-Prince and in the gang-controlled seaside slum of Cite de Soleil, where thousands of people live in cramped, unsanitary conditions.

"Cholera is something that can spread very, very quickly," warned Laure Adrien, director general of Haiti's health ministry.

Food or water contaminated with the cholera bacteria can lead to severe diarrhea and dehydration that can be deadly.

The United Nations said in a statement that it is working with Haiti's government to "mount an emergency response to this potential outbreak," stressing that health teams need to be guaranteed safe access to areas where cases have been reported.

The deaths come as a lack of fuel and ongoing protests shut down the availability of basic services across

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 44 of 69

Haiti, including medical care and clean water, which is key to helping fight cholera and keep patients alive.

Haiti's most powerful gang continues to control the entrance to a main fuel terminal in the capital of Port-au-Prince, leading to a lack of fuel amid soaring prices that have unleashed widespread protests that have paralyzed the country for more than two weeks.

The absence of fuel and increasing number of roadblocks have prevented water trucks from visiting neighborhoods to provide potable water to those who can afford it. It also has prompted some companies to temporarily shut down operations.

On Sunday, Caribbean Bottling Company said it could no longer produce or distribute potable water because its diesel reserves were "completely depleted," adding that the lack of such a vital resource would affect "all sectors of society."

Adrien said health officials were trying to visit communities where cholera has been reported, but that his agency, too, has been affected by a lack of fuel as he called on people blocking the gas terminal and organizing protests to "have a conscience."

"This is a real problem," he said of how the country has virtually been paralyzed. "We're hoping this will not spread."

Adrien noted that all those who died were unable to reach a hospital in time.

Haiti Health Minister Alex Larsen said people have a right to protest but asked Haitians to allow potable water supplies into neighborhoods that have been cut off by roadblocks and protests.

"Water has not been in these areas for a long time, and people are not drinking treated water," he said, adding that cholera cases could spike again. "We ask people who can afford it to add a little chlorine to the water."

Haiti's last cholera epidemic sickened more than 850,000 people in a country of more than 11 million, marking one of the world's worst outbreaks of the preventable disease in recent history.

United Nations peacekeepers from Nepal were blamed for introducing cholera into Haiti's largest river in October 2010 by sewage. The U.N. has since acknowledged it played a role in the epidemic and that it has not done enough to help fight it, but it has not specifically said it introduced the disease.

Haiti would have been declared cholera-free by the World Health Organization only after reaching three consecutive years with no new cases.

Exit poll: Center-right GERB party will win Bulgarian vote

By VESELIN TOSHKOV Associated Press

SOFIA, Bulgaria (AP) — An exit poll in Bulgaria suggested Sunday that the center-right GERB party of ex-premier Boyko Borissov, a party blamed for presiding over years of corruption, will be the likely winner of Bulgaria's parliamentary election.

The poll conducted by Gallup International showed the GERB party earning 24.6% support, apparently edging out the reformist We Continue the Change pro-Western party of former Prime Minister Kiril Petkov, which is expected to capture 18.9%. Still, the predicted percentage won't be enough for Borissov's party to form a one-party government, and the chances for a GERB-led coalition are slim.

The exit poll also predicted that eight parties could pass the 4% threshold to enter a fragmented parliament with populist and pro-Russia groups showing increased gains.

The European Union nation's fourth election in 18 months was marked by a raging war nearby, political instability and economic hardships in the bloc's poorest member. A low turnout reflected voter apathy.

Petkov conceded defeat late Sunday.

"We lost the election, albeit by a small margin, and now GERB has the responsibility to form a coalition and govern the country," he said.

It could take days before the final official results are announced. If they confirm the exit poll, Borisov will be handed a mandate to form his fourth cabinet. It will be an uphill task for him to produce a stable governing coalition, however, since most political groups have in advance rejected any cooperation with his GERB party, which presided over years of corruption that hampered development.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 45 of 69

The early election came after a fragile coalition led by Petkov lost a no-confidence vote in June. He claimed afterward that Moscow had used "hybrid war" tactics to bring down his government after it refused to pay gas bills in rubles and ordered an expulsion of Russian diplomats from Bulgaria.

The deputy chief of the European Council on Foreign Relations, Vessela Cherneva, said the predicted result could produce two types of coalitions: an anti-corruption coalition, in which GERB under Borissov would find no place, or a geopolitical coalition of the centrist parties, which would be possible only if Borissov resigns from leading his party.

"The scenario under which there is no coalition possible would undermine parliamentary democracy in Bulgaria and will further tilt the balance towards the pro-Russian President (Rumen) Radev," Cherneva said.

After casting his vote Sunday, Borissov told reporters that Bulgaria needs to clearly position itself on Russia's war in Ukraine.

"With this aggression, with this war with a clear aggressor in the face of (Russian President Vladimir) Putin – (I have) nothing against the Russian people — with this farce with the referendums, Bulgaria must be very clear, categorical, and precise about its place in the European Union and NATO," he said.

He said getting Bulgaria into Europe's 19-nation shared currency eurozone should be the next government's most important task.

Petkov ran on promises to continue efforts to eradicate corruption, but a European energy crisis sparked by Russia's war on Ukraine was the dominant economic theme for voters.

Many Bulgarians share pro-Russia sentiments, which provides fertile soil for aggressive Kremlin propaganda in the Balkan country.

The pro-Russia party Vazrazhdane, riding on those feelings, captured 10.2% of the vote, up from 4.9% in the previous election, the exit poll predicted.

Unlike the stance taken by the EU, which has fully condemned Russia's war in Ukraine and slapped sanctions on Russia for it, Vazrazhdane leader Kostadin Kostadinov has urged "full neutrality" for Bulgaria in the war.

AP Top 25: Tide retakes No. 1 from UGA; Kansas snaps drought

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Football Writer

Alabama reclaimed No. 1 from Georgia in The Associated Press college football poll in one of the closest votes in the recent years, and six teams — including Kansas — made their season debut on Sunday.

The Crimson Tide received 25 first-place votes and 1,523 points in the AP Top 25 presented by Regions Bank, two points more than the Bulldogs. Georgia received 28 first-place votes to become the first team since Alabama in November 2019 to have the most first-place votes but not be No. 1.

The Tide was No. 2 behind LSU that year, with 21 first-place votes to the Tigers' 17.

The last time there was a two-point margin between Nos. 1 and 2 was Nov. 1, 2020, when Clemson was ahead of Alabama. There have been three other polls with a two-point margin at the top since 2007.

Ohio State remained third, but the Buckeyes also gained some ground on the top two, getting 10 first-place votes.

The Crimson Tide started the season at No. 1, but the defending national champion Bulldogs took the top spot away from their Southeastern Conference rivals after Week 2 when Alabama needed a late field goal to beat Texas.

The Bulldogs remain unbeaten but needed a fourth-quarter rally to beat four-touchdown underdog Missouri on Saturday night. Earlier in the day, the Tide managed to pull away from Arkansas in the second half without Heisman Trophy winner Bryce Young.

Young sprained his throwing shoulder in the first half and missed most of the game in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

No. 4 Michigan, No. 5 Clemson and No. 6 Southern California all won and held their places this week, though the Wolverines and Tigers are now separated by just three points.

No. 7 Oklahoma State, followed by Tennessee, Mississippi and Penn State, round out the top 10.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 46 of 69

The rest of the AP Top 25 got a major overhaul after 10 ranked teams lost, five to unranked opponents. That cleared the way for seven teams to move into the rankings this week, most notably No. 19 Kansas.

The Jayhawks are ranked for the first time since Oct. 18, 2009, which was the longest drought for a team currently in a Power Five conference.

POLL POINTS

The closest margin between Nos. 1 and 2 in AP poll history is zero. Oklahoma and Miami tied for No. 1 in the 2002 preseason poll, and Miami and Washington shared the top spot in mid-October 1992.

The last time there was a one-point margin between the top two teams was 1992, when the Hurricanes and Huskies were separated by a point in the weeks before and after they were tied.

With Kansas back in the rankings, the longest poll appearance drought belongs to Illinois, which was last ranked in 2011. And the Illini have positioned themselves to make the leap with a 4-1 start heading into their home game against Iowa next week.

Next up on the list is Rutgers (2012), Oregon State (preseason 2013) and Vanderbilt (final 2013).

IN

The voters generally decided to start from scratch at the back half of the rankings, flipping seven teams.

— No. 17 TCU is in the rankings for the first time since a brief stay in 2019 at 25th.

— No. 18 UCLA is off to its first 5-0 start since 2013.

— No. 19 Kansas stayed unbeaten by knocking off Iowa State. The Jayhawks last started 5-0 in that 2009 season, then proceeded to drop their next six games and fall to the bottom of major college football for more than a decade.

Both Kansas schools are ranked for the first time since Oct. 14, 2007.

— No. 22 Syracuse improved to 5-0 with an easy victory against Wagner and finally cracked the rankings. The Orange are ranked for the first time since early in the 2019 season.

— No. 23 Mississippi State has been ranked for only one week (after the first regular-season game of 2020) since the end of 2018 season.

Both Mississippi SEC schools are ranked for the first time since Nov. 11, 2015.

— No. 24 Cincinnati. The Bearcats are the one team to enter the rankings this week that already had been in this season. Cincinnati fell out after a Week 1 loss at Arkansas and has won four straight since.

— No. 25 LSU has its first ranking under coach Brian Kelly. The Tigers have won four straight, including two SEC games, since losing a heartbreaker to Florida State on Labor Day weekend.

OUT

Among the seven teams to drop out of the AP Top 25, five of them will be unranked for the first time this season: Oklahoma, Baylor, Arkansas, Texas A&M and Pittsburgh.

Florida State and Minnesota had brief stays in the AP Top 25. The Seminoles and Gophers were teams on the rise for a week and then both lost at home.

CONFERENCE CALL

SEC — 7 (Nos. 1, 2, 8, 9, 13, 23, 25).

Pac-12 — 5 (Nos. 6, 11, 12, 18, 21).

ACC — 4 (Nos. 5, 15, 16, 22).

Big 12 — 4 (Nos. 7, 17, 19, 20).

Big Ten — 3 (Nos. 3, 4, 10).

American — 1 (No. 24).

Independent — 1 (No. 16).

RANKED vs. RANKED

No. 25 LSU at No. 8 Tennessee.

No. 17 TCU at No. 19 Kansas.

No. 11 Utah at No. 18 UCLA.

Amid crises, rural roots anchor Southern Baptists' president

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 47 of 69

By BOBBY ROSS Jr. Associated Press

FARMERSVILLE, Texas (AP) — On the first Saturday of fall, a sweating Bart Barber trekked across a weedy pasture in search of Bully Graham, the would-be patriarch of the rural Baptist pastor's fledgling cattle herd.

With the afternoon temperature in the mid-90s, the 52-year-old Texan found the bull — whose nickname reflects his owner's deep affection for the late Rev. Billy Graham — and 11 heifers cooling under a canopy of trees.

