

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Sunday, Oct. 9

Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Worship Service at 10:45 a.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m., SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship (St. John's 9:00 am, Zion 11:00 am)

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.; Sunday School, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.

## Monday, Oct. 10

No School - Native American Day

## Tuesday, Oct. 11

Northwestern Middle School Music Festival  
PSAT Pre-Administration

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



**"The first recipe for happiness is:  
Avoid too lengthy meditation  
on the past."**

André Maurois

*Chicken Soup  
for the Soul*

7 p.m.: School Board Meeting

## Wednesday, Oct. 12

8:30 a.m.: PSAT Grades 10 and 11 (Optional)  
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.

## Thursday, Oct. 13

Region 1A Cross Country Meet at Webster, 3:30 p.m.

Volleyball at Deuel (7th and 8th at 4 p.m., C match at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity)

5 p.m.: Combined 7th/8th FB at Webster

## **OPEN:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

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## NSU Career Highs Highlight 3-Set Win over (RV) Augustana

Aberdeen, S.D. – The Northern State University volleyball team closed out their Gypsy Day weekend with an offensively powered win over (RV) Augustana University. The Wolves repaid the Vikings, who swept them in September non-conference action, with a swift 3-set victory from Wachs Arena

### THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 3, AU 0

Records: NSU 11-8 (6-5 NSIC), AU 13-6 (5-6 NSIC)

Attendance: 1334

### HOW IT HAPPENED

The Wolves defeated the Vikings with set scores of 25-19, 25-10, and 25-18

Northern hit .337 in the match and held Augustana to a .069 hitting percentage, forcing 24 attack errors

NSU notched a match high 43 kills, 40 assists, 49 digs, and ten blocks in their ninth victory by sweep of 2022

The Wolves recorded just two hitting errors in the final two sets, hitting .379 in the second and .483 in the third

Two Wolves recorded double digit kills, with three attackers hitting above .300

The Northern State defense saw five players record three blocks or more and two notched double figure digs

### NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Taylor Buckley: 12 kills, .333 attack%, 8 digs, 4 blocks (career high)

Abby Brooks: 11 kills (career high), .600 attack%, 4 blocks

Hanna Thompson: 9 kills, .400 attack%

Keri Walker: 36 assists, 10 digs, 4 blocks

Madison Langlie: 15 digs, 2 assists

### UP NEXT

Northern State will travel for their next three matches, facing Sioux Falls on October 14, Southwest Minnesota State on October 15, and the University of Mary on October 20. With nine games remaining in the regular season the Wolves sit seventh in the NSIC standings.

## No. 1 Wayne State Pulls Away from Northern State

Aberdeen, S.D. – The Northern State University volleyball team battled with the No. 1 team in the country, ultimately falling in three sets. The Wolves put pressure on the Wildcats, falling with set scores of 25-19, 25-17, and 25-21.

### THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 0, WSC 4

Records: NSU 10-8 (5-5 NSIC), WSC 20-0 (10-0 NSIC)

Attendance: 1570

### HOW IT HAPPENED

Northern challenged the Wildcats, forcing 15 attack errors and holding them to a .215 attack percentage

The Wolves hit .130 with 36 kills and 34 assists in the match

NSU added 63 digs and eight blocks as a team and held a lead in each of the three sets

Sally Gaul led the team on offense and defense with nine kills and a career high 29 digs

Keri Walker dished out 32 assists in the match, while Abby Brooks led the team at the net with a career high seven blocks

### NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Sally Gaul: 9 kills, 29 digs, 3 blocks

Abby Brooks: 8 kills, 7 blocks

Madison Langlie: 15 digs

Keri Walker: 32 assists, 9 digs, 2 kills, 2 blocks

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## Full Throttle Second Half Leads Northern State over Winona State

Aberdeen, S.D. – It was a game for the Dacotah Bank Stadium record books Saturday afternoon, with the Northern State University Wolves recording a 42-21 Gypsy Days victory over Winona State. The Wolves played in front of a sell-out crowd of 7,064 and tied the stadium record for the most points scored by NSU. In addition, Northern handed Winona State their second road loss of the 2022 season.

### THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 42, WSU 21

Records: NSU 3-3, WSU 4-2

Attendance: 7064 (Dacotah Bank Stadium record)

### HOW IT HAPPENED

Winona State made smooth work of their opening drive of the contest, scoring on a 7-play, 3-minute drive at 10:01 in the first

Northern quickly responded and tied the game at 7-all, on a 10-yard receiving touchdown by Kaleb Skelly

The Warriors regained the lead mid-way through the second, recording their second receiving touchdown of the contest

It looked as though WSU would enter the locker room at half with a 7-point lead, however Dominick Fiscelli took the game into his own hands, literally; the Wolves wide receiver notched his first touchdown of the 2022 season in a 71-yard reception from Will Madler

NSU opened the half with a 31-yard reception score by Ben Noland and ran away with the game in the third

Jacob Van Landingham added a 6-yard receiving touchdown at 7:57 on the clock and Madler rushed 1-yard to the goal line with under 4-minutes, giving Northern a 35-14 lead

Madler added his second rushing score of the game and third of the season, with 12:21 to play in regulation, on a 37-second drive, following a fumble recovery by Nate Robinson

Winona State added a rushing touchdown with under a minute to play, however was unable to overcome the third quarter deficit

Northern notched a game leading 24 first downs, 83 yards rushing, 394 yards receiving, and 477 yards of total offense; season highs for the Wolves in both receiving yards and total offense

In addition, the NSU defense notched four sacks for a loss of 28 yards, one interception, one fumble recovery, and saw six players record at least one tackle for a loss

The Wolves special teams averaged 15.5 yards per kick return, averaged 39.0 yards per punt, and 63.9 yards per kickoff

Madler threw for a career high 394 yards, completing 23-of-31 attempts, and added 26 yards rushing and two touchdowns

Noland recorded the first 100-yard game of his Northern State career with 117 yards receiving and one touchdown, while Skelly was just shy of the 100-yard mark with 96

Hunter Hansen, Logan Grossinger, Brock Baker, and Ian Marshall tallied the four sacks for NSU, while Trevor Johnson pulled down the interception

### NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Will Madler: 394 yards passing, 4 touchdowns, 26 yards rushing, 2 touchdowns

Ben Noland: 117 yards receiving, 1 touchdown, 8 return yards

Kaleb Skelly: 96 yards receiving, 1 touchdown

Brennan Kutterer: 8 tackles, 1.0 tackles for a loss, 1 break-up

Hunter Hansen: 6 tackles, 1.5 tackles for a loss, 1.0 sack, 1 break-up

Trey King: 5 tackles, 2.0 tackles for a loss

Payton Eue: 111 yards punting (37.0 yards per punt), 447 kickoff yards (63.9 yards per kickoff), 6-for-6 PATs

UP NEXT: Northern State travels to Minot State next Saturday, October 15, for a 2 p.m. kick versus the Beavers. The Wolves then return home on October 22 versus Concordia-St. Paul.

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## **GFP Commission Holds October Meeting**

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission held their meeting at the Rapid City Outdoor Campus on Oct. 6-7.

### **WILDLIFE FINALIZATIONS**

The Commission voted to finalize turkey season proposals from previous meetings. To view them in their entirety, visit [gfp.sd.gov/commission/information/](http://gfp.sd.gov/commission/information/).

#### **Spring Turkey**

The Commission finalized changes for the spring wild turkey seasons. The following are the changes for the spring turkey season:

For the Black Hills spring turkey season, eliminated the second license available for residents and changed the season start date from the 2nd Saturday in April to the 4th Saturday in April.

April 22 – May 31, 2023

April 27 – May 31, 2024

For archery and mentored spring turkey licenses, season start dates would align with the prairie and Black Hills season, respectively.

For the Fall River hunting unit, removed the allowance to hunt within one mile of the Cheyenne River within the Black Hills hunting unit.

#### **Custer State Park Turkey**

The Commission finalized their current proposal for the Custer State Park Spring Turkey Season to begin on the 4th Saturday in April.

April 22 – May 21, 2023

April 27 – May 19, 2024

### **PARKS PROPOSALS**

#### **Allowance of Pets**

The Commission proposed a rule change allowing people staying in a cabin, lodge, or suite within a state park to have their dog or cat inside that facility during their stay.

A dog or cat accommodation fee of \$10 per reservation per facility is provided for in a separate proposal.

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Pictured left to right are Cole Simon, Jace Johnson, Carter Simon, Brevin Fliehs, Logan Pearson, Coach Joel Guthmiller. (Courtesy Photo)

## Groton's golf team places 7th in the state; Fliehs medals at 12th place

The Groton Area boys golf team placed seventh in the state tournament held in Aberdeen. Brevin Fliehs was a medalist with a 12th place finishing, shooting a 37 both days for a total score of 74.

Carter Simon shot a 37 and a 42 for a total score of 79 to place in 33rd place. Cole Simon was in 46th place with scores of 40 and 46 for a total of 86. Logan Pearson was in 66th place with scores of 45 and 47 for a total score of 92. Jace Johnson was in 80th place with scores of 44 and 51 and a total score of 95. Groton Area placed seventh as a team with a score of 331.

There were 97 golfers with 12 schools fielding complete teams at the state tournament.



Brevin Fliehs placed 12th at the state golf meet. (Courtesy Photo)

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## THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

*May the Lord our God be with us,  
as He was with our fathers; may He  
not leave us or forsake us, that He  
may incline our hearts to Himself,  
to walk in all His ways and to keep  
His commandments and His statutes  
and His ordinances, which  
He commanded our fathers.*

*1 KINGS 8: 57,58*

Detail of "King Solomon" (1337-41)  
by Andrea  
Pisano



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"I'D SAY THE ODDS ARE 60-50 THAT'S WRONG."

## BIBLE TRIVIA by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Song of Solomon in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. From Genesis 19, who prepared a meal for two in Sodom? *Lot, Abel, Ishmael, Hagar*

3. What was the more commonly known name of Hadassah? *Ruth, Esther, Sarah, Michal*

4. From Proverbs 16:18, "Pride goeth before ..." *Failure, Lust, Destruction, Forgiveness*

5. What caused the death of Samson's wife? *Poisoned, Fell off a cliff, Pushed from a tower, Burned*

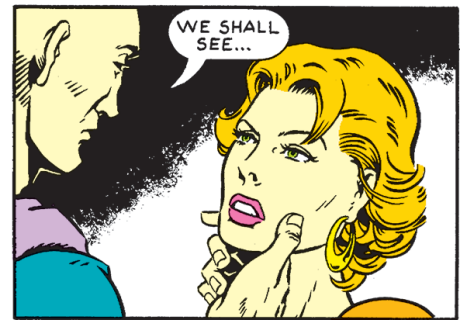
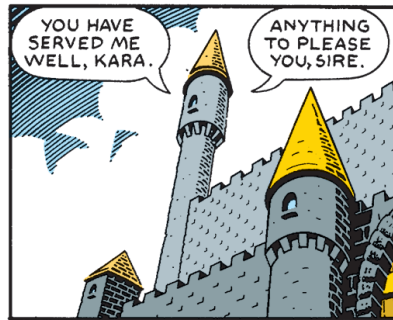
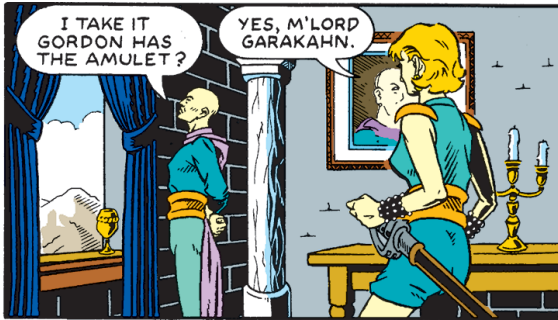
6. Who was the father of Jacob? *Moses, Isaac, Abraham, Noah*

ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) Lot, 3) Esther, 4) Destruction, 5) Burned, 6) Isaac

*"Test Your Bible Knowledge," a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online.*

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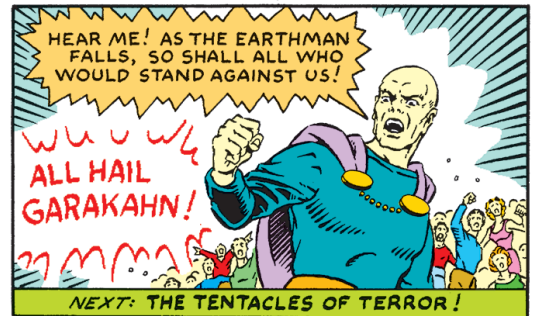
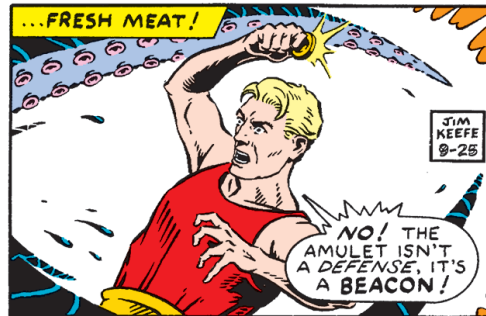
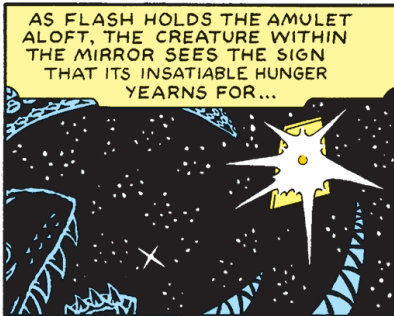
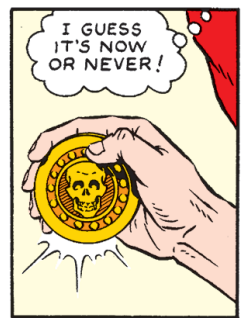
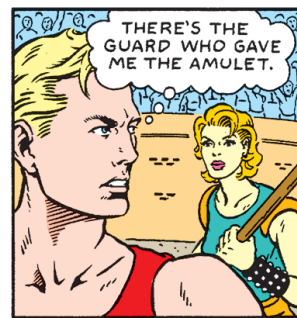
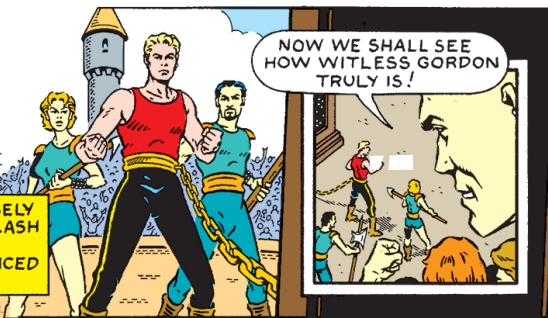
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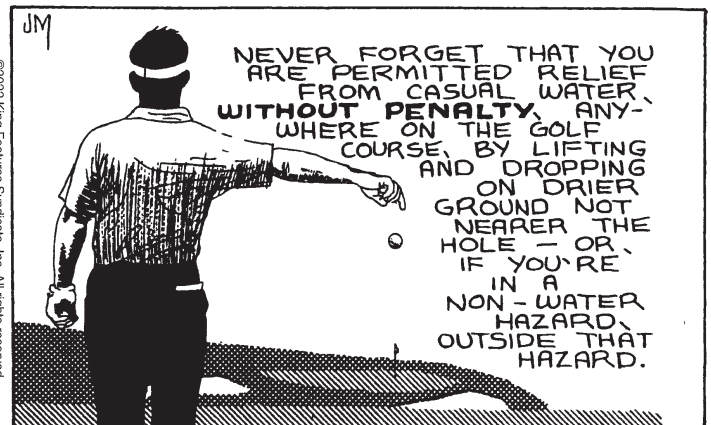
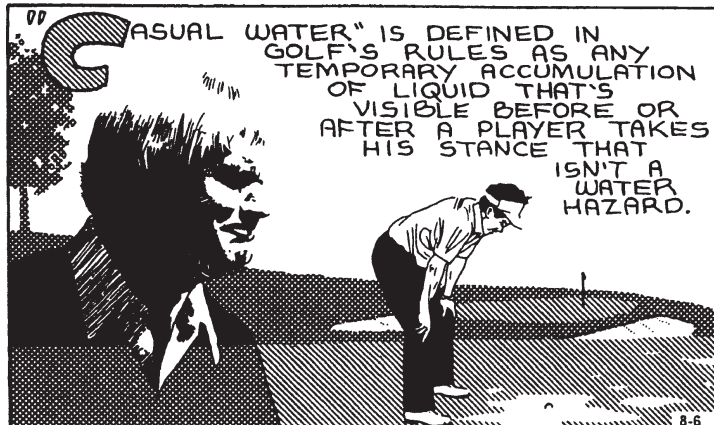
## FLASH GORDON

HOLDING THE AMULET HE FALSELY BELIEVES WILL PROTECT HIM, FLASH IS BROUGHT BEFORE THE MYSTICAL MIRROR TO BE SACRIFICED TO THE CREATURE WITHIN!

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## Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS







## Praluent Injections Significantly Decrease LDL Level

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I am a 66-year-old male who was diagnosed about 15 years ago with mild coronary artery disease, with some blockages in my peripheral arteries. I was taking the maximum recommended dosage of pravastatin to maintain a low cholesterol, but I experienced complete ruptures of both Achilles tendons. These incidences occurred five years apart, but after the second rupture, my doctor discontinued the pravastatin. I then started Praluent injections twice a month to control my cholesterol, which has been incredibly effective — maybe even too effective — and is the purpose of my writing to you. With Praluent injections, my LDL level is about 26, and my HDL is 100. When my primary doctor's assistant recently called to inform me of my bloodwork results, she said she has never seen anyone with such a low LDL level — and she sees a lot of bloodwork! My primary care doctor doesn't like it that low, but two different cardiologists I have seen think that the lower it is, the better. What do you think? — *J.W.*

**ANSWER:** The first issue is whether statins increase the risk of an Achilles tendon rupture, and I can't answer that with certainty, because there is some evidence it does. (Some studies have reported anywhere from an 80% relative risk increase to triple the risk, but the risk is still very, very low. Even if they triple the risk, the risk would be only three people per 10,000.) The studies that have shown there is risk

year of taking statins, but other studies have shown no risk at all from statins.

The second issue is your very low LDL level, and the data for LDL levels is firmly on the side of the cardiologists you spoke with. The lower the LDL, the lower the risk of heart disease, and levels under 30 are not at all unusual in a person taking alirocumab (Praluent) or the other drug in that class (called PCSK9 inhibitors), evolocumab (Repatha). Your doctor's assistant will likely be seeing more people with LDL levels like yours. Do remember that a healthy, mostly plant-based diet and regular exercise still have benefits in people with LDL levels as low as yours — and not just in heart disease, but in reducing cancer risk, too.

\*\*\*

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** Can Dupuytren's contracture be transmitted from one person to another via plasma donation? Is the theory a consensus in the medical field? — *H.H.*

**ANSWER:** Dupuytren's contracture is a condition of fibrosis in the connective tissue of the hand, which leads to decreased hand flexibility and, ultimately (without treatment), to contractures, where fingers curl into the palm.

There is no known person-to-person transmissibility of Dupuytren's contracture. It's not an infectious disease. The risk factors include previous family history, being over 50, repetitive trauma, diabetes, smoking and alcohol. Some other related medical illnesses can also predispose a person to Dupuytren's contracture. Potential treatments include surgery and enzyme injection.

The word "theory" means a well-thought-out explanation based on the scientific method that helps explain why certain observed phenomena occur. Your question about Dupuytren's contracture being transmissible by plasma donation is a hypothesis for which I could find no support.

*Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to [ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu](mailto:ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu).*

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"Mr. Harrigan's Phone" (PG-13) -- Spooky movie season continues with this new release out now. Based on a novella from Stephen King's "If It Bleeds" collection, this film follows Craig (Jaeden Martell), a boy who befriends an elderly man named Mr. Harrigan (Donald Sutherland). As their friendship grows, Craig gifts Mr. Harrigan with a cell phone. After the elderly man passes away, Craig gets beat up by bully. In order to soothe his own spirit, Craig calls Mr. Harrigan's old phone number, confessing that he wishes revenge on the bully. Little does he know, Mr. Harrigan hears him from beyond the grave and is willing to help Craig get exactly what he desires ... with very deadly consequences. (Netflix)

**Jaeden Martell and Donald Sutherland star in "Mr. Harrigan's Phone."** Courtesy of Netflix

"Dark Places" (R) -- Here's another horror/mystery book-to-film adaptation that seemed to have gone under the radar. "Dark Places" stars Charlize Theron as Libby Day, a woman still wrecked with trauma from the day she discovered her mother and two sisters murdered in their home. Libby, who was 8 at the time, gets pressured by the police to name her teenage brother, Ben, as the perpetrator of these crimes. Decades later, Ben is still in prison, but Libby gets approached by the head of a true crime club who, after studying the case in depth, believes that there's much more to the story and that her brother is innocent. At first hesitant, but in need of the cash that the club can supply her with, Libby follows the club's leads with every person connected to that night until she finally uncovers the complex truth. (HBO Max)

"Shantaram" (NR) -- Releasing Oct. 14, this 12-episode thriller TV series features Charlie Hunnam ("Sons of Anarchy" and "The Gentlemen") as Lin, an ex-convict who escaped prison to reach the city of Bombay, India, where he plans to start anew. However, amid trying to start a new life, crime continues to find him, and he quickly gets himself wrapped into elaborate schemes, leading to a partnership with a crime boss in Afghanistan. Longing for freedom, but unable to find it along the dangerous path he continues to walk along, Lin battles with severe internal conflict and must eventually decide between doing what's right versus what's easy. (AppleTV+)

"The Lost City" (PG-13) -- This comedy-adventure can provide a bit of a break from the more-intense entertainment choices right now. Sandra Bullock portrays Loretta Cage, a romance novelist who lives a life opposite of the passionate ones her characters live. To promote her latest novel set in a "lost city," Loretta goes on tour with her book's cover model, Alan (Channing Tatum), who the fans are much more interested in. But, in a sudden turn of events, not unlike the ones in her novels, Loretta gets kidnapped by billionaire Abigail Fairfax (Daniel Radcliffe), who thinks Loretta can help him decipher a map leading to a real lost city that is full of treasure. Alan, heavy on looks and low on brains, is the only person who sees Loretta get taken and therefore becomes her only chance of salvation. (Prime Video)

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1. Which Rod Stewart song has a verse with spoken French lyrics?
2. How many films did the Beatles make? Name them in order.
3. What was Brook Benton's real name?
4. Who had a hit with "Afternoon Delight"?
5. Name the song that contains these lyrics: "Sittin' here eatin' my heart out waitin', Waitin' for some lover to call."

## Answers

1. "Tonight's the Night (Gonna Be Alright)," 1976. The spoken lyrics were done by Swedish model and actress Britt Ekland, who was Stewart's girlfriend.
2. There were five: "A Hard Day's Night" (1964), "Help" (1965), "Magical Mystery Tour" (1967), "Yellow Submarine" (1968) and "Let It Be" (1970). Of the list, "Magical Mystery Tour" was the least well received, likely because it didn't even have a script, it was shown on BBC in black and white, and worse, it came out the day after Christmas.
3. Benjamin Franklin Peay. His first chart topper was "It's Just a Matter of Time" in 1959.
4. Starland Vocal Band, in 1976.
5. "Hot Stuff," by Donna Summer in 1979. The song topped global charts, hitting No. 1 in Japan, Canada (on three charts), Australia, Switzerland and on four charts in the U.S.

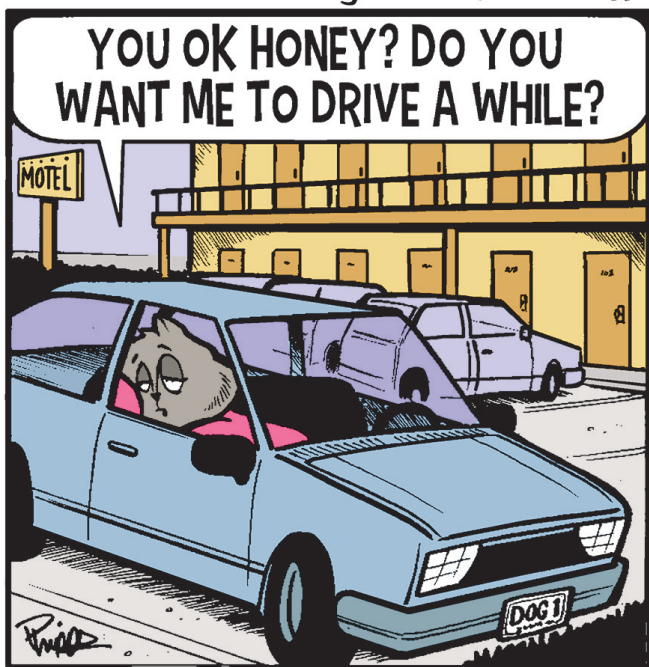
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## GRIN and BEAR IT <sup>by Wagner</sup>



"I'm getting more and more wishes for hybrid flying carpets."

## Just Like Cats & Dogs <sup>by Dave T. Phipps</sup>

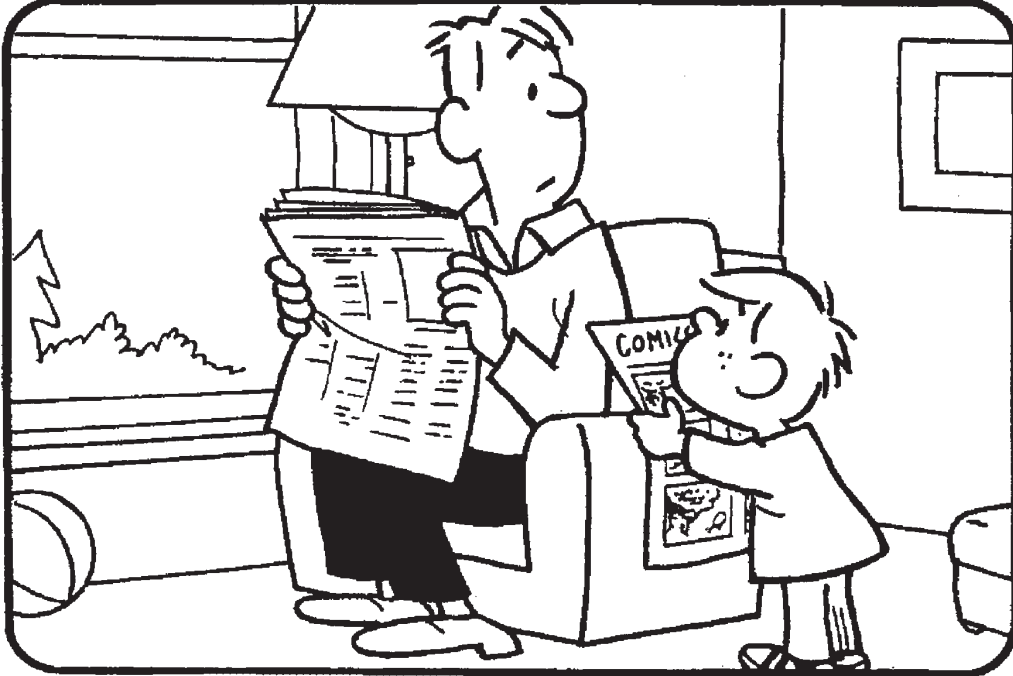


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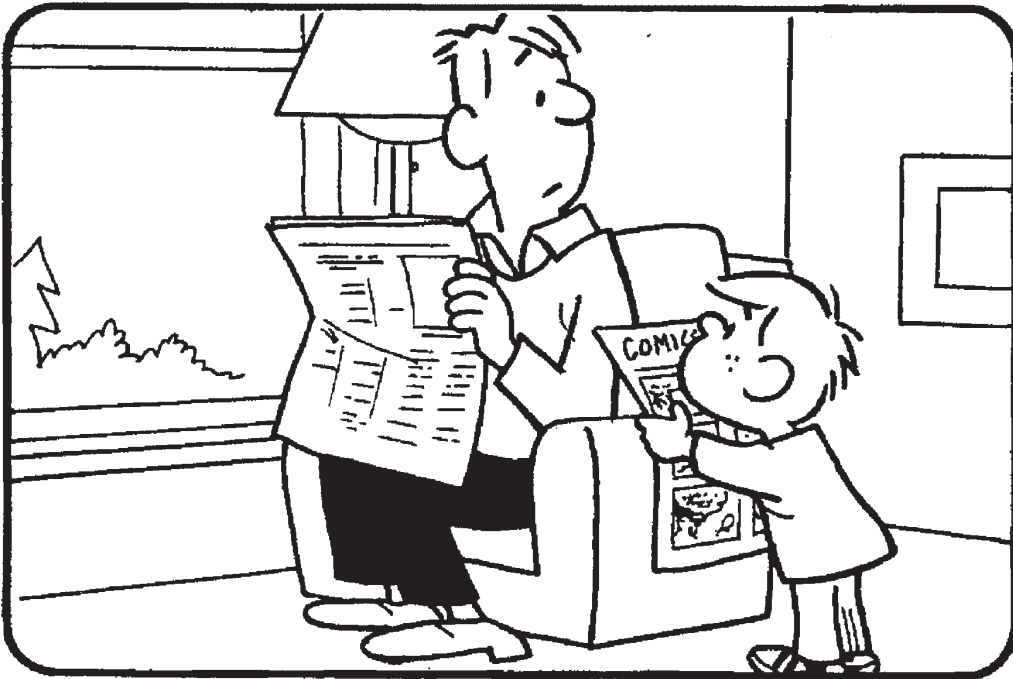
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## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY  
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Ball is missing. 2. Hand is missing. 3. Paper has fewer pages. 4. Shirt is slimmer. 5. Picture is moved. 6. Footstool is missing.

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\* Candy, candy and more candy. Halloween is just around the corner, and some of us like to offer a non-candy alternative to our door-knocking ghouls and goblins. Here are three that I have been successful with: pencils, erasers and glow sticks/bracelets. -- JoAnn

\* Post-Halloween sales are a great time to pick up imagination-stimulating accessories and outfits for the dress-up bin.

\* "Young children often love the act of pumpkin carving, but apart from letting them scoop out the seeds (which is FUN), there's not a safe way to let them help with the cutting. I recommend purchasing

a small pumpkin for the little ones to decorate with markers or paint." -- W.F. in South Carolina

\* "Baby lotion is great to have around on Halloween, because it can be used to remove face paint. Masks can restrict children's vision when trick-or-treating, so face paint is a better way to go. Use a washcloth and baby lotion to get that paint off quick." -- A.V. in Oregon

\* Choose a battery-powered candle for your carved jack-o'-lanterns. You can leave it on longer, even when you aren't home. And it's much safer than a true flame.

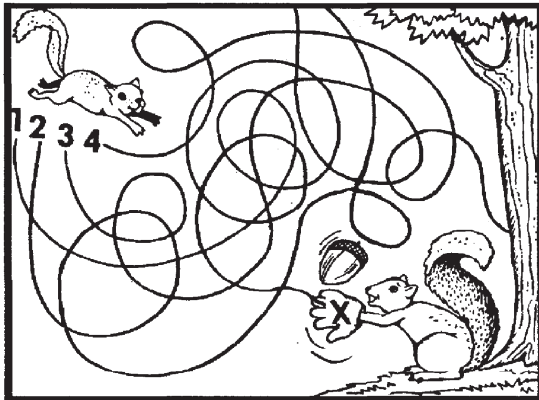
\* "Give any costume that your kid wants to wear for Halloween the 'dance test.' Have him or her put on the costume and dance around. If the child is tripping over the hems or the accessories are cumbersome, a change is in order." -- M. in Michigan

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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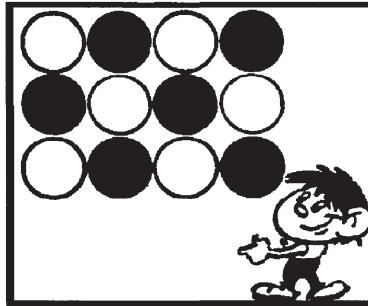
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## Junior Whirl

by Hal Kaufman



### MAKE HEADS OR TAILS OF COIN SWITCH?

LIKE to switch things around? Try your hand at this old poser. P.S.: It has a catch to it, natch.

Arrange a group of 12 similar-size coins, as at left, alternating heads and tails.

Now then, see if you can rearrange the scheme of things so that each vertical row consists of all heads or all tails simply by touching and manipulating just one coin.

That is to say, rearrange the setup, for instance, so that the first and third rows are all heads, and the second and fourth row tails.

And all this by touching and manipulating one coin.

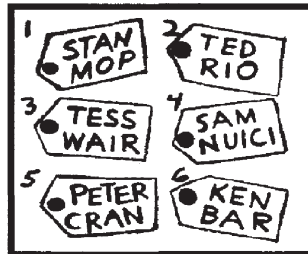
How is it done?

Move first coin in middle row to opposite side and push entire middle row one coin to the left.

**NICE CATCH!** Which path does the squirrel take to catch the falling acorn? Take a guess, then trace through line or lines.

**SHAPE UP!** There's a box turtle, a square meal, an angleworm, a conehead, arc welding, an archenemy, a round robin. Can you think of some more definitively shaped terms?

**TAG LINES!** What's in a name? Or, more specifically, what's in the six names that appear on tags in the diagram below? Well, if you are able to anagram the six names correctly, you can identify each individual's occupation. That is to say, letters can be rearranged to form names of jobs.



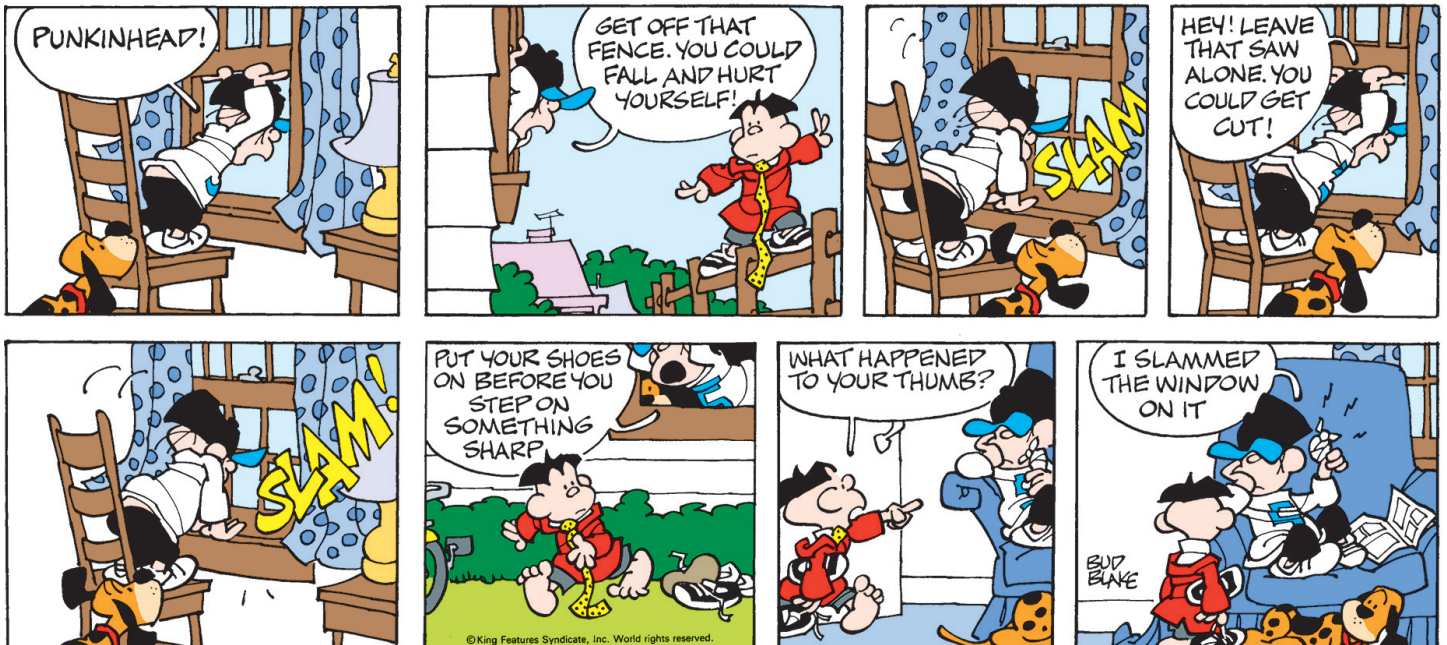
- Hints: 1. Delivers mail. 2. Handles copy.  
3. Serves food. 4. Plays in a band. 5. Uses a hammer. 6. Lends money.

What are the jobs?

1. Postman. 2. Editor. 3. Editor. 4. Musician. 5. Carpenter. 6. Banker.

## TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 "Big Blue"
- 4 Twice cuatro
- 8 Tubular pasta
- 12 PBS funder
- 13 Beloved
- 14 Optimist's credo
- 15 Standards
- 17 Profs' degrees
- 18 Finally
- 19 Snooze
- 21 Sound from a hot wok
- 22 "Conga" singer Estefan
- 26 Eastern European cake
- 29 Wager
- 30 Nile reptile
- 31 Novelist Anita
- 32 "Mayday!"
- 33 Ovid's 53
- 34 Hostel
- 35 Farm pen
- 36 Tightly packed
- 37 Illinois city
- 39 Day light
- 40 Corn serving
- 41 Tempt
- 45 Wicked
- 48 Bliss
- 50 News reporter Logan
- 51 Nepal's continent
- 52 "— a Won-

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15			16						17			
18							19	20				
			21				22			23	24	25
26	27	28				29				30		
31					32				33			
34				35				36				
37			38				39					
			40				41			42	43	44
45	46	47			48	49						
50					51					52		
53					54					55		

- derful Life"
- 53 Linen source
- 54 Squad
- 55 Command to Rover
- 8 Lighter brand
- 9 German pronoun
- 10 Wee bit
- 11 — and outs
- 16 To-do list items
- 20 PC key
- 23 Picnic spoiler
- 24 Egyptian deity
- 25 "... baked in —"
- 26 Radar dot
- 27 First-rate
- 28 U2 lead singer
- 29 Lad
- 32 Ogle
- 33 Slow, in music
- 35 "Chandelier" singer
- 36 "Girls" star Lena
- 38 Chill out
- 39 Old photo tint
- 42 Rainbow
- 43 New York's — Field
- 44 Sunrise direction
- 45 Sprite
- 46 Actor Kilmer
- 47 401(k) alternative
- 49 Work with

### DOWN

- 1 Early Peruvian
- 2 Ernie's pal
- 3 Postal delivery
- 4 Black Sea port
- 5 Breath mint brand
- 6 "Bali —"
- 7 Vitamin C providers

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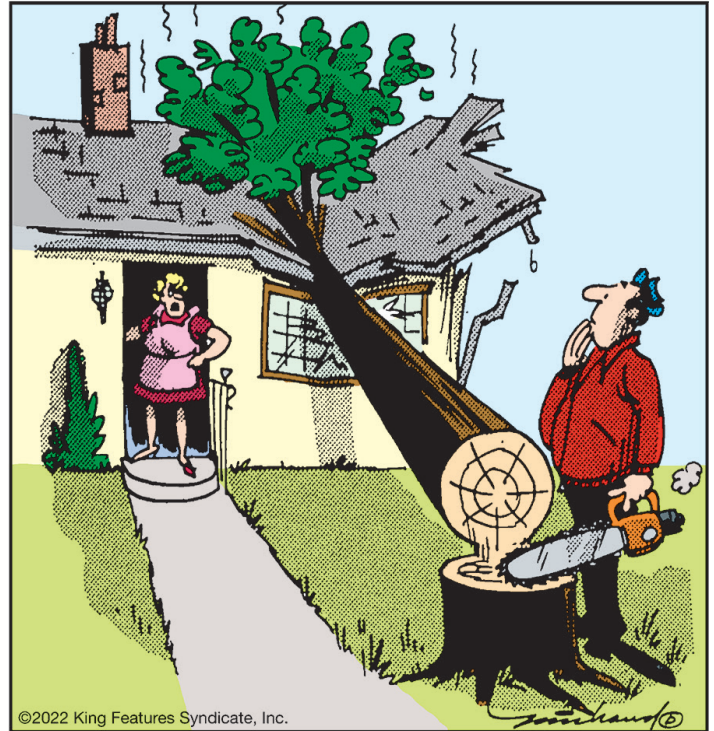
## — King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

I	B	M		O	C	H	O		Z	I	T	I
N	E	A		D	E	A	R		I	C	A	N
C	R	I	T	E	R	I	A		P	H	D	S
A	T	L	A	S	T		N	A	P			
			S	S	S		G	L	O	R	I	A
B	A	B	K	A		B	E	T		A	S	P
L	O	O	S		S	O	S		L	I	I	I
I	N	N		S	T	Y		D	E	N	S	E
P	E	O	R	I	A		S	U	N			
			E	A	R		E	N	T	I	C	E
E	V	I	L		E	U	P	H	O	R	I	A
L	A	R	A		A	S	I	A		I	T	S
F	L	A	X		T	E	A	M		S	I	T

## LAFF - A - DAY

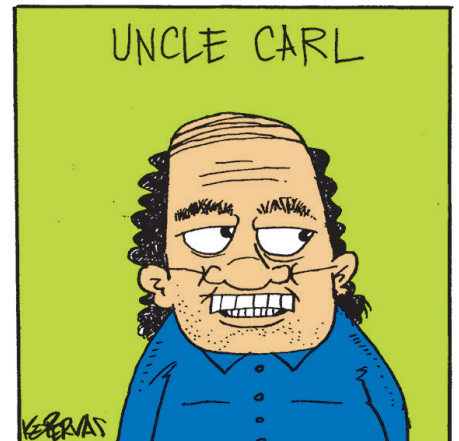
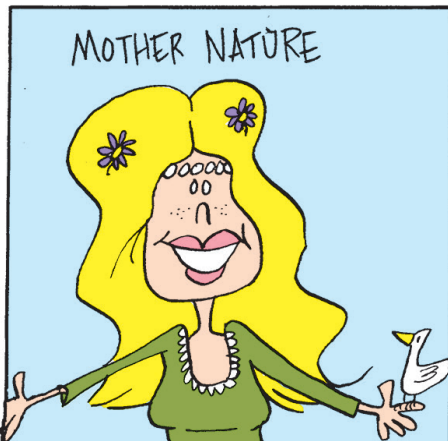


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"You woke up Mother!."

## Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas

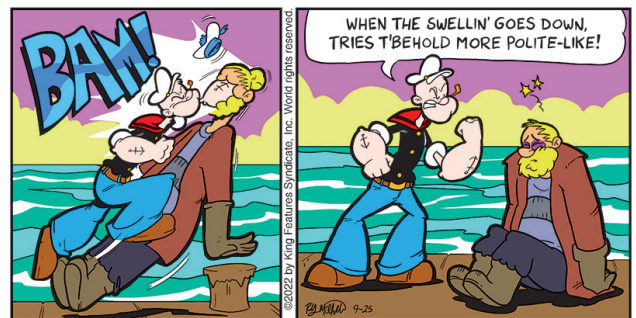
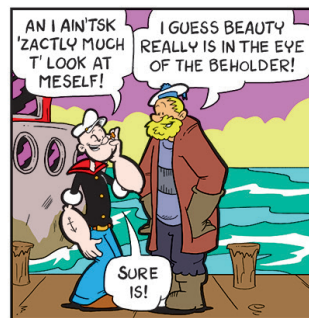
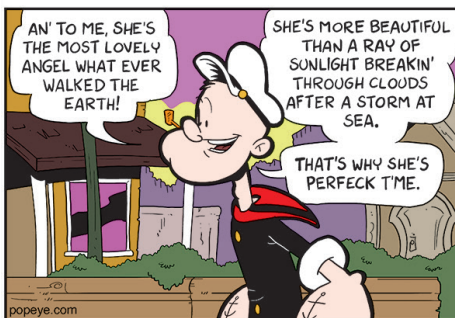
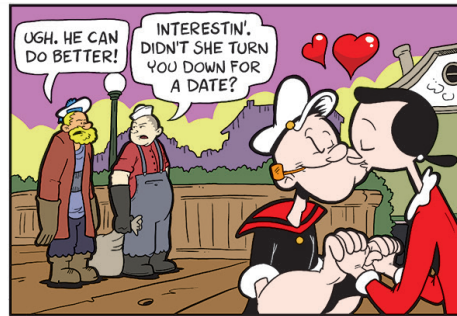
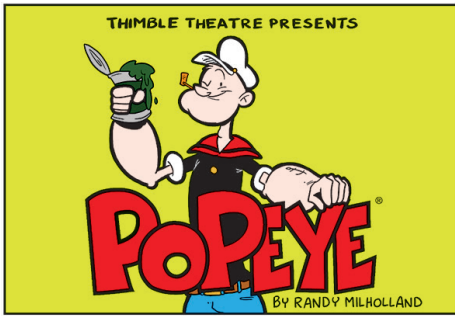


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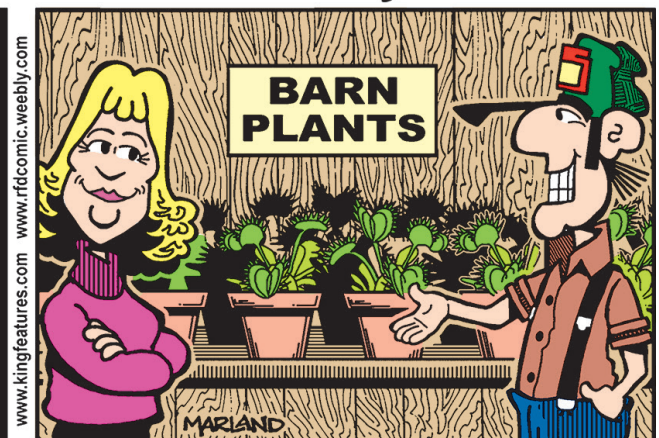
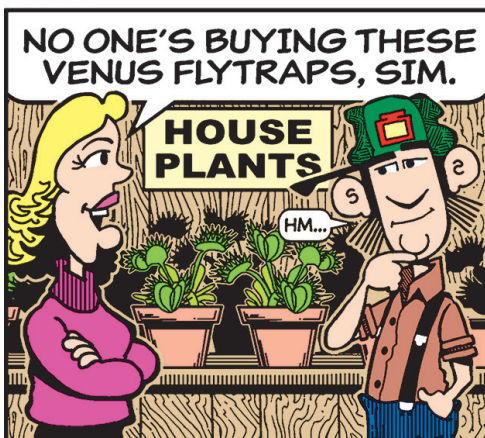
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## R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



# Groton Daily Independent

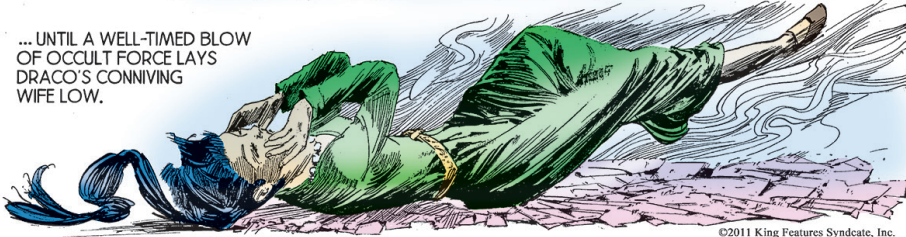
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Hal Foster's BY GIANNI AND SCHULTZ  
**Prince Valiant**

THE SPECTRAL BATTLE IS FIERCE, BUT SLOWLY THE MYSTERIOUS TRIO BEATS BACK MALDUBH'S DARK WITCHCRAFT...

