

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Monday, Oct. 10

No School - Native American Day

## Tuesday, Oct. 11

Northwestern Middle School Music Festival  
PSAT Pre-Administration  
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.; Con-  
firmation, 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

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

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

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## Weekly Vikings Recap - Week 5

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

It might not have been the prettiest game, but the Vikings were able to withstand a Bears comeback Sunday to get the victory and move to a 4-1 record on the year. For the third straight game, the Vikings had a competitive game come down to the wire. The only concern for Vikings fans might be that those three games were against the Lions, Saints, and Bears, three teams that have a combined 5-10 record. Nonetheless, with the Viking's victory today and the Green Bay Packers' loss, the Vikings remain in the driver's seat of the NFC North.

Minnesota got off to a hot start today, scoring touchdowns on their first three drives of the game. As usual, Justin Jefferson was a star on the field all game. Not only did Jefferson have 12 catches for 154 yards, but he also had a 23-yard pass to Dalvin Cook on a trick play in the 2nd quarter. Although Jefferson had another monster performance, he once again was unable to find the endzone for a touchdown, making it his fourth straight game without a touchdown. Nevertheless, Dalvin Cook was able to clean up the slack with his two rushing touchdowns in the first half.

Despite saying last week that the Vikings' special teams unit had become the most consistent unit on the team, today was not the case. Vikings' punter, Ryan Wright, had a horrible punt late in the first half that traveled a mere fifteen yards. At the time of the punt, the Vikings had a 21-3 lead and all the momentum. However, because of Wright's paltry punt, the Bears' offense got the ball at the 50-yard line and drove down the field for a touchdown. The Vikings got the ball back with a little over a minute left on the clock, and although they were able to drive into field goal range, kicker Greg Joseph missed the 53-yard kick as time expired.

With the Bears getting the ball to start the second half, the momentum seemed to shift a little to the Bears' side. The momentum went entirely to the Bears' side when their offense drove down the field and scored a touchdown to cut the score to 21-16 (they failed a 2-point conversion). To make matters worse for the Vikings, on the next possession the Bears blocked Greg Joseph's 51-yard field goal attempt.

After dominating for most of game so far, the Vikings started to waver in the third quarter. After a Kirk Cousins interception and a couple of Bears' made field goals, the Vikings surprisingly found themselves down 22-21. The thing to note with the game was although the Vikings blew their huge lead, the Vikings' offense never looked like it had completely stalled. They were relatively efficient throughout the whole game, even going 12 for 15 on third-down attempts. Because of this, the game never felt in doubt for the Vikings.

With 9:26 remaining in the game, the Vikings got the ball to start what would be a 17-play, game-winning drive. The drive was capped off with a Kirk Cousins rushing touchdown thanks to a QB sneak on 3rd and goal from the 1-yard line. And, after completing the two-point conversion to Justin Jefferson, the Vikings were able to gain a 29-22 lead over the Bears with 2:26 left in the game.

Unlike last year, the Vikings' defense came up huge when it was needed. With 1:12 remaining in the game, Justin Fields threw a comeback route to former Vikings wide receiver, Ihmir Smith-Marsette. Although Smith-Marsette was able to break a tackle from Vikings' cornerback, Cam Dantzler, he made the mistake of staying in-bounds. As Smith-Marsette continued to fight for more yards, Cam Dantzler got up from the missed tackle and came from behind to strip Smith-Marsette of the football and secure the victory for the Vikings.

Next week, the Vikings will travel to Miami to face the 3-2 Dolphins, who might be without their top two quarterbacks, as both Tua Tagovailoa and Teddy Bridgewater are currently in the NFL's concussion protocol

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## Kids in crisis

It's tempting to blame the pandemic for the dizzying rates of mental health concerns among American teens. We are all familiar with the impact Covid is having on our lives, and the disruption it continues to cause in the lives of young people. Kids witnessed vehement disagreements between neighbors, friends, and family over the decisions that had to be made in response to the pandemic, and felt the stress at home as parents faced economic and work changes, all without many of their usual support systems.



Based on Science, Built on Trust



**Debra Johnston, M.D.**

However, rates of mental illness among children and adolescents have been steadily rising throughout the last decade. In 2019, nearly 20% of deaths in the 10-24 age group were suicides and nearly 16% of high schoolers had made a suicide plan. Even back in 2019, more than one in three teens suffered persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness.

Covid may have thrown gasoline on this particular fire, but make no mistake, the fire was already burning.

Some groups have been disproportionately affected by this crisis, as with so many others. Risk is increased by factors that include, but are not limited to, gender, race, socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, social supports, and family history.

I don't think it has ever been easy to be a teenager. As the brain matures it starts to wrestle with a more nuanced and sophisticated understanding of the world, and of the self. Today's teenagers face nearly inescapable social forces, from the carefully curated lives influencers display on social media, to anonymous bullying from strangers on the internet, to the always-on news cycle that shows them violence and disaster 24 hours a day. However, there is a lot more speculation on what is behind the rise in mental distress in our teens than there is actual science.

Fortunately, there is some research to guide us moving forward. As always, prevention is key. We can bring wellness initiatives to young people, so they can build skills to help them navigate difficult situations and manage challenging emotions. We can protect them from bullying and discrimination. Parents can attend to their own mental health and roll model healthy self care. We can fund our schools adequately to be the safety nets we expect them to be for our children and families.

Those who are already facing moderate or severe mental health issues, whether children, teens, or adults, need treatment. Access to that treatment needs to improve, and we as a society need to reject the stigma around seeking those services. Mental health treatment is as essential as cancer treatment.

There is no quick fix for this challenge, but our youth need us to rise to meet it.

Debra Johnson, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at [www.prairiedoc.org](http://www.prairiedoc.org) and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show providing health information based on science, built on trust for 21 Seasons, broadcast on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.

## Thats Life/Tony Bender

### a primer: talking about cancer

"You're wasting away," a friend blurted the other day and probably regretted it immediately as much as I did. For my part, I feel suddenly obligated to divulge things that frankly, I'm weary talking about.

Statistically, one in three people get cancer, so I decided as part of that large minority, I should provide a brief primer for friends and neighbors, who, aside from a few busy-bodies and gossips, truly do care.

First of all, according to an insurance weight table I once read, at 200 pounds I'm 45 pounds over my optimum weight. Heck, when I was running everyday and had a 28-inch waist, I weighed 168. Let's worry when the insurance companies are happy.

Secondly, I feel great, and I should because my scans are clean and my doctor calls me a "walking miracle." I attribute that to world-class treatment, prayers, many from people who don't really even know me, and positive thinking on my part.

One comment didn't send me off to the keyboard. It's the accumulation, and honestly, it's generational. Oldsters say things like, "When I saw your new picture for your column, I said, 'That's not Tony!'" Or, "You don't look like yourself!" Whoa. Don't I get to decide what I look like, with of course, acceptance of Father Time and life's inevitable scars?

Occasionally, some old fart demands I deliver my own personal HIPA violation and then regales me with a list of everyone they knew who died of cancer during their Methuselah lifespan. Inspiring. Well, old-timer, cancer isn't a death sentence; there've been tremendous advances in chemotherapy, radiation, and immunotherapy.

I was diagnosed exactly two years ago and told my kids, "Don't research the statistics. I'm not a statistic. If anyone's going to beat this, it's me."

I told my primary physician recently I planned to die of something else, and we settled on a boating accident at 95 with a bevy of bikini-clad women. When I told my oncologist that he looked startled. "Don't worry," I said. "None of the girls get hurt."

After the diagnosis—I remember my doctor and nurse were more shook up than I was, God bless 'em—I wrote myself a note that's been hanging on my refrigerator door since:

"You Will because you Can.

"You Can because you Will."

That's how I live.

After chemo and radiation to reduce the tumor at the bottom of my esophagus, I had an esophagectomy to remove most of the esophagus and rebuild it with healthy stomach tissue, leaving me with very little stomach capacity, so to maintain my 247 pounds at the time of my diagnosis, I'd need 3,000 calories a day with a limit each meal of what fits in the palm of my hand.

This bores me to tears, but let's placate the worry worts and morbidly-interested. Basically, I had involuntary stomach reduction surgery. It's tougher to digest meats so I limit them in favor of other proteins. I love fruits, and I could pound ice cream everyday to hit 3,000 calories, but I like my A1C numbers where they are and my blood pressure's that of a 20-year-old. It requires balance.

Younger friends inevitably say, "You look great!" (Not that I recommend the diet plan.) It's generational. Not that older folks are mean. Many are just matter-of-fact bordering on insensitive. But younger folks can be more judgmental, to affix responsibility for the cancer. Mine's a result of acid-reflux—who knew that could happen—but since I enjoy fine wine and a quality cigar—quality over quantity—they just assume that Facebook photo is me 24/7.

You know another link to esophageal cancer? Preservatives. Now, check your pantry. Yeah, I just ate a brat loaded with things I can't pronounce. I didn't fight through this ordeal to become a vegetarian monk.

So what's my advice to approaching someone dealing with cancer? Practice this sentence: "How are you doing?" If it's me, I'll say, "Fantastic," and mean it. But there's an opening to share more if I chose.

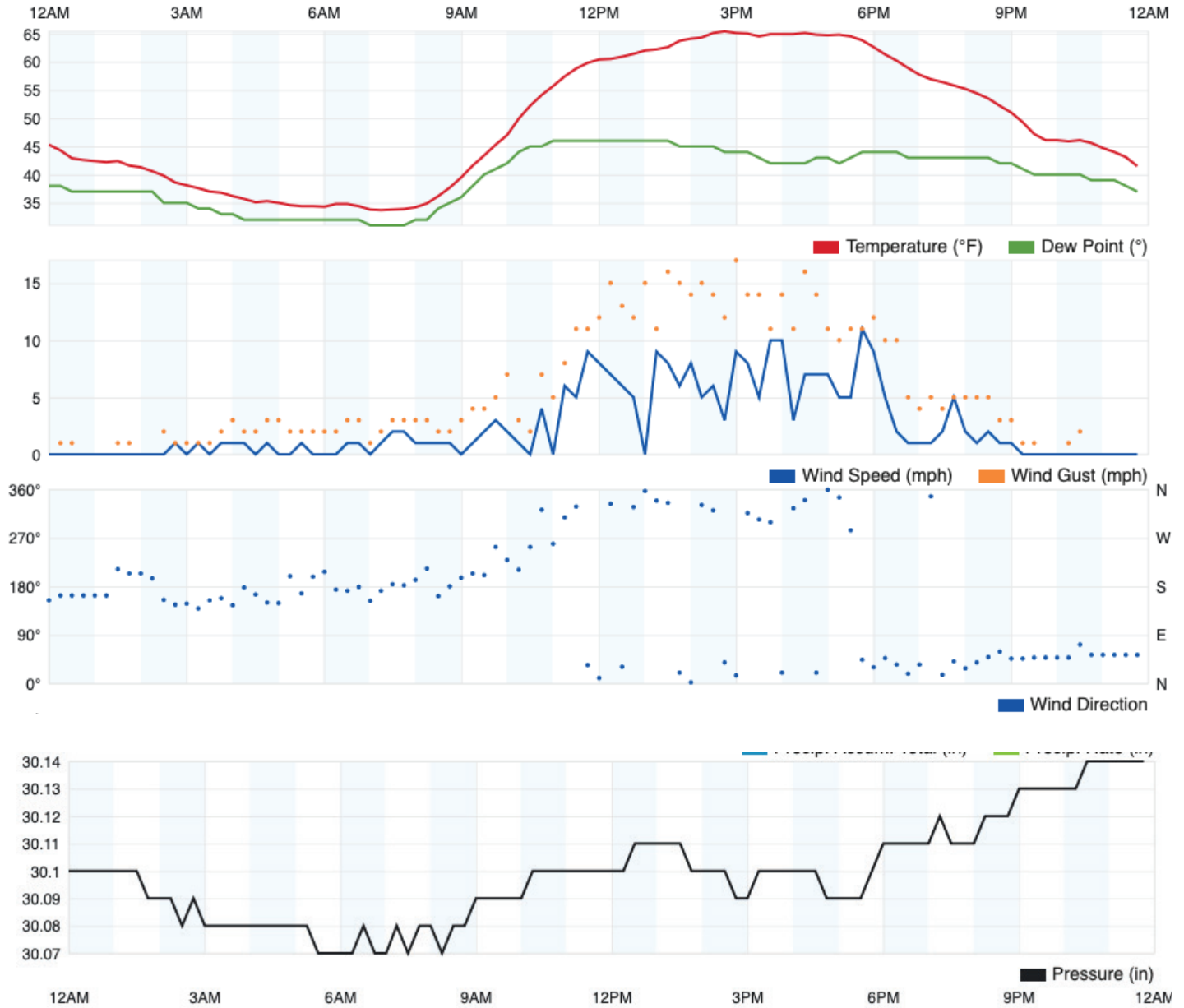
All cancer survivor look over their shoulders even without reminders, but it makes one pretty good at looking ahead, too, at appreciating every minute you have with those you love.

Cancer offers perspective and personal evolution, a borderline blessing. That mindset demands positivity. Give us that. We don't have to even discuss it. My life revolves around other things. Cancer's just another hurdle. Let's talk about the weather. Or my new boat.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



# Broton Daily Independent

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**Columbus Day**



Patchy Fog then Mostly Sunny

High: 75 °F

**Tonight**



Mostly Clear

Low: 46 °F

**Tuesday**



Sunny then Partly Sunny and Breezy

High: 74 °F

**Tuesday Night**



Decreasing Clouds

Low: 40 °F

**Wednesday**



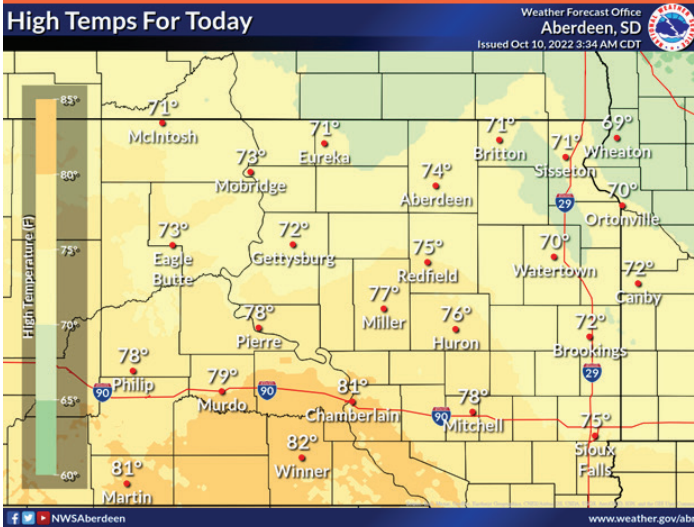
Mostly Sunny and Breezy

High: 57 °F



Warmer than Average Today and Windy Tuesday/Wednesday

**High Temps For Today**



Aberdeen, SD  
weather.gov/abr

	Maximum Wind Gust Forecast												Maximum	
	10/11 Tue					10/12 Wed								
	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	
Aberdeen	21	28	32	32	24	21	21	28	36	45	47	45	35	47
Britton	26	28	35	36	23	18	20	23	36	41	43	45	33	45
Eagle Butte	36	43	43	37	24	23	24	33	46	49	51	44	35	51
Eureka	29	39	40	35	20	20	21	32	43	48	51	49	39	51
Gettysburg	24	37	36	32	24	21	22	30	43	49	53	49	38	53
Kennebec	25	35	39	36	25	24	23	26	39	49	49	48	36	49
McIntosh	37	43	43	37	25	24	25	35	46	52	52	45	36	52
Milbank	22	23	23	24	23	22	20	21	30	33	37	40	30	40
Miller	20	28	31	31	24	21	22	26	37	48	48	45	32	48
Mobridge	31	36	36	32	22	18	21	29	39	47	51	48	36	51
Murdo	29	39	43	36	25	22	22	26	37	48	52	44	35	52
Pierre	23	33	37	32	23	18	20	25	40	49	49	47	38	49
Redfield	17	23	29	29	24	18	20	23	32	44	46	46	32	46
Sisseton	24	25	32	32	28	21	21	26	35	38	40	41	33	41
Watertown	23	23	25	28	23	21	20	21	29	37	43	44	35	44
Webster	23	24	28	32	28	22	22	25	33	40	44	45	35	45
Wheaton	22	23	29	29	25	20	18	21	29	35	36	33	25	36

With winds out of the south and southeast today, we are expecting warmer temperatures with highs in the 70s to around 80 and overall dry weather. There is a very slight chance of an isolated rain shower overnight, mainly in our eastern and southeastern coverage area. Gusty downsloping winds across the Prairie Coteau are also possible overnight with gusts up to 35mph. Windy conditions expected along and west of the Missouri River for Tuesday with it even windier and more widespread for Wednesday. With the already dry fuels in place, this will generate elevated fire danger.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 66 °F at 2:47 PM**

**Low Temp: 34 °F at 7:51 AM**

**Wind: 17 mph at 1:17 PM**

**Precip: : 0.00**

Day length: 11 hours, 16 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 93 in 2015

Record Low: 10 in 1919

Average High: 63°F

Average Low: 36°F

Average Precip in Oct.: .75

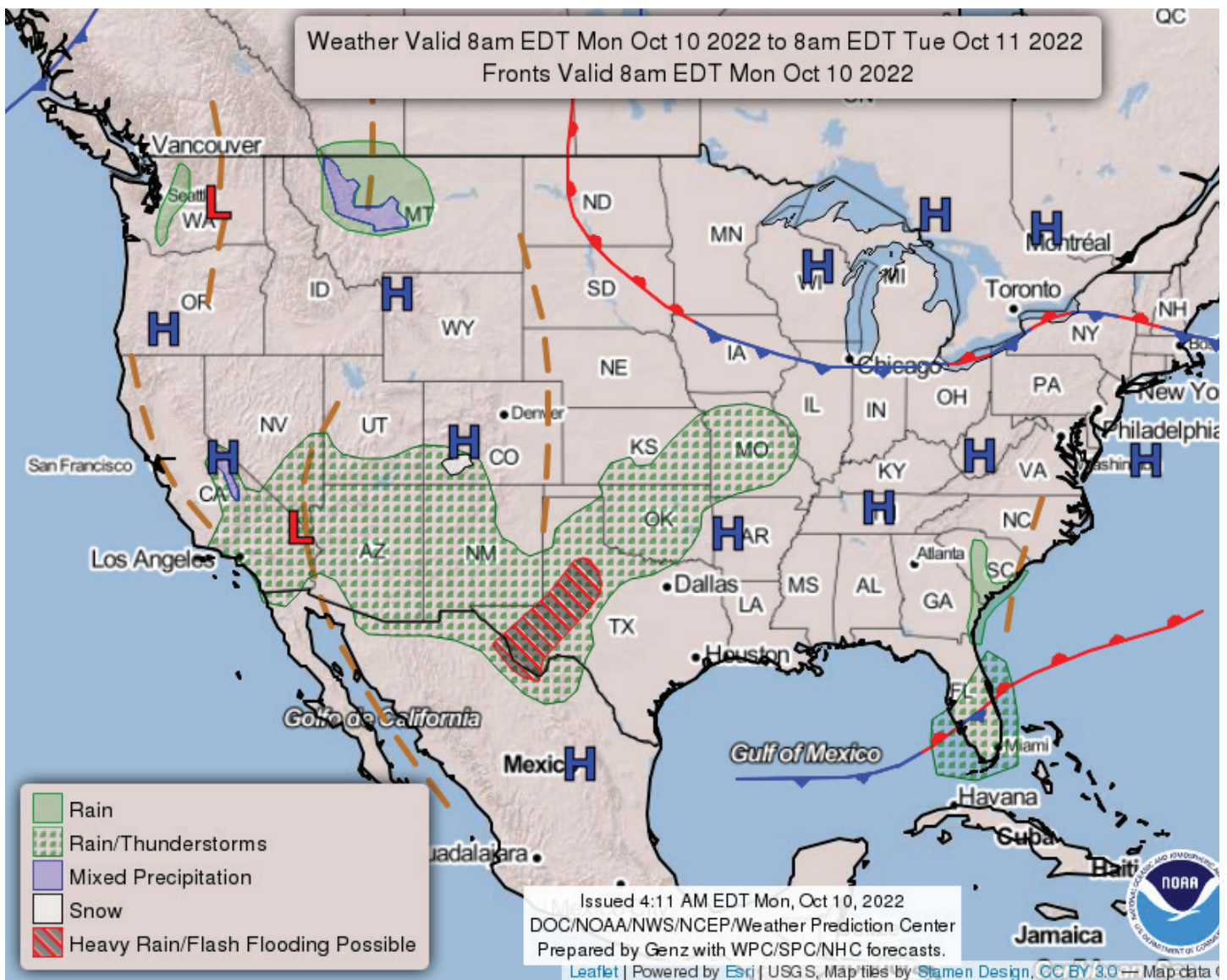
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.45

Average Precip to date: 19.08

Precip Year to Date: 16.50

Sunset Tonight: 6:57:39 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:42:17 AM



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## Today in Weather History

October 10, 1928: The temperature reached 90 degrees at Minneapolis, Minnesota, the latest such reading on record.

October 10, 1982: October 8th through October 10th, 1982, record amounts of snow piled up in the northern Black Hills. Not only was the storm an unprecedented breaker because it came so early in the season, but it was also a record snowfall producer for any time of year. Amounts of three to six feet were typical across the northern hills. On October 9th, 1982, thirty-two inches of snow buried Lead. The thirty-two inches that day is the most on record for 24 hours in South Dakota.

1780: The Great Hurricane of 1780 made landfall on the island of Barbados on this day with estimated wind gusts of 200 mph. This hurricane went on to affect the islands of St. Vincent, where only 14 of 600 homes stood at Kings Town. St. Lucia, Martinique, Dominica, and Puerto Rico were all impacted by this hurricane. This storm is the deadliest Atlantic hurricane on record, with between 20,000 and 22,000 deaths.

