

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 1 of 75

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Sisseton holds off Groton rally in girls hoop action](#)
- [2- Chamber Ad](#)
- [3- Groton City Council Meeting Agenda](#)
- [3- Coming Up on GDILIVE.COM](#)
- [4- Groton C&MA Christmas Pageant](#)
- [4- Changes in St. John's Christmas Services](#)
- [4- Rounds Issues Statement on Former President's Call to Terminate the United States Constitution](#)
- [5- Reflection on State Oral Interp Festival](#)
- [9- Harry Implement Ad](#)
- [10- SD Searchlight: Forest Service fixing decades-old blunder in Black Hills](#)
- [13- SD Searchlight: Rounds criticizes Trump's call for 'termination' of the Constitution](#)
- [14- SD Searchlight: Here's when drug prices will start to decrease for Medicare recipients](#)
- [15- Weather Pages](#)
- [21- Daily Devotional](#)
- [22- 2022 Community Events](#)
- [23- Subscription Form](#)
- [24- News from the Associated Press](#)

Groton Community Calendar

Tuesday, Dec. 6

Senior Menu: Baked codfish, parsley buttered potatoes, seasoned cabbage, fruit, whole wheat bread.
School Breakfast: Breakfast sandwich
School Lunch: Lasagna hot dish, corn.
St. John's Ladies Aid Christmas Party, noon.
JHGBB hosts Northwestern. 7th grade at 6:15 p.m. followed by 8th grade
Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
The Pantry, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
Groton UMC Bible Study Christmas Party, 10 a.m.;
Conde Advent Bible Study, 6 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 7

Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, mixed vegetables, garlic toast, pears, sherbert.
School Breakfast: Eggs and breakfast potatoes.
School Lunch: Sloppy joes, potato wedges.
St. John's Bible Study, 2:45 p.m.; Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.; Advent Service, 7 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.; Confir-



mation, 6 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.
Groton Chamber board meets at noon at City Hall
Community Coffee Hour at Groton UMC, 9:30 a.m.
Confirmation UMYF Angel Tree Shopping, 6 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 8

Senior Menu: Beef stew, biscuit, Waldorf salad, sherbert.
School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.
School Lunch: Chicken sandwich, sweet potatoes.
MS/HS Christmas Concert, 7 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 9

Senior Menu: Chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes with gravy, corn, chocolate cake, fruit, whole wheat bread.
School Breakfast: Biscuits and gravy
School Lunch: Pizza crunchers, green beans.
BB at Hamlin (GBB 8th grade at 4 p.m. followed by 7th grade in multipurpose gym; Boys C game at 4 p.m. followed by JV and varsity girls at 6:30 p.m. with boys varsity at 8 p.m.)

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.
© 2022 Groton Daily Independent

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 2 of 75

Sisseton holds off Groton rally in girls hoop action

Groton Area's girls basketball team opened its season Monday night, dropping a 32-24 game to the Sisseton Redmen at Sisseton.

Sisseton took control of the game early on, jumping out to a 9-0 lead and led it at half time, 19-5. The Tigers made two of 31 field goals for just 6 percent while Sisseton was five of 17 for 29 percent.

Groton Area started to make strides into the deficit in the second half. Sisseton watched its 16-point lead a 21-5 to start the third quarter dwindle. It was 21-12 at the end of the third quarter. Groton Area closed to within two, 26-24, with less than two minutes to go in the game. Sisseton turned the ball over and the Tigers had a chance to either tie or take the lead, but was unable to capitalize and Sisseton quickly scored. The Redmen hung on to win, 32-24.

Gracie Traphagen led the Tigers with nine points (seven in the fourth quarter), nine rebounds and one assist. Jerica Locke had four points, seven rebounds, two assists and four steals; Jaedyn Penning had four points, five rebounds and one steal; Aspen Johnson had three points, five rebounds and one steal; Brooke Gengerke had two points, two rebounds and three assists; Sydney Leicht had two points, six rebounds and one steal; Kennedy Hansen had one rebound, one assist, one steal.