"Hey, baby girl," Barber said as he patted one of the cows, a favorite he dubbed Lottie Moon after the namesake of his denomination's international missions offering.

For nearly a quarter-century, Barber enjoyed relative obscurity as a minister in this town of 3,600, about 50 miles northeast of Dallas. That changed in June as delegates to the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting in Anaheim, California, chose Barber to lead the nation's largest Protestant denomination at a time of major crisis.

The previous month a scathing, 288-page investigative report hit the denomination's 13.7 million members. It laid out the findings of an independent probe detailing how Southern Baptist leaders stonewalled and denigrated survivors of clergy sex abuse over two decades while seeking to protect their own reputations.

In August, SBC leaders revealed that the Department of Justice was investigating several of its major entities, giving few details but indicating that the inquiry concerned the sex abuse allegations.

Barber's background as a trusted, small-town preacher — not to mention his folksy sense of humor and self-deprecating style — helps explain why fellow Baptists picked him.

"In this moment where I think there's a lot of widespread distrust of these big institutions, I think a lot of people find it refreshing that the one leading us is an everyday pastor," said Daniel Darling, director of the Land Center for Cultural Engagement at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

A staunch theological conservative, Barber touts biblical inerrancy, opposes women serving as pastors and supports abortion bans. In running for SBC president, he expressed a desire to be a peacemaker and a unifier. Emerging from a field of four candidates, he received 61% of votes in a run-off against Tom Ascol, a Florida pastor who vowed to take the denomination further right.

The SBC faces multiple challenges. Rank-and-file Baptists have demonstrated a strong commitment to implementing sex abuse reforms, but the final outcome remains unclear. The denomination also has a problem with falling membership, which has slid 16% from its 2006 peak. Annual baptisms last year were 154,701, down 63% from their 1999 high, according to SBC affiliate Lifeway Christian Resources.

Nathan Finn, a church historian and provost of North Greenville University in South Carolina, agreed that Barber's small-town appeal is a big part of why Baptists turned to him to lead the SBC through such troubled times.

"To many Southern Baptists, Bart is an appealing president precisely because he does not pastor a suburban megachurch or lead a seminary," Finn said via email. "He pastors a 'normal' Southern Baptist church and sounds like the pastor down the road. I think many find him to be a breath of fresh air as well as a thoughtful voice to represent Southern Baptists to the outside world.

"Though he is a well-educated church historian and an expert on SBC history and polity, Bart is not an elitist," Finn added. "He gives the impression that he would rather be working on his farm than hobnobbing with denominational leaders."

For his part, Barber said he ran for president because he prayed and concluded God was calling him to do it, not because of the sex abuse crisis.

Still, after recently appointing an abuse task force that will make recommendations at next year's annual meeting in New Orleans, he said Southern Baptists are determined that there must be reforms and identifying solutions to the problem is his top priority.

"Look who all has been touched by this," Barber said of sex abuse. "It's in public schools. It's in Scouting. It's in the military. It's in Hollywood. It's in sports. It's in USA Gymnastics.

"And so if Southern Baptists, who also have problems in this area, can lead the way to real solutions ... that would be a great shining victory for the SBC," he added. "And what Hollywood and USA Gymnastics and the government and the military ... don't have is the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit and the

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 48 of 69

promise of God himself that he has built his church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.”

Barber grew up in a Southern Baptist family in Lake City, Arkansas. Baptized just before his sixth birthday, he felt God calling him to ministry at age 11 and preached his first sermon at 15.

His late father, Jim, ran the home office for an Arkansas congressman, a Democrat named Bill Alexander. His stay-at-home mother, Carolyn, now 77, taught him to read by the time he entered kindergarten and made sure he paid attention in church.

Often his dad would bring politicians by the house, he recalled, and his mom would make chicken pot pie or smothered steak with mashed potatoes and gravy.

“It’s kind of weird,” Barber said. “Here we were in very small-town Arkansas — not a lot of money, not a lot of fame or anything like that — and a gubernatorial candidate would stop by the house.

“Dad always had an interest in politics and current events,” he continued. “And from when I was young, I enjoyed sitting there listening to the adults talking about all this stuff.”

Barber attended Baptist-affiliated Baylor University in Waco, Texas, where he met his future wife, Tracy, in a campus ministry. They have two children: Jim, 19, and Sarah, 16.

He also earned a master’s in divinity and a doctorate in church history from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He pastored in Mill Creek, Oklahoma, and Royse City, Texas, before moving to Farmersville in 1999.

“He has the heart of a pastor. He is someone who really cares about folks,” Tracy Barber said of her husband of 30 years. “The people in our church are our family, and Farmersville is a small town, so it lends itself to that.”

Steve Speir, 74, is a 42-year member of First Baptist Church of Farmersville, which averages Sunday attendance of about 320. His wife, Linda, plays the church organ.

Barber is “very organized,” Speir said. “He won’t keep anything hidden. Our entire church has full disclosure on all financial matters. They give an accounting for every check that gets written.”

Another longtime member, Donna Armstrong, 75, voiced similar confidence in Barber: “We never doubt whether he’s biblically based or loves the Lord. He also just knows how to be human and relate with people.”

On a recent Sunday, Barber got up at 4:30 a.m., attended a deacons meeting at 7 and preached at his congregation’s 8:30 and 11 worship assemblies. After a two-hour afternoon nap, he drove to Dallas and flew to Nashville, Tennessee, for meetings at the Southern Baptist Convention headquarters.

After three nights there, he caught a ride to Louisville, Kentucky, where he stayed overnight Wednesday and spoke Thursday at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, the oldest of the SBC’s six seminaries. A canceled flight kept him in Louisville an extra night before he returned home Friday.

“It is stressful. It is time-consuming. I do enjoy it,” Barber said of his new job.

Back home, he rose before the sun that Saturday to help his daughter load a 1,000-pound heifer named Iris into a cattle trailer. They drove a half-hour to a dirt-floor events center in McKinney, a Dallas suburb, for a livestock show organized by local chapters of the 4-H Club and the National FFA Organization.

Barber greeted children who came to see the animals, used clippers to help Sarah shave Iris and periodically shoveled manure into a garbage can.

He also enjoyed a friendly chat with rancher Joni Brewer about the miniature Hereford cows her family brought to the show. Brewer attends First Baptist Church of Trenton, about 20 miles north of Farmersville, but she had no clue that the man she was talking to was the new leader of the SBC.

“I live out in the country,” she said, “so you don’t always see all of those things.”

But James Callagher, who knows Barber through 4-H Club activities, described his friend as perfect for the job.

“The thing that sticks out to me is just authenticity,” said Callagher, who is Catholic. “He lives his faith, and as Christians we have a lot of common ground.”

In addition to such in-person contacts, Barber maintains an active presence on Twitter, where he has 20,000 followers and interacts with supporters and critics alike. Just in the last week, he posted pictures and videos of his cows, debated biblical qualifications for church leaders and shared SBC plans for Hurricane Ian relief.

Barber and his family live in a church-owned parsonage, but last year they bought 107 acres of land

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 49 of 69

where they're raising their Santa Gertrudis beef cattle and where they intend to build a home when it becomes more affordable.

"If something happened to me, my wife would not only lose her husband but she'd lose her house, because that house goes with my job," he said of the parsonage. "So we started making a more permanent plan at this stage of our lives."

For now, they keep a recreational vehicle with a generator on the property, providing a convenient place for a cold drink or a hot shower.

In a recent sermon, Barber joked that a boyhood job chopping cotton and hoeing soybeans was what inspired him to go into ministry. Asked on the drive back from the livestock show if he's now enjoying life as a farm owner, Barber smiled and nodded.

"Not only that, but I'm surviving everything else because of how I'm enjoying it," he said. "It's a great source of tranquility for me."

"To watch a herd of cattle around sunset slowly graze their way across the pasture, it's very difficult to be stressed watching that," Barber continued. "I mean, I can spend 15 minutes on the tractor disking up an area ... and everything that you need to rest from goes away."

Ousted Burkina Faso leader leaves country for Togo

By SAM MEDNICK and ARSENE KABORE Associated Press

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso (AP) — Burkina Faso's ousted coup leader Lt. Col. Paul Henri Sandaogo Damiba left the country for Togo Sunday two days after he himself was overthrown in a coup, while the new junta urged citizens not to loot or vandalize.

Damiba's departure was confirmed by two diplomats who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter. It was not known whether Togo was his final destination.

Earlier Sunday, religious leaders who had mediated between the factions said that Damiba had offered his resignation as long as his security and other conditions were met. A junta representative later announced on state television that their leader, Capt. Ibrahim Traore, officially has been named head of state following the Friday coup that ousted Damiba.

Their power grab marked Burkina Faso's second military coup this year, deepening fears that the political chaos could divert attention from an Islamic insurgency whose violence has killed thousands and forced 2 million to flee their homes. It followed unrest in Ouagadougou, the capital, in which mobs on Saturday attacked the French embassy and other French-related sites, wrongly believing that they were sheltering Damiba.

Along with agreeing not to harm or prosecute him, Damiba also asked Traore and the new junta leadership to respect the commitments already made to the West African regional bloc ECOWAS. Damiba, who came to power in a coup last January, had recently reached an agreement to hold an election by 2024.

In a statement late Sunday, ECOWAS said it would be sending a team of mediators to Ouagadougou on Monday including former Niger President Mahamadou Issoufou.

The ECOWAS statement, signed by Guinea-Bissau President Umaro Sissoco Embaló, noted that Damiba had resigned "in order to avoid a violent confrontation and possible bloodshed."

Earlier in the day, the new junta leadership had called for an end to the unrest that engulfed Ouagadougou in wake of Friday night's coup.

In a statement broadcast on state television, junta representative Capt. Kiswendsida Farouk Azaria Sorgho called on people to "desist from any act of violence and vandalism" especially those against the French Embassy or the French military base.

Anti-French sentiment rose sharply after the new junta alleged that interim president Damiba was sheltering at a French military base following his ouster. France vehemently denied the allegation, but soon protesters with torches thronged the perimeter of the French Embassy in Ouagadougou.

Saturday's violence was condemned by the French Foreign Ministry, which denied any involvement in the rapidly developing events. French Institutes in Ouagadougou and the country's second-largest city,

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 50 of 69

Bobo-Dioulasso, had also been targeted and French citizens were urged to be very cautious.

"The situation is very volatile in Burkina Faso," a French spokeswoman told The Associated Press on Sunday.

Damiba came to power in January promising to secure the country from jihadi violence. However, the situation only deteriorated as jihadis imposed blockades on towns and have intensified attacks. Last week, at least 11 soldiers were killed and 50 civilians went missing after a supply convoy was attacked by gunmen in Gaskinde commune in the Sahel. The group of officers led by Traore said Friday that Damiba had failed and was being removed.

To some in Burkina Faso's military, Damiba also was seen as too cozy with former colonizer France, which maintains a military presence in Africa's Sahel region to help countries fight Islamic extremists.