1804 - A famous snow hurricane occurred. The unusual coastal storm caused northerly gales from Maine to New Jersey. Heavy snow fell across New England, with three feet reported at the crest of the Green Mountains. A foot of snow was reported in the Berkshires of southern New England, at Goshen CT. (David Ludlum)

1846: A major hurricane, likely a Category 5, moved through the Caribbean Sea. This Great Havana Hurricane struck western Cuba on 10 October. It hit the Florida Keys on 11 October, destroying the old Key West Lighthouse and Fort Zachary Taylor.

1928 - The temperature at Minneapolis, MN, reached 90 degrees, their latest such reading of record. (The Weather Channel)

1949: A rapidly deepening area of low pressure produced gale to hurricane-force winds across much of Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Michigan, and the Dakotas. Sustained 1-minute winds reached 85 mph at Rochester, MN, and 79 mph at La Crosse, WI, during the early afternoon. Winds gusts were as high as 100 mph. This storm produced extensive damage to buildings and power lines. Also, many corn crops were flattened.

1970: A slow-moving tropical depression produced 41.68 inches of rain in Jayuya, Puerto Rico from October 2-10th, 1970.

1973 - Fifteen to 20 inch rains deluged north central Oklahoma in thirteen hours producing record flooding. Enid was drenched with 15.68 inches of rain from the nearly stationary thunderstorms, which established a state 24 hour rainfall record. Dover OK reported 125 of 150 homes damaged by flooding. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1979 - A storm blanketed Worcester, MA, with 7.5 inches of snow, a record snowfall total for so early in the season for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Eleven cities in the north central U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Colorado Springs CO with a reading of 23 degrees, and Havre MT with a low of 11 degrees above zero. Light snow was reported as far south as Kansas. Omaha NE reported their third earliest snow of record. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Sunny and mild weather prevailed across the nation for Columbus Day. The afternoon high of 77 degrees at Kalispell MT was the warmest reading of record for so late in the autumn season. Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced wind gusts to 56 mph at Lorain OH. Snowflakes were observed at Milwaukee WI around Noon, but quickly changed to rain as temperature readings were in the lower 60s. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced torrential rains along the northeast coast of Florida. Augustine was deluged with 16.08 inches of rain. The heavy rain caused extensive flooding of homes and businesses, and left some roads under three feet of water. Ten cities from South Carolina to New England reported record low temperatures for the date, including Concord NH with a reading of 23 degrees. Temperatures dipped into the 30s in the Carolinas. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2009: Nome, Alaska, experiences its first-ever October thunderstorm with five lightning strikes between 8 and 9 PM ADT.



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Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### WORDS AND WRATH

"Try it! I promise you it will work," said Mrs. Ron.

"No, it won't. They'll just yell louder and louder," I responded with certainty.

"How do you know? Have you ever tried it? If you did try it, what happened? Did the shouting stop?" she asked.

"I don't know because I've never had anyone tell me that before," I replied as I gave up. I knew that she had an advantage over me from her years of experience as a teacher.

Her theory was simple and seemed senseless. "When children, either individually or in a group, raise their voices, if you speak in a hushed tone, they will quiet down. They want to hear what you are saying. Their curiosity will get the best of them," she explained.

After thinking about it, I decided to follow her recommendation since nothing I tried had worked. To my surprise, it worked. And it does make sense, when you think about it.

Solomon may not have known much about anger management, but he gave some great advice when he wrote, "A soft gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." We see that all too often when mobs gather to protest. Both sides believe they can gain the advantage with volume.

"A harsh word" does not suggest that a person is using words that are irrational or abrasive - though they may be part of the "conversation." Rather, it refers to one who intends to use words to destroy another by design. We are once again reminded of the power of the tongue! Softness can represent power if we follow the Word and teachings of Scripture.

Prayer: Lord, how wonderful is Your Word that informs us of the power of our words. May we always speak gently and confidently as we follow Your teachings. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Proverbs 15:1



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)  
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## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

### Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

- Black & White ..... \$48.99/year
- Colored ..... \$79.88/year
- Colored ..... \$42.60/6 months
- E-Weekly\* ..... \$31.95/year

\* The E-Weekly is a PDF file emailed to you each week. It does not grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

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## Groton Daily Independent

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

- 1 Month ..... \$15.98
- 3 Months ..... \$26.63
- 6 Months ..... \$31.95
- 9 Months ..... \$42.60
- 12 Months ..... \$53.25

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## News from the Associated Press

### **Noem's balancing act: Big ambitions, South Dakota reelection**

By STEPHEN GROVES and JONATHAN J. COOPER Associated Press

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP) — They had waited in the desert heat in a line that wrapped around the block and now the excitement was palpable when South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem took the stage in a suburban Phoenix convention hall. "She's our governor!" someone yelled.

Kari Lake, the Republican nominee for governor in Arizona who hosted the event this past week, stood beside Noem and joined in the praise. She called Noem an "inspiration" who stood up for families against intrusive government mandates during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The warm reception was familiar to Noem, who has made such appearances part of building her national profile as a potential 2024 White House contender.

"I wish I could vote for a woman like that," Lake said. "But I don't live in South Dakota."

If Noem has ambitions beyond her state, she must first take care of political business back home: winning a second term in November.

Many expected her to cruise to victory in a Republican-dominated state against a Democratic opponent without statewide experience. But her frequent out-of-state travels, as well as recent ethics stumbles, have given Democrats license to dream of an upset — or at least making the race close enough to raise questions about Noem's viability on a bigger stage.

Drey Samuelson, a longtime Democratic strategist in the state, said few people gave Democratic state Rep. Jamie Smith much of a chance when he announced his campaign for governor, given Smith's lack of name recognition and Noem's massive fundraising advantage. Republicans have almost doubled Democrats on voter rolls and Smith's highest political experience was leading House Democrats — a beleaguered band that has dwindled to eight members.

But Smith has run a shrewd race by seeking to turn Noem's ambition against her, Samuelson said.

"Everyone I talk to, both Republicans and Democrats, believes that he has closed the gap on her," he said.

Noem did not grant an interview request for this story. Her campaign spokesman, Ian Fury, said Noem "has never taken a single election for granted."

"She works hard for her constituents, she works hard on the campaign trail and she is going to run through the finish line," he said.

Her recent stop in Arizona, which was also the site of a family wedding, was just one appearance in more than a dozen states this campaign cycle.

Noem's campaign has argued that lending a hand to fellow Republicans helps advance the conservative cause. But she has also paid to boost her campaign ads on Facebook in Iowa, South Carolina and New Hampshire — important early presidential primary states — and granted several interviews where she warmed to the idea of running for the White House.

The governor sailed through spring and summer, releasing an autobiography, creating a nationwide fundraising network that amassed nearly \$12 million and publicly reconnecting with Corey Lewandowski, Donald Trump's 2016 campaign manager. Noem had severed ties last year with Lewandowski after he was accused by a donor of making unwanted sexual advances at a fundraiser that Noem and Lewandowski both attended.

Smith, with \$900,000 raised for his campaign, has gone around the state in his pickup, visiting every county in his long shot challenge. Panning Noem's out-of-state trips has been a recurring theme of his campaign.

"We need a leader that's focused on the state of South Dakota, that's working for the people and that truly cares about what's best for the state," Smith told The Associated Press.

Smith, a real estate agent who has also worked as a teacher and coach, has cast himself as a moderate and so far has run a mostly upbeat campaign. During his lone debate with Noem, he only briefly mentioned

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ethics complaints that have dogged her in recent months, including her intervention with a state agency in the application by one of her daughters for a real estate appraiser's license. The state ethics board, on a matter first reported by the AP, found evidence of misconduct but has not revealed its action against her.

Michael Card, a former political strategist and professor at the University of South Dakota, said Noem has made herself vulnerable on those issues, while also irking many teachers and school administrators by naming a conservative college in Michigan to help remake the state's social studies standards. Noem also faces questions about whether she can win over women, especially after abortion emerged as a key election-year issue.

Noem's abortion stance, without exceptions for rape and incest, may be out of step with South Dakotans, who voted in 2006 and 2008 against legislative attempts to completely ban the procedure.

"There are some lingering questions about whether she is ready for prime time," Card said.

If nothing else, Smith seems to have Noem's attention.

She recently came out with an ad that tied Smith to President Joe Biden, who won 36% of South Dakota's vote in 2020. The governor grabbed hold of an issue Smith had pressed for years by promising to repeal a state tax on groceries. She also returned to campaigning quickly after announcing a back surgery she initially said could require several months for full recovery, with appearances in her traditional stronghold of Rapid City as well as the Arizona visit.

Alice Stewart, a Republican strategist who advised Texas Sen. Ted Cruz's 2016 presidential campaign, played down the idea that a narrow Noem victory would hurt her down the road. More important, Stewart said, is whether Noem is showing leadership on issues such as the economy, crime, parental rights and education that are important to broad groups of voters.

The grocery tax repeal was just such a move, along with a promise by Noem to expand parental leave opportunities.

But Casey Murschel, 71, said she plans to vote for Smith. A former GOP state representative in the Sioux Falls area, Murschel said the riot at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, led her to leave the party and identify as an independent. She said she trusts Smith to focus on governing the state and to advocate for abortion rights.

"Kristi has gone Hollywood," she said. "She has basically turned her back on South Dakotans. We're like props for her."

## Protests in Iran over woman's death reach key oil industry

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Workers at the site of a major complex of refineries crucial for Iran's massive offshore natural gas field protested Monday over the death of a 22-year-old woman, online videos appeared to show.

The demonstrations at Asaluyeh mark the first time the unrest surrounding the death of Mahsa Amini threatened the coffers of Iran's long-sanctioned theocratic government — its oil and gas industry.

While it remains unclear if other workers will follow, the protests come as demonstrations rage on in cities, towns and villages across Iran over the Sept. 16 death of Amini after her arrest by the country's morality police in Tehran. Early on Monday, the sound of apparent gunshots and explosions echoed through the streets of a city in western Iran, while security forces reportedly killed one man in a nearby village, activists said.

Iran's government insists Amini was not mistreated, but her family says her body showed bruises and other signs of beating. Subsequent videos have shown security forces beating and shoving female protesters, including women who have torn off their mandatory headscarf, or hijab.

From Tehran and elsewhere, online videos have emerged despite authorities disrupting the internet. Videos showed some women marching through the streets without headscarves, while others confronted authorities and lit fires in the street as the protests continue into a fourth week. The demonstrations represent one of the biggest challenges to Iran's theocracy since the 2009 Green Movement protests.

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Online videos analyzed by The Associated Press showed dozens of workers gathered at the refineries in Asaluyeh, some 925 kilometers (575 miles) south of the capital, Tehran, on the Persian Gulf. The vast complex takes in natural gas from the massive offshore natural gas field that Iran shares with Qatar.

In one video, the gathered workers — some with their faces covered — chant “shameless” and “death to the dictator.” The chants have been features across protests dealing with Amini’s death.

Others show them gathered around the massive network of tanks and industrial features, as well as on a nearby roadway. The details in the videos correspond with each and to known features of the facility compared against satellite photos taken Sunday.

Iran did not acknowledge any disruption at the facility, though the semiofficial Tasnim news agency described the incident as a salary dispute. Iran is one of the world’s top natural gas suppliers, just after the U.S. and Russia.

The violence early Monday in western Iran occurred in Sanandaj, the capital of Iran’s Kurdistan province, as well as in the village of Salas Babajani near the border with Iraq, according to a Kurdish group called the Hengaw Organization for Human Rights. Amini was Kurdish and her death has been felt particularly in Iran’s Kurdish region, where demonstrations began Sept. 17 at her funeral there.

Hengaw posted footage it described as smoke rising in one neighborhood in Sanandaj, with what sounded like rapid rifle fire echoing through the night sky. The shouts of people could be heard.

There was no immediate word if people had been hurt in the violence. Hengaw later posted a video online of what appeared to be collected shell casings from rifles and shotguns, as well as spent tear gas canisters.

Authorities offered no immediate explanation about the violence early Monday in Sanandaj, some 400 kilometers (250 miles) west of Tehran. Esmail Zarei Kousha, the governor of Iran’s Kurdistan province, alleged without providing evidence that unknown groups “plotted to kill young people on the streets” on Saturday, the semiofficial Fars news agency reported Monday.

Kousha also accused these unnamed groups that day of shooting a young man in the head and killing him — an attack that activists have roundly blamed on Iranian security forces. They say Iranian forces opened fire after the man honked his car horn at them. Honking has become one of the ways activists have been expressing civil disobedience — an action that has seen riot police in other videos smashing the windshields of passing vehicles.

In the village of Salas Babajani, some 100 kilometers (60 miles) southwest of Sanandaj, Iranian security forces repeatedly shot a 22-year-old man protesting there who later died of his wounds, Hengaw said. It said others had been wounded in the shooting.

It remains unclear how many people have been killed in the demonstrations or by the security force crackdown targeting them. State television last suggested at least 41 people had been killed in the demonstrations as of Sept. 24. In the over two weeks since, there’s been no update from Iran’s government.

An Oslo-based group, Iran Human Rights, estimates at least 185 people have been killed. This includes an estimated 90 people killed in violence in the eastern Iranian city of Zahedan amid demonstrations against a police officer accused of rape in a separate case.

Amnesty International said security forces killed 66 people in Zahedan on Sept. 30, and that more people were killed in the area in subsequent incidents. Iranian authorities have described the Zahedan violence as involving unnamed separatists, without providing details or evidence.

Meanwhile, a prison riot has struck the city of Rasht, killing several inmates there, a prosecutor reportedly said. It wasn’t immediately clear if the riot at Lakan Prison was linked to the ongoing protests, though Rasht has seen heavy demonstrations in recent weeks since Amini’s death.

The semiofficial Mehr news agency quoted Gilan provincial prosecutor Mehdi Fallah Miri as saying, “some prisoners died because of their wounds as the electricity was cut (at the prison) because of the damage.” He also alleged prisoners refused to allow authorities access to those wounded.

Miri described the riot as breaking out in a wing of a prison housing death penalty inmates.

## Russia blasts Kyiv, other Ukrainian cities in deadly strikes

By ADAM SCHRECK and HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia unleashed a lethal barrage of strikes against multiple Ukrainian cities Monday, smashing civilian targets including downtown Kyiv where at least six people were killed amid burnt-out cars and shattered buildings that brought back into focus the grim reality of war after months of easing tensions in the capital.

Police said a total of at least 10 people were killed and around 60 others were wounded in the morning attacks across Ukraine. The country's Emergency Service said nine people were killed. The conflicting numbers couldn't immediately be reconciled.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, whose military invaded neighboring Ukraine on Feb. 24, said the strikes were in retaliation for what he called Kyiv's "terrorist" actions — a reference to Ukraine's attempts to repel Moscow's invasion forces and cripple their supply lines.

The actions he referred to include an attack last weekend on a key bridge, prized by the Kremlin, between Russia and the annexed Crimean Peninsula.

Putin vowed a "tough" and "proportionate" response should Ukraine carry out further attacks that threaten Russia's security.

"No one should have any doubts about it," he said.

Monday's intense, hours-long attack by Russia marked a sudden military escalation in its assault on Ukraine. It came a day after Putin called the explosion Saturday on the huge bridge connecting Russia to its annexed territory of Crimea a "terrorist act" masterminded by Ukrainian special services.

Putin, speaking in a video call with members of Russia's Security Council, said the Russian military launched "precision weapons" from the air, sea and ground to target key energy and military command facilities.

The missile strikes marked the biggest and most widespread Russian attacks in months. Putin, whose partial mobilization order earlier this month triggered an exodus of hundreds of thousands of men of fighting age from Russia, stopped short of declaring martial law or a counterterrorism operation as many had expected.

But the sustained barrage on major cities hit residential areas and critical infrastructure facilities alike, portending a major surge in the war amid a successful Ukrainian counteroffensive in recent weeks and raising questions about how "precise" Russia's targeting is.

Moscow's war in Ukraine is approaching its eight-month milestone, and the Kremlin has been reeling from humiliating battlefield setbacks in areas of eastern Ukraine it is trying to annex.

Blasts struck in the capital's Shevchenko district, a large area in the center of Kyiv that includes the historic old town as well as several government offices, Mayor Vitali Klitschko said.

Some of the strikes hit near the government quarter in the symbolic heart of the capital, where Parliament and other major landmarks are located. A glass tower housing offices was significantly damaged, most of its blue-tinted windows blown out.

Residents were seen on the streets with blood on their clothes and hands. A young man wearing a blue jacket sat on the ground as a medic wrapped a bandage around his head. A woman with bandages wrapped around her head had blood all over the front of her blouse. Several cars were also damaged or completely destroyed. Air raid sirens sounded repeatedly across the country and in Kyiv.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Russian forces launched dozens of missiles and Iranian-built drones against Ukraine.

The General Staff of the Ukraine Armed Forces said 75 missiles were fired against Ukrainian targets, with 41 of them neutralized by air defenses.

The targets were civilian areas and energy facilities in 10 cities, Zelenskyy said in a video address. "(The Russians) chose such a time and such targets on purpose to inflict the most damage," Zelenskyy said.

The morning strikes sent Kyiv residents back into bomb shelters for the first time in months. The city's subway system stopped train services and made the stations available once more as places for refuge.

While air raid sirens have continued throughout the war in Ukraine's major cities across the country, in

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Kyiv and other areas where there have been months of calm many Ukrainians had begun to ignore their warnings and go about their normal business.

That changed on Monday morning. The attacks arrived in Kyiv at the start of the morning rush hour, when commuter traffic was beginning to pick up. At least one of the vehicles struck near the Kyiv National University appeared to be a commuter minibus, known as a "marshrutka" and which is a popular albeit often crowded alternative to the city's bus and metro routes.

Nearby, at least one strike landed in the popular Shevchenko Park, leaving a large hole near a children's playground.

Among the targets hit was a pedestrian bridge known as the Klitschko bridge — a landmark in central Kyiv with its glass panels. Closed-circuit television footage shared by an adviser to Ukraine's interior minister showed a huge explosion as the bridge was apparently targeted. A man seen on the bridge just before the explosion is seen running away after the blast.

Lesia Vasylenko, a member of Ukraine's parliament, tweeted a photo showing that at least one explosion occurred near the main building of the Kyiv National University in central Kyiv.

Elsewhere, Russia targeted civilian areas and energy infrastructure as air raid sirens sounded in every region of Ukraine, except Russia-annexed Crimea, for four straight hours.

Associated Press journalists in Dnipro city saw the bodies of multiple people killed at an industrial site on the city's outskirts. Windows in the area had been blown out and glass littered the street. A telecommunications building was hit.

Ukrainian media also reported explosions in a number of other locations, including the western city of Lviv, which has been a refuge for many people fleeing the fighting in the east, as well as in Kharkiv, Ternopil, Khmelnytskyi, Zhytomyr and Kropyvnytskyi.

Kharkiv was hit three times, Mayor Ihor Terekhov said. The strikes knocked out the electricity and water supply. Energy infrastructure was also hit in Lviv, regional Gov. Maksym Kozytskyi said.

Three cruise missiles launched against Ukraine from Russian ships in the Black Sea crossed Moldova's airspace, the country's Foreign Affairs Minister Nicu Popescu complained.

A day earlier, Putin had called the attack on the Kerch Bridge to Crimea a terrorist act carried out by Ukrainian special services. In a meeting Sunday with the chairman of Russia's Investigative Committee, Putin said "there's no doubt it was a terrorist act directed at the destruction of critically important civilian infrastructure."

The Kerch Bridge is important to Russia strategically, as a military supply line to its forces in Ukraine, and symbolically, as an emblem of its claims on Crimea. No one has claimed responsibility for damaging the 12-mile (19-kilometer) -long bridge, the longest in Europe.

Amid the onslaught, Zelenskyy said on his Telegram account that Russia is "trying to destroy us and wipe us off the face of the earth."

The attacks appeared set to bring a fresh bout of international condemnation for Russia.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's spokesman, Steffen Hebestreit, said the Group of Seven industrial powers will hold a videoconference Tuesday on the situation which Zelenskyy will address. Germany currently chairs the G-7.

The attacks brought a chorus of outrage in Europe. French President Emanuel Macron expressed "extreme concern, as the strikes caused civilian casualties" and renewed his pledge of more military aid for Ukraine.

British Foreign Secretary James Cleverly tweeted that "Russia's firing of missiles into civilian areas of Ukraine is unacceptable."

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba broke off his Africa tour and headed back to Ukraine, tweeting that the attacks represented "terror on peaceful Ukrainian cities."

Some feared Monday's attacks may just be the first salvo in a renewed Russian offensive. Ukraine's Ministry of Education announced that all schools in Ukraine must switch to online classes at least until the end of this week.

In an ominous move, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko announced Monday that he and Putin



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have agreed to deploy a joint "regional grouping of troops" amid the escalation of fighting in Ukraine. He offered no details as to where the grouping will be deployed, when and what for.

Lukashenko repeated his claims that Ukraine is plotting an attack on Belarus, sparking fears the stage is being set for preemptive action by Minsk.

## Former Fed chair Bernanke shares Nobel for research on banks

By DAVID KEYTON, FRANK JORDANS and PAUL WISEMAN Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Former U.S. Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke, who put his academic expertise on the Great Depression to work reviving the American economy after the 2007-2008 financial crisis, won the Nobel Prize in economic sciences along with two other U.S.-based economists for their research into the fallout from bank failures.

Bernanke was recognized Monday along with Douglas W. Diamond and Philip H. Dybvig. The Nobel panel at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm said the trio's research had shown "why avoiding bank collapses is vital."

With their findings in the early 1980s, the laureates laid the foundations for regulating financial markets, the panel said.

"Financial crises and depressions are kind of the worst thing that can happen to the economy," said John Hassler of the Committee for the Prize in Economic Sciences. "These things can happen again. And we need to have an understanding of the mechanism behind those and what to do about it. And the laureates this year provide that."