Groton Area made seven of 33 two-pointers for 21 percent, one of 20 three-pointers for 5 percent; had 35 rebounds, 15 turnovers, seven assists, eight steals and 14 team fouls with Penning fouling out with 2:05 left in the game.

Chloe Langager led the Redmen with 11 points followed by Emmalee Nielsen with eight, Hannah Leverson and Krista Langager each had six and Rylie Huff had one free throw. Three Redmen had 14 turnovers, made nine of 39 field goals for 23 percent, and 11 of 16 free throws for 69 percent.

The varsity game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Bierman Farm Service, Dacotah Bank, Groton Chamber of Commerce, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Locke Electric, Spanier Harvesting & Trucking, Bahr Spray Foam, Thunder Seed with John Wheeting.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 31-13. Kennedy Hansen had four points, Faith Traphagen eight, Laila Roberts four, Brooklyn Hansen three, Rylee Dunker three, Jaedyn Penning five and Mia Crank four.

The JV game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Adam and Nicole Wright.

- Paul Kosel



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 3 of 75

Groton City Council Meeting Agenda

December 6, 2022 – 7:00pm

City Hall – 120 N Main Street

(IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CALL IN TO THIS MEETING, PLEASE MAKE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS TO DO SO BY CALLING CITY HALL 605-397-8422)

• Public Comments - pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1
(Public Comments will offer the opportunity for anyone not listed on the agenda to speak to the council. Speaking time will be limited to 3 minutes. No action will be taken on questions or items not on the agenda.)

- Minutes
- Bills
- Department Reports
- Reappoint Jeff Steen as Planning and Zoning Board Representative – 5 Year Term
- Purchase of Tarp for Skating Pond
- Pay Request #3 – Dahme Construction
- Approval of Groton Union Cemetery First Addition, Block 40 Plat
- Northeast Council of Governments (NECOG) Joint Cooperative Agreement for 2023
- First Reading of Ordinance #765 – Supplemental 2022 Appropriations
- Park Bathroom Continued Discussion
- Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)
- Adjournment

GDILIVE.COM

City Council Meeting
Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2022, 7 p.m.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 4 of 75

Groton C&MA Christmas Pageant

The Christian & Missionary Alliance Church family will present a Christmas pageant portraying God's gift of love, on Dec. 18th at 5pm, at 706 N Main. Following the program, a ham and turkey dinner, with all the trimmings, will be served as a gift to the community. The public is invited.

Changes in St. John's Christmas Services

There will be no advent service on December 21. The pre-school Christmas program will be held on Dec. 21 at 7 p.m. The Christmas Eve service has been moved up to 4 p.m.

Rounds Issues Statement on Former President's Call to Terminate the United States Constitution

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Mike Rounds (R-S.D.) yesterday issued the following statement after the former president called for the termination of the United States Constitution:

"Americans have a deep appreciation for the Constitution and our Founding Fathers who risked their lives to establish it.

"As elected officials, we take an oath to support and defend the Constitution. We should never dishonor that oath. No one is above the Constitution.

"As I've said before, there is no evidence of widespread voter fraud that would alter the results of the 2020 election.

"Anyone who desires to lead our country must commit to protecting the Constitution. They should not threaten to terminate it.

"In South Dakota, Mount Rushmore serves as an enduring reminder of that commitment and the stability our Constitution has provided for over 200 years.

"Despite their imperfections, our Founding Fathers crafted a Constitution that has stood the test of time and sets America apart from the rest of the world. We continue to strive for a more perfect union.

"I believe Americans want leaders, like those on Mount Rushmore, who will defend the Constitution and unite us in our belief that America is truly a shining city upon a hill."

###

Fire From a Spark

A reflection on the 2022 State Oral Interpretation festival from the photographer who was there to document it

By Jeremy Waltner

What follows is an intimate first-person look inside last week's South Dakota High School Activities Association's 2022 State Oral Interpretation festival.

Kleenex is not required but recommended.