Some who support the new coup leader, Traore, have called on Burkina Faso's government to seek Russian support instead. Outside the state broadcaster on Sunday, supporters of Traore were seen cheering and waving Russian flags.

In neighboring Mali, the coup leader has invited Russian mercenaries from the Wagner Group to help with security, a move that has drawn global condemnation and accusations of human rights abuses.

Conflict analysts say Damiba was probably too optimistic about what he could achieve in the short term but that a change at the top didn't mean that the country's security situation would improve.

"The problems are too profound and the crisis is deeply rooted," said Heni Nsaibia, a senior researcher at the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, adding that "militant groups will most likely continue to exploit" the country's political disarray.

US shift away from coal hits tribal community in New Mexico

By SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN Associated Press

KIRTLAND, N.M. (AP) — The clamor of second graders breaking away from lessons to form lunch lines has gotten quieter in a rural New Mexico community, where families losing coal jobs have been forced to pack up and leave in search of work.

At Judy Nelson Elementary, 1 in 4 students have left in an exodus spurred by decisions made five years ago to shutter a coal-fired power plant and mine that sit just up the road from the school in a largely Navajo community. The plant and mine had provided electricity to millions of people across the southwestern U.S. for nearly a half-century.

The San Juan Generating Station burned its last bit of coal Thursday. The remaining workers will spend the coming weeks draining water from the plant, removing chemicals and preparing to tear down what has long been fixture on the high-desert horizon.

It's part of the latest wave of coal-burning units to be retired as New Mexico and other states try to fight climate change by requiring more carbon-free sources of electricity. President Joe Biden also has pledged to cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030.

Just weeks ago, Hawaii's last coal-fired power plant closed after 30 years, and more retirements are scheduled around the U.S. over the next decade.

Realities of shuttering the San Juan plant are setting in for surrounding communities, including the Navajo Nation, where poverty and joblessness already are exponentially higher than national averages. Hundreds of jobs are evaporating along with tens of millions of dollars in annual tax revenue used to fund schools and a community college.

"A lot of the Native American families have multi-generations living in the home so it doesn't just affect the husband and wife. It affects their children and their grandchildren," said Arleen Franklin, who teaches second grade at Judy Nelson. Her husband purchases equipment for a coal mine that feeds another power plant scheduled to close in 2031.

Denise Pierro, a reading teacher at Judy Nelson, said it's stressful for parents to see a steady income erased. Pierro's husband, who served as the general manager of the mine for the San Juan plant, is among those forced into early retirement.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 51 of 69

"They've taken the rug out from underneath our feet," she said.

Area power plants, mines and associated businesses represent 80% of property tax revenues that fund the Central Consolidated School District, which spans an area the size of Delaware and Rhode Island combined. Almost 93% of the students are Navajo.

It's rural and remote. Some students ride a school bus for three hours round trip, arriving home well after sunset. Internet service is spotty or nonexistent, and many homes don't have electricity or indoor plumbing. The poverty rate within the district is four times the national level. The median annual household income is about \$20,000, and the unemployment rate hovers around 70%.

New Mexico's Democratic leaders have celebrated the plant's closure while touting a landmark 2019 law that pushes for a renewable energy economy. Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, who is running for reelection, has said the law represented a promise to future generations for a cleaner environment and new job opportunities.

Environmentalists have said the closure will reduce air and water pollution in a region that some have described as an industrial sacrifice zone. They argue that power plant emissions and methane from the oilfields have caused health problems for residents.

Joe Ramone, a 69-year-old pipe welder who worked at San Juan, lives in a Navajo community not far from the Four Corners plant. When the wind blows just right, he said his community is hit with ash and coal dust.

Still, he said his priority is making sure Navajos have work.

"I don't want to see anybody unemployed and I am in no way in favor of these companies being shut down. But there's room for improvement," he said, suggesting more investments could have been made.

The loss of the San Juan plant and the mine ripple through every facet of life, from fewer lunch orders at Kirtland's café to a dwindling ash supply for concrete manufacturers. Meanwhile, prices have skyrocketed for everything from the Navajo staple of mutton to the woven baskets and other materials needed for healing ceremonies.

Public Service Co. of New Mexico, which runs the plant, is providing \$11 million in severance packages to help about 200 displaced workers. About 240 mine workers are getting severance payments worth \$9 million. Another \$3 million went to job training.

A state fund established by the energy law also includes \$12 million for affected workers.

Solar and battery storage projects are meant to eventually replace the capacity lost with San Juan's shutdown and provide jobs during construction. But some of those projects have been delayed due to supply chain problems, and others are on hold indefinitely amid historic inflation and other economic constraints.

Fresh off a night shift as an electrician at the mine for the neighboring Four Corners Power Plant, Christine Aspaas, a Central Consolidated School Board member, said even if those "green" jobs existed now, they would be temporary. And to make up for lost property tax revenue, she said, some families will have to pay up to seven times more.

It's been heartbreaking for so many Navajos to consider leaving home, Aspaas said.

"That's what others don't understand," she said. "There's culture, there's traditions, and so it's not easy."

Sharon Clahchischilliage, once a teacher and a former New Mexico lawmaker, said people in her Navajo community near Shiprock are angry.

"One of them told me, 'I don't know who to be angry at for us having to do this. We don't have a family anymore,'" she said, referring to bonds broken as Navajos search for jobs elsewhere.

In the final days, the plant's spinning turbine sent vibrations through layers of concrete and passing work boots. Heat emanated from the boilers below.

In the dim control room, workers monitored screens displaying temperatures, pressure, turbine speeds and pollution control systems. Allen Palmer, 70, spent over half his life working his way up the ranks.

"I hate to see it close," he said.

Workers knew for years that the plant would be shuttered. It became more real as coal piles shrank each day — until there was nothing left. As the finish line approached, the company served workers green chile cheeseburgers as a morale booster alongside a big projection screen that read: "Thank you to all

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 52 of 69

employees at San Juan for your years of dedicated service!"

The last few dozen employees will be laid off over the coming weeks. Some were ready to retire; in June, there were voluntary layoffs when the first of the last two generating units closed.

"There's lots of us who have worked 20-plus years and we all know each other and it's our family," said plant director Rodney Warner, who will oversee the decommissioning. "It's who we are."

December would have marked 10 years at the plant for Steven Sorrow, 32. He and his coworkers know there's a good chance they will have to uproot and possibly enter other fields. Some will head to Wyoming, Colorado or Utah, where there are other plants and mines.

"It's going to be an adjustment for sure," he said. "I feel like I've tried to prepare over the five years when they told us what we had left. Hopefully I've prepared well enough."

Aspaas said officials need to find ways to keep the workforce in New Mexico. She said the foundation of economic development is education but without economic development, education suffers.

"This whole transition, everything that's happening, the closures, that's what is threatening our ability to keep funding education," she said. "When you go down to what it impacts, it is the education of our people, of the Navajo people, our students."

Ukraine presses on with counteroffensive; Russia uses drones

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia attacked the Ukrainian president's hometown and other targets Sunday with suicide drones, and Ukraine took back full control of a strategic eastern city in a counteroffensive that has reshaped the war.

Russia's loss of the eastern city of Lyman, which it had been using as a transport and logistics hub, is a new blow to the Kremlin as it seeks to escalate the war by illegally annexing four regions of Ukraine and heightening threats to use nuclear force.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's land grab has threatened to push the conflict to a dangerous new level. It also prompted Ukraine to formally apply for fast-track NATO membership.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced Sunday that his forces now control Lyman: "As of 12:30 p.m. (0930 GMT) Lyman is cleared fully. Thank you to our militaries, our warriors," he said in a video address.

Russia's military didn't comment Sunday on Lyman, after announcing Saturday that it was withdrawing its forces there to more favorable positions.

The British military described the recapture of Lyman as a "significant political setback" for Moscow, and Ukraine appeared to swiftly capitalize on its gains.

Hours after Zelenskyy's announcement, Ukrainian media shared an image of Ukrainian troops carrying the country's yellow-and-blue flag in front of a statue marking the village of Torske, 15 kilometers (9 miles) east of Lyman and within sight of the Russian-held Luhansk region.

Shortly later, a video posted online showed one Ukrainian soldier saying that Kyiv's forces had begun to target the city of Kreminna, just across the border in Luhansk. Outgoing artillery could be heard in the background. Russian military correspondents also acknowledged Ukrainian attacks targeting Kreminna.

In another online photo, an Ukrainian soldier stood before giant watermelon landmark just south of the village of Novovorontsovka on the banks of the Dnieper River, along the Russian-controlled province of Kherson's northern edge. A Ukrainian flag flew above the statue as several apparently deactivated landmines lay beside it.

While Ukrainian forces did not immediately acknowledge a breakthrough, writers close to the Russian military have described a new offensive by Kyiv in the Kherson region.

In southern Ukraine, Zelenskyy's hometown of Krivyi Rih came under Russian attack by a suicide drone that destroyed two stories of a school early Sunday, the regional governor said. The Ukrainian air force said Sunday it shot down five Iranian-made drones overnight, while two others made it through air defenses.

A car carrying four men seeking to forage for mushrooms in Ukraine's Chernihiv region struck a mine,

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 53 of 69

killing all those inside, authorities said Sunday.

The reports of military activity couldn't be immediately verified.

Ukrainian forces have retaken swaths of territory, notably in the northeast around Kharkiv, in a counteroffensive in recent weeks that has embarrassed the Kremlin and prompted rare domestic criticism of Putin's war.

Lyman, which Ukraine recaptured by encircling Russian troops, is in the Donetsk region near the border with Luhansk, two of the four regions that Russia illegally annexed Friday after forcing what was left of the population to vote in referendums at gunpoint.

In his nightly address, Zelenskyy said: "Over the past week, there have been more Ukrainian flags in the Donbas. In a week there will be even more."

In a daily intelligence briefing Sunday, the British Defense Ministry called Lyman crucial because it has "a key road crossing over the Siversky Donets River, behind which Russia has been attempting to consolidate its defenses."

The Russian retreat from northeast Ukraine in recent weeks has revealed evidence of widespread, routine torture of both civilians and soldiers, notably in the strategic city of Iziium, an Associated Press investigation has found.

AP journalists located 10 torture sites in the town, including a deep pit in a residential compound, a clammy underground jail that reeked of urine, a medical clinic and a kindergarten.

Recent developments have raised fears of all-out conflict between Russia and the West.

Putin frames the recent Ukrainian gains — along with NATO's post-Soviet expansion — as a U.S.-orchestrated effort to destroy Russia, and last week he heightened threats of nuclear force in some of his toughest, most anti-Western rhetoric to date.

Nine central and eastern European NATO members fearful that Russia's aggression could eventually target them, too, issued a letter of support Sunday for Ukraine.

The leaders of Czechia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania and Slovakia issued a joint statement Sunday backing a path to NATO membership for Ukraine, and calling on all 30 members of the U.S.-led security bloc to ramp up military aid for Kyiv.