Bernanke, 68, now with the Brookings Institution in Washington, examined the Great Depression of the 1930s, showing the danger of bank runs — when panicked people withdraw their savings — and how bank collapses led to widespread economic devastation. Before Bernanke, economists saw bank failures as a consequence, not a cause, of economic downturns.

Diamond, 68, based at the University of Chicago, and Dybvig, 67, who is at Washington University in St. Louis, showed how government guarantees on deposits and can prevent a spiraling of financial crises. In 1983, they co-authored "Bank Runs, Deposit Insurance, and Liquidity," which in part addressed damage from runs on banks.

Diamond said the Nobel came as a surprise. On Monday morning, he said, "I was sleeping very soundly and then all of a sudden, off went my cellphone" with good news from Nobel committee.

When it comes to the global economic turmoil created by the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war in Ukraine, Diamond said the financial system is "much, much less vulnerable" to crises because of memories of the 2000s collapse and improved regulation.

"The problem is that these vulnerabilities of the fear of runs and dislocations and crises can show up anywhere in the financial sector. It doesn't have to be commercial banks," he said.

The trio's research took on great real-world significance when investors sent the financial system into a panic during fall 2008.

Bernanke, then head of the Fed, teamed up with the U.S. Treasury Department to prop up major banks and ease a shortage of credit, the lifeblood of the economy.

He slashed short-term interest rates to zero, directed the Fed's purchases of Treasury and mortgage investments and set up unprecedented lending programs. Collectively, those steps calmed investors and fortified big banks.

They also pushed long-term interest rates to historic lows and led to fierce criticism of Bernanke, particularly from some 2012 Republican presidential candidates, that the Fed was hurting the value of the dollar and running the risk of igniting inflation later.

The Fed's actions under Bernanke extended the authority of the central bank into unprecedented territory. They weren't able to prevent the longest and most painful recession since the 1930s. But in hindsight, the Fed's moves were credited with rescuing the banking system and avoiding another depression.

And Bernanke's Fed established a precedent for the central bank to respond with speed and force to

economic shocks.

When COVID-19 slammed the U.S. economy in early 2020, the Fed, under Chair Jerome Powell, quickly cut short-term interest rates back to zero and pumped money into the financial system. The aggressive intervention — along with massive government spending — quickly ended the downturn and triggered a powerful economic recovery.

But the quick comeback also came at a cost: Inflation began rising rapidly last year and now is close to 40-year highs, forcing the Fed to reverse course and raise rates to cool the economy. Central banks around the world also are taking the steps as inflation erodes consumers' spending power.

In a groundbreaking 1983 paper, Bernanke explored the role of bank failures in deepening and lengthening the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Before that, economists cast blame on the Fed for not printing enough money to support the economy as it sank. Bernanke agreed but found that the shortage of money could not explain why the depression was so devastating and lasted so long. The problem, he found, was the collapse of the banking system. Panicked savers pulled money out of rickety banks, which then could not make the loans that kept the economy growing.

"The result," the Nobel committee wrote, "was the worst global recession in modern history."

The economics award capped off a week of Nobel Prize announcements in medicine, physics, chemistry and literature as well as the Peace Prize.

They carry a cash award of 10 million Swedish kronor (nearly \$900,000) and will be handed out on Dec. 10.

Unlike the other prizes, the economics award wasn't established in Alfred Nobel's will of 1895 but by the Swedish central bank in his memory. The first winner was selected in 1969.

## As suicides rise, US military seeks to address mental health

By ASHRAF KHALIL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — After finishing a tour in Afghanistan in 2013, Dionne Williamson felt emotionally numb. More warning signs appeared during several years of subsequent overseas postings.

"It's like I lost me somewhere," said Williamson, a Navy lieutenant commander who experienced disorientation, depression, memory loss and chronic exhaustion. "I went to my captain and said, 'Sir, I need help. Something's wrong.'"

As the Pentagon seeks to confront spiraling suicide rates in the military ranks, Williamson's experiences shine a light on the realities for service members seeking mental health help. For most, simply acknowledging their difficulties can be intimidating. And what comes next can be frustrating and dispiriting.

Williamson, 46, eventually found stability through a monthlong hospitalization and a therapeutic program that incorporates horseback riding. But she had to fight for years to get the help she needed. "It's a wonder how I made it through," she said.

In March, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin announced the creation of an independent committee to review the military's mental health and suicide prevention programs.

According to Defense Department data, suicides among active-duty service members increased by more than 40% between 2015 and 2020. The numbers jumped by 15% in 2020 alone. In longtime suicide hotspot postings such as Alaska — service members and their families contend with extreme isolation and a harsh climate — the rate has doubled.

A 2021 study by the Cost of War Project concluded that since 9/11, four times as many service members and veterans have died by suicide as have perished in combat. The study detailed stress factors particular to military life: "high exposure to trauma — mental, physical, moral, and sexual — stress and burnout, the influence of the military's hegemonic masculine culture, continued access to guns, and the difficulty of reintegrating into civilian life."

The Pentagon did not respond to repeated requests for comment. But Austin has publicly acknowledged that the Pentagon's current mental health offerings — including a Defense Suicide Prevention Office established in 2011 — have proven insufficient.

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"It is imperative that we take care of all our teammates and continue to reinforce that mental health and suicide prevention remain a key priority," Austin wrote in March. "Clearly we have more work to do."

Last year the Army issued fresh guidelines to its commanders on how to handle mental health issues in the ranks, complete with briefing slides and a script. But daunting long-term challenges remain. Many soldiers fear the stigma of admitting to mental health issues within the internal military culture of self-sufficiency. And those who seek help often find that stigma is not only real, but compounded by bureaucratic obstacles.

Much like the issue of food insecurity in military families, a network of military-adjacent charitable organizations has tried to fill the gaps with a variety of programs and outreach efforts.

Some are purely recreational, such as an annual fishing tournament in Alaska designed to provide fresh air and socialization for service members. Others are more focused on self-care, like an Armed Services YMCA program that offers free childcare so that military parents can attend therapy sessions.

The situation in Alaska is particularly dire. In January, after a string of suicides, Command Sgt. Maj. Phil Blaisdell addressed his soldiers in an emotional Instagram post. "When did suicide become the answer," he asked. "Please send me a DM if you need something. Please ..."

U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, said that while posting to Alaska can be a dream for some service members, it's a solitary nightmare for others that needs to be addressed.

"You've got to be paying attention to this when you see the statistics jump as they are," Murkowski said. "Right now, you've got everybody. You've got the Joint Chiefs looking at Alaska and saying, 'Holy smokes, what's going on up there?'"

The stresses of an Alaska posting are compounded by a shortage of on-the-ground therapists. During a visit to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska earlier this year, Army Secretary Christine Wormuth heard from base health care workers who say they are understaffed, burned out and can't see patients on a timely basis. If a soldier seeks help, they often have to wait weeks for an appointment.

"We have people who need our services and we can't get to them," one longtime counselor told Wormuth during a meeting. "We need staff and until we get them, we will continue to have soldiers die."

The annual Combat Fishing Tournament in Seward, Alaska, was formed to "get the kids out of the barracks, get them off the base for the day and get them out of their heads," said co-founder Keith Manternach.

The tournament, which was begun in 2007 and now involves more than 300 service members, includes a day of deep-water fishing followed by a celebratory banquet with prizes for the largest catch, smallest catch and the person who gets the sickest.

"I think there's a huge element of mental health to it," Manternach said.

It's not just in Alaska.

Sgt. Antonio Rivera, an 18-year veteran who completed three tours in Iraq and a year at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, freely acknowledges that he has serious PTSD.

"I know that I need help. There's signs and I've waited long enough," said Rivera, 48, who is assigned to Fort Hood in Texas. "I don't want my children to suffer because of me not going to get help."

He's doing yoga, but says he needs more. He's reluctant to seek help inside the military.

"Personally I'd feel more comfortable being able to talk to someone outside," he said. "It would allow me to open up a lot more without having to be worried about how it's going to affect my career."

Others who speak up say it's a struggle to get assistance.

Despite the on-base presence of "tons of briefings and brochures on suicide and PTSD," Williamson said she found herself fighting for years to get time off and therapy.

Eventually, she entered a monthlong in-patient program in Arizona. When she returned, a therapist recommended equine-assisted therapy, which proved to be a breakthrough.

Now Williamson is a regular at the Cloverleaf Equine Center in Clifton, Virginia, where riding sessions can be combined with a variety of therapeutic practices and exercises. Working with horses has long been used as a form for therapy for people with physical or mental disabilities and children diagnosed with autism. But in recent years, it has been embraced for helping service members with anxiety and PTSD.

"In order to be able to work with horses, you need to be able to regulate your emotions. They communicate through body language and energy," said Shelby Morrison, Cloverleaf's communications director.

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"They respond to energies around them. They respond to negativity, positivity, anxiety, excitement."

Military clients, Morrison said, come with "a lot of anxiety, depression, PTSD. ... We use the horse to get them out of their triggers."

For Williamson, the regular riding sessions have helped stabilize her. She still struggles, and she said her long campaign for treatment has damaged her relationship with multiple superior officers. She's currently on limited duty and isn't sure if she'll retire when she hits her 20-year anniversary in March.

Nevertheless, she says, the equine therapy has helped her feel optimistic for the first time in recent memory.

"Now even if I can't get out of bed, I make sure to come here," she said. "If I didn't come here, I don't know where I would even be."

## 'Nothing's left': Hurricane Ian leaves emotional toll behind

By BOBBY CAINA CALVAN and BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP) — With her home gone and all her belongings trashed by Hurricane Ian, Alice Pujols wept as she picked through soggy clothes, toys and overturned furniture piled head-high outside a stranger's house, looking to salvage something — anything — for her four children and herself.

"I'm trying to make it to the next day," she said. "That's all I can do. It's really depressing. It really is."

For those who lost everything to a natural disaster and even those spared, the anguish can be crushing to return home to find so much gone. Grief can run the gamut from frequent tears to utter despair. Two men in their 70s even took their own lives after viewing their losses, said the medical examiner in Lee County, where Ian first made landfall in southwestern Florida.

The emotional toll in the days, weeks and months after a hurricane, flood or wildfire can be crippling. More pressing needs for food, shelter and clothing often take priority to seeking counseling, which is in short supply even in good times.

"When someone's in a state of trauma that so many are in, they don't know where to begin," said Beth Hatch, CEO of the Collier County, Florida, branch of the National Alliance of Mental Illness. "They need that hand-holding and they need to know that there's so many people here to help them."

Hurricane Ian hammered Florida with such ferocity that it wiped out whole neighborhoods, tossed boats onto highways, swept away beaches and swamped homes in roof-deep waters.

With sustained winds of 150 mph (240 kph), it was one of the strongest hurricanes to ever hit southwest Florida. It later cut a watery and wind-battered swath across the Florida peninsula before turning out to sea to regain strength and pummel South Carolina.

It killed more than 100 people, the majority of victims in Florida, making it the third-deadliest storm to hit the U.S. mainland this century. Even a week after it passed through, officials warned that more victims could yet be found as they continued to inspect the damage. The storm knocked out power to 2.6 million and caused billions of dollars in damage.

Research has shown that between a third and half of those who survive a disaster develop some type of mental distress, said Jennifer Horney, an epidemiology professor at the University of Delaware who studies natural disaster impacts on public health.

Post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety rise along with substance abuse. Those with existing mental disorders are at greater risk of having those conditions exacerbated by the trauma.

A variety of help is available as additional resources are sent to the area.

The state of Florida was setting up support centers and the federal government has a 24-hour disaster distress helpline to provide counseling and crisis support. Hatch's organization was going to some homes in hard-hit areas to check on clients with mental illness.

The vast majority of people, though, were still assessing damage, trying to retrieve and dry out possessions worth keeping and drag what couldn't be saved to growing trash heaps by the side of the road.

On Pine Island, just off the Florida mainland where Ian first struck, an emotional Alan Bickford said he was

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trying to take a longer view because what lay before him was bleak: the floors of his home were coated in stinky muck and his yard was littered with framed photos, furniture and other items he'd hauled outside.

"It's like a death of a loved one. The pain just comes and goes," he said. "There's times when there are these little glimmers or slivers of hope. And then everything falls apart."

Riding out a deadly storm amid screaming winds, pounding waves and rising waters, or escaping as danger closes in is terrifying and traumatic. Living out of a duffel bag or suitcase in an evacuation center is disruptive, stressful and depressing. Returning to a flood-ravaged home that needs to be gutted to prevent mold from taking hold or, worse, reduced to splinters and scrap metal and scattered like confetti is heartbreaking.

Mao Lin walked an hour Thursday to reach the plot of land where she had lived on Fort Myers Beach, which looked like a blast zone. She was distressed to find it gone.

"The whole street — nothing's left," she said. "We don't have a home. We don't have a car. We don't have anything. We have nothing left."

In recent days, the number of calls have doubled at Hatch's organization as people recognize they cannot rebuild their lives — and overcome trauma — alone.

"The needs are going to change over time," Hatch said. "Some people have lost everything, maybe the walls of their home may be still standing, but they're uninhabitable."

Cleaning up the mess of a damaged home or finding a new one in the wake of a catastrophe gives way to the longer term challenges of navigating the maze of bureaucracy for financial assistance, securing permits for rebuilding or fighting insurance companies over reimbursements.

Horney studied suicide rates in counties that experienced a disaster between 2003-2015. She and her colleagues found suicides increased 23% when comparing the three-year period preceding a disaster to the three years after an event, according to the study published in *The Journal of Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention*.

She said the Sept. 30 and Oct. 1 suicides of men in their 70s was not typical so soon after a catastrophic event.

"It's not usually an immediate, post-disaster thing," Horney said. "It's really these longer-term mental health problems that have either been exacerbated by or caused by the disaster that then over time tend to lead to more severe outcomes like suicide."

In the aftermath of a disaster, communities pull together to recover and rebuild. Rescuers, relief workers and nonprofit organizations provide food, funding and other help, including counseling. But attention eventually fades and the money dries up. Emergency funds for mental health sometimes expire in as soon as two months and last no longer than a year.

With disasters becoming more frequent and more severe due to climate change, there could be a cumulative effect on mental health, Horney said. She said her study calls for more funding to fix the damage that is felt but can't be seen.

Most of the emotional impacts of a disaster are short-lived but they could be worsened if followed by another cataclysmic event.

"If it was usual that symptoms would resolve in six months to a year, but then there's another hurricane or another wildfire, then you're in this cycle of intensifying mental health impacts," Horney said. "The research is definitely clear that the more disasters you're exposed to, the stronger the impacts on mental health."

Joe Kuczko hunkered down with his parents as their Pine Island mobile home was battered by the storm. Kuczko got a gash in his foot that he stitched himself after a piece of the roof blew off.

Pieces of mangled metal lay on the ground Thursday along with containers full of possessions and clothes hung to dry as Kuczko, shirtless and with a sunburn on his back, strung up a tarp to keep the rain out of what remained of the home.

"I lost the first 30 years of my life," he said. "Every time I hear the wind blow and a piece of aluminum shift, it's like PTSD."

## Questionable roughing the passer calls raise more questions

By ROB MAADDI AP Pro Football Writer

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Can't touch this.

Falcons defensive tackle Grady Jarrett found out the hard way when he sacked Tom Brady and got flagged for roughing the passer in the fourth quarter of Atlanta's 21-15 loss at Tampa Bay on Sunday.

The questionable penalty that benefited Brady and the Buccaneers raised more concerns about interpretations of the rule. It was the second straight week referee Jerome Boger made the critical call late in the game on a play that didn't seem to warrant a flag.

Last week, it helped the Buffalo Bills on a drive that ended with Tyler Bass kicking a 21-yard field goal as time expired to beat the Baltimore Ravens 23-20.

This time, it allowed the Buccaneers to extend the final drive and eventually run out the clock.

Protecting quarterbacks has always been a point of emphasis for the NFL. That was magnified after Dolphins quarterback Tua Tagovailoa was taken off the field on a stretcher following a violent hit in a game against Cincinnati on Sept. 29. Tagovailoa sustained a concussion when 6-foot-3, 340-pound Bengals defensive tackle Josh Tupou threw him backward, slamming his head into the turf.

Tupou wasn't penalized for sacking Tagovailoa. Neither Josh Allen nor Brady were injured on the hits Boger called roughing.

"What I had was the defender grabbed the quarterback while he was still in the pocket, and unnecessarily throwing him to the ground," Boger told a pool reporter after the game. "That is what I was making my decision based upon."

Buccaneers coach Todd Bowles, of course, understood the decision.

"I saw that one being called. I saw it against Tua when he got hit, and in the London game this morning," Bowles said. "I think they are starting to crack down on some of the things, slinging backs. I don't know. Right now, the way they are calling (it), I think a lot of people would've gotten that call."

In the NFL rulebook, it states: "Any physical acts against a player who is in a passing posture (i.e. before, during, or after a pass) which, in the referee's judgment, are unwarranted by the circumstances of the play will be called as fouls."

The rulebook also notes: "When in doubt about a roughness call or potentially dangerous tactic against the quarterback, the referee should always call roughing the passer."

Many analysts, including former quarterbacks, disagreed with Boger's call.

"The league office has to get that fixed," Hall of Fame coach Tony Dungy said on NBC's "Football Night in America" pregame show. "If you cannot tackle the quarterback, it's going to be impossible to play defense."

Robert Griffin III tweeted: "The Falcons got ROBBED. Hitting the QB hard does not equal Roughing the Passer even if it's Tom Brady."

Despite the perception that the 45-year-old Brady gets special treatment, the seven-time Super Bowl champion ranks 41st with .14 roughing calls per game since 2009. This was the first time Brady was the beneficiary of a roughing penalty this season. He only got one last year.

Jarrett was visibly upset about the penalty and refused to talk to reporters after the game. Falcons coach Arthur Smith wouldn't criticize the officials.

"Obviously from my vantage point, it looked like it was a bad call," Falcons cornerback Casey Hayward Jr. said. "But that's why you put the refs out there to make these calls. They pay these guys to make those calls. It looked bad (from) my standpoint - but like I said - I was on the back end. They put these guys there to make those calls."

Nobody wants to see any player endure a hit like the one that sent Tagovailoa to the hospital. But there's a difference between protecting quarterbacks and punishing defenders for playing football.

Finding a balance is the NFL's dilemma.

## NKorea confirms simulated use of nukes to 'wipe out' enemies

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By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea's recent barrage of missile launches were the simulated use of its tactical battlefield nuclear weapons to "hit and wipe out" potential South Korean and U.S. targets, state media reported Monday, as its leader Kim Jong Un signaled he would conduct more provocative tests.

The North's statement, released on the 77th birthday of its ruling Workers' Party, is seen as an attempt to burnish Kim's image as a strong leader at home amid pandemic-related hardships as he's defiantly pushing to enlarge his weapons arsenal to wrest greater concessions from its rivals in future negotiations.

"Through seven times of launching drills of the tactical nuclear operation units, the actual war capabilities ... of the nuclear combat forces ready to hit and wipe out the set objects at any location and any time were displayed to the full," the North's official Korean Central News Agency said.

KCNA said the missile tests were in response to recent naval drills between U.S. and South Korean forces, which involved the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan for the first time in five years.

Viewing the drills as a military threat, North Korea decided to stage "the simulation of an actual war" to check and improve its war deterrence and send a warning to its enemies, KCNA said.

North Korea considers U.S.-South Korean military drills as an invasion rehearsal, though the allies have steadfastly said they are defensive in nature. Since the May inauguration of a conservative government in Seoul, the U.S. and South Korean militaries have been expanding their exercises, posing a greater security threat to Kim.

The launches — all supervised by Kim — included a nuclear-capable ballistic missile launched under a reservoir in the northeast; other ballistic missiles designed to launch nuclear strikes on South Korean airfields, ports and command facilities; and a new-type ground-to-ground ballistic missile that flew over Japan, KCNA reported. It said North Korea also flew 150 warplanes for separate live-firing and other drills in the country's first-ever such training.

Cheong Seong-Chang at the private Sejong Institute in South Korea said the missile launches marked the first time for North Korea to perform drills involving army units tasked with the operation of tactical nuclear weapons.

The North's public launch of a missile from under an inland reservoir was also the first of its kind, though it has previously test-launched missiles from a submarine.

Kim Dong-yub, a professor at Seoul's University of North Korean Studies, said North Korea likely aims to diversify launch sites to make it difficult for its enemies to detect its missile liftoffs in advance and conduct preemptive strikes.

KCNA said when the weapon launched from the reservoir was flying above the sea target, North Korean authorities confirmed the reliability of the explosion of the missile's warhead, apparently a dummy one, at the set altitude.

Kim, the professor, said the missile's estimated 600-kilometer (370-mile) flight indicated the launch could be a test of exploding a nuclear weapon above South Korea's southeastern port city of Busan, where the Reagan previously docked. He said the missile tested appeared to be a new version of North Korea's highly maneuverable KN-23 missile, which was modeled on Russia's Iskander missile.

North Korea described the missile that flew over Japan as a new-type intermediate-range weapon that traveled 4,500 kilometers (2,800 miles). Some foreign experts earlier said the missile was likely North Korea's existing nuclear-capable Hwasong-12 missile, which can reach the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam. But Kim, the professor, said the missile tested recently appeared to be an improved version of the Hwasong-12 with a faraway target like Alaska or Hawaii.

North Korea released a slew of photos on the launches. One of them showed Kim and his wife Ri Sol Ju, both wearing ochre field jackets, frowning while covering their ears. Some observers say the image indicated Ri's elevated political standing because it was likely the first time for her to observe a weapons launch with her husband.

Worries about North Korea's nuclear program deepened in recent months as the country adopted a new law authorizing the preemptive use of its bombs in certain cases and took reported steps to deploy

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tactical nuclear weapons along its frontline border with South Korea. This year, North Korea carried out more than 40 missile launches.

Some experts say Kim Jong Un would eventually aim to use his advanced nuclear arsenal to win a U.S. recognition of North Korea as a legitimate nuclear state, which Kim sees as essential in getting crippling U.N. sanctions on his country lifted.