PART 1: THE BLACK BOX ROOM

Ariana Edwards stood at the front of the Black Box Room, one of the performance centers at the Mitchell Career & Technical Education Academy that is part of the Mitchell School District and poured her heart out.

No, not hers.

Rather, the Sioux Falls Washington senior poured out the heart of Rebecca, the central character in the piece she presented in the category of Serious Reading at the 113th State Oral Interpretation Festival held Friday and Saturday, Dec. 2 and 3. Ariana's selection titled "A Year of Firsts" and written by Susan Miller tells the story of Rebecca leaving her husband and falling in love with a woman who gave her joy she had never felt in living a life conformed to society's standards. But it's not long until tragedy strikes — an automobile/pedestrian accident that sends Rebecca's partner to the hospital.

Rebecca races there to see her, but after identifying as her partner, she is told by staff that she is not allowed into the room because she is not "family," and the love of her life dies alone.

I was wrecked.

"How do you not cry?" I asked Ariana, who won three superiors at last weekend's state festival — for "A Year of Firsts," and also in the categories of Duet Interpretation and Reader's Theatre.

"I keep it controlled," she responded. "I want it to be about my character's feelings, not mine."

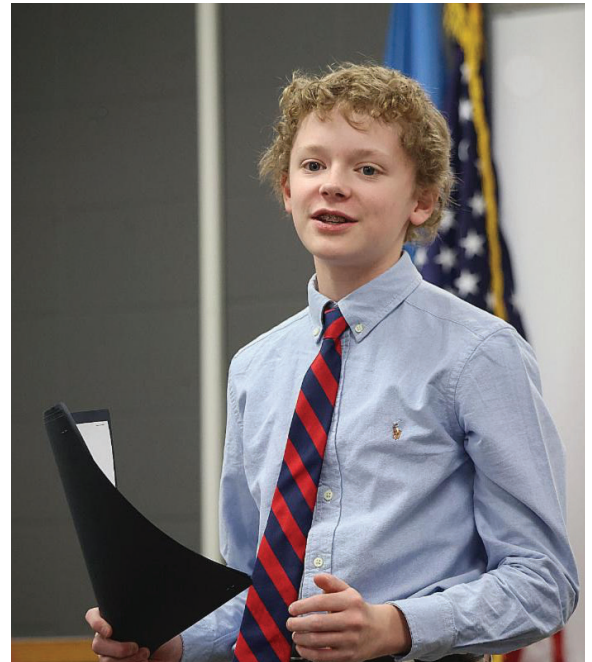
But Ariana, who came out as a lesbian her freshman year, does find time to cry and did so in the hallway after giving the piece one last time on Friday — after saying goodbye to Rebecca.

"It's emotionally draining," she said, hoping that the message resonates with those who heard it — that it doesn't matter who you love, but that you love. "It's such an important story and hits really hard."

PART 2: PAC MAIN STAGE

With most of the other events concluded, the theater at the Mitchell Career & Technical Education Academy was nearly filled when the Reader's Theatre team from Brandon Valley took the stage for "How to Eat Like a Child" — the final presentation of the day.

And Ian Candy, Kaylee Willard, Lucy Lamont, Bella Reif and Julia Tinker had the audience in stitches as they gave life-lesson-advice through the eyes of a child, like how to convince parents to get a dog, how to torture your sister and how to resist bedtime. It was a fast-paced romp, much like many of the Reader's Theatre productions that took that very stage, and generated an abundance of authentic emotion. It was as powerful as Ariana's piece but in an entirely different way in that it made people laugh.



Thor Aanenson, a freshman at Freeman Public, presents "The Good News on Poverty" in the Class B category of Non-Original Oratory Saturday afternoon, Dec. 3. Aanenson received a superior for his presentation of the TED Talk first given by U2 singer Bono in 2013. PHOTO BY JEREMY WALTNER/FOR SDPB

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 6 of 75



Sioux Falls Washington senior Arianna Edwards shares "A Year of Firsts" in the Class AA division of Serious Reading Friday afternoon, Dec. 2. Edwards earned a superior for her presentation of the Susan Miller piece and also claimed a top honor in Duet Interpretation and Reader's Theatre.