Germany's defense minister on Sunday announced the delivery of 16 wheeled armored howitzers produced in Slovakia to Ukraine next year. The weapons will be financed jointly with Denmark, Norway and Germany.

Russia moved ahead Sunday with steps meant to make its land grab look like a legal process aimed at helping people allegedly persecuted by Kyiv, with rubber-stamp approval by the Constitutional Court and draft laws being pushed through the Kremlin-friendly parliament.

Outside Russia, the Kremlin's actions have been widely denounced as violating international law, with multiple EU countries summoning Russian ambassadors since Putin on Friday signed annexation treaties with Moscow-backed officials in southern and eastern Ukraine.

Meanwhile, international concerns are mounting about the fate of Europe's largest nuclear plant after Russian forces detained its director for alleged questioning.

The International Atomic Energy Agency announced Sunday that its director-general, Rafael Grossi would visit Kyiv and Moscow in the coming days to discuss the situation around the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. Grossi is continuing to push for "a nuclear safety and security zone" around the site.

The Zaporizhzhia plant is in one of the four regions that Moscow illegally annexed on Friday, and repeatedly has been caught in the crossfire of the war. Ukrainian technicians have continued running the power station after Russian troops seized it but its last reactor was shut down in September as a precautionary measure.

Pope Francis on Sunday decried Russia's nuclear threats and appealed to Putin to stop "this spiral of violence and death."

Trump: 'King' to some in Pennsylvania, but will it help GOP?

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 54 of 69

MONONGAHELA, Pa. (AP) — The Trump-Pence sign still hangs on the older building off Main Street in this historic town, a lasting vestige of the campaign fervor that roused voters, including many who still believe the falsehood that the former president didn't lose in 2020 and hope he'll run in 2024.

The enthusiasm for Donald Trump's unique brand of nationalist populism has cut into traditional Democratic strongholds like Monongahela, about 25 miles south of Pittsburgh, where brick storefronts and a Slovak fellowship hall dot Main Street and church bells mark the hours of the day. Republicans are counting on political nostalgia for the Trump era as they battle Democrats this fall in Pennsylvania in races for governor, the U.S. Senate and control of Congress.

"Trump just came along and filled the empty space," said Matti Gruz, who stitches old blue jeans into tote bags, place mats and other creations she sells at the weekly Farmer's Market downtown. "He's still the king, and the kingmaker."

Against the backdrop of this picturesque place, House Republicans recently released their campaign agenda, hoping their "Commitment to America" can tap into the same political sentiment Trump used to attract not just Republican but independent and former Democratic voters. But it's unclear whether the support that propelled Trump to the White House will be there on Election Day, Nov. 8.

Perhaps even more challenging for the GOP is whether Trump's false claims of voter fraud will cost the party if people believe, as the defeated president claims without evidence, the elections are rigged. Some may just decide to sit out the election.

"It started out as a low-enthusiasm race," said Dave Ball, the Republican Party chairman in Washington County, which includes much of western Pennsylvania.

Ball said enthusiasm has been "building rapidly" — his main metric for voter interest in the elections is the demand for lawn signs. "We were wondering, at one point, you know, we were going to see any," he said. "Right now, I can't get my hands on enough."

But Amy Michalic, who was born and raised in Monongahela and works the polls during elections, said she hears skepticism from some voters, particularly Trump supporters, "who think my vote doesn't count."

Trump's claims of fraud have no basis in fact. Dozens of court cases filed by Trump and his supporters have been dismissed or rejected by judges across the nation, but he continues to challenge Joe Biden's victory. In every state, officials have attested to the accuracy of their elections, and Trump's own attorney general at the time, Bill Barr, said in 2020 there was no voter fraud on a scale to change the outcome.

Michalic reminds skeptical voters in her hometown of the importance of voting and notes that in 2016, no one thought Trump could win. "Look what he did, he took Pennsylvania," she said.

At the Farmer's Market on a recent afternoon, voters shared concerns that many people in the United States voice this election year — about the high prices of everything, about finding workers and good-paying jobs, about the culture wars.

"Where do you start?" said Michelle DeHosse, wearing an American flag shirt as she helped vendors set up stands.

DeHosse, who runs a custom-screen print and embroidery shop on Main Street, said she has had trouble hiring employees since the pandemic. While she said just cannot afford the \$20 an hour and health care benefits many applicants demand, she understands that many workers need both. "It's the economy that's the biggest concern," she said.

Democrats were sparse among the voters, who didn't seem to have strong feelings for their choices this fall for either of the Senate candidates, Democrat John Fetterman or the Trump-backed Republican Mehmet Oz. Several said they probably would vote party line.

"I don't like either one of them," said Carolyn McCuen, 84, a Republican enjoying sunset with friends and McDonald's coffee at a picnic table by the river.

"Me either," said another Republican, Sam Reo, 76, a retired mechanical engineer, playing oldies from the portable speaker he sets up for the group.

Both still plan to vote. Support for the GOP candidate for governor, Doug Mastriano, who was outside the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, can be seen in the giant signs along Lincoln Highway, an east-west route across the state.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 55 of 69

Mastriano is a “folk hero around here,” said Gruz, who recalled his regular updates broadcast during the pandemic.

A history buff who home-schooled her children, Gruz hasn’t missed a vote since she cast her first presidential ballot for Ronald Reagan. The same goes for her husband, Sam, a plumber. They moved here two decades ago from Baltimore, for a better life. Now a grandmother, she spends her days working on her crafts and listening to far-right broadcasts – Steve Bannon, Charlie Kirk and others.

She is not a fan of House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif. and isn’t convinced he has the toughness needed to push the party’s ideas forward. But she did attend the event at a nearby manufacturing facility where lawmakers outlined the GOP agenda. She was heartened to see far-right Georgia Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene at the event with McCarthy, and made sure to shake Greene’s hand.

“If she’s behind him,” she said, trailing off. “It looked today he had enough behind him, pushing him.”

Trump remains popular, and the sign hanging on the building off Main Street from his 2020 campaign was far from the only one still visible in the state, two years since that election.

Several of the voters dismissed the investigations against Trump as nothing more than a “witch hunt” designed to keep him from running again office, despite the potentially serious charges being raised in state and federal inquiries. Some voters said they didn’t believe the attack on the Capitol was an insurrection, despite the violence waged by pro-Trump supporters trying to overturn Biden’s election.

Those views stand in contrast to the hard facts of Jan. 6: More than 850 people have been arrested and charged in the insurrection, some given lengthy sentences by the courts for their involvement. Hours before the siege, Trump told a rally crowd to “fight like hell” for his presidency. Loyalists soon broke into the Capitol, fighting in hand-to-hand combat with police, interrupting Congress as it was certifying the election results. Five people, including a Trump supporter shot by police, died in the immediate aftermath.

And if Trump runs again?

“I wish he would,” said McCuen, a retired church secretary. “But I don’t know if he will.”

Poor Florida neighborhood battered by flood tries to recover

REBECCA SANTANA Associated Press

HARLEM HEIGHTS, Fla. (AP) — The Gladiolus Food Pantry usually hands out supplies on Wednesdays to about 240 families, so when Hurricane Ian swept through that day and canceled their distribution, it was left full of flats of canned black beans, bags of rice, meats, bread and produce — food that helps families struggling with rising rents and inflation make ends meet.

By the weekend, much of that food was in the garbage, the floors were still wet and muddy from the floodwaters that had filled the room, and the pantry’s founder and director, Miriam Ortiz, was worried about what would become of her neighborhood as she worked to get the pantry she started nine years ago up and running again.

“Right now I don’t know what we’re going to do because we’re going to need food, we’re going to need water, we’re going to need everything,” she said. “We got flooded and the water came through all the building.”

Ortiz said the food pantry’s green building is the heart of the Harlem Heights neighborhood, a small, mostly Hispanic community of nearly 2,000 people near Fort Myers that was hammered by the Category 4 hurricane. A sign scrawled on a piece of roofing that had torn loose advertised free food, diapers, wipes, body wash and toothpaste.

The wind, rain and storm surge that accompany hurricanes affect everyone in their path. But those combined effects are often more of a disaster for poor people living day to day, like many in Harlem Heights, where the median income is a little under \$26,000, according to U.S. Census data.

Many are hourly workers with little savings for things such as evacuation hotel stays or money to tide them over until their places of employment reopen. In a tourism heavy economy like South Florida’s, the wait for hotels to reopen and visitors — along with the jobs they bring — to return can be long and agonizing.

Ortiz said many of the clients she was seeing every week before the hurricane were already hurting

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 56 of 69

from the skyrocketing cost of food and housing. Rising rents had forced many young adults that had been living on their own to move back in with parents and grandparents, she said.

Over the weekend, cars and trucks whizzed down the neighborhood's main road, which was dry and had been swept free of tree limbs and palm fronds. That wasn't the case on many side streets, many of which were still submerged in water as residents hauled waterlogged furniture to the curb.

At Maria Galindo's apartment, the water had risen to about hip height and the wind had ripped off part of her roof while she and her 9-year-old daughter, Gloria, were terrified inside. Her daughter said that during the storm, she kept thinking she wanted to return to her native Guatemala.

"We did not know where to go, where to grab onto, whether here or there because of the rain, the wind, the water. ... It was very difficult," said Maria Galindo, speaking in Spanish.

They and their neighbors were trying to salvage what they could and to push the water from their waterlogged apartments. Wet clothes hung from a clothes line outside, while inside a thin seam of light coming between the wall and ceiling showed where the roof had been lifted.

Galindo works as a housekeeper at a local hotel, but it's closed until further notice. She's worried for her family and her daughter and wondering how she'll make ends meet.

"We are without a roof overhead. We need food. We need money to buy things," she said. "We need help."

Back at the food pantry, people had been delivering donations of food, cleaning supplies and clothing throughout the day Saturday, and a volunteer had set up a tent and was cooking food for people.

One of those who dropped by to deliver supplies was a frustrated Lisa Bertaux, who came with her friend. She ticked off the items that people needed: toothbrushes, deodorant, cleaning supplies, paper towels, children's clothes and wipes. And the list went on.

"There is so much need here. ... There's very little food coming in so far. There's a great need," she said. "It's time for us to rebuild our community."

One of those coming by to pick up supplies was Keyondra Smith, who lives down the street in an apartment complex with her three kids. She had parked her car in a different area so that when the floodwaters came sweeping through, she didn't lose it. Her neighbors weren't so lucky, as cars floated through the parking lot during the worst of the flooding and the people who lived on the first floor — she's on the second — were completely flooded out.

Smith had been driving by the food pantry when she noticed it had supplies so she stopped to pick up some toilet paper, water and hot plates of food. Before that, her family had been eating raviolis out of a can, Vienna sausages and snacks from a local convenience store.

"We don't have any water. My food is spoiling in the refrigerator," she said. Though she can drive to the few stores that are open, she said they are only taking cash and many of the ATMs aren't working. "I have three kids so I have to get some supplies to feed them."