Kim Jong Un said the recent launches were "an obvious warning" to Seoul and Washington, informing them of North Korea's nuclear attack capabilities. Kim repeated that he has no intentions of resuming the stalled disarmament diplomacy with the United States now, according to KCNA.

"The U.S. and the South Korean regime's steady, intentional and irresponsible acts of escalating the tension will only invite our greater reaction, and we are always and strictly watching the situation crisis," Kim was quoted as saying.

Kim also expressed conviction that the nuclear combat forces of his military would maintain "their strongest nuclear response posture and further strengthen it in every way" to perform their duties of defending the North's dignity and sovereign rights.

South Korean officials recently said North Korea maintains readiness to perform its first nuclear test in five years. Some experts say the nuclear test would be related to an effort to build warheads to be mounted on short-range missiles targeting South Korea.

"North Korea has multiple motivations for publishing a high-profile missile story now," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul. "Kim Jong Un's public appearance after a month-long absence provides a patriotic headline to mark the founding anniversary of the ruling Workers' Party."

"Pyongyang has been concerned about military exercises by the U.S., South Korea and Japan, so to strengthen its self-proclaimed deterrent, it is making explicit the nuclear threat behind its recent missile launches. The KCNA report may also be a harbinger of a forthcoming nuclear test for the kind of tactical warhead that would arm the units Kim visited in the field," Easley said.

## Drive for climate compensation grows after Pakistan's floods

By RIAZAT BUTT and ADIL JAWAD KHAN Associated Press

DADU, Pakistan (AP) — Every part of Rajul Noor's life has been wrecked by this summer's massive monsoon-driven floods. The 12-year-old girl's family home is destroyed, as is the school that she loved. The friends she used to walk to school and play with are scattered, finding refuge elsewhere.

"Our whole world is underwater, and nobody has helped us," she said, speaking in the tent where she, her parents and four siblings now live in Dadu district in Pakistan's Sindh province.

Almost 100% of the district's cotton and rice crops were destroyed. More than half its primary and secondary schools were fully or partially damaged, local officials say. Boats laden with people and their belongings crisscross Dadu, past buildings still partially submerged, weeks after the rains stopped. This level of damage is repeated in towns and cities across Pakistan.

The destruction has intensified the debate over a question of climate justice: Whether rich countries whose emissions have been the main driver of climate change owe compensation for the damage that change is inflicting on poor countries like Pakistan.

It's an idea that developed nations have repeatedly rejected, but Pakistan and other developing countries are pushing for it to be seriously discussed at COP27, next month's international climate conference in Egypt.

Pakistan in many ways crystalizes the debate. Scientists have said climate change no doubt helped swell monsoon rains this summer that dumped three and a half times the normal amount of rain, putting a third of the country underwater. At least 1,300 people were killed, and 33 million people in Pakistan have been affected.

Pakistan, which contributed only 0.8% to the world's emissions, now faces damages estimated at more than \$30 billion, more than 10% of its GDP. It must repair or replace 2 million damaged or destroyed homes, nearly 24,000 schools, nearly 1,500 health facilities and 13,000 kilometers (7,800 miles) of roads. Bridges, hotels, dams, and other structures were swept away.



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"These 33 million Pakistanis are paying in the form of their lives and livelihoods for the industrialization of bigger countries," Pakistani Foreign Minister Bilwal Bhutto-Zardari said on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly last month.

Climate Change Minister Sherry Rehman went further, saying rich nations owe reparations to countries hit by climate disasters.

Developed nations have refused anything that smacks of reparations, fearing the door will open to massive climate claims against them from around the world.

They agreed to give money to help poorer countries reduce emissions and adapt their infrastructure for future climate change, though they have been slow in providing the money. But at COP26 in Glasgow last year, the United States and European Union members rejected demands for a fund to compensate poor countries for "loss and damage" -- destruction already wrought by climate change.

"Bigger states are extremely concerned about liability. How long can they keep kicking the can down the road? They may at some point want to settle as the issue isn't going to go away," said Margeretha Wewerinke-Singh, assistant professor of international public law at Leiden University in the Netherlands.

She is lead counsel for the tiny Pacific island nation of Vanuatu in its pursuit of an advisory opinion on climate change from the International Court of Justice.

Wewerinke-Singh said there is a basis for legal action. International law says states have an obligation not to cause harm to the environment of other states. Violations can trigger an obligation to make reparation — either restoring the situation to what it was before or providing compensation.

Pakistan has two options, she said. It could go after states through an international body like the ICJ. But this avenue rules out China and the U.S., two of the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitters, as they don't recognize the ICJ's jurisdiction. Or it could pursue cases against governments or fossil fuel companies in national courts.

She pointed to successful suits against tobacco companies for the harm caused by smoking.

"Climate change litigation is in its infancy. Tobacco litigation is an example of litigation that was construed to be far-fetched, but it really took off," she said.

Regardless of Rehman's statement, Pakistan's prime minister and foreign minister have both said their country is not demanding reparations. Instead, they have spoken forcefully of rich countries' moral obligation to help Pakistan as a victim of climate change.

That may reflect a calculation on Islamabad's part that it is more likely to get the funding it needs by pressing developed countries to give at a U.N.-backed donor conference for Pakistan expected later this year, rather than stoke their fears on reparations by pursuing a long-term, systematic solution like a fund for loss and damage.

Complicating the case for reparations is the question of how much Pakistan's own policies worsened the impact of the flood disaster.

Ayesha Siddiqi, an expert on climate change and disasters, said the greater responsibility for the destruction lies with those causing climate change, "but there is responsibility" with Pakistan as well. She was one of the authors on a scientific paper released last month that pointed to Pakistan's self-created vulnerabilities.

Pakistan approved a national flood protection plan in 2017 but never put it in place. The World Bank extended a \$200 million credit line to fund flood protection projects in Baluchistan province but it was suspended because of Pakistan's lack of progress in implementing it; the projects were supposed to have been completed this month.

The biggest problems that Siddiqi and others point to are unrestricted building in flood zones and Pakistan's reliance on engineering mega-projects like large dams and drainage systems along the Indus River Valley. Those mega-projects only worsen destruction by trying to pen up floodwaters, they say, when it should be trying to let the inundation flow through with as little harm as possible.

"It's about controlling the river, taming the river, rather than small-scale solutions to manage the water and working with the ecological system," Siddiqi said.

No reforms were enacted after 2010 flooding that killed nearly 2,000 people, said Daanish Mustafa,

who co-authored Pakistan's first climate change response strategy and was lead author on a U.N. flood response strategy for Pakistan.

He has recommended removing obstacles that block natural drainage and preventing home building on flood plains.

In Dadu, Noor keeps the same routine as she once did in her village of Gholam Nabi Pir. She wakes at 5 a.m. and helps her four younger sibling get ready for the day. They go to school in a nearby tent. But there's no longer the long walk to school with her friends, no more playing tag around her house, no hearty traditional breakfast of fried eggs and paratha flatbread.

"I lived happily at home. I miss everything about it," she said. "It makes me cry."

## '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

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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 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

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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.

## Musgrove pitches hometown Padres past Mets 6-0 and into NLDS

By MIKE FITZPATRICK AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — With a magnificent performance on a memorable night in Padres history, Joe Musgrove brought this one home for San Diego and really stuck it to the New York Mets.

The big right-hander brushed off chants of "Cheater!" after a bizarre spot check by umpires on the mound, pitching his hometown Padres into the next round of the playoffs Sunday with seven innings of one-hit ball in a 6-0 victory over the listless Mets.

"You could see the resolve in his face and the demeanor he had," San Diego manager Bob Melvin said. "He was on a mission today."

Trent Grisham hit an RBI single and made a terrific catch in center field that helped the Padres take the best-of-three National League wild-card series 2-1. Austin Nola and Juan Soto each had a two-run single.

San Diego advanced to face the top-seeded Los Angeles Dodgers in a best-of-five Division Series beginning Tuesday — ensuring the Padres will play in front of their home fans in the postseason for the first time in 16 years when they return to Petco Park for Game 3.

"Can't wait to get back there. They deserve it," Melvin said.

It was the fifth time the Padres won a playoff series — and they took this one without star shortstop Fernando Tatis Jr., sidelined all season by a wrist injury and PED suspension.

They won a first-round matchup against St. Louis in their own ballpark with no fans permitted after the pandemic-shortened 2020 season before being swept in the Division Series by the eventual World Series champion Dodgers.

For the Mets, a scintillating season ended with a whimper at home in front of empty seats. Baseball's biggest spenders won 101 games — second-most in franchise history — but were unable to hold off Atlanta in the NL East after sitting atop the division for all but six days.

Relegated to the wild-card round, New York never fully recovered. Max Scherzer got rocked in Game 1 and, after the Mets won Game 2 behind Jacob deGrom to stave off elimination, they mustered almost nothing against Musgrove and finished with one lonely hit.

No. 3 starter Chris Bassitt lasted just four innings, giving up three runs and three hits with three costly walks to batters near the bottom of the order.

Pete Alonso's leadoff single in the fifth and Starling Marte's walk to start the seventh were the only baserunners permitted by Musgrove in his first postseason start. He was 0-5 with a 6.33 ERA in five previous starts against the Mets.

Robert Suarez and Josh Hader finished up with perfect relief. After the final out, Padres players and coaches gathered for happy hugs and handshakes on the field as a small but vocal throng of San Diego fans dressed in brown and yellow cheered and chanted "Beat LA! Beat LA!" behind the team's dugout.

Then the Padres took the party inside their clubhouse — dancing and dousing each other with booze in a loud, raucous celebration.

"They flat-out beat us," Alonso said.

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Musgrove grew up a Padres fan in the San Diego suburbs and pitched the franchise's first no-hitter last year in his second start with the team.

He was working on a one-hitter and warming up for the sixth inning Sunday when Mets manager Buck Showalter came out of the dugout and spoke to first base umpire Alfonso Marquez.

"All Buck requested was for us to check for an illegal substance," Marquez said.

The six umps huddled and then went to the mound. Marquez, the crew chief, felt Musgrove's glove, cap — even his ears — searching for any unauthorized sticky substances.

"I've seen him do it before, checking the pitcher," Musgrove said, referring to Showalter. "I get it, dude. They're on their last leg, they're desperate, they're doing everything they can to get me out of the game."

Marquez said the umpires "found nothing."

Musgrove was allowed to continue, and he worked a 1-2-3 sixth punctuated by a pointed gesture toward the New York dugout.

"It motivated me a little bit, man. It fired me up," he said.

The spin rate was up on all six of Musgrove's pitches Sunday.

"I love him as a pitcher, always have," Showalter said. "I feel kind of bad about it, but it won't cast anything. He's too good a pitcher, and they're too good — without getting into a lot of things, the spin rates and different things that I'm sure you're all aware of when you see something that jumps out at you. I get a lot of information in the dugout that — we certainly weren't having much luck the way it was going, that's for sure."

"I'm charged with doing what's best for the New York Mets. If it makes me look however it makes me look or whatever, I'm going to do it every time and live with the consequences. I'm not here to not hurt somebody's feelings. I'm going to do what's best for our players and the New York Mets. I felt like that was best for us right now. There's some pretty obvious reasons why it was necessary."

Fans yelled "Cheater!" at Musgrove, a member of the 2017 Houston Astros World Series champions that were found by Major League Baseball to have stolen signs illegally to help their hitters.

"I guarantee Musgrove has Red Hot on his ears," Milwaukee outfielder Andrew McCutchen tweeted. "Pitchers use it as mechanism to stay locked in during games. It burns like crazy and IDK why some guys thinks it helps them but in no way is it 'sticky.' Buck is smart tho. Could be trying to just throw him off."

Musgrove has said he feels uncomfortable wearing his Astros championship ring after their cheating scandal rocked the sport. He said he wants "one that feels earned" with the Padres.

"Joe Musgrove is a man of character," Melvin said. "Questioning his character to me, that's the part I have a problem with, and I'm here to tell everybody that Joe Musgrove is as above board as any pitcher I know, any player I know, and unfortunately that happened to him because the reception that he got after that was not warranted."

## THINKING OF MR. PADRE

During batting practice, San Diego second baseman Jake Cronenworth wore an old-school Tony Gwynn No. 19 uniform T-shirt, a giveaway at Petco Park one day this season.

Cronenworth figured this was a night to salute the late Padres Hall of Famer.

"I brought it with me for a reason, so I decided I'd wear it," he said. "Tony was one of the best, so give us some support from up above."

## TRAINER'S ROOM

Padres: All-Star 3B Manny Machado, who had an RBI single, limped back to the dugout after striking out in the ninth and appeared to be favoring his right leg. He remained in the game and said afterward he was fine.

## UP NEXT

San Diego went 5-14 against the first-place Dodgers this season and finished 22 games behind them in the NL West.

New York begins its spring training schedule next year with split-squad games Feb. 25 against Miami and Houston. The regular-season opener is March 30 at Miami.

## A personal reckoning, and the truth comes out of the closet

By BOBBY CAINA CALVAN Associated Press

I crouched onto the damp grass and picked at the weeds sprouting around my dad's headstone. I struggled for the words — and the courage — to tell him what I couldn't in his living years. I had flown thousands of miles to Sacramento to visit my dead father and reveal the secret I have held close for most of my 57 years.

In life, my father wasn't the type of man who had heart-to-heart talks with his children. And I'm not the type to confide his deepest-held emotions with family, not even with my closest siblings. I held my deepest torments tight inside me.

I stammered as I spoke to his grave. It took a half hour before I could utter a complete sentence as I continued pulling weeds and rearranging the flowers I brought him. "Daddy, I gotta tell you something. I wanted to tell you this for a long time."

In a halting and hushed voice, in case the breeze carried my secret to eavesdropping ears, I broke the news to my father, dead 24 years:

"Dad, I'm gay."

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I am the eighth of nine children, the bookish one who did well in grade school without trying. We were from a working-class, maybe even impoverished family. My dad milked cows at a corporate dairy on the other side of the Ko'olau Mountains from Diamond Head. Our house was among about a dozen in an enclave of mostly immigrant families adjacent to cow pastures. My mother worked at hotels in Waikiki.

I didn't have many friends outside my dairy farm community. I liked spending time alone, sometimes building tree houses at the foot of the nearby mountain. I often roamed the pastures or hiked alone among the trees, or walked along a creek to scoop out guppies and crayfish.

There are certainly out gay people in my culture. But the visible ones are often jesters to be laughed at. The words I grew up with to describe gay people — "bakla" in Pilipino and "mahu" in Hawaiian — were synonymous to "faggot," derisive terms that I would never want to be called.

In Asian culture, we have been taught not to shame the family. Being gay, I thought, would have brought embarrassment and ridicule.

I knew I was attracted to other guys when I hit puberty. I tried fooling myself and others into thinking I was attracted to the opposite sex.

I remember fretting about having to get naked with other boys at my school's communal shower after P.E., worried that somehow I'd be found out. So I would get under the spray of water quickly and towel off as fast as I could. At gatherings, I tried to be the flirtatious life of the party. But whenever a girl showed the slightest interest, I would recoil.

As a young adult, my resume was fragmented, leading some to wonder if I could hold a job. The truth was that I quit jobs I enjoyed because I was running from my sexuality. I once had a crush on another guy — a straight guy — and I quit when it became unbearable. I perpetuated my own big lie.

Coming out seemed so easy for other people, especially today's young. I sometimes wondered how different things would have been had I came out sooner. Perhaps I would have planted roots in a community instead of jumping from job to job, hopscotching from one city to the next.

How orderly my life could have been.

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As a journalist, my job is to report the truth. Yet I had been lying all these years, purposely hiding the truth to protect myself. It was an ethical lapse that tortured me.

My journey out of the closet has taken decades. I am still sharing my truth about my sexuality — something that, before my confession to my father, I had shared with only a handful of friends.

The first friend I told took me to a gay bar across the Potomac from Washington, to help ease my coming out. I was still full of shame and awkwardness. I kept myself from making eye contact with other men. While my friend was outside having a smoke, a hand slid across my back.

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"Congratulations," the stranger told me.

"Huh? For what," I asked.

"For having the courage to come out," he replied.

I felt violated. How dare my friend out me to a stranger! I had lost control over my secret, even if I knew my friend was trying to be helpful. We failed to realize then that coming out would be far more complicated and onerous.

Four years passed before I told another soul.

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Holding in my secret was excruciating. It nearly took my life.

During one of my melancholy days, I took a drive through Glacier National Park in Montana to help lift my mood. I stared down sheer cliffs as my Subaru lurched up the cliff-hugging Going-to-the-Sun Road. I could feel my car drifting closer to the edge. I felt no inclination to steer back on course.

Regret filled my mind. I thought about how much simpler it would be if I started over in the afterlife.

A siren's wail jarred me back into reality. An ambulance was speeding up the road. I would later learn that a hiker had fallen to his death. The piercing sound might have saved me from a similar fate.

After wandering the country that summer, I resolved to begin stepping out of the closet again.

One of my best friends and his wife were visiting New York City from Paris for the new year in 2018. It was time to tell Kevin, I told myself. But when the first chance came, I couldn't go through with it.

The next day, I met a couple of buddies for drinks and dinner at a restaurant in Manhattan's Koreatown. I hesitated to tell them, but thought I'd use the experience as practice for when I would tell Kevin.

My heart pumped. My nerves jittered to my fingertips. My knees bounced with nervousness. Looks of concern came over my friends' faces as I tried to tell them. I could not use the word gay, and they wondered why I was in such distress.

"It's about my sexuality."

"That's a relief," one friend said. "I thought you were going to tell us you had cancer."

The next morning, I sat down with Kevin, my best friend, and told him I had something important to say.

"Remember when you asked me to be your best man?" I said. "I really wanted to tell you then, so you could change your mind."

"What are you talking about?" he asked.

Again, I couldn't use the word gay. Again, my knees bounced. I was sweating. My eyes turned glassy. I saw worry in his wife's eyes. "What's wrong?" Kevin asked. He started guessing.

I gave him a clue.

"You're gay?" he finally asked.

I nodded. He chuckled in relief.

"I'm sorry. It's not funny — but is that all?"

He told me: He would have asked me to be his best man anyway.

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Most of my life, I had suffered from migraines. With my truth finally coming out, that pain has mostly disappeared.

But I still couldn't share my secret with my siblings.

During a visit to California, I had taken a nephew aside. All these years, I had wanted to tell his mother that I was gay. But I hadn't mustered the courage. Just days before, I nearly suffered a nervous breakdown in her car trying to tell her; I dismissed my fraying nerves to stress at work.

Upon hearing what I had to share, he asked why I hadn't told anyone sooner. "Uncle Bobby, you could have been so much happier."

Many months later, I would tell a younger nephew. I recalled how after a football game — he was the star quarterback — he quizzed me about my love life, or the lack thereof. He noted he never saw me introduce any women to the family, that he didn't know me to have been dating. He wanted to know why.

So did a sister, who would later confide: "I wanted to ask, but I didn't want to embarrass you."

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When I told her my secret just months ago, she shrugged. "I kind of figured," she said. I was more apprehensive about telling my two oldest sisters, twins, who were devout Roman Catholics. I didn't know what to expect when I started to share my secret with one of them. I was practiced and calm. I spoke to her about my depression and the medication that had helped lift me. As a nurse, she quizzed me about how I was feeling.

Then I told her the source of my many years of depression. I recounted how, not too many years before, I nearly drifted off the road to my death.

"Oh, my God," she said. "Don't worry about those things. God still loves you."

Then she recommended that I hold back in telling more of my siblings. They had too many worries of their own, she said, to handle such news.

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I've been told I look a lot like my father. When I'm feeling sociable, I take on his personality — a back-slapper, a schmoozer, a happy-go-lucky guy.

In truth, I'm more like my mother — someone who can be comfortable around others but who couldn't always get along with them. Moody. Sometimes gruff.

I was closer to my mom than I was to my dad. Both were fiercely proud of me, even if I hadn't achieved the dream they had for me — a family, fancy cars and wealth. I never aspired to have any of those. But they found prestige in my college education and, eventually, the profession I pursued.

My father loved reading the newspaper, watching the evening news and following politics. How proud he would have been to know that I stood just feet from a U.S. president or that I covered Congress.

Weeks before I would depart to cover the war in Iraq, we gathered in our hometown in the Philippines to fete my mother for her 80th birthday. Neither she nor any of my siblings knew I was heading into a war zone. I thought about telling her my secret — should something go awry during my assignment.

As I bid her goodbye in the Philippines, little did I know: That chance would never come again.

My mother died on Thanksgiving 2007, barely two months after her birthday, just as I was preparing to join troops in Iraq for wartime holiday celebrations.

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When I told my father at his grave about my secret, I made a request: Don't tell my mother. I wanted to retain ownership of my secret until I chose to share it with her.

My mother and I had a turbulent relationship. She thought I was too free and wayward. Little did she know that I had built a cage around me — one that grew more constricting as I aged. So there I was at her grave, hoping to break through.

I waited until the final day of my trip, even as it gnawed at me. Surely she must have known; there must be such a thing as mother's intuition. Maybe my father had already shared my secret. No matter. I needed to go through the exercise of telling her, as if she were still alive.

At her grave, I lingered. I peeled away hardened pools of candle wax. As I sweltered under a fierce sun, I hoped to let the truth uncage itself. I hoped to marshal the same courage I had mustered months earlier while standing before my dead father.

But I found no words to break my uncomfortable silence. I simply could not say what I wanted to — not here, not now.

I turned back and returned home full of regret. My journey was — is — not yet over.

## Nevada Senate race tests potency of abortion focus for Dems

By STEVE PEOPLES AP National Political Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Democrats predicted abortion would be Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto's saving grace.

But inside Nevada's crowded union halls, across its sun-scorched desert towns and on the buzzing Las Vegas strip, there are signs that outrage over the Supreme Court's decision to dismantle abortion rights may not be enough to overcome intensifying economic concerns.