PHOTO BY JEREMY WALTNER/FOR SDPB

politics. We are going to win because we don't play their dirty games. We are going to win because we don't have a party-political agenda. We are going to win because the tears that come from our eyes actually come from our hearts. We are going to win because we have dreams, and we're willing to stand up for those dreams.'

"That activist is right," he concluded. "We're going to win if we work together as one, because the power of the people is so much stronger than the people in power."

And Thor owned the room.

In a big way.

Nobody took an eye off the charming and engaging orator, who poured his heart and soul into the words he spoke. Using the perfect combination of science and humor to dazzle the judges all along the way, he delivered one of the most well-deserved superiors I have ever heard.

"It was tangible," Thor said of the silent energy inside MCTEA 10. "It was exciting. It was awesome. To spend 10 minutes giving something to people that matters, means everything to me. That's why oral interp needs more attention. It's amazing."

Yeah.

What Thor said.

After all, it doesn't matter what you feel, but that you feel.

It was glorious.

PART 3: ROOM MCTEA 10

Thor Aanenson was the eighth speaker in the 13-contestant Non-Original Oratory category that came near the conclusion of last week's festival. What the Freeman High School freshman delivered was well worth the wait.

Thor presented "The Good News on Poverty," a TED Talk delivered by U2 front-man Bono in 2013, a fact-driven, hope-based account of why we should feel good about an existence that all too often feels heavy and hard.

"What the facts are telling us is that humanity's long, slow journey of equality is actually speeding up; look at what's been achieved," Thor told the audience through his powerful selection. "Since the year 2000, there are eight million more AIDS patients getting life-saving antiretroviral drugs. Malaria: There are eight countries in sub-Saharan Africa that have had their death rates cut by 75 percent. For kids under five, child mortality is down by 2.65 million a year. That's a rate of 7,256 children's lives saved each day. Wow. Wow.

"Let's just stop for a second and think about that. Have you read anything anywhere in the last week that is remotely as important as that number? Wow. Great news. It drives me nuts that most people don't seem to know this news. Seven thousand kids a day."

Activism has achieved a decrease in poverty and an increase in equality, Thor's piece said, and the people are taking power.

Note the quote from an activist behind a revolt in Egypt, he said:

"We are going to win because we don't understand

PART 4: CHANGING THE WORLD

I had the absolute privilege of photographing last weekend's state festival for South Dakota Public Broadcasting and experienced roughly 18 hours of incredible human beings being 100% committed to whatever it was they were talking about, and it had a profound impact that left me adrenalized days after the event's conclusion.

The power behind the presentations I heard from Ariana, the team from Brandon Valley, Thor, and the dozens of others who poured their heart and soul into the pieces they prepared and shared prompted an indescribable blend of emotions — grief, wonder and delight.

At times, it felt like an out-of-body experience.

Here is the Facebook post I shared late Saturday night after I got home.

"The emotional volume these incredible students outputted was and is beyond words and I can't express enough what an incredible experience it was. While photographing each group of those who earned a superior, I took a minute to tell them something from my heart that I could not keep quiet — that winning a superior at state was an enormous accomplishment and extremely hard to do, and that even though I didn't know (most) of them, I was proud of all of them.

"Tears swelled in their eyes, and in mine. It was authentic and spontaneous beauty. It was humanity looking at each other with a quiet understanding and belief that everything is going to be OK.

"And here's the thing: Even those who didn't win a superior gave a gift that they will never know and never understand, because I promise you that the people who heard those words FELT THEM.

"That is art, my friends.

"We are not better because of Facebook or Twitter, 24-hour news cycles or true crime podcasts, debates about who worships the correct God or stands for the right causes. We are better because of what I saw and heard the past two days by the next generation that wants to do better, and I am as hopeful as I've ever been."

In the few days following the many hours I spent in Mitchell, I have thought a lot about why my emotional decoder ring was so lit up, and I still don't have a good answer.