125 die as tear gas triggers crush at Indonesia soccer match

By AGOES BASOEKI and NINIEK KARMINI Associated Press

MALANG, Indonesia (AP) — Police firing tear gas after an Indonesian soccer match in an attempt to stop violence triggered a disastrous crush of fans making a panicked, chaotic run for the exits, leaving at least 125 people dead, most of them trampled upon or suffocated.

Attention immediately focused on police crowd-control measures at Saturday night's match between host Arema FC of East Java's Malang city and Persebaya Surabaya. Witnesses described officers beating them with sticks and shields before shooting tear gas canisters directly into the crowds.

It was among the deadliest disasters ever at a sporting event. President Joko Widodo ordered an investigation of security procedures, and the president of FIFA called the deaths "a dark day for all involved in football and a tragedy beyond comprehension." While FIFA has no control over domestic games, it has advised against the use of tear gas at soccer stadiums.

Brawls are common among rival Indonesian soccer fans, so much so that the organizer had banned Persebaya supporters from Arema's stadium. But violence still broke out when the home team lost 3-2

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 57 of 69

and some of the 42,000 Arema fans, known as "Aremania," threw bottles and other objects at players and soccer officials.

Witnesses said the fans flooded the Kanjuruhan Stadium pitch and demanded that Arema management explain why, after 23 years of undefeated home matches against Persebaya, this one ended in a defeat.

At least five police vehicles were toppled and set ablaze outside the stadium. Riot police responded by firing tear gas, including toward the stadium's stands, causing panic among the crowd.

"The stadium turned into a smoke-filled battleground when police fired tear gas," said Rizky, who goes by one name. He came with his cousin to watch the game.

"I felt hot and stinging in my eyes, I couldn't see clearly while my head was dizzy and everything went dark ... I passed out," he said. When he woke up, he was already in the emergency room. He said his cousin died because of head injuries.

"We wanted to entertain ourselves by watching a football match, but we got disaster," he said.

Another spectator, Ahmad Fatoni, said police had started beating the fans with sticks and shields, and they fought back.

"Officers fired tear gas directly at spectators in the stands, forcing us to run toward the exit," he said. "Many victims fell because of shortness of breath and difficulty seeing due to tear gas and were trampled."

He said he climbed the roof of the stands and only came down when the situation calmed.

Others suffocated and were trampled as hundreds of people ran to the exit to avoid the tear gas. In the chaos, 34 died at the stadium, including two officers, and some reports include children among the casualties.

"Some were trampled, some fell down and some got hit," Rian Dwi Cahyono told Sky News from the hospital, where he was being treated for an injured arm. Asked what triggered the panic, he replied: "Tear gas."

National Police chief Listyo Sigit Prabowo said the death toll had been revised to 125 from 174, after authorities found some of the victims were counted twice. More than 100 were receiving intensive treatment in eight hospitals, 11 of them in critical condition.

East Java police chief Nico Afinta defended the use of tear gas.

"We have already done a preventive action before finally firing the tear gas as (fans) began to attack the police, acting anarchically and burning vehicles," he told a news conference early Sunday.

Indonesia's soccer association, known as PSSI, suspended the premier soccer league Liga 1 indefinitely in light of the tragedy and banned Arema from hosting soccer matches for the remainder of the season.

Grieving relatives waited for information about their loved ones at Malang's Saiful Anwar General Hospital. Others tried to identify the bodies laid at a morgue while medical workers put identification tags on the bodies of the victims.

"I deeply regret this tragedy and I hope this is the last soccer tragedy in this country, don't let another human tragedy like this happen in the future," Widodo said in a televised speech. "We must continue to maintain sportsmanship, humanity and a sense of brotherhood of the Indonesian nation."

He ordered the sports minister, the national police chief and the PSSI chair to conduct a thorough evaluation of the country's soccer and its security procedure.

Youth and Sports Minister Zainudin Amali said the incident "has certainly injured our soccer image." Indonesia is due to host the 2023 FIFA U-20 World Cup from May 20 to June 11, with 24 participating teams. As the host, the country automatically qualifies for the cup.

In a statement, FIFA President Gianni Infantino expressed condolences on behalf of the global football community, saying "the football world is in a state of shock." The statement did not mention the use of tear gas.

At the Vatican, Pope Francis said he was praying for "those who have lost their lives and for the wounded following clashes that erupted after a soccer game in Malang, Indonesia."

The restriction on Persebaya fans from entering the stadium was imposed after clashes between supporters of the two rival teams in East Java's Blitar stadium in February 2020 caused 250 million rupiah (\$18,000) in damage. Brawls were reported outside the stadium during and after the semifinals of the

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 58 of 69

East Java Governor's Cup, which ended with Persebaya beating Arema 4-2.

Rights groups responded to the tragedy by blaming the use of tear gas in the stadium by police.

Citing FIFA's stadium safety guidelines against the use of "crowd control gas" by pitch side stewards or police, Amnesty International called on Indonesian authorities to conduct a swift investigation into the use of tear gas and ensure that those who are found to have committed violations are tried in open court and do not merely receive internal or administrative sanctions.

Usman Hamid, executive director of Amnesty International Indonesia, said tear gas should only be used to disperse crowds when widespread violence has occurred and other methods have failed. People must be warned that tear gas will be used and allowed to disperse. "No one should lose their lives at a football match," Hamid said.

Hundreds of soccer fans, mostly wearing black shirts, held a candlelight vigil on Sunday night at Gelora Bung Karno, Indonesia's largest sport stadium in the capital, Jakarta, for the victims of the disaster. They sang songs they composed to lift the spirits of the grieving Aremanias.

Despite Indonesia's lack of international accolades in the sport, hooliganism is rife in the soccer-obsessed country where fanaticism often ends in violence, as in the 2018 death of a Persija Jakarta supporter who was killed by a mob of hardcore fans of rival club Persib Bandung in 2018.

Data from Indonesia's soccer watchdog, Save Our Soccer, showed 78 people have died in game-related incidents over the past 28 years.

Saturday's game is already among the world's worst crowd disasters, including the 1996 World Cup qualifier between Guatemala and Costa Rica in Guatemala City where over 80 died and over 100 more were injured. In April 2001, more than 40 people are crushed to death during a soccer match at Ellis Park in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Horror pic 'Smile' happy at No. 1; 'Bros' starts in 4th

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Moviegoining audiences chose the horror movie over the romantic comedy to kick off the month of October. Paramount's "Smile" topped the North American charts with \$22 million in ticket sales, according to studio estimates Sunday, leaving Billy Eichner's rom-com "Bros" in the dust.

Universal's "Bros" launched with an estimated \$4.8 million to take fourth place behind "Don't Worry Darling" (\$7.3 million) and "The Woman King" (\$7 million). But opening weekends likely aren't the final word on either "Bros" or "Smile." Horror movie audiences are generally front-loaded, dropping off steeply after the first weekend, while something like "Bros," which got great reviews and an A CinemaScore, suggesting strong word-of-mouth potential, is a movie that could continue finding audiences through the fall. It is not unusual for R-rated comedies to open modestly and catch on later.

"Everyone who sees it absolutely loves it," said Jim Orr, Universal's president of domestic distribution. "Billy Eichner, (director) Nick Stoller and Judd Apatow have created a movie that's heartwarming and hysterically funny."

"Bros" is significant for being the first gay rom-com given a wide theatrical release by a major studio, as well as the first studio movie starring and co-written by an openly gay man. Since premiering at the Toronto International Film Festival last month, the film has gotten stellar reviews from critics and also been the target of "review bombs" on IMDB. The site last week removed removed hundreds of one-star reviews for "Bros" that were logged before the film was released.

It's also hard to compete with a new horror movie in October. "Smile," written and directed by Parker Finn in his directorial debut, stars Sosie Bacon as a therapist haunted by smiling faces after a traumatic event.

According to exit polls, 52% of the audience was male and 68% were ages 18-34 for the R-rated film. Playing in 3,645 locations, "Smile" started strong with \$2 million from Thursday night previews, too, and had a 4% uptick Saturday, which is almost unheard of for genre films that usually decline after the first night.

"Smile" also cost only \$17 million to produce.

"It's remarkable, particularly when you take the budget into account. It's just a terrific result and validated our thoughts about the movie as a whole," said Chris Aronson, Paramount's president of domestic

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 59 of 69

distribution. "That Saturday uptick bodes well for the long-term playability."

The "Smile" marketing team last weekend planted smiling actors at baseball games around the country as a marketing stunt, which Aronson said helped push the movie over the top.

"Smile" just shows once again that the horror genre should be put on a pedestal by theater owners," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore.

Second place went to "Don't Worry Darling" in its second weekend in theaters, with \$7.3 million, down 64% from its opening. The mid-century-styled psychological thriller starring Florence Pugh and Harry Styles has earned \$32.8 million domestically against a \$35 million production budget.

And "The Woman King" was close behind in third place in its third weekend, with an estimated \$7 million, down only 36% from last weekend. The historical war epic directed by Gina Prince-Bythewood stars Viola Davis as an Agojie general and has made \$46.7 million.

Rounding out the top five was the re-release of "Avatar," with \$4.7 million from 1,860 locations.

Notably, the film with the highest per-theater average was the Indian epic "Ponniyin Selvan: I," which earned \$4.1 million from just 510 theaters. It's one of several Indian blockbusters to perform well in North America recently, including "RRR" and "Brahmastra Part 1: Shiva."

"It was a solid weekend," Dergarabedian said. "We're not going to get into the \$100 million-plus weekends until 'Black Adam,' but audiences are getting a really diverse slate of movies to see on the big screen."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. "Smile," \$22 million.
2. "Don't Worry Darling," \$7.3 million.
3. "The Woman King," \$7 million.
4. "Bros," \$4.8 million.
5. "Avatar" (re-release), \$4.7 million.
6. "Ponniyin Selvan: I," \$4.1 million.
7. "Barbarian," \$2.8 million.
8. "Bullet Train," \$1.4 million.
9. "DC League of Super-Pets," \$1.3 million.
10. "Top Gun: Maverick," \$1.2 million.

Pine Island residents recount horror, fear as Ian bore down

By GERALD HERBERT and AMY FORLITI Associated Press

PINE ISLAND, Fla. (AP) — Paramedics and volunteers with a group that rescues people after natural disasters went door to door Saturday on Florida's devastated Pine Island, offering to evacuate residents who spoke of the terror of riding out Hurricane Ian in flooded homes and howling winds.

The largest barrier island off Florida's Gulf Coast, Pine Island has been largely cut off from the outside world. Ian heavily damaged the only bridge to the island, leaving it only reachable by boat or air. For many, the volunteers from the non-profit Medic Corps were the first people they have seen from outside the island in days.

Residents described the horror of being trapped in their homes as water kept rising. Joe Conforti became emotional as he recounted what happened, saying the water rose at least 8 to 10 feet (2.4-3 meters), and there were 4-foot (1.2-meter) waves in the streets.