That's leaving Cortez Masto as the Senate's most vulnerable Democrat in the final month of a volatile



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midterm election year. Her predicament is the starkest example of the challenge facing Democrats nationwide as they try to capitalize on anger over the abortion ruling while Republicans focus on crime and stubborn inflation. If Cortez Masto can't turn things around, the GOP would be well on its way to netting the one seat they need to retake the Senate and blunt the final two years of President Joe Biden's term.

In an interview, Cortez Masto sidestepped questions about her fragile political standing. She acknowledged "there's more work to be done" on the economy in a working-class state in which gasoline remains over \$5.40 per gallon, the unemployment rate is higher than the national average and spending at casinos has not kept pace with inflation.

"I know our families, the issues that are important to them are the kitchen-table issues," she said, citing the recent passage by the Democratic-controlled Congress of the so-called Inflation Reduction Act, which lowered the cost of some prescription drugs and expanded health care coverage, among other Democratic priorities.

"But I also know, talking with our families, the repeal of Roe v. Wade is having an impact," she said. "We're a pro-choice state, proudly. That's why so many are outraged by the repeal."

Democrats insist that Nevada remains a purple state, despite being led by a Democratic governor, two Democratic senators and a Democratic-controlled state legislature. Former President Donald Trump lost the state by less than 34,000 votes in 2020. And on Nov. 8, polls suggest, the GOP could take over several statewide offices.

Veteran Democratic strategist James Carville fears his party's hyper-focus on abortion isn't working.

"A lot of these consultants think if all we do is run abortion spots that will win for us. I don't think so," said Carville, a vocal Cortez Masto ally who has sent dozens of fundraising emails on her behalf. "It's a good issue. But if you just sit there and they're pummeling you on crime and pummeling you on the cost of living, you've got to be more aggressive than just yelling abortion every other word."

Cortez Masto is facing Republican Adam Laxalt, a former state attorney general, failed 2018 gubernatorial candidate and the grandson of a former Nevada governor and U.S. senator. The 44-year-old Republican has avoided talking about his opposition to abortion in the election's final weeks as his campaign works to avoid unscripted moments.

Laxalt's campaign refused to make him available for this story. And he has declined to participate in any of the state's traditional debates, although he called unsuccessfully for Cortez Masto to agree to at least two other meetings. Late last week, organizers canceled what would have been the only debate broadcast in Spanish because of Laxalt's refusal to attend.

Laxalt instead spent his weekend campaigning with Trump, whom Laxalt has leaned on to revitalize his political career.

Laxalt co-chaired Trump's state campaign in 2020 and spearheaded legal challenges to the vote-counting process. Earlier in the year, he began raising fears of voter fraud in the 2022 midterms as well.

With polls now showing he could defeat Cortez Masto, Laxalt avoided the topic of election fraud as he addressed thousands of Trump supporters gathered Saturday on the edge of a desert air field. Speaking an hour before Trump called 2020 "a fake and dirty and rigged election" on the same stage, Laxalt focused on the state's economic woes and Cortez Masto's support for Biden.

"She won't mention the two words: 'Joe Biden.' Will Joe Biden come to Nevada anytime soon? I'm still waiting for that invite," Laxalt snickered, speaking from a podium emblazoned with Trump's name.

In the interview, Cortez Masto did not say whether she wanted the Democratic president to visit the state on her behalf.

"The president is always welcome in the state of Nevada. But really, my goal here is to make sure I'm addressing the needs of Nevadans," she said, adding that she wasn't surprised Trump was in the state campaigning for Laxalt.

Laxalt "was the face of the big lie for President Trump in the state," Cortez Masto said. "In my view, he stands with the insurrectionists and not the people of Nevada."

Vulnerable Democratic senators in Arizona, Georgia and New Hampshire are also fighting to overcome Biden's weak standing, which is roughly equal to Trump's in the 2018 midterms when the GOP lost 40

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House seats. The party that occupies the White House almost always suffers major losses in a president's first midterm election.

But there are reasons to believe that Cortez Masto's situation is more dire than those of her colleagues elsewhere.

Nevada's electorate is overwhelmingly working-class compared to voters in other battleground states, leaving the state's 3 million residents more vulnerable to economic setbacks. Just 25.5% of the state graduated from college, compared to 35% nationally, according to the Census Bureau.

Nevada has among the highest gasoline prices in the country at an average of \$5.44, almost 40% higher than the U.S. average, according to AAA. Higher gas prices have also translated into fewer drivers crossing into Nevada from California to go to Las Vegas. Nor has gaming revenue kept pace with annual inflation. Gaming revenue in Clark County, home to Las Vegas, rose just 2.9% in August from a year ago.

Gas prices may get worse before they get better. The Biden administration suffered a stinging setback last week when OPEC oil producers announced a major production cut.

At the same time, Laxalt has avoided some of the pitfalls that have undermined high-profile GOP Senate candidates in other key states.

In New Hampshire, Republican groups canceled millions of dollars in television ad reservations designed to benefit GOP nominee Don Bolduc in recent days, reflecting a growing sense that Bolduc's hard-line conservative positions will make it difficult to defeat Democratic Sen. Maggie Hassan.

Republicans have also pulled some money out of Arizona, despite first-term Sen. Mark Kelly's apparent vulnerability in a state Biden carried by less than 1% in 2020. And in Georgia, Republican Senate nominee Herschel Walker's prospects have been clouded by allegations that he paid for a girlfriend's abortion.

Laxalt, by contrast, has sought to cast himself as a mainstream Republican with longstanding ties to the state, despite the best efforts of Democrats to highlight his loyalty to Trump. That may be good enough in a difficult political environment for Democrats as questions loom about the potency of the Democrats' abortion message.

Republican National Committee Chair Ronna McDaniel, in Las Vegas late last week to promote the GOP ticket, said Democrats have "oversaturated" their abortion message.

"Voters are starting to come back to the things they wake up thinking about every day: Can I fill my car with gas? Can I pay for groceries? How are my kids doing?" she said. "And those are the issues that I think are really going to win, and that's where Adam is focused."

Nevada Republicans also note that abortion — in the state, at least — is settled because of a 1990 referendum that codified abortion access until 24 weeks of pregnancy into state law.

Yusette Solomon, a canvasser for the state's powerful pro-Democrat Culinary Workers union, said he doesn't hear much about abortion when talking to voters. Instead, the 47-year-old hotel utility porter said, the state's economic challenges remain a constant concern.

"It's hard for everybody," he said. "It's the supermarket. It's gas. Inflation is something we need to deal with. Everyone's feeling it."

Solomon lost his job at a Las Vegas hotel for roughly two years because of the pandemic. He survived only by driving for Uber.

Still, he's optimistic about Cortez Masto's chances.

"I'm sure Democrats are going to win. This is a blue state. We're going to continue to be a blue state," Solomon said. "Every election is tough."

## From fringe to front row: Congresswoman Greene rises in GOP

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Marjorie Taylor Greene took her seat directly behind Republican House leader Kevin McCarthy, a proximity to power for the firebrand congresswoman that did not go unnoticed, as he unveiled the House GOP's midterm election agenda in Pennsylvania.

Days later, she appeared on stage warming up the crowd for Donald Trump, when the former president

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rallied voters in Michigan to cast ballots for Republicans, including for control of Congress.

Once shunned as a political pariah for her extremist rhetoric, the Georgia congresswoman who spent her first term in the House stripped of institutional power by Democrats is being celebrated by Republicans and welcomed into the GOP fold. If Republicans win the House majority in the November election, Greene is poised to become an influential player shaping the GOP agenda, an agitator with clout.

"No. 1, we need to impeach Joe Biden. No. 2, We need to impeach Secretary Mayorkas. And No. 3, we should impeach Merrick Garland," Greene told The Associated Press outside the U.S. Capitol. Alejandro Mayorkas is the secretary of the Department of Homeland Security and Garland the attorney general.

Scolding the media for having been "wrong about me" from the start, she said those who know better "take me very seriously."

"I'm going to be a strong legislator and I'll be a very involved member of Congress," she predicted. "I know how to work inside, and I know how to work outside. And I'm looking forward to doing that."

This is the outlook for the Republican Party in the Trump era, the normalizing of once fringe figures into the highest ranks of political power. It's a sign of the GOP's rightward drift that Greene's association with extremists and nationalists, violent rhetoric and remarks about Jewish people have found a home in elected office. Her ascent brings into focus the challenge ahead for McCarthy, whose GOP ranks are filling with far-right political stars with the potential to play an oversized role in setting the policies, priorities and tone of the new Congress.

"I've said for a long time there's a battle for the heart and soul of the Republican Party," said Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, the No. 2 Democrat in the House, at a briefing ahead of the midterm elections.

When the congresswoman says outlandish things — as she did at the Trump rally earlier this month claiming "Democrats want Republicans dead, and they've already started the killings" — few Republican leaders dare a public or private rebuke of such incendiary language. In this case, she was exaggerating two local incidents involving politics, one that ended tragically in a fatality.

Greene's political currency stretches beyond her massive social media following and her ability to rake in sizable sums from donors. Her proximity to Trump makes her a force that cannot be ignored by what's left of her mainstream GOP colleagues.

McCarthy's allowance for Greene to sit front and center with leadership for the campaign rollout was not by accident but design. The Republican lawmakers in attendance celebrated her presence, calling it a sign of the GOP's "big tent" that welcomes all comers. But Greene's arrival also signaled a stark normalizing of the most extreme elements in the Republican Party.

Longtime political strategist Rick Wilson, a former Republican who left the party in the Trump era, calls Greene's brand of politics "government by trolling" that marks a dangerous new era for the GOP and will make it difficult to govern. McCarthy is in line to become House speaker if Republicans regain the majority.

"No matter what the trolling part of the Republican caucus does, you can't ever satisfy them," said Wilson, now at the Lincoln Project.

With the departure of the last vestiges of the anti-Trump wing of the House GOP — Liz Cheney defeated by a primary opponent and Adam Kinzinger deciding to step down rather than seek reelection — "that's it," Wilson said.

Greene swept onto the national stage in the 2020 election, catapulted forward even before she took office. As the lawmaker-elect from northwest Georgia, she attended a key organizing meeting at the Trump White House as lawmakers laid plans to object to the certification of Joe Biden's election on Jan. 6, 2021. When she arrived to be sworn into Congress, she wore a "Trump Won" face mask.

Democrats moved swiftly and unequivocally to reprimand Greene, voting to strip her of congressional committee assignments over her incendiary rhetoric, including trafficking in volatile conspiracy theories. Greene drew rebuke from her own party a few months later for comparing mandatory COVID-19 face masks to the treatment of Jewish people by Nazi Germany.

While some have tried to compare Greene to outspoken far-left lawmakers, it became clear even to Republican leaders that Greene stood in a category of her own.

At that time, McCarthy called her comments about the Holocaust "wrong" and "appalling." Greene later

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apologized.

In many ways, Greene's arrival in the House traces the arc of the Republican Party's rightward evolution from the Newt Gingrich revolution that brought conservatives to power in the 1994 election, to the "tea party" Republicans that regained the House majority in 2010.

Jack Kingston, a former Republican congressman who rose during those earlier eras, said McCarthy was smart in welcoming Greene to unfurl the House GOP's "Commitment to America" last month.

"He's got to work with her, and he knows that," Kingston said.

"Getting Marjorie Taylor Greene on board is very important," he said. "If you don't bring everybody in the tent, they're going to find their own niche."

In the interview, Greene said she is certain she will be reinstated on her congressional committees if Republicans win the majority, eyeing the House Oversight panel, and is talking to leadership about other opportunities in the new Congress.

Not only does Greene want to impeach Biden and Cabinet officials, she is eager to conduct investigations, including into the origins of COVID-19.

Last month, Greene unveiled legislation that is another priority — her bill to prohibit some gender reassignment procedures on minors — flanked by a dozen Republican lawmakers and leaders in the conservative movement. Many of them praised the congresswoman for her work.

"I want to thank Marjorie Taylor Greene — who is soon to get her full legislative powers back, by the way," said Matt Schlapp, chairman of the Conservative Political Action Committee, who hugged her afterward.

"If this is the type of thing that you're going to have the courage to do, I think that's something everybody needs to understand," Schlapp said.

McCarthy and Greene appear to have come to an understanding that they need each other. The leader needs Greene to come into the GOP fold rather than throw rocks from outside. She needs McCarthy's blessing to regain committee assignments, enabling her to participate more fully in Congress and put her imprint on legislation.

At the Pennsylvania event McCarthy batted away questions about his ability to govern if Republicans win the majority.

"Name me one person in the conference that is opposed to this," he said afterward of their platform. "Is that a difference? Yes."

## UN mulls quick foreign troop deployment to ease Haiti crisis

By DÁNICA COTO Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — The United Nations Security Council was evaluating options including the immediate activation of foreign troops to help free Haiti from the grip of gangs that has caused a scarcity of fuel, water and other basic supplies.

Such a force would "remove the threat posed by armed gangs and provide immediate protection to critical infrastructure and services," as well as secure the "free movement of water, fuel, food and medical supplies from main ports and airports to communities and health care facilities," according to a letter U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres submitted to the council on Sunday.

The letter, which was seen by The Associated Press and has not been made public, said one or several member states would deploy the force to help Haiti's National Police.

It also states the secretary-general may deploy "additional U.N. capacities to support a ceasefire or humanitarian arrangements."

However, the letter notes that "a return to a more robust United Nations engagement in the form of peacekeeping remains a last resort if no decisive action is urgently taken by the international community in line with the outlined options and national law enforcement capacity proves unable to reverse the deteriorating security situation."

The letter was submitted after Haiti Prime Minister Ariel Henry and 18 high-ranking officials requested from international partners "the immediate deployment of a specialized armed force, in sufficient quantity," to stop the "criminal actions" of armed gangs across the country.

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The request comes nearly a month after one of Haiti's most powerful gangs seized control of a key fuel terminal in the capital of Port-au-Prince, where some 10 million gallons of diesel and gasoline and more than 800,000 gallons of kerosene are stored.

Tens of thousands of demonstrators also have barricaded streets in Port-au-Prince and other major cities in recent weeks, preventing the flow of goods and traffic as part of an ongoing protest against a spike in the prices of gasoline, diesel and kerosene.

Gas stations and schools are closed, while banks and grocery stores are operating on a limited schedule.

Protesters are demanding the resignation of Henry, who announced in early September that his administration could no longer afford to subsidize fuel.

The deepening paralysis has caused supplies of fuel, water and other basic goods to dwindle amid a cholera outbreak that has killed several people and sickened dozens of others, with health officials warning that the situation could worsen.

On Sunday, Haitian senators signed a document demanding that Henry's "de facto government" defer its request for deployment of foreign troops, saying it is illegal under local laws.

A spokesman for Henry could not be immediately reached for comment.

Haitian officials have not specified what kind of armed forces they're seeking, with many local leaders rejecting the idea of U.N. peacekeepers, noting that they've been accused of sexual assault and of sparking a cholera epidemic that killed nearly 10,000 people during their a 13-year mission in Haiti that ended five years ago.

The letter that the U.N. secretary-general submitted Sunday suggests that the rapid action force be phased out as Haitian police regain control of infrastructure, and that two options could follow: member states establish an international police task force to help and advise local officers or create a special force to help tackle gangs "including through joint strike, isolation and containment operations across the country."

The letter notes that if member states do not "step forward with bilateral support and financing," the U.N. operation may be an alternative.

"However, as indicated, a return to U.N. peacekeeping was not the preferred option of the authorities," it states.

The letter also says the Security Council could decide to strengthen the police component of the current United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti known as BINUH, and to call on member states to provide additional equipment and training to local police, which are understaffed and lack resources. Only about a third of some 13,000 are operational in a country of more than 11 million people.

The secretary-general said the issue is a matter of urgency, noting Haiti "is facing an outbreak of cholera amid a dramatic deterioration in security that has paralyzed the country."

The U.S. Embassy has granted temporarily leave to personnel and urged U.S. citizens to immediately leave Haiti.

## UN ponders rapid armed force to help end Haiti's crisis

By DÁNICA COTO Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres submitted a letter to the Security Council on Sunday proposing the immediate activation of a rapid action force following a plea for help from Haiti as gangs and protesters paralyze the country.

The letter, which was seen by The Associated Press but has not been made public, said the rapid action force would be deployed by one or several member states to help Haiti's National Police. That force would "remove the threat posed by armed gangs and provide immediate protection to critical infrastructure and services," as well as secure the "free movement of water, fuel, food and medical supplies from main ports and airports to communities and health care facilities."

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peacekeeping remains a last resort if no decisive action is urgently taken by the international community in line with the outlined options and national law enforcement capacity proves unable to reverse the deteriorating security situation."

A Canadian official who was not authorized to speak publicly on the matter told the AP on condition of anonymity that "we are watching the situation in Haiti closely and will be working with our international partners to assess Haiti's broader request for international support."

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On Friday, Haiti's government published an official document signed by Prime Minister Ariel Henry and 18 top-ranking officials requesting from international partners "the immediate deployment of a specialized armed force, in sufficient quantity," to stop the "criminal actions" of armed gangs across the country.

The request comes nearly a month after one of Haiti's most powerful gangs surrounded a key fuel terminal in the capital of Port-au-Prince, preventing the distribution of some 10 million gallons of diesel and gasoline and more than 800,000 gallons of kerosene stored on site.

Tens of thousands of demonstrators also have blocked streets in Port-au-Prince and other major cities in recent weeks, preventing the flow of traffic including water trucks and ambulances, as part of an ongoing protest against a spike in the prices of gasoline, diesel and kerosene.

Gas stations and schools are closed, while banks and grocery stores are operating on a limited schedule.

Protesters are demanding the resignation of Henry, who announced in early September that his administration could no longer afford to subsidize fuel.

The deepening paralysis has caused supplies of fuel, water and other basic goods to dwindle amid a cholera outbreak that has killed several people and sickened dozens of others, with health officials warning that the situation could worsen amid a lack of potable water and cramped living conditions. More than 150 suspected cases have been reported, with the U.N. warning that the outbreak is spreading beyond Port-au-Prince.

The outbreak comes as UNICEF warns that three-fourths of major hospitals across Haiti are unable to provide critical service "due to the fuel crisis, insecurity and looting."

The U.S. Embassy has granted temporarily leave to personnel and urged U.S. citizens to immediately leave Haiti.

Haitian officials have not specified what kind of armed forces they're seeking, with many local leaders rejecting the idea of U.N. peacekeepers, noting that they've been accused of sexual assault and of sparking a cholera epidemic that killed nearly 10,000 people during their a 13-year mission in Haiti that ended five years ago.

A Brazilian general and former U.N. peace mission leader who declined to be identified because he is still involved with the U.N. told The Associated Press this weekend that any peacekeeping mission would be established following a decision by the Security Council if it believes there's a risk to international security.

The U.N. would send a team for evaluation, and then the Security Council would decide if money is

available and which countries would be available for volunteering. He noted that a military mission could cost between 600 to 800 million dollars and would count with 7,000 military components, plus police and civil components.

"It is an ongoing crisis, which makes it difficult for short term solutions," he said. "There needs to be international help, no doubt about that."

## 20 years later, Bali bombing survivors still battling trauma

By EDNA TARIGAN and ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Thiolina Marpaung still panics anytime she smells smoke, immediately recalling the bomb explosion that upended her life 20 years ago.

Marpaung, now 48, was in a car with her colleagues on the Indonesian resort island of Bali in 2002 when the blast shook their vehicle from behind. Marpaung was temporarily blinded as shards of glass pierced her eyes. She remembers calling out for help and someone bringing her to the sidewalk, before an ambulance raced her to a hospital with other victims.

"I was traumatized by the sound of ambulance sirens," Marpaung said.

She is one of dozens of Indonesian survivors who were outside of Sari Club on the night of October 12, 2002, when a car bombing there and the nearly simultaneous suicide bombing at nearby Paddy's Pub killed 202 people, mostly foreign tourists, including 88 Australians and seven Americans.

Marpaung later had surgery in Australia to remove the glass from her eyes, but the pain still bothers her and requires treatment to this day. At the urging of her psychologist, she has thrown away and burned photographs, news articles, clothing and other reminders of that day. She even tossed the shards of glass that were removed from her eyes onto Kuta Beach in Bali, not far from the attack site.

"That's made me feel better until now," she said.

Two decades after the Bali bombings, counterterrorism efforts in the world's most populous Muslim country remain highly active. More than 2,300 people have been arrested on terrorism charges, according to data from the Center for Radicalism and Deradicalization Studies, since a national counterterrorism unit, known as Densus 88, was established in the wake of the attacks.

In 2020, 228 people were arrested on terrorism charges. The number rose to 370 last year, underscoring authorities' commitment to pursue suspects even as the number of terrorist attacks in Indonesia has fallen.

But the aggressive police work has also prompted concerns about potential overreach.

"The government's recent move towards expanding the definition of the threat of terrorism by going after non-violent, ideologically conservative organizations can undermine the legitimacy of its counterterrorism efforts if the public begins to see anti-terrorism as something of a political thing rather than a law enforcement effort," said Sana Jaffrey, director of the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict in Jakarta.

The pursuit of suspects related to the Bali bombings has also continued, even in recent years.

In December 2020, police arrested Aris Sumarsono, 58, whose real name is Arif Sunarso but is better known as Zulkarnaen, in the southern town on Sumatra island. He became the latest person arrested over the 2002 bombing, and the court sentenced him to 15 years in prison for his role. Indonesian authorities also suspect him to be the mastermind of several other attacks in the country.

In August this year, Indonesia's government considered granting an early prison release to the bombmaker in the Bali attack, Hisyam bin Alizein, 55, better known by his alias, Umar Patek, who has also been identified as a leading member of the al Qaida-linked Southeast Asian Islamic radical group Jemaah Islamiyah. Indonesian authorities said Patek was an example of successful efforts to reform convicted terrorists and that they planned to use him to influence others not to commit terrorist acts.