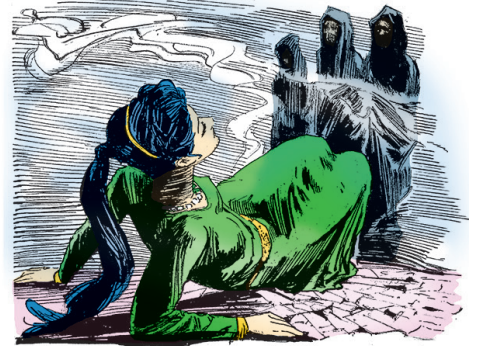


... UNTIL A WELL-TIMED BLOW OF OCCULT FORCE LAYS DRACO'S CONNING WIFE LOW.

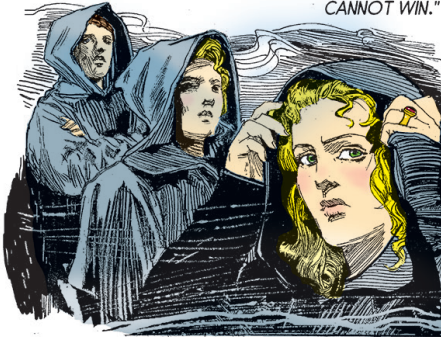


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DAZED AND ENRAGED BY THIS REVERSAL OF FORTUNE, SHE GASPS: "WHO ARE YOU?" ONLY THEN DO THE TRIO DRAW BACK THEIR COWLS.



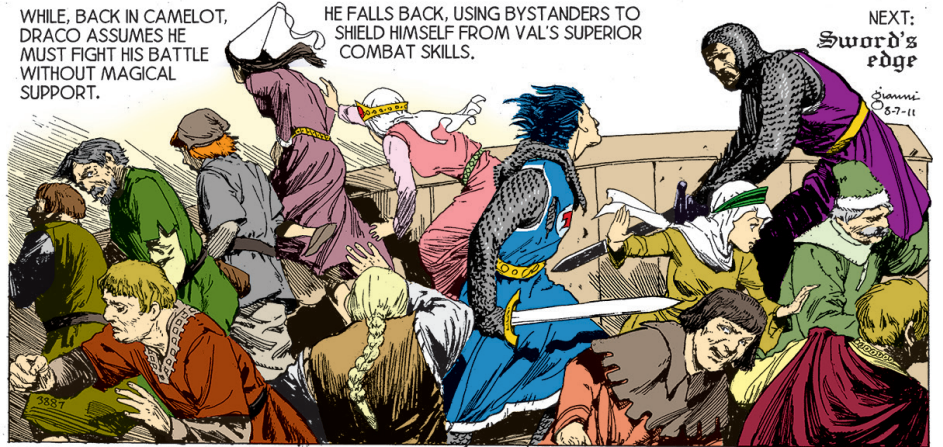
MALDUBH RECOGNIZES MAEVE. THE OTHERS ARE STRANGERS, BUT LOOK UNNERVINGLY FAMILIAR: "WE ARE THE DAUGHTERS OF THE QUEEN OF THE MISTY ISLES AND THE PRINCE OF THULE. YOU CANNOT WIN."



WHILE, BACK IN CAMELOT, DRACO ASSUMES HE MUST FIGHT HIS BATTLE WITHOUT MAGICAL SUPPORT.

HE FALLS BACK, USING BYSTANDERS TO SHIELD HIMSELF FROM VAL'S SUPERIOR COMBAT SKILLS.

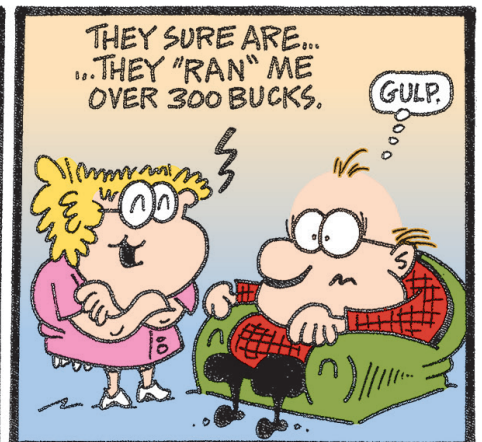
NEXT:  
**Sword's edge**



Gianni  
5-7-11

## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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## SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

### Storing Food When There's No Space

During the past two years when I stocked up on grocery staples, I ended up with canned foods and dry goods stored in three different places around the house.

I'd have to check all three places to be sure I grabbed the green beans with the nearest expiration date. Pasta was the same. Worse was when I discovered that I wasn't having spaghetti for dinner after all because I'd used the last of the pasta and only thought I had one more tucked away somewhere.

Enter the internet and the wide selection of kitchen storage products available.

I wish I'd known of this two years ago: a metal stacking unit that holds 36 cans. I put it on the buffet in the dining room, all cans in easy reach around the corner from the kitchen.

Not having a pantry, I've pulled the hall coat closet into service, moving the hangar bar close to the ceiling and opening up the whole bottom half of the space for four rows of wire shelving and baskets for dry goods and envelopes.

And when all seems lost, when you have no pantry and no basement, when your coat closet can't be reconfigured, there are still handy places you can store food. A small bookcase will hold cans. Slide a few baskets under an end table. Cereal keepers are smaller than boxes. A row of clear canisters for envelopes will let you see what you have at a glance.

The immediate benefit of having alternate storage places is that it opens up space in your cupboards for currently used items. The box of instant rice and the jar of peanut butter will all be right in front of you.

For more ideas to organize your food, search online (especially Amazon and the big-box hardware store near you) for food storage for small spaces.

Remember to get a black marker to write expiration dates in big letters!

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1. What Baseball Hall of Famer and member of the 1907 and '08 Chicago Cubs World Series teams lost parts of two fingers in a farm-machinery accident as a kid?

2. Name the American freestyle wrestler who won gold at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games and then went on to a prolific career in the WWF/WWE.

3. What Emmy and Peabody award-winning HBO sports newsmagazine series debuted in April 1995?

4. What event is traditionally held over two days in July at Boulia Racecourse in the Australian Outback?

5. The Eredivisie is the highest-level pro soccer league in what country?

6. What British racecar driver punched a track marshal who was trying to assist him after a crash at the 1977 Formula One Canadian Grand Prix?

7. What SEC college football team plays its home games in a stadium nicknamed "Death Valley"?



by Ryan A. Berenz

## Answers

1. Mordecai "Three Finger" Brown.

2. Kurt Angle.

3. "Real Sports With Bryant Gumbel."

4. The Boulia Camel Races.

5. The Netherlands.

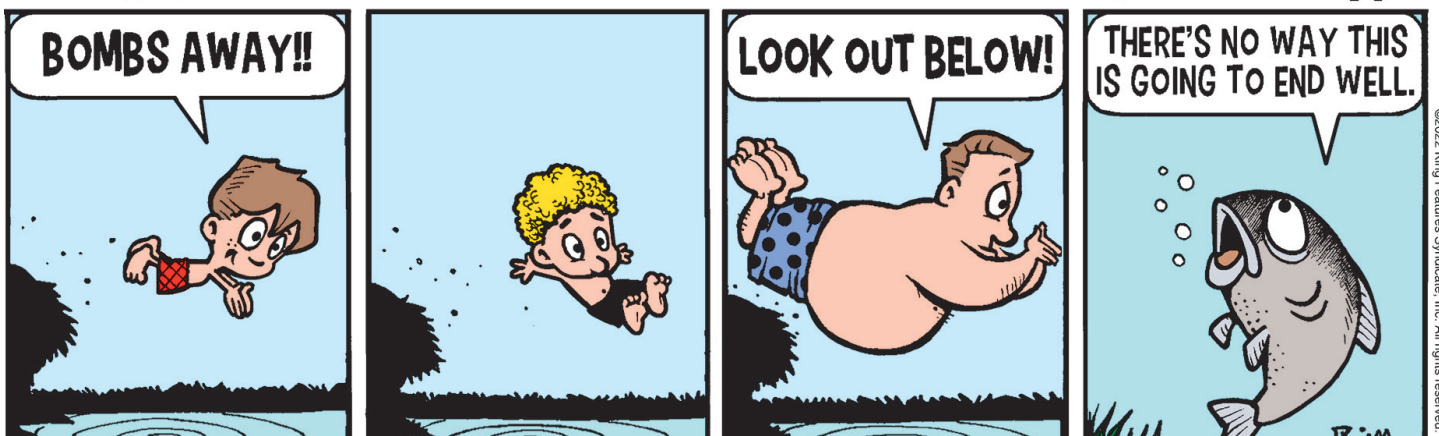
6. James Hunt.

7. The Louisiana State University Tigers.

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## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





## Fall Flea Season

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My cat Isaiah often gets fleas in the late spring through summer, but by September the fleas are usually gone. This year, he still has fleas, even as we get into the chillier October month. What can I do to drive the fleas out? -- Maddy in Biddeford, Maine

DEAR MADDY: While flea activity tends to drop during the colder months, chillier weather isn't a guarantee that they'll go away. A number of factors could keep them around, conceivably, all year. Things like a constantly warm environment in which to live (your house) or a higher than usual flea population (this can vary from year to year).

To really get rid of Isaiah's fleas, you'll need to treat him and tackle possible flea problems inside the house.

Treat Isaiah with a flea treatment, available at the pet store or from the vet. Perfumed soaps aren't good alternatives; they can dry and irritate his skin.

Wash or replace Isaiah's bedding, and wash any furniture upholstery, blankets or other items where he likes to lounge for long periods.

Treat the carpet with a flea preventative, available at the pet store or online. Put Isaiah into a safe room and sprinkle the treatment into the carpet as directed, then vacuum it up. The treatment will take care of any live fleas or eggs hiding in the carpet.

If your cat spends time outdoors, consider making him an indoor cat. This will reduce the chance of him contracting fleas outside and bringing them into the house.

Send your tips, comments or questions to [ask@pawscorner.com](mailto:ask@pawscorner.com).

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## Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

\* Boxing heavyweight champion Jack Johnson invented the household wrench in 1922.

\* The movie title "Death Wish III" was changed to "Death Wish 3" after a survey conducted by the Cannon Group revealed that nearly half of Americans couldn't read Roman numerals.

\* Tom Hanks' brother Jim voices "Toy Story's" Woody when his sibling is too busy.

\* A hat that doubles as a weapon? Sure, if you're a gum-leaf skeletonizer caterpillar, which wears its old molted heads on top of its noggin and uses them to bat away predators!

\* The human jaw can clench with 250 pounds of force.

\* Those chocolate-covered caramel candies we fondly know as Milk Duds were originally intended to be perfectly round. But when machines in 1928 couldn't produce them consistently, the misshaped goodies were called "duds," hence their unusual name.

\* From the "nothing like planning ahead" files: CNN has prepared a doomsday video, to be played by the last surviving employee. In 2009, a former intern posted the footage online. It shows a low-resolution video of a U.S. Army band playing a mournful rendition of "Nearer My God to Thee."

\* The center of the Milky Way tastes like raspberries and smells like rum.

\* In the 1970s, Chrysler advertised its luxury cars as containing "Corinthian leather." But spokesman Ricardo Montalban admitted on "Late Night with David Letterman" that the term really meant nothing, as said leather was actually sourced out of New Jersey.

\* Romania's Movile Cave, isolated from the outside world for more than 5 million years, contains more than 30 species not found anywhere else on Earth.

\* In the 1700s, "bitch the pot" or "standing bitch" was English slang for hosting a tea party.

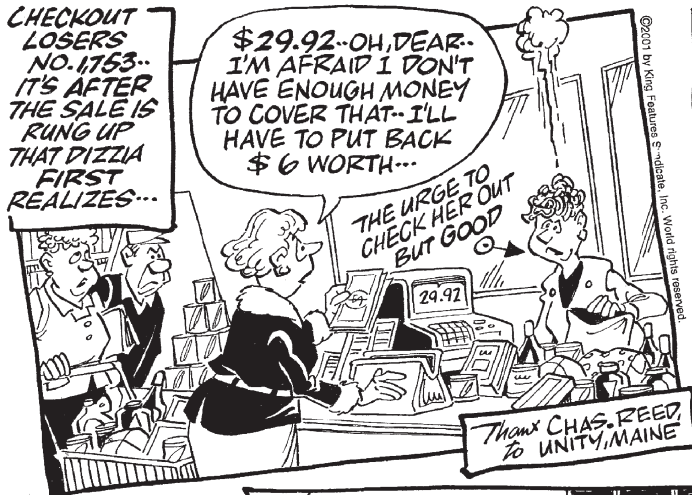
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Thought for the Day: "Try to be a rainbow in someone else's cloud." --Maya Angelou

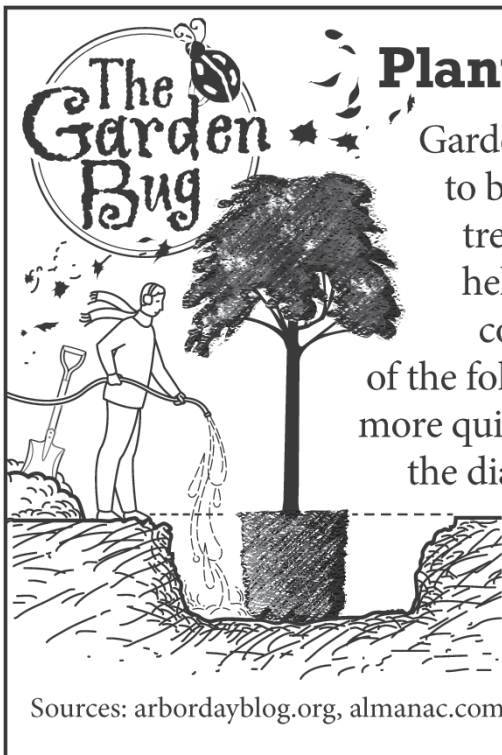
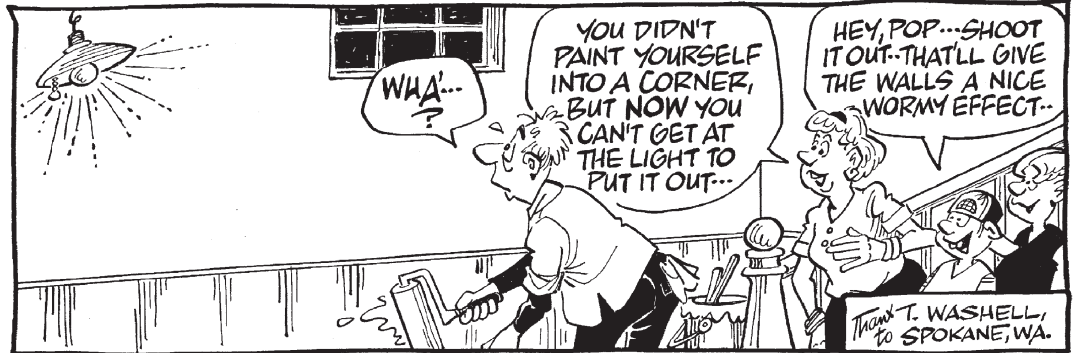
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## THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

BY AL SCADUTO



**SHOCK WAVES--**  
BARFO WAS VERY CAREFUL NOT TO PAINT HIMSELF INTO A CORNER-- NOW HERE'S A NEW WRINKLE FOR OUR MAN WHO WIELDS THE PAINT ROLLER--



## Planting in autumn

Gardeners often think that fall is too close to bitter winter weather to plant a young tree, but cooler temps and autumn rain help to establish roots before they must contend with extreme heat or drought of the following summer. New roots establish more quickly in a hole that is 1) roughly twice the diameter of the tree's root ball, and 2) a depth that allows the tree to stand at the same level as the nearby soil, so that water does not pool around the trunk. - Brenda Weaver

Sources: arbordayblog.org, almanac.com



by Freddy Groves

## Medical Scammers Caught

Thieves must think they're smarter than the rest of us. Until they're caught, that is, and have to give up all their ill-gotten gains and spend time behind bars. Here are a few examples:

The president of a medical testing company has been convicted of paying kickbacks, misleading investors and committing health-care fraud for pushing an allergy test.

He made several outlandish claims to investors

along the way:

-- That his company was valued at \$4.5 billion and that his little test could show nearly any disease just using a few drops of blood when it wasn't actually a diagnostic test at all.

-- That Dr. Fauci had required testing for Covid and allergies at the same time, which was handy, because the scammer also claimed that his allergy test could test for Covid.

-- That he was on the list to receive the Nobel Prize.

The scammer was convicted of a whole list of crimes and could face five to 20 years in prison on each of the scams. A back-of-the-envelope calculation shows 115 years in prison.

Then we have yet another health-care fraud, this time for genetic cancer testing. The owner of a chain of laboratories paid kickbacks for referrals who sent him patients who didn't actually need the test he was providing. The scammer submitted 325,000 claims and received over \$26 million in payments.

And yet another thief, this time a chiropractor, targeted health care in the durable medical equipment niche: crutches, hospital beds, canes, walkers, wheelchairs and more -- all supposedly prescribed through telemedicine visits. It involved bribery of doctors who approved the medical equipment. Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) was just one of their targets, and the scammers collected over \$10 million from that one source alone.

Unfortunately, the head thief in this scam only got four years in the slammer. He will, however, be minus \$3 million he has to pay back and \$10 million in restitution when he gets out.

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## Wishing Well®

6	2	8	6	2	3	5	6	3	5	8	7	4
H	E	Y	A	M	T	S	B	E	T	O	A	N
7	8	5	6	4	2	8	6	7	5	8	2	5
G	U	R	I	O	P	L	T	O	E	O	H	S
4	8	2	6	8	3	4	6	5	6	5	2	5
M	O	A	S	K	A	O	I	S	M	R	S	E
8	6	5	4	7	4	3	7	2	4	3	2	6
Y	P	D	R	O	E	C	D	I	M	H	Z	R
8	2	7	2	6	3	6	3	7	6	4	5	4
O	E	M	G	O	O	V	T	O	E	E	U	L
7	3	8	5	2	4	3	4	3	4	5	3	4
V	H	U	C	O	A	E	N	R	C	E	S	H
5	7	8	4	2	4	8	2	8	2	8	4	8
D	E	R	O	A	L	B	L	E	S	S	Y	T

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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1. U.S. STATES: How many states border the Great Lakes?
2. MOVIES: What was Buzz Lightyear's original name in the animated movie "Toy Story"?
3. TELEVISION: What was the name of the family dog on "The Brady Bunch"?
4. FOOD & DRINK: What is blind baking?
5. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What are the two traditional flowers associated with September?
6. HISTORY: Which state divided into two as a result of the U.S. Civil War?
7. PSYCHOLOGY: What kind of fear is represented by the condition called chromophobia?
8. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Who is the only president to serve in the office who was not elected as vice president or president?
9. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a group of tigers called?
10. MUSIC: Who was the first woman to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame?

### Answers

1. Six (Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio).
2. Lunar Larry.
3. Tiger.
4. Pre-baking a pie crust without filling.
5. Aster and morning glory.
6. Virginia and West Virginia.
7. Fear of one or more colors.
8. Gerald Ford.
9. An ambush.
10. Aretha Franklin.

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South Dakota Governor

**Kristi Noem**



**South Dakota:** *Under God, the People Rule*

## Breaking Tourism Records

The record-breaking pace continues for South Dakota's tourism industry – even with high inflation raising gas prices for visitors to our state. We recently rounded up Custer State Park's famous buffalo herd (although I didn't get to ride in the Buffalo Roundup this year like I normally do). The event drew another 20,000 attendees from across the country and around the globe. It was a perfect capstone to another record-breaking tourism season.

So far in 2022, South Dakota is on track to break records for visitor spending. Total spending this year-to-date is above last year's record-breaking pace – and by more than inflation. Given that last year's visitor spending was \$4.4 billion, that is an incredible accomplishment.

But the records don't stop there. We've had more night stays in South Dakota hotels and short-term rentals than ever before. And visitation to Mount Rushmore is up another 4% over last year's record. The Sioux Falls Regional Airport reported all-time passenger traffic records in both July and August.

Despite the Biden Administration's crushing inflation, visitors are still finding a way to make the trip to South Dakota. Tourism numbers are largely down across the country this year, which makes South Dakota's record-breaking pace all the more impressive!

We must remember that tourism is our state's 2nd largest industry. When tourism thrives, our state does well. And tourism has been thriving for years now because of South Dakota's respect for Freedom, our unique approach to the COVID pandemic, and our emphasis on telling our story to the rest of the country.

So, what can we expect in the final months of 2022? As I traveled throughout the Black Hills this past week in preparation for the Buffalo Roundup, I had the opportunity to stop at many tourism-related shops and businesses. They all were reporting strong visitation and spending through the Fall.

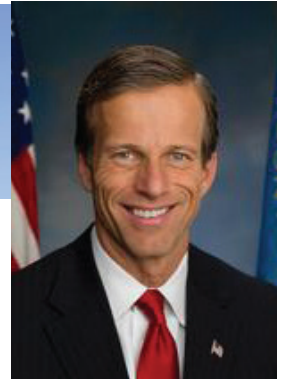
Moreover, pheasant hunting season is literally just days away, and our pheasant numbers are looking like some of our best in recent years. This certainly bodes well for ending our tourism year on a very positive note.

South Dakotans can take pride in the fact that our state offers an endless variety of things to see and do. We have beautiful landscapes, pristine state & national parks, and the nation's Shrine to Democracy. Visitors can experience our pioneer, Native American, and Old West cultures. These are just a few of the reasons South Dakota is still the perfect place to experience a world-class vacation.

But above all else, visitors are coming to South Dakota because we cherish our freedoms – and we love to share that with our visitors! Our friendly people are still our best ambassadors, and they make a visitor's time in our state extra special.

Join me in continuing to support our robust tourism industry. Let's welcome and encourage every visitor to experience the Great Faces and Great Places of South Dakota.

**John Thune**  
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



## Conservation Secures Future Pheasant Seasons

For more than a century, South Dakotans have eagerly anticipated the annual pheasant season. As the date approaches, we dust off our blaze orange, ready our shotguns, and induct a new generation of South Dakotans into our great state tradition.

I've looked forward to the start of pheasant season for as long as I can remember. Growing up in Murdo, in the heart of pheasant country, my dad instilled this heritage in us from a young age, teaching us the skills we needed to bag a rooster and more than a few life lessons along the way. From crisp mornings spent in our great outdoors to nights gathered 'round with friends and family for a communal meal that hopefully includes pheasant, the hunting season encompasses much of what I love about life in South Dakota.

It's no wonder that pheasant season draws hunters from around the country who have made our state's tradition part of their own family traditions. An estimated 100,000 non-resident hunters are expected to join 76,000 South Dakotans hunting ringnecks this season. As hunters of all stripes descend on South Dakota, they visit our small businesses and contribute hundreds of millions of dollars to our local economies. More than that, they prove that South Dakota is, in fact, the unrivaled Pheasant Capital of the World.

It goes without saying that hunters come to South Dakota because this is where the pheasants are. But in order for the populations to be strong in the fall, the conditions need to be right during the spring nesting season when quality habitat is essential for pheasants to hide their nests and protect their young chicks. For almost 40 years, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) has played an important role in maintaining and improving these wildlife habitats in South Dakota.

CRP was created to take environmentally sensitive land out of production and provide an economical alternative to using expensive seed, fertilizer, and chemicals that would otherwise be used on high-risk marginal lands. Today, more than 22 million acres of land nationwide and 1.7 million acres in South Dakota are enrolled in this program, protecting against soil erosion, improving water quality, and increasing wildlife habitat.

As a longtime member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I have been a strong supporter of CRP. As we look forward to another farm bill next year, I am also working to improve the program by making grazing more accessible, providing more enrollment options to producers, and addressing implementation issues from the 2018 farm bill. These changes will help ensure CRP remains an effective option for producers and landowners and continues to protect South Dakota land, water, and wildlife for years to come.

As we begin pheasant season, I am grateful for the landowners whose conservation practices are critical to keeping our pheasant hunting tradition strong for future generations. Whether it's your first hunt or your fiftieth, I wish all hunters across South Dakota a safe and successful hunting season.



CONGRESSMAN  
**DUSTY JOHNSON**  
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



## **Guest Column: Interning in a Congressional Office? An Experience of a Lifetime**

**By Mary-Katherine Schlicte, Jonah Dross, and Nathanael Monroe**

A congressional internship is a great opportunity to witness the inner workings of our nation's government and establish connections that help lead into professional life. Working for Congressman Dusty Johnson allows you to learn while being mentored by an advanced and established office of professionals.

Jonah:

My experience with Congressman Dusty Johnson's office has been nothing short of exceptional. Since joining the Congressman's team, I've worked on several projects assisting the press and legislative teams in policy areas that interest me. Everyone in the office has been great at helping me adapt to life on Capitol Hill; they answer my questions in detail and are always willing to help. The interns have become an integral part of the team in a short period of time.

Nathanael:

I applied for internships in a lot of offices, but the interview process really helped me narrow it down. While interviewing with this office I could immediately sense the interest in the interns and desire to see them succeed. During a typical busy week on the Hill in July they still made time to interview me one-on-one. The passion shown towards my success in a short zoom meeting made a big difference. During my internship, I have had the opportunity to sit in on meetings and briefings, write memos, speak with constituents, and develop valuable skills within politics. A couple of my favorite memories are sitting in the House and Senate galleries as Members cast votes on important legislation and being on the House floor. In just a month, the internship has already exceeded my expectations and I am sure it will do the same for you!

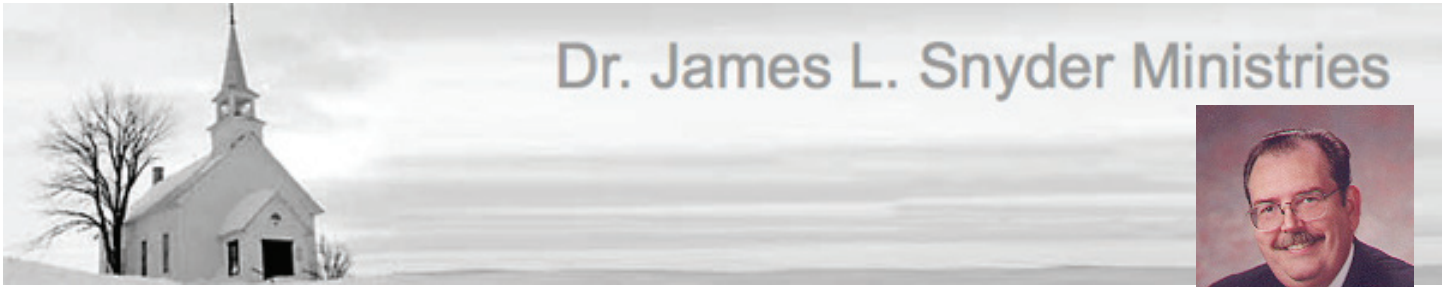
Mary-Katherine:

Interning in the D.C. office has been an incredible experience. I always knew politics was my passion, and now I get to work on Capitol Hill, directly involved in our nation's government. Some of my favorite aspects of working here are joining constituent meetings, researching background for bills, and gaining vital career skills for life after college.

An internship in Congressman Johnson's office is accommodating, adaptable, challenging, and rewarding. His staff is forward thinking, cohesive, and supportive. It is a positive environment which encourages you to take advantage of opportunities to apply and strengthen your skills. Want to be a part of it? You can find more information and apply here.

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## Have Nose, Will Snore



Having been married as long as The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and myself, there are very few things we disagree.

I run by the idea, "Do you want to be happy, or do you want to be right?" That has guided me through many a storm these past years.

Almost every day, I come across somebody having difficulty getting along with their spouse. My counseling has been consistent through the years, "You don't always have to be right."

That's what causes a lot of problems in relationships. People are obsessed with being right about everything, even when wrong. It doesn't cost a person a lot to give in, even when they might be right.

Our relationship has been very calm except for a few bumps.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is what I call a Vegetable Freak, whereas, on the other side of the kitchen table, I'm just a Freak.

If my wife doesn't get her daily dose of vegetables, she can become quite anxious. However, when I get my daily dose of vegetables, I also become anxious but in the other direction.

The king on her vegetable table is broccoli. Just the sight of broccoli is very offensive to me. I never had broccoli when I was growing up, and I'm not going to have broccoli until I die.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is very focused on her broccoli diet. If a day goes by that, she has not had broccoli, I have not seen it yet.

Often I use broccoli as a bargaining chip for my favorite food, Apple Fritter.

From my point of view, and it's only mine, the Apple Fritter makes up for Eve's apple blunder in the Garden of Eden. That is my story, and I'm sticking to it.

Probably, the biggest controversy we have, which has been with us ever since we were married, has to do with snoring. But, for some reason, I know not why, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage assumes that I snore every night.

Often in the middle of the night, I will feel a sharp elbow in my Adam ribs and hear somebody say, "Stop your snoring." For the life of me I have no idea what she's talking about.

She will confront me in the morning over breakfast with the idea that I snore at night. With a very quizzical nod, I just tried to forget that complaint. I know that I don't snore at night.

"You know how miserable it makes me to hear you snoring all night?"

I return her quizzical look and tell her that I don't know what she is talking about. I stayed up one night and never heard myself snore.

For some reason, she has the idea that snoring is bad for your health.

"Don't you know it's not healthy to snore at night like you do?"

I kept my response to myself, but if snoring is not healthy, how come everybody does it? I don't want her to hear me say that for various reasons.

I'm not sure about the health damage snoring does to a person. If I had been snoring all these years, according to her, how come it has not affected my health?

One night I got up and went to the kitchen to get a drink of water. Then, walking down the hallway to the bedroom, I heard this raspy noise. As I got to my bedroom, here it was, The Gracious Mistress of

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the Parsonage snoring. I only regret that I did not tape that incident because it would have been worth a lot to me.

When we got up in the morning, I was chuckling, and looking at me, she said, "Why are you laughing?" Do I tell her, or do I pass it off?

Being who I am, I actually did tell her.

She glared at me and said most vocally, "I do not snore, and I don't want to hear you tell me that ever again."

I chuckled inwardly and was waiting for some excuse to tell her again.

Then I saw it. A little Facebook report said that contrary to what people have believed, snoring is a very healthy thing for your body. According to this investigation, the bigger you are, the more you need to snore.

In sharing this new information with my wife, she was not very sympathetic. "That cannot be right," she said most defiantly. "Snoring is not healthy."

Then I showed her the story and even read it, and she did not want to believe it.

I looked at her and said, "It must be true because it's on Facebook."

Looking at me she said, "You believe everything you read on Facebook?"

"Well," I said as soberly as possible, "I believe this one for sure."

Not knowing what to say, she just turned around and walked away, mumbling something I couldn't understand.

When we went to bed that night, I looked at her and said, "I'm going to have a very healthy night tonight."

She didn't smile, but I did.

As I drifted off to la-la-land, I thought of a scripture. Amos 3:3, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

It is quite rare when two people agree on everything. It is important that we agree on the right things. We can have our difference but there are crucial issues where we must agree. Every relationship is based on discovering those issues and committing ourselves to them.

## EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What's causing the increase in malaria in Latin America? Could the disease reemerge in the U.S.?  
-- M. Simon, Braintree, MA

Malaria is a tropical disease that can cause high fever, a shaking chill and nasty flu-like symptoms. It can sometimes be fatal, but there are various treatments for it. It is spread by parasites that can live in mosquitoes, so if a mosquito feeds from the blood of an infected human, it can pass the parasite on the next time it drinks someone's blood.

Malaria is a serious problem outside of the United States, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted treatments, prevention and funding. It's a perennial problem in much of Africa because the temperature allows for year-round transmission. Recently a surge in Pakistan occurred because of the flooding. In Latin America, the uptick has been linked to a die off of amphibians, which means fewer animals that eat mosquito larva and therefore more mosquitoes that hatch and spread malaria parasites.

This happened because, in the 1980s, a fungus that causes the disease chytridiomycosis in amphibians traveled throughout the region. This disease causes thickening of the skin, which can be devastating because some amphibians absorb water through their skin instead of drinking it. In fact, this disease has been implicated in the extinction of over 200 species throughout the world. It has been inadvertently spread by humans, and is found on every continent except Antarctica. It's been confirmed in the U.S., especially on the East Coast, but only began to have an impact in the 1990s, 10 years after amphibian die-offs began in Latin America, so it is unlikely to have an effect on U.S. malaria levels for now.

The U.S. eliminated malaria transmission in 1951 and it has stayed that way since. This was accomplished by spraying insecticides, better drainage, and removal of mosquito breeding sites. Now, cases in the U.S. tend to be restricted to people who traveled to places where the disease is present without using anti-malarial drugs or who immigrated from those areas. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) collects reports of cases for its Malaria Surveillance System and works within the country for treatments and prevention. The CDC also recommends four essential malaria interventions: insecticide-treated mosquito nets, preventative treatment in pregnant women, preventative treatment in infancy, and interior insecticide spraying. These are currently not needed within the U.S., but they would be used if malaria reemerged. However, the U.S. devotes many resources toward preventing this, and is the largest government donor to global malaria efforts.

There is also hope for combating malaria in the future. New developments like amphibian extinction may give the disease an advantage, but scientists continue to create solutions. In Africa, anti-malarial programs are increasing, which means that less malaria will spread across the globe from immigrants and travelers. Scientists have also engineered mosquitoes that are less hospitable to the malaria parasite, and therefore pass on the disease far less. Also, although there is currently not a vaccine for malaria, researchers in England have very positive results in the creation of one and may have it approved by next 2023. .



**Malaria is a serious problem outside of the United States, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted treatments, prevention and funding.** Credit: pexels.com.

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## South Dakota COVID-19 Report

New Cases\*

842  
**+102**

Total Cases\*

262,213

Currently Hospitalized

66  
**-19**

New Hospitalizations

36

Total Hospitalized

11,804

[Click to Visit](#)

[SD COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage](#)

New Deaths

12

Total Deaths

3,033

[Click to Visit](#)

[COVID-19 Community Levels](#)



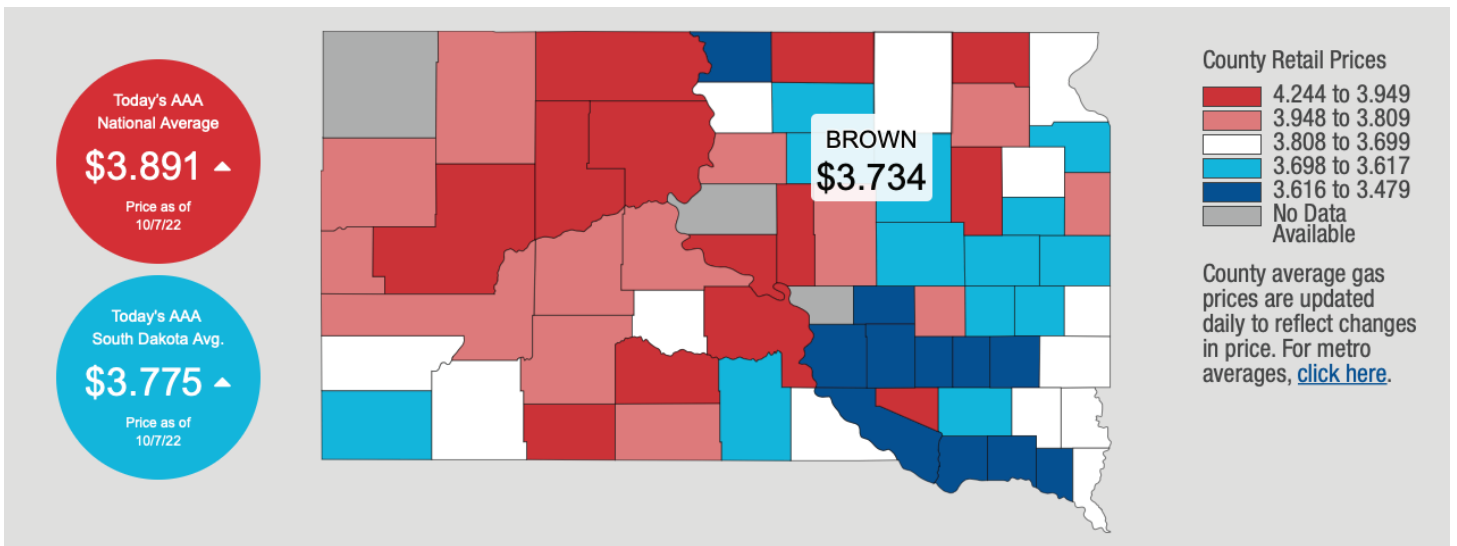
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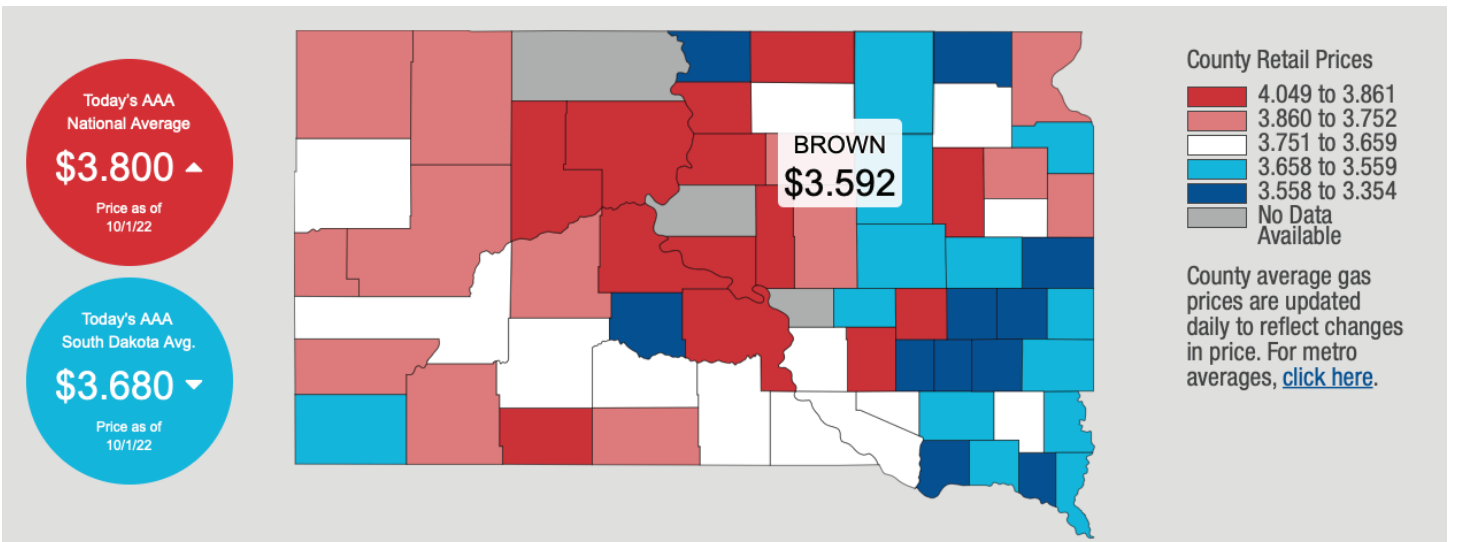
## South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$3.775	\$3.912	\$4.389	\$4.702
Yesterday Avg.	\$3.736	\$3.892	\$4.343	\$4.654
Week Ago Avg.	\$3.689	\$3.821	\$4.291	\$4.637
Month Ago Avg.	\$3.727	\$3.901	\$4.353	\$4.879
Year Ago Avg.	\$3.203	\$3.311	\$3.662	\$3.371

### This Week



### Last Week



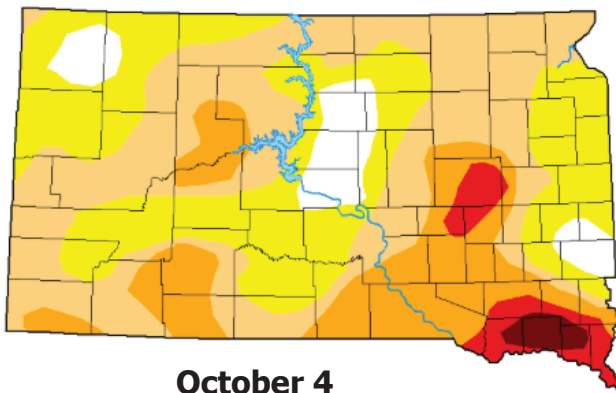
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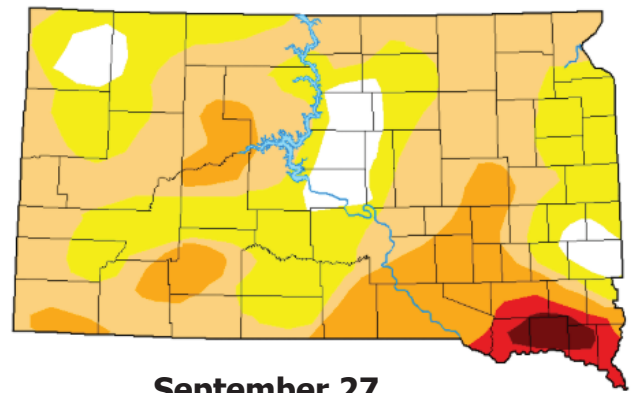
## Drought Classification



## Drought Monitor



October 4



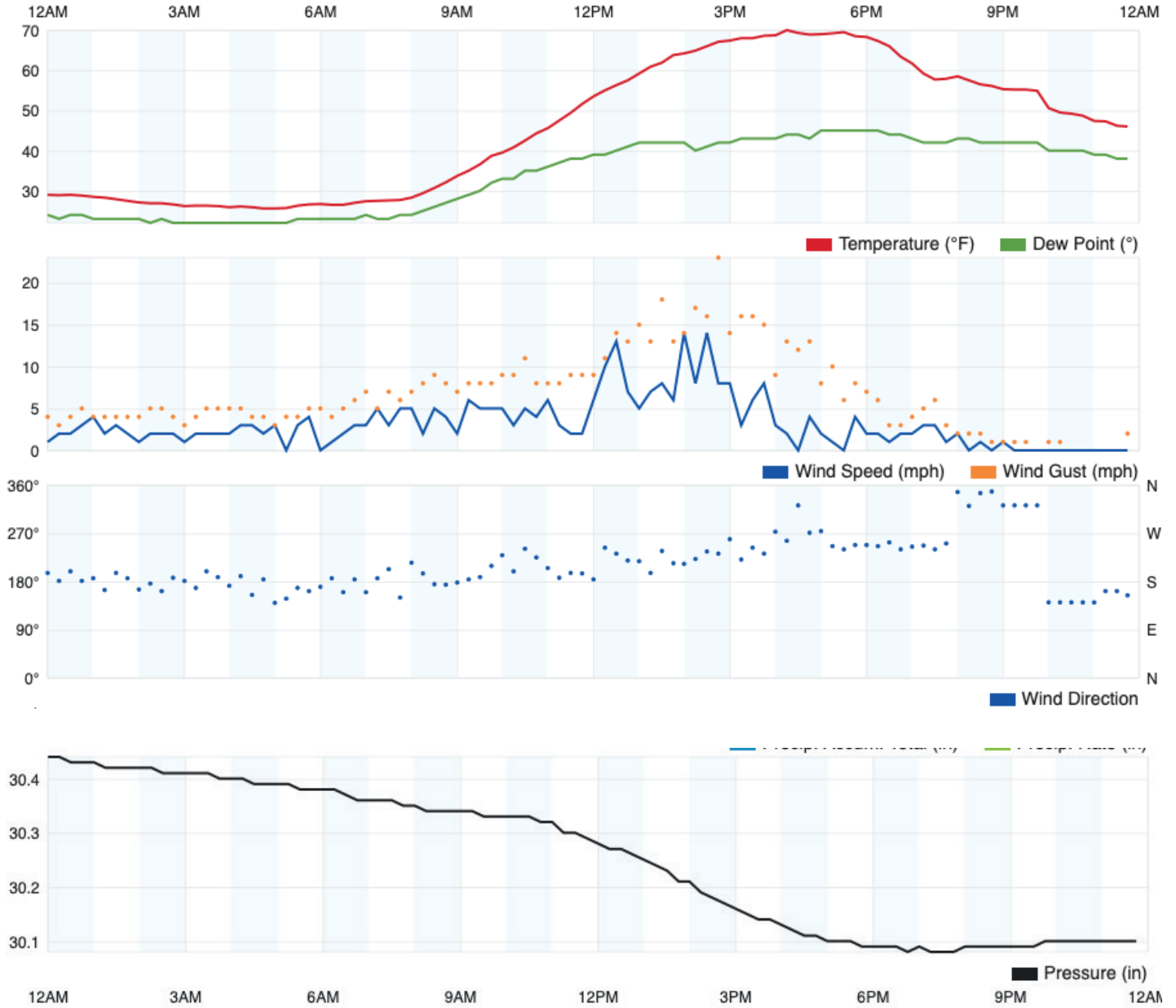
September 27

Short and long-term NDMC blends, SPIs, soil moisture, and crop conditions support a 1-category degradation for southern South Dakota, southwestern Nebraska, and parts of Kansas. Pond levels are low in Kansas and limited soil moisture is available for winter wheat planting. Abundant recent precipitation (locally more than 2 inches) prompted improvements along the western slopes of the Colorado Rockies. Improvements were also made to northeastern Colorado due to relatively significant precipitation (more than 0.5 inch) this past week. Following heavy precipitation during early August, little to no rainfall for a six week period resulted in an increase in D1 across southeastern Colorado. Beneficial precipitation during the past 30 to 60 days along with improving soil moisture conditions prompted improvements across parts of Wyoming.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Sunny

High: 73 °F

Tonight



Partly Cloudy

Low: 37 °F

Columbus Day



Sunny

High: 72 °F

Monday Night



Mostly Clear

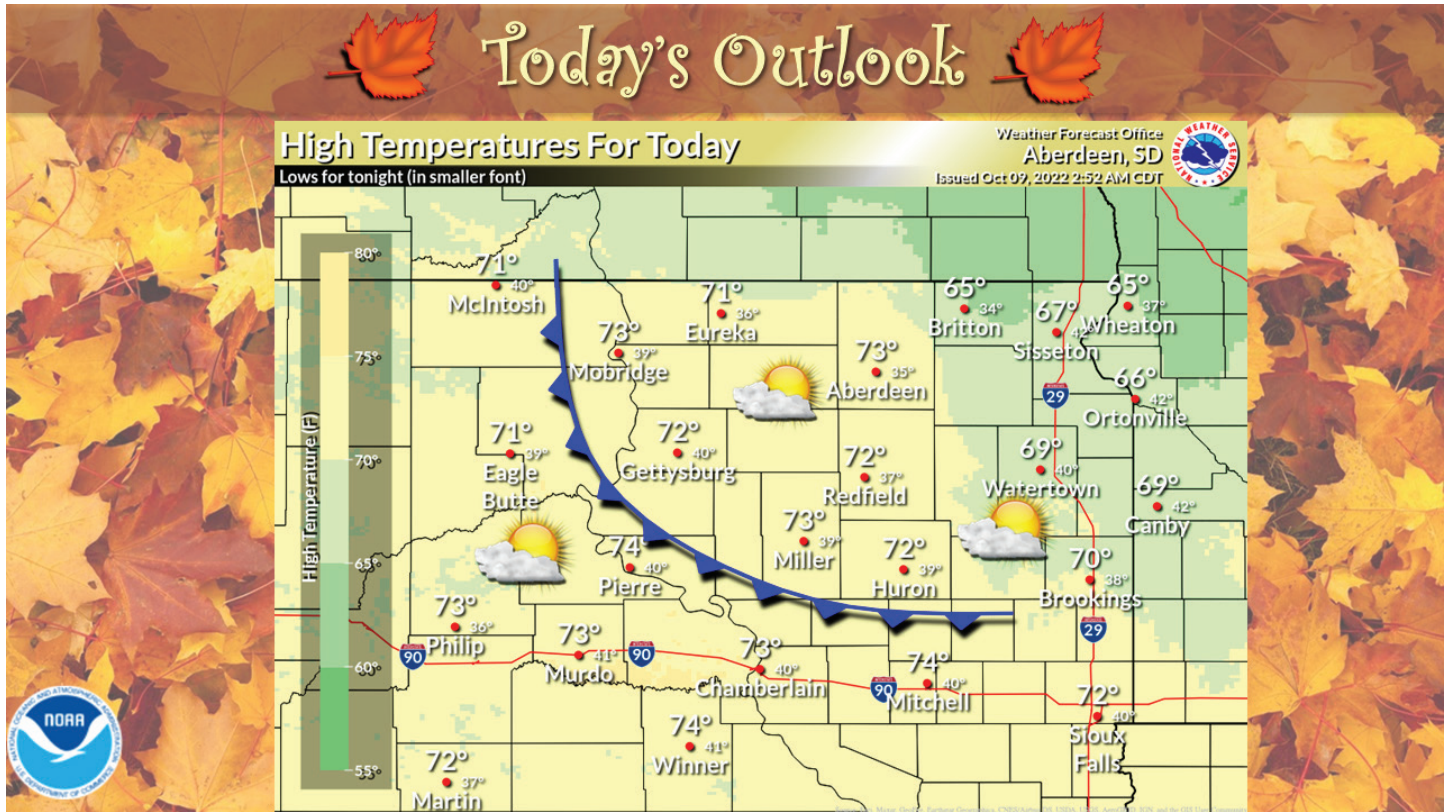
Low: 47 °F

Tuesday



Sunny

High: 76 °F



Mid to high clouds will be moving in today, associated with a dry frontal passage from the north. Otherwise, quiet with above average temperatures in the upper 60s to the mid 70s and winds turning north this afternoon. Partly cloudy tonight as winds shift out of the south bringing in warmer air. Overnight lows will range in the upper 30s to mid 40s. Warmer weather is expected for Monday.