"The water just kept pounding the house and we watched, boats, houses — we watched everything just go flying by," he said, as he fought back tears. "We've lost so much at this point."

Conforti said if it wasn't for his wife, Dawn Conforti, he wouldn't have made it. He said: "I started to lose sensibility, because when the water's at your door and it's splashing on the door and you're seeing how fast it's moving, there's no way you're going to survive that."

He said his wife had them get on top of a table to keep from getting swept away by the water. The next day, he said, they brought food to an older gentleman who lived on the next block, and they made sure

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 60 of 69

to get him off the island on the first available boat.

"He lost everything," Joe Conforti said of the man. "He said that if we didn't bring him the food, he was going to take his life that night because it was so bad."

Some residents shed tears as Medic Corps volunteers came to their doors and asked if they wanted to be evacuated on Saturday. Some declined the offer for now and asked for another day to pack their belongings. But others were anxious to get away immediately.

Helen Koch blew her husband a kiss and mouthed the words "I love you" as she sat inside the Medic Corps helicopter that lifted her and seven of the couple's 17 dogs to safety from the decimated island. The dogs were in cages, strapped to the outside of the helicopter as it took off.

Her husband, Paul Koch, stayed behind with the other dogs, and planned to leave the isolated island on a second trip. He told The Associated Press that days earlier, he didn't think they would make it, as the major hurricane raged and the house began taking on water.

Pine Island has long been known for its quiet, small-town atmosphere and mangrove trees. It's a popular destination for fishing, kayaking and canoeing. Now, bleak scenes of destruction are everywhere in this shattered paradise.

Houses have been reduced to splinters and boats have been tossed onto roadways. The island has no power, and no running water – save for a few hours on Friday when one resident said they were able to take a shower. A community of mobile homes was destroyed.

The Medic Corps volunteers went to one house to search for a woman who was known to have stayed behind during the storm and has had no contact with her friends since. Inside the woman's house, heavy furniture had been toppled over and her belongings were tossed about. There was no sign of the woman, raising fears she had been sucked out of her home by the storm surge.

Linda Hanshaw said the tight-knit island community is amazing and "everyone I know who hasn't left is trying to leave."

But that wasn't true for everyone. Kathleen Russell was trying to persuade her elderly husband to leave, but he didn't want to budge just yet. The couple kept declining offers to evacuate. The couple said they were not ready, but might be willing to leave on Sunday.

Claire St. Leger said she had nine people in her house, including neighbors, as the storm came in.

"I thought for sure we were all dying," she said. "I just sat in an inside room with pillows, I crossed myself so many times, I thought for sure we were dying. Water kept rising."

Medic Corps is a nonprofit group of pilots, paramedics, doctors, a former Navy SEAL and other volunteers that responds to natural disasters and gets people to safety. According to the organization's website, it began in 2013 in response to Super Typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines and in 2017 it began deploying aircraft and responders to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

EXPLAINER: 3 more on trial in Michigan governor kidnap plot

By ED WHITE Associated Press

JACKSON, Mich. (AP) — A scheme to kidnap Michigan's governor in 2020 will get yet another airing in a different court when three men face trial Monday, just weeks before voters consider whether to reelect Gretchen Whitmer to a second term.

Fourteen men were arrested two years ago, disrupting what one participant said was a plan to incite a U.S. civil war known as the "boogaloo." But not all were treated the same. Federal prosecutors focused on six who were considered to be key players, while Michigan authorities handled the rest.

A look at the issues:

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2020?

The government said it broke up a plot to kidnap Whitmer, a Democrat, from her vacation home in northern Michigan. For months, undercover FBI agents and informants were embedded among anti-government extremists who trained in Wisconsin and Michigan and made trips to scope out her property.

Investigators secretly recorded hate-filled conversations about Whitmer and other public officials who

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 61 of 69

were denounced as tyrants, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic when businesses were shut down, people were ordered to stay home and schools were closed.

Ty Garbin and Kaleb Franks pleaded guilty in federal court in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and testified against four others. The alleged leaders, Barry Croft and Adam Fox, were convicted in August, while two more men were acquitted last spring.

WHO'S FACING TRIAL NOW?

Joe Morrison, father-in-law Pete Musico and Paul Bellar are charged in Jackson County, Michigan, with three crimes, including providing material support for terrorist acts, which carries a maximum prison sentence of 20 years. They're accused of forming an alliance with Fox and others through their paramilitary group, the Wolverine Watchmen.

Jackson County is where gun drills and other training with Fox occurred.

"They didn't go out and participate in a plan to kidnap the governor," Assistant Attorney General Sunita Doddamani said in court in 2021. "Their group provided the motive, means and opportunity for those individuals that did do so."

Mark Chutkow, a former federal prosecutor in Detroit, said dividing the cases between state and federal authorities made sense.

"The state attorney general has carved out a piece of the conspiracy where you have three people working in concert in Jackson County," Chutkow told The Associated Press. "That's a story that's digestible, that a jury can get its arms around, and a story more easily translated than scooping everyone up" in federal court.

WHAT IS THE DEFENSE?

Lawyers for Morrison, Musico and Bellar say the men cut ties with Fox before the kidnapping plot accelerated in summer 2020; Bellar had moved to South Carolina.

They plan to sharply question an important witness, Dan Chappel, an Army veteran who said he joined the Wolverine Watchmen to maintain his gun skills but was distressed over talk about attacking police. He agreed to stay in the group and become an FBI informant.

The men claim they were entrapped by Chappel and his FBI handlers, though Garbin, another likely witness for prosecutors, will knock that down.

Any weapons drills simply were to prepare for "potential civil unrest in the United States," said Bellar's lawyer, Andrew Kirkpatrick.

But a judge who found enough evidence to send the men to trial likened the Wolverine Watchmen to a minor league baseball team where players are trained to join the "big leagues."

"Unfortunately, the big leagues was something extremely heinous and illegal," Judge Michael Klaeren said last year.

TRIAL AND POLITICS:

The kidnapping plot hadn't been mentioned much in Michigan's gubernatorial race until Republican candidate Tudor Dixon seemed to make light of it during a Sept. 23 campaign appearance.

"The sad thing is, Gretchen will tie your hands, put a gun to your head and ask if you're ready to talk," Dixon said, apparently a reference to Whitmer's pandemic policies. "For someone so worried about being kidnapped, Gretchen Whitmer sure is good at taking business hostage and holding it for ransom."

The Whitmer campaign said threats of violence were "no laughing matter."

King Charles III decides not to attend climate summit

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — King Charles III has decided not to attend the international climate change summit in Egypt next month, fueling speculation that the new monarch will have to rein in his environmental activism now that he has ascended the throne.

The Sunday Times newspaper reported that the decision came after Conservative Prime Minister Liz Truss objected to Charles attending the conference, known as COP27, when she met with the king last

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 62 of 69

month at Buckingham Palace.

But a member of Truss' Cabinet said the government and palace were in agreement about the decision. "That is a decision that has been made amicably, as far as I am aware, between the palace and the government," Simon Clarke told Times Radio. "The suggestions this morning that he was ordered to stay away are simply not true."

Clarke also rejected suggestions that Truss didn't want Charles to attend the summit because she intends to water down Britain's climate goals. The government remains committed to the achieving its target of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, he said.

Under the rules that govern Britain's constitutional monarchy, the king is barred from interfering in politics. By convention, all official overseas visits by members of the royal family are undertaken in accordance with advice from the government.

Before becoming king when Queen Elizabeth II died on Sept. 8, there had been speculation Charles would travel to the summit in the role he then held as Prince of Wales.

Charles attended the previous climate summit, COP26, last year in Glasgow, Scotland, but his attendance at this year's conference was never confirmed. COP27 is taking place Nov. 16-18 in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh.

When he was Prince of Wales, Charles was accused of meddling in government affairs, including allegations that he inappropriately lobbied government ministers.

But Charles is now king, and he has acknowledged that he will have less freedom to speak out on public issues as monarch than he did as the heir to the throne. At the same time, his advisers would be looking for the right time and place for Charles' first overseas trip as sovereign.

"My life will, of course, change as I take up my new responsibilities," Charles said in a televised address after his mother's death.

"It will no longer be possible for me to give so much of my time and energies to the charities and issues for which I care so deeply. But I know this important work will go on in the trusted hands of others."

Biden pledge to make federal fleet electric faces slow start

By HOPE YEN, MATTHEW DALY and DAVID SHARP Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden, a self-described "car guy," often promises to lead by example on climate change by moving swiftly to convert the sprawling U.S. government fleet to zero-emission electric vehicles. But efforts to eliminate gas-powered vehicles from the fleet have lagged.

Biden last year directed the U.S. government to purchase only American-made, zero-emission passenger cars by 2027 and electric versions of other vehicles by 2035.

"We're going to harness the purchasing power of the federal government to buy clean, zero-emission vehicles," the president said soon after his January 2021 inauguration. He has since used photo ops — taking a spin in Ford Motor Co.'s electric F-150 pickup truck, or driving GM's Cadillac Lyriq electric SUV at the Detroit auto show — to promote their potential. Cabinet officials have hawked a first set of Ford Mustang Mach-E SUVs in use at the departments of Energy and Transportation.

The White House frequently describes the 2027 timeline as on track. But the General Services Administration, the agency that purchases two-thirds of the 656,000-vehicle federal fleet, says there are no guarantees.

Then there is the U.S. Postal Service, which owns the remaining one-third of the federal fleet. After initially balking and facing lawsuits, the agency now says that half of its initial purchase of 50,000 next-generation vehicles will be powered by electricity. The first set of postal vehicles will hit delivery routes late next year.

Climate advocates say that agency can do even better.

"USPS should now go all-electric or virtually all electric with its new vehicles," said Luke Tonachel, senior director of clean vehicles and buildings at the Natural Resources Defense Council, citing an additional \$3 billion in federal spending targeted for the postal fleet under the landmark climate law Biden signed last month.

About 30% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions come from the transportation sector, making it the single

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 63 of 69

largest source of planet-warming emissions in the country.

Electrification of the federal fleet is a "cornerstone" of Biden's efforts to decarbonize the federal government, said Andrew Mayock, chief federal sustainability officer for the White House.

"The future is electric, and the federal government has built a strong foundation ... that's going to deliver on this journey we're on over the next decade," he said in an interview.

Excluding the Postal Service, about 13% of new light-duty vehicles purchased across the government this year, or about 3,550, were "zero emissions," according to administration figures provided to The Associated Press. The government defines zero emissions as either electric or plug-in hybrid, which technically has a gas-burning engine. That compares with just under 2% in the 2021 budget year and less than 1% in 2020.

Nationwide, about 6% of new car sales are electric.

When it comes to vehicles actually on the road, the federal numbers are even smaller. Many of the purchases in recent months won't be delivered for as long as a year due to supply chain problems.

Currently just 1,799 of the 656,000-vehicle federal fleet are zero-emissions vehicles.