Ni Luh Erniati, who lost her husband in the Bali bombing and has raised two sons as a single mother the past two decades, met Patek at a prison in East Java province last month. She's met other convicted terrorists too, saying she believes the meetings can help relieve her grief.

"I told him that I worked at Sari Club and I met my husband at Sari Club, and then I had to lose my husband at Sari Club. It is a memory that is very, very unforgettable and tragic. And I said, because of that

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incident, I lost my true love, and I told him my life after that. He was crying, really crying," Erniati said.

Patek begged for her forgiveness, she said.

"Finally, I couldn't help but take it. He knelt down. I held his hand, I said, 'Yes, I have forgiven you.' He was crying louder," Erniati said.

"I also told him, let's work together to protect our beloved country so that the same tragedies don't happen in the future. ... He was still crying," she added.

Although she forgives him, Erniati says the decision over his release is now up to the government, which is deciding whether to free him after he served half of his 20-year sentence.

Indonesia's Minister of Law and Human Rights Yasonna Laoly says Patek has fulfilled all requirements for parole as recommended by Indonesia's counterterrorism agency.

But the Australian government has expressed its strong opposition to his possible release. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has described Patek as "abhorrent."

Peter Hughes, another survivor of the 2002 bombing who hails from the Australian west coast city of Perth, has visited Bali more than 30 times in the past 20 years after overcoming his physical and psychological trauma.

Hughes spent a month in an induced coma after suffering burns to 55% of his body in the Paddy's Pub explosions in Bali.

He said he plans to visit again for the 20th anniversary commemoration service.

"I'm mainly going back because I'm on holiday and while I was there I just thought I'd pay my respects. That's a given," Hughes said.

He can understand why some survivors of the Bali bombings might never want to return.

"People have a choice. People deal with deep trauma differently. It's unpredictable how people deal with issues. I don't really have an issue with it. I put it down to a bit of bad luck and that just keeps it good in my space, if you know what I mean," Hughes said.

Hughes was interviewed by an Australian news crew at a Bali hospital hours after the blasts. Blistered and swollen, he told the reporter he was feeling "really good" and other victims were worse off.

Hughes today says he was certain he would die in Bali but wanted to send a positive message to his 21-year-old son Lee, who might see the news.

"I just lied. The whole idea was to get something back to my son," Hughes said.

Hughes said he was not concerned that Patek, the Bali bombmaker, could soon be released from prison.

"It doesn't worry me. I have no issue with it. The Indonesian judicial system is a little bit different to us, I guess," Hughes said.

## Bell wins Charlotte as champion Larson bumped from playoffs

By JENNA FRYER AP Auto Racing Writer

CONCORD, N.C. (AP) — It was a race of desperation.

For Christopher Bell, who had to win Sunday to stave off elimination from NASCAR's playoffs.

For reigning NASCAR champion Kyle Larson, who hit the wall and suddenly found his chances of racing for a second consecutive Cup title in serious jeopardy.

For Trackhouse Racing, the feel-good upstart young team hoping to celebrate its 100th start by advancing both its drivers into the third round of NASCAR's playoffs.

And for Stewart-Haas Racing, which is now under NASCAR investigation for potential race manipulation.

When the checkered flag finally flew, only Bell was celebrating.

His victory in overtime on the road course at Charlotte Motor Speedway moved him into the round of eight and possibly made him a true title contender. His Joe Gibbs Racing team used the first natural caution of the race — it came with five laps remaining — to bring Bell in for new tires on his Toyota. The fresh Goodyears gave Bell the advantage to drive through the field for his second win of the season and third of his career.

"The task was simple. We knew we had to win," said Bell, who was the most consistent driver in the



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first round of the playoffs but found himself 11th in the standings as NASCAR prepared to cut the field from 12 to eight.

"Man, you've just got to be there at the end of these things. I keep watching all these races where the fastest car doesn't always win. We were just there at the right time. We obviously weren't in position to win, we rolled the dice, gambled, it paid off for us."

Larson, meanwhile, was eliminated from the playoffs one year after winning a NASCAR-high 10 races and racking up wins all across the country in sprint cars. He has just two wins this season and finished 35th on Sunday, five laps down, and was bumped out of the playoffs by two points.

"I made way too many mistakes this whole year. You can't win a championship like that," said Larson. "No surprise that I made another mistake today and took us out of contention. Just extremely mad at myself. We'll keep fighting. We'll come back stronger. I'll definitely come back stronger and smarter, make better moves out there. Just mad at myself."

Trackhouse nearly lost both Daniel Suarez and Ross Chastain from the playoff field when Suarez lost his power steering and Chastain hit the wall to break a part on his Chevrolet. Chastain squeezed his way into the next round despite finishing 37th, while Suarez was eliminated from the field with his 36th-place finish.

His car was a monster to drive once the power steering failed and it caused Suarez to hit Corey LaJoie on the track. LaJoie later retaliated and the two were jawing at each other on the walk from pit road through the garage after the race. At one point, Suarez pushed his finger into LaJoie's chest.

"I gotta tell you something: I'm the only driver in the field who could have finished the race the way my car was," Suarez said. "Like, my arms are completely destroyed. I have never felt like this in my life. My shoulder is very bad, my hands are destroyed. It was tough, it was very, very tough."

"There were a couple times, more than a couple times, that I was just screaming. I just needed to get it out. It was for sure the most difficult race I have had in my life but I wasn't going to give up."

A race void of any cautions suddenly flipped with five laps to go when a sponsorship sign flew off the speedway wall and landed on the track.

At last, NASCAR called a caution, Chase Elliott's march to what seemed a certain career-high sixth win of the season was halted, and the entire playoff picture changed.

Bell pitted for the new tires and began charging his way through the field when the race restarted with three laps to go.

Then came the chaos.

AJ Allmendinger, winner of the Xfinity Series race on Saturday, passed Elliott for the lead. Then Kevin Harvick pushed Allmendinger off the track to take the lead and Bell kept making up ground. Elliott was pushed off track by Tyler Reddick and cars were spinning all through the field.

Another caution for a spin and a broken patch of curbing brought out yet another yellow and sent the race to overtime — giving Bell a legitimate shot at passing Harvick for the win. He completed the pass at the start of the two-lap overtime sprint, leaving all the drama in his rearview mirror.

Chase Briscoe and Daytona 500 winner Austin Cindric were jockeying both desperately trying to pick up finishing positions and snatch the eighth and final playoff spot. Cindric was spun in overtime, but Briscoe was relentless and got a boost from his Stewart-Haas Racing teammate Cole Custer, who used his Ford to hold up traffic to help Briscoe gain another spot and finish ninth.

"What a wild day. I told my guys before we took the initial green in the race, there's a difference between thinking we could move on and knowing we could move on," Briscoe said. "This team never gives up. I told them I was never going to give up. It took every bit of it there at the end."

The assist from Custer got Briscoe into the next round but also put SHR in NASCAR's crosshairs for potential race manipulation.

"NASCAR is reviewing data, video and radio transmissions from (Custer's car) following its incident on the backstretch during the final lap," NASCAR said in a post-race statement. "NASCAR will communicate the results of the review early this week. Any potential penalties would not affect the Round of 8 field."

Advancing to the round of eight were: Bell, Briscoe, Elliott, William Byron, Denny Hamlin, Joey Logano,

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Ross Chastain and Ryan Blaney.

Eliminated were Suarez, Cindric, Larson and Alex Bowman, who missed his second consecutive race Sunday with a concussion. The Larson elimination cut Hendrick Motorsports' championship contenders in half as only Elliott and Byron advanced for the organization that won the last two Cup titles.

Elliott and Byron were seen talking on pit road after the race, but Elliott angrily chased away a television camera capturing the conversation. Elliott finished 20th after leading the most laps Sunday.

"Didn't feel like we did a whole lot wrong, and unfortunately I wasn't rewarded for it," Elliott said.

UP NEXT

The opening race of the round of eight Sunday at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. Denny Hamlin is the defending race winner and Alex Bowman won at Las Vegas earlier this year.

## Putin calls Kerch Bridge attack "a terrorist act" by Kyiv

By JUSTIN SPIKE and ADAM SCHRECK Associated Press

ZAPORIZHZHIA, Ukraine (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday called the attack that damaged the huge bridge connecting Russia to its annexed territory of Crimea "a terrorist act" masterminded by Ukrainian special services.

The Kerch Bridge, which holds important strategic and symbolic value to Russia in its faltering war in Ukraine, was hit a day earlier by what Moscow has said was a truck bomb. Road and rail traffic on the bridge were temporarily halted, damaging a vital supply route for the Kremlin's forces.

"There's no doubt it was a terrorist act directed at the destruction of critically important civilian infrastructure of the Russian Federation," Putin said during a meeting with the chairman of Russia's Investigative Committee, Alexander Bastrykin. "And the authors, perpetrators, and those who ordered it are the special services of Ukraine."

Bastrykin said Ukrainian special services and citizens of Russia and other countries took part in the attack. He said a criminal investigation had been launched into an act of terror.

"We have already established the route of the truck," he said, saying it had been to Bulgaria, Georgia, Armenia, North Ossetia and Krasnodar, a region in southern Russia.

In Kyiv, presidential adviser Mikhail Podolyak called Putin's accusation "too cynical even for Russia."

"Putin accuses Ukraine of terrorism?" he said. "It has not even been 24 hours since Russian planes fired 12 rockets into a residential area of Zaporizhzhia, killing 13 people and injuring more than 50. No, there is only one state terrorist and the whole world knows who he is."

Podolyak referred to missile strikes on the city of Zaporizhzhia overnight that brought down part of a large apartment building. The six missiles were launched from Russian-occupied areas of the Zaporizhzhia region, the Ukrainian air force said.

The region is one of four Russia claimed as its own this month, though its capital of the same name remains under Ukrainian control.

Russia has suffered a series of setbacks nearly eight months after invading Ukraine in a campaign many thought would be short-lived. In recent weeks, Ukrainian forces have staged a counteroffensive, retaking areas in the south and east, while Moscow's decision to call up more troops has led to protests and an exodus of hundreds of thousands of Russians.

Recent fighting has focused on the regions just north of Crimea, including Zaporizhzhia. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy lamented the latest attack.

"Again, Zaporizhzhia. Again, merciless attacks on civilians, targeting residential buildings, in the middle of the night," he wrote. At least 19 people died in Russian missile strikes on apartment buildings in the city on Thursday.

"From the one who gave this order, to everyone who carried out this order: They will answer," he added.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba called the attacks on civilians in Zaporizhzhia a war crime and urged an international investigation.

Stunned residents watched from behind police tape as emergency crews tried to reach the upper floors

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of a building that took a direct hit. A chasm at least 12 meters (40-feet) wide smoldered where apartments had once stood. In an adjacent apartment building, the missile barrage blew windows and doors out of their frames in a radius of hundreds of feet. At least 20 private homes and 50 apartment buildings were damaged, a local official said.

Regional police reported Sunday afternoon that 13 people had been killed and more than 60 wounded in the latest Zaporizhzhia attack, at least 10 of them children.

Tetyana Lazunko, 73, and her husband, Oleksii, took shelter in the hallway of their top-floor apartment after hearing air raid sirens. The explosion shook the building and sent their possessions flying. Lazunko wept as the couple surveyed the damage to their home of nearly five decades.

"Why are they bombing us? Why?" she said.

Others called the missile attack relentless.

"There was one explosion, then another one," 76-year-old Mucola Markovich said. In a flash, the fourth-floor apartment he shared with his wife was gone.

"When it will be rebuilt, I don't know," Markovich said. "I am left without an apartment at the end of my life."

In another nearby neighborhood ravaged by a missile, three volunteers dug a shallow grave for a German shepherd killed in the strike.

Abbas Gallyamov, an independent Russian political analyst and a former speechwriter for Putin, said prior to his declaration that it was a terror attack, the Russian president had not responded forcefully enough to satisfy angry war hawks. The attack and response, he said, has "inspired the opposition, while the loyalists are demoralized."

"Because once again, they see that when the authorities say that everything is going according to plan and we're winning, that they're lying, and it demoralizes them," he said.

Putin personally opened the Kerch Bridge in May 2018 by driving a truck across it as a symbol of Moscow's claims on Crimea. No one has claimed responsibility for damaging the 12-mile (19-kilometer) bridge, the longest in Europe.

Traffic over the bridge was temporarily suspended after the blast, but both automobiles and trains were crossing again on Sunday. Russia also restarted a car ferry service.

Crimea is a popular vacation resort for Russians and people trying to drive to the bridge and back onto the Russian mainland encountered hours-long traffic jams Sunday.

"We were a bit unprepared for such a turn," said one driver, Kirill Suslov, sitting in traffic. "That's why the mood is a bit gloomy."

The Institute for the Study of War said videos of the bridge indicated that damage from the explosion "is likely to increase friction in Russian logistics for some time" but not cripple Russia's ability to equip its troops in Ukraine.

In other news:

— In the devastated Ukrainian city of Lyman, which was recently recaptured after a months-long Russian occupation, Ukrainian national police said authorities have exhumed the first 20 bodies from a mass burial site. Initial indications are that around 200 civilians are buried in one location, and that another grave contains the bodies of Ukrainian soldiers. The civilians, including children, were buried in single graves, while members of the military were buried in a 40-meter long trench, according to police.

— The Ukrainian military said Sunday that fierce clashes were taking place around the cities of Bakhmut and Avdiivka in the eastern Donetsk region, where Russian forces have claimed some gains. The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine did not acknowledge any loss of territory but said "the most tense situation" has been observed around those two cities.

— The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, meanwhile, said that the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, Europe's biggest, had been reconnected to the power grid after losing its last external power source early Saturday following shelling. IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi tweeted that the reconnection was "a temporary relief in a still-untenable situation."

## Rain-fueled landslide sweeps through Venezuela town; 22 dead

By ANDRY RINCÓN Associated Press

LAS TEJERÍAS, Venezuela (AP) — A landslide fueled by flooding and days of torrential rain swept through a town in central Venezuela, leaving at least 22 people dead as it dragged mud, rocks and trees through neighborhoods, authorities said Sunday. Dozens of people are missing.

Residents of Las Tejerías in Santos Michelena, an agro-industrial town in Aragua state 54 miles (87 kilometers) southwest of Caracas, had just seconds to reach safety late Saturday as debris swept down a mountainside onto them.

The official death toll rose to 22 after the recovery of 20 bodies on Sunday, Vice President Delcy Rodríguez told state-owned Venezolana de Televisión.

"There was a large landslide in the central area of Las Tejerías" where five streams overflowed, she said from the scene of the disaster. "We have already found 22 dead people; there are more than 52 missing."

"There are still people walled in," Rodríguez said. "We are trying to rescue them, to rescue them alive." She said shelters will be set up for people who lost their homes.

Higher on the mountainside, most of the houses were swept away, including those of a group of Evangelicals who were praying when the landslide hit, said homemaker Carmen Teresa Chirinos, a resident of Las Tejerías. Families in tears hugged in front of destroyed homes and businesses.

"There are a lot of people missing," Chirinos said.

Hours earlier, Major Gen. Carlos Pérez Ampueda, the vice minister for risk management and civil protection, had said via Twitter that several people were reported missing in the El Béisbol and La Agotada neighborhoods in the north of the town. Dozens of homes were damaged by the landslide.

Rescuers were carrying out search operations with trained dogs and drones, Pérez Ampueda said. Crews of workers and heavy machinery removed debris to clear roads and restore electricity and water services.

"So many families lost their houses and I, as a businessman, lost my pizzeria," said Luis Fuentes, who opened his pizza restaurant two years ago. "Look, I have nothing."

Aragua Gov. Karina Carpio said the flood waters "terribly affected" 21 sectors in Las Tejerías, capital of the Santos Michelena municipality, which has some 54,000 inhabitants.

During the past week, torrential rains have caused flooding in 11 of Venezuela's 23 states.

President Nicolás Maduro said 20,000 officials, including rescuers and members of security forces, have been deployed to affected regions.

## AP Top 25: UGA back at No. 1, Alabama slips to 3 behind OSU

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Football Writer

Georgia took back the No. 1 spot in The Associated Press college football poll from Alabama on Sunday after being bumped out last week by the Crimson Tide, who slid to No. 3.

The Bulldogs received 32 first-place votes and 1,535 points in the Top 25, presented by Regions Bank, to easily reclaim No. 1. They were just two points behind Alabama at No. 2 last week.

Georgia thumped Auburn 42-10 on Saturday. The Tide, whose Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback Bryce Young was sidelined by injury, escaped an upset bid at home by Texas A&M.

Ohio State moved up a spot to No. 2, receiving 20 first-place votes and 1,507 points.

No. 3 is a season-low for Alabama, which was preseason No. 1 but fell to No. 2 after Week 2. The Tide received 11 first-place votes.

There were two notable season debuts in the Top 25: No. 24 Illinois is ranked for the first time since 2011 and James Madison is in the AP Top 25 for the first time in its program history. The Dukes are playing their first season as a member of the Sun Belt Conference in Division I college football's highest level.

Clemson overtook Michigan and moved up to No. 4 and the Wolverines fell one spot to No. 5.

Tennessee moved up to No. 6, which is the best ranking for the currently undefeated Volunteers since No. 5 early in the 2005 season. Tennessee stumbled to a 5-6 and unranked finish that year.

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Southern California fell one spot to No. 7, and Oklahoma State, Mississippi and Penn State held their places to round out the top 10.

## POLL POINTS

The shuffle that Georgia's made from No. 1 to 2 and back No. 1 over three polls hadn't happened in more than a decade.

Florida went back and forth between Nos. 1 and 2 in 2009, flip-flopping with Alabama as both teams won in late October.

The Tide is the first team to drop from No. 1 to No. 3 off a victory in 25 years, when Nebraska beat Missouri in overtime on the famous "Flea Kicker." Michigan jumped from No. 4 to No. 1 on Nov. 10, 1997, after it won 34-8 at No. 2 Penn State.

## IN

The week after Kansas handed the ignominious title of Power Five conference team with the longest streak of being unranked to Illinois, the Illini are now off the schneid in their second year under coach Bret Bielema.

Illinois improved to 5-1 by beating Iowa and landed in the poll for the first time since Oct. 16, 2011 — 178 polls.

Next up on the list of longest ranking droughts for Power Five schools are: Rutgers (2012), Oregon State (preseason 2013) and Vanderbilt (final 2013), Georgia Tech (2015), Arizona (2017).

— James Madison has been a powerhouse in the the Football Championship Subdivision for years, winning a national title in 2016 and losing to North Dakota State in the NCAA championship game in 2017 and '19. The Dukes have had no issue moving up so far, going 5-0 and averaging 44 points per game.

JMU's transition has been different than others, who take a year or two to acclimate before playing a full FBS-type schedule as they build up from 63 scholarship players to 85.

Aided by temporary changes to eligibility rules due to the pandemic, plus loosened transfer rules, the Dukes were able to dive right in with a more FBS-ready roster, coach Curt Cignetti told AP.

"There were a lot of unknowns coming into the season," Cignetti said. "The one thing about our program is we've had such great success from 2016 on ... there's a culture here, a standard, an expectation. And our guys expect to win every time we go out."

Since Division I football split into subdivisions in 1978, JMU is the first team to be ranked in a season when it was transitioning up.

"All the national publicity that we have had is extremely positive for the university, the program, the athletic department and our boosters and supporters," said Cignetti, the son of Hall of Fame coach Frank Cignetti, who died in September. "Making the Top 25, that's just another step."

— No. 22 Texas is ranked again after blowing out rival Oklahoma and tied with Kentucky in the Top 25.

## OUT

— BYU is unranked for the first time this season after losing to Notre Dame.

— Washington dropped out of the rankings after a second straight loss.

— LSU's return to the Top 25 was brief after getting thumped at home by Tennessee.

## CONFERENCE CALL

The Sun Belt went from its inception in 2001 to 2015 without having a ranked team. The conference has now had at least one team ranked for at least one week each of the last five seasons and six of the last seven.

James Madison is the second Sun Belt team to reach the Top 25 this season, along with Appalachian State.

SEC — 6 (Nos. 1, 3, 6, 9, 16, 22).

Big 12 — 5 (8, 13, 17, 19, 22).

ACC — 4 (Nos. 4, 14, 15, 18).

Big Ten — 4 (Nos. 2, 5, 10, 24).

Pac-12 — 4 (Nos. 7, 11, 12, 20).

American — 1 (No. 21).

Sun Belt — 1 (No. 25).

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RANKED vs. RANKED

A season-high six games matching ranked teams:

No. 10 Penn State at No. 5 Michigan. Third top-10 matchup in the series and first since 1997.

No. 3 Alabama at No. 6 Tennessee. The second top-10 matchup since 2000.

No. 8 Oklahoma State at No. 13 TCU. Horned Frogs have their best rankings since being No. 9 in 2017.

No. 15 North Carolina State at No. 18 Syracuse. First matchup of ranked teams at home for Syracuse since 2001.

No. 16 Mississippi State at No. 22 Kentucky. First time the teams will meet as ranked teams in 49 games.

No. 7 USC at No. 20 Utah. Second straight game against a ranked Los Angeles team for the Utes.

## Russian analyst set to face trial on charges of lying to FBI

BY MATTHEW BARAKAT and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) — Five years after the term “Steele dossier” entered the political lexicon, a think tank analyst who contributed to research about Donald Trump and Russia goes on trial Tuesday for lying to the FBI about his sources of information.

Igor Danchenko is the third person to be prosecuted by Special Counsel John Durham, who was appointed to investigate the origins of “Crossfire Hurricane” — the designation given to the FBI’s 2016 probe into former president Trump’s Russia connections. It is also the first of Durham’s cases that delves deeply into the origins of the dossier that Trump derided as fake news and a political witch hunt.

Here’s some background on what the case is about.

WHO IS DANCHENKO AND WHAT IS HE ACCUSED OF?

Danchenko, a Russian analyst, was a source of information for Christopher Steele, a former British spy who was paid by Democrats to research ties between Russia and presidential candidate Donald Trump.