I guess I can't help how I feel; I don't think anyone can.

And that is the answer!

When it comes right down to it, oral interpretation is all about feelings. About heart. About humanity. About gain and loss and heartbreak and hope. As I said before, it doesn't matter what you feel; what matters is that you feel.



The Brandon Valley Reader's Theatre team performs "How to Eat Like a Child" from the PAC main stage of the PAC Friday evening, Dec. 2. The group won a superior for their humorous look at life through the eyes of a child. PHOTO BY JEREMY WALTNER/FOR SDPB

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 8 of 75

When we own and honor our emotions, we grow into better people, and when we become better people we become better citizens of the world, and when we become better citizens of the world, we make a difference. And one small and seemingly inconsequential state oral interpretation festival can be a spark that sets a city on fire.

But it was a spark that set a city on fire last week, yet only a few people know about it.

And that's why I'm writing this.

We fill basketball arenas with edgy fans and call them sanctuaries. We fill baseball stadiums with seed-spitting spectators and call them cathedrals. We display state championship trophies behind locked glass and hang banners on gymnasium walls. We recount the year that we took it all and talk about that one call that cost us everything that, in the end, really doesn't matter. And we get excited when that one special group of athletes is ready to take the town by storm.

And we should.

But the fact that we pay so little attention to the Arianas, the team from Brandon Valley, Thor, and all the performers from 91 high schools in South Dakota who opened up their souls for anybody who cared to listen last weekend ...

Well, that breaks me, too.

Because when it comes down to it, with few headlines, scant attention and little glamour, the people who are going to make a difference in the world were those in the Black Box Room and on the PAC Main Stage and in Room MCTEA 10 and the three other performance centers inside the Mitchell Career & Technical Education Academy last weekend.

My hope is that the performers who performed know that they will, in fact, change the world.

And that love is love.

Laughter is laughter.

And that hope lives in all of us.

Thank God it does.

Jeremy Waltner is a second-generation editor and publisher for The Courier (Freeman, S.D.) who freelances as a photographer and videographer. He has worked fulltime at his hometown newspaper since May of 1999 and has been co-publisher with his wife, Stacey, since 2016. They have two children: Ella, 16; and Oliver, 13. He can be reached by text at 605-351-6097.

X SERIES | *Cub Cadet*

PUT WINTER IN ITS PLACE



3X 30" HD

Gear up for the worst of winter weather with the 3X 30" HD powered by a 420cc Cub Cadet OHV engine.

- Heavy-duty 14-gauge steel auger housing and side plates
- LED light bar on auger housing plus dual LED in-dash headlights
- 23" intake height
- Heated hand grips
- OVH crank chute control w/ high-arc steel chute
- Heavy-duty cast aluminum gear box backed by 5-year limited warranty**

MSRP
\$1,999*



3X 26" TRAC

Clear it all with the strength of the 3X 26" Trac featuring a powerful 357cc Cub Cadet OHV engine.

- Track Drive ideal for slopes, inclines and gravel driveways
- Heavy-duty 14-gauge steel auger housing and side plates
- 23" intake height
- Heated hand grips
- OVH crank chute control w/ high-arc steel chute
- LED light bar on auger housing plus dual LED in-dash headlights
- Heavy-duty cast aluminum auger gear box w/ 5-year limited warranty**

MSRP
\$2,099*



2X 30" MAX

Take on winter with the commercial-grade durability of the 357cc Cub Cadet 2X 30" MAX snow blower

- Heavy-duty 14-gauge steel side plates and auger housing
- 14" augers and impeller
- Sealed ball bearings on auger and wheel shafts
- LED light bar on auger housing
- 23" intake height
- Heated hand grips
- 16"x6.5" X-Trac tires
- High-arc steel chute
- Heavy-duty cast aluminum auger gear box w/ 5-year limited warranty

MSRP
\$1,899*

■ Indicates step-up feature



YOUR INDEPENDENT DEALER – EXPERT SERVICE. LOCALLY OWNED.
The advice, service, selection and support you need to find the right fit for you.