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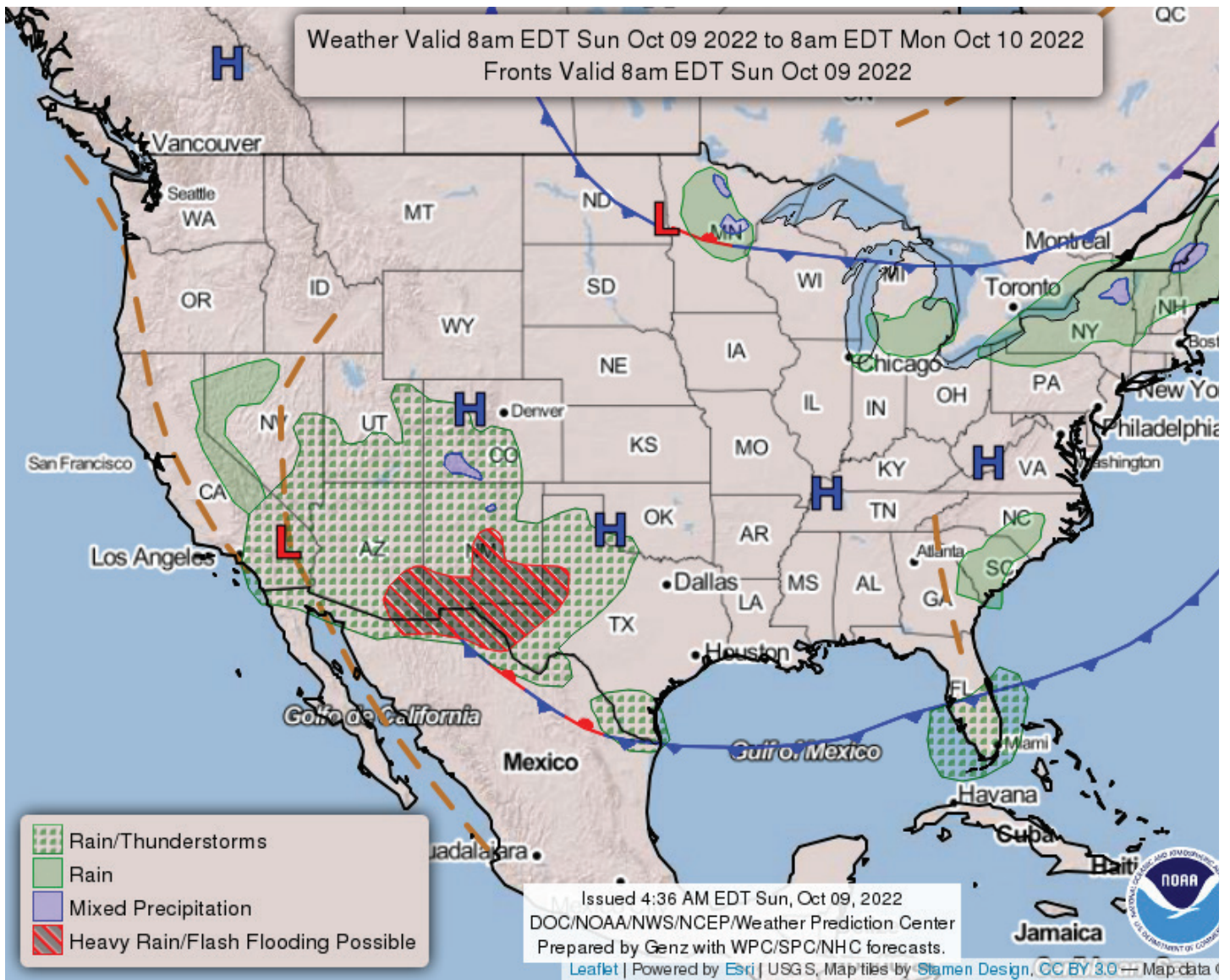
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 70 °F at 4:15 PM**  
**Low Temp: 25.6 °F at 5:00 AM**  
**Wind: 23 mph at 2:45 PM**  
**Precip: : 0.00**

Day length: 11 hours, 19 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 86 in 2020  
Record Low: 114 in 1964  
Average High: 63°F  
Average Low: 37°F  
Average Precip in Oct.: .68  
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.45  
Average Precip to date: 19.01  
Precip Year to Date: 16.50  
Sunset Tonight: 6:59:28 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:40:59 AM



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## Today in Weather History

October 9, 1964: Record cold occurred on this day in 1964 across parts of central and northeast South Dakota with temperatures falling into the mid-teens to around 20 degrees at many locations. Sisseton had a record low of 20 degrees; Watertown had a record low of 16 degrees, with Kennebec recording the lowest temperature of 13 degrees on this day in 1964. Although not a record low, Aberdeen fell to 14 degrees.

October 9, 1980: On this day in 1980, hot air streamed across central and northeast South Dakota as well as west-central Minnesota with highs mostly in the 80s. Record highs were established at Watertown with 86 degrees and both Wheaton and Sisseton with 87 degrees. One of the warmest temperatures across the area was 89 degrees at Kennebec.

1804: The famous Snow Hurricane moved ashore near Atlantic City on this day. After briefly passing through Connecticut and into Massachusetts, cold air was entrained in the circulation with heavy snow falling between New York to southern Canada. Berkshires Massachusetts and Concord New Hampshire record two feet of snow with this hurricane. This storm produced the first observation of snow from a hurricane, but not the last. Hurricane Ginny of 1963 brought up to 18 inches (400 mm) of snow to portions of Maine.

1903 - New York City was deluged with 11.17 inches of rain 24 hours to establish a state record. Severe flooding occurred in the Passaic Valley of New Jersey where more than fifteen inches of rain was reported. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1981 - The temperature at San Juan, Puerto Rico, soared to 98 degrees to establish an all-time record for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Eighteen cities in the southeastern U.S. and the Middle Atlantic Coast Region reported record low temperatures for the date. Asheville NC dipped to 29 degrees, and the record low of 47 degrees at Jacksonville FL marked their fourth of the month. A second surge of cold air brought light snow to the Northern Plains, particularly the Black Hills of South Dakota. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Ten cities in the northeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Hartford CT with a reading of 28 degrees. Snow continued in northern New England through the morning hours. Mount Washington NH reported five inches of snow. Warm weather continued in the western U.S. Los Angeles CA reported a record high of 102 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Unseasonably cold weather continued in the Upper Midwest. Thirteen cities in Ohio, Michigan and Indiana reported record low temperatures for the date, including Marquette MI with a reading of 20 degrees. Unseasonably warm weather continued in the western U.S. as the San Francisco Giants won the National League pennant. San Jose CA reported a record high of 91 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

2001: An unusually strong fall outbreak of tornadoes spawned at least 23 twisters across parts of Nebraska and Oklahoma. Hardest hit was the town of Cordell, OK, but a 22 minute lead time led to an amazingly low casualty count: only nine injuries and no fatalities.

2013: The Puglia region of southern Italy saw tornadoes on this day.

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Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### FACTS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," said George Santayana in 1863. However, it does not matter who said it or when, history has proven this fact time and time again.

Generations come and go, governments rise and fall, generals win one battle and then lose the next, good times are enjoyed and then disaster sets in while no one was paying attention. People and leaders become so involved in "their particular thing" that they lose sight of the big picture and how nations become estranged from God. They do not hear His voice nor heed His Word and forget what righteousness is about, where it comes from, and how it stabilizes a nation.

"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people," is an oft quoted and well-known verse. It is mentioned frequently by the clergy and often by government leaders. But the words fall silently to the ground, and nothing changes.

Solomon used the word "exalts" by design. He was aware of the power of that word and understood what it meant to individuals and nations. "If" the people of a nation come together and honor God and "lift" Him up in worship, and are obedient to His laws, "they" will be blest and have His favor and protection and respect.

However, the alternative to a "righteous" nation is one whose sin is destructive, despicable and ultimately dishonors God. When this happens, it brings indescribable shame and disgrace to its people. In the end, it destroys what God designed.

Prayer: Father, may we take Your warnings seriously, recognize the ravages and result of sin and repent. Bring revival to our nation. We need you! Awaken us! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns any people. Proverbs 14:34



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

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## 2022-23 Community Events

- 07/21/2022: Pro Am Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course  
07/22/2022: Ferney Open Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start  
07/24/2022: Moonlight Swim at the Swimming Pool 9-11pm for 9th grade to age 20  
07/27/2022: Golf Fundraiser Lunch at Olive Grove Golf Course 11a-1pm  
08/05/2022: Wine on Nine at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm  
08/12/2022: GHS Basketball Golf Tournament  
No Date Set: Groton Firemen Summer Splash Day 4-5pm GHS Parking Lot  
09/10/2022: Lions Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)  
09/11/2022: 6th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3-5pm  
09/11/2022: Couples Sunflower Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10 a.m.  
09/02-04: Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport  
10/01/2022: Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm  
10/07/2022: Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am  
10/31/2022: Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)  
10/31/2022: United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm  
11/19/2022: Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm (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)



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## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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News from the  Associated Press

## SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

01-04-18-19-28

(one, four, eighteen, nineteen, twenty-eight)

Estimated jackpot: \$92,000

Lotto America

01-04-09-14-49, Star Ball: 3, ASB: 2

(one, four, nine, fourteen, forty-nine; Star Ball: three; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$25,920,000

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: 445,000,000

Powerball

13-43-53-60-68, Powerball: 5, Power Play: 2

(thirteen, forty-three, fifty-three, sixty, sixty-eight; Powerball: five; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$401,000,000

## Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Chester def. Bridgewater-Emery, 25-10, 25-9, 25-6

Douglas def. Sturgis Brown, 25-17, 25-23, 25-22

Herreid/Selby Area def. Timber Lake, 10-25, 25-20, 25-18, 19-25, 15-11

Huron def. Rapid City Stevens, 25-21, 25-20, 21-25, 25-22

Jones County def. New Underwood, 25-23, 25-10, 25-19

MOC-Floyd Valley, Iowa def. Sioux Falls O'Gorman, 21-8, 21-10

Menno def. Andes Central/Dakota Christian, 26-24, 25-18, 20-25, 25-22

Mitchell def. Rapid City Central, 25-20, 29-27, 25-9

Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Century, N.D., 25-11, 25-21

Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 23-25, 25-21, 15-10

Sioux Falls Jefferson def. West Fargo, N.D., 25-16, 25-14

Wagner def. Canton, 27-25, 21-25, 25-22, 25-13

Battler Invitational=

Red Pool=

Faith def. Lyman, 25-22, 25-10

Faith def. Potter County, 25-23, 22-25, 25-14

Potter County def. Lyman, 25-14, 25-12

Wolsey-Wessington def. Faith, 25-11, 25-18

Wolsey-Wessington def. Lyman, 25-15, 25-14

Wolsey-Wessington def. Potter County, 25-12, 25-15

Gray Pool=

Faulkton def. Ipswich, 25-21, 21-25, 26-24

Faulkton def. McIntosh, 25-8, 25-11

Faulkton def. Philip, 25-16, 25-20

McIntosh def. Ipswich, 25-13, 25-19

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Philip def. Ipswich, 28-26, 25-19  
Philip def. McIntosh, 25-20, 25-16  
Championship=  
Wolsey-Wessington def. Faulkton, 25-17, 25-14  
Third Place=  
Faith def. Philip, 25-15, 25-23  
Fifth Place=  
Ipswich def. Potter County, 25-21, 25-19  
Seventh Place=  
Lyman def. McIntosh, 25-16, 27-25  
Northwestern Tournament=  
Northwestern def. Hill City, 25-11, 25-21  
Northwestern def. Kimball/White Lake, 25-12, 25-18  
Northwestern def. Pine Ridge, 25-8, 25-11  
Northwestern def. Rapid City Christian, 18-25, 25-23, 25-22  
Stanley County Triangular=  
Stanley County def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-12, 25-16, 25-22  
Stanley County def. Todd County, 25-8, 25-8, 25-15

## PREP FOOTBALL=

Sioux Falls Roosevelt 34, Yankton 29

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

## Friday's Scores

The Associated Press

## PREP FOOTBALL=

Aberdeen Central 20, Brookings 3  
Aberdeen Roncalli 42, Webster 0  
Beresford 20, Sioux Falls Christian 18  
Canton 32, Vermillion 13  
Castlewood 54, Waverly-South Shore 0  
Colome 58, Centerville 32  
Corsica/Stickney 48, Freeman/ Marion/ Freeman Academy Co-op 18  
Dakota Valley 49, Lakota Tech 0  
Dell Rapids 35, Chamberlain 20  
Elk Point-Jefferson 48, Tri-Valley 7  
Elkton-Lake Benton 64, Florence/Henry 13  
Gayville-Volin 53, Arlington 0  
Gregory 49, Burke 7  
Hamlin 51, Great Plains Lutheran 0  
Hanson 48, Viborg-Hurley 6  
Harding County/Bison Co-op 44, Timber Lake 22  
Harrisburg 59, Rapid City Central 0  
Herreid/Selby Area 58, Potter County 14  
Hill City 20, Custer 0  
Hitchcock-Tulare 34, DeSmet 12  
Hot Springs 42, Rapid City Christian 0  
Ipswich 68, Dupree 13

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Irene-Wakonda 64, Garretson 12  
Jim River 38, Tripp-Delmont/Armour/Andes Central/Dakota Christian 6  
Jones County 33, Bennett County 0  
Kadoka Area 44, Faith 6  
Leola/Frederick 58, North Central Co-Op 0  
Little Wound 50, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 0  
Lyman 32, Sully Buttes 8  
Madison 41, Lennox 19  
McCook Central/Montrose 44, Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan 0  
Milbank 43, Sisseton 6  
Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 38, Sunshine Bible Academy 7  
Parkston 16, Bon Homme 9  
Philip 52, Newell 8  
Pierre 59, Huron 7  
Platte-Geddes 40, Colman-Egan 0  
Red Cloud 57, Pine Ridge 6  
Redfield 52, Dakota Hills 13  
Sioux Falls Jefferson 46, Rapid City Stevens 0  
Sioux Falls Lincoln 34, Brandon Valley 30  
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 31, Sioux Falls Washington 14  
St. Thomas More 21, Douglas 8  
Stanley County 34, Lemmon/McIntosh 14  
Sturgis Brown 49, Belle Fourche 14  
Tea Area 49, Spearfish 0  
Tiospa Zina Tribal 50, Flandreau Indian 0  
Wall 54, Kimball/White Lake 0  
Warner 50, Estelline/Hendricks 7  
Watertown 24, Mitchell 14  
White River 32, New Underwood 28  
Winner 46, West Central 12  
Wolsey-Wessington 47, Britton-Hecla 8

## PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Deubrook def. Sioux Valley, 25-19, 25-18, 19-25, 25-13  
Edgemont def. Harding County, 25-22, 19-25, 26-24, 21-25, 15-9  
Elk Point-Jefferson def. Tri-Valley, 25-21, 25-18, 25-20  
Huron def. Rapid City Central, 25-14, 25-10, 25-13  
James Valley Christian def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-16, 25-21, 25-19  
Rapid City Stevens def. Mitchell, 25-17, 20-25, 24-26, 25-14, 15-12  
Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Fargo Davies, N.D., 25-12, 25-23  
Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Grand Forks Red River, N.D., 27-25, 25-11  
Sioux Falls Jefferson def. St. Mary's, N.D., 25-10, 25-12  
Wessington Springs def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-17, 25-21, 25-11

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

## South Dakota State wins 5th straight, 28-3 over South Dakota

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Isaiah Davis rushed for 107 yards and two touchdowns and South Dakota State beat South Dakota 28-3 on Saturday for its fifth straight victory.

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Davis went up the middle, broke several tackles and stiff-armed a defender for a 48-yard score to give South Dakota State a 14-3 lead.

SDSU held South Dakota to 136 total yards in front of a sold out crowd of 19,332. Cale Reeder and Dalys Beanum each had an interception for the Jackrabbits' defense, and Adam Bock had seven tackles and two sacks.

Mark Gronowski was 12 of 20 for 136 yards with one touchdown and one interception for South Dakota State (5-1, 3-0 Missouri Valley Football Conference).

Carson Camp completed 5 of 12 passes for 44 yards with two interceptions for South Dakota (1-4, 0-2). Travis Theis carried 13 times for 73 yards.

The Jackrabbits hold a 56-52-7 advantage in the series that dates to 1889. In last season's meeting, USD's Jeremiah Webb hauled in a 57-yard Hail Mary pass from Camp on the final play of the game for a 23-20 victory over fourth-ranked SDSU.

## Families leave offerings for children slain at Thai day care

By TASSANEE VEJPONGSA and DAVID RISING Associated Press

UTHAI SAWAN, Thailand (AP) — Families offered flowers and dolls, popcorn and juice boxes to children massacred at a day care center in Thailand, part of a Buddhist ceremony held Sunday just paces from where the slaughter began that was meant to guide the young souls back to their bodies.

"Come back home" and "come back with us," the relatives called into the empty day care center, many with tears in their eyes.

The gun and knife attack on the Young Children's Development Center in Uthai Sawan was Thailand's deadliest mass killing, and it robbed the small farming community of much of its youngest generation. The former police officer who stormed the building killed two dozen people at the day care before taking more lives as he fled, including his wife and child, police said. He then killed himself.

Ceremonies were held Sunday at three temples, where the 36 victims — mostly preschoolers — were taken ahead of funeral rites and cremation on Tuesday.

Maneerat Tanonethong — whose 3-year-old Chaiyot Kijareon was killed at the day care center — said the rituals were helping her with her grief.

"I am trying not think about horrible images and focus on how lovely he was. ... But I don't know what I will do with myself once this is all over," she said. "I am determined that I will try let go of this, that I won't hold any grudge against the perpetrator and understand that all of these will end in this life."

At Rat Samakee temple, family members sat in front of the tiny coffins while Buddhist monks chanted prayers. They placed trays of food, toys and milk along the outside of the temple walls as offerings to the spirits of their slain children.

Later, they headed to the day care center and gathered in front of a makeshift memorial there to receive the slain children's belongings. They made offerings of their kids' favorite foods and lit incense and candles as they implored the children's souls to return to their bodies.

Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha is expected to attend evening prayers at the three temples where bodies were brought later Sunday.

Police identified the attacker as Panya Kamrap, 34, a police sergeant fired earlier this year after being charged with a drug offense.

An employee at the day care told Thai media that Panya's son had attended the center but hadn't been there for about a month. Police have said they believe Panya was under stress from tensions between him and his wife, and money problems.

The attack has left no one in the small community untouched, and brought international media attention to the remote, rural area. Thai police are investigating a report that a CNN crew inappropriately entered the day care center while reporting.

CNN tweeted that the crew had entered the premises at a moment when the police cordon had been removed from the center, and were told by three public health officials that they could film inside.

Mass killings in Thailand are rare but not unheard of.

In 2020, a disgruntled soldier opened fire in and around a mall in the northeastern city of Nakhon Ratchasima, killing 29 people and holding off security forces for some 16 hours before being killed by them.

Prior to that, a 2015 bombing at a shrine in Bangkok left 20 people dead. It was allegedly carried out by human traffickers in retaliation for a crackdown on their network.

## 'A time bomb': Anger rising in a hot spot of Iran protests

By SAMYA KULLAB and SALAR SALIM Associated Press

SULIMANIYAH, Iraq (AP) — Growing up under a repressive system, Sharo, a 35-year-old university graduate, never thought she would hear words of open rebellion spoken out loud. Now she herself chants slogans like "Death to the Dictator!" with a fury she didn't know she had, as she joins protests calling for toppling the country's rulers.

Sharo said that after three weeks of protests, triggered by the death of a young woman in the custody of the feared morality police, anger at the authorities is only rising, despite a bloody crackdown that has left dozens dead and hundreds in detention.

"The situation here is tense and volatile," she said, referring to the city of Sanandaj in the majority Kurdish home district of the same name in northwestern Iran, one of the hot spots of the protests.

"We are just waiting for something to happen, like a time-bomb," she said, speaking to The Associated Press via Telegram messenger service.

The anti-government protests in Sanandaj, 300 miles (500 kilometers) from the capital, are a microcosm of the leaderless protests that have roiled Iran.

Led largely by women and youth, they have evolved from spontaneous mass gatherings in central areas to scattered demonstrations in residential areas, schools and universities as activists try to evade an increasingly brutal crackdown.

Tensions rose again Saturday in Sanandaj after rights monitors said two protesters were shot dead and several were wounded, following a resumption of demonstrations. Residents said there has been a heavy security presence in the city, with constant patrols and security personnel stationed on major streets.

The Associated Press spoke to six female activists in Sanandaj who said suppression tactics, including beatings, arrests, the use of live ammunition and internet disruptions make it difficult at times to keep the momentum going. Yet protests persist, along with other expressions of civil disobedience, such as commercial strikes and drivers honking horns at security forces.

The activists in the city spoke on the condition their full names be withheld fearing reprisals by Iranian authorities. Their accounts were corroborated by three human rights monitors.

### THE BURIAL

Three weeks ago, the news of the death of 22-year old Mahsa Amini in the custody of the morality police in Tehran spread rapidly across her home province of Kurdistan, of which Sanandaj is the capital. The response was swift in the impoverished and historically marginalized area.

As the burial was underway in Amini's town of Saqqez on Sept. 17, protesters were already filling Sanandaj's main thoroughfare, activists said.

People of all ages were present and began chanting slogans that would be repeated in cities across Iran: "Woman. Life. Freedom."

The Amini family had been under pressure from the government to bury Mahsa quickly before a critical mass of protesters formed, said Afsanah, a 38-year-old clothing designer from Saqqez. She was at the burial that day and followed the crowds from the cemetery to the city square.

Rozan, a 32-year old housewife, didn't know Amini personally. But when she heard the young woman had died in the custody of the morality police in Tehran and had been arrested for violating the Islamic Republic's hijab rules, she felt compelled to take to the street that day.

"The same thing happened to me," she said. In 2013, like Amini, she had ventured to the capital with a friend when she was apprehended by the morality police because her abaya, or loose robe that is part of

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the mandatory dress code, was too short. She was taken to the same facility where Amini later died, and fingerprinted and made to sign a declaration of guilt.

"It could have been me," she said. In the years since then Rozan, a former nurse, was fired from the local government health department for being too vocal about her views about women's rights.

After the funeral, she saw an elderly woman take a step forward and in one swift gesture, remove her headscarf. "I felt inspired to do the same," she said.

## SUPPRESSION

In the first three days after the burial, protesters were plucked from the demonstrations in arrest sweeps in Sanandaj. By the end of the week, arrests targeted known activists and protest organizers.

Dunya, a lawyer, said she was one among a small group of women's rights activists who helped organize protests. They also asked shopkeepers to respect a call for a commercial strike along the city's main streets.

"Almost all the women in our group are in jail now," she said.

Internet blackouts made it difficult for protesters to communicate with one another across cities and with the outside world.

"We would wake up in the morning and have no idea what was happening," said Sharo, the university graduate. The internet would return intermittently, often late at night or during working hours, but swiftly cut off in the late afternoon, the time many would gather to protest.

The heavy security presence also prevented mass gatherings.

"There are patrols in almost every street, and they break up groups, even if its just two or three people walking on the street," said Sharo.

During demonstrations security forces fired pellet guns and tear gas at the crowd causing many to run. Security personnel on motorcycles also drove into crowds in an effort to disperse them.

All activists interviewed said they either witnessed or heard live ammunition. Iranian authorities have so far denied this, blaming separatist groups on occasions when the use of live fire was verified. The two protesters killed Saturday in Sanandaj were killed by live fire, according to the France-based Kurdistan Human Rights network.

Protesters say fear is a close companion. The wounded were often reluctant to use ambulances or go to hospitals, worried they might get arrested. Activists also suspected government informants were trying to blend in with the crowds.

But acts of resistance have continued.

"I assure you the protests are not over," said Sharo. "The people are angry, they are talking back to the police in ways I have never seen."

## DISOBEDIENCE

The anger runs deep. In Sanandaj the confluence of three factors has rendered the city a ripe ground for protest activity — a history of Kurdish resistance, rising poverty and a long history of women's rights activism.

Yet the protests are not defined along ethnic or regional lines even though they were sparked in a predominantly Kurdish area, said Tara Sepehri Fars, a researcher for Human Rights Watch. "It's been very unique in that sense," she said.

There have been waves of protest in Iran in recent years, the largest in 2009 bringing large crowds into the streets after what protesters felt was a stolen election. But the continued defiance and demands for regime change during the current wave seem to pose the most serious challenge in years to the Islamic Republic.

Like most of Iran, Sanandaj has suffered as U.S. sanctions and the coronavirus pandemic devastated the economy and spurred inflation. Far from the capital, in the fringes of the country, its majority Kurdish residents are eyed with suspicion by the regime.

By the third week, with the opening of universities and schools, students began holding small rallies and joined the movement.

Videos circulated on social media showing students jeering school masters, school girls removing their headscarves on the street and chanting: "One by one they will kill us, if we don't stand together."

One university student said they were planning on boycotting classes altogether.

Afsanah, the clothing designer, said that she likes wearing the headscarf. "But I am protesting because it was never my choice."

Her parents, fearing for her safety, tried to persuade her to stay home. But she disobeyed them, pretending to go to work in the morning only to search for protest gatherings around the city.

"I am angry, and I am without fear — we just need this feeling to overflow on the street," she said.

## Philippine ex-senator briefly held hostage in jail rampage

By JIM GOMEZ Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Philippine police killed three detained militants linked to the Islamic State group after they staged a jail rampage Sunday that saw a police officer stabbed and a former opposition senator briefly held hostage in a failed escape attempt from the maximum-security facility in the police headquarters in the capital, police said.

National police chief Gen. Rodolfo Azurin Jr. said former Sen. Leila de Lima was unhurt and taken to a hospital for a checkup following the brazen escape attempt and hostage-taking at the detention center for high-profile inmates at the main police camp in Metropolitan Manila.

One of the three inmates stabbed a police officer who was delivering breakfast after dawn in an open area, where inmates can exercise outdoors. A police officer in a sentry tower fired warning shots, and then shot and killed two of the prisoners, including Abu Sayyaf commander Idang Susukan, when they refused to yield, police said.

The third inmate ran to de Lima's cell and briefly held her hostage, but he was also gunned down by police commandos, Azurin said.

"She's safe. We were able to quickly resolve the incident inside the custodial center," Azurin told reporters and justified police action to shoot the inmates. "Sen. De Lima was already being held hostage so should we let that very critical situation drag on?"

Susukan, who had been blamed for dozens of killings and beheadings of hostages, including foreign tourists, and other terrorist attacks was arrested two years ago in southern Davao city.

The other two inmates, Arnel Cabintoy and Feliciano Sulayao Jr., were suspected members of the Dawlah Islamiyah, a Muslim militant group that has been linked to bombings and other deadly attacks in the country's south. They were arrested in 2019 in suburban Quezon city in the capital region, and were facing non-bailable charges like Susukan, police officials said.

Many militants belonging to Abu Sayyaf, which the United States and the Philippines have blacklisted as a terrorist organization, and the Dawlah Islamiyah have aligned themselves with the Islamic State group.

The police officer who was stabbed with an improvised knife was in serious condition at a hospital, Azurin said. Another inmate was injured in the rampage, police said.

Interior Secretary Benhur Abalos said the three slain inmates staged the rampage in an attempt to escape and did not specifically target de Lima.

After the two militants were shot and killed, the third inmate ran to de Lima's cell and took her hostage, blindfolding her and aiming a blunt object at her chest. The inmate demanded a helicopter for him to escape during a brief negotiation and later asked for water, giving a police officer a chance to shoot him while handing him water, Abalos said.

De Lima told opposition Sen. Risa Hontiveros, who visited her, that she feared she would be killed during the incident. "Why would I die now when I may get freed soon?" Hontiveros quoted de Lima as telling her. "And something inside her told her to stay still."

De Lima has been detained since 2017 and has been facing a trial for drug charges she says were fabricated by former President Rodrigo Duterte and his officials in an attempt to muzzle her criticism of his deadly crackdown on illegal drugs, which has left thousands of mostly petty suspects dead and sparked an International Criminal Court investigation as a possible crime against humanity.

She has been cleared in one of three cases, and at least two witnesses have withdrawn their testimonies



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against her, her aides say.

Duterte, who has insisted on de Lima's guilt, stepped down from office on June 30 at the end of his turbulent six-year term and was succeeded by Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the son of a former dictator who was ousted in a 1986 pro-democracy uprising.

Abalos visited de Lima and relayed an offer by the president for her to be transferred to another detention site but she rejected the offer, Abalos said, adding that steps would be taken to prevent such incidents from occurring again.

In 2005, detained Abu Sayyaf Muslim militants led a siege of a maximum-security jail in another Metro-Manila police camp where special forces were based in another botched escape attempt. Police launched a major assault with tear-gas canisters and assault rifles after the militants refused to surrender, killing 22 inmates, including top Abu Sayyaf commanders.

In a court-authorized interview with The Associated Press in the jail compound in March, de Lima appeared undaunted by her yearslong detention in the old facility, which is ringed by a maze of high concrete walls and topped by rusty barbed wire and sentry towers. Jail guards armed with assault rifles constantly roamed and kept watch.

"I'm a fighter," the bespectacled former human rights commission chief and justice secretary told an AP journalist then. "It's tough, but I can manage."

"I can never lose hope," said de Lima, 63.

De Lima's yearslong detention has sparked calls for her immediate release from the European Union Parliament, some U.S. legislators and U.N. human rights experts and international watchdogs.

## Opera singer flees Belarusian oppression to revive career

By MARK PRATT Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Ilya Silchukou was a cultural icon in his native Belarus, the lead soloist at the State Opera Bolshoi who represented his nation at official government functions at home and abroad and performed at opera houses across Europe.

He lived a privileged and comfortable life in his homeland.

And he gave it all up.

Silchukou dared to speak out against Alexander Lukashenko, who has led the former Soviet republic with an iron fist for nearly three decades.

He's now living in suburban Boston with his wife and three children and teaches music to middle school students while he tries to revive his singing career in the U.S., where he remains relatively unknown.

"I am known in Europe, but I've never performed in the States, and it was like a blank piece of paper for me, just a new page," he said during a recent interview in Boston. "We had to start from scratch here."

When Lukashenko won a sixth term in office in 2020 in an election regarded by his opposition and the West as fraudulent, Silchukou joined tens of thousands of Belarusians at election protests that were violently suppressed and resulted in the arrests of thousands.

"It was so evident to all of us that we could not keep silent any more," he said.

He renounced three awards that he had received personally from Lukashenko.

His friends warned him of the risks.

"They said, 'What is the problem with you? You have everything you need,'" he said. "I was well paid in Belarus and I had all the benefits from that. I said, 'Yes they pay me, but they don't own me.'"

His public opposition to Lukashenko got him fired from the opera for an "act of immorality" and he was black-listed, he said. In response, he had one more act of defiance — using his baritone voice in a video of the traditional Belarusian hymn, "Mahutny Bozha," which means "Mighty God," and has become a signature anthem of the opposition to Lukashenko.

Still, it wasn't until March 2021 when the police came after his wife, Tanya, and accused her of defrauding the nation's state-sponsored child support system and threatened her with two years in jail that he knew he had to get out. He took it as a thinly-veiled threat to break up their family.

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"Lots of kids in Belarus have both parents in prison," he said.

When his children finished school in May of that year, the family packed four suitcases with some vital documents and photos and flew from Belarus to the nation of Georgia, then on to Seattle, where his parents live.

The family came to the East Coast about a year ago at the suggestion of Marina Lvova, who runs the nonprofit Belarusians in Boston, drawn by Boston's cultural scene, proximity to Europe and vibrant Belarusian expatriate community.

Lvova and her husband first saw Silchukou at one of his last public performances in Minsk and "fell in love with his voice," she said.

But she was also impressed with his bravery for standing up to Lukashenko.

"Ilya is a real patriot of Belarus," she said. "You cannot be successful in a country that is a prison, and unfortunately our country is a prison right now."

Silchukou is making ends meet teaching 5th through 9th graders at the private Star Academy school.

"It's pretty incredible that he's able to share some of the experiences he's had at some of the best opera houses in Europe," said Margarita Druker, Star Academy's co-director.

The school has many students of Eastern European descent whose families have similar stories of fleeing oppression.

"It was very courageous for someone of his stature to walk away from all he had into so much uncertainty," Druker said.

Silchukou has returned to the stage, collaborating with pianist Pavel Nersessian, an associate professor at Boston University, for two recent concerts in Boston and New Jersey.

For both, he put together a retrospective of some of his personal favorite pieces spanning his career from his first singing lessons to his time at the national opera, including "Papageno" from "The Magic Flute" and "Cavatina Figaro" from the "The Barber of Seville." He capped off the shows with what he called the "jewel of the concert," a duet with his mezzo-soprano wife.

He recently had an audition with the Boston Lyric Opera and is trying to secure auditions with other opera houses in the U.S., and he's in negotiations with U.S. agents.

"I am looking forward with hope," he said.

One of those hopes is a return to his homeland.

He remains in touch with friends and colleagues in Belarus who are "working in fear," afraid of speaking out against Lukashenko.

"We hope to see them again, and for sure we will sing our songs on the squares on our true independence day," he said.

## 'War crime:' Industrial-scale destruction of Ukraine culture

By HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The exquisite golden tiara, inlaid with precious stones by master craftsmen some 1,500 years ago, was one of the world's most valuable artifacts from the blood-letting rule of Attila the Hun, who rampaged with horseback warriors deep into Europe in the 5th century.

The Hun diadem is now vanished from the museum in Ukraine that housed it — perhaps, historians fear, forever. Russian troops carted away the priceless crown and a hoard of other treasures after capturing the Ukrainian city of Melitopol in February, museum authorities say.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine, now in its eighth month, is being accompanied by the destruction and pillaging of historical sites and treasures on an industrial scale, Ukrainian authorities say.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Ukraine's culture minister alleged that Russian soldiers helped themselves to artifacts in almost 40 Ukrainian museums. The looting and destruction of cultural sites has caused losses estimated in the hundreds of millions of euros (dollars), the minister, Oleksandr Tkachenko, added.

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"The attitude of Russians toward Ukrainian culture heritage is a war crime," he said.

For the moment, Ukraine's government and its Western backers supplying weapons are mostly focused on defeating Russia on the battlefield. But if and when peace returns, the preservation of Ukrainian collections of art, history and culture also will be vital, so survivors of the war can begin the next fight: rebuilding their lives.

"These are museums, historical buildings, churches. Everything that was built and created by generations of Ukrainians," Ukraine's first lady, Olena Zelenska, said in September when she visited a Ukrainian museum in New York. "This is a war against our identity."

Workers at the Museum of Local History in Melitopol first tried hiding the Hun diadem and hundreds of other treasures when Russian troops stormed the southern city. But after weeks of repeated searches, Russian soldiers finally discovered the building's secret basement where staff had squirreled away the museum's most precious objects — including the Hun diadem, according to a museum worker.

The worker, who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity, fearing Russian punishment for even discussing the events, said the Ukrainians don't know where Russian troops took the haul, which included the tiara and some 1,700 other artifacts.

Dug up from a burial chamber in 1948, the crown is one of just a few Hun crowns worldwide. The museum worker said other treasures that disappeared with Russian soldiers include 198 pieces of 2,400-year-old gold from the era of the Scythians, nomads who migrated from Central Asia to southern Russia and Ukraine and founded an empire in Crimea.

"These are ancient finds. These are works of art. They are priceless," said Oleksandr Symonenko, chief researcher at Ukraine's Institute of Archaeology. "If culture disappears, it is an irreparable disaster."

Russia's Culture Ministry did not respond to questions about the Melitopol collection.

Russian forces also looted museums as they laid waste to the Black Sea port of Mariupol, according to Ukrainian officials who were driven from that the southern city, which was relentlessly pounded by Russian bombardment. It fell under Moscow's complete control only in May when Ukrainian defenders who clung to the city's steelworks finally surrendered.

Mariupol's exiled city council said Russian forces pilfered more than 2,000 items from the city's museums. Among the most precious items were ancient religious icons, a unique handwritten Torah scroll, a 200-year-old bible and more than 200 medals, the council said.

Also looted were art works by painters Arkhip Kuindzhi, who was born in Mariupol, and Crimea-born Ivan Aivazovsky, both famed for their seascapes, the exiled councillors said. They said Russian troops carted off their stolen bounty to the Russian-occupied Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine.

The invasion has also wrought extensive damage and destruction to Ukraine's cultural patrimony. The U.N.'s cultural agency is keeping a tally of sites being struck by missiles, bombs and shelling. With the war now in its eighth month, the agency says it has verified damage to 199 sites in 12 regions.

They include 84 churches and other religious sites, 37 buildings of historic importance, 37 buildings for cultural activities, 18 monuments, 13 museums and 10 libraries, UNESCO says.

Ukrainian government tallies are even higher, with authorities saying their count of destroyed and damaged religious buildings alone is up to at least 270.

While invasion forces hunted for treasures to steal, Ukrainian museum workers did what they could to keep them out of Russian hands. Tens of thousands of items have been evacuated away from the front lines and combat-struck regions.

In Kyiv, the director of the Museum of Historical Treasures of Ukraine lived in the building, guarding its artifacts, during the invasion's first weeks when Russian forces sought, unsuccessfully, to encircle the capital.

"We were afraid of the Russian occupiers, because they destroy everything that can be identified as Ukrainian," recalled the director, Natalia Panchenko.

Fearing Russian troops would storm the city, she sought to confuse them by taking down the plaque on the museum's entrance. She also dismantled exhibits, carefully packing away artifacts into boxes for evacuation.

One day, she hopes, they'll go back into their rightful place. For now, the museum is just showing copies.

"These things were fragile, they survived hundreds of years," she said. "We couldn't stand the thought they could be lost."

## Families seek truth as Airbus, Air France face crash trial

By NICOLAS VAUX-MONTAGNY and JEFFREY SCHAEFFER Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Nicolas Touillou had just proposed marriage to his girlfriend. Nelson Marinho Jr. was heading off on a new oil exploration job. Eric Lamy was about to celebrate his 38th birthday.

They were among 228 people killed in 2009 when their storm-tossed Air France flight from Rio de Janeiro to Paris slammed into the Atlantic. After more than a decade of legal battles, their families at last have a chance at justice.

Aviation industry heavyweights Airbus and Air France are charged with manslaughter in a trial that opens Monday over the crash of Flight 447 on June 1, 2009. The worst plane crash in Air France history killed people of 33 nationalities and had lasting impact, leading to changes in air safety regulations, how pilots are trained and the use of airspeed sensors.

But it almost didn't come to trial. The companies insist they are not criminally responsible, and Air France has already compensated families. Investigators argued for dropping the case, but unusually, judges overruled them and sent the case to court.

"We made a promise to our loved ones to have the truth for them and to ensure that they didn't die for nothing," Ophelie Touillou, whose 27-year-old brother Nicolas was killed, told The Associated Press. "But we are also fighting for collective security, in fact, for all those who board an Airbus every day, or Air France, every day."

She said the companies present themselves as "untouchable," and that Airbus made no effort to address families' concerns. "For them, we are nothing. They did not lose 228 people. They lost a plane."

Few families in Brazil, which lost 59 citizens in the crash, can afford to travel to France for the trial. Some feel the French justice system has been too soft on Airbus and Air France — two industrial giants in which the French government has an ownership stake.

The trial is expected to focus on two key factors: the icing over of external sensors called pitot tubes, and pilot error.