At a rate of 35,000 to 50,000 GSA car purchases a year, it will take years, if not decades, to convert the entire fleet.

"It hasn't been exactly a fast start," said Sam Abuelsamid, principal mobility analyst for Guidehouse Insight. "It's going to be challenging for them probably for at least the next year or two to really accelerate that pace."

Christina S. Kingsland, who directs the business management division for the federal fleet at GSA, said "the federal fleet is a working fleet."

The agency pointed to a limited EV supply from automakers with big upfront costs. In addition, it said the needs of agencies are often highly specialized, from Interior Department pickup trucks on large rural tribal reservations to hulking Department of Homeland Security SUVs along the U.S. border.

Agencies also need easy access to public EV charging stations. The White House has acknowledged agencies are "way behind" on their own charging infrastructure, with roughly 600 charging stations and 2,000 total chargers nationwide.

While Biden's bipartisan infrastructure law provides \$7.5 billion to states to build out an EV charging network of up to 500,000 chargers over several years along interstate highways, no money from that law was earmarked for federal agencies' specialized needs. Money for charging stations must be allocated in each department's budget.

Meeting Biden's goal for the federal fleet is contingent on industry increasing production as predicted beginning in 2025 and 2026, analysts say. By that time, the effects of big federal investments to build public chargers and boost EV manufacturing in the U.S. will likely be felt alongside tougher rules for automakers to curtail tailpipe emissions.

GM, for example, has set a target of 1 million EV annual production capacity worldwide by 2025, while Ford expects to make 2 million EVs globally by 2026. Stellantis also is cranking up production capacity and is getting ready to launch a whole slate of new EVs.

The White House has declined to set a specific goal for EV purchases in 2023, but Mayock said he expects the number to be higher than 13%.

While the Postal Service is an independent agency, it plays an essential role in fleet electrification, not only because it owns 234,000 vehicles in the federal fleet, but also because the familiar blue-and-white mail trucks are by far the most visible federal vehicle, rolling into neighborhoods across America each day.

The agency plans to buy up to 165,000 of next-generation vehicles over a decade. The Postal Service remains "committed to reducing our carbon footprint in many areas of our operations and expanding the use of EVs in our fleet is a priority," said spokesperson Kim Frum.

White House officials say government EV purchases can only increase exponentially after a near-zero baseline a few years ago under President Donald Trump, who sought to loosen fuel economy requirements for gas-powered vehicles and proposed doing away with a federal tax credit for electric cars.

At a recent EV demonstration at a Federal Law Enforcement Training Center outside Washington, officers

test-drove EVs outfitted for police use, including the Ford Mustang Mach-E. Officers were impressed with the EV's acceleration and "nimbleness," Mayock said, calling the test drives "a big change-management moment" for the government.

Defendant to represent himself in Wisconsin parade trial

By TODD RICHMOND Associated Press

Darrell Brooks' trial was never going to be easy for the Milwaukee suburb of Waukesha. Now it could hurt even more.

Brooks plowed through the city's Christmas parade in his Ford Escape last year, killing six people and injuring dozens more, prosecutors allege. His trial opens Monday with jury selection and is expected to last at least a month.

Prosecutors have lined up hundreds of videos of the incident and dozens of eyewitnesses to testify, promising a case that legal experts have called overwhelming. But Brooks changed the playing field last week when Judge Jennifer Dorow ruled he could represent himself.

Brooks, who has no legal training, has already shown himself to be disruptive and combative. What looked like a straightforward proceeding could quickly devolve into a painful slog for still-grieving witnesses, legal observers said.

"It's really going to be a challenging trial for the witnesses," said Tom Grieve, a criminal defense attorney based in Madison. "You have a defendant who feels like he has nothing to lose. He's going to try to make as big a mess as possible and force a fumble by the prosecutors or judge and try to force a mistrial or build an appeal."

According to a criminal complaint, Brooks, 40, got into an argument with his ex-girlfriend on Nov. 21, then sped off and drove onto the parade route despite police shouting at him to stop and shooting at him. Police officers described the SUV as moving side to side and running over people.

The dead included 8-year-old Jackson Sparks, who was marching in the parade with his baseball team, and four members of a group calling itself the Dancing Grannies, a group of grandmothers who dance in parades. Police captured Brooks after he abandoned the SUV and tried to get into a nearby house, the complaint said.

Brooks faces 77 charges, including six counts of first-degree intentional homicide and 61 counts of felony reckless endangerment. Each homicide count carries a mandatory life sentence. Prosecutors attached a using-a-dangerous-weapon penalty modifier to each endangerment count, bringing the total maximum sentence on each of those charges to 17 1/2 years.

District Attorney Susan Opper has compiled more than 300 videos of the parade. Her witness list is 32 pages long; it includes Sparks' parents, as well as dozens of police officers and FBI agents.

"There's going to be no question in this jury's mind what happened, who was driving, how these people were injured or killed," Opper told the judge in court last week.

The process won't assuage any of the grief that David Durand is suffering over the loss of his wife, Tamara, one of the Dancing Grannies who was killed.

"The trial isn't going to bring her back," he said in a telephone interview.

Paul Bucher, a former Waukesha County district attorney, said that Brooks' failure to stop even as bodies were bouncing off his SUV will help Opper prove that Brooks intended to kill people, the key element in a first-degree intentional homicide count.

Brooks initially pleaded not guilty by reason of mental disease, which could have resulted in him being sentenced to a mental institution rather than prison. He withdrew that plea in September without explanation. Dorow said in court last week that psychologists found Brooks has a personality disorder but is mentally competent.

Brooks moved last week to fire his public defenders and asked Dorow to let him represent himself. Dorow warned that without legal training he faces long odds against Opper and her assistants. But without a finding of mental incompetence, she said, she was legally bound to allow him to proceed.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 65 of 69

Brooks can be volatile in court. During a hearing in August, he fell asleep at the defense table, woke up, went on a tirade and scuffled with a bailiff. At last week's hearing, he repeatedly interrupted Dorow as she spoke. Dorow became so frustrated she adjourned until the next day.

Phil Turner, a Chicago-based defense attorney and former federal prosecutor, said that he expects Opper will call as many witnesses as she can to build an airtight case against Brooks.

If Brooks gets so unruly that cross-examinations break down, Dorow could simply end the questioning, Turner said. That would give Brooks grounds for an appeal, he said, "but there's going to be an appeal, no matter what."

Bucher, the former prosecutor, said he thinks Brooks knows he's probably going to prison for the rest of his life and just wants to waste everyone's time in court. He warned that the trial will become painful for victims and other witnesses who will have to interact with Brooks during cross-examination.

"He's playing games, and I think he enjoys it," Bucher said. "It's going to be terrible for the victims and the witnesses."

EXPLAINER: What's behind Indonesia's deadly soccer match?

By EDNA TARIGAN and EILEEN NG Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Violence, tear gas and a deadly crush that erupted following a domestic league soccer match Saturday night marked another tragedy in Indonesian football. Here's a look at how the chaos occurred and what is being done to prevent future incidents:

HOW DID THE CHAOS OCCUR?

Chaos broke out after Persebaya Surabaya defeated Arema Malang 3-2 in Saturday night's match in East Java's province Malang city. Police said there were some 42,000 spectators in the stadium, all of whom were Arema's supporters because the organizer had banned Persebaya fans in an effort to avoid brawls.

But a disappointing loss by Arema — the first match lost to Persebaya at its home stadium — prompted angry spectators to pour into the field after the match to demand answers. Fans threw bottles and other objects at players and soccer officials and violence spread outside the stadium, where at least five police cars were toppled and set ablaze and others damaged. Riot police responded with tear gas, which is banned at soccer stadiums by FIFA. But it sparked panic.

Hundreds of spectators rushed to an exit gate to avoid the tear gas, resulting in a crush that trampled or suffocated 34 to death almost instantly, with many more deaths to follow due to injuries.

HOW MANY PEOPLE DIED?

In one of the worst sports disasters, police said at least 125 people died, including children and two police officers, most of whom were trampled.

More than 100 people were injured. Police said the death toll is likely to rise more with multiple people in critical condition.

Data from an Indonesian football watchdog organization, Save Our Soccer, said that at least 86 soccer fans had died since 1995, most of them in fights.

WHY DOES SOCCER BEGET VIOLENCE?

Football is the most popular sport in Indonesia and the domestic league is widely followed. Fans are strongly attached to their clubs, and such fanaticism often ends in violence and hooliganism. But it usually happens outside the stadium.

The most well-known feud is between Persija Jakarta and Persib Bandung. Supporters of the two clubs have clashed in several matches that led to deaths. In 2018, a Persija Jakarta supporter was beaten to death by Persib Bandung rivals.

Indonesian football has also been beset with trouble on the international stage. Brawls broke out between supporters of archrivals Indonesia and Malaysia in 2019 during qualifiers for this year's FIFA World Cup.

In September 2019, Malaysian fans were threatened and pelted with projectiles at a World Cup qualifier in Jakarta, and Malaysia's visiting sports minister had to be evacuated from the stadium after violence broke out. Two months later, fans hurled flares and bottles at each other in another match in Kuala Lumpur.

Also in 2019, after losing in the finals of the U-22 match to Vietnam in the Southeast Asian Games, Indonesian fans took to social media to insult, harass, and send death threats to Vietnamese players and even their families.

In June, two Persib Bandung fans died while jostling to enter the stadium in Bandung to watch the 2022 President's Cup. The angry supporters became aggressive because the officers on the field did not allow them to enter the already-full stadium.

WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT DOING ABOUT IT?

Indonesian President Joko Widodo has expressed his deepest regret and ordered a thorough investigation into the deaths. He has also ordered the premier soccer league suspended until a safety reevaluation is carried out and tighter security put in place. Widodo said he hoped "this tragedy will be the last tragedy of football in Indonesia."

Indonesia's soccer association has also banned Arema from hosting soccer matches for the remainder of the season. Rights group Amnesty International urged Indonesia to investigate the use of tear gas at the stadium and ensure that those found in violations are tried in open court.

Man accused of killing 22 older women goes on trial again

By JAMIE STENGLE Associated Press

DALLAS (AP) — After Mary Brooks was found dead on the floor of her Dallas-area condo, grocery bags from a shopping trip still on her countertop, authorities decided the 87-year-old had died of natural causes.

Even after her family discovered jewelry was missing — including a coral necklace she loved and diamond rings — it took an attack on another woman weeks later for police to reconsider.

The next capital murder trial for Billy Chemirmir, 49, begins Monday in Dallas in the death of Brooks, one of 22 older women he is charged with killing. The charges against Chemirmir grew in the years following his 2018 arrest, as police across the Dallas area reexamined the deaths of older people that had been considered natural, even though families raised alarm bells about missing jewelry. Four indictments were added this summer.