The compilation of research files, which included salacious rumors and unproven assertions, came to be familiarly known as the “Steele dossier.” Though the dossier did not help launch the FBI’s investigation into potential coordination between Russia and Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign, the Justice Department did rely on it when it applied for and received warrants to monitor the communications of a former Trump campaign adviser.

As part of its efforts to verify information in the dossier, the FBI interviewed Danchenko in 2017.

He is charged with lying to agents about his information sources, with prosecutors accusing Danchenko of misleading the FBI in an effort to make his own contributions seem more credible.

WHAT DO THE PROSECUTORS SAY?

Prosecutors say Danchenko lied when the FBI asked him about how he obtained the information he gave to Steele. Specifically, they say he denied that he relied on a Democratic operative, Charles Dolan, a public relations executive who volunteered for Hillary Clinton’s presidential 2016 campaign.

Prosecutors also say Danchenko lied when he said he received information from an anonymous phone call that he believed was placed by a man named named Sergei Millian, a former president of the Russian-American Chamber of Commerce. They argue Danchenko knew that Millian wasn’t a source of any anonymous phone call.

The indictment says the FBI could have better judged the veracity of the Steele dossier had it known that a Democratic operative was the source of much of its information.

WHAT DOES THE DEFENSE SAY?

Danchenko’s lawyers say the prosecution “is a case of extraordinary government overreach.” They note that Danchenko agreed to multiple voluntary FBI interviews throughout 2017. They say his answers to the FBI were all technically true.

For instance, an FBI agent asked Danchenko whether he ever “talked” with Dolan about the information that showed up in the dossier. While prosecutors have produced evidence that the two had email exchanges about topics in the dossier, there’s no evidence that they talked orally about those topics.

“It was a bad question,” said Danchenko’s lawyer, Stuart Sears, at a pretrial hearing last month. “That’s

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the special counsel's problem. Not Mr. Danchenko's."

And while Danchenko said he believed Millian was the voice on the anonymous phone call, he never told the FBI with any certainty that it was Millian. Sears argued that ambiguous statements like that fall short of what's necessary to convict on a false statements charge.

U.S. District Judge Anthony Trenga last month rejected a request from defense lawyers to dismiss the charges, though he called his decision to let the case move forward an "extremely close call." He has since ruled that prosecutors cannot present evidence about the most salacious parts of the dossier.

WHAT OTHER CASES HAS DURHAM BROUGHT?

Durham was the U.S. Attorney in Connecticut in 2019 when he was tapped by then-Attorney General William Barr to hunt for potential misconduct by government officials who conducted the original Russia investigation.

But after more than three years, Durham's work has failed to meet the expectations of Trump supporters who hoped he would uncover sweeping FBI conspiracies to derail the Republican's candidacy.

The probe has produced only three criminal cases.

The first case was against an FBI lawyer, Kevin Clinesmith, who was accused of altering an email related to the surveillance of former Trump campaign aide Carter Page. It ended in a guilty plea and a sentence of probation – and involved FBI misconduct already uncovered by the Justice Department's inspector general.

Last year, Durham's team charged a Democratic lawyer with making a false statement to the FBI's top lawyer during a 2016 meeting in which he presented information about a purported digital backchannel between a Russia bank and the Trump organization. The FBI investigated but found no suspicious contact. The case against the lawyer, Michael Sussmann, ended in a swift acquittal in May.

Durham's work has continued deep into the Biden administration Justice Department, but the Danchenko trial seems likely to be the last criminal case his team will bring. It is not clear when Durham might produce a report summarizing his findings.

## Prosecutors seek prison for rioter's attack on AP journalist

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN Associated Press

Federal prosecutors on Sunday recommended a prison sentence of approximately four years for a Pennsylvania man who pleaded guilty to assaulting an Associated Press photographer and using a stun gun against police officers during a mob's attack on the U.S. Capitol.

U.S. District Judge Randolph Moss is scheduled to sentence Alan Byerly on Oct. 21 for his attack on AP photographer John Minchillo and police during the Jan. 6, 2021, riot in Washington.

Sentencing guidelines recommend a prison term ranging from 37 to 46 months. Prosecutors are seeking a sentence of at least 46 months of imprisonment, followed by three years of supervised release. Byerly's attorney has until Friday to submit a sentencing recommendation.

The judge isn't bound by any of the sentencing recommendations.

Byerly was arrested in July 2021 and pleaded guilty a year later to assault charges.

Byerly purchased a stun gun before he traveled from his home in Fleetwood, Pennsylvania, to Washington for the "Stop the Steal" rally on Jan. 6. Leaving the rally before then-President Donald Trump finished speaking, Byerly went to the Capitol and joined other rioters in using a large metal Trump sign as a battering ram against barricades and police officers, prosecutors said.

After that, he went to the Capitol's Lower West Terrace, where he and other rioters attacked Minchillo, who was wearing a lanyard with AP lettering. Byerly is one of at least three people charged with assaulting Minchillo, whose assault was captured on video by a colleague.

Byerly then approached police officers behind bike racks and deployed his stun gun.

"After officers successfully removed the stun gun from Byerly's hands, Byerly continued to charge toward the officers, struck and pushed them, and grabbed an officer's baton," prosecutors wrote.

Byerly later told FBI agents that he did just "one stupid thing down there and that's all it was," according to prosecutors.

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"This was a reference to how he handled the reporter and nothing more," they wrote.

Byerly treated Jan. 6 "as a normal, crime-free day, akin to the movie, 'The Purge,' when he could do whatever he wanted without judgment or legal consequence," prosecutors said.

"He was mistaken," they added.

More than 100 police officers were injured during the Capitol siege.

Approximately 900 people have been charged with federal crimes for their conduct on Jan. 6. More than 400 of them have pleaded guilty, mostly to misdemeanor offenses. Over 280 riot defendants have been sentenced, with roughly half sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from one week to 10 years.

## Senator: Dems back reparations for those who 'do the crime'

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican Sen. Tommy Tuberville asserted that Democrats support reparations for the descendants of enslaved people because "they think the people that do the crime are owed that."

The first-term Alabama Republican spoke at a Saturday evening rally in Nevada featuring former President Donald Trump, a political ally. His comments were part of a broader critique in the final weeks before the Nov. 8 election, when control of Congress is at stake, about how Democrats have responded to rising crime rates. But Tuberville's remarks about reparations played into racist stereotypes about Black people committing crimes.

"They're not soft on crime," Tuberville said of Democrats. "They're pro-crime. They want crime. They want crime because they want to take over what you got. They want to control what you have. They want reparation because they think the people that do the crime are owed that."

He ended his appearance with a profanity as the crowd cheered.

Tuberville is falsely suggesting that Democrats promote crime and that only Blacks are the perpetrators. In fact, crime has slowed in the last year and most crimes are committed by whites, according to FBI data.

The Democratic Party has not taken a stance on reparations for Black Americans to compensate for years of unpaid slave labor by their ancestors, though some leading Democrats, including President Joe Biden, back the creation of a national commission to study the issue.

Some Republicans on Sunday struggled to defend Tuberville's comments.

Rep. Don Bacon, R-Neb., said he "wouldn't say it the same way," describing the remarks as impolite.

"That's not the way I present things," Bacon said on "Meet the Press" on NBC. "But got to be honest that we have a crime problem in our country."

There was no immediate response from Tuberville's office on Sunday to a request for comment.

Republicans have been trying to close out this election year with an emphasis on crime, using rhetoric that has sometimes been alarmist or of questionable veracity, similar to Trump's late-stage argument during the 2020 campaign that Democratic-led cities were out of control.

FBI data released last week showed violent and property crime generally remained consistent between 2020 and 2021, with a slight decrease in the overall violent crime rate and a 4.3% rise in the murder rate. That's an improvement over 2020, when the murder rate in the U.S. jumped 29%.

The report presents an incomplete picture, in part because it doesn't include some of the nation's largest police departments.

More broadly, rates of violent crime and killings have increased around the U.S. since the pandemic, in some places spiking after hitting historic lows. Nonviolent crime decreased during the pandemic, but the murder rate grew nearly 30% in 2020, rising in cities and rural areas alike, according to an analysis of crime data by The Brennan Center for Justice. The rate of assaults went up 10%, the analysis found.

The rise defies easy explanation. Experts have pointed to a number of potential causes, from worries about the economy and historically high inflation rates to intense stress during the pandemic that has killed more than 1 million people in the United States.

## Ukraine nuclear plant reconnected to grid after line was cut

BERLIN (AP) — An external power line to Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant — the biggest in Europe — was repaired on Sunday after shelling disconnected the facility from the grid and forced it to



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resort to emergency diesel generators, the U.N. nuclear watchdog said.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said the 750-kilovolt line was reconnected to the plant on Sunday evening following repair work by Ukrainian engineers. That enabled the plant to start switching off the generators that had kicked in to provide it with power after the line — its last connection to the grid — was cut early Saturday.

IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi tweeted that the reconnection was “a temporary relief in a still-untenable situation.”

The plant has been held by Russian forces for months, but operated by Ukrainian employees. All six reactors at the site are shut down but they still require electricity for cooling and other safety functions.

Grossi has spent weeks pushing for the establishment of a “nuclear safety and security protection zone” around the plant. He says he will travel to Russia and then see Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in an effort to realize that plan.

Grossi condemned attacks “in areas that could affect the safety and security” of the plant, including in nearby Enerhodar and in the Ukrainian-held provincial capital of Zaporizhzhia.

“Almost every day now, there is shelling in the region where the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant is located and where the plant workers and their families live,” he said. “The shelling must stop, immediately. It is already having an impact on the nuclear safety and security situation at the plant.”

Ukrainian operating staff told IAEA experts that a convoy of five trucks carrying “vital additional diesel fuel supplies” is currently in the city of Zaporizhzhia and plans to cross the front line to reach the plant on Monday, the agency said. The site currently has diesel reserves for about 10 days. Separately, a supply of diesel provided by the Russian state nuclear company Rosatom has arrived in Enerhodar, the IAEA added.

Zaporizhzhia is one of four regions in Ukraine that Russian President Vladimir Putin has annexed in violation of international laws.

Putin signed a decree Wednesday declaring that Russia was taking over the nuclear 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.

## **Biden preaches patience to voters spooked by economic tumult**

By JOSH BOAK and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — When it comes to reassuring Americans about an economy that’s an election-year challenge for his party, President Joe Biden is telling the country to hold on.

It’s a message of patience as voters are buffeted by persistent inflation, fears of a recession and the prospect of rising energy prices in the closing weeks of the campaign season when they will determine the fate of vulnerable Democrats and control of Congress.

The \$25 trillion-plus economy is veering in two radically different directions.

Growth has fallen for two straight quarters, raising the specter of recession. But job gains have rolled on, including 263,000 more in September as a sign of economic health. Nonetheless, the latest jobs report sent stocks plummeting Friday on renewed worries that the Federal Reserve will have to continue aggressive interest rate increases to temper rising consumer prices.

Biden argued that the newest numbers are solid and have slowed in recent months in a way that points toward inflation easing. Major oil-producing countries led by Saudi Arabia and Russia dealt him a “disappointment” with their decision last week to cut production, but the U.S. government forecasts that domestic output should increase by an average of roughly 840,000 barrels a day next year.

Speaking at a Volvo drivetrain factory in Hagerstown, Maryland, Biden tried to make the case once more that lots more factory jobs were on the horizon.

“This is the progress we need to see,” the president said. “In the short term, the transition to a more stable growth that continues to deliver for workers and families while bringing inflation down. In the long term, the economy built on a firmer foundation. We still have a lot of work to do. We’re building a different economy than before, a better one, a stronger one.”

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Yet polls show Biden consistently with poor marks for his handling of the economy, and people in the United States broadly view the country as headed in the wrong direction.

A September poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found just 38% of those surveyed approve of Biden's economic leadership. Twenty-nine percent of U.S. adults said the economy is in good shape, while 71% say it's doing poorly. That was better than in June, when 20% said conditions were good and 79% said they were bad.

While Biden is not on the ballot Nov. 8, Democratic candidates are facing relentless criticism from Republicans who want to make the election a referendum on the president's performance. With GOP ads citing inflation and high gas prices, there is growing pressure for the White House to address the public's concerns about the economy before Election Day.

Jason Furman, who led the White House Council of Economic Advisers under President Barack Obama, said the jobs numbers were a political win for Biden, but also a warning of the economic hardship to come as the Fed faces pressure to raise rates to tackle inflation.

"The price level is still high and headline inflation is likely to have picked up every month from July through October due to the dynamics of gas prices," Furman said. Curtailing that, he said, "unfortunately will take a lot of time, and potentially a lot of pain, for them to succeed."

Nowhere is Biden's messaging challenge more pronounced than on gas prices.

For 99 straight days, the White House highlighted declining prices after their peak in June. But they started ticking up last month, and they have shot up more since OPEC and its partners announced severe production cuts Wednesday.

The U.S. national average is now \$3.91 a gallon, according to AAA. That's below the June high of \$5.02, but higher than a month ago (\$3.74) and a year ago (\$3.27).

At the end of March, Biden ordered the release 1 million barrels of oil a day for six months from the U.S. strategic reserve to help lower prices. The White House now says the administration is weighing further releases to offset the OPEC cuts. It has also tried to shame oil companies into increasing production and cutting their profit margins.

Meanwhile, the Fed expects that bringing inflation closer to the central bank's target of no more than 2% a year — it was 8.3% higher in September than a year earlier — will require a contraction in the labor market that could put at least a million people out of work.

Fed officials indicated last month that the unemployment rate would climb next year to 4.4% — up nearly a full percentage point — if inflation were to fall below 3%. The hiring Biden that cheered on Friday might soon give way to losses.

OPEC's production cut could mean that it will be even harder to lower inflation, with more expensive gas requiring the Fed to take more drastic measures to bring down prices, costing even more jobs.

Investment bank Goldman Sachs on Thursday suggested that oil prices will reach \$110 a barrel toward the end of this year, compared with its prior forecast of \$100 a barrel. That would translate into higher prices at the pump and has given Republicans more evidence to say he's put the economy at risk.

"The president is in denial that America is experiencing a dangerous wage-price spiral that will drive high inflation for years, that we are in stagflation, and that we are either in, or on the verge of, a harsh recession — all that he created by bungling the recovery," said Texas Rep. Kevin Brady, the top Republican on the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee.

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

By NICOLAS VAUX-MONTAGNY and JEFFREY SCHAEFFER Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Nicolas Toulliou 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 have a chance at justice in a courtroom.

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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 Toulliou, 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 A330-200 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 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

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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.

## Singer driven from Belarus for speaking out tries to rebuild

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.

"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

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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.

## Pope slams treatment of migrants as 2 Italians become saints

By COLLEEN BARRY and LUIGI NAVARRA Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis on Sunday denounced Europe's indifference toward migrants risking their lives to cross the Mediterranean Sea as he elevated to sainthood an Italian bishop and Italian-born missionary whose work and life paths illustrated the difficulties faced by 19th Century Italian emigrants.

Francis departed from prepared remarks to slam Europe's treatment of migrants as "disgusting, sinful and criminal." He noted that people from outside the continent are often left to die during perilous sea crossings or pushed back to Libya, where they wind up in camps he referred to as "lager," the German word referring to Nazi concentration camps.

He also recalled the plight of Ukrainians fleeing war, which he said "causes us great suffering."

"The exclusion of migrants is scandalous," Francis said, generating applause from the faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square for the canonizations of Don Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, an Italian bishop who founded an order to help Italian emigrants in 1887, and Artedime Zatti, an Italian who emigrated in 1897 to Argentina and dedicated his life as a lay-worker there to helping the sick.

"Indeed, the situation of migrants is criminal. They are left to die in front of us, making the Mediterranean the largest cemetery in the world. The situation of migrants is disgusting, sinful, criminal. Not to open the doors to those who are in need. No, we exclude them, we send them away to lager, where they are exploited and sold as slaves."

He urged the faithful to consider the treatment of migrants, asking: "Do we welcome them as brothers, or do we exploit them?"

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The pontiff said the two new saints "remind us of the importance of walking together."

Francis said Scalabrani showed "great vision," by looking forward "to a world and a Church without barriers, where no one was a foreigner." And the pontiff called Zatti "a living example of gratitude" who devoted his life to serving others after being cured of tuberculosis.

Scalabrini founded the Missionaries of Saint Charles Borromeo, known as the Scalabrian Fathers, and the Missionary Sisters of Saint Charles Borromeo Scalabrians, to minister to the many Italians who left their homeland due to what he wrote were the combined effects of an agricultural crisis, social change, a poorly managed economy, exorbitant taxation and "the natural desire to improve one's condition."

Disturbed by statistics on Italian emigration that swelled to 84,000 in 1884 alone, Scalabrini wrote that the mass emigration and separation of families would "help strew white the lands of America with their bones."

He died in 1905 in Piacenza, where he was bishop, and was beatified in 1997 by St. John Paul II. Pope Francis dispensed with the canonization requirement of Scalabrini having a miracle attributed to him after his beatification.

The order he founded currently operates 176 missions around the world, including 27 migrant shelters and 20 schools and centers for children.

Francis, himself the son of Italian immigrants to Argentina, has recalled being inspired by Zatti's life while he was Jesuit provincial superior in Argentina, saying the number of men entering the Catholic order increased after he prayed for the late bishop's intercession.

Zatti was one of eight children born to a farming couple in northern Italy that emigrated to Argentina in 1897 when he was a teenager.

After entering the Salesian order at age 20, Zatti fell ill with tuberculosis and was sent to a Salesian-run hospital in northern Patagonia to be treated. He made a vow to serve the sick and poor for the rest of his life, if he recovered. Zatti went on to work in the same hospital for 40 years, working as a nurse, in the pharmacy, and later as an administrator.

His fame for treating the ill attracted the sick from all over Patagonia. Zatti was known to travel the city of Viedma with his bicycle with a medical case to help the sick. The pontiff on Sunday also recalled an occasion when Zatti was seen removing a dead patient on his own shoulders from the hospital, to prevent the sick from seeing the body.

Zatti died in 1951, and was beatified in 2002. Paving the way for canonization, Francis signed the decree recognizing Zatti's intercession in the healing of a man in the Philippines who had suffered a brain bleed.

## Telemedicine was made easy during COVID-19. Not any more

By TOM MURPHY AP Health Writer

Telemedicine exploded in popularity after COVID-19 hit, but limits are returning for care delivered across state lines.

That complicates follow-up treatments for some cancer patients. It also can affect other types of care, including mental health therapy and routine doctor check-ins.

Over the past year, nearly 40 states and Washington, D.C., have ended emergency declarations that made it easier for doctors to use video visits to see patients in another state, according to the Alliance for Connected Care, which advocates for telemedicine use.

Some, like Virginia, have created exceptions for people who have an existing relationship with a physician. A few, like Arizona and Florida, have made it easier for out-of-state doctors to practice telemedicine.

Doctors say the resulting patchwork of regulations creates confusion and has led some practices to shut down out-of-state telemedicine entirely. That leaves follow-up visits, consultations or other care only to patients who have the means to travel for in-person meetings.

Susie Rinehart is planning two upcoming trips to her cancer doctor in Boston. She needs regular scans and doctor visits to monitor a rare bone cancer that has spread from her skull to her spine.

Rinehart doesn't have a specialist near her home outside Denver who can treat her. These visits were

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done virtually during the pandemic.

She will travel without her husband to save money, but that presents another problem: If she gets bad news, she'll handle it alone.

"It's stressful enough to have a rare cancer, and this just adds to the stress," the 51-year-old said.

Rinehart's oncologist, Dr. Shannon MacDonald, said telemedicine regulation enforcement seems to be more aggressive now than it was before the pandemic, when video visits were still emerging.

"It just seems so dated," said MacDonald, who recently co-wrote a piece about the issue in The New England Journal of Medicine.

To state medical boards, the patient's location during a telemedicine visit is where the appointment takes place. One of MacDonald's hospitals, Massachusetts General, requires doctors to be licensed in the patient's state for virtual visits.

It also wants those visits restricted to New England and Florida, where many patients spend the winter, said Dr. Lee Schwamm, a vice president for the Mass General Brigham health system.

That doesn't help doctors like MacDonald who see patients from around the country.

Cleveland Clinic also draws a lot of patients from out of state. Neurosurgeon Dr. Peter Rasmussen worries about how some will handle upcoming travel, especially because winter can bring icy weather.

A fall "literally could be life ending" for someone with a condition like Parkinson's disease who has trouble walking, he said.

Psychiatrists have a different concern: Finding doctors for patients who move out of state. This is especially difficult for college students who temporarily leave home.

Most U.S. counties have no child and adolescent psychiatrists, noted Dr. Shabana Khan, chair of the American Psychiatric Association's telepsychiatry committee.

"If we do try to transition patients, often there is no one there," Khan said.

Helen Khuri's mother found a specialist to help her when the 19-year-old's post-traumatic stress disorder flared up last spring. But the Emory University student had to temporarily move from Atlanta to Boston for treatment, even though she never set foot inside the hospital offering it.

She rented an apartment with her father so she could be in the same state for telemedicine visits, a situation she deemed "ridiculous."

"It didn't necessarily make sense to ... kind of uproot my life, just to receive this three-week treatment program," Khuri said.

Even people seeing doctors close to home can be affected.

Dr. Ed Sepe's Washington, D.C., pediatric practice has patients in Maryland who have started driving a few miles across the border into the city to connect by video. That saves them a 45-minute trip downtown for an in-person visit.

"It's silly," he said. "If you are under a doctor's care, and you are in the U.S., it doesn't make any sense to have geographic restrictions for telemedicine."

Sepe noted that low-income families tend to be in jobs that don't allow time off for in-person visits. Some also have a hard time getting transportation. Video visits were helping with these obstacles.

"It's bigger than just telemedicine," he said. "There's a missed opportunity there to level the playing field."

States can play an important role in telemedicine's growth by guarding against fraud and protecting patient safety, according to Lisa Robin, an executive with the Federation of State Medical Boards.