The Airbus A300-200 disappeared from radars over the Atlantic Ocean between Brazil and Senegal with 216 passengers and 12 crew members aboard. The first debris was only spotted at sea five days later. And it wasn't until 2011 that the plane — and its black box recorders — were located on the ocean floor, in an unprecedented search effort at depths of more than 13,000 feet.

France's air accident investigation agency BEA found that the accident involved a cascading series of events, with no single cause.

As a storm buffeted the plane, ice crystals present at high altitudes disabled the pitot tubes, blocking speed and altitude information. The autopilot disconnected.

The crew resumed manual piloting, but with erroneous navigation data. The plane went into an aerodynamic stall, its nose pitched upward. And then it plunged.

The pilots "did not understand what was happening to them. A difficulty of interpretation, in an all-digital aircraft like all the aircraft in the world today — well, it's easy to be wrong," said Gerard Feldzer, a former pilot and pilot trainer for Air France.

He said he and pilots around the world asked themselves afterward "if it had been me, would I have acted in the same way? It has been a very difficult question to answer."

No one risks prison in this case; only the companies are on trial. Each faces potential fines of up to 225,000 euros — a fraction of their annual revenues — but they could suffer reputational damage if found criminally responsible.

Nelson Marinho, whose son Nelson Jr was killed, is angry that no company executives will be tried.

"They have changed various directors, both at Airbus and Air France, so who will they arrest? No one. There won't be justice. That's sadly the truth," Marinho, a retired mechanic who leads a support group for

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victims' families, told The AP.

Air France is accused of not having implemented training in the event of icing of the pitot probes despite the risks.

In a statement, the company said it would demonstrate in court "that it has not committed a criminal fault at the origin of the accident" and plead for acquittal.

Air France has since changed its training manuals and simulations. It also provided compensation to families, who had to agree not to disclose the sums.

Airbus is accused of having known that the model of pitot tubes on Flight 447 was faulty, and not doing enough to urgently inform airlines and their crews about it and to ensure training to mitigate the resulting risk.

An AP investigation at the time found that Airbus had known since at least 2002 about problems with pitots, but failed to replace them until after the crash. The model in question — a Thales AA pitot — was subsequently banned and replaced.

Airbus blames pilot error, and told investigators that icing over is a problem inherent to all such sensors. "They knew and they did nothing," said Danièle Lamy, president of an association of victims' families that pushed for a trial. "The pilots should never have found themselves in such a situation, they never understood the cause of the breakdown and the plane had become unpilottable."

Lamy lost her son Eric a few days before his 38th birthday. She has struggled ever since to find out the truth.

"The plane had sent messages to the ground about the problem but had not warned the pilots. It's as if you were driving a car at 130 (kph, about 80 mph), your brakes were no longer working but the car sent the alert to the mechanic and not to the driver," Lamy told the AP.

She is among 489 civil parties to the trial, which is scheduled to last through December.

The crash forced Airbus and Air France to be more transparent and reactive, Feldzer said, noting that the trial will be important for the aviation industry as well as for families.

"The history of aviation security is made from this, from accidents," Feldzer said.

## Jalen Milroe, No. 1 Alabama escape Texas A&M, 24-20

By JOHN ZENOR AP Sports Writer

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. (AP) — Alabama was plagued by turnovers and other mistakes and once again was pushed to the brink by Texas A&M, this time with Bryce Young watching from the sideline.

Things turned out differently this time.

Jalen Milroe threw for three touchdowns in his first start and No. 1 Alabama made a final goal-line stand to escape with a 24-20 victory over Texas A&M on Saturday night in a battle of backup quarterbacks.

Playing without the injured Heisman Trophy winner Young, the Crimson Tide (6-0, 3-0 Southeastern Conference) needed two late stops from Will Anderson Jr. and the defense. They got them, just barely, to survive four turnovers and two missed field goals against a team that beat the Tide 41-38 last season.

"That was not our best football out there tonight," Alabama coach Nick Saban said. "When you don't have your quarterback out there and the second-teamer has to play, everybody's got to play better."

But the Aggies were in a similar boat, albeit with a more experienced quarterback sub.

Haynes King, subbing for injured starter Max Johnson (throwing hand), drove the Aggies (3-2, 1-2) 69 yards in the final 1:50 with big passes to Evan Stewart and Moose Muhammad III. Jordan Battle appeared to end the threat with an interception in the end zone, but Brian Branch was flagged for pass interference.

That set up one final shot from the 2 with three seconds left, but King's pass to Stewart fell incomplete.

Milroe passed for 111 yards and ran for 183, but also threw an interception and lost two fumbles. Jahmyr Gibbs ran for 159 yards after gaining most of his 206 after Young's shoulder injury early against Arkansas.

The big question now is if Young will play against No. 8 Tennessee.

"Jalen did some good things but obviously a couple of turnovers," Saban said. "He's going to live and learn and we're going to live and learn with him. We'll just see what progress Bryce makes."

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King completed 25 of 46 passes for 253 yards and a pair of touchdowns with an interception but faced constant pressure. The Tide had three sacks and Anderson was credited with eight quarterback hurries.

Texas A&M coach Jimbo Fisher wasn't buying any narrative that the Aggies kept it close because Alabama was without its star quarterback and made a number of mistakes.

"We're playing the backup, quarterback too," Fisher said. "Two good teams locked up and battled and went at it and we showed what we're capable of."

Ultimately, Alabama got a double measure of revenge against the Aggies and Fisher. Another unranked Texas A&M team handed Alabama its only regular-season loss last year, then Fisher went no-holds barred in response to Saban's comments that the Aggies bought their top recruiting class with NIL money.

Once again, the Aggies hung ever so close with the top team, a 23 1/2-point favorite.

"We also remember that feeling and all (through) preparation we're just saying we don't ever want to feel that feeling again," Anderson said.

Texas A&M cut it to 24-20 on Randy Bond's 46-yard field goal with 3:32 left. The Aggies settled for the kick after twice getting flagged for false starts trying to go for it on fourth-and-long.

The defense then forced Alabama into a three-and-out, setting up one more shot for King and the Aggies.

"We went toe to toe with them," Fisher said.

He went toe to toe with Saban in the offseason but they went through the customary pregame and postgame exchanges.

"I told him he had a good team and wished him good luck the rest of the year and he said the same to me," Fisher said.

## THE TAKEAWAY

Texas A&M: It was another blow for an Aggies season that started with a No. 6 ranking and hopes of SEC and national contention. But the offense showed late signs of life in a gutty performance that fell just short.

Alabama: The dynamic passing game with Young wasn't evident, but the grind-it-out run game was effective but for the array of mistakes. Linebacker Jaylen Moody missed the game with a bruised kidney.

## POLL IMPLICATIONS

Alabama swapped spots with Georgia after the Bulldogs had a near-miss against Missouri. It will be interesting to see how voters view the Tide's own close call.

## STARTING QBS

Young came out for warmups with the team and took snaps alongside the other quarterbacks, but didn't throw passes. Johnson watched from the sidelines in warmups. Milroe said he found out he was starting before the game and "I was ready to go."

He said Young helped him "stay calm, cool and collected."

## UP NEXT

Texas A&M has an open date before visiting South Carolina on Oct. 22.

Alabama visits No. 8 Tennessee in its first game against a Top 10 team.

## NFL's concussion protocol modified after Tagovailoa review

By ALANIS THAMES AP Sports Writer

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. (AP) — The NFL and NFL Players Association have agreed to make changes to the league's concussion protocol following a joint investigation into the procedures after Miami Dolphins quarterback Tua Tagovailoa suffered what was described as a back injury against the Buffalo Bills last month.

The league and players' union said in a joint statement Saturday that while the Dolphins followed protocol after the injury, the outcome of the Tagovailoa case "was not what was intended when the Protocol was drafted." As a result, language addressing abnormality of balance/stability was added to the league's protocol list of symptoms that would keep a player from returning to the game.

In the first half Sept. 25 against Buffalo, Tagovailoa took a hit from Bills linebacker Matt Milano, which caused him to slam to the ground. He appeared disoriented afterward and stumbled as he tried to get

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to his feet.

Tagovailoa was immediately taken to the locker room and to go through the NFL's concussion protocol, after which he was cleared of any head injury. He started the third quarter, drawing wide-spread criticism as to why he was allowed to return to the game.

The NFL and NFLPA said they reviewed video and jointly interviewed members of the Dolphins' medical staff, the head athletic trainer, the Booth ATC Spotter, the now-terminated Unaffiliated Neurotrauma Consultant and Tagovailoa.

Tagovailoa did not show any signs or symptoms of a concussion during the locker room exam, the rest of the game, or throughout the following week, the league and union said. But immediately after he took the hit from Milano, gross motor instability was present as Tagovailoa was visibly disoriented.

After the game, Tagovailoa and Dolphins coach Mike McDaniel said the player had suffered a back injury earlier in the contest on a quarterback sneak.

The investigation found that Tagovailoa told the medical staff he aggravated his back injury when he was hit by Milano and that his back injury caused him to stumble. The review also said the medical staff determined that the gross motor instability was not due to a concussion.

In their statement Saturday, the NFL and players' union said there was not an examination of the QB's back during the check for a concussion, but medical personnel "instead relied on the earlier examination conducted by other members of the medical staff." The conclusion then was that the back injury was the cause of Tagovailoa's instability.

As a result of the joint investigation, the league and union agreed to change the league's concussion protocol to include the term "ataxia." In the statement, ataxia is defined as "abnormality of balance/stability, motor coordination or dysfunctional speech caused by a neurological issue."

Ataxia replaced the term "gross motor instability" and has been added to the list of symptoms that would prohibit a player from returning to the game. The other symptoms are confusion, amnesia and loss of consciousness.

"The Protocol exists to establish a high standard of concussion care for each player," the league and union's statement said, "whereby every medical professional engages in a meaningful and rigorous examination of the player-patient. To that end, the parties remain committed to continuing to evaluate our Protocol to ensure it reflects the intended conservative approach to evaluating player-patients for potential head injuries."

On Oct. 1, the union fired the Unaffiliated Neurotrauma Consultant who handled Tagovailoa's situation during the game.

Jeff Miller, the NFL's executive vice president overseeing health and safety, said in a virtual news conference Saturday that he believes this is the first time a UNC has been fired, and that the NFL did not support the decision to fire him.

Less than a week after the injury, Tagovailoa started against the Cincinnati Bengals in a Thursday night game. He suffered a concussion in the first half after taking a hard sack, and displayed the fencing response after the scary hit. He was stretchered off the field and immediately taken to the hospital. He remains in the concussion protocol and will miss Sunday's game against the Jets.

Dr. Allen Sills, the NFL's Chief Medical Officer, said with the league's amended protocol, Tagovailoa would have been diagnosed with a concussion on Sept. 25 under the ataxia term, thus making him ineligible to come back into that game.

Sills said there's no exact timetable for return for a player diagnosed with a concussion, but it would be "extremely unlikely" for a player diagnosed with ataxia to be able to play on Thursday night. The median time out with a concussion is nine days, he added.

Sills also alluded to how difficult it is to definitively diagnose concussions. He mentioned that blood and saliva tests could help make concussion examinations more accurate.

Commissioner Roger Goodell said at a fan forum in London Saturday that the NFL will make a "change or two" to its concussion protocol.

McDaniel, asked repeatedly in the days following the incident about the decision to allow Tagovailoa to

return, emphasized his confidence in the team's handling of the situation.

"This is a player-friendly organization that I make it very clear from the onset," McDaniel said last week, "that my job as a coach is here for the players. I take that very serious, and no one else in the building strays from that."

## Thai town struggles with sudden loss of so many of its young

By DAVID RISING Associated Press

UTHAI SAWAN, Thailand (AP) — Paweenuch Supholwong sits on her mother's lap and fidgets with her pigtails as her mother tells the remarkable story of how the 3-year-old wisp of a girl survived Thailand's worst mass killing — the only child to emerge unscathed from a day care after a former police officer massacred preschoolers while they napped.

Two dozen children were among the 36 people shot and slashed to death in an attack that shattered the serenity of the rural township of Uthai Sawan, robbing the small farming community of much of its youngest generation in the blink of an eye.

Paweenuch was deeply asleep and covered by a blanket on the floor when the attacker burst through the front door and killed 22 of her classmates who lay around her — apparently missing her because he thought she was already dead, her mother Panomplai Srithong said. Another child survived with serious injuries and remains hospitalized.

As the community has come together to share its grief at the scene of the attack and its Buddhist temples, people have also flocked to Paweenuch, tying dozens of white, yellow and red "soul strings" to her wrists in the hope it will help her also spiritually survive the horror, in the belief that when someone suffers such a tragedy, they lose part of their soul.

"It is to bring the spirit back into her body," Panomplai explained, holding her daughter warmly. "It's like the spirit had left the body and it is being called back."

Uthai Sawan's 6,500 people are spread across a dozen villages, living in homes scattered among the sugar cane fields and rice paddies that many of them farm. The township in northeastern Thailand was named for two smaller communities merged together administratively, with Uthai meaning "rising sun" and Sawan meaning "heaven" or "happiness" in Sanskrit.

Ninety-two of the township's preschool-aged children attended the public day care center, which is next to the government's administrative offices and across from a sugar cane field. But flooding from seasonal monsoon rains, a mechanical failure that kept the center's school bus from working and other factors kept many away on Thursday when the gunman attacked.

The township has about 100 more preschool-aged children who either go to private care centers or stay at home, said Nanticha Panchom, the teacher who runs the day care.

Nanticha, 43, was in the center's kitchen cooking the children lunch when she heard the first shot from outside — police say it was the attacker shooting a man and a child in front of the building. She heard someone else yell to lock the front door and she ran out to get help.

"I never thought he would go inside," she said as she looked across the driveway to the single-story building now adorned with flowers and other tributes to those killed.

She bleakly wondered whether any children would ever return to the day care, and what the killing of the others will mean for the township of about 1,900 households.

"I can't even imagine what this lost generation will mean to this community," Nanticha said.

Police identified the shooter as Panya Kamrap, 34, a former police sergeant fired earlier this year because of a drug charge involving methamphetamine. After leaving the day care, he killed others along the way, and then his wife, child and himself at home, police said. An exact motive has not been determined, but he was due in court the following day to answer for the drug charge.

Like many from the area, Tawatchi Wichaiwong came to the scene Saturday from a neighboring village with his wife, sister-in-law, and three young nephews to place flowers at the memorial outside the day care.

"We felt it across all the villages. I cried when I heard the news," the 47-year-old sugar cane farmer said.



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"We all have children of similar ages, we all know each other."

For a township where people are used to simple and peaceful daily lives, the attack came as a particular shock, said Chuanpit Geawthong, a senior local administrator who was born and raised in Uthai Sawan.

"We've never encountered anything like this. Even during the COVID crisis, we did not lose anybody," she said. "This is something felt by all of us — there's no one not affected, we're all connected families."

The 52-year-old works in the district office building next door to the day care center and said she frequently popped over to help out and see the children, who called her "grandma."

Chuanpit was in the outdoor restroom when she heard the shots fired, and ran out to see a man lying under a table suffering from a gunshot wound and rushed to his aid. He is recovering at a hospital, but a man who worked at the district office was killed, she said.

It's the loss of the children that she is having the hardest time coming to terms with.

"It's almost impossible for someone here not to be affected by this — if the victim wasn't your child, your grandchild, your family member, it's someone you know," she said.

"Our community has been so happy, it is such a lovely place, and the perpetrator has damaged its future. These kids could have grown up to be anything, a member of parliament or even prime minister," Chuanpit said.

Thailand's government is providing financial compensation to the families to help them with funeral costs and other expenses — at least 310,000 baht, which is about \$8,300 and for many amounts to several months' salary, if not more, in one of the country's poorest provinces.

The government also quickly dispatched a team of trauma experts from Bangkok who linked up with local mental health professionals on the day of the attack to help the victims.

Team leader Dutsadee Juengsiragulwit, a doctor with the government's department of mental health, said a small community like Uthai Sawan has the advantage in that its size gives it a social cohesion that can be a source of power in dealing with such a tragedy.

On the other hand, she said since almost everyone is affected in some way, there are no "undamaged" people who can support others, so it is important for professionals to provide help quickly.

"If we do nothing, the psychological wounds or psychological trauma will be embedded in this generation," she said.

Panomplai Srithong and her husband were at work in a Bangkok electronics factory when they heard that their daughter's day care had been attacked and that no one had survived.

Like many from Uthai Sawan, they had moved to the capital for work and send home money to their family, leaving 3-year-old Paweenuch in her grandmother's care.

After an initial panic, they learned that their daughter had survived and they drove home to Uthai Sawan as quickly as possible.

"Breathing was difficult, I can't describe it, but when I found out my child survived I was relieved," Panomplai said. "But I also wanted to know if she had any injuries, if there was any collateral damage."

She said from what her daughter has told her, she had been asleep under her blanket turned toward a wall and she doesn't seem to have seen or heard the attack. Rescue workers carried her out of the building with her eyes covered so she didn't see the grisly scene.

She did ask her grandmother about where her best friend was, and she told her that her friend "has passed."

"That's when she found out that her friend died," Panomplai said. "This was the person who was sleeping next to her."

Panomplai's adult cousin was killed outside the day care, and she attended a temple service Saturday for him and other victims.

"There's both good luck hidden in bad luck — I'm lucky that my child is okay but I lost my cousin," she said.

"For other people, some lost an only child who was their hope," she said, shaking her head in disbelief.

## **NKorea launches 2 missiles toward sea after US-SKorea drills**

By HYUNG-JIN KIM and MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles toward its eastern waters on Sunday, the latest of a recent barrage of weapons tests, a day after it warned the redeployment of a U.S. aircraft carrier near the Korean Peninsula was inflaming regional tensions.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement that it detected two missile launches Sunday between 1:48 a.m. and 1:58 a.m. from the North's eastern coastal city of Munchon. It added that South Korea's military has boosted its surveillance posture and maintains a readiness in close coordination with the United States.

Japanese Vice Defense Minister Toshiro Ino also confirmed the launches, saying Pyongyang's testing activities are "absolutely unacceptable" as they threaten regional and international peace and security.

Ino said the weapons could be submarine-launched ballistic missiles. "We are continuing to analyze details of the missiles, including a possibility that they might have been launched from the sea," Ino said.

North Korea's pursuit of an ability to fire missiles from a submarine would constitute an alarming development for its rivals because it's harder to detect such launches in advance. North Korea was believed to have last tested a missile launch from a submarine in May.

The South Korean and Japanese militaries assessed that the missiles flew about 350 kilometers (217 miles) and reached maximum altitudes of 90 to 100 kilometers (56 to 60 miles) before falling into the waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida separately instructed officials to gather and analyze all information they could and expedite any updates about the tests to the public. His office said it also was seeking to ensure the safety of all aircraft and ships in waters around Japan while preparing for any contingencies.

South Korea's presidential office said National Security Director Kim Sung-han called an emergency security meeting over the launches where members reviewed the South's defense preparedness and discussed ways to strengthen cooperation with the United States and Japan to counter the growing North Korean threats.

Seoul warned that Pyongyang's consecutive provocations will deepen its international isolation and increase the "instability of the regime" by worsening its economy and people's livelihoods.

The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said in a statement that the launches didn't pose any immediate threat to U.S. personnel or territory, or to its allies. But it said the launches highlight "the destabilizing impact" of North Korea's unlawful weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs. It said U.S. commitments to the defense of South Korea and Japan remain "ironclad."

The launch, the North's seventh round of weapons tests in two weeks, came hours after the United States and South Korea wrapped up two days of naval drills off the Korean Peninsula's east coast.

The drills involved the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan and its battle group, which returned to the area after North Korea fired a powerful missile over Japan last week to protest the carrier group's previous training with South Korea.

On Saturday, North Korea's Defense Ministry warned that the Reagan's redeployment was causing a "considerably huge negative splash" in regional security. The ministry called its recent missile tests a "righteous reaction" to intimidating military drills between South Korea and the United States.

North Korea regards U.S.-South Korean military exercises as an invasion rehearsal and is especially sensitive if such drills involve U.S. strategic assets such as an aircraft carrier. North Korea has argued it was forced to pursue a nuclear weapons program to cope with U.S. nuclear threats. U.S. and South Korean officials have repeatedly said they have no intentions of attacking the North.

North Korea has launched more than 40 ballistic and cruise missiles in over 20 different events this year, exploiting a division in the U.N. Security Council deepened over Russia's war on Ukraine as a window to speed up arms development.

The record number of tests included last week's launch of a nuclear-capable missile that flew over Japan for the first time in five years. It was estimated to have traveled about 4,500-4,600 kilometers (2,800-2,860 miles), a distance sufficient to reach the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam and beyond.

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South Korean officials say Pyongyang may up the ante soon by conducting an intercontinental ballistic missile or a nuclear test explosion, following a traditional pattern of manufacturing diplomatic crises with weapons tests and threats before offering negotiations aimed at extracting concessions. There are also concerns about provocations along the Koreas' land and sea borders.

Sunday's launches came on the eve of the 77th anniversary of the foundation of the North Korean ruling Workers' Party.

Earlier this year, North Korea tested other nuclear-capable ballistic missiles that place the U.S. mainland, South Korea and Japan within striking distance.

North Korea's testing spree indicates its leader, Kim Jong Un, has no intention of resuming diplomacy with the U.S. and wants to focus on expanding his weapons arsenal. But some experts say Kim would eventually aim to use his advanced nuclear program to wrest greater outside concessions, such as the recognition of North Korea as a legitimate nuclear state, which Kim thinks is essential in getting crippling U.N. sanctions lifted.

South Korean officials recently said North Korea was also prepared to test a new liquid-fueled intercontinental ballistic missile and a submarine-launched ballistic missile while maintaining readiness to perform its first underground nuclear test since 2017.

## CJ Stroud throws 6 TDs, No. 3 Ohio St tops Michigan St 49-20

By LARRY LAGE AP Sports Writer

EAST LANSING, Mich. (AP) — C.J. Stroud lofted a pass to his left, slightly short of Marvin Harrison Jr. and the son of a former NFL star did the rest.

Harrison made a twisting, leaping catch to snag a football that was near his right cleat for his third touchdown to help Stroud tie a school record with six touchdown passes as No. 3 Ohio State coasted to a 49-20 win over Michigan State on Saturday.

"If they saw my face on camera, I was like, 'What was that?'" coach Ryan Day said. "That was a tremendous catch. We do see things in practice, but that was special."

The Buckeyes (6-0, 3-0 Big Ten) scored on their opening drive for the fifth straight game when Harrison caught his first of three touchdowns.

It was an impressive performance by an offense without injured receiver Jaxon Smith-Njigba and running back Miyan Williams.

How good would Ohio State be at full strength?

"It's scary to me so I can only imagine what it's like for the rest of the country," said Harrison, who had seven catches for 118 yards and three scores for the third time in seven games.

TreVeyon Henderson ran for 118 yards and a touchdown before limping off the field with an apparent right leg injury in the third quarter.

With an abundance of caution, Day kept him on the sideline.

"If it was a different game, he probably would've come back in," Day said.

The Spartans (2-4, 0-3) have lost four straight after winning their first two games this season.

"I'm not really happy right now and I'm going to keep it short," coach Mel Tucker told reporters.

Stroud was 21 of 26 for 361 yards. He became the first player in program history to throw six touchdowns in three games, a feat he pulled off in consecutive games against Michigan State.

"What can you say about somebody who throwing it like that in 20 mph wind?" Day asked.

Stroud threw an interception for the third straight game and the latest was returned 32 yards by Charles Brantley to pull the Spartans into a 7-all tie.

Emeka Egbuka had five receptions for 143 yards and a score, a 69-yard catch on Stroud's first throw after his Pick-6 in the second quarter.

Payton Thorne was 11 of 18 for 113 yards with an 18-yard touchdown pass to Jayden Reed to pull the Spartans within eight points early in the second quarter before they gave up 28 straight points in the lopsided game.

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Michigan State has already lost twice as many games as it did last season.

"It's very tough," Thorne said. "It's not something you want to go through. It's not easy."

Thorne, who threw an interception, could not rely on a running game that gained just 7 yards against the Buckeyes.

## SEA OF RED

Michigan State's disappointing season and the proximity to Ohio led to a lot of Buckeyes fans watching the game at Spartan Stadium.

## THE TAKEAWAY

Ohio State: The Buckeyes are the first Big Ten team to score 45-plus points in five straight games since Michigan did it, closing the 1946 season and picking it up again in 1947, and it will take quite a defense to slow them down.

"It all starts with the physicality up front and running the football effectively," Day said. "That opens up everything else."

Michigan State: A potentially promising season is crumbling for Tucker, who does not seem to have answers to fix his team's many problems on both sides of the ball. The Spartans were No. 15 in the preseason AP Top 25 and were No. 11 before losing the first of four straight games at Washington.

"I'm not looking to make any changes from a coaching standpoint at all," Tucker said.

## INJURY REPORT

Ohio State: Williams and Smith-Njigba did not make the trip to Michigan State due to undisclosed injuries.

Michigan State: Jaden Mangham was taken to a hospital for evaluation after being carted off the field with an injury. The freshman safety appeared to take the brunt of a collision when he tackled Henderson late in the first quarter. As the cart approached the tunnel, Mangham flashed a thumbs up for the cheering crowd.

"Jaden Mangham was in the locker room with us just now with his teammates," Tucker said.

## UP NEXT

Ohio State: A bye week comes at a good time to rest a banged-up backfield before hosting Iowa on Oct. 22 and playing the next week at No. 10 Penn State.

Michigan State: Hosts Wisconsin, another struggling team that is led by an interim coach, in what seems like an opportunity to earn a desperately needed win.

## Breonna Taylor warrant details deepen mistrust in police

By DYLAN LOVAN Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — Recent revelations about the search warrant that led to Breonna Taylor's death have reopened old wounds in Louisville's Black community and disrupted the city's efforts to restore trust in the police department.

Former Louisville officer Kelly Goodlett admitted in federal court that she and another officer falsified information in the warrant. That confirmed to many, including U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland, that Taylor never should have been visited by armed officers on March 13, 2020.

Protest leaders who took to the streets of Kentucky's largest city after she was fatally shot by police say Goodlett's confession confirms their suspicions that Louisville police can't be trusted and that systemic issues run deep. They say officers abused demonstrators after the botched raid, and that her fatal shooting is just one of many reasons why the community remains wary.

"What bothers me so incredibly is that so many lives were lost because of this lie," said Hannah Drake, a Louisville poet and leader in a push for justice after Taylor's death. "They don't even understand the far-reaching tentacles of what they did."

More than once during that long, hot summer, individual officers escalated rather than calmed a situation.

Days before a Black man was shot dead by a National Guard member in his restaurant's kitchen, an officer who wounded the man's niece taunted demonstrators on social media, daring them to challenge police. Another Louisville officer faces a federal charge over hitting a kneeling protester in the back of the

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head with a baton.

"We were right to protest," Louisville Urban League President Sadiqa Reynolds tweeted shortly after Goodlett's plea. "People are dead and lives upended because of a pile of lies."

Some Louisville officers have been disciplined, fired, and even charged with crimes for abusing protesters, in addition to the four officers now charged federally in relation to the botched raid. But the problems can't be blamed on a few rogue officers, according to a lawsuit brought by Taylor's white neighbors, who were nearly hit by gunfire during the raid.

They accuse the department of having a "warrior culture" and cultivating an "us vs. them" mentality. In a lawsuit, the family of the man shot at the restaurant alleges that police aggression during a curfew instigated his death.

Louisville is working on numerous reforms, implementing a new 911 diversion program, increasing leadership reviews of search warrant requests and improving officer training. The city has outlawed "no knock" warrants, conducted an independent audit and paid Taylor's mother \$12 million in a civil settlement. A new police chief, Erika Shields, was hired in 2021.

Such reforms have been implemented amid a continuing U.S. Department of Justice investigation of LMPD's policing practices, which could land at any moment.

The chief called Taylor's death "horrific," and said in an interview with The Associated Press that she welcomes the federal investigations, which led to charges against Goodlett and the other officers. "I think we're in an important place that was necessary to get to, before we move on," she said.

Mayor Greg Fischer, whose 12-year run ends this year, said city officials turned the probes over to state and federal officials "because the community rightfully was saying LMPD should not be investigating LMPD, and I agree with that."

Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron's investigation then ended without any officers being charged directly in Taylor's death. It took federal prosecutors to convict Goodlett — she pleaded guilty to conspiracy and admitted to helping create a phony link between Taylor and a wanted drug dealer. Goodlett resigned the day before her charges were announced in August and awaits sentencing next month.

In August court filings, federal prosecutors said another former officer, Joshua Jaynes, inserted the crucial information into the warrant request that drew Taylor into the narcotic squad's investigation — claiming that a postal inspector had verified that the drug dealer was receiving packages at Taylor's apartment.

Goodlett and Jaynes knew that was false, as did their sergeant, Kyle Meany, when he signed off on the request, Garland said.

"Breonna Taylor should be alive today," Garland said.

Goodlett, Jaynes and Meany were all fired, as was a fourth officer, Brett Hankison, who faces federal charges for blindly firing into Taylor's home through a side door and window. He was exonerated on similar state charges earlier this year. Jaynes and Meany are being tried together. That trial, along with Hankison's, is scheduled for next year. Goodlett is expected to testify against Jaynes.

Metro Council President David James, a former police officer, said that to restore trust, Louisville's Black community "just wants the police to treat them the same way they would treat people in another part of the city."

No incident highlighted the racial divide more than the fatal shooting of Black restaurant owner David McAtee as police sought to enforce the city's curfew in a predominantly African American neighborhood far from the center of the Taylor protests.

Just before midnight on May 31, 2020, Louisville officers and Kentucky National Guard members were sent to a gathering spot near McAtee's YaYa's BBQ "for a show of force (and) intimidation," McAtee's family alleges in a lawsuit.

A few nights earlier, officer Katie Crews had been photographed in a line of police as a protester offered her a handful of flowers. Crews posted the image on social media, writing that she hoped the protester was hurting from the pepper balls she "got lit up with a little later on."

"Come back and get ya some more ole girl, I'll be on the line again tonight," Crews wrote.

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When officers marched toward McAtee's restaurant, Crews escalated the tension by firing non-lethal pepper balls at the crowd, an LMPD investigation found. Many people rushed into McAtee's kitchen, where his niece was shot in the neck by Crews with the non-lethal rounds.

That prompted McAtee to pull a pistol from his hip and fire a shot. Seeing that, Crews and other officers switched to live rounds and McAtee, leaning out his kitchen door, was fatally shot in the chest by a National Guard member. The deadly force was found to be justified, but the police chief was fired by Fischer because the Louisville officers involved had failed to turn on their body cameras, just as they did during the Taylor raid.

Crews later admitted that no one in the crowd had been disorderly. She was fired by Shields in February. Now she faces up to 10 years in prison if convicted of a federal charge of using unreasonable force.

James, the Metro Council president and former officer, groaned while recalling McAtee's death, saying he was saddened because he knew him and had eaten his food. The "extremely unfortunate and tragic" shooting has stuck with him as an example of bad policing, he said.

Drake, the poet and activist, said more systemic changes are needed. In the meantime, she said authorities should apologize for their treatment of protesters, and drop any cases against people arrested for demonstrating that summer. Hundreds have been cleared, but some remain criminally charged. Knowing it was all so unnecessary only deepens the pain, she said.

"We could have avoided all this," Drake said. "And I think that's where the pain comes from — we were right!"

## **Palestinian gunman kills woman Israeli soldier in Jerusalem**

By JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — A Palestinian opened fire on an Israeli military checkpoint in east Jerusalem on Saturday night, killing a female Israeli soldier and wounding three other people, Israeli authorities said.

The attack came hours after a pair of Palestinian teenagers were killed during an Israeli military raid in the occupied West Bank.

It was the latest bloodshed in the deadliest round of fighting in the area in seven years. It also came less than 24 hours before Israel was to begin celebrating the weeklong Sukkot holiday, a time when tens of thousands of Jews visit the holy city.

Saturday night's shooting occurred at a checkpoint near the Shuafat refugee camp in east Jerusalem. Police said the assailant got out of a car and opened fire, seriously wounding the female soldier and a security guard before running into the camp. The army announced early Sunday that the woman, who was 19, had died.

Police said two members of the paramilitary border police unit were lightly wounded by shrapnel.

Police said they were searching for the attacker, with special forces and a helicopter involved in the search. Police said early Sunday that they arrested one person on suspicion of involvement in the attack, but were continuing the manhunt.

"Our hearts tonight are with the wounded and their families," said Prime Minister Yair Lapid. "Terrorism will not defeat us. We are also strong on this difficult evening."

Israel captured east Jerusalem in the 1967 Mideast war and annexed the area in a move that is not recognized internationally. It considers the entire city, including east Jerusalem, home to the city's most important holy sites, to be its capital. The Palestinians claim east Jerusalem as the capital of a future state.

Israel already has been carrying out daily arrest raids in the occupied West Bank since a series of deadly Palestinian attacks inside Israel. Most of the military activity has been focused in the Palestinian cities of Jenin and Nablus in the northern West Bank.

Earlier Saturday, the Israeli military shot and killed two Palestinian teens during an arrest raid in the Jenin refugee camp, the site of repeated clashes between Israeli forces and local gunmen and residents. The camp is known as a stronghold of Palestinian militants.

Palestinian officials said soldiers entered the camp early Saturday and surrounded a house. In videos

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circulated on social media, exchanges of fire could be heard. The Palestinian Health Ministry reported two dead and 11 wounded, three of them critically.

The Palestinian Health Ministry identified the dead as Mahmoud al-Sous, 18, and Ahmad Daraghmeh, 16.

The Israeli military said it had arrested a 25-year-old operative from the Islamic Jihad militant group who has previously been imprisoned by Israel. It said the man had recently been involved in shooting attacks on Israeli soldiers.

It said soldiers opened fire during the raid when dozens of Palestinians hurled explosives and shot at them. Just before noontime, the Israeli forces withdrew from the area.

The killing occurred a day after two Palestinian teenagers, ages 14 and 17, were killed by Israeli fire in separate incidents elsewhere in the occupied West Bank. Rights groups accuse Israeli forces of using excessive force in their dealings with the Palestinians, without being held accountable. The Israeli military says it opens fire only in life-threatening situations.

Israel says it is forced to take action because Palestinian security forces, who coordinate with the military in a tense alliance against Islamic militants, is unable or unwilling to crack down. Palestinian security forces say the military raids have undermined their credibility and public support, especially in the absence of any political process. The last round of substantive Israeli-Palestinian peace talks ended in 2009.

Most of those killed are said by Israel to have been militants. But local youths protesting the incursions as well as some civilians have also been killed in the violence. Hundreds have been rounded up, with many placed in so-called administrative detention, which allows Israel to hold them without trial or charge. Over 100 Palestinians have been killed in the fighting this year.

The violence is also fueled by deepening disillusionment and anger among young Palestinians over the tight security coordination between Israel and the internationally backed Palestinian Authority, which work together to apprehend militants.

U.N. Mideast envoy Tor Wennesland said he was alarmed by the rising bloodshed. "The mounting violence in the occupied West Bank is fueling a climate of fear, hatred and anger," he said in a statement, calling on the sides to reduce tensions and take steps toward reviving a political process.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war and 500,000 Jewish settlers now live in some 130 settlements and other outposts among nearly 3 million Palestinians. The Palestinians want that territory, along with east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, for their future state.

## Rays, Guardians have longest scoreless postseason game

CLEVELAND (AP) — The Cleveland Guardians and Tampa Bay Rays set a record Saturday for the longest scoreless postseason game in major league history at 15 innings.

The previous high was set two years ago, when Atlanta beat Cincinnati 1-0 in the NL Wild Card Series opener on Freddie Freeman's walk-off single in the 13th inning.

Tampa got just four hits through 14 innings and used eight pitchers, including Corey Kluber, who made his first relief appearance in more than nine years.

Cleveland had four hits and also used eight pitchers. It was the longest postseason game in the team's history.

There were 36 strikeouts through 14 innings.

## Blast on bridge to Crimea hurts Russian supply lines, pride

By ADAM SCHRECK and VASILISA STEPANENKO Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — An explosion Saturday caused the partial collapse of a bridge linking the Crimean Peninsula with Russia, damaging an important supply artery for the Kremlin's faltering war effort in southern Ukraine and hitting a towering symbol of Russian power in the region.

Nobody immediately claimed responsibility for the blast, which killed three people. The speaker of the Russian-backed regional parliament in Crimea accused Ukraine, but Moscow didn't apportion blame. Ukrainian officials have repeatedly threatened to strike the bridge, and some lauded the destruction on

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Saturday. But Kyiv stopped short of claiming responsibility.

The explosion, which Russian authorities said was caused by a truck bomb, risked a sharp escalation in Russia's eight-month war, with some Russian lawmakers calling for President Vladimir Putin to declare a "counterterrorism operation," shedding the term "special military operation" that had downplayed the scope of fighting to ordinary Russians.

Putin signed a decree late Saturday tightening security for the bridge and for energy infrastructure between Crimea and Russia, and put Russia's federal security service, the FSB, in charge of the effort.

Hours after the explosion, Russia's Defense Ministry announced that the air force chief, Gen. Sergei Surovikin, would now command all Russian troops in Ukraine. Surovikin, who this summer was placed in charge of troops in southern Ukraine, had led Russian forces in Syria and was accused of overseeing a bombardment that destroyed much of Aleppo.

Moscow, however, continues to suffer battlefield losses.

On Saturday, a Kremlin-backed official in Ukraine's Kherson region announced a partial evacuation of civilians from the southern province, one of four illegally annexed by Moscow last week. Kirill Stremousov told Russia's state-run RIA Novosti agency that young children and the elderly could be relocated because Kherson was getting "ready for a difficult period."

The 19-kilometer (12-mile) Kerch Bridge, on a strait between the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, is a symbol of Moscow's claims on Crimea and an essential link to the peninsula, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014. The \$3.6 billion bridge, the longest in Europe, is vital to sustaining Russia's military operations in southern Ukraine. Putin himself presided over the bridge's opening in 2018.

The attack on it "will have a further sapping effort on Russian morale, (and) will give an extra boost to Ukraine's," said James Nixey of Chatham House, a think tank in London. "Conceivably the Russians can rebuild it, but they can't defend it while losing a war."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in a video address, indirectly acknowledged the bridge attack but did not address its cause.

"Today was not a bad day and mostly sunny on our state's territory," he said. "Unfortunately, it was cloudy in Crimea. Although it was also warm."

Zelenskyy said Ukraine wants a future "without occupiers. Throughout our territory, in particular in Crimea."

Zelenskyy also said Ukrainian forces advanced or held the line in the east and south, but acknowledged "very, very difficult, very tough fighting" around the city of Bakhmut in the eastern Donetsk region, where Russian forces have claimed recent gains.

Russia's National Anti-Terrorism Committee said a truck bomb caused seven railway cars carrying fuel to catch fire, resulting in the "partial collapse of two sections of the bridge." A couple riding in a vehicle on the bridge were killed, Russia's Investigative Committee said. It didn't say who the third victim was.

All vehicles crossing the bridge are supposed to undergo state-of-the-art checks for explosives. The truck that exploded was owned by a resident of the Krasnodar region in southern Russia, the Investigative Committee said, adding that the man's home was searched and experts were looking at the truck's route.

Train and automobile traffic over the bridge was temporarily suspended. Automobile traffic resumed Saturday afternoon on one of the two links that remained intact, with the flow alternating in each direction, said Crimea's Russia-backed leader, Sergey Aksyonov.

Rail traffic was resuming slowly. Two passenger trains left the Crimean cities of Sevastopol and Simferopol and headed toward the bridge Saturday evening. Passenger ferry links between Crimea and the Russian mainland were being relaunched Sunday.

While Russia seized areas north of Crimea early in its invasion of Ukraine and built a land corridor to it along the Sea of Azov, Ukraine is pressing a counteroffensive to reclaim that territory.

The Russian Defense Ministry said its troops in the south were receiving necessary supplies through that corridor and by sea.

Russian war bloggers responded to the bridge attack with fury, urging Moscow to retaliate by striking Ukrainian civilian infrastructure. Putin ordered the creation of a government panel to deal with the emer-



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gency. Gennady Zyuganov, head of the Russian Communist Party, said the "terror attack" should serve as a wake-up call. "The special operation must be turned into a counterterrorist operation," he declared.

Leonid Slutsky, head of the foreign affairs committee in the Russian parliament's lower house, said "consequences will be imminent" if Ukraine was responsible. And Sergei Mironov, leader of the Just Russia faction, said Russia should respond by attacking key Ukrainian infrastructure.

Such statements may herald a decision by Putin to declare a counterterrorism operation.

The parliamentary leader of Zelenskyy's party cast the explosion as a consequence of Moscow's takeover of Crimea.

"Russian illegal construction is starting to fall apart and catch fire. The reason is simple: If you build something explosive, then sooner or later it will explode," said David Arakhamia of the Servant of the People party.

The Ukrainian postal service announced it would issue stamps commemorating the blast, as it did after the sinking of the Moskva, a Russian flagship cruiser, by a Ukrainian strike.

The secretary of Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council, Oleksiy Danilov, tweeted a video with the Kerch Bridge on fire and Marilyn Monroe singing her "Happy Birthday Mr. President" song. Putin turned 70 on Friday.

In Moscow, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said "the reaction of the Kyiv regime to the destruction of civilian infrastructure shows its terrorist nature."

The Crimean Peninsula is a popular destination for Russian tourists and home to a Russian naval base. A Russian tourist association estimated that 50,000 tourists were in Crimea on Saturday.

Elsewhere, the U.N. nuclear watchdog said Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant has lost its last remaining external power source as a result of renewed shelling and is now relying on emergency diesel generators.

Ukrainian authorities were also just beginning to sift through the wreckage of the devastated city of Lyman in eastern Ukraine, assessing the humanitarian toll and possible war crimes after a months-long Russian occupation.

"Some people died in their houses, some people died in the streets, and the bodies are now being sent to experts for examination," said Mark Tkachenko of the Kramatorsk district police.

Explosions also rocked the eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv early Saturday, sending plumes of smoke into the sky and triggering secondary explosions. Ukrainian officials accused Russia of using surface-to-air missiles in two largely residential neighborhoods.

Kharkiv resident Tetiana Samoilenko's apartment caught fire in the attack. She was in the kitchen when the blast struck, sending glass flying.

"Now I have no roof over my head. Now I don't know what to do next," the 80-year-old said.

## Serial 'jogger rapist' to be released from Oregon prison

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — An Oregon serial rapist is set to be released from prison in mid-December after serving nearly 36 years behind bars, almost all of his maximum sentence.

Richard Gillmore, arrested in 1986 and called the "jogger rapist" because he stalked victims as he ran by their homes, admitted to raping nine girls in the Portland area in the 1970s and 80s but was only convicted in one case because of the statute of limitations. In 1987, a jury found him guilty of raping 13-year-old Tiffany Edens, his last known victim, in December 1986.

The Associated Press generally does not name people who have been sexually assaulted unless they come forward publicly. Edens has spoken out about the assault and recently wrote on social media that she received a voicemail in August from the state's Victim Information and Notification Service telling her of his impending release.

"I have been slowly processing the reality of it all," she wrote.

The Oregonian, citing prison officials, reported that Gillmore was transferred in August from Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla to the minimum-security Columbia River Correctional Institution in Portland to help him prepare for his re-entry into the community. He will be 63 at the time of his release

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in December.

KOIN, which first reported his upcoming release, said Gillmore will remain under supervision until 2034 and could be sent back to prison if he violates his parole.

A judge in the Edens case sentenced Gillmore to at least 30 years in prison with a 60-year maximum. But a parole board cut his sentence in half in 1988, the year after he was convicted.

Danielle Tudor, who has said she was a teenager when Gillmore raped her in 1979, has spoken out against his release.

"If he had been able to have been charged for all the rapes he committed, he'd never be getting out," Tudor told KOIN.

Gillmore has been classified as a sex offender at the lowest risk of reoffending. He will have to register as a sex offender for the rest of his life due to his rape conviction, but the classification means the state and county aren't required to notify surrounding residents that he's living near them.

His victims are angered that Gillmore isn't considered a high-risk sex offender, which would require notification to the community wherever he lives or moves.

The Oregonian reported that Tudor said she didn't understand why he was being classified as a low-level sex offender.

"He was designated as a dangerous offender at trial," Tudor said.

## Racial equity in marijuana pardons requires states' action

By AARON MORRISON Associated Press

By pardoning Americans with federal convictions for marijuana possession, President Joe Biden said he aimed to partially redress decades of anti-drug laws that disproportionately harmed Black and Latino communities.

While Biden's executive action will benefit thousands of people by making it easier for them to find housing, get a job or apply to college, it does nothing to help the hundreds of thousands of mostly Black and Hispanic Americans still burdened by state convictions for marijuana-related offenses, not to mention the millions more with other drug offenses on their records.

Advocates for overhauling the nation's drug laws are hopeful that Biden's pardons lead state lawmakers to pardon and expunge minor drug offenses from people's records. After all, they say, dozens of states have already decriminalized cannabis and legalized it for a multibillion-dollar recreational and medicinal use industry that is predominantly white-owned.

"We know that this is really the tip of the iceberg when it comes to people who are suffering the effects of (past) marijuana prohibition," said Maritza Perez, director of federal affairs at the Drug Policy Alliance, a nonprofit organization pushing for decriminalization and safe drug use policies.

The decades-long "war on drugs," a sweeping federal legislative agenda that Biden championed as a U.S. senator and that was mirrored by state lawmakers, brought about mass-criminalization and an explosion of the prison population. An estimated tens of millions of people have had a marijuana-related arrest on their record since 1965, the vast majority of them stemming from enforcement by local police and state prosecutors.