Chemirmir, who maintains his innocence, was convicted in April of capital murder in the smothering death of 81-year-old Lu Thi Harris and sentenced to life in prison without parole. He will receive the same punishment if convicted in Brooks' death. His first trial in Harris' death ended in a mistrial last November when the jury deadlocked.

Loren Adair Smith, whose 91-year-old mother is among those Chemirmir is charged with killing, will be among the many relatives of victims attending the trial, which, she said, brings a "huge bag of mixed feelings."

"At the same time of having that dread feeling, we are really glad to go back and bring this chapter to a close," Smith said.

It was Mary Annis Bartel's survival of a March 2018 attack that set Chemirmir's arrest in motion. Bartel, 91 at the time, told police that a man had forced his way into her apartment at an independent living community for seniors, tried to smother her with a pillow and took her jewelry.

Before Bartel died in 2020, she described the attack in a taped interview that was played at Chemirmir's previous trials. She said the minute she opened her door and saw a man wearing green rubber gloves, she knew she was in "grave danger."

Police said they found Chemirmir the next day in the parking lot of his apartment complex. He was holding jewelry and cash, and had just thrown away a large red jewelry box. Documents in the box led them to the home of Harris, who was found dead in her bedroom, lipstick smeared on her pillow.

At trial, prosecutors presented evidence that Harris and Chemirmir were checking out at the same time

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 67 of 69

at a Walmart just hours before she was found dead.

In a video interview with police, Chemirmir told a detective that he made money by buying and selling jewelry, and that he had also worked as a caregiver and a security guard.

Most of Chemirmir's alleged victims lived in apartments at independent living communities for older people. The women he's accused of killing in private homes include the widow of a man he had cared for while working as an at-home caregiver.

Brooks' grandson, David Cuddihee, testified that he found her body on Jan. 31, 2018. He said she had sometimes used a cane but was still healthy and active.

"She would walk to church, she would walk to the dentist down the street," Cuddihee said.

Police testified that grocery receipts showed Brooks was at Walmart the day before her body was found. Surveillance video from the store showed a vehicle matching the description of Chemirmir's leaving just after Brooks, going in the same direction.

Dallas County District Attorney John Creuzot, a Democrat, decided to seek life sentences rather than the death penalty when he tried Chemirmir on two of his 13 capital murder cases in the county. His Republican opponent has criticized that decision as he seeks reelection in the nation's busiest death penalty state.

In an interview with The Dallas Morning News, Creuzot said he's not against the death penalty, but among things he considers when deciding whether to pursue it are the time it takes before someone is executed, the costs of appeals and whether the person would still be a danger to society behind bars. Chemirmir, he added, is "going to die in the penitentiary."

Prosecutors in neighboring Collin County haven't said if they will try any of their nine capital murder cases against Chemirmir.

Pope warns of nuclear war risk; appeals to Putin on Ukraine

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis on Sunday appealed to Russian President Vladimir Putin for a cease-fire, imploring him to "stop this spiral of violence and death" in Ukraine and denouncing the "absurd" risk of the "uncontrollable" consequences of nuclear attack as tensions sharply escalate over the war.

Francis uttered his strongest plea yet about the seventh-month-old conflict, which he denounced as an "error and a horror."

It was the first time in public that he cited Putin's role in the war. The pontiff also called on Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to "be open" to serious peace proposals.

Francis told the public, gathered in St. Peter's Square, that he was abandoning his usual religious theme for his Sunday noon remarks to concentrate his reflection on Ukraine.

"How the war is going in Ukraine has become so grave, devastating and threatening that it sparks great worry," Francis said.

"In fact, this terrible, inconceivable wound of humanity, instead of shrinking, continues to bleed even more, threatening to spread," the pope said.

"I deplore strongly the grave situation created in the last days, with further actions contrary to the principles of international law," Francis said, in a clear reference to Putin's illegal annexation of a large swath of eastern Ukraine. "It, in fact, increases the risk of a nuclear escalation, to the point of fearing uncontrollable and catastrophic consequences on the world level."

"Rivers of blood and tears spilled these months torment me," the pope said. "I am pained by the thousands of victims, in particular among the children, and by so much destruction, that leaves many persons and families homeless and threatens vast territories with cold and hunger," he said.

"Certain actions can never be justified, never," the pope said. He didn't elaborate. But Putin sought to justify launching the invasion saying he needed to protect his country from what he called "Nazi" elements in Ukraine.

"It's anguishing that the world is learning the geography of Ukraine through names like Bucha, Irpin, Mariupol, Izium, Zaporizhzhia and other places, that have become places of indescribable sufferings and

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 68 of 69

fears," Francis said.

"And what to say about the fact that humanity finds itself again faced with atomic threat? It's absurd," Francis said, who then called for an immediate cease-fire.

"My appeal is directed above all to the president of the Russian Federation, imploring him to stop, also for the love of his people, this spiral of violence and death," Francis said. "On the other side, pained by the immense suffering of the Ukrainian people following the aggression undergone, I direct a similarly trusting appeal to the president of Ukraine to be open to serious proposals of peace," Francis said.

It is rare for the pope to single out leaders in his frequent appeals for an end to violent conflicts. In doing so, Francis signaled his extreme worry over the deteriorating situation.

"May arms cease and conditions be searched for to start negotiations able to lead to solutions not imposed by force but agreed upon, just and stable," Francis said. "And they will be thus if they are based on respect for the sacrosanct value of human life, as well as on the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of every country, as well as the rights of minorities and of legitimate concerns."

Invoking God's name and the "sense of humanity that lodges in every heart," he renewed his many pleas for an immediate cease-fire.

Without elaborating, Francis also called for the "recourse to all diplomatic instruments, including those so far possibly not utilized, to end this immense tragedy."

"The war itself is an error and a horror," the pontiff lamented.

Throughout the war, Francis has denounced the recourse to arms. But recently, he stressed Ukraine's right to defend itself from aggression. Logistics complications have frustrated his oft-stated hope to make a pilgrimage to Ukraine to encourage peace efforts.

Today in History: October 3, MLB's first Black manager

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, Oct. 3, the 276th day of 2022. There are 89 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 3, 1995, the jury in the O.J. Simpson murder trial in Los Angeles found the former football star not guilty of the 1994 slayings of his former wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and Ronald Goldman. (Simpson was later found liable for damages in a civil trial).

On this date:

In 1941, Adolf Hitler declared in a speech in Berlin that Russia had been "broken" and would "never rise again."

In 1944, during World War II, U.S. Army troops cracked the Siegfried Line north of Aachen, Germany.

In 1951, the New York Giants captured the National League pennant by a score of 5-4 as Bobby Thomson hit a three-run homer off Ralph Branca of the Brooklyn Dodgers in the "shot heard 'round the world."

In 1961, "The Dick Van Dyke Show," also starring Mary Tyler Moore, made its debut on CBS.

In 1970, the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) was established under the Department of Commerce.

In 1974, Frank Robinson was named major league baseball's first Black manager as he was placed in charge of the Cleveland Indians.

In 1981, Irish nationalists at the Maze Prison near Belfast, Northern Ireland, ended seven months of hunger strikes that had claimed 10 lives.

In 1990, West Germany and East Germany ended 45 years of postwar division, declaring the creation of a reunified country.

In 2001, the Senate approved an agreement normalizing trade between the United States and Vietnam.

In 2003, a tiger attacked magician Roy Horn of duo "Siegfried & Roy" during a performance in Las Vegas, leaving the superstar illusionist in critical condition on his 59th birthday.

In 2008, O.J. Simpson was found guilty of robbing two sports-memorabilia dealers at gunpoint in a Las

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 088 ~ 69 of 69

Vegas hotel room. (Simpson was later sentenced to nine to 33 years in prison; he was granted parole in July 2017 and released from prison in October of that year.)

In 2011, an Italian appeals court freed Amanda Knox of Seattle after four years in prison, tossing murder convictions against Knox and an ex-boyfriend in the stabbing of their British roommate, Meredith Kercher.

Ten years ago: An aggressive Mitt Romney sparred with President Barack Obama on the economy and domestic issues in their first campaign debate. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton promised a full and transparent probe of the attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya, that killed the U.S. ambassador to Libya and three other Americans.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump, visiting Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, congratulated the U.S. island territory for escaping the higher death toll of what he called "a real catastrophe like Katrina"; at a church used to distribute supplies, Trump handed out flashlights and tossed rolls of paper towels into the friendly crowd. The United States expelled 15 of Cuba's diplomats to protest Cuba's failure to protect Americans from unexplained attacks in Havana. Yahoo announced that the largest data breach in history had affected all 3 billion accounts on its service, not the 1 billion it had revealed earlier.

One year ago: A report from the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists found that hundreds of world leaders, politicians, billionaires, religious leaders and drug dealers had been hiding investments in mansions, beachfront property, yachts and other assets for decades, using shell companies and offshore accounts to keep trillions of dollars out of government treasuries; those identified as beneficiaries of the secret accounts included Jordan's King Abdullah II and former U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair. An EgyptAir jet landed in Tel Aviv, making the first official direct flight by the Egyptian national carrier since the two countries signed a 1979 peace treaty. Tom Brady rallied the Tampa Bay Buccaneers to a 19-17 victory over the Patriots on a rainy Sunday night in his return to New England.

Today's Birthdays: Composer Steve Reich is 86. Rock and roll star Chubby Checker is 81. Actor Alan Rachins is 80. Former Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., is 79. Singer Lindsey Buckingham is 73. Jazz musician Ronnie Laws is 72. Blues singer Keb' Mo' is 71. Former astronaut Kathryn Sullivan is 71. Baseball Hall of Famer Dave Winfield is 71. Baseball Hall of Famer Dennis Eckersley is 68. Civil rights activist Rev. Al Sharpton is 68. Actor Hart Bochner is 66. Actor Peter Frechette is 66. World Golf Hall of Famer Fred Couples is 63. Actor-comedian Greg Proops is 63. Actor Jack Wagner is 63. Actor/musician Marcus Giamatti is 61. Rock musician Tommy Lee is 60. Actor Clive Owen is 58. Actor Janel Moloney is 53. Singer Gwen Stefani (No Doubt) is 53. Pop singer Kevin Richardson is 51. Rock singer G. Love is 50. Actor Keiko Agena is 49. Actor Neve Campbell is 49. Actor Lena Headey is 49. Singer India.Arie is 47. Rapper Talib Kweli is 47. Actor Alanna Ubach is 47. Actor Seann (cq) William Scott is 46. Actor Shannyn Sossamon is 44. Rock musician Josh Klinghoffer (Red Hot Chili Peppers) is 43. Actor Seth Gabel is 41. Rock musician Mark King (Hinder) is 40. Actor Erik Von Detten is 40. Actor Tessa Thompson is 39. Country singer Drake White is 39. Actor Meagan Holder is 38. Actor Christopher Marquette is 38. Actor-singer Ashlee Simpson is 38. Rapper A\$AP Rocky is 34. Actor Alicia Vikander is 34. Actor Noah Schnapp (TV: "Stranger Things") is 18.