HARRY IMPLEMENT INC.
109 CENTER ST.
FERNEY, SD 57439
www.harrysinc.com
605-395-6421

¹ Restrictions apply. See dealer or cubcadet.com/en_US/financing for details.

[†] When compared to the same engine without IntelliPower™ technology. Improvements vary depending on engine models and specific operating conditions.

* Actual retail prices are set by dealer and may vary. Taxes are additional and vary by location. Freight and PDI charges may be additional and vary by dealer.

Models subject to limited availability. Images may not reflect dealer inventory and/or unit specifications.

** See owner's manual for warranty details and information. Certain restrictions apply.

© 2022 Cub Cadet

**EXCEPTIONAL FINANCING
OFFERS AVAILABLE!**





SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Forest Service fixing decades-old blunder in Black Hills **The wrong trees were planted after a historic fire and now pose a safety threat and fire risk**

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - DECEMBER 5, 2022 4:56 PM

When foresters replanted trees decades ago after a devastating wildfire in the Black Hills, they made a mistake.

They planted a species of ponderosa pine that was not native to the area.

Today, the U.S. Forest Service knows better, but effects linger from the agency's earlier actions. Thousands of acres in the Black Hills National Forest are covered with deformed, stunted trees that grew from those non-native seeds.

And now, the Forest Service is trying to fix the error.

Forest officials are proposing to cut down thousands of acres of trees just north of Hill City and replant them with native trees over the next several years. The effort is part of a larger movement to ensure forest safety and restoration.

The Artemis Restoration Project, with a name celebrating the historic Artemis rocket launch in November, is the fourth restoration effort in the forest's Mystic Ranger District – an area roughly comprising the central Black Hills. The projects aim to replant 8,000 to 10,000 acres of forest impacted by the 1939 McVey Fire, which spanned over 20,000 acres and is one of the largest in the forest's history.

While the replanting effort after the fire was well intentioned, decades later the non-native trees leave the area vulnerable to fires and disease and hurt the quality of wildlife habitat, said Jim Gubbels, district ranger for the Forest Service.

Non-native trees grow deformed, increase fire risk

The originally replanted trees grew stunted and deformed, retaining dead limbs longer than native ponderosa pine. A native ponderosa pine naturally sheds its branches and has a several-foot gap from the ground as it grows, which helps keep fires from spreading to the tree canopy.

None of the originally planted stands are regenerating naturally, and many are infected with gall rust, a



Restoration work on the old McVey Fire burn area in Black Hills National Forest. (USDA Forest Service photo)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 11 of 75



Example of a non-native ponderosa pine in the Black Hills (Courtesy of the Forest Service)

disease that grows in a pine tree's branches or trunk and can be detrimental to young tree growth. The disease is potentially due to the trees' offsite genetics.

The McVey restoration effort has been in the works since 2019, when groups began developing plans to treat the area.

Gubbels expects it'll be eight to 10 years before native seedlings will be transplanted to the area and grow on their own, given several bidding projects and steps required to cut down trees, collect seeds, grow seedlings, transport them back to the Black Hills and replant the trees.

"The cost of putting a native landscape back together is important work," Gubbels said. "To the folks around the Black Hills, putting native ponderosa pine back on the ecosystem is a priceless function because that's habitat and range, and it's a really important part of the forest."

Restoration: clearing dead wood, cutting trees, planting new growth

The Artemis project will include a bidding process for loggers to cut down or thin 2,900 acres of the forest. There will also be efforts to save individual, healthy trees; to increase the number of hardwood trees in the area, such as aspen and oak; and to preserve treeless meadows.

The proposed work is similar to other work already occurring in the McVey Fire footprint, including projects named Alvin, Simon and Theodore. Projects have also tackled stacking dead branches on the forest

floor into piles for burning to reduce fire risks.