But as many law enforcement officials like to point out, the majority of people who serve long sentences for marijuana-related offenses were convicted of more serious charges than possession, such as a weapons count or the intent to sell or traffic the drug on a larger scale. Such factors are typically how a case moves into federal territory versus state prosecution.

Still, reform advocates counter that many of them aren't violent drug kingpins.

A 2021 Associated Press review of federal and state incarceration data showed that between 1975 and 2019, the U.S. prison population jumped from 240,593 to 1.43 million people. Of them, about 1 in 5 were incarcerated with a drug offense listed as their most serious crime.

The passage of stiffer penalties for crack cocaine, marijuana and other drugs in the 1990s helped to triple the Black and Hispanic incarceration rates by the year 2000. The white incarceration rate only doubled.

And despite state legalization or decriminalization of possession up to certain amounts, local law enforce-

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ment agencies continue to make more arrests for drug possession, including marijuana, than any other criminal offense, according to FBI crime data.

The president's pardon of more than 6,500 Americans with federal marijuana possession convictions, as well as thousands more with convictions in the majority-Black city of Washington, captures only a sliver of those with records nationwide. That's likely why he has called on state governors to take similar steps for people with state marijuana possession convictions.

"While white and Black and brown people use marijuana at similar rates, Black and brown people have been arrested, prosecuted and convicted at disproportionate rates," Biden said Thursday. "Just as no one should be in a federal prison solely due to the possession of marijuana, no one should be in a local jail or state prison for that reason, either."

With the president's unambiguous acknowledgement of racial inequity in marijuana enforcement, drug law reform advocates and those with convictions now see an opening to push for far more remedies to the harms of the war on drugs.

Weldon Angelos, whose 2003 federal case for selling \$300 worth of marijuana to a confidential informant in Utah got him sentenced to 55 years in prison, said he knows many people who will benefit from the president's pardon. But there are also many more who will not, he said.

"I feel like this is a first step of (Biden) doing something bigger," said Angelos who, after serving 13 years in prison, received presidential clemency and a pardon during the Obama and Trump administrations. He is now a drug law reform activist.

Felony cannabis cases like his also deserve consideration, Weldon said. Biden's pardon does not cover convictions for possessing marijuana with an intent to distribute, which could further widen the scope of people receiving relief by tens of thousands.

Enacting a law that clears a person's federal drug record, similar to what has been offered in nearly two dozen states where marijuana has been decriminalized or legalized recreationally, would make the conviction invisible to companies and landlords doing criminal background checks, he said. Even with the federal pardon, Weldon's record is still visible, he said.

"There's a lot more that needs to be done here, if we really want to unwind the effects, and the racist effects, of the war on cannabis," Weldon said.

Some advocates believe the country should consider clearing more than just marijuana records. In the 1990s, Marlon Chamberlain was a college student in Iowa when he learned that his then-girlfriend was pregnant with his eldest son. He began using cannabis to cope with the anxiety of becoming a young father and, soon after, started selling the drug.

"My thought was that I would try to make enough money and have the means to take care of my son," said Chamberlain, a 46-year-old Chicago native. "But I got addicted to the lifestyle and I graduated from selling weed to selling cocaine."

Chamberlain said he had a slew of state charges for marijuana possession between the ages of 19 and 25. But it was a federal case for crack cocaine, in which authorities used his prior marijuana arrests to enhance the seriousness of their case, that upended his life. Chamberlain was sentenced to 20 years in prison before the punishment was reduced to 14 years under the Fair Sentencing Act that narrowed the sentencing disparity between crack and powder forms of cocaine. He was freed after 10 years.

Even though he will not benefit from Biden's marijuana pardon, Chamberlain sees it as an opportunity to advocate for the elimination of what he calls the "permanent punishments," such as the difficulties in finding a job or housing that come with having a past drug offense.

"What Biden is initiating is a process of righting the wrongs" of the drug war, he said.

Colorado and Washington were the first states to legalize the recreational use of cannabis in 2012, although medical use had already been legal in several states. According to the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, 37 states, the District of Columbia and four U.S. territories now permit the medical use of cannabis. Nineteen states, D.C. and two territories have legalized its recreational use.

And during next month's midterm elections, voters in Arkansas, Maryland, Missouri, North Dakota and

South Dakota will decide whether to permit recreational adult use of cannabis. That is reason enough for every state to look into mass-pardons and expungements, civil rights leaders say.

"How fair is it that you will legalize marijuana now, tax it to use those state taxes to fund government, but forget all the people who are sitting in jails or were incarcerated when it was illegal?" NAACP President Derrick Johnson told the AP. "All those individuals who have been charged with marijuana crimes need to be pardoned, particularly those in states that have legalized marijuana."

Richard Wallace, executive director of Equity and Transformation, a social and economic justice advocacy group in Chicago, said state pardons must also come with some form of restitution to those who suffered economically under the racially discriminatory drug war.

"We need to be thinking about building out durable reparations campaigns centered around cannabis legalization," he said. "I think oftentimes we end up just fighting for the pardons and the expungements, and we leave out the economic component."

## Vegas showgirls describe shock of stabbings that left 2 dead

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Victims of a quick series of stabbings on the Las Vegas Strip described the shock and horror of the unexpected attack on a group of showgirls and others outside a casino that left two people dead and six injured.

Police arrested Yoni Barrios, 32, after a short chase blocks from where they say he attacked four showgirls and ended up stabbing eight people on Thursday.

An arrest report released Friday said Barrios told police some of the victims had laughed at him and he "let the anger out." Prosecutors say he'll be charged with two counts of murder and six counts of attempted murder.

"I couldn't believe that this was happening to me," said Victoria Caytano, one of the showgirl impersonators who was released from the hospital Friday after she was treated for a stab wound.

"I got up, and I started running," Caytano told KLAS-TV. "I started yelling, 'he has a knife!'"

The coroner's office identified those killed as Las Vegas residents Brent Allan Hallett, 47, and Maris Mareen DiGiovanni, 30. Hallett was stabbed in the back and DiGiovanni died from a chest wound, authorities said.

DiGiovanni was part of the Best Showgirls In Vegas modeling and talent agency, according to Cheryl Lowthorp, who runs the business. She said two others with the agency were among the wounded and a third escaped without injury.

According to the police report, some performers said he made them feel uncomfortable when he approached for a photo and one backed away. One woman said he stabbed her in the back, then stabbed DiGiovanni.

Anna Westby, who suffered a punctured lung, said she and Caytano were with DiGiovanni when Barrios attacked them.

"I'm screaming, asking everyone for help," she told KLAS-TV. "He caught up to me, and he stabbed me in the back and then he ran off."

Best Showgirls In Vegas provides models and showgirls for various promotional events from restaurant openings to airport greetings. In her 12 years operating the agency, Lowthorp said the models have pretty much gone day to day "without incident."

"This is a safe job, there are cops everywhere," Lowthorp said. "No place is filmed more than the Las Vegas Strip."

The police report said Barrios was covered in blood when he was arrested. Officers seized a large, long-bladed knife, the report said.

Barrios told one victim "sorry, man" before stabbing him in the back and also said that he hoped police would shoot him, the report said.

It wasn't immediately known whether Barrios had a lawyer who could comment on his behalf. He made his initial court appearance on Friday was ordered held without bail. An initial arraignment was scheduled for Tuesday.

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Barrios had an address in Los Angeles, told police that he came to Las Vegas two days earlier to move in with a friend who then refused to let him stay at the house, so he packed his things and took a bus to the Las Vegas Strip, according to the arrest report.

## **In her own words: Justice Jackson speaks volumes from bench**

By JESSICA GRESKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ketanji Brown Jackson, the first Black woman on the Supreme Court and its newest justice, said before the term began that she was “ready to work.” She made that clear during arguments in the opening cases.

The tally: 4,568 words spoken over nearly six hours this past week, about 50% more than any of the eight other justices, according to Adam Feldman, the creator of the Empirical SCOTUS blog.

The justices as a whole are generally a talkative bunch, questioning lawyers in rapid succession. For now, Jackson’s approach seems less like Justice Clarence Thomas, who once went 10 years without asking a question, and more like Justice Neil Gorsuch, who in his first year was one of the more active questioners.

On Tuesday, in a case that could weaken the landmark Voting Rights Act, which sought to bar racial discrimination in voting, Jackson was particularly vocal.

At one point, she spoke uninterrupted for more than three and a half minutes to lay out her understanding of the history of the post-Civil War 14th Amendment to the Constitution guaranteeing formerly enslaved people equal rights. Jackson’s statement ran three transcript pages, the longest Feldman could remember ever seeing.

“I can’t think of a time where you’ve seen a junior justice take hold of the arguments” to the same extent, Feldman said using the court’s shorthand title for the newest justice.

A jurist with a liberal record, Jackson joined a court where conservatives hold a 6-3 advantage, so in many of the most contentious cases her vote likely does not matter to the outcome. But her performance during arguments seemed to show she intends to make herself heard.

“I have a seat at the table now and I’m ready to work,” she said last week at an appearance at the Library of Congress following her ceremonial investiture at the high court.

In three of the four cases the court heard this past week, she was the most active speaker among the justices.

Feldman said new justices usually sit back and take things in but “poke their heads up occasionally” to ask a question. “This was a different approach,” he said.

Monday was the court’s opening day and Jackson’s first on the Supreme Court bench. The justices were about five minutes into their questioning in what turned out to be a nearly two-hour argument in a dispute over the nation’s main anti-water pollution law when Jackson asked her first question; she was the fourth justice to do so.

By the end of arguments, she had probed the meaning of the word “adjacent,” asked whether a marsh in a 1985 case was “visually indistinguishable from the abutting creek” and prefaced another question by saying: “Let me try to bring some enlightenment to it by asking it this way.”

Jackson was confirmed in April but did not take her seat until the court began its summer recess in June, giving her months to study cases the court had granted. Other justices spent some of that time finalizing opinions in cases that included decisions overturning the landmark Roe v. Wade abortion rights case and expanding gun rights.

Speaking at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in early April, days before Jackson was confirmed, Justice Amy Coney Barrett noted “fortunately there will be some lead time” for the new justice to ease into her role. Barrett, in contrast, heard her first arguments a week after she was confirmed. Justice Brett Kavanaugh was sworn in on a Saturday and heard his first argument the following Tuesday.

Justices themselves have acknowledged it takes time to get used to sitting on the highest court in the land. Justice Elena Kagan once compared starting the job to “drinking out of a fire hose” with a learning curve that “is extremely steep, sometimes it seems vertical.” Some justices have said it takes five years

to feel really comfortable in the role.

In her Library of Congress appearance, Jackson talked about the attention on her as the first Black woman to be a justice. People approach her with "what I can only describe as a profound sense of pride and what feels to me like renewed ownership," she said.

Their message to her is "in essence, 'You go, girl,'" Jackson said. "They're saying 'Invisible no more. We see you and we are with you.'"

## **Goodell: NFL to make 'change or two' to concussion protocol**

By KEN MAGUIRE AP Sports Writer

LONDON (AP) — The NFL is prepared "to make a change or two" to its concussion protocol, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell said at a fan forum in London on Saturday as the league faces questions about how the Miami Dolphins handled quarterback Tua Tagovailoa's recent injuries.

Responding to a fan's question about concussions and "recent incidents," Goodell outlined the league's "intensive focus" on the issue over the past 15 years and said its medical protocols have served as templates for other sports.

"Our job really is to continue to modify those as medical experts or other experiences tell you this is something you can do differently," he said.

The commissioner took questions only from fans in London ahead of Sunday's game between the Green Bay Packers and the New York Giants at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. He wasn't made available to the media Saturday. The league did not elaborate on what the potential protocol changes are or when they could come into effect.

Earlier this week, the NFL Players Association fired the unaffiliated neurotrauma consultant who evaluated Tagovailoa after he stumbled off the field against Buffalo on Sept. 25 following a hit. The quarterback was evaluated for a concussion, but he quickly returned to the game and the Dolphins said a back injury had caused his wobbly gait.

The quarterback subsequently suffered a concussion four days later at Cincinnati and is out indefinitely.

Goodell, without citing Tagovailoa by name, said there's "more chatter now" about concussions.

"We understand some of that chatter, but the reality is the protocols are really important. We follow that strictly. We see no indication that that didn't happen in this case. There's an ongoing investigation," he said. "We're really focused on doing that. But we're also prepared to make a change or two in the protocols because we think we can actually add another element that would make it even safer."

On Friday, the NFL Players Association urged the league to implement changes in time to protect players in this weekend's games. In its own statement, the NFL said it was working on updates to the protocol but did not commit to implementing them before Sunday's games.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers tight end Cameron Brate' was also injured last Sunday when he collided with a teammate near the end of the first half against the Kansas City Chiefs and was initially allowed to re-enter the game. He then sat out the second half with a concussion.

NFL players "are getting the most extraordinary care and better than they ever have in the history of the NFL, but they deserve that, and that's our obligation, and that's what we need to do," Goodell said.

## **Some Ukrainians voice mixed reactions to Nobel prize winners**

By SABRA AYRES The Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — A day after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize with fellow human rights campaigners from Belarus and Russia, the head of the Ukrainian Center for Civil Liberties praised the work of her fellow laureates but cautioned against lumping the three together in a Cold War-like narrative.

"We don't see — and we shouldn't see — this prize ... as a Soviet narrative about brotherhood nations," said Oleksandra Matviychuk at a press conference on Saturday in Kyiv, Ukraine's capital. "This is a story about fighting against a common enemy."

Matviychuk's comments came a day after some in Ukraine voiced mixed reactions to the Nobel commit-

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tee's decision to award the prize to her organization along with imprisoned Belarus activist Ales Bialiatski and Russia's best-known human rights group, Memorial.

The Ukrainian Center for Civil Liberties was founded in 2007 to defend human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Berit Reiss-Andersen, chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, said the panel decided to honor "three outstanding champions of human rights, democracy and peaceful coexistence."

Some Ukrainians expressed resentment for what they saw as lumping Ukraine in the same category as Russia and Belarus, whose territory Moscow has used to wage its war on Ukraine.

Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak mocked the prize in a tweet Friday, saying the committee had an "interesting understanding of the word 'peace.'"

Belarusian and Russian human rights defenders are "fighting for the rights of people in dictatorships," while in Ukraine, groups like the Center for Civil Liberties are documenting "the war crimes of these dictatorships because missiles fly to Ukraine from Belarus and Russia," Ukrainian journalist Anastasia Magazova tweeted Friday.

"Despite all the merits of the laureates from Russia and Belarus, Ukrainians do not want the struggle for human rights in the three countries to be perceived equally," wrote Magazova, who has covered Ukraine for German and Ukrainian publications since 2014.

Matviychuk, the head of the Ukrainian civil liberties group, on Saturday dismissed suggestions that awarding the prize to representatives from the three countries at the same time diminished its importance.

The prize, "which belongs to all the people of Ukraine who fight for freedom and democracy," is a symbol of the fight "for your freedom and ours," she said, referencing a phrase that was often repeated by Soviet dissidents.

"Russia still hasn't overcome its imperial complex. This is a threat. The same as in Belarus, where Lukashenko gave up his land to occupation," said the center's executive director, Oleksandra Romantsova.

Romantsova praised the work of Bialiatski and Memorial, which she pointed out was the first organization to document Russian war crimes during the first war from 1994 to 1996 in Chechnya, the majority Muslim region on Russia's southern flank that has fought two wars with Moscow for independence.

"Perhaps if the world had paid attention to the war crimes in Chechnya from the start, we wouldn't have the war in Ukraine today," Romantsova said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as of Saturday had not called the Ukrainian group to congratulate it on the prize, which both Matviychuk and the organization's executive director brushed aside as insignificant, given the ongoing war in Ukraine.

It was unlikely Zelenskyy would have been able to reach either of them Friday after the news broke, she said.

"I don't wish to anyone to go through war, but this complicated time gives us time to show our best qualities that we have, from the farmer protecting his land or tractor to the president who doesn't flee the country during the war," Matviychuk said.

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## Harvey Weinstein goes on trial in LA, where he once reigned

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Five years after women's stories about him made the #MeToo movement explode, Harvey Weinstein is going on trial in the city where he once was a colossus at the Oscars.

Already serving a 23-year sentence for rape and sexual assault in New York, the 70-year-old former movie mogul faces different allegations including several that prosecutors say occurred during a pivotal Oscar week in Los Angeles. Jury selection for an eight-week trial begins Monday.

Weinstein has been indicted on four counts of rape and seven other sexual assault counts involving five women, who will appear in court as Jane Does to tell their stories. He has pleaded not guilty.

Four more women will be allowed to take the stand to give accounts of Weinstein sexual assaults that did not lead to charges, but which prosecutors hope will show jurors he had a propensity for committing such acts.

Starting in the 1990s, Weinstein, through the company Miramax that he ran with his brother, was an



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innovator in running broad and aggressive campaigns promoting Academy Award nominees. He had unmatched success, pushing films like "Shakespeare in Love" and "The Artist" to best picture wins and becoming among the most thanked men ever during Oscar acceptance speeches.

Miramax and its successor The Weinstein Co. were based in New York, where Weinstein lived and did business, but that didn't diminish his presence in Hollywood.

"He was a creature of New York, but he was also a creature of Los Angeles," said Kim Masters, editor at large for The Hollywood Reporter and a longtime observer of the movie industry. "He had this huge Golden Globes party that was always well beyond capacity when he was in his heyday. He was the King of Hollywood in New York and LA."

It was during Oscars week in 2013, when Jennifer Lawrence would win an Academy Award for the Weinstein Co.'s "Silver Linings Playbook" and Quentin Tarantino would win for writing the company's "Django Unchained," that four of the 11 alleged crimes took place.

Like most of the incidents in the indictments, they happened under the guise of business meetings at luxury hotels in Beverly Hills and Los Angeles, which Weinstein used as his California headquarters and where he could be seen during awards season and throughout the year. He was treated as more than a VIP. At a pre-trial hearing, the chauffeur who drove Weinstein around Los Angeles testified that even he was allowed to take as much as \$1,000 in cash in Weinstein's name from the front desk of the hotel where the mogul was staying.

By the time stories about him in The New York Times and The New Yorker in October of 2017 brought about his downfall, Weinstein's power to seemingly will films to win awards had diminished, and his company had fallen into financial trouble.

"His stature changed, he was no longer the king of Oscar, which was really what made him vulnerable," Masters said.

The Los Angeles trial is likely to be far less of a spectacle than the New York proceedings, and not merely because it's a sequel and Weinstein is already serving a long sentence.

Foot traffic is sparse and there is no grand entrance at the downtown LA courthouse that's hosting the trial. Weinstein will not be visible to any media horde or protesters outside as he was in Manhattan, as he'll be ushered into the courtroom straight from jail — once he's changed from his prison garb into a suit — across a short hallway where no cameras are allowed that could capture him.

Only a dozen reporters, including two sketch artists, will be allowed into the small courtroom each day, compared to several dozen in New York.

Weinstein will also be represented by different lawyers in Los Angeles, Alan Jackson and Mark Werksman. They have expressed worries that the movies may play a role in trial.

The film "She Said," which fictionalizes the work of two New York Times reporters and their bombshell stories on Weinstein, is set to be released midway through the trial on Nov. 18.

Weinstein's lawyers lost a bid to have the proceedings delayed over the film, with the judge rejecting their argument that publicity surrounding it would prejudice a potential jury against him.

"This case is unique," Werksman said at a pretrial hearing. "Mr. Weinstein's notoriety and his place in our culture at the center of the firestorm which is the #MeToo movement is real, and we're trying to do everything we can to avoid having a trial when there will be a swirl of adverse publicity toward him," Werksman said at a pretrial hearing.

Weinstein's trial is one of several with #MeToo connections that have begun or are about to begin as the fifth anniversary of the movement's biggest moment passes, including the rape trial of "That '70s Show" actor Danny Masterson just down the hall from Weinstein's and the New York sexual assault civil trial of Kevin Spacey.

## Herschel Walker centers pitch to Republicans on 'wokeness'

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

EMERSON, Ga. (AP) — Herschel Walker pitches himself as a politician who can bridge America's racial

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and cultural divides because he loves everyone and overlooks differences.

"I don't care what color you are," Georgia's Republican Senate nominee, who is Black, told an overwhelmingly white crowd recently in Bartow County, north of Atlanta. The United States, he said, "is a good place," adding that "a way we make it better is by coming together."

Yet the former football star who calls all Georgians "my family" has staked out familiar conservative ground on America's most glaring societal fissures, seemingly contradicting his promises of unity.

Walker says those who do not share his vision of the country can leave. He says his opponent, Sen. Raphael Warnock, and the Democratic Party are the real purveyors of division. He insists that their "wokeness" on race, transgender rights and other issues threatens U.S. power and identity.

"Sen. Warnock believes America is a bad country full of racist people," Walker says in one ad, making a claim based on the fact that Warnock, who is also Black, has acknowledged institutional racism during his sermons as a Baptist minister. "I believe we're a great country full of generous people," Walker concludes.

That approach is not surprising in a state controlled for most of its history by white cultural conservatives, and it aligns Walker with many high-profile Republicans, including former President Donald Trump. But Walker's arguments make for a striking contrast in a Senate contest featuring two Black men born in the Deep South during or immediately following the civil rights movement.

The strategy will face its fiercest test in the closing weeks of the campaign as Walker vehemently denies reports from The Daily Beast that he encouraged and paid for a woman's 2009 abortion and later fathered a child with her. The New York Times reported Friday that he urged her to have a second abortion, a request that she refused. The Daily Beast also published new details provided by the woman about Walker's lack of involvement with their child.

Such developments would typically sink a Republican candidate. Walker, however, is betting that the conservative ground he has staked out will win over voters singularly focused on retaking the Senate majority.

His advisers believe Walker's rhetoric reflects the views of many Georgians, at least most who will vote this fall. Most specifically, it is an appeal to whites, including moderates who may be wary of the first-time candidate yet believe Democrats push too much social change.

The outcome could turn on how Walker's pitch lands in an electorate younger, more urban, less white, and less native to Georgia than when Walker, 60, and Warnock, 53, grew up in the state.

Warnock, as minister of Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church, where Martin Luther King Jr. preached, has long linked the civil rights icon's vision of a "beloved community" to 21st century discussions of diversity and justice, including religious pluralism, LGBTQ rights, ballot access, racial equity, law enforcement and other issues. But in his paid advertising, the pastor-politician casts himself mostly as a hardworking senator who has delivered results and federal money for Georgia.

Walker saves his hottest rhetoric for campaign events, where crowds are measured in the dozens or hundreds, rather than the thousands and millions watching carefully cultivated ads.

In one such ad, a smiling Walker talks of unity after a string of Democrats — Warnock, Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and Georgia's Democratic gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams — are heard discussing racism.

Addressing fellow Republicans, Walker maintains the smile but goes harder at the left, especially on transgender rights.

"They're bringing wokeness in our military," Walker said in Cumming. It was an apparent reference to the Pentagon allowing transgender persons to serve and have access to medical care.

"The greatest fighting force ever assembled before God (and) they're talking about pronouns," Walker said. "Are you serious? How do you identify? I can promise you right now China ain't talking about how you can identify. They're talking about war."

Walker sometimes presents his mores as humor. "Y'all see it. They telling you what is a woman. Think about it," he said in Bartow County, drawing laughter from voters. "That's right," he continued with a broad smile. "They're telling you a man can get pregnant. Hey, I'm gone tell you right now, a man can't get pregnant."

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Warnock, Walker says, "wants men in women's sports." His campaign aides point separately to a Senate vote on a Republican amendment that would have limited federal money for any educational institutions "that permit any student whose biological sex is male to participate in an athletic program or activity designated for women or girls." The amendment failed on a party-line vote.

"That's sort of like saying you want Herschel Walker to compete against your daughters," Walker said in Norcross, eliciting more laughs.

Walker rarely identifies the policies he opposes or explains counter proposals. He sticks with broader cultural branding, and in perhaps the most direct contradiction of his unity messaging, recommends that those with a different vision for America consider moving. "If you don't like the rules under our roof, you can go somewhere else," he said in Bartow County, after recalling a similar message his father once delivered to him.

Warnock seems reluctant to answer Walker's broadsides directly. "My job is to represent all the people of Georgia across racial and ethnic and religious line, and all corner of this state," he told reporters last week.

Asked specifically about Walker's emphasis on transgender politics, Warnock said, "People love their children and they want to make sure that their children are safe from hatred and bigotry. So, you know, I will remain focused on all our young people and, at the same time, creating opportunities for young people."

## Death toll rises to 10 in blast at gas station in Ireland

LONDON (AP) — The death toll from a gas station explosion that shattered a small village in northwest Ireland rose to 10 on Saturday, and emergency workers who combed through piles of rubble said they did not expect to find more bodies.

Irish police said no one remained missing after Friday's explosion in Creeslough, County Donegal. Police are investigating the cause of the blast, and Superintendent David Kelly said evidence "is pointing toward a tragic accident."

Ireland's police force, An Garda Siochana, said the midafternoon explosion killed four men, three women, two teenagers and a girl of primary school age. Eight people were hospitalized — one in critical condition — after the blast destroyed the Applegreen service station in the community of about 400 people near Ireland's rugged Atlantic coast.

Emergency responders from Ireland and neighboring Northern Ireland joined in what police said Saturday was "search and recovery" operation. Sniffer dogs combed the debris, and a mechanical digger lifted piles of rubble from the site on Saturday.

The explosion leveled the gas station building, which holds the main shop and post office for the village, damaged an adjacent apartment building and shattered the windows in nearby cottages.

"There were blocks thrown a hundred yards away from the scene," local medic Dr. Paul Stewart told Irish broadcaster RTE. "The whole front of the building collapsed... and the roof of the first floor collapsed down into the shop. It's a miracle they got anyone out."

Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin said it was one of the "darkest of days for Donegal and the entire country."

"People across this island will be numbed by the same sense of shock and utter devastation as the people of Creeslough at this tragic loss of life," Martin said.

Agriculture Minister Charlie McConalogue, who represents Donegal in Ireland's parliament, said the service station was well known across the country because of its prominent position on the area's main N56 road, and was "the heart" of the local community.

"People are shocked and numbed," he told Irish broadcaster RTE. "People have been rallying together and everyone's concern is with the families of those who have lost their loved ones and how they can support them."

Another local lawmaker, Pearse Doherty, said people in the community were in shock.

"(It's) something nobody ever thought could happen in a little village like this where everyone knows each other," he said. "A quarter past three yesterday, kids were coming out of school, people were going

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to collect their welfare payments. For such a nightmare to occur, that will take some time to sink in.”

## Once hopeful Iowa Democrats running uphill vs. Sen. Grassley

By THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press

WEST DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — When Michael Franken won the Democratic nomination for the Senate in June, many in Iowa’s disillusioned party thought they landed on a candidate who could maybe — possibly — reverse their humbling slide in the state.

After all, the retired Navy admiral won 76 of 99 counties, in every region of the state, notably conservative northern and western Iowa. His hesitancy during the primary campaign to back weapons bans and college loan forgiveness were signs he aimed to appeal to moderate Democrats and even some Republicans tired of incumbent Chuck Grassley after four decades in office.

But those ambitions are beginning to fade as Election Day, Nov. 8, approaches. Franken’s quest to unseat the most senior Republican in the Senate has been wounded by allegations that the Democrat kissed a former campaign aide without permission. Franken’s campaign has denied the claim.

He’s defied skeptics before, beating the better known and better funded former Rep. Abby Finkenauer in primary. Nonetheless, many Democrats acknowledge that a race always considered a long shot is at risk of slipping firmly out of reach.

To Democrat Marcia Nichols, the former longtime political director for Iowa’s largest public employees union, the allegation, “whatever it is, it’s made it tougher now.” But she noted that Franken took on Finkenauer, “who was pretty popular, and beat her by a lot. I’m not writing him off.”

The obstacles seemed distant during a recent campaign stop as Franken, in his standard Navy ball cap, urged hundreds of supporters on a warm early autumn afternoon in suburban Des Moines to rally Republicans who might want a change after 42 years of Grassley in the Senate.

“Iowans wake up every day doing hard things,” Franken said. “That takes, in today’s environment, a lot of guts.”

To win, Franken would have to have to share voters with Republican Gov. Kim Reynolds, a devout social conservative and fervent Donald Trump supporter who is favored in her reelection campaign. He would have to defy a decadelong Republican ascendancy in Iowa, made harder in an election year when majority Democrats in Congress are facing economic headwinds and tepid approval of Democratic President Joe Biden.

Franken’s challenges are part of a broader reversal of fortunes for Democrats.

A decade ago, Grassley and five-term progressive Democrat Tom Harkin were Iowa’s senators. Democrats held three of five U.S. House seats and a thin majority in the state Senate. Today, Rep. Cindy Axne of West Des Moines is Iowa’s lone Democrat in Congress and she is considered among the most vulnerable in her party this fall. The GOP hold on the statehouse is the party’s longest in more than six decades.

Franken’s resounding primary victory offered a glimmer of a chance for Democrats.

A month after the primary, Franken trailed Grassley by just 8 percentage points among likely voters in a Des Moines Register/Mediacom Iowa Poll. That pointed to a potentially closer race than Grassley has faced since he defeated Democratic Sen. John Culver in 1980.

With no help from the Democrats’ national Senate campaign arm, Franken has raised a noteworthy \$8.3 million this year, including \$3.6 million in the third quarter. Grassley had reported raising \$7.5 million through the end of July but had not released his total for July-September period. That report is due by Oct. 15.

The majority job approval that Grassley had owned for roughly two decades of Des Moines Register polling has recently fallen: It has hovered in unfamiliar territory and was at 46% in the July poll.

Also telling of the shift, 64% of likely voters said in a June 2021 Des Moines Register poll they did not want him to run again, given the choice of seeing someone else hold office or reelecting the senator for another term.

The change in mood comes as Grassley, who entered the Senate as a Ronald Reagan-era fiscal conservative, has tried to adapt to the hyper-partisan politics of the Trump era.

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Facing pointed questions from voters last year about why he had declined to say Democrat Joe Biden won the 2020 election, Grassley parsed his language to obliquely suggest Biden is president as the result of the Electoral College vote count.

About two-thirds of Republicans nationally said they do not think Biden was legitimately elected, according to an Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll in July 2021.

A year ago, Grassley beamed when Trump endorsed him at a Des Moines rally that drew 10,000 to the Iowa state fairgrounds, where the former president argued falsely that he had won the 2020 election. "I'm smart enough to accept that endorsement," Grassley told the audience, noting Trump's comfortable victory in Iowa in that race.

Grassley has campaigned little in public. He has relied more on television advertising, much of it critical of Franken for comments he made about the direction of the state under Republican leadership.

Grassley turned 89 last month and says he has no concerns about being able to finish another six-year term — he would be 95 at the end of an eighth term. "Absolutely not," he said during a Wednesday news conference.

He ticked through his daily schedule, which he said includes rising at 4 a.m., running 2 miles six days a week and arriving at his office by 6 a.m.

"Unless God intervenes, I'm going to be in the Senate for six years," he added.

Franken has steered clear of Grassley's age and instead has cast Grassley's time in office as his chief liability. "We deserve better than a senator for life," the Democrat said.

Franken has characterized Grassley's praise of the Supreme Court decision stripping women of their constitutional right to an abortion as out of step with Iowa, where polls show a majority of voters support keeping abortion legal.

Franken, who supports enacting legislation making abortion a federal right, held a modest advantage with women likely voters in the July Des Moines Register/Mediacom poll.

But the publication of a police report detailing the unwanted kiss with the former campaign staffer has prompted questions from some would-be Franken supporters. The campaign manager issued a public statement that the allegation in the report was untrue and the police called it unfounded.

Elizabeth Sibers, a 22-year-old Iowa State University student from Waukee who attended Franken's rally, said she would like him, at a minimum, to speak out against harassment.

"It does trouble me. He needs to take the time to address it," she said. Sibers remains open to voting for him and said she wants to "give Franken the chance to grow from this, and not just look past it."

Grassley said he does not plan to raise it as a campaign issue. But when Franken called him "anti-woman," for supporting the overturning of Roe v. Wade, Grassley replied quickly and curtly.

"You're in no position to lecture me about women," he said. "You're in no position to do that."

## UN: Ukraine nuclear power plant loses external power link

BERLIN (AP) — Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, the biggest in Europe, has lost its last remaining external power source as a result of renewed shelling and is now relying on emergency diesel generators, the U.N. nuclear watchdog said Saturday.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said the plant's link to a 750-kilovolt line was cut at around 1 a.m. Saturday. It cited official information from Ukraine as well as reports from IAEA experts at the site, which is held by Russian forces.

All six reactors at the plant are shut down but they still require electricity for cooling and other safety functions. Plant engineers have begun work to repair the damaged power line and the plant's generators — not all of which are currently being used — each have sufficient fuel for at least 10 days, the IAEA said.

"The resumption of shelling, hitting the plant's sole source of external power, is tremendously irresponsible," IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi said.

Grossi visited Kyiv on Thursday. He said he will soon travel to Russia, then make another trip to Ukraine, to further his effort to set up a "nuclear safety and security protection zone" around the plant, which he

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has advocated for weeks.

"This is an absolute and urgent imperative," he said. The IAEA didn't apportion blame for the shelling. Zaporizhzhia is one of four regions in Ukraine that Russian President Vladimir Putin has annexed in violation of international laws. While the nuclear plant has been under Russian control for months, the city of the same name remains under Ukrainian control.

Putin signed a decree Wednesday declaring that Russia was taking over the plant. Ukraine's Foreign Ministry called it a criminal act and said it considered Putin's decree "null and void." Ukraine's state nuclear operator, Energoatom, said it would continue to operate the plant.

## Mourners pray at Thai temple filled by children's keepsakes

By TASSANEE VEJPONGSA and DAVID RISING Associated Press

UTHAI SAWAN, Thailand (AP) — Grief-stricken families prayed Saturday at a Buddhist temple filled with children's keepsakes, flowers and photos of the smiling toddlers who were slain as they napped on blankets at a day care center in northeastern Thailand.

Coffins containing the 36 killed, 24 of them children and most of them preschoolers, were released Friday and placed inside Wat Rat Samakee and two other temples in the town nestled among rice paddies in one of Thailand's poorest regions.

Several mourners stayed at Wat Rat Samakee overnight in the tradition of keeping company for those who died young.

"All the relatives are here to make merit on behalf of those who died," said Pensiri Thana, an aunt of one of the victims, referring to an important Buddhist practice. She was among those staying the night at the temple. "It is a tradition that we keep company with our young ones. It is our belief that we should be with them so they are not lonely."

The massacre left no one untouched in the small town, but community officials found helping others was helping assuage their own grief, at least momentarily.

"At first, all of us felt so terrible and couldn't accept this. All the officials feel sad with the people here. But we have to look after everyone, all these 30 victims. We are running around and taking care of the people, giving them moral support," Somneuk Thongthalai, a local district official, said.

A mourning ceremony will continue for three days before the royal-sponsored funerals, which will culminate in the cremation of the bodies according to Buddhist tradition.

No clear motive may ever be known for Thailand's deadliest mass killing after the perpetrator left the day care center Thursday and killed his wife and son at home before taking his own life.

Late Friday, King Maha Vajiralongkorn and Queen Suthida visited hospitals where seven people wounded in the attack are being treated. The monarch met with family members of the victims in what he said was a bid to boost morale.

"It is a tragedy that this evil thing has happened," the king told reporters in a rare public appearance. "But right now, we have to think of what we can do to improve things to the best of our ability."

Outside the Young Children's Development Center in Uthai Sawan, bouquets of white roses and carnations lined an outside wall, along with five tiny juice boxes, bags of corn chips and a stuffed animal.

At Wat Rat Samakee, mourners and those trying to lend them support crowded the grounds.

"It was just too much. I can't accept this," said Oy Yodkhaio, 51, sitting Friday on a bamboo mat in the oppressive heat as relatives gave her water and gently mopped her brow.

Her 4-year-old grandson Tawatchai Sriphu was killed, and she said she worried for the child's siblings. The family of rice farmers is close, with three generations living under one roof.

Police identified the attacker as Panya Kamrap, 34, a former police sergeant fired earlier this year because of a drug charge involving methamphetamine. An employee at the day care told Thai media Panya's son had attended but hadn't been there for about a month. Police have said they believe Panya was under a lot of stress from tensions between him and his wife, and money problems.

Panya was cremated Saturday in the neighboring province of Udon Thani after Buddhist temples in Uthai Thani refused to host his funeral, Thai media reported. The website of the Manager newspaper said the

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abbot of the temple hosting the ceremony, attended by about 10 relatives, asked that it not be identified so as not to upset its members and neighbors.

Manager reported that his mother, carrying out the traditional bathing ritual at the side of his coffin, implored Panya's spirit: "When you're born in the next life, don't kill anyone. I love you, son. If you had any problems, why didn't you talk to me? Don't do this again. I've made merit for you. Go to heaven, my son."

Mass shootings are rare but not unheard of in Thailand, which has one of the highest civilian gun ownership rates in Asia, with 15.1 weapons per 100 people. That's still far lower than the U.S. rate of 120.5 per 100 people, according to a 2017 survey by Australia's GunPolicy.org nonprofit organization.

Thailand's previous worst mass killing involved a disgruntled soldier who opened fire in and around a mall in the northeastern city of Nakhon Ratchasima in 2020, killing 29 people and holding off security forces for some 16 hours before being killed by them.

The previously worst attack on civilians was a 2015 bombing at a shrine in Bangkok that killed 20 people. It was allegedly carried out by human traffickers in retaliation for a crackdown on their network.

## Oldest public library in the Americas has Catholic origins

By MARÍA TERESA HERNÁNDEZ Associated Press

PUEBLA, Mexico (AP) — It is, according to UNESCO, the oldest public library in the Americas, tucked away from the street front at a cultural center in the historic heart of this Mexican city. Those who enter the Palafoxiana Library for the first time — seeing the high, vaulted ceiling and gold-framed painting of the Virgin Mary — might think they've arrived at a chapel.

Indeed, the library owes its existence to one of Puebla's early Catholic bishops, Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, who in 1646 donated his private library of 5,000 volumes to a local religious college — with the hope that anyone who knew how to read would have access to them.

In 1773, more than a century after Palafox's death, the bishop of that era ordered the construction of a majestic library to house the collection. The walls were fitted with two tiers of wooden bookshelves; a third tier was added in the 19th century as donations flowed in from religious leaders and laypeople. There are now more than 45,000 volumes and manuscripts.

The books are organized according to principles of scholastic philosophy which held that the foundation of all knowledge is God and reason is subordinate to faith.

On the first floor, there are more than 11,000 Bibles, religious documents and theological texts. The second level is dedicated to the relationship between God and people — chronicles of religious orders and the lives of saints — and the third contains books on physics, mathematics, botany, language, architecture, even carpentry.

In effect, the overall collection navigates between two worlds — the word of God coexisting with the contributions of humankind.

"Everything that was imagined at that time is in the library," said Juan Fernández del Campo, the library's current manager.

Among the library's greatest treasures are nine incunabula — books made between 1450 and 1500 with Gutenberg's first printing techniques — and volumes by Galen and Vesalius, who are renowned for their contributions to the study of medicine.

Inside the library there are no explanatory texts that reveal the enigmas of the Palafoxiana to its visitors, but at the entrance there are always volunteer guides who recount its history to whoever is interested. Fernández del Campo said access to the materials is often prioritized for researchers who show a clear justification for their request.

Palafox's passion for books is evident in a quote from him, written on a mosaic outside the library.

"He who finds himself without books finds himself in solitude without consolation," it says.

Yet Fernández del Campo, from an office hidden behind the altar of the Virgin out of the eye of tourists, said those words from the bishop should be interpreted within the context of his time.

"If you read what Palafox said and look back in the history of Mexico, you say: Wait a minute, no. This

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was not the time for Mexico to raise its wings toward freedom of thought," the library manager said.

Indeed, the historical record suggests Palafox sought to assert the authority of Spain's king and the Catholic Church hierarchy, putting him at odds with religious orders such as the Jesuits who questioned the royal authority.

Amid that friction, Palafox was transferred to Spain in 1653. The Jesuits were expelled from the Spanish Empire a century later; many of their books were added to the Palafox collection when the order abandoned Puebla.

According to the World Monuments Fund, the added weight of the books stored on the library's third tier made the bookshelves more susceptible to damage when earthquakes struck Puebla in 1999.

Following the quakes, the fund participated in an extensive restoration project. Cracks in the walls and vaults were repaired and the bookcases were restructured.

The library reopened in 2002; two years later it was added by UNESCO to its Memory of the World Register.

## Town employee quietly lowered fluoride in water for years

By LISA RATHKE Associated Press

RICHMOND, Vt. (AP) — Residents of a small community in Vermont were blindsided last month by news that one official in their water department quietly lowered fluoride levels nearly four years ago, giving rise to worries about their children's dental health and transparent government — and highlighting the enduring misinformation around water fluoridation.

Katie Mather, who lives in Richmond, a town of about 4,100 in northwestern Vermont, said at a water commission meeting this week that her dentist recently found her two kids' first cavities. She acknowledged they eat a lot of sugar, but noted that her dentist recommended against supplemental fluoride because the town's water should be doing the trick.

Her dentist "was operating and making professional recommendations based on state standards we all assumed were being met, which they were not," Mather said. "It's the fact that we didn't have the opportunity to give our informed consent that gets to me."

The addition of fluoride to public drinking water systems has been routine in communities across the United States since the 1940s and 1950s but still doesn't sit well with some people, and many countries don't fluoridate water for various reasons, including feasibility.

Critics argue that the health effects of fluoride aren't fully known and that its addition to municipal water can amount to an unwanted medication; some communities in recent years have ended the practice. In 2015, the U.S. government lowered its recommended amount in drinking water after some children got too much of it, causing white splotches on their teeth.

While such splotches are primarily a cosmetic problem, the American Dental Association notes on its website that fluoride — along with life-giving substances including salt, iron and oxygen — can be toxic in large doses.

But in the recommended amounts, fluoride in water decreases cavities or tooth decay by about 25%, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which reported in 2018 that 73% of the U.S. population was served by water systems with adequate fluoride to protect teeth. So for some people in Richmond, it was a shock to hear their water wasn't meeting the standard.

Kendall Chamberlin, Richmond's water and wastewater superintendent, told the Water and Sewer Commission in September that he reduced the fluoride level because of his concerns about changes to its sourcing and the recommended levels.

He said he worries about quality control in the fluoride used in U.S. drinking systems because it comes from China — an assertion that echoes unfounded reports about Chinese fluoride that have circulated online in recent years.

And, he said, he doesn't think the state's recommended level of fluoride is warranted right now.

"My duty is to take reasonable care and judgment for the protection of public health, safety and the



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environment of my customers," he said, adding that "to err on the side of caution is not a bad position to be in."

Chamberlin did not respond to an Associated Press email seeking comment.

Two of the three fluoride additives U.S. water systems can use do, in fact, come from China because they have no domestic manufacturers, but all are subject to stringent standards, testing and certification to ensure safety, CDC spokesperson Tracy Boehmer said in an email. Spokespeople for the Vermont Department of Health concurred that all additives must meet those national standards.

Chamberlin's decision flabbergasted residents and doctors.

"For a single person to unilaterally make the decision that this public health benefit might not be warranted is inappropriate. I think it's outrageous," retired Dr. Allen Knowles said at the Sept. 19 meeting. He said he has an 8-month-old granddaughter he thought was getting adequately fluoridated water.

"Fluoride, again, is one of the most successful and important public health measures that has ever been undertaken in this country," Knowles said. "The reduction in dental disease is just inarguable. You don't establish safety based on one person's opinion or one study or this or that."

Most water naturally contains some fluoride, but typically not enough to prevent cavities.

The mineral was first added to public water in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1945. Now it's commonplace, although more prevalent in some states than others; Oregon, New Jersey and Hawaii have the lowest percentage of residents with fluoridated water, according to the United Health Foundation.

Fluoride is also added to toothpaste and other topical products and is in some foods.

In sparsely populated and largely rural Vermont, 29 of the 465 public water systems voluntarily fluoridate, and just over half of residents served by a public system get fluoridated water, according to the Vermont Department of Health. The state's standard level is based on federal recommendations.

Towns that fluoridate must maintain levels within the state's recommendations and submit monthly reports to the state Health Department.

The state's former fluoride program manager, who retired in 2019, had tried working with Chamberlin and his team in Richmond, "and things would improve for a while, but drop back down again," Robin Miller, the director of the Office of Oral Health, wrote in an email to the AP.

Miller said she didn't realize the town's fluoride number had been consistently low for so long until March this year. After a site visit by the state in April, the levels did not improve, so Miller contacted the Richmond town manager in June, who requested she attend the meeting in September, she said.

At the second meeting Monday, the one at which Katie Mather raised concerns about her children's teeth, Chamberlin — who doesn't live in town and appeared online — read a statement of apology.

"Words cannot express how sorry I am for causing this controversy," he said. "Believe me when I say I have always only had good intentions based on a misunderstanding. I promise I will make sure nothing like this ever happens again."

A former Richmond employee who worked under Chamberlin pointed out the monthly report is reviewed by the town manager and goes to the state.

"It's not just one guy doing what he wants. He's bringing these reports to his boss, who signs them," said Erik Bailey, now the village manager in Johnson.

Town Manager Josh Arneson said Chamberlin or other staffers always told him levels were acceptable. He said he first heard from the state in June about the consistently low levels.

The commission voted to return the water to full fluoridation. It's not clear whether anyone could face professional repercussions; personnel issues were discussed in a closed session.