But the federation also recommends that states loosen some telemedicine restrictions.

That includes permitting virtual follow-ups for someone who has traveled out of state to seek care or for people who temporarily move but want to stay with a doctor.

States could also form regional compacts with their neighbors to ease cross-border care, noted Dr. Ateev Mehrotra, a Harvard health policy professor who studies telemedicine.

"There's so many ways that these issues can be addressed," he said

In the meantime, patients who need care now are trying to figure out how to manage it.

Lucas Rounds isn't sure how many visits he will make to see MacDonald in Boston to monitor his rare bone cancer. The 35-year-old Logan, Utah, resident already spent months away from home earlier this

year, undergoing radiation and surgery.

Plus he has a wife and three young girls and expenses like a mortgage to consider.

Rounds says he has to think about taking care of his family "if the worst happens."

"If I die from cancer, then all these expenses we've accrued ... those are dollars that my family wouldn't have," he said.

## Florida school shooter may have been his own worst witness

By TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — It's possible Florida school shooter Nikolas Cruz talked himself into a death sentence.

Prosecutors played video last week at Cruz's penalty trial of jailhouse interviews he did this year with two of their mental health experts. In frank and sometimes graphic detail, he answered their questions about his massacre of 17 people at Parkland's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on Feb. 14, 2018 — his planning, his motivation, the shootings.

While it can't be known what the 12 jurors are thinking, if any are wavering between voting for death or life without parole, his statements to Dr. Charles Scott, a forensic psychiatrist, and Robert Denney, a neuropsychologist, did not help his cause.

"All of this made Cruz himself perhaps one of the state's best witnesses," said David S. Weinstein, a Miami defense attorney and former prosecutor who has been monitoring the trial.

The jury will likely decide Cruz's fate this week. For the 24-year-old to get a death sentence, the jury must be unanimous on at least one victim. But if all 17 counts come back with at least one vote in favor of life in prison, then that would be his sentence. Closing arguments are scheduled Tuesday, with deliberations beginning Wednesday.

Because Cruz's defense is that his birth mother's heavy drinking during pregnancy left him brain damaged, prosecutors could have experts examine him for their rebuttal case.

Scott and Denney interviewed him separately for several hours. In each, Cruz sat across the table, handcuffed, a sweater draped over his chest. He sometimes asked for a pen and paper to add diagrams and drawings to his explanations.

"The question is: What will the jury take away from the interviews? Cold-blooded killer who was vengeful and excited about the murders, or a person so hopelessly deranged that he can't be anything but crazy?" said Bob Jarvis, a professor at Nova Southeastern University's law school.

Excerpts from those interviews, some of which are graphic:

HOW LONG HAD CRUZ BEEN CONTEMPLATING A SCHOOL SHOOTING?

"A very long time," Cruz told Scott, starting when he was 13 or 14, about five years before he did it.

"It was just a thought. I was reading books," Cruz said. "It would come and go. It would pop up in my mind."

The thoughts would return when he watched violent videos, particularly documentaries about mass shootings at Colorado's Columbine High School, Virginia Tech and elsewhere, he said.

HOW DID CRUZ PLAN THE MASSACRE?

"I did my own research," Cruz told Scott. "I studied mass murderers and how they did it, their plans, what they got and what they used."

He detailed the lessons he learned: Watch for would-be rescuers coming around corners, keep some distance from your targeted victims, attack as fast as possible — and "the police didn't do anything."

"I have a small opportunity to shoot people for maybe 20 minutes," Cruz said.

HOW DID CRUZ PREPARE?

He told Scott he put his AR-15-style semi-automatic rifle in a bag the night before and slipped its magazines into a shooting vest. He adjusted the gun's sights and imagined what the recoil would feel like.

"I didn't get any sleep," Cruz said.

He donned the burgundy polo shirt he received when he was a member of the Stoneman Douglas Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program so he could escape by mingling with fleeing students.



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"If I had all my (shooting) gear on, they would have called the cops," Cruz said.

When he set out at 2 p.m., he told the Uber driver he was in the school orchestra and the bag carried his instrument.

WHAT DID CRUZ DO WHEN HE ARRIVED?

"I walked through the gates. Hopefully, there would be no security guards, but I was wrong," Cruz told Scott. "I was looking at the guy and he was watching me."

When Cruz attended Stoneman Douglas, guards frequently checked him for weapons because of his erratic and sometimes violent behavior. When he was expelled a year before the shooting, a guard predicted he would eventually return and shoot people.

Fearing he'd been discovered, Cruz sprinted into a three-story classroom building and quickly assembled his weapon. He told a student who happened upon him to flee because something bad was about to happen.

He then went floor to floor, shooting down hallways and into classrooms, firing 140 shots in all.

"I thought they would scream," Cruz said about his first three victims. He shot them point-blank outside a locked classroom door. "It was more like they passed out and blood came pouring out of their head. It was really nasty and sad to see."

But he continued.

"I think I showed mercy to three girls. I was going to walk away, but they showed nasty faces and I went back," Cruz said. "I thought they were going to attack me."

Cruz shot several of his victims a second time after they fell, including his final one — a student writhing from a leg wound. He said the boy "gave me a nasty look. A look of anger."

"His head blew up like a water balloon," Cruz said.

WHY DID CRUZ STOP SHOOTING?

Students and teachers fled the building or locked themselves in classrooms. The third-floor hallway was now empty except for victims.

"I couldn't find anyone to kill," he said. "I didn't want to do it anymore and I didn't think there was anyone else in the building."

He dropped his gun and vest on the stairwell and fled. He was captured an hour later — the police officer had been looking for a young male in a Stoneman Douglas ROTC polo.

CRUZ'S FINAL SAY

As Denney was finishing the final interview, he asked Cruz if there was anything else he should know. Cruz thought for 10 seconds before responding: "Why I chose Valentine's Day."

"Because I thought no one would love me," Cruz explained. "I didn't like Valentine's Day and I wanted to ruin it for everyone."

"Do you mean for the family members of the kids that were killed?" Denney asked.

"No, for the school," Cruz replied.

The holiday will never be celebrated there again, he said.

## Michigan GOP statewide candidates stick to far-right message

By JOEY CAPPELLETTI Associated Press/Report for America

WARREN, Mich. (AP) — With voting underway in Michigan's general election, the Republican nominee for secretary of state stepped on stage as a warm-up act for former President Donald Trump and hit hard on the main theme of her campaign.

Kristina Karamo repeated unfounded assertions about the 2020 presidential election that have been repeatedly debunked. She told the crowd at the recent rally at Macomb Community College that "authoritarians" are giving millions to her Democratic opponent — Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson — in an attempt to "corrupt battleground state election systems so they can control America."

"If you look at history, it shows you what tyrants do," said Karamo, a former community college professor. "History is telling us, history is screaming to us, that if we don't step up and fight now, we will lose

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the greatest country in human history.”

It was an address designed to rev up the crowd of devoted Trump followers, some of whom have latched onto the baseless QAnon conspiracy theory.

While Karamo’s speech drew cheers, relying on a general election strategy that appeals to the most far-right voters is a gamble for Michigan Republicans.

Candidates who have to play to their party’s base during primaries or nominating conventions often shift toward the center, aiming to attract more voters for the general election. But that hasn’t happened this year for the Republicans seeking Michigan’s top three statewide offices — governor, attorney general and secretary of state.

The Nov. 8 election will test whether campaigns designed to resonate with the far-right and highlight strong ties to Trump will be enough to win in a traditional swing state, where the Republican incumbent lost the White House race to Democrat challenger Joe Biden by more than 154,000 votes in 2020.

All three GOP candidates stood behind Trump during the Oct. 1 rally at the college about 20 miles north of Detroit, joined by Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., and MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell, who has amplified Trump’s election falsehoods to audiences across the country.

Trump falsely claimed the 2020 election was “rigged and stolen” in Michigan, citing “evidence” he said first originated with Karamo and Matthew DePerno, a tax lawyer who is the nominee for state attorney general.

In his own address to the crowd, DePerno called Democrats “radical, cultural Marxists” who want to “silence you.”

“If that doesn’t work, they want to put you in jail,” DePerno told the crowd, which fell into chants of “Lock her up.” All three Democratic incumbents are women.

DePerno’s campaign also is clouded by an investigation into whether he should be criminally charged for attempting to gain access to voting machines after the 2020 election.

John DeBlaay, a Grand Rapids real estate agent and precinct delegate who attended the rally, said he was thrilled with the candidates. “We’ve got the best America First ticket all the way from top to bottom that we’ve had in a long time now,” he said.

Some moderate Republicans are skeptical that campaigns appealing mostly to base elements of the party will be enough to beat Democratic incumbents with wide name recognition and sizable fundraising advantages. The Democrats also are expected to benefit from having an amendment on the ballot that seeks to enshrine the right to abortion in the state constitution.

These Republicans say inflation, gas prices and economic anxiety should be the GOP’s main talking points, not a continued alignment with Trump and his false claims about widespread fraud costing him reelection.

They point to the unusual way Michigan selects its attorney general and secretary of state candidates, a process done through a party nominating convention rather than through a primary election in which voters make the choice.

The most conservative Republicans who are loyal to Trump dominated that convention in April. The party’s co-chair, Meshawn Maddock, was one of 16 Republicans who submitted false certificates stating they were the state’s presidential electors despite Biden’s certified victory in the state.

Three weeks before the convention, during another Trump rally, DePerno encouraged attendees — many of them precinct delegates — to “storm” the party gathering and said it was “time for the grassroots to unite.”

Delegates overwhelmingly voted to nominate Karamo. DePerno won a runoff over former legislative leader Tom Leonard, who lost in the 2018 attorney general’s race by 3 percentage points to Democrat Dana Nessel.

“Karamo and DePerno are among the most loyal to Donald Trump that you will find anywhere in the country,” said Jason Roe, a longtime Republican strategist. “That loyalty has been unshakable in this election process, regardless of how it might affect general election prospects.”

Roe, whose father served as the Michigan GOP’s executive director for 10 years, became executive director of the state party in spring 2021. Six months later, he stepped down due to a “difference in opinion on how many conspiracy theories we should tolerate.”

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Soon after Roe left, Trump began calling party leaders to “force the party to embrace things formally that weren’t going to be helpful to the upcoming election,” Roe said.

The party’s candidate for governor, Tudor Dixon, won the nomination during the primary in August after receiving Trump’s endorsement. Dixon, a conservative news show host who once acted in low-budget horror films, also benefited from support of the wealthy DeVos family.

While seen as less extreme than Karamo and DePerno, Dixon indicated during debates that she thought the 2020 presidential election was stolen and she recently made light of a plot to kidnap Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat. Dixon has since tried to pivot away from denying the results of the last election by focusing on topics such as inflation and education, but she also is repeating hard-right rhetoric on cultural issues.

She has called for banning “pornographic” books in schools and has pitched an education agenda modeled after the Florida policy that critics have labeled “Don’t Say Gay.”

While Democrats have attacked DePerno and Karamo for their continued denial of Biden’s victory in 2020, they have focused on what they describe as Dixon’s “extreme” abortion stance. Lackluster fundraising has made it difficult for her to push back.

As of Aug. 22, Dixon had \$524,000 in the bank compared with Whitmer’s \$14 million, according to the latest available campaign finance reports. Some of that gap has been closed by the super PAC Michigan Families United, which has received \$2.5 million in donations, including from the DeVos family.

“I just don’t like that there’s no commercials on TV about Dixon. Everything you see is about the other people, and it’s all negative,” said Laura Bunting, an Ionia County resident who attended the Trump rally.

Karamo and DePerno had a combined \$422,554 cash on hand as of Sept. 16 compared with the \$5.7 million combined for their Democratic opponents, according to campaign finance reports.

Michigan-based pollster Bernie Porn said the Republican candidates have been defined by their extreme stances but that none has attracted enough money to get on TV and introduce themselves to a broader swath of voters. That, he said, “makes it difficult for folks to form a favorable opinion of you.”

## Historic homes may prove to be more resilient against floods

By BEN FINLEY Associated Press

SUFFOLK, Va. (AP) — Whenever historic homes get flooded, building contractors often feel compelled by government regulations to rip out the water-logged wood flooring, tear down the old plaster walls and install new, flood-resistant materials.

It’s a hurried approach that’s likely to occur across southwest Florida in the wake of Hurricane Ian. But restorers Paige Pollard and Kerry Shackelford say they know something that science is yet to prove: historic building materials can often withstand repeated soakings. There’s often no need, they say, to put in modern products such as box-store lumber that are both costly to homeowners and dilute a house’s historic character.

“Our forefathers chose materials that were naturally rot-resistant, like black locust and red cedar and cypress,” said Shackelford, who owns a historic restoration business. “And they actually survive better than many of the products we use today.”

Pollard and Shackelford are part of an emerging movement in the U.S. that aims to prove the resilience of older homes as more fall under the threat of rising seas and intensifying storms due to climate change. They hope their research near Virginia’s coast can convince more government officials and building contractors that historic building materials often need cleaning — not replacing — after a flood.

In Florida, historic preservationists already fear older homes damaged by Ian may be stripped of original materials because so few craftsmen are available who can properly perform repairs.

“There are some companies that just roll through, and their job is just to come in and gut the place and move on,” said Jenny Wolfe, board president of the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation.

Pollard and Shackelford’s joint venture in Virginia, the retrofit design firm Building Resilient Solutions, opened a lab this year in which planks of old-growth pine, oak and cedar are submerged into a tank

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mimicking flood conditions. The tests are designed to demonstrate historic materials' durability and were devised with help from Virginia Tech researchers.

Meanwhile, the National Park Service has been working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on similar research at the Construction Engineering Research Laboratory in Champaign, Illinois.

Researchers there have read through construction manuals from the mid-19th and early 20th centuries to assemble everything from tongue-and-groove flooring to brick walls coated with plaster. The materials were lowered into water containing bacteria and mold to simulate tainted floodwater.

The research may seem glaringly redundant considering all of the older homes that stand intact along the nation's coasts and rivers: many have withstood multiple floods and still boast their original floors and walls.

Pollard and Shackelford say lumber in older homes is resilient because it came from trees that grew slowly over decades, if not centuries. That means the trees' growth rings were small and dense, thereby making it harder for water to seep in. Also, the timber was cut from the innermost part of the trunk, which produces the hardest wood.

Plaster can also be water resistant, while common plaster coatings were made from lime, a substance with antiseptic qualities.

But here's the problem: U.S. flood insurance regulations often require structures in flood-prone areas to be repaired with products classified as flood-resistant. And many historic building materials haven't been classified because they haven't been tested.

U.S. regulations allow exceptions for homes on the National Register of Historic Places as well as some state and local registries. But not everyone fully understands or is aware of the exceptions, which can be limited.

The far bigger challenge is a lack of expertise among contractors and local officials, Pollard said. Interpretations of the regulations can vary, particularly in the chaos after a major flood.

"You've got a property owner who's in distress," said Pollard, who co-owns a historic preservation firm. "They're dealing with a contractor who's being pulled in a million directions. And the contractors are trained to get all of that (wet) material into a dumpster as quickly as possible."

In Norfolk, Virginia, Karen Speights said a contractor replaced her original first floor — made from old-growth pine — with laminate flooring after her home flooded.

Built in the 1920s, Speights' two-story craftsman is in Chesterfield Heights, a predominantly Black neighborhood on the National Register of Historic Places. It sits along an estuary of the Chesapeake Bay in one of the most vulnerable cities to sea-level rise.

"I still believe I had a good contractor, but flooding was not his expertise," Speights said. "You don't know what you don't know."

Along Florida's Gulf Coast, there are thousands of historic structures, said Wolfe of the Florida Trust. A large number of them are wood-framed houses on piers with plaster-and-lath walls.

Many likely just need to be dried out after Ian, Wolfe said. But only so many local contractors know what to do "in terms of drying them slowly and opening up the baseboards to get circular airflow."

Andy Apter, president-elect of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry, agreed that many contractors aren't well-versed in older building materials.

"There's no course that I know of that teaches you directly how to work on historical homes," said Apter, a Maryland contractor. "It's like an antique car. You're going to be limited on where you can find parts and where you can find someone who's qualified to work on it."

But interest in the resilience of older homes has grown since Hurricane Katrina, which deluged hundreds of thousands of historic structures along the Gulf Coast in 2005, according to Jenifer Eggleston, the National Park Service's chief of staff for cultural resources, partnerships and science.

Eggleston said the park service recognized the growing need to protect older structures and issued new guidelines last year for rehabilitating historic buildings in flood-prone areas.

The guidelines recommend keeping historic materials in place when possible. But they don't list specific materials due to the lack of research on their flood resistance.

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That's where the studies come in.

A recent study by the park service and Army Corps found that some historic materials, such as old-growth heart pine and cypress flooring, performed considerably better than certain varieties of modern lumber, Eggleston said.

Those particular floor assemblies could be dried for reuse after so-called "clean water" damage, Eggleston said. But they would likely require refinishing to remove "biological activity," such as mold and bacteria.

Pollard and Shackelford said they're hoping for an eventual shift in practices that will save money for homeowners as well as taxpayers, who often foot the bill after a major disaster.

In the meantime, flooding in historic areas will only get worse from more frequent rain storms or more powerful hurricanes, said Chad Berginnis, executive director of the Association of State Floodplain Managers.

"Think about our historic settlement patterns in the country," Berginnis said. "On the coasts, we settled around water. Inland, we settled around water."

## Today in History: October 10, Naval Academy is established

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, Oct. 10, the 283rd day of 2022. There are 82 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 10, 1845, the U.S. Naval Academy was established in Annapolis, Maryland.

On this date:

In 1911, Chinese revolutionaries launched an uprising that led to the collapse of the Qing (or Manchu) Dynasty and the establishment of the Republic of China.

In 1935, the George Gershwin opera "Porgy and Bess," featuring an all-Black cast, opened on Broadway, beginning a run of 124 performances.

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy, responding to the Thalidomide birth defects crisis, signed an amendment to the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act requiring pharmaceutical companies to prove that their products were safe and effective prior to marketing.

In 1964, entertainer Eddie Cantor, 72, died in Beverly Hills, California.

In 1966, the Beach Boys' single "Good Vibrations" by Brian Wilson and Mike Love was released by Capitol Records.

In 1973, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, accused of accepting bribes, pleaded no contest to one count of federal income tax evasion, and resigned his office.

In 1981, funeral services were held in Cairo for Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat, who had been assassinated by Muslim extremists.

In 1985, U.S. fighter jets forced an Egyptian plane carrying the hijackers of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro (ah-KEE'-leh LOW'-roh) to land in Italy, where the gunmen were taken into custody. Actor-director Orson Welles died in Los Angeles at age 70; actor Yul Brynner died in New York at age 65.

In 1997, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and its coordinator, Jody Williams, were named winners of the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 2001, U.S. jets pounded the Afghan capital of Kabul. President George W. Bush unveiled a list of 22 most-wanted terrorists, including Osama bin Laden.

In 2004, Christopher Reeve, the "Superman" of celluloid who became a quadriplegic after a May 1995 horse riding accident, died in Mount Kisco, New York, at age 52.

In 2014, Malala Yousafzai (mah-LAH'-lah YOO'-suhf-zeye), a 17-year-old Pakistani girl, and Kailash Satyarthi (KY'-lash saht-YAHR'-thee), a 60-year-old Indian man, were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for risking their lives for the right of children to receive an education and to live free from abuse.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama conceded he did poorly the previous week in his first debate with Republican rival Mitt Romney, telling ABC he'd "had a bad night"; Romney, meanwhile, barnstormed battleground state Ohio and released a new commercial pledging not to raise taxes. Football star-turned-

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actor Alex Karras died in Los Angeles at age 77.

Five years ago: The U.S. soccer team failed to qualify for the World Cup, eliminated with a 2-1 loss to Trinidad and Tobago; it ended a run of seven straight U.S. appearances at soccer's showcase event. A flood of new allegations poured in against movie executive Harvey Weinstein, including testimonies from Gwyneth Paltrow and Angelina Jolie. Reacting to reports that Secretary of State Rex Tillerson had called him a "moron" after a classified briefing, President Donald Trump challenged Tillerson to "compare IQ tests;" the White House insisted Trump was only joking.

One year ago: After the first direct talks between U.S. officials and Afghanistan's new Taliban leaders, the Taliban said the U.S. had agreed to provide humanitarian aid while refusing to give political recognition to the new rulers; the U.S. said only that the two sides had discussed the provision of U.S. humanitarian aid to the Afghan people. After more than 18 months of pandemic delays, Daniel Craig's final James Bond film, "No Time to Die," was the top earner at the box office on its opening weekend, grossing \$56 million in North America.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Peter Coyote is 81. Entertainer Ben Vereen is 76. Actor Charles Dance is 76. Rock singer-musician Cyril Neville (The Neville Brothers) is 74. Actor Jessica Harper is 73. Author Nora Roberts (aka "J.D. Robb") is 72. Singer-musician Midge Ure is 69. Rock singer David Lee Roth is 68. Actor J. Eddie Peck is 64. Country singer Tanya Tucker is 64. Actor Julia Sweeney is 63. Actor Bradley Whitford is 63. Musician Martin Kemp is 61. Actor Jodi Benson is 61. Rock musician Jim Glennie (James) is 59. Actor Rebecca Pidgeon is 57. California Gov. Gavin Newsom is 55. Rock musician Mike Malinin (mah-LIHN'ihn) (Goo Goo Dolls) is 55. Pro Football Hall of Famer Brett Favre is 53. Actor Manu Bennett is 53. Actor Joelle Carter is 53. Actor Wendi McLendon-Covey is 53. Actor/TV host Mario Lopez is 49. Retired race car driver Dale Earnhardt Jr. is 48. Actor Jodi Lyn O'Keefe is 44. Singer Mya is 43. Actor Dan Stevens is 40. Singer Cherie is 38. MLB outfielder Andrew McCutchen is 36. Actor Rose McIver is 34. Actor Aimee Teegarden is 33.