To get the seeds for new trees, the Forest Service will hire tree-climbers to pick pine cones from healthy trees in the forest. Those cones will be shipped to a Forest Service nursery in Nebraska, where the seeds will be extracted, sewn and grown until they're ready to be transplanted.

Although Gubbels didn't have a specific cost estimate, each project ranges from hundreds of thousands of dollars to up to \$1 million. The cost varies depending on the cost of lumber and labor at the time, since the Forest Service can offset its costs by allowing contractors to keep wood removed in the effort.

The USDA Forest Service released a notice of initiation for the Artemis project on Nov. 28. Public comment will be accepted online and through mail up to 60 days after the announcement. Gubbels will make further decisions on the project after another month or two.

"The overall focus here is restoration," Gubbels said. "In the process, we're getting a lot of good work out there to reduce fire hazards. The ultimate outcome is that a forest should be in the same shape the rest of the Black Hills is. Long-term, it'll be a wonderful project."

Tree lines will remain untouched on the project's boundaries to retain a visual treeline for private landowners.

Restoration efforts throughout the Black Hills

The Mystic Ranger District isn't the only area of the Black Hills to engage in restoration efforts.

The Hell Canyon Ranger District in the southern Black Hills has been planting trees throughout the footprint of the historic Jasper fire over the last two decades. The Jasper fire is the largest in the forest's history,

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 12 of 75



Pine trees in the Black Hills National Forest. (Seth

Tupper/South Dakota Searchlight)

burning more than 83,500 acres in 2000.

The area was so badly scarred that thousands of acres were left without a seed source for mature trees to regrow on their own.

In spring 2021, around 150,000 ponderosa pine seedlings were planted over 400 acres in a portion of the Jasper footprint.

The restoration efforts are needed to ensure the health of the forest.

"If they wouldn't have replanted any trees, a lot of the area would have seen similar fire scars like Jasper, with no trees left at all," Gubbels said. "The McVey area would have been a wide-open acreage on the forest not growing trees right now. Those areas could take over 100 years to reseed unless we started replanting."



MAKENZIE HUBER  

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan whose work has won national and regional awards. She's spent five years as a journalist with experience reporting on workforce, development and business issues within the state.

Rounds criticizes Trump's call for 'termination' of the Constitution

BY: SETH TUPPER - DECEMBER 5, 2022 3:25 PM

U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds, R-South Dakota, is criticizing former president Donald Trump for proposing the "termination" of the U.S. Constitution.

Rounds issued a written statement by email Monday afternoon.

"Americans have a deep appreciation for the Constitution and our Founding Fathers who risked their lives to establish it," Rounds' statement said, in part. "As elected officials, we take an oath to support and defend the Constitution. We should never dishonor that oath. No one is above the Constitution."

Rounds was reacting to Trump's Saturday post on Trump's own social media platform, Truth Social. In that post, Trump reiterated his claims of fraud in the 2020 election: "A Massive Fraud of this type and magnitude allows for the termination of all rules, regulations, and articles, even those found in the Constitution."

After widespread condemnation from Democrats and some Republicans, Trump went on Truth Social again Monday and wrote, "The Fake News is actually trying to convince the American People that I said I wanted to 'terminate' the Constitution. This is simply more DISINFORMATION & LIES, just like RUSSIA, RUSSIA, RUSSIA, and all of their other HOAXES & SCAMS."

Rounds has consistently said there was no evidence of fraud in 2020 that was widespread enough to alter the results of the election, which Trump lost to President Joe Biden. Rounds reiterated that stance in his Monday statement and included some language about the next presidential election in 2024, which already includes Trump as a declared candidate on the Republican side.

"Anyone who desires to lead our country must commit to protecting the Constitution. They should not threaten to terminate it," Rounds said. "I believe Americans want leaders, like those on Mount Rushmore, who will defend the Constitution and unite us in our belief that America is truly a shining city upon a hill."

Thune, Johnson respond

Meanwhile, a spokesman for Sen. John Thune, R-South Dakota, said Thune fielded impromptu questions Monday afternoon from reporters in a Washington, D.C., hallway