## 'I love you, mommy': 4-year-old Thai day care victim mourned

By TASSANEE VEJPONGSA Associated Press

UTHAI SAWAN, Thailand (AP) — The little girl's nickname was Plai Fon. In Thai, it means "the end of the rainy season" — a time of happiness.

And then in one horrible burst of violence, the happiness that the chubby-cheeked 4-year-old had sym-

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bolized for her adoring family was shattered. In its place is an unfathomable agony over what happened to Plai Fon in a massacre that began at her Thai day care center and left 36 people, plus the killer, dead.

"When she woke up, she would say, 'I love you, mommy and daddy and brother,'" her 28-year-old mother, Tukta Wongsila, recalled of her daughter's usual morning routine. Tukta's grief over the memory soon stole her breath away.

At least 24 of the victims of Thursday's gun and knife attack in northeast Thailand were children, mostly preschoolers. One day after their short lives were snuffed out, their desperate families spent hours outside an administrative office near the day care center, waiting for their children's bodies to be released.

Authorities had told the families to gather at the office so they could process compensation claims and meet the prime minister. But Tukta didn't care about forms or formalities. She just wanted her little girl.

"I want to get my daughter back to hold a ceremony as soon as I can," she wailed, tears pouring from her red eyes. "All this insurance money, I don't want it. I just want her back for the funeral."

Tukta and her family live in Uthai Sawan, a rural community in one of the country's poorest regions, not far from the Laos border. Like many residents, they have long struggled to pay the bills.

Tukta and her husband work on the family's rice farm during the growing season, making around \$2,600 a year if they are lucky. They take odd jobs on their free days to bolster their income. The couple and their children share a house with Tukta's mother-in-law and bed-ridden father-in-law. Moving to a bigger city for better jobs has been impossible because of their need to care for their young children and aging parents.

Plai Fon, whose formal name was Siriprapa Prasertsuk, was the eldest of Tukta's two children, three years older than her baby brother. She was tiny, with black hair and plump cheeks that pulled up into a radiant smile. It was a smile her grandmother, 62-year-old Bandal Pornsora, already missed.

"She was a such a good girl," Bandal said. "Such a good girl."

On Thursday, Plai Fon went to the Young Children's Development Center, where the walls are adorned with cheerful pictures of flowers and butterflies. It was early afternoon when a fired police officer stormed in and began shooting and stabbing the children, who had been snuggled up on mats and blankets taking their afternoon nap.

On Friday, as Tukta waited for her daughter's body, she found herself contemplating the horror Plai Fon must have endured in her final moments.

"I want to see my daughter, to see what she looked like," she said. "I don't know how much pain he inflicted on her. (Even) if she was asleep, she must have felt the pain. I don't know what took her life. I just want to see her face."

She finally would, hours later, at a nearby Buddhist temple where loved ones of the dead had gathered to receive the bodies.

Families who emerged from the temple spoke of seeing massive cuts on their children. Many screamed. Some fainted.

Tukta walked into the temple alongside her husband and mother-in-law. When they came back out, Tukta's husband collapsed. He was taken to the hospital.

Tukta sobbed and reached for her father's arms. Plai Fon's eyes, she said, had been wide open.

On the lawn behind the temple, the pair embraced, trying to provide comfort that would not come.

Tukta clung to a framed photo of Plai Fon drawing with a yellow marker and staring into the camera with wide, dark eyes. The young mother's fingers fidgeted on the edge of the frame as she leaned into her father, both wiping away tears.

Every night before bed, Tukta said, Plai Fon would say: "I want to sleep with mommy."

Tukta wept at the memory.

"These are the words I hear every night," she said. "But I missed those words last night."

## Ukrainian authorities take stock of ruins in liberated Lyman

By JUSTIN SPIKE Associated Press

LYMAN, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian authorities are just beginning to sift through the wreckage of the

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devastated city of Lyman in eastern Ukraine as they assess the humanitarian toll, and possibility of war crimes, from a months-long Russian occupation.

Few of the buildings in the city in the Donetsk region — an area which Moscow illegally claimed as Russian territory last week following a staged “referendum” — have survived without damage, and most houses are without basic utilities.

Walls around the town bear graffitied reminders of the four-month occupation by Russian troops, with words like “Russia,” “USSR” and “Russian World” scrawled on surfaces that are riddled by bullets.

Mark Tkachenko, communications inspector for the Kramatorsk district police of the Donetsk region, said Friday that authorities are still searching for the bodies of civilians amid the destruction, and trying to determine causes of death.

“They will look at when people died and how they died. If it was in the period when the city was occupied and they have injuries from Kalashnikov rifles, then of course, it’s a war crime,” Tkachenko told The Associated Press.

While it is still unclear how many died in the city since it was overrun by Russian forces in May, he said, Lyman today has become a “humanitarian crisis” which could still hold further grim discoveries.

“Some people died in their houses, some people died in the streets, and the bodies are now being sent to experts for examination,” he said. “For now we are looking for grave sites, and there are probably mass graves.”

The road approaching Lyman, which Russians used as a strategic logistics and transport hub during its occupation, is littered with miles of desolation left behind from intense fighting as Ukrainian troops pressed to retake it late last week.

The forests surrounding the city were decimated by the fighting, and the burned out and twisted wreckage of dozens of vehicles lined the road which was pockmarked by craters from falling rockets.

Tetyana Ignatchenko, spokeswoman for the Donetsk regional administration, said the city’s civilian infrastructure had been “completely destroyed,” and that an effort was ongoing to clear it of the bodies of Russian soldiers abandoned during their army’s retreat.

“Police and criminologists are working, looking for Russian bodies and collecting them in the streets and forests. There are very many of them because the occupiers didn’t bring them with them,” Ignatchenko said.

As they left Lyman, Russian soldiers placed mines on the bodies of some of their fallen comrades, set to explode when Ukrainian authorities attempted to clear them, said Tkachenko of the Kramatorsk district police. Some had exploded, but caused no injuries.

As Ukrainian authorities entered the city, they found that many civilian residents had been killed by shelling while others, mostly older people, had died during the Russian occupation because of a lack of food and medicine, Tkachenko said.

Looting of civilian homes by Russian soldiers, he said, was widespread.

Anatolii, 71, a Lyman resident who lined up in the city’s central square Friday to receive humanitarian aid, said Russian soldiers generally left people his age alone, but that he had heard rumors of prolonged detentions of civilians and that his daughter’s home had been robbed.

“I was looking after my daughter’s house when they came over and opened the house with a crowbar and stole everything that they needed and escaped,” he said. “What could I say, and to whom? Could I fight with them? No.”

The liberation of Lyman came as the latest in a series of gains by Ukrainian forces as part of successful counteroffensive operations in the Kharkiv, Donetsk and Kherson regions.

Even as Ukraine has recovered thousands of square miles of territory in the last month, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed treaties to illegally annex the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions. Western leaders decried the move as illegitimate and a reckless escalation of the war, which began on Feb. 24.

As Ukrainian forces moved back into liberated cities and towns, they discovered some instances of mass graves and torture sites, such as those recently observed by AP journalists in recaptured settlements in the Kharkiv region.

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In one liberated city, Iziium, an AP investigation uncovered 10 separate torture sites.

Ukrainian media earlier reported the discovery of a mass grave in Lyman, but authorities on site wouldn't confirm or deny its existence and wouldn't elaborate further, saying only that investigations were ongoing.

But Donetsk Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko on Friday said that two burial sites had been found in Lyman, including around 200 individual civilian graves and a mass grave with an undetermined number of bodies.

On Friday, Tetyana, who didn't want to give her last name, wheeled a hand cart full of squashes toward her house on the outskirts of Lyman on a street where most houses bore damage from the fighting.

Her home had been heavily damaged in a Russian attack, she said, pointing at what used to be a window in her kitchen from when a rocket came through the wall.

"I was at home and fell into the bathroom, and my daughter was in the hallway. How we weren't killed, I don't know," she said. "The storage shed is destroyed, the roof was destroyed, but now we've repaired it. Here you see the doors are also damaged."

Tetyana pointed to a pair of green trousers she was wearing, and several camouflage coats hanging on hooks outside her house. She'd found the Russian uniforms, she said, "laying around. All my stuff was destroyed so I have nothing to wear."

Daria Yevheniivna, 15, said that while she had spent most of the occupation at home in hiding, she now feels a new sense of hope that her city can be salvaged.

"Everything got better," she said. "It became very calm. I don't hear shooting anymore, and I can sleep in the house, not in the cellar. People became more kind."

Anatolii, who also didn't give his last name, complained as he spoke on the central square that some of his neighbors only watched Russian television, which he said had "messed with their heads." He has tried to influence them, he said, but without success.

"There are some people who were waiting for the Russians, but I am Ukrainian, and we don't like them," he said.

"War is war. This is a real war," he said. "Russians shout that it's a special operation, but it's only a special operation for them. For us, it's a real war."

## North Korea says US carrier's return aggravates tensions

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea warned Saturday the U.S. redeployment of an aircraft carrier near the Korean Peninsula is causing a "considerably huge negative splash" in regional security, as it defended its recent missile tests as a "righteous reaction" to intimidating military drills between its rivals.

The North Korean Defense Ministry statement came a day after the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan began a new round of naval drills with South Korean warships off the peninsula's east coast. The Reagan and its battle group returned to the area after North Korea fired a powerful missile over Japan earlier this week to protest the carrier group's previous training with South Korea.

The Reagan's redeployment is "an event of considerably huge negative splash to the regional situation," an unidentified spokesman at the North Korean Defense Ministry said in remarks carried by state media. "The armed forces of (North Korea) is seriously approaching the extremely worrisome development of the present situation."

He also called the Reagan's return "a sort of military bluffing" to issue a warning over North Korea's "righteous reaction" to "the extremely provocative and threatening joint military drills of the U.S. and South Korea."

North Korea regards U.S.-South Korean military exercises as an invasion rehearsal and is especially sensitive if such drills involve U.S. strategic assets like an aircraft carrier. North Korea has argued it was forced to pursue a nuclear weapons program to cope with U.S. nuclear threats. U.S. and South Korean officials have repeatedly said they have no intentions of attacking the North.

In the past two weeks, North Korea has fired 10 ballistic missiles into the sea in five launch events, adding to its record-breaking pace of weapons tests this year. The recent weapons tests include a nuclear-

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capable missile that flew over Japan for the first time in five years and demonstrated a range to strike the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam and beyond.

Earlier this year, North Korea tested other nuclear-capable ballistic missiles that place the U.S. mainland and its allies South Korea and Japan within striking distance.

North Korea's testing spree indicates its leader, Kim Jong Un, has no intention of resuming diplomacy with the U.S. and wants to focus on expanding his weapons arsenal. But some experts say Kim would eventually aim to use his advanced nuclear program to wrest greater outside concessions, such as the recognition of North Korea as a legitimate nuclear state, which Kim thinks is essential in getting crippling U.N. sanctions on his country lifted.

The Reagan carrier group's latest training with the South Korean navy is to end on Saturday.

South Korean officials recently said North Korea was also prepared to test a new liquid-fueled intercontinental ballistic missile and a submarine-launched ballistic missile while maintaining readiness to perform its first underground nuclear test since 2017.

## National Guard struggles as troops leave at faster pace

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Soldiers are leaving the Army National Guard at a faster rate than they are enlisting, fueling concerns that in the coming years units around the country may not meet military requirements for overseas and other deployments.

For individual states, which rely on their Guard members for a wide range of missions, it means some are falling short of their troop totals this year, while others may fare better. But the losses comes as many are facing an active hurricane season, fires in the West and continued demand for units overseas, including combat tours in Syria and training missions in Europe for nations worried about threats from Russia.

According to officials, the number of soldiers retiring or leaving the Guard each month in the past year has exceeded those coming in, for a total annual loss of about 7,500 service members. The problem is a combination of recruiting shortfalls and an increase in the number of soldiers who are opting not to reenlist when their tour is up.

The losses reflect a broader personnel predicament across the U.S. military, as all the armed services struggled this year to meet recruiting goals. And they underscore the need for sweeping reforms in how the military recruits and retains citizen soldiers and airmen who must juggle their regular full-time jobs with their military duties.

Maj. Gen. Rich Baldwin, chief of staff of the Army National Guard, said the current staffing challenges are the worst he's seen in the last 20 years, but so far the impact on Guard readiness is "minimal and manageable."

"However, if we don't solve the recruiting and retention challenges we're currently facing, we will see readiness issues related to strength begin to emerge within our units within the next year or two," he said.

According to Gen. Daniel Hokanson, head of the National Guard Bureau, both the Army and Air Guards failed to meet their goals for the total number of service members in the fiscal year that ended last Friday. The Army Guard's authorized total is 336,000, and the Air Guard is 108,300.

Baldwin said the Army Guard started the year with a bit more than its target total, but ends the fiscal year about 2% below the goal. Fueling that decline was a 10% shortfall in the number of current soldiers who opted to reenlist. Hokanson said the Air Guard missed its total goal by nearly 3%.

The reasons are many. But Guard officials suggest that young people may not be hearing the strong call to service that they did when the U.S. was at war in Iraq and Afghanistan, in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

Baldwin said that as operations in Iraq and Afghanistan began to decline several years ago, states started to see higher than expected losses in personnel. In exit interviews, he said, troops cited a number of reasons why they weren't reenlisting. "But, unexpectedly, they found that one reason common to many of their soldiers was based on the perception that the war was over," said Baldwin, adding that they had

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joined to serve their country, not make the Army Guard their career.

The same may be true now, he said. In 2020 and 2021, Guard members were heavily involved in a range of domestic emergencies, from natural disasters and civil unrest to the pandemic, including medical care, COVID-19 testing and vaccines.

"Today, we have a much lower overseas deployment tempo than we've been used to and almost all of the COVID support missions have been ramped down," Baldwin said. "We join to make a difference by serving others and by being part of something bigger than ourselves. ... There may be a perception among both our soldiers and the civilians we are trying to recruit that we are on the backside of all of that and it's time to take advantage of the hot job market we have right now."

While the shortfalls for 2022 may be small percentages, the Guard is facing increasing losses over the next year due to the U.S. military's requirement that all troops get the COVID-19 vaccine. Currently about 9,000 Guard members are refusing to get the shot, and another 5,000 have sought religious, medical or administrative exemptions.

So far, no Guard members have been discharged for refusing the vaccine order. The National Guard is awaiting final instructions from the Army on how to proceed. Officials have said it's not clear when they will get that guidance.

With more losses likely on the horizon, Guard leaders are looking for ways to entice service members to join or reenlist. Hokanson said a critical change would be to provide Guard members with healthcare coverage. Currently, he said, about 60,000 Guardsmen don't have health insurance. And those who have insurance through their civilian employer have to go through a difficult process to move to the military's TRICARE program when they are on active-duty status.

The cost of providing health care coverage to those who don't have it would be about \$719 million a year, he said.

Other changes that could help, he said, would include expanding educational benefits and giving Guard members a financial bonus when they bring in new recruits. Such bonuses were used during the peak of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, but there were some problems that Hokanson and others said could be avoided now.

"We need to make adjustments based on the current environment because for the long term, our nation needs a National Guard the size that we are, or maybe even larger to meet all the requirements that we have," said Hokanson. "It's up to us to make sure that we fill our formations so that they're ready when our nation needs us."

## Johnson, Barnes polished in 1st Wisconsin Senate debate

By HARM VENHUIZEN Associated Press/Report for America

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Republican Sen. Ron Johnson and his Democratic challenger Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes stuck to their scripts — and their time limits — as they met for a debate Friday evening in a hotly contested race that could determine party control of the U.S. Senate.

In battleground Wisconsin, it was a welcome chance for both candidates to clarify their positions on a variety of issues, and though they disagreed on most subjects, their comments were similar to those they've made on the campaign trail. Here are the key takeaways:

### THE ECONOMY

Inflation is one of the issues most felt by voters this midterm, with noticeable increases in the prices of everyday expenses like groceries, rent and utilities. It's also among the top issues Wisconsin voters are concerned about, recent polling has shown.

Johnson was hesitant to commit to supporting increases in the minimum wage, saying he would "possibly consider it." The incumbent also blamed Democrats for inflation, saying jobs and the economy were better under former President Donald Trump.

Barnes reiterated his support for a \$15 minimum wage as well as an approach to job creation that includes technical and trade education. Johnson questioned several references Barnes made to his working-class background, saying he was unaware of what experience the lieutenant governor has in the private sector

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other than his parents' jobs as a schoolteacher and a factory worker.

## ABORTION

Barnes, who has made support for abortion rights central to his campaign, said he would "absolutely vote to codify Roe v. Wade" into federal law as a senator.

Johnson again voiced support for a statewide referendum on abortion — an option that seems unlikely after the state Legislature quickly ended a special session called by Democratic Gov. Tony Evers earlier this week to consider allowing ballot measures. Barnes accused Johnson of running from his record of supporting anti-abortion legislation, saying the senator knows a referendum won't happen.

A 173-year-old law bans abortions in Wisconsin except to save the life of the mother. Doctors stopped providing abortions after the Supreme Court handed down its decision overturning Roe v. Wade in June. Polling has shown that a majority of people in Wisconsin support abortion rights.

## CRIME

A flurry of attack ads have from Johnson and other Republicans have branded Barnes as "dangerous" and displayed the lieutenant governor against footage of violent crime. Such ads are a likely reason the lead Barnes held over Johnson in midsummer has since eroded. Barnes supports ending cash bail, but he was clear Friday night that his plan would not allow dangerous offenders out of jail.

"Senator Johnson may not have encountered a problem he can't buy his way out of, but that's not the case for the majority of people in Wisconsin," said Barnes, sneaking a jab in at the incumbent, who is also a multimillionaire and former businessman.

Johnson hit back by highlighting Barnes' statements on police funding and accusing him of inciting riots during protests against racism in 2020. "He says it pains him to see fully funded police budgets," said Johnson. Barnes doesn't support defunding the police, but he has expressed support for redirecting police funding towards alternative community safety programs.

The candidates also addressed gun control. "If gun control were the solution, it would've already been solved," said Johnson, who pinned the blame for gun violence on a lack of social and religious values. Barnes, a Milwaukee native, took the opportunity to decry gun violence and talk about his personal connections to victims.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

"The climate has always changed, always will change," said Johnson, denying that climate change is an issue. The senator also said the federal government should worry less about carbon emissions and more about "real pollution" like the state's ongoing issues with a group of chemicals known as PFAS.

Barnes accused Johnson of protecting special interests in the fossil fuel industry and referenced his conversations with local farmers. Rural voters are a key group in Wisconsin that Barnes has been struggling to gain the support of.

When speaking about renewable energy, Johnson said wind and solar energy "make our grid very unreliable" and instead suggested, "If you're concerned about climate change, you should be supporting nuclear power."

## JAN. 6 ATTACK

The incumbent senator has downplayed the attack on the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, saying it "didn't seem like an insurrection to me." On Friday, Johnson also downplayed his role in attempting to deliver a slate of false electors to former Vice President Mike Pence after the 2020 election.

"From my standpoint, this is a non-issue," Johnson said, claiming he had no knowledge of an alternate slate of electors. Both candidates said they believed Pence did the right thing while certifying the results of the 2020 election.

## Thais mourn dozens, mainly kids, killed in day care attack

By TASSANEE VEJPONGSA and DAVID RISING Associated Press

UTHAI SAWAN, Thailand (AP) — Relatives wailed and collapsed in grief over the small coffins of children Friday after a fired police officer stormed a rural Thai day care center at naptime and massacred dozens

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of people.

Thailand's deadliest mass killing left virtually no one untouched in the small community nestled among rice paddies in one of the nation's poorest regions. Grief also gripped the rest of the country, where flags were lowered to half-staff and schoolchildren said prayers to honor the dead.

At least 24 of the 36 people killed in Thursday's grisly gun and knife attack were children, mostly preschoolers.

"I cried until I had no more tears coming out of my eyes. They are running through my heart," said Seksan Sriraj, 28, whose pregnant wife was due to give birth this month and who worked at the Young Children's Development Center in Uthai Sawan.

"My wife and my child have gone to a peaceful place. I am alive and will have to live. If I can't go on, my wife and my child will be worried about me, and they won't be reborn in the next life," he said.

A stream of people, including Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, other government representatives and relatives themselves, left flowers at the day care center on Friday. By afternoon, bouquets of white roses and carnations lined the wall outside, along with five tiny juice boxes, bags of corn chips and a stuffed animal.

Later, relatives received the bodies at the local Buddhist temple. As the small, white coffins were opened, some screamed, while others fainted and were revived with smelling salts. For a time, the grounds outside the temple were crowded with people overcome by grief.

"It was just too much. I can't accept this," said Oy Yodkhao, 51, sitting on a bamboo mat in the oppressive heat as relatives gave her water and gently mopped her brow.

Her 4-year-old grandson Tawatchai Sriphu was killed, and she said she worried for the child's siblings. The family of rice farmers is close, with three generations living under one roof.

Som-Mai Pitfai collapsed when she saw the body of her 3-year-old niece.

"When I looked, I saw she had been slashed in the face with a knife," the 58-year-old said, holding back tears.

King Maha Vajiralongkorn and Queen Suthida visited hospitals, where seven of the 10 people wounded are being treated, and met with family members of victims in what he said was a bid to boost morale.

"It is a tragedy that this evil thing has happened," the monarch told reporters during a rare public appearance. "But right now, we have to think of what we can do to improve things to the best of our ability."

Police identified the attacker as Panya Kamrap, 34, a former police sergeant fired earlier this year because of a drug charge involving methamphetamine. He had been due to appear in court Friday. An employee told a Thai TV station that Panya's son had attended the day care but hadn't been there for about a month.

Panya took his own life after killing his wife and child at home. A motive for the killings remains unknown, although money and marital problems appeared to be involved.

In an interview with Amarin TV, Satita Boonsom, who worked at the day care center, said staff locked the glass front door to the building after seeing the assailant shoot a child and his father out front. But the gunman shot and kicked his way through it.

The children, mainly preschoolers, had been taking an afternoon nap, and photos taken by first responders showed their tiny bodies still lying on blankets. In some images, slashes to the victims' faces and gunshots to their heads could be seen.

Satita said she and three other teachers climbed the center's fence to escape and call police and seek help. By the time she returned, the children were dead. She said one child who was covered by a blanket survived the attack, apparently because the assailant assumed he was dead.

She said the center usually has around 70 to 80 children, but there were fewer at the time of the attack because the semester had ended for older children and rain prevented a school bus from operating.

"They wouldn't have survived," she said.

Satita added that the attacker's son hadn't been to the day care center recently because he was sick.

One of the youngest survivors is a 3-year-old boy who was riding a tricycle close to his mother and grandmother when the assailant began slashing them with the knife. The mother died from her wounds, and the boy and grandmother were being treated at hospitals, according to local media.



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Mass shootings are rare but not unheard of in Thailand, which has one of the highest civilian gun ownership rates in Asia, with 15.1 weapons per 100 people compared to only 0.3 in Singapore and 0.25 in Japan. That's still far lower than the U.S. rate of 120.5 per 100 people, according to a 2017 survey by Australia's GunPolicy.org nonprofit organization.

Support and condolences poured in from around the world. "All Australians send their love and condolences," Prime Minister Anthony Albanese tweeted. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken called the violence "senseless and heartbreaking."

Pope Francis offered prayers for all those affected by such "unspeakable violence."

"I'm profoundly saddened by the heinous shooting at a childcare centre in Thailand," U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres tweeted.

Thailand's previous worst mass killing involved a disgruntled soldier who opened fire in and around a mall in the northeastern city of Nakhon Ratchasima in 2020, killing 29 people and holding off security forces for some 16 hours before eventually being killed by them.

Nearly 60 others were wounded in that attack. Its death toll surpassed that of the previously worst attack on civilians, a 2015 bombing at a shrine in Bangkok that killed 20 people. It was allegedly carried out by human traffickers in retaliation for a crackdown on their network.

Last month, a clerk shot co-workers at Thailand's Army War College in Bangkok, killing two and wounding another before he was arrested.

## Appeals court ruling allows Arizona abortions to restart

By BOB CHRISTIE Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Abortions can take place again in Arizona, at least for now, after an appeals court on Friday blocked enforcement of a pre-statehood law that almost entirely criminalized the procedure.

The three-judge panel of the Arizona Court of Appeals agreed with Planned Parenthood that a judge should not have lifted the decades-old order that prevented the older law from being imposed.

The brief order written by Presiding Judge Peter J. Eckerstrom said Planned Parenthood and its Arizona affiliate had shown they are likely to prevail on an appeal of a decision by the judge in Tucson to allow enforcement of the old law.

Planned Parenthood had argued that the lower court judge should have considered a host of laws restricting abortions passed since the original injunction was put in place following the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade* that said women have a constitutional right to an abortion.

Those laws include a new one blocking abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy that took effect last month. The previous limit was 24 weeks, the viability standard established by now-overruled U.S. Supreme Court cases.

"Arizona courts have a responsibility to attempt to harmonize all of this state's relevant statutes," Eckerstrom wrote, mirroring arguments made by attorneys for Planned Parenthood.

The U.S. Supreme Court overruled *Roe* in June, and Republican Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich then asked that the injunction blocking enforcement of the pre-statehood abortion be lifted. It had been issued in 1973, shortly after *Roe* was decided. Pima Court Superior Court Judge Kellie Johnson agreed on Sept. 23 and lifted the order two weeks ago.

"Today's decision provides a desperately needed sense of security for both our patients and providers," Alexis McGill Johnson, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, said in a statement. "We can now breathe a sigh of relief and serve patients. While the fight isn't over, for now, Arizonans will once again be able to make their own decisions about their bodies, health care decisions, and futures."

Brnovich spokeswoman Brittnei Thomason said in a statement that "our office understands this is an emotional issue, and we will carefully review the court's ruling before determining the next step."

Republican Gov. Doug Ducey has said the 15-week law he signed in March takes precedence. But his lawyers did not seek to argue that position in court.

Language in the new 15-week ban said it does not repeal the pre-statehood law, and Brnovich and some

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Republican lawmakers have insisted the old law takes precedence. It contains an exception if the life of the mother is at risk, but not for rape or incest.

Providers across the state stopped abortions after the U.S. Supreme Court decision, but many restarted procedures in mid-summer. That came after a federal judge blocked a separate "personhood" law they worried would allow criminal charges against doctors and nurses. They halted again after Johnson's ruling.

Planned Parenthood and other abortion rights advocates have repeatedly said that Arizona's competing abortion laws create confusion for providers and patients.

The appeals court said Planned Parenthood has shown it is likely to prevail on its argument that the trial court erred by limiting its analysis only to the attorney general's request to lift the 50-year-old injunction and refusing to consider the later laws passed by the Legislature to regulate abortion.

Eckerstrom wrote that a stay is appropriate "given the acute need of healthcare providers, prosecuting agencies, and the public for legal clarity as to the application of our criminal laws. Notably, in the underlying litigation both parties sought some form of such clarification from the court."

The appeals court set a hearing for next week to consider whether to set an expedited schedule for hearing Planned Parenthood's full appeal.

Separately this week, a Phoenix doctor and an abortion rights group sued to block the old law, raising similar arguments that Johnson had rejected. In her ruling, Johnson wrote that while there may be legal questions regarding conflicting laws, they were not properly before her.

Some clinics in Arizona have been referring patients to providers in California and New Mexico since Johnson lifted the injunction on the old law. The pre-statehood law carries a sentence of two to five years in prison for doctors or anyone else who assists in an abortion. Last year, the Legislature repealed a law allowing charges against women who seek abortions.

One Phoenix clinic has come up with a workaround to allow patients who can use abortions pills to get them delivered to the California-Arizona border for pickup. That cuts the time it takes to get abortion pills, which are effective up to 12 weeks gestation, from a two-day trip to one that can be done in a day.

Since Roe was overturned, Arizona and 13 other states have banned abortions at any stage of pregnancy. About 13,000 people in Arizona get an abortion each year, according to Arizona Department of Health Services reports.

## Flynn, Gingrich testimony sought in Georgia election probe

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — The Georgia prosecutor investigating whether then-President Donald Trump and others illegally tried to interfere in the 2020 election filed paperwork Friday seeking to compel testimony from a new batch of Trump allies, including former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich and former national security adviser Michael Flynn.

Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis filed petitions in court seeking to have Gingrich and Flynn, as well as former White House lawyer Eric Herschmann and others, testify next month before a special grand jury that's been seated to aid her investigation.

They join a string of other high-profile Trump allies and advisers who have been called to testify in the probe. Rudy Giuliani, the former New York mayor and Trump attorney who's been told he could face criminal charges in the probe, testified in August. Attorneys John Eastman and Kenneth Chesebro have also appeared before the panel. U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham's attempt to fight his subpoena is pending in a federal appeals court. And paperwork has been filed seeking testimony from others, including former White House chief of staff Mark Meadows.

Flynn didn't immediately respond to email and phone messages seeking comment, and his lawyer also didn't immediately return an email seeking comment. Gingrich referred questions to his attorney, who declined to comment. Herschmann could not immediately be reached.

Willis has said she plans to take a monthlong break from public activity in the case leading up to the November midterm election, which is one month from Saturday.

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Each of the petitions filed Friday seeks to have the potential witnesses appear in November after the election. But the process for securing testimony from out-of-state witnesses sometimes takes a while, so it appears Willis is putting the wheels in motion for activity to resume after her self-imposed pause.

Compelling testimony from witnesses who don't live in Georgia requires Willis to use a process that involves getting judges in the states where they live to order them to appear. The petitions she filed Friday are essentially precursors to subpoenas.

Fulton County Superior Court Judge Robert McBurney, who's overseeing the special grand jury, signed off on the petitions, certifying that each person whose testimony is sought is a "necessary and material" witness for the investigation.

The petition for Gingrich's testimony relies on "information made publicly available" by the U.S. House committee that's investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

It says he was involved along with others associated with the Trump campaign in a plan to run television ads that "repeated and relied upon false claims about fraud in the 2020 election" and encouraged members of the public to contact state officials to push them to challenge and overturn the election results based on those claims.

Gingrich was also involved in a plan to have Republican fake electors sign certificates falsely stating that Trump had won the state and that they were the state's official electors even though Democrat Joe Biden had won, the petition says.

The petition seeking Flynn's testimony says he appeared in an interview on conservative cable news channel Newsmax and said Trump "could take military capabilities" and place them in swing states and "basically re-run an election in each of those states."

He also met with Trump, attorney Sidney Powell and others at the White House on Dec. 18, 2020, for a meeting that, according to news reports, "focused on topics including invoking martial law, seizing voting machines, and appointing Powell as special counsel to investigate the 2020 election," Willis wrote.

Willis in August filed a petition seeking testimony from Powell.

Herschmann, who featured prominently in the House committee hearings on the Capitol attack, was a senior adviser to Trump from August 2020 through the end of his term and "was present for multiple meetings between former President Trump and others related to the 2020 election," Willis wrote in the petition seeking his testimony.

She wrote that the House committee also revealed that Herschmann had "multiple conversations" with Eastman, Giuliani, Powell "and others known to be associated with the Trump Campaign, related to their efforts to influence the results of the November 2020 elections in Georgia and elsewhere." Specifically, he had a "heated conversation" with Eastman "concerning efforts in Georgia," she added.

Willis also filed petitions Friday to compel testimony from Jim Penrose and Stephen Cliffgard Lee.

She identified Penrose as "a cyber investigations, operations and forensics consultant" who worked with Powell and others known to be associated with the Trump campaign in late 2020 and early 2021.

He also communicated with Powell and others regarding an agreement to hire data solutions firm SullivanStrickler to copy data and software from voting system equipment in Coffee County, about 200 miles southeast of Atlanta, as well as in Michigan and Nevada, Willis wrote. Penrose did not immediately respond to an email and phone message seeking comment.

Willis wrote in a petition seeking Lee's testimony that he was part of an effort to pressure elections worker Ruby Freeman, who was the subject of false claims about election fraud in Fulton County. He could not immediately be reached for comment.

Special grand juries are impaneled in Georgia to investigate complex cases with large numbers of witnesses and potential logistical concerns. They can compel evidence and subpoena witnesses for questioning and, unlike regular grand juries, can also subpoena the target of an investigation to appear before it.

When its investigation is complete, the special grand jury issues a final report and can recommend action. It's then up to the district attorney to decide whether to ask a regular grand jury for an indictment.

## Brother of suspect in California family's killing arrested

By OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ and STEFANIE DAZIO Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The younger brother of a man suspected in the kidnapping and killings of an 8-month-old baby, her parents and an uncle, was arrested on suspicion he helped his brother destroy evidence, authorities said Friday.

Alberto Salgado, 41, was arrested late Thursday and accused of criminal conspiracy, accessory, and destroying evidence, the Merced County Sheriff's Office said. He's booked in the Merced County Jail — the same place where suspect Jesus Salgado, 48, is being held on kidnapping and murder charges. It wasn't clear whether either brother had a lawyer who could speak on their behalf.

The bodies of Aroohi Dheri; her mother Jasleen Kaur, 27; father Jasdeep Singh, 36; and uncle Amandeep Singh, 39, were found by a farm worker late Wednesday in an almond orchard in a remote area in the San Joaquin Valley, California's agricultural heartland.

Jesus Salgado — a convicted felon who tried to kill himself a day after the kidnappings — had worked for the family's trucking business and had a longstanding feud with them, Merced County Sheriff Vern Warnke told The Associated Press Thursday.

He was treated at a hospital before being taken to jail. Warnke had said detectives were also seeking a person of interest believed to be his accomplice.

Relatives of the victims and fellow members of the Punjabi Sikh community were shocked by the killings.

Jaspreet Kaur, Amandeep Singh's widow, said in a GoFundMe fundraiser that her husband and his brother had been in the United States for 18 years and supported not only their families in California but also their elderly parents back in India.

"This is the story of our shared American dream gone wrong," she wrote. "Our loving family was violently taken away from us on October 3rd."

Kaur said her husband routinely donated food to the local food bank and never missed Sunday service in the local Sikh temple. They had a 9-year-old daughter and an 8-year-old son.

The baby's parents married three years ago in India and reunited two years ago after her mother immigrated to the U.S., she said.

At a vigil Thursday evening in downtown Merced, hundreds of people held lit candles and formed a circle around enlarged photos of the victims. Religious leaders of different faiths opened the ceremony with prayers for the family, the Merced Sun-Star reported.

"Tonight was the community coming together and showing the Singh family that 'we're here with you and we will be here with you for as long as you need us, and we will remember the names of those we lost,'" family friend Priya Lakireddy told the newspaper.

The city of Merced, where the family lived and had their trucking business, will hold evening vigils in their memory through Sunday.

The older Salgado was previously convicted of first-degree robbery with the use of a firearm in Merced County, attempted false imprisonment and an attempt to prevent or dissuade a victim or witness after he held a family he had worked for at gunpoint and forced them to follow his orders nearly 20 years ago.

Salgado worked for the family's trucking company but was fired in 2004 because the family suspected him of stealing money, members of the family told the Los Angeles Times.

On the night of Dec. 19, 2005, he showed up at their home wearing a mask and held a gun to the father's head and bounded his hands with duct tape, recalled his daughter Katrina, who was 16 years old at the time and asked the newspaper to not use her last name.

Salgado rounded up the family, as well as a friend of Katrina's who was visiting, and took them to the garage, where the family kept a safe with cash and jewelry, she and her mother, Kathy, said.

"I was so scared," Kathy said. "And I expected to hear the shot as soon as it was open."

After robbing them, even taking Kathy's wedding ring, Salgado then led the family to the pool in the backyard and made them jump in as he escaped, Kathy and Katrina recalled. He was caught just a few days later after the family reported him to police.

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In 2007, he was sentenced to 11 years in state prison in that case. He was released in 2015 and discharged from parole three years later, according to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. He also has a conviction for possession of a controlled substance, the department said.

Relatives of Salgado contacted authorities and told them he had admitted to them his involvement in the kidnapping Monday in Merced. Salgado tried to take his own life before police arrived at a home in nearby Atwater where an ATM card belonging to one of the victims was used after the kidnapping.

The victims were Punjabi Sikhs, a community that has a significant presence in the trucking business in central California where many of them drive trucks, own trucking companies or own other businesses associated with trucking.

Public records show the family owns Unison Trucking Inc. and relatives said they had opened an office in the last few weeks in a parking lot the Singh brothers also operated. The feud with Salgado dated back a year, the sheriff said, and "got pretty nasty" in text messages or emails. Other details about Salgado's employment and the nature of the dispute were not immediately available.

Warnke said he believes the family was killed shortly after being kidnapped from their business. A farm-worker found their bodies Wednesday near the town of Dos Palos, about 30 miles (50 kilometers) south of Merced.

## Haiti's leader requests foreign armed forces to quell chaos

DÁNICA COTO undefined

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Haiti's government has agreed to request the help of international troops as gangs and protesters paralyze the country and supplies of water, fuel and basic goods dwindle, according to a document published Friday.

The document, signed by Prime Minister Ariel Henry and 18 top-ranking officials, states that they are alarmed by "the risk of a major humanitarian crisis" that is threatening the life of many people.

It authorizes Henry to request from international partners "the immediate deployment of a specialized armed force, in sufficient quantity," to stop the crisis across the country caused partly by the "criminal actions of armed gangs."

"It is imperative to restart activities to avoid a complete asphyxiation of the national economy," the document states.

It wasn't clear if the request had been formally submitted, to whom it would be submitted and whether it would mean the activation of United Nations peacekeeping troops, whose mission ended five years ago after a troubled 11 years in Haiti.

On Friday, the U.S. Embassy warned that "U.S. citizens should depart Haiti now in light of the current health and security situation and infrastructure challenges." It also authorized the temporary departure of government personnel and their families.

U.S. State Department deputy spokesman Vedant Patel said earlier in the day that the U.S. is considering a request for a humanitarian corridor to restore the distribution of fuel within Haiti and coordinating with Haiti's prime minister and other international partners to determine how best to provide additional support.

"We strongly condemn those who continue to block the distribution of fuel and other necessities to Haitian businesses," he said.

Patel would not address the issue of where the troops to enforce the corridor might come from, saying that consideration was still in an early stage.

The petition comes after Luis Almagro, secretary general of the Organization of American States, met Thursday with officials including U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Haiti Foreign Affairs Minister Jean Victor Génésus to talk about the country's worsening situation.

Almagro tweeted late Thursday that Haiti "must request urgent assistance from the international community to help resolve security crises, determine the characteristics of an international security force."

Many Haitians have rejected the idea of another international intervention, noting that U.N. peacekeepers were accused of sexual assault and sparked a cholera epidemic more than a decade ago that killed

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nearly 10,000 people.

"I don't think Haiti needs another intervention," said Mathias Pierre, Haiti's former elections minister. "We have been through so many, and nothing has been solved .... If we don't do it as Haitians, 10 years forward, we're going to be in the same situation again."

He called on the U.S. government to help reduce the amount of ammunition and guns flowing to Haiti and also to equip police officers so they have more weapons and the ability to run intelligence on gangs.

He also worried about the situation that an international security force would encounter.

"It's not an army they're facing," he said. "They're facing gangs located in poor areas and using the population as shields to protect themselves."

Haiti's National Police has struggled to control gangs with its limited resources and chronic understaffing, with only some 12,800 active officers for a country of more than 11 million people.

The gangs have only grown more powerful since the July 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse.

As Henry's administration agreed on the request for foreign troops, his office issued a statement saying the prime minister had not resigned, rejecting what it called fake reports circling on social media that prompted hundreds of Haitians across the country to celebrate in the streets late Thursday.

"It is purely and simply strategies of fabrications, intoxication, orchestrated by ill-intentioned individuals, aiming to sow more trouble and confusion," his office said.

Protesters and increasingly powerful gangs have helped plunge Haiti into an unprecedented level of chaos, with the country paralyzed for nearly a month after gangs surrounded a large fuel terminal in the capital of Port-au-Prince, refusing to budge until Henry steps down.

As a result, crews have been unable to distribute about 10 million gallons of diesel and gasoline and more than 800,000 gallons of kerosene stored on site.

Protesters also have blocked roads ever since Henry announced in early September that his administration could no longer afford to subsidize fuel, leading to sharp increases in the price of gasoline, diesel and kerosene.

The document signed by Henry and other officials stated that such actions are having "catastrophic consequences."

Gas stations are shuttered, hospitals have cut back on critical services and businesses including banks and grocery stores have curtailed their hours.

On Wednesday, the U.N. Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Office in Haiti proposed a "humanitarian corridor" to allow fuel and aid to those in need. It noted the country is also dealing with a new cholera outbreak, with several deaths reported and dozens of patients being treated.

"The most vulnerable people are the first to suffer from the blockage," the U.N. said.

At least 13 U.S. congressional leaders have demanded that the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden stop showing that it is backing Henry and suspend all deportations "given the extreme physical security risks and dire humanitarian situation."

It called on the U.S. government to support "legitimate efforts to create a transitional Haitian government that respects the will of the Haitian people, and should make it clear to Henry that it will not support him as he blocks progress."

Henry has stressed that he has no interest in holding on to power and plans to organize general elections as soon as the violence quells.

## Multiple explosions rock eastern Ukraine city of Kharkiv

By ADAM SCHRECK Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — A series of explosions rocked the eastern Ukraine city of Kharkiv early Saturday, sending towering plumes of illuminated smoke into the sky and triggering a series of secondary explosions.

There were no immediate reports of casualties

The blasts came hours after Russia concentrated attacks in its increasingly troubled invasion of Ukraine on areas it illegally annexed, while the death toll from earlier missile strikes on apartment buildings in the

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southern city of Zaporizhzhia rose to 14.

Kharkiv Mayor Ihor Terekhov said on Telegram that the early-morning explosions were the result of missile strikes in the center of the city. He said that the blasts sparked fires at one of the city's medical institutions and a nonresidential building.

In a rebuke to Russian President Vladimir Putin and his conduct of Europe's worst armed conflict since World War II, the Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to human rights organizations in his country and Ukraine, and to an activist jailed in Russia's ally Belarus.

Berit Reiss-Andersen, the committee's chair, said the honor went to "three outstanding champions of human rights, democracy and peaceful coexistence."

Putin this week illegally claimed four regions of Ukraine as Russian territory, including the Zaporizhzhia region that is home to Europe's largest nuclear power plant, whose reactors were shut down last month.

Fighting near the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant has alarmed the U.N.'s atomic energy watchdog, which on Friday doubled to four the number of its inspectors monitoring plant safeguards. An accident there could release 10 times more potentially lethal radiation than the world's worst nuclear disaster at Chernobyl in Ukraine 36 years ago, Ukrainian Environmental Protection Minister Ruslan Strilets said Friday.

"The situation with the occupation, shelling, and mining of the Chernobyl and Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plants by Russian troops is causing consequences that will have a global character," Strilets told The Associated Press.

The U.N. watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, reported more trouble at the plant, saying Friday on Twitter that external power had again been cut off to one of Zaporizhzhia's shutdown reactors, necessitating the use of emergency backup diesel generators to run safety systems.

The city of Zaporizhzhia is located 53 kilometers (33 miles) away from the nuclear plant as a crow flies and remains under Ukrainian control. To cement Russia's claim to the region, Russian forces bombarded the city with S-300 missiles on Thursday, with more attacks reported Friday.

Ukrainian authorities said the death toll from the strikes on apartment buildings rose to 14 on Friday, while 12 people wounded in the bombardment remained hospitalized.

Missiles also struck the city overnight, wounding one person, Zaporizhzhia Gov. Oleksandr Starukh said. Russia also used Iranian-made Shahed-136 drones there for the first time and damaged two infrastructure facilities, he said.

With its army losing ground to a Ukrainian counteroffensive in the south and east, Russia has deployed unmanned, disposable Iranian-made drones that are cheaper and less sophisticated than missiles but still can damage ground targets.

The Washington-based Institute for the Study of War said Russia's use of the explosives-packed drones was unlikely to affect the course of the war.

"They have used many drones against civilian targets in rear areas, likely hoping to generate nonlinear effects through terror. Such efforts are not succeeding," analysts at the think tank wrote.

In other Moscow-annexed areas, Russia's Defense Ministry reported Friday that its forces had repelled Ukrainian advances near the city of Lyman and retaken three villages elsewhere in the eastern Donetsk region. The ministry also claimed that Russian forces had prevented Ukrainian troops from advancing on several villages in the southern Kherson region.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address Friday that this week alone, his military has recaptured 776 square kilometers (300 square miles) of territory in the east and 29 settlements, including six in the Luhansk region, which Putin has annexed. In total, Ukrainian forces have liberated 2,434 square kilometers (940 square miles) of land and 96 settlements since the beginning of its counteroffensive, he said.

In Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region, Russian troops shelled the city of Nikopol overnight, killing one person, wounding another and damaging buildings, natural gas pipelines and electricity systems, the governor reported. Nikopol lies along the Dnieper River across from Russian-held territory near the nuclear power

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plant. The city has been shelled frequently for weeks.

The trail of Russia's devastation and death from areas where its troops retreated became clearer Friday. A report by Ukrainian First Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Yevhen Yenin revealed that 530 bodies of civilians have been found in Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region since Sept. 7.

The residents killed during the Russian occupation included 257 men, 225 women and 19 children, with 29 people unidentified, Yenin said. Most of the bodies were found in a previously disclosed mass grave in the city of Iziun.

According to Yenin, the recovered bodies bore signs of gunshots, explosions and torture. Some people had ropes around their necks, hands tied behind their back, bullet wounds to their knees and broken ribs.

Authorities have identified 22 torture sites in parts of the Kharkiv region that Ukrainian forces recently liberated, said Serhiy Bolvinov, a regional police official.

In recently recaptured Lyman, workers found 200 individual graves and a mass grave with an unknown number of victims, Donetsk Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko reported on Telegram. In Sviatohirsk, 24 kilometers (15 miles) from Lyman, 21 bodies of civilians were reburied.

Russian military equipment and weapons, meanwhile, is getting into Ukrainian hands. Britain's Ministry of Defense said Friday that Ukrainian forces have captured at least 440 tanks and about 650 armored vehicles since the Russian invasion started Feb. 24.

"The failure of Russian crews to destroy intact equipment before withdrawing or surrendering highlights their poor state of training and low levels of battle discipline," the British ministry said. "With Russian formations under severe strain in several sectors and increasingly demoralized troops, Russia will likely continue to lose heavy weaponry."

Putin ordered a partial mobilization of Russian army reservists last month to reinforce manpower on the front lines in Ukraine. Mistakes have dogged the military call-up, however, and tens of thousands of men have fled Russia, unwilling to fight Putin's war.

That has left Russia desperate for troop reinforcements. The Ukrainian military said Friday that 500 former criminals have been mobilized to reinforce Russian ranks in the eastern Donetsk region, where Ukrainian forces have retaken territory. Law enforcement officers are commanding the new units, the military said.

Russia's state news agency Tass reported Friday that a court in the Russian city of Penza had dismissed the first case against a Russian man called up to serve but who refused. The 32-year-old man's lawyers had argued that the law under which he was charged applies only to conscription evaders, not those subject to the partial mobilization.

In another sign of trouble, reports have surfaced of poor training and few supplies for the new Russian troops. At least two Russian cities — St. Petersburg and Nizhny Novgorod — announced Friday they were canceling their Russian New Year's and Christmas celebrations and redirecting that money to buy supplies for Russian troops.

Under increasing pressure from his own supporters as well as critics, Putin continued to reshuffle his military's leadership, replacing the commander of Russia's eastern military district.

## Judge blocks restrictive Ohio abortion law as suit proceeds

By JULIE CARR SMYTH Associated Press

CINCINNATI (AP) — An Ohio law banning virtually all abortions will remain blocked while a state constitutional challenge proceeds, a judge said Friday in a ruling that will allow pregnancy terminations through 20 weeks' gestation to continue for now.

Hamilton County Common Pleas Judge Christian Jenkins issued the preliminary injunction from the bench after a daylong hearing where courthouse guards screened spectators and one abortion provider testified to wearing a Kevlar vest over fears for her safety.

In impassioned remarks announcing his decision, Jenkins knocked the state's arguments that the Ohio Constitution doesn't ever mention abortion and so doesn't protect the right to one. He said a right doesn't have to be named to be protected.



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"This court has no difficulty holding that the Ohio Constitution confers a fundamental right on all of Ohioans to privacy, procreation, bodily integrity and freedom of choice in health care decision-making that encompasses the right to abortion," he said.

He said the state failed to prove that the ban on most abortions after detection of fetal cardiac activity is narrowly tailored enough not to infringe on those rights. Rather, Jenkins said, the law is written "to almost completely eliminate the rights of Ohio women. It is not narrowly tailored, not even close."

The state is expected to appeal.

Ohio Right to Life President Michael Gonidakis said his organization was "saddened but not surprised" by the decision.

"The abortion clinics literally forum shopped to get the outcome they wanted. This is a moment in time for the pro-life movement and we are convinced that the Ohio Supreme Court will overturn this ruling," Gonidakis said in a statement. "Nowhere in Ohio's Constitution does a right to an abortion exist."

The law signed by Republican Gov. Mike DeWine in April 2019 prohibits most abortions after the first detectable "fetal heartbeat." Cardiac activity can be detected as early as six weeks into pregnancy, before many women know they're pregnant. The law had been blocked through a legal challenge, briefly went into effect when the landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade decision was overturned, and then was again put on hold in court.

Jenkins' ruling following a day of testimony that varied little from existing societal and political arguments for and against abortion, and, he said later, surprised him in its failure to plow any new ground.

Lawyers for abortion clinics presented witnesses who emphasized that abortion is safe, necessary health care and that pregnant Ohioans seeking the procedure were devastated when the law was briefly imposed after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the landmark Roe v. Wade case in June.

Dr. Steven Ralston, a maternal and fetal medicine doctor at the University of Maryland, said limited exceptions included in Ohio's so-called "heartbeat" law are vague and worrisome to physicians, who face losing their medical licenses or felony charges for misinterpretations.

He testified to observing more danger to patients in pregnancy than in abortion.

"I've seen many, many more patients end up in intensive care units after having a baby compared to women who have had an abortion," Ralston said in video testimony. "In fact, I can't even remember a time that I've seen a woman end up in a care unit after an abortion."

The state's attorneys brought witness Dr. Dennis Sullivan, a bioethics expert from Cedarville University, a private Baptist institution, who testified that human life begins at conception and that's "scientifically not open to debate."

He said Ohio's law is "consistent with good medical practice" and that he views performing abortions under its limited exceptions — which include the life of the mother or risk of extensive internal organ damage — is medically ethical. The law contains no exception for fetal anomalies, which Jenkins raised as a question.

He asked a series of pointed questions of Sullivan after he was cross-examined, particularly a view he expressed in testimony that his positions on the nature of human life and the unethical nature of pregnancy termination in cases not involving medical emergencies should be imposed on others.

"My question is what allows you uniquely, or someone else uniquely, to make that judgment any better than the individual whose rights we are being asked to limit, whose autonomy we are being asked to take away?" Jenkins asked.

Sullivan responded with an example of a medical situation where a suffering woman's autonomy might be sacrificed when she arrives at a hospital in need of life-saving care. He also pointed to Ohio laws beyond abortion that limit citizens' autonomy, such as the state's ban on assisted suicide.

Plaintiffs' witness Dr. Steven Joffe, a faculty member in the Department of Medical Ethics and Health Policy at the University of Pennsylvania, testified that Sullivan's position gave the moral status of an embryo "almost absolute weight" over the pregnant patient.

Jenkins said he was most impressed with the testimony of Dr. Michael Parker, a Columbus OB/GYN,

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whose testimony revealed a patchwork of hypothetical, sometimes conflicting judgment calls he felt would make sense under the law. The judge said that proved to him it's "extremely difficult to be a practitioner in the state of Ohio under this law."

## Michael Flynn's ReAwaken roadshow recruits 'Army of God'

By MICHELLE R. SMITH and RICHARD LARDNER Associated Press

BATAVIA, N.Y. (AP) — By the time the red, white and blue-colored microphone had been switched off, the crowd of 3,000 had listened to hours of invective and grievance.

"We're under warfare," one speaker told them. Another said she would "take a bullet for my nation," while a third insisted, "They hate you because they hate Jesus." Attendees were told now is the time to "put on the whole armor of God." Then retired three-star Army general Michael Flynn, the tour's biggest draw, invited people to be baptized.

Scores of people walked out of the speakers' tent to three large metal tubs filled with water. While praise music played in the background, one conference-goer after another stepped in. Pastors then lowered them under the surface, welcoming them into their movement in the name of Jesus Christ. One woman wore a T-shirt that read "Army of God."

Flynn warned the crowd that they were in the midst of a "spiritual war" and a "political war" and urged people to get involved.

ReAwaken America was launched by Flynn, a former White House national security adviser, and Oklahoma entrepreneur Clay Clark a few months after the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol failed to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election. Attendees and speakers still insist — against all evidence and dozens of court rulings — that Donald Trump rightfully won.

Since early last year, the ReAwaken America Tour has carried its message of a country under siege to tens of thousands of people in 15 cities and towns. The tour serves as a traveling roadshow and recruiting tool for an ascendant Christian nationalist movement that's wrapped itself in God, patriotism and politics and has grown in power and influence inside the Republican Party.

In the version of America laid out at the ReAwaken tour, Christianity should be at the center of American life and institutions. Instead, it's under attack, and attendees need to fight to restore the nation's Christian roots. It's a message repeated over and over at ReAwaken — one that upends the constitutional ideal of a pluralist democracy. But it's a message that is taking hold.

A poll by the University of Maryland conducted in May found that 61% of Republicans support declaring the U.S. to be a Christian nation.

"Christian nationalism really undermines and attacks foundational values in American democracy. And that is a promise of religious freedoms for all," said Amanda Tyler, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee, which advocates for religious freedom.

She said the ReAwaken cause is "a partisan political cause, and the cause here is to spread misinformation, to perpetuate the big lie and to have a different result next time in the next election."

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This story is part of an ongoing investigation from The Associated Press and the PBS series "Frontline" that includes the upcoming documentary "Michael Flynn's Holy War," premiering Oct. 18 on PBS and online.

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ReAwaken acts as a petri dish for Christian nationalism and pushes the idea that there's a battle underway between good and evil forces. Those who are considered evil include government officials and Democrats.

It's "a pep rally on spiritual steroids," said Kristin Kobes Du Mez, a history professor at Calvin University in Michigan, who studies evangelicalism.

ReAwaken often appears in churches with speakers addressing attendees from the pulpit. The Batavia show was staged on the grounds of a church, after faith and community leaders in nearby Rochester told organizers they weren't welcome.

Inside a revival tent set up outside, people sat in white folding chairs packed so tightly the rows between

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were nearly impassable. From the stage, speakers stirred up fear and hatred. Immigrants are rushing over the border "to take your place," one said. Homosexuals and pedophiles are classified in the same category: sinful people who don't honor God. Life-saving vaccines are creating "a damn genocide." "The enemy wants to muzzle you," another speaker warned. "He wants to shut your mouth."

Clark, the Tour's principal organizer and emcee, opened the Batavia show bellowing: "Good morning, New York! And good morning, New York Attorney General Letitia James!" The greeting was a reference to a letter James' sent to Flynn and Clark warning them against violent or unlawful conduct.

"I want you to look around and you'll see a group of people that love this country dearly," he said. "At this Reawaken America Tour, Jesus is King (and) President Donald J. Trump is our president."

The AP and Frontline bought tickets for the Batavia event after Clark invited "Frontline" to attend one of the tour's shows. Reporters spent two days listening to speakers and observing the events from inside. On the second day, security escorted a "Frontline" reporter from the grounds because, he was told, Flynn believed he intended to cover the event unfavorably. When an AP reporter began interviewing people attending the event at the end of the second day, she was also reported to security.

While smaller in scale, the ReAwaken shows are similar in tone to the rallies Trump holds. Grievance and contempt for government institutions are regular themes. ReAwaken speakers have included Trump's sons, Eric and Don Jr., Trump confidant Roger Stone, and Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., who has spread anti-vaccine misinformation.

For a tour stop scheduled later this month in Pennsylvania, Republican gubernatorial nominee Doug Mastriano is listed as a speaker.

In Batavia, Greg Locke, a Tennessee pastor, and Eric Trump declared in back-to-back remarks that the FBI's court-authorized search of Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida for classified records showed how the U.S. government has been weaponized against its citizens.

"Third world Gestapo stuff," said Eric Trump. After he finished speaking, a group gathered to pray over him.

Other speakers promoted bizarre theories. One claimed President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963 because he threatened to expose a plot to enslave every man, woman and child in the U.S. Another said a Hebrew prophet foretold 2,500 years ago the exact date the U.S. Supreme Court would overturn *Roe v. Wade*, taking away the constitutional right to abortion.

There were frequent personal attacks on Democrats, with no remark apparently off limits. Clark questioned the gender of former first lady Michelle Obama. Locke called Democrats "baby-butcher mongrels."

The volatile combination of politics, Christianity and conspiracy theory pushed at the ReAwaken tour could eventually tip into political violence, several political and religious scholars told AP.

Samuel Perry, a sociologist at the University of Oklahoma, has done numerous surveys measuring Christian nationalist ideology. In an August 2021 survey, about half of white Americans who most strongly identified with Christian nationalism said they believe things are getting so bad that "real patriots" may have to resort to violence.

"I think all of us believe that America is on the verge of ending," Clark told AP.

Flynn is a constant presence at ReAwaken America events. He is painted as a martyr on the far right — the retired general who paid a price for working for Trump. That status has made him the Tour's star attraction. Offstage, people flock to Flynn to take photos, trade trinkets or tell him how much it means to them that he is there. He hops onstage frequently to speak or even bang a gong to welcome Eric Trump.

An AP/Frontline investigation published last month reported that Flynn has used public appearances to energize voters, political endorsements to build alliances, and a network of nonprofit groups — one of which has projected spending \$50 million — to advance his movement.

The irony of Flynn's aura as a populist warrior is glaring. He was the ultimate Washington insider before being fired by Trump in February 2017 for lying about contacts he had with Russians. Now, Flynn leads a crusade against the same government establishment that employed him for years and which gave him access to many of its deepest secrets.

"So now, he's a spiritual general," said Anthea Butler, a scholar of American religion and politics at the

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University of Pennsylvania.

Butler said that the way Flynn and ReAwaken join Christian nationalism to the idea of spiritual warfare is dangerous because it suggests there are "demonic" people in government, and Christians need to act to save the country. "If people are talking about spiritual warfare and are talking about taking up arms and stuff, then I think you should be very worried," she said. Flynn's battlefield experience, she added, enhances his credibility.

Who exactly the United States needs to be saved from is displayed on a huge monitor on the ReAwaken America stage. The show's villains include former President Barack Obama and Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates, but the principal foe at the center of the monitor is less familiar. He's an 84-year-old German economist and engineer named Klaus Schwab, who heads the World Economic Forum, a global think tank in Switzerland, that holds an annual gathering of the world's business and political elites in Davos, Switzerland, to discuss ways of building a better future.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Schwab unveiled an initiative called The Great Reset that envisioned sweeping changes to how societies and economies work. Even though Schwab and The World Economic Forum have no policymaking power, ReAwaken America participants see his plan, which spoke of "greater government interference" and a "green economy," as an assault on America's foundations.

The other side of the giant monitor has photos of ReAwaken heroes: regulars including Flynn, Locke, MyPillow CEO and 2020 election denier Mike Lindell, and three doctors who became famous for their anti-vaccine views.

Katherine Stewart, author of "The Power Worshipers: Inside the Dangerous Rise of Religious Nationalism," attended a March 2022 ReAwaken America show at a church in San Marcos, California. She said it was like entering a "parallel messaging universe."

"The leaders of the ReAwaken America tour are really driving people into a fact-free echo chamber," Stewart said. "They have been persuaded and manipulated into believing they're doing what's right for their country. But all of their good intentions are being harnessed in service of an agenda that's dividing our country as never before and, frankly, leading to the potential destruction of our democracy."

The politics, anger and prayer were interspersed with a good dose of commerce and fundraising.

Ticket prices ran as high as \$500 for VIP seating or \$250 for general admission, though tickets were only sold by phone and sales agents were eager to bargain. An AP reporter bought two tickets to the Batavia show for less than \$100. A retiree said he paid more than \$700 on admission for two — one VIP ticket for himself plus a donation of \$250 for a general admission ticket for someone who couldn't afford it.

Trump ally Roger Stone asked for donations to his legal defense fund. A naturopath promoted her organic health and beauty line. The stage backdrop even carried ads for a company that buys and sells gold and silver and bills itself as "General Flynn's Gold Buyer of Choice."

In booths inside and outside the church, buyers could pick up a \$3,300 vibrating platform that could purportedly ease back pain and increase sexual function, a \$259 blanket sold to shield the user from 5G, and a "power pendant" that supposedly helps people absorb "the natural living frequencies to empower your body, mind and spirit."

Flynn's son, Michael Flynn Jr., manned his father's merchandise booth, where autographed copies of Flynn's 2017 book, "The Field of Fight," sold for \$60.

Du Mez, who is writing a book on the overlap of consumerism and Christian identity, said such events are orchestrated to extract money from participants. They are invited to participate in the movement by pulling out their credit cards.

"The skeptical take is this is a scam. That's not how it feels to the people who are giving their money," she said. "People give it happily."

Such events, she said, are "identity building and sustaining," giving people a sense of belonging.

Speakers affirmed the message that inside the tent, they are all part of a community. One told attendees that they should "go ahead and take the hit" if they have to split with their loved ones over their views. At the ReAwaken tour, they were repeatedly assured, they are welcome and their beliefs will be validated.

Amanda Grace, a self-described prophetic minister, told the crowd that many of their loved ones "are

still under the control of the rulers of the darkness of this world.”

“This is war, and you have to have a different mindset for that,” Grace said. “You pray for your family, you pray for your friends, you love them. But you have to understand that these rulers are after you. They’re out to destroy you and your line, and everything you’re going to birth forth through your line for the Kingdom of God.”

So when Flynn and others invited the crowd to be baptized at the end of the day, scores joined in to pray and participate.

A woman wearing a T-shirt that read “Jesus is my savior, Trump is my president” said she was being baptized for a third time because she wanted to speak in tongues, a gift that had just been described by a ReAwaken speaker as “the artillery bomb of the enemy.”

Past the baptismal troughs, people were invited to a circle for prayers. Pastors laid hands on them and cast demons out, while people wearing American flag shirts and QAnon hats, crowded around.

“You are free!” one pastor declared. “You are free! You are free!”

Meanwhile, Michael Flynn, accompanied by private security guards, got into his SUV and drove away.

## Uvalde schools suspend entire police force after outrage

By PAUL J. WEBER Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Uvalde’s school district suspended its entire police force Friday amid fresh outrage over the hesitant law enforcement response to the gunman who massacred 21 people at Robb Elementary School.

The extraordinary move follows the revelation that the district hired a former state trooper who was among hundreds of officers who rushed to the scene of the May 24 shooting.

School leaders also put two members of the district police department on administrative leave, one of whom chose to retire instead, according to a statement released by the Uvalde Consolidated Independent School District. Remaining officers will be reassigned to other jobs in the district.

Uvalde school leaders’ suspension of campus police operations one month into a new school year in the South Texas community underscores the sustained pressure that families of some of the 19 children and two teachers killed have kept on the district.

Brett Cross, the uncle of 10-year-old victim Uziyah Garcia, had been protesting outside the Uvalde school administration building for the past two weeks, demanding accountability over officers allowing a gunman with an AR-15-style rifle to remain in a fourth-grade classroom for more than 70 minutes.

Uvalde families have said students in the district are not safe so long as officers who waited so long to confront and kill the gunman remain on the job.

“We did it!” Cross tweeted.

The Uvalde school district had five campus police officers on the scene of the shooting, according to a damning report from Texas lawmakers that laid out multiple breakdowns in the response. A total of nearly 400 officers responded, including school district police, the city’s police, county sheriff’s deputies, state police and U.S. Border Patrol agents, among others.

The fallout Friday is the first in Uvalde’s school police force since the district fired former police Chief Pete Arredondo in August. He remains the only officer to have been fired from his job following one of the deadliest classroom attacks in U.S. history.

The district said it would ask the Texas Department of Public Safety, which had already assigned dozens of troopers to the district for the school year, for additional help. Spokespersons for the agency did not immediately return messages seeking comment Friday.

“We are confident that staff and student safety will not be compromised during this transition,” the district said in a statement.

The statement did not specify how long campus police operations would remain suspended.

The former DPS trooper who was hired by the district was among at least seven troopers later placed under internal investigation for her actions at Robb Elementary.

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Officer Crimson Elizondo was fired Thursday, one day after CNN first reported her hiring. She has not responded to messages left by The Associated Press.

Steve McCraw, the head of the Department of Public Safety, has called the law enforcement response to the shooting an "abject failure." McCraw has also come under pressure as the leader of a department had more than 90 troopers on the scene but still has the support of Republican Gov. Greg Abbott.

On Thursday, after Elizondo was fired, Abbott called it a "poor decision" for the school to hire the former trooper and that it was up to the district to "own up to it."

## **EXPLAINER: Jurors weigh cost of Alex Jones' Sandy Hook lies**

By DAVE COLLINS Associated Press

WATERBURY, Conn. (AP) — For a decade, the parents and siblings of people killed in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting have been tormented and harassed by people who believe the mass shooting was a hoax.

How do you put a price tag on their suffering?

That's part of the task faced by a Connecticut jury that has been asked to decide how much Infowars host Alex Jones and his company should pay for spreading a conspiracy theory that the massacre never happened.

The six jurors deliberated for less than an hour Thursday before breaking for the evening. They didn't reach a verdict Friday and are scheduled to resume work next week.

Jones now acknowledges his conspiracy theories about the shooting were wrong, but says he isn't to blame for the actions of people who harassed the families. His lawyers also say the 15 plaintiffs have exaggerated stories about being subjected to threats and abuse.

Here are some questions and answers about the deliberations.

**COULD THE JURY DECIDE THAT WHAT JONES DID IS PROTECTED BY THE FIRST AMENDMENT?**

No. A judge has already ruled that Jones is liable for defamation, infliction of emotional distress, invasion of privacy and violating Connecticut's unfair trade practices law. The jury's job is to decide how much he owes for harming the people who sued him over his lies.

**HOW MUCH COULD JONES PAY?**

Jones, who lives in Austin, Texas, could be ordered to pay as little as \$1 to each plaintiff or potentially hundreds of millions of dollars to them. The decision will be based on whether the jury determines the harm to the families was minimal or extensive.

Christopher Mattei, a lawyer for the plaintiffs, said the jury should award the plaintiffs at least \$550 million. Jones' lawyer, Norm Pattis, says any damages awarded should be minimal.

**HOW DOES THE JURY COME UP WITH THE DOLLAR FIGURES?**

In her instructions to the jury, Judge Barbara Bellis said there are no mathematical formulas for determining dollar amounts. Jurors, she said, should use their life experiences and common sense to award damages that are "fair, just and reasonable."

The jury, however, heard evidence and testimony that Jones and his company, Free Speech Systems, made millions of dollars from selling nutritional supplements, survival gear and other items. A company representative testified it has made at least \$100 million in the past decade.

**WHAT KIND OF DAMAGES ARE THE JURY CONSIDERING?**

Jurors could award both compensatory and punitive damages.

Compensatory damages are often meant to reimburse people for actual costs such as medical bills and income loss, but they also include compensation for emotional distress that can reach into the millions of dollars.

Punitive damages are meant to punish a person for their conduct. If the jury decides Jones should pay punitive damages, the judge would determine the amount.

**DOES CONNECTICUT CAP DAMAGES?**

No, and yes. The state does not limit compensatory damages, while punitive damages are limited in

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many cases to attorney's fees and costs. So if the jury says Jones should pay punitive damages, he would potentially have to shell out hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Sandy Hook families' lawyers' costs.

IS THIS THE FIRST TIME JONES HAS FACED A VERDICT LIKE THIS?

No. At a similar trial in Texas in August, a jury ordered the Infowars show host to pay nearly \$50 million to the parents of one of the children killed in the school shooting for pushing the lie that the massacre was a hoax.

But legal experts say Jones probably won't pay the full amount. In most civil cases, Texas law limits how much defendants have to pay in "exemplary," or punitive, damages to twice the "economic damages" plus up to \$750,000. But jurors are not told about this cap. Eye-popping verdicts are often hacked down by judges.

A third trial in Texas involving the parents of another child slain at Sandy Hook is expected to begin near the end of the year.

## FBI gives evidence to tie militia to Gov. Whitmer plotters

By ED WHITE Associated Press

Prosecutors on Friday played secretly recorded audio from a 2020 meeting in the basement of a vacuum shop as they tried to show jurors how a paramilitary group was connected to a plot to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

It was contemptuous talk about police and politicians in the makeshift home of Adam Fox — who was recently convicted of conspiring to abduct Whitmer — as a step toward kicking off a U.S. civil war, known to extremists as the "boogaloo." The FBI intervened in the fall of 2020.

Joe Morrison, Paul Bellar and Pete Musico, members of a group called the Wolverine Watchmen, are charged with providing material support to Fox and others, though they're not accused of directly participating in the kidnapping scheme.

The trial in Jackson, Michigan, is the first in state court since prosecutors won convictions against Fox and three other men in federal court. Testimony began Wednesday.

"I like how you guys roll, man," Fox said at the Vac Shack, according to the audio recorded by an FBI informant.

Bellar was at the June 2020 meeting, along with fellow militia member Ty Garbin, who eventually pleaded guilty in federal court.

The next day, Bellar told fellow Watchmen that he liked Fox: "The guy's definitely got the spirit for this," according to chat messages.

FBI agent Hank Impola testified that talk turned to training. He said Musico invited Fox to gun drills at a rural property in Jackson County.

"Just because I'm a church director, don't think I won't shed blood in the name of liberty and defense," Musico said, according to a message read aloud by the agent.

Morrison was not at the vacuum shop meeting, but he tried to get to know Fox by proposing a double date at a Denny's restaurant, Impola testified.

Defense attorneys acknowledge that Morrison, Musico and Bellar expressed violent anti-government rants but insist they had cut ties with Fox when the Whitmer kidnapping scheme began to pick up steam during summer 2020.

## Hurricane Ian drowning victim was "the best big brother"

By FREIDA FRISARO Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Craig Steven Markgraff Jr., a construction worker and the "best big brother ever," was last seen clinging to a tree as rising waters from Hurricane Ian lashed areas dozens of miles inland from Florida's Gulf Coast.

One of the storm's first publicly identified victims in Florida, the 35-year-old man's body was found this

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week by rescue crews near his home in Zolfo Springs in central Florida, the Hardee County Sheriff's Office said.

Markgraff was known as "CJ" to many of his friends. But to his sister April Rudolph, he was just Craig, "the best big brother ever."

"If you ever needed anything, he was right there. He was the protector of the family," she said from her home in Garden City, Michigan.

Rudolph said her brother split time between Florida and Michigan and was last home in Michigan over the summer. He left his Rotweiler, Rex, with the family while he returned to Florida to wrap up some work, she said. He had planned to return to Michigan.

"He was a construction worker," she said. "And he built so many of those big fancy houses in Fort Myers," the area worst hit by Hurricane Ian.

Markgraff was in touch with his mother and aunt last Wednesday as the hurricane was approaching, and he was nervous, his sister said. She said he lived near a creek that was already rising before the worst of Hurricane Ian passed over Hardee County.

"He was at his house, and it was too late to leave," Rudolph said, adding that she doesn't know exactly what happened to her brother later that day, and how he ended up clinging to the tree.

But his death has left a huge hole in the family.

Rudolph has started a GoFundMe to help with funeral expenses.

"He loved working on his car, being with friends, hanging out at the beach, and living life to the fullest. His dog Rex was his best friend, and we have him here with us in Michigan," she wrote.

Markgraff's body was found Oct. 4 by rescue crews near Zolfo Springs, some 90 miles (145 kilometers) from where the storm barreled ashore on Sept. 28. Markgraff had been reported missing Sept. 29, hours after his father last saw him clinging to a tree in fast-rising water, the Hardee County Sheriff's Office said.

Markgraff and his father had called on a friend for help after their trucks became stuck, the sheriff's office said.

Search efforts were hampered by flooding. But the sheriff's office deployed search crews several times to the area he was last seen, and his body was finally found Tuesday. The medical examiner's office identified him the next day through tattoos described by his family and through photos on social media. His death was caused by drowning.

Markgraff didn't fit the pattern of the majority of Florida's more than 90 victims. At least half of them have been elderly and have heavily concentrated along the southwest coast in the Fort Myers area. The Florida victims have ranged in age from 19 to 96, but more than two-thirds of them were 50 or older.

## What Friday's jobs report means for Fed's inflation fight

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — For most Americans, Friday's September jobs report was welcome news: Businesses kept hiring at a brisk pace, unemployment fell back to a half-century low and average pay rose.

Yet for the Federal Reserve, the jobs figures highlight how little progress they're making in their fight against inflation. With the Fed more likely to keep raising borrowing costs rapidly, the risk of recession will also rise.

Employers did pull back slightly on hiring last month, and average wage gains slowed. But economists say neither is falling fast enough for the Fed to slow its inflation-fighting efforts.

As a result, another hefty rate hike of three-quarters of a point — a fourth consecutive one — is likely at the Fed's next meeting in November. (The central bank typically lifts rates in quarter-point increments.)

The Fed's rate hikes are intended to cool the economy and tame inflation. The increases have, in turn, led to higher borrowing costs across the economy, notably for homes, credit cards and business loans.

Rising U.S. interest rates have roiled global markets and caused a sharp fall in U.S. stock prices. On Friday, share prices fell further, with the S&P 500 index off nearly 3%.

Yet as it struggles to defeat the worst inflation bout in four decades, the Fed is focused much more on



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the job market than on the financial markets. Underlying measures of inflation indicate that prices are still surging.

"There is still more work for the Fed to do to cool the labor market and reduce the inflationary pressures stemming from it," said Sarah House, an economist at Wells Fargo.

Here are five ways that Friday's report will influence the Fed as it decides how fast to continue raising rates:

## LOWER UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DOESN'T HELP

For the Fed, the decline in the unemployment rate, from 3.7% to 3.5%, was a mixed bag, at best. The rate fell because both more Americans found jobs and some unemployed people gave up looking for work, which meant they were no longer counted as unemployed.

A diminished pool of people seeking jobs will keep pressure on employers to offer higher pay to attract and keep employees. Businesses will pass at least some of those higher costs onto consumers, thereby increasing prices and feeding inflation.

Fed officials have signaled that the unemployment rate needs to be at least 4% to slow inflation. Some economists say the jobless rate would need to be even higher. Either way, low unemployment points to more rate hikes to come.

The mostly strong September jobs report also underscored a view held by many Fed policymakers that the U.S. economy is healthy enough to withstand higher rates. That means they may see little reason to slow their rate hikes anytime soon.

## HIRING SLOWS, BUT NOT BY ENOUGH

The Fed wants to see a better balance of supply and demand in the job market. That would mean some combination of more people looking for work and less demand for workers.

There's been only limited progress on both sides. This week, the government reported that the number of available jobs fell sharply in August and is about 15% below a record high reached in March. Yet the number of openings remains at historically high levels.

Christopher Waller, a member of the Fed's Board of Governors, noted Thursday that economists were predicting a gain of 260,000 jobs in September — quite close to the actual figure in Friday's report.

Such an increase "would be lower than recent months but very healthy relative to past experience," Waller said. "As a result, I don't expect tomorrow's jobs report to alter my view that we should be focused 100 percent on reducing inflation."

## TOO FEW AMERICANS LOOKING FOR WORK

An increase in people competing for jobs would make it easier for employers to fill positions without offering higher wages. That would reduce inflation pressures without requiring many layoffs.

"More labor supply is the painless way out of the inflationary pressures currently coming from the job market," House said.

Yet Friday's report shows there's been little such progress in recent months. The proportion of Americans either working or looking for work dipped to 62.3% in September, around where it's been all year.

Fed officials have said in recent speeches that they don't expect many more people to return to the workforce. Many older workers who retired early in the past two years are likely to remain on the sidelines.

A smaller supply of workers means the Fed would feel compelled to reduce the need for workers even more than it otherwise would. That would suggest that more large rate hikes are in store.

## THERE'S STILL A LOT OF CATCH-UP HIRING

Another challenge for the Fed is that even as it's tightening credit at the fastest pace in 40 years to slow demand, many companies may need more workers just to keep up with modest consumer demand. Such pressure could also force the Fed to raise rates higher to cool demand.

Two weeks ago, for example, Jess Pettit, an executive at the Hilton hotel chain, told Fed officials at a roundtable discussion that consumer demand isn't the main driver of his company's hiring. Instead, it's trying mainly to maintain a basic minimum of staff amid fierce competition from other hotels for a smaller pool of workers.

Waller asked him, "So, regardless of what we do for demand, you're still going to have demand for labor?"

"I think yeah, that's the case," Pettit replied.

## WAGES FELL SLIGHTLY

For the Fed, the one bright spot in Friday's jobs report may be that wage growth slowed, though it's not clear if that trend will continue.

Hourly wages rose in both August and September at about a 3.6% annual rate, down from about 5.6% early this year. If sustained, that slowdown could ease pressure on the Fed to tighten credit. Wage growth at that level is roughly consistent with the Fed's 2% inflation target.

Steven Friedman, senior economist at the investment firm Mackay Shields, said the wage figures are "a silver lining for the Fed," if the same pace continues.

But "I don't think the Fed feels they have the luxury of time to wait for that," Friedman said.

## Biden's 'Armageddon' talk edges beyond bounds of US intel

By AAMER MADHANI, ELLEN KNICKMEYER and JOSH BOAK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden's warning that the world is at risk of a nuclear "Armageddon" was designed to send an unvarnished message that no one should underestimate the extraordinary danger if Russia deploys tactical nuclear weapons in its war against Ukraine, administration officials said Friday.

The president's grim assessment, delivered during a Democratic fundraiser on Thursday night, rippled around the globe and appeared to edge beyond the boundaries of current U.S. intelligence assessments. U.S. security officials continue to say they have no evidence that Vladimir Putin has imminent plans for a nuclear strike.

Biden veered into talk about Ukraine at the end of his standard fundraising remarks, saying that Putin was "not joking when he talks about the use of tactical nuclear weapons or biological or chemical weapons."

"We have not faced the prospect of Armageddon since Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis," he added. He suggested the threat from Putin is real "because his military is — you might say — significantly underperforming."

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre on Friday did not directly respond to a question about whether Biden had gone into the event intending to invoke Armageddon, as the White House sought to clarify the president's off-the-cuff comments.

She told reporters: "Russia's talk of using nuclear weapons is irresponsible and there's no way to use them without unintended consequences. It cannot happen." She added that "if the Cuban missile crisis has taught us anything, it is the value of reducing nuclear risk and not brandishing it."

Biden's national security team for months has warned that Russia could use weapons of mass destruction in Ukraine as it has faced a series of strategic setbacks on the battlefield. But the president's remarks were the starkest warnings yet by the U.S. government about the nuclear stakes.

One U.S. official said Biden was also trying to warn against underestimating the danger any level of tactical nuclear weapons.

There's some concern in the administration that Russia has determined it can use its nuclear arsenal in a manner short of a "full-blown" nuclear attack on Ukraine and face only limited reaction from U.S. and Western allies who are determined to keep the Ukraine conflict from turning into a broader war, according to the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss administration thinking.

Putin has repeatedly alluded to using his country's vast nuclear arsenal, including last month when he announced plans to conscript Russian men to serve in Ukraine.

"I want to remind you that our country also has various means of destruction ... and when the territorial integrity of our country is threatened, to protect Russia and our people, we will certainly use all the means at our disposal," Putin said. "It's not a bluff."

In Europe, leaders sought to turn down the volume after Biden's stark warning.

Asked about Biden's remarks, French President Emmanuel Macron said it was crucial to speak with care on the nuclear threat.

"I have always refused to engage in political fiction, and especially ... when speaking of nuclear weapons,"

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Macron said at a EU summit in Prague. "On this issue, we must be very careful."

European Council President Charles Michel told reporters that leaders take "every escalation very seriously,"

"Threats will not intimidate us," Michel said. "Instead, we are going to remain calm. We are going to keep cool heads and we will, each time, denounce the irresponsible character of these threats."

Jean-Pierre reiterated on Friday the U.S. has "not seen any reason to adjust our own strategic nuclear posture nor do we have indications that Russia is preparing to imminently use nuclear weapons."

It's not the first time that Biden's comments have appeared to push against the margins of U.S. policy. Last month, Biden, in a CBS "60 Minutes" interview, said that "U.S. forces, U.S. men and women, would defend Taiwan in the event of a Chinese invasion."

The White House said after the interview that U.S. policy toward Taiwan hasn't changed. That policy says Washington wants to see Taiwan's status resolved peacefully but doesn't say whether U.S. forces might be sent in response to a Chinese attack.

In March, as he wrapped up a speech in Warsaw, Biden seemed to call for the ouster of Putin, saying, "For God's sake, this man cannot remain in power." Before Biden could even board Air Force One to begin the flight back to Washington, aides were scrambling to clarify that he wasn't calling for an immediate change in government in Moscow.

Earlier that month, Biden called Putin a "war criminal" for the Russian onslaught in Ukraine before the White House walked back the comments. The White House had been avoiding applying the "war criminal" label to Putin, because it requires investigation and an international determination.

After Biden used the term, his then-press secretary, Jen Psaki, said the president was "speaking from his heart" and clarified that the administration acknowledged there is a process for making a formal determination.

As for Biden's latest eyebrow-raising remarks, "People sort of say, 'Oh, yeah, it's Biden. You know, he says this stuff,'" said Hans Kristensen, director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, and a veteran of nuclear policy research.

"But overseas countries are saying, 'Whoa, this is what the U.S. president says,'" Kristensen said. "And so that means we have to be really careful about using big words" that in themselves can escalate nuclear tensions unintentionally.

Biden's strong choice of words could have an unintended impact with Russia, Kristensen said, the biggest problem with the president's latest comments.

"It's quite clear to me that Putin will be looking at this and say to himself 'Wow, you know, I got their attention now. So they're really afraid.'"

## **Nobel Peace Prize to activists from Belarus, Russia, Ukraine**

By HANNA ARHIROVA, FRANK JORDANS and VANESSA GERA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Human rights activists from Ukraine, Belarus and Russia won the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday, a strong rebuke to Russian President Vladimir Putin, whose invasion of Ukraine ruptured decades of nearly uninterrupted peace in Europe, and to the Belarusian president, his authoritarian ally.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the 2022 prize to imprisoned Belarus activist Ales Bialiatski, the Russian group Memorial and the Ukrainian organization Center for Civil Liberties. Bialiatski is the fourth laureate to be honored while in detention.

Berit Reiss-Andersen, chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, said the panel was honoring "three outstanding champions of human rights, democracy and peaceful coexistence."

"We are in the midst of a war and we are talking about two authoritarian regimes and one nation fighting a war and we would like to highlight the importance of civil society," she said.

In Ukraine, there was some resentment at awarding the Ukrainian group alongside activists from Russia and Belarus, whose government allowed Russian forces to attack Ukraine from its territory.

Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak tweeted that the Nobel committee has "an interesting

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understanding of the word 'peace' if representatives of two countries that attacked a third one receive" the prize together.

"Neither Russian nor Belarusian organizations were able to organize resistance to the war," he said.

Belarus' Foreign Ministry denounced the Nobel Committee for honoring Bialiatki, with the spokesman calling its choices in recent years so "politicized" that "Alfred Nobel got tired of turning in his grave."

Olav Njølstad, director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute, retorted: "Well, I'm quite sure we understand Alfred Nobel's will and intentions better than the dictatorship in Minsk."

Asked whether the Nobel Committee was intentionally rebuking Putin, whose 70th birthday is Friday, Reiss-Andersen said the prize was not against anyone but for the democratic values the winners champion. However, she did note that both the Russian and Belarusian governments were "suppressing human rights activists."

It was the second straight year that Putin's repressive government was implicitly rebuked with the prize. It was awarded last year to Dmitry Muratov, editor of the independent Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta, and Philippine journalist Maria Ressa, for their efforts to safeguard freedom of expression. Both have struggled in the past year.

Bialiatki was a leader of the democracy movement in Belarus in the mid-1980s and has continued to campaign for human rights and civil liberties. He founded the non-governmental organization Human Rights Center Viasna.

He was detained following protests in 2020 against the re-election of Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko. He remains in jail without trial and faces up to 12 years in prison if convicted.

"Despite tremendous personal hardship, Mr. Bialiatki has not yielded one inch in his fight for human rights and democracy in Belarus," Reiss-Andersen said.

Pavel Sapelko, one of the leaders of Viasna, told The Associated Press that the Belarusian authorities will not be able to ignore the fact that Bialiatki won the prize.

"It is a clear signal from the international community to the regime of Lukashenko, who must free all political prisoners," Sapelko said by phone from the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, where he settled after being forced to leave Belarus. "The Nobel prize to Bialiatki is both a lifeline, an alarm and a recognition of achievements."

Six of Viasna's rights activists are currently jailed, while more than two dozen others operate in secrecy, monitoring the worsening human rights situation in Belarus.

Memorial was founded in the Soviet Union in 1987 to ensure the victims of communist repression would be remembered. It has continued to compile information on human rights abuses and track the fate of political prisoners in Russia. The country's highest court ordered it shut down in December, the latest move in a relentless crackdown on rights activists, independent media and opposition supporters.

Tatyana Glushkova, a board member of the Memorial Human Rights Defense Center, said one of the reasons the Kremlin views the group as a threat is because it understands and informs people about the "parallels between Putin's regime and the Soviet regime."

Glushkova noted the award came on the day the group once again had to appear in court — this time on a case related to its Moscow office building. The court later ordered the building confiscated at the government's request.

The Center for Civil Liberties was founded in 2007 to promote human rights and democracy in Ukraine during a period of turmoil in the country. Following Russia's invasion in February, the group has worked to document Russian war crimes against Ukrainian civilians.

"The center is playing a pioneering role with a view to holding the guilty parties accountable for their crimes," Reiss-Andersen said.

A researcher at the center, Volodymyr Yavorskyi, said the award was important for the organization because "for many years we worked in a country that was invisible."

"Human rights activity is the main weapon against the war," said Yavorskyi, who is married to a Belarusian and lived in the Belarusian capital, Minsk, until May 2021, when he was expelled along with his

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9-year-old son. He is barred from entering Belarus for 10 years and said law enforcement beat him during interrogations.

The prize carries 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, in 1895.

Besides Bialiatki, three other laureates received the prize while in prison or detention. German pacifist Carl von Ossietzky won in 1935, infuriating Adolf Hitler. Aung San Suu Kyi was in house arrest in Myanmar when she won in 1991. Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo was serving an 11-year sentence when he was awarded the Nobel in 2010 and remained imprisoned until he died from liver cancer in 2017.

If Bialiatki is unable to receive the award in person, he can ask a representative to collect it for him, like Polish winner Lech Walesa did in 1983, said Olav Njoelstad, prize committee secretary. Otherwise, the committee might choose to symbolically place an empty chair on the stage, like it did when Liu won.

## Supreme Court's new 'class photo' includes number of firsts

WASHINGTON (AP) — The group photo of the Supreme Court's nine members is a long-standing ritual. But it has never looked quite like the one taken on Friday.

The new image includes Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, the first Black female justice, who joined the court in June. With her addition, the court marks a number of firsts. It's the first time white men don't hold a majority on the court and the first time four women have served together. It's also the first time the court has had two Black justices.

Jackson participated in her first arguments this week because the justices began their summer break when she joined the court.

Friday's formal photo captured by news photographers is sometimes called the group's "class photo." In it, the justices are positioned in front of a red curtain, similar to their courtroom's red drapes. Five of the justices are seated in their black robes with Chief Justice John Roberts in the center. The four remaining justices stand behind them. The justices sit in order of seniority with the longest-serving justice, Justice Clarence Thomas, sitting on Roberts' right. Jackson is standing at the far right.

Because no cameras are allowed in the courtroom when the justices hear arguments, the class photo is one of the few times the group is photographed together. The justices also were photographed together at Jackson's ceremonial investiture last week. A new class photo generally won't be taken until another justice joins the court.

## NOT REAL NEWS: A look at what didn't happen this week

By The Associated Press undefined

A roundup of some of the most popular but completely untrue stories and visuals of the week. None of these are legit, even though they were shared widely on social media. The Associated Press checked them out. Here are the facts:

Harris comments on addressing climate inequity misrepresented

CLAIM: Vice President Kamala Harris said that Hurricane Ian relief will be distributed based on race, with communities of color receiving aid first.

THE FACTS: Speaking at the Democratic National Committee's Women's Leadership Forum in Washington last week, Harris discussed distributing resources equitably to help vulnerable groups, such as communities of color, recover from disasters related to climate change. She did not describe the structure that would be used to allocate aid to victims of the recent hurricane. Widespread social media posts mischaracterized Harris' comments during her conversation with actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas to claim she said communities of color would be prioritized in the distribution of relief for this storm. A Facebook video with a clip of Harris at the event on Sept. 29 alleged: "Kamala Harris tells hurricane victims in Florida they may not

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get aid because of their skin color?!" The video was viewed more than 211,000 times. The post refers to Harris' response to a multipart question from Chopra Jonas in which she asked first about Hurricane Ian aid, and then, separately, about long-term efforts related to climate change. "Can you talk a little bit about the relief efforts, obviously, of Hurricane Ian and what the administration has been doing to address the climate crisis in the states?" Chopra Jonas asked, according to a full recording of the event. Chopra Jonas continued: "But — and just a little follow up, because this is important to me: We consider the global implications of emissions, right? The poorest countries are affected the most. They contributed the least and are affected the most. So how should voters in the U.S. feel about the administration's long-term goals when it comes to being an international influencer on this topic?" Harris mentioned Hurricane Ian in passing, but did not talk about specific relief efforts the federal government would undertake. She instead referenced money allocated to address climate change in the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 and spoke about what she believes needs to be done to address the effects of climate change broadly, including the equitable distribution of resources. Pivoting to address the second part of Chopra Jonas' question related to addressing disparities, Harris continued: "But also what we need to do to help restore communities and build communities back up in a way that they can be resilient — not to mention, adapt — to these extreme conditions, which are part of the future." Harris then elaborated: "In particular on the disparities, as you have described rightly, which is that it is our lowest income communities and our communities of color that are most impacted by these extreme conditions and impacted by issues that are not of their own making," she said, adding: "We have to address this in a way that is about giving resources based on equity, understanding that we fight for equality, but we also need to fight for equity; understanding that not everyone starts out at the same place. And if we want people to be in an equal place, sometimes we have to take into account those disparities and do that work." Deputy White House Press Secretary Andrew Bates told the AP that claims Harris announced in this response that Ian aid would be race-based are "inaccurate." He said Harris was discussing long-term goals for addressing climate change, having "explicitly moved on to answering the second question." FEMA Director of Public Affairs Jaclyn Rothenberg also told the AP that claims the process will be race-based are false, and that Hurricane Ian aid will be given to all those affected by the storm. "The Vice President was talking about a different issue at that time and her comments were focused on long term climate investments," she wrote in an email.

— Associated Press writer Melissa Goldin in New York contributed this report.

World Cup 'rules' graphic created by citizens group, not Qatari officials

CLAIM: Qatar's government created an infographic with instructions on how to behave during the 2022 World Cup, including rules that ban alcohol, homosexuality and dating.

THE FACTS: The infographic being shared online ahead of the 2022 World Cup, which opens in Qatar next month, was not created or released by the government there, according to the state agency in charge of organizing the event. It was created by a Qatari citizens group and published on social media as part of a campaign called "Reflect Your Respect." The graphic, shared on social media with claims that it listed official rules on how to behave in the Muslim-majority country during the event, states: "Qatar welcomes you! Reflect your respect to the religion and culture of Qatari people by avoiding these behaviors." The poster cites eight specific examples, including "drinking alcohol, homosexuality, immodesty, profanity," and not respecting places of worship. Playing loud music, dating and taking people's pictures without permission are also noted. Images representing each of those areas are featured on the infographic and are covered by a circle with a slash through it. "Qatar's rules for people who will attend the World Cup 2022 in the country," a tweet with the infographic claimed. But the infographic does not reflect official policies from Qatar related to conduct during the World Cup, according to the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, the state entity organizing the tournament. "The 'Qatar Welcomes You' graphic circulating on social media is not from an official source and contains factually incorrect information," a committee spokesperson wrote in a statement to the AP. "We strongly urge fans and visitors to rely solely on official sources from tournament organisers for travel advice for this year's FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022." Qatar is easing

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its stance on alcohol for the tournament. World Cup organizers have finalized a policy that would allow alcoholic beer to be served to fans inside stadiums and fan zones, the AP has reported. Qatari law calls for a prison sentence of one to three years for adults convicted of consensual gay or lesbian sex. Despite same-sex relationships being criminalized, the AP reported that Qatari officials insist that LGBTQ couples would be welcomed and accepted in Qatar for the World Cup, complying with FIFA rules promoting tolerance and inclusion. Still a senior leader overseeing security for the tournament told the AP earlier this year that rainbow flags may be taken away from fans to protect them from being attacked for promoting gay rights. Planners involved with Reflect Your Respect did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

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No, COVID shots don't change human DNA to a 'triple helix'

CLAIM: COVID-19 mRNA vaccines alter recipients' DNA by changing its shape to a "triple helix."

THE FACTS: There is no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccines are editing humans' DNA, experts have told the AP. The false claim, which has been shared repeatedly on social media, has surfaced again, this time in posts that allege the mRNA shots change DNA to a "triple helix." DNA is made of two linked strands that appear like a twisted ladder, referred to as a double helix. RNA is closely related to DNA, and one type, called messenger RNA or mRNA, sends instructions to the cell for different purposes. The mRNA in the COVID-19 vaccines helps train the body to recognize a protein from the coronavirus to trigger an immune response. In one TikTok video that also appeared on Instagram, a woman claims: "The magic potion, if you actually read the patents, it is adding a triple helix." Another Instagram video claims that "this new technology they came out with introduces a third strand, through mRNA messaging technology it actually breaks a strand and puts in a third strand, which creates a triple helix." But the videos distort the science, experts said. The video attempts to back up its assertion by showing language from a Moderna patent application published in 2014 that at one point states: "According to the present invention, the nucleic acids, modified RNA or primary construct may be administered with, or further encode one or more of RNAi agents, siRNAs, shRNAs, miRNAs, miRNA binding sites, antisense RNAs, ribozymes, catalytic DNA, tRNA, RNAs that induce triple helix formation, aptamers or vectors, and the like." But Dr. Daniel Kuritzkes, chief of infectious diseases at Brigham and Women's Hospital, told the AP the patent document was discussing RNA presenting as a triple helix, not changing humans' DNA to a triple helix. "If you actually read the patent, it has nothing to do with forming a triple helix of the RNA therapeutic with the host DNA," Kuritzkes said. It's that the RNA molecule could theoretically form a triple helix, he said. For certain therapeutic applications, a triple helical RNA could be useful, he said. The patent was broad and not specific to Moderna's eventual COVID-19 vaccine. "The messenger RNA from the vaccine does not form a triple helix, and it certainly doesn't intercalate with the DNA to form a triple helix in any way," Kuritzkes said. Experts emphasized that the mRNA in COVID-19 vaccines is not transforming humans' DNA. "There is no mechanism for them to alter anyone's DNA," said Emily Bruce, an assistant professor of microbiology and molecular genetics at the University of Vermont. "It's something that's temporarily translated into protein and then the body gets rid of it."

— Associated Press writer Angelo Fichera in Philadelphia contributed this report.

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Inflation is worse than it was a year ago, despite online claims

CLAIM: New data shows that inflation has dropped to half of what it was a year ago, marking a win for President Joe Biden.

THE FACTS: While inflation has slowed in recent months, the latest government estimates show that prices are still higher in August 2022 than they were in August 2021. As steep consumer price hikes continue to strain Americans' budgets, a tweet downplaying the severity of recent inflation spread online. "BREAKING: New data has dropped that inflation has dropped to half of what it was a year ago," read the tweet, which amassed more than 28,000 likes. "That's a Biden Win!" The tweet's claim isn't supported by data, economists told the AP. While the Consumer Price Index, a measure of change in consumer prices and a common metric of inflation published by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, was

up just 0.1% in August from July, the index is still up 8.3% since August 2021. "There is no hard evidence of either inflation falling sharply on a monthly basis, on a quarterly basis, on a semi-annual basis, on a yearly basis, or announcement of any substantial revision of official statistics," said Alessandro Rebutti, an associate professor of economics at Johns Hopkins Carey Business School. The Bureau of Labor Statistics did report that consumer prices increased 0.3% in August 2021 from July 2021, which is a higher monthly rate of change compared to the 0.1% monthly increase reported in August 2022. While the monthly change in consumer prices was lower in August 2022 than it was in August 2021, comparing those rates alone doesn't accurately reflect how prices have changed during that 12-month timeframe, experts say. Lower gas prices slowed U.S. inflation for the second straight month in August, but most other prices kept rising, the AP reported. This jump in "core" prices, which exclude volatile food and energy costs, outpaced expectations and continues to pose a significant burden for U.S. households. "There's still a fair amount of inflation embedded in the economy," said Stephan Weiler, a professor of economics at Colorado State University, adding that Americans' overall purchasing power has been reduced by 8.3%. The August CPI "basically means that things are getting more expensive," said Yun Pei, an assistant professor of economics at the University at Buffalo. He characterized the idea that inflation has been halved over the last year as "clearly not true."

## Disputing Iran's version, mom says teen was beaten to death

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The mother of a 16-year-old Iranian girl has disputed official claims that her daughter fell to her death from a high building, saying the teen was killed by blows to the head as part of the crackdown on anti-hijab protests roiling the country.

Nasreen Shakarami also said authorities kept her daughter Nika's death a secret for nine days and then snatched the body from a morgue to bury her in a remote area, against the family's wishes. The bereaved mother spoke in a video message Thursday to Radio Farda, the Persian-language arm of the U.S.-funded station Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

Nika Shakarami has become the latest icon of the protests, seen as the gravest threat to Iran's ruling elites in years. Attempts by authorities in recent days to portray the teen's death as an accident could signal concern that the incident is fueling further anger against the government.

The protests, which enter their fourth week Saturday, were sparked by the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in the custody of the morality police. They had detained Amini for alleged violations of the country's strict Islamic dress code.

Young women have often been leading the protests, tearing off and defiantly waving their headscarves as they call for toppling the government.

The protests quickly spread to communities across Iran and have been met by a harsh government crackdown, including beatings, arrests and killings of demonstrators, as well as internet disruptions.

Human rights groups estimate that dozens of protesters have been killed over the past three weeks. On Thursday, the London-based group Amnesty International published its findings about what appears to be the single deadliest incident so far — in the city of Zahedan on Sept. 30.

The report said Iranian security forces killed at least 66 people, including children, and wounded hundreds, after firing live rounds at protesters, bystanders and worshippers in a violent crackdown that day. Iranian authorities claimed the Zahedan violence involved unnamed separatists. More than a dozen people have been killed since then in the area, the report said.

Meanwhile, Nika Shakarami's mother pushed back against attempts by officials to frame her daughter's death as an accident.

In her video message, she said that the forensics report showed that Nika had died from repeated blows to the head.

Nika's body was intact, but some of her teeth, bones in her face and part of the back of her skull were broken, she said. "The damage was to her head," she said. "Her body was intact, arms and legs."

Earlier this week, Iran's police chief, Gen. Hossein Ashtari, claimed that the teen had gone to a building



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"and fell from the upper floor at a time of gatherings." He said that "the fall from that height led to her death."

Nasreen Shakarami said her daughter left her home in Tehran in the afternoon of Sept. 19 to join anti-hijab protests. She said she was in touch by phone with Nika several times in the next few hours, pleading with her to come home. They last spoke before midnight. "Then Nika's mobile was off, after she and her friends were shouting names of forces while they were fleeing," she said.

The following morning, the family searched for Nika at police stations and prisons, but had no word of her whereabouts for nine days. Authorities finally handed over the body on the 10th day and the family headed to the city of Khoramabad for burial, she said. Authorities repeatedly demanded to take possession of the body, which was in the meantime stored in the Khoramabad morgue.

On the day of the planned funeral the family learned that the body had been snatched from the morgue and was taken to a remote village for burial, under heavy security, Nasreen Shakarami said.

Since the confirmation of her death, Nika has emerged as another icon of the protests, alongside Amini. A photo of Nika, wearing a black T-shirt and sporting a stylish two-tone bob haircut and eyeliner, has been widely circulated on social media.

Authorities arrested Nasreen Shakarami's brother and sister. The sister, Atash, later said on Iranian TV that her niece fell from a high building.

Nika's mother said she believes her siblings had been pressured to echo the official version.

Iran has a long history of broadcasting forced confessions.

Also Friday, the official IRNA news agency quoted the coroner's office saying examinations found that Mahsa Amini died of cerebral hypoxia — in which oxygen supply to the brain decreases. It said she suffered multiple organ failure but "her death was not led by blunt force trauma to the head, organs and vital parts of the body."

It said Amini suffered heart arrhythmia, hypotension and loss of consciousness before been taken to a hospital.

Amini's family rejected the coroner's report, because authorities had failed to consult with medical specialists as requested by the family, BBC Persian reported. Mahsa Amini's father has previously said her corpse showed clear signs of being bruised and beaten.

## Org. of American States boss faces probe over relationship

By JOSHUA GOODMAN and GISELA SALOMON Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — The head of the Organization of American States is facing an internal investigation into allegations he carried on an intimate relationship with a staffer that may have violated the organization's code of ethics, The Associated Press has learned.

News of the probe into a relationship between Secretary General Luis Almagro and a Mexican-born woman two decades his junior emerged as Almagro and delegates from 34 countries gathered in Peru's capital this week for the OAS' annual meeting.

But inside the Washington-based peace and democracy-building organization, their long-running romance has been an open secret, one that made some of its 600 employees feel uncomfortable and intimidated interacting with the boss' alleged paramour, according to a half-dozen individuals, including current and former staffers as well as regional diplomats.

Two said they saw the two kissing poolside at the OAS General Assembly in Medellin, Colombia, in 2019. Another individual described them holding hands at a meeting in his office in the summer of 2020. A former U.S. official said he was told by the OAS chief that the relationship was what prompted his separation from his second wife around the time of his re-election in 2020.

At issue are OAS ethics guidelines that say staff members must not have intimate relationships with colleagues in a way that interferes "with the performance of their duties or to disadvantage others in the workplace." It dictates that a manager must back out of any supervisory role of the other individual or that benefits the person in any way.

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The 59-year-old Almagro declined repeated requests from the AP to comment. But an OAS spokesman denied Almagro was ever the woman's supervisor, saying that since 2019 she's worked in the OAS' Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy.

"Almagro never took part in any decisions regarding this staff member's interests within the OAS," spokesman Gonzalo Espariz said in a email.

However, in several online bios as well as in photos with Almagro as recently as March, some of them posted to the OAS' social media accounts, the woman is described as an "adviser" or sometimes "head adviser" to the secretary general.

After the AP contacted the woman at her OAS email, her LinkedIn profile was modified to reflect the she is no longer serving as an advisor to the organization. The OAS press office said she has been on unpaid leave since June and didn't say why.

The woman, who is not being named at the request of the OAS and because the investigation is ongoing, also declined to comment. But she was quoted at length about her "very deep and very intense" connection with her boss in a biography of Almagro published in late 2020 in his native Uruguay.

"I always tell him. 'I am more intelligent because it took me no more than thirty-eight years to get to know you, it took you about fifty-something,'" she told the book's authors Gonzalo Ferreira and Martin Natalevich.

In the biography titled "Luis Almagro Doesn't Ask For Forgiveness," the OAS chief demurred when asked about the younger staffer, instead citing a verse from legendary Nicaraguan poet Ruben Dario: "With graying hair I approach the rose bushes in the garden."

Almagro also said "the female sex" had been a "very important engine" fueling his professional ambitions over the years.

Revelations of the investigation come less than two weeks after another U.S.-dominated regional organization, the Inter-American Development Bank, fired its president, former White House official Mauricio Claver-Carone, over similar allegations of favoring a subordinate with whom he allegedly had an intimate relationship.

Unlike at the IDB, which hired an outside law firm to probe Claver-Carone's relationship with his chief of staff, the OAS appears to be handling the matter internally.

The OAS' Inspector General told the AP that it decided to look into the matter after Almagro forwarded a loosely detailed anonymous complaint June 3 alleging an intimate relationship with an unnamed staffer. As of the internal watchdog's latest activity report July 31, the matter was referenced as "Alleged Misconduct of Senior OAS Staff Member."

Almagro was elected to head the OAS with near-unanimous support in 2015 after serving as foreign minister in Uruguay's leftist government. And throughout his tenure he's faced questions about his leadership style.

From the start, Almagro made common cause with the U.S. in opposing Cuba and Venezuela's socialist governments, once even mimicking President Donald J. Trump's line that he wouldn't rule out using military force to remove Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro — a position rebuked even by conservative U.S. allies.

Almagro also played a key role in Bolivian President Evo Morales' resignation in 2019 following a messy election that an OAS mission said was marred by fraud — findings that were later questioned by U.S. academics.

At the OAS' General Assembly in Lima this week, Almagro championed the creation of "safe spaces" for women and girls in the Americas, sending out a tweet that pictured him surrounded by two-dozen women.

"We must remain steadfast," it read, "in our commitment to dismantle the remnants of the patriarchy which only seek to suffocate female talent, knowledge & experience."

## **EXPLAINER: How will OPEC+ cuts affect gas prices, inflation?**

By DAVID McHUGH AP Business Writer

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — Major oil-producing countries led by Saudi Arabia and Russia have decided

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to slash the amount of oil they deliver to the global economy.

And the law of supply and demand suggests that can only mean one thing: higher prices are on the way for crude, and for the diesel fuel, gasoline and heating oil that are produced from oil.

The decision by the OPEC+ alliance to cut 2 million barrels a day starting next month comes as the Western allies are trying to cap the oil money flowing into Moscow's war chest after it invaded Ukraine.

Here is what to know about the OPEC+ decision and what it could mean for the economy and the oil price cap:

## WHY IS OPEC+ CUTTING PRODUCTION?

Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister Abdulaziz bin Salman says that the alliance is being proactive in adjusting supply ahead of a possible downturn in demand because a slowing global economy needs less fuel for travel and industry.

"We are going through a period of diverse uncertainties which could come our way, it's a brewing cloud," he said, and OPEC+ sought to remain "ahead of the curve." He described the group's role as "a moderating force, to bring about stability."

Oil prices had fallen after a summer of highs. Now, after the OPEC+ decision, they are heading for their biggest weekly gain since March. Benchmark U.S. crude rose 3.2% on Friday, to \$91.31 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, rose 2.8% to \$97.09, though it's still down 20% from mid-June, when it traded at over \$123 per barrel.

One big reason for the slide is fears that large parts of the global economy are slipping into recession as high energy prices — for oil, natural gas and electricity — drive inflation and rob consumers of spending power.

Another reason: The summer highs came about because of fears that much of Russia's oil production would be lost to the market over the war in Ukraine.

As Western traders shunned Russian oil even without sanctions, customers in India and China bought those barrels at a steep discount, so the hit to supply wasn't as bad as expected.

Oil producers are wary of a sudden collapse in prices if the global economy goes downhill faster than expected. That's what happened during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and during the global financial crisis in 2008-2009.

## HOW IS THE WEST TARGETING RUSSIAN OIL?

The U.S. and Britain imposed bans that were mostly symbolic because neither country imported much Russia oil. The White House held off pressing the European Union for an import ban because EU countries got a quarter of their oil from Russia.

In the end, the 27-nation bloc decided to cut off Russian oil that comes by ship on Dec. 5, while keeping a small amount of pipeline supplies that some Eastern European countries rely on.

Beyond that, the U.S. and other Group of Seven major democracies are working out the details on a price cap on Russian oil. It would target insurers and other service providers that facilitate oil shipments from Russia to other countries. The EU approved a measure along those lines this week.

Many of those providers are based in Europe and would be barred from dealing with Russian oil if the price is above the cap.

## HOW WILL OIL CUTS, PRICE CAPS AND EMBARGOES CLASH?

The idea behind the price cap is to keep Russian oil flowing to the global market, just at lower prices. Russia, however, has threatened to simply stop deliveries to a country or companies that observe the cap. That could take more Russian oil off the market and push prices higher.

That could push costs at the pump higher, too.

U.S. gasoline prices that soared to record highs of \$5.02 a gallon in mid-June had been falling recently, but they have been on the rise again, posing political problems for President Joe Biden a month before midterm elections.

Biden, facing inflation at near 40-year highs, had touted the falling pump prices. Over the past week, the national average price for a gallon rose 9 cents, to \$3.87. That's 65 cents more than Americans were paying a year ago.

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"It's a disappointment, and we're looking at what alternatives we may have," he told reporters about the OPEC+ decision.

**WILL THE OPEC PRODUCTION CUT MAKE INFLATION WORSE?**

Likely yes. Brent crude should reach \$100 per barrel by December, says Jorge Leon, senior vice president at Rystad Energy. That is up from an earlier prediction of \$89.

Part of the 2 million-barrel-per-day cut is only on paper as some OPEC+ countries aren't able to produce their quota. So the group can deliver only about 1.2 million barrels a day in actual cuts.

That's still going to have a "significant" effect on prices, Leon said.

"Higher oil prices will inevitably add to the inflation headache that global central banks are fighting, and higher oil prices will factor into the calculus of further increasing interest rates to cool down the economy," he wrote in a note.

That would exacerbate an energy crisis in Europe largely tied to Russian cutbacks of natural gas supplies used for heating, electricity and in factories and would send gasoline prices up worldwide. As that fuels inflation, people have less money to spend on other things like food and rent.

Other factors also could affect oil prices, including the depth of any possible recession in the U.S. or Europe and the duration of China's COVID-19 restrictions, which have sapped demand for fuel.

**WHAT WILL THIS MEAN FOR RUSSIA?**

Analysts say that Russia, the biggest producer among the non-OPEC members in the alliance, would benefit from higher oil prices ahead of a price cap. If Russia has to sell oil at a discount, at least the reduction starts at a higher price level.

High oil prices earlier this year offset much of Russia's sales lost from Western buyers avoiding its supply. The country also has managed to reroute some two-thirds of its typical Western sales to customers in places like India.

But then Moscow saw its take from oil slip from \$21 billion in June to \$19 billion in July to \$17.7 billion in August as prices and sales volumes fell, according to the International Energy Agency. A third of Russia's state budget comes from oil and gas revenue, so the price caps would further erode a key source of revenue.

Meanwhile, the rest of Russia's economy is shrinking due to sanctions and the withdrawal of foreign businesses and investors.

## Another month of solid US hiring suggests more big Fed hikes

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — America's employers slowed their hiring in September but still added 263,000 jobs, a solid figure that will likely keep the Federal Reserve on pace to keep raising interest rates aggressively to fight persistently high inflation.

Friday's government report showed that hiring fell from 315,000 in August to the weakest monthly gain since April 2021. The unemployment rate dropped from 3.7% to 3.5%, matching a half-century low.

The Fed is hoping that a slower pace of hiring would eventually mean less pressure on employers to raise pay and pass those costs on to their customers through price increases — a recipe for high inflation. But September's job growth was likely too robust to satisfy the central bank's inflation fighters.

Last month, hourly wages rose 5% from a year earlier, the slowest year-over-year pace since December but still hotter than the Fed would want. The proportion of Americans who either have a job or are looking for one slipped slightly, a disappointment for those hoping that more people would enter the labor force and help ease worker shortages and upward pressure on wages.

The jobs report "was still likely too strong to allow (Fed) policymakers much breathing room," said Matt Peron, director of research at Janus Henderson Investors.

Likewise, Rubeela Farooqi, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics, said she didn't think September's softer jobs and wage numbers would stop the Fed from raising its benchmark short-term

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rate in November by an unusually large three-quarters of a point for a fourth consecutive time — and by an additional half-point in December.

On Wall Street, stocks tumbled Friday morning — a sign that investors foresee more aggressive Fed rate hikes ahead. The S&P 500 index sank 1.9% in early trading. And the yield on the 2-year Treasury note, which tends to track expectations for Fed actions, rose to 4.31% from 4.26% late Thursday.

The public anxiety that has arisen over high prices and the prospect of a recession is also carrying political consequences as President Joe Biden's Democratic Party struggles to maintain control of Congress in November's midterm elections.

In its epic battle to rein in inflation, the Fed has raised its benchmark interest rate five times this year. It is aiming to slow economic growth enough to reduce annual price increases back toward its 2% target.

It has a long way to go. In August, one key measure of year-over-year inflation, the consumer price index, amounted to 8.3%. And for now, consumer spending — the primary driver of the U.S. economy — is showing resilience. In August, consumers spent a bit more than in July, a sign that the economy was holding up despite rising borrowing rates, violent swings in the stock market and inflated prices for food, rent and other essentials.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell has warned bluntly that the inflation fight will "bring some pain," notably in the form of layoffs and higher unemployment. Some economists remain hopeful that despite the persistent inflation pressures, the Fed will still manage to achieve a so-called soft landing: Slowing growth enough to tame inflation, without going so far as to tip the economy into recession.

It's a notoriously difficult task. And the Fed is trying to accomplish it at a perilous time. The global economy, weakened by food shortages and surging energy prices resulting from Russia's war against Ukraine, may be on the brink of recession. Kristalina Georgieva, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, warned Thursday that the IMF is downgrading its estimates for world economic growth by \$4 trillion through 2026 and that "things are more likely to get worse before it gets better."

Powell and his colleagues on the Fed's policymaking committee want to see signs that the abundance of available jobs — there's currently an average of 1.7 openings for every unemployed American — will steadily decline. Some encouraging news came this week, when the Labor Department reported that job openings fell by 1.1 million in August to 10.1 million, the fewest since June 2021.

On the other hand, by any standard of history, openings remain extraordinarily high: In records dating to 2000, they had never topped 10 million in a month until last year.

Last month's decline in unemployment was widely shared across demographic groups. The jobless rate for Hispanics tumbled to 3.8%, the lowest level in government records dating to 1973. Unemployment for Black Americans also fell, from 6% in August to 5.8% in September, still above its record low of 5.1% in November 2019.

In September, restaurants and bars added 60,000 jobs, as did healthcare companies. State and local governments cut 27,000 jobs. Retailers, transportation and warehouse companies reduced employment modestly.

Many Americans appear to have decided that there are still plenty of jobs available and that they can take their time accepting one. Among them is Jenny Savitscus of Columbus, Ohio, who recently earned a technology certificate at a program run by Goodwill. Savitscus, 45, who'd like a job in high technology, said she's willing to hold out for an employer that will offer flexible hours and work-at-home options.

"There are opportunities out there," she said. "Employers and job seekers are trying to find the right balance" between work and home life. She said she can afford to wait for just the right position because she has two part-time teaching jobs.

Friday's government report underscored how resilient the job market remains even if it may be slowing.

"The U.S. labor market continues to decelerate, but there are no signs that it's stalling out," said Nick Bunker, head of economic research at the Indeed Hiring Lab. "Payroll growth is no longer at the jet speed we saw last year, but employment is still growing quickly."

Radial, a company that powers the online businesses for Lucky Brands, Tommy Hilfiger and Calvin Klein,

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is one employer that is hiring more cautiously. The company plans to hire 15,000 seasonal workers at its 25 warehouses — 7,000 fewer than a year ago — and 2,000 at its customer-service centers, said Sabrina Wnorowski, chief human resource officer for Radial, based in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania.

Wnorowski said the company's more moderate approach to hiring reflects a renewed focus on adding workers closer to the peak of the holiday season to make them more productive. She noted that online sales growth is slowing and that the tight job market appears to be weakening a bit. Peloton, for example, the maker of high-end exercise equipment, announced Thursday that it is cutting 500 jobs — 12% of its workforce.

Yet some companies continue to plow ahead with hiring. Walt Rowen, president of Susquehanna Glass Co. in Columbia, Pennsylvania, said the company, which makes decorative glass products, needs around 15 seasonally workers along with a full-time staff of 40 to 45. Rowen has raised entry-level pay from around \$9 an hour before the pandemic to \$14 an hour and yet still struggles to fill vacancies.

"It's getting harder and harder," he said. "You used to be able to interview 10, bring in five and keep three. Now we're interviewing 20, getting five and keeping one."

## Hurricane Ian floods leave mess, insurance questions behind

By REBECCA SANTANA and MICHAEL PHILLIS Associated Press

NORTH PORT, Fla. (AP) — Christine Barrett was inside her family's North Port home during Hurricane Ian when one of her children started yelling that water was coming up from the shower.

Then it started coming in from outside the house. Eventually the family was forced to climb on top of their kitchen cabinets — they put water wings on their 1-year-old — and were rescued the next day by boat.

After the floodwaters had finally gone down Barrett and her family were cleaning out the damp and muddy house. On the front lawn lay chairs, a dresser, couch cushions, flooring planks and a pile of damp drywall. Similar scenes played out across the block as residents tried to clear out the soggy mess before mold set in.

North Port is about 5 miles (8 kilometers) inland and the Barretts - like many of its residents - live in areas where flood insurance isn't required and therefore, don't have it. Now many wonder how they'll afford much-needed repairs.

"Nobody in this neighborhood has flood insurance because we are a nonflooding area," she said. "But we got 14 inches of water in our house."

Many people associate hurricanes with wind damage — downed power lines, shingles or roofing materials ripped off, trees blown over into homes or windows smashed by flying objects, and Hurricane Ian's 150-mph (241-kph) winds certainly caused widespread damage.

But hurricanes can also pack a massive storm surge as Ian did in places like Naples or Fort Myers Beach.

Heavy rains from hurricanes can also cause widespread flooding far from the beach. Ian dumped rain for hours as it lumbered across the state, sending waterways spilling over their banks and into homes and businesses far inland from where Ian made landfall. People were using kayaks to evacuate their flooded homes, and floodwaters in some areas have still not gone down a week after landfall.

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

But flooding is not covered by a homeowner's insurance policy.

It must be purchased separately — usually from the federal government. Although most people have the option of purchasing flood insurance, it is required only on government-backed mortgages that sit in areas that the Federal Emergency Management Agency deems highest risk. Many banks require it in high-risk zones, too. But some homeowners who pay off their mortgage drop their flood insurance once it's not required. Or if they purchase a house or mobile home with cash they may not opt for it at all. And flooding can and does happen outside those high risk areas where flood insurance is required.

There have long been concerns that not enough people have flood insurance especially at a time when climate change is making strong hurricanes even stronger and making storms in general wetter, slower

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and more prone to intensifying rapidly. According to the Insurance Information Institute, only about 4% of homeowners nationwide have flood insurance although 90% of catastrophes in the U.S. involve flooding. In Florida that number is only about 18%.

"We have experienced catastrophic flood events across the U.S. this year, including in Kentucky and Missouri, where virtually no one had flood insurance," said the Institute's Mark Friedlander.

Hurricane Ian caused extensive flooding in areas outside of the high-risk zones. According to the consulting firm Milliman, roughly 18.5% of homes in counties that were under an evacuation order had federally issued flood insurance. In areas under an evacuation order that were outside of high-risk zones, 9.4% of homes had a policy.

Last year, FEMA updated its pricing system for flood insurance to more accurately reflect risk called Risk Rating 2.0. The old system considered a home's elevation and whether it was in a high-risk flood zone. Risk Rating 2.0 looks at the risk that an individual property will flood, considering factors like its distance to water. The new pricing system raises rates for about three-quarters of policyholders and offers price decreases for the first time.

FEMA has long said the new ratings would attract new policyholders. However, a FEMA report to the treasury secretary and a handful of congressional leaders last year said far fewer people would buy flood insurance as prices rise. Since the new rating system has gone into effect in Florida, the number of policies in the state has dropped by roughly 50,000 since August 2021.

After a federally declared disaster, homeowners with flood insurance are likely to receive more money, more quickly, to recover and rebuild than the uninsured.

After major flooding in Louisiana in 2016, for example, the average payment to a flood insurance policyholder was \$86,500, according to FEMA. Uninsured homeowners could get individual assistance payments for needs like temporary housing and property damage, but they averaged roughly \$9,150.

Congress sometimes provides additional aid after major disasters although that can take months to years to arrive.

"Unless you have flood insurance, the federal government is not going to give you enough assistance to rebuild your home," said Rob Moore, water and climate team director at the Natural Resources Defense Council.

In the North Port neighborhood that was cleaning up from Ian, Ron Audette wasn't sure whether he would get flood insurance going forward because of the cost. The retired U.S. Navy sailor was cleaning up his one-story home on a corner lot after floodwaters buckled the laminate flooring, swelled wood furniture and left the leather reclining sofa where he watched Patriots games a muddy, watery mess.

"I don't think we could live here if we had to buy flood insurance," he said.

But down the street, his neighbor Barrett was definitely planning to get it.

"Get flood insurance even if it's not required," she advised. "Because we definitely will now."

## **EXPLAINER: Fewer people cross Mediterranean; many still die**

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — The back-to-back shipwrecks of migrant smuggling boats off Greece has once again put the spotlight on the dangers of the Mediterranean migration route, the risks migrants and refugees are willing to take and the political infighting that has thwarted a safe European response to people fleeing war, poverty and climate change.

Here's a look at the migration situation across the Mediterranean Sea:

**WHAT HAPPENED TO TWO SMUGGLERS' BOATS OFF GREECE?**

Bodies floated amid splintered wreckage off a Greek island on Thursday as the death toll from separate sinkings of two migrant boats rose to 22, with about a dozen still missing. The vessels went down hundreds of miles apart, in one case prompting a dramatic overnight rescue effort as island residents and firefighters pulled shipwrecked migrants to safety up steep cliffs.

The Greek shipwrecks came just days after Italy commemorated the ninth anniversary of one of the

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deadliest Mediterranean shipwrecks in recent memory, the Oct. 3, 2013 capsizing of a migrant ship off Lampedusa, Sicily, in which 368 people died.

## WHAT ARE THE TRENDS IN MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANT ARRIVALS?

So far this year, the International Organization of Migration has recorded around 109,000 "irregular" arrivals to the Mediterranean countries of Italy, Spain, Greece, Cyprus and Malta by land or sea. This has made immigration a hot political topic in those European Union nations.

U.N. refugee officials note that overall numbers of migrants seeking to come to Europe this way has decreased over the years, to an average of around 120,000 annually. They call that a relatively "manageable" number, especially compared to the 7.4 million Ukrainians who have fled their homeland this year to escape Russia's invasion, and were welcomed by European countries.

"We've seen how quickly and how rapidly a response was mounted to deal with that situation in a very humane and commendable way," said Shabia Mantoo, spokesperson for the U.N. refugee agency in Geneva. "If we can see that happen very concretely in this situation, why can't it be applied for 120,000 people that are coming across to Europe on a yearly basis?"

Others see Europe's harsh response to Mediterranean migrants, who often come from Africa, and its welcoming of Slavic Ukrainian migrants as racist.

## HOW DANGEROUS IS THE MEDITERRANEAN?

So far this year the IOM has reported 1,522 dead or missing migrants in the Mediterranean. Overall, the IOM says 24,871 migrants have died or gone missing in the Mediterranean since 2014, with the real number believed to be even higher given the number of shipwrecks that never get reported.

"The voyage toward Italy has been confirmed to be the most dangerous," said the ISMU foundation in Italy, which conducts research on migration trends.

The Central Mediterranean migration route that takes migrants from Libya or Tunisia north to Europe is the deadliest known migration route in the world, accounting for more than half of the reported deaths in the Mediterranean that IOM has tracked since 2014. The route has Italy as its prime destination.

## WHAT ARE THE DEADLIEST KNOWN SMUGGLING SHIPWRECKS?

On April 18, 2015, the Mediterranean's deadliest known shipwreck in living memory occurred when an overcrowded fishing boat collided 77 nautical miles off Libya with a freighter that was trying to come to its rescue. Only 28 people survived. At first it was feared the hull held the remains of 700 people. Forensic experts who set out to try to identify all the dead concluded in 2018 that there were originally 1,100 people on board.

On Oct. 3, 2013, a trawler packed with more than 500 people, many from Eritrea and Ethiopia, caught fire and capsized within sight of an uninhabited islet off Italy's southern island of Lampedusa. Local fishermen rushed to try to help save lives. In the end, 155 survived and 368 people died.

One week later, a shipwreck occurred on Oct 11, 2013, further out at sea, 60 miles south of Lampedusa in what has become known in Italy as the "slaughter of children." In all, more than 260 people died, among them 60 children. The Italian newsweekly L'Espresso in 2017 published the audio recordings of the migrants' desperate calls for help and Italian and Maltese authorities seemingly delaying the rescue.

## WHAT ARE OTHER MEDITERRANEAN MIGRATION ROUTES TO EUROPE?

The Western Mediterranean route is used by migrants seeking to reach Spain from Morocco or Algeria. The Eastern Mediterranean route, where the shipwrecks occurred this week off Greece, has traditionally been used by Syrian, Iraqi, Afghan and other non-African migrants who flee first to Turkey and then try to reach Greece or other European destinations.

Greece was a key transit point for hundreds of thousands of migrants and refugees entering the EU in 2015-16, many fleeing wars in Iraq and Syria, though the numbers dropped sharply after the EU and Turkey reached a deal in 2016 to limit smugglers. Greece has since toughened its borders and built a steel wall along its land border with Turkey. Greece has also been accused by Turkey and some migration experts of pushing back migrants, a charge it denies.

For its part, Greece says Turkey has failed to stop smugglers active on its shoreline and has been using



migrants to apply political pressure to the whole European Union.

HOW HAS MIGRATION DIVIDED THE EU'S 27 NATIONS?

Mediterranean countries have for years complained that they have been left to bear the brunt of welcoming and processing migrants, and have long demanded other European countries step up and take them in.

Poland, Hungary and other Eastern European nations refused an EU plan to share the burdens of carrying for the migrants.

Human rights groups have condemned how the EU in recent years has outsourced migrant rescues to the Libyan coast guard, which brings the migrants back to horrific camps on land where many are beaten, raped and abused.

"Over the years, the routes have changed but not the tragedies," said the Sant'Egidio Community as it commemorated the 2013 Lampedusa anniversary this week. Working with other Christian groups, the Catholic charity has brought more than 5,000 refugees to Italy via "humanitarian corridors" and has called for more safe passages to be organized so migrants don't have to risk dangerous Mediterranean crossings with smugglers.

## Putin's path: from pledges of stability to nuclear threats

By The Associated Press undefined

As he turns 70 on Friday, Russian President Vladimir Putin finds himself in the eye of a storm of his own making: His army is suffering humiliating defeats in Ukraine. Hundreds of thousands of Russians are fleeing his mobilization order, and his top lieutenants are publicly insulting military leaders.

With his room for maneuvering narrowing, Putin has repeatedly signaled that he could resort to nuclear weapons to protect the Russian gains in Ukraine — a harrowing threat that shatters the claims of stability he has repeated throughout his 22-year rule.

"This is really a hard moment for him, but he can't accuse anyone else. He did it himself," said Andrei Kolesnikov, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment. "And he is going straight ahead to big, big problems."

By unleashing the disastrous war in Ukraine, Europe's largest military conflict since World War II, Putin has broken an unwritten social contract in which Russians tacitly agreed to forgo post-Soviet political freedoms in exchange for relative prosperity and internal stability.

Mikhail Zygar, a journalist who has had extensive contacts among the Kremlin elite and published a bestselling book about Putin and his entourage, noted that the invasion came as a complete surprise not only for the public but for Putin's closest associates.

"All of them are in shock," Zygar said. "None of them wanted to see the developments unfold in such a way just because they are going to lose everything. Now they are all stained by blood, and they all understand they have nowhere to run."

Stanislav Belkovsky, a longtime political consultant with extensive contacts among the ruling class, described the invasion as a mechanism of "self-destruction for Putin, his regime and the Russian Federation."

With the Russian army retreating under the blows of Ukrainian forces armed with Western weapons, Putin raised the stakes by annexing four Ukrainian regions and declaring a partial mobilization of up to 300,000 reservists to buttress the crumbling front line.

The poorly organized call-up has triggered broad chaos. The military is struggling to provide supplies for new recruits, many of whom were told to buy medical kits and other basics themselves and were left to sleep on the floor while waiting to be sent to the front.

Social networks have been abuzz with discussions about how to dodge recruitment, and hundreds of thousands of men fled the mobilization, swarming Russia's borders with ex-Soviet neighbors.

The mobilization, Kolesnikov noted, has eroded Putin's core support base and set the stage for potential political upheavals. "After the partial mobilization, it's impossible to explain to anyone that he stabilized the system. He disrupted the foundation of stability," he said.

The military setbacks also drew public insults from some of Putin's top lieutenants directed toward military leaders. The Kremlin has done nothing to halt the criticism, a signal that Putin could use it to set the

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stage for a major shakeup of the top brass and blame them for the defeats.

"The infighting between powerful clans in Putin's entourage could destabilize the system and significantly weaken Putin's control over the situation in the country," Belkovsky said.

The widening turmoil marks a dramatic contrast with the image of stability Putin has cultivated since taking helm in 2000. He has repeatedly described the turbulent rule of his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin, as a time of decay when national riches were pilfered by Kremlin-connected tycoons and the West while millions were plunged into poverty.

Russians have eagerly embraced Putin's promises to restore their country's grandeur amid oil-driven economic prosperity, and they have been largely indifferent to the Kremlin's relentless crackdown on political freedoms.

Insiders who have closely studied Putin's thinking say he still believes he can emerge as a winner.

Belkovsky argued that Putin hopes to win by using energy as an instrument of pressure. By reducing the gas flow to Europe and striking a deal with OPEC to reduce oil output, he could drive prices up and raise pressure on the U.S. and its allies.

Putin wants the West to tacitly accept the current status quo in Ukraine, resume energy cooperation with Russia, lift the most crippling sanctions and unfreeze Russian assets, Belkovsky said.

"He still believes that he will get his way in the long showdown with the West, where the situation on the Ukrainian front line is just one important, but not decisive, element," Belkovsky said.

At the same time, Putin threatened to use "all means available" to defend the newly annexed Ukrainian territories in a blunt attempt to force Ukraine and its Western allies to back off.

The U.S. and its allies have said they are taking Putin's threats seriously but will not yield to what they describe as blackmail to force the West to abandon Ukraine. Ukraine vowed to press its counteroffensive despite the Russian rhetoric.

Kolesnikov described Putin's nuclear threats as a reflection of growing desperation.

"This is the last step for him in a sense that this is a suicidal" move, Kolesnikov said. "If he's ready for the step, it means that we are witnessing a dictator who is even worse than Stalin."

Some observers have argued that NATO could strike Russia with conventional weapons if Putin presses the nuclear button.

Belkovsky warned that Putin firmly believes that the U.S. and its allies wouldn't dare to strike back if Russia used a low-yield nuclear weapon in Ukraine.

"If the U.S. believes that there is no psychologically readiness for that, it's mistaken," he said.

Zygar compared the Russian leader to a fighter pilot who tries to win a dogfight by attacking the enemy head-on and waiting for him to turn away first.

"He thinks he has the nerve, and he believes he must escalate to the end," Zygar said.

He noted that pundits failed to predict Putin's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the current invasion just because they were using rational criteria.

"Our past perceptions about rational limits all have proven false," he said. "There are no such limits."

## Today in History: October 9, Obama wins Nobel Peace Prize

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Sunday, Oct. 9, the 282nd day of 2022. There are 83 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 9, 2009, President Barack Obama won the Nobel Peace Prize for what the Norwegian Nobel Committee called "his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples."

On this date:

In 1888, the public was first admitted to the Washington Monument.

In 1910, a coal dust explosion at the Starkville Mine in Colorado left 56 miners dead.

In 1936, the first generator at Boulder (later Hoover) Dam began transmitting electricity to Los Angeles.

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In 1946, the Eugene O'Neill drama "The Iceman Cometh" opened at the Martin Beck Theater in New York. In 1962, Uganda won autonomy from British rule.

In 1967, Marxist revolutionary guerrilla leader Che Guevara, 39, was summarily executed by the Bolivian army a day after his capture.

In 1975, Soviet scientist Andrei Sakharov (AHN'-dray SAHK'-ah-rawf) was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1985, the hijackers of the Achille Lauro (ah-KEE'-leh LOW'-roh) cruise liner surrendered two days after seizing the vessel in the Mediterranean. (Passenger Leon Klinghoffer was killed by the hijackers during the standoff.)

In 2001, in the first daylight raids since the start of U.S.-led attacks on Afghanistan, jets bombed the Taliban stronghold of Kandahar. Letters postmarked in Trenton, New Jersey, were sent to Sens. Tom Daschle and Patrick Leahy; the letters later tested positive for anthrax.

In 2004, a tour bus from the Chicago area flipped in Arkansas, killing 15 people headed to a Mississippi casino.

In 2006, Google Inc. announced it was snapping up YouTube Inc. for \$1.65 billion in a stock deal.

In 2010, Chile's 33 trapped miners cheered and embraced each other as a drill punched into their underground chamber where they had been stuck for an agonizing 66 days.

Ten years ago: Former Penn State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky was sentenced in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, to 30 to 60 years in prison following his June 2012 conviction on 45 counts of sexual abuse of boys. Future Nobel peace laureate Malala Yousufzai (mah-LAH'-lah yoo-SOOF'-zeze), a 15-year-old Pakistani girl who had dared to advocate education for girls and criticize the Taliban, was shot and seriously wounded by a militant gunman.

Five years ago: Declaring, "The war on coal is over," EPA chief Scott Pruitt said he would sign a new rule overriding the Clean Power Plan, an effort from the Obama administration to limit carbon emissions from coal-fired power plants. ESPN suspended anchor Jemele Hill for two weeks for making political statements on social media; Hill had referred to President Donald Trump as a "white supremacist" in a series of tweets. The bodies of 100-year-old Charles Rippey and his 98-year-old wife Sara were found in the ruins of their Northern California home; they were among the victims of two deadly wildfires in the region.

One year ago: Jonathan Toebbe, a Navy nuclear engineer with access to military secrets, was arrested in West Virginia along with his wife Diana; the Justice Department said Toebbe was charged with trying to pass information about the design of American nuclear-powered submarines to someone he thought represented a foreign government but who turned out to be an undercover FBI agent. (The couple withdrew guilty pleas in August 2022 after a judge rejected plea agreements; they are awaiting trial.) Texas A&M stunned top-ranked Alabama 41-38 to end the Crimson Tide's winning streak at 19 games. California became the first state to say large department stores must display products like toys and toothbrushes in gender-neutral ways.

Today's Birthdays: Retired MLB All-Star Joe Pepitone is 82. Former Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., is 81. C-SPAN founder Brian Lamb is 81. R&B singer Nona Hendryx is 78. Singer Jackson Browne is 74. Nobel Peace laureate Jody Williams is 72. Actor Gary Frank is 72. Actor Richard Chaves is 71. Actor Robert Wuhl is 71. Actor-TV personality Sharon Osbourne is 70. Actor Tony Shalhoub is 69. Actor Scott Bakula is 68. Musician James Fearnley (The Pogues) is 68. Actor John O'Hurley is 68. Writer-producer-director-actor Linwood Boomer is 67. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Mike Singletary is 64. Actor Michael Paré is 64. Jazz musician Kenny Garrett is 62. Rock singer-musician Kurt Neumann (The BoDeans) is 61. Movie director Guillermo del Toro is 58. Former British Prime Minister David Cameron is 56. Singer P.J. Harvey is 53. Movie director Steve McQueen (Film: "12 Years a Slave") is 53. World Golf Hall of Famer Annika Sorenstam is 52. Actor Cocoa Brown is 50. Country singer Tommy Shane Steiner is 49. Actor Steve Burns is 49. Rock singer Sean Lennon is 47. Actor Randy Spelling is 44. Christian hip-hop artist Lecrae is 43. Actor Brandon Routh is 43. Actor Zachery Ty Bryan is 41. Actor Spencer Grammer is 39. Comedian Melissa Villaseñor is 35. Actor Tyler James Williams is 30. Country singer Scotty McCreery (TV: "American Idol") is 29. Actor Jharrel Jerome is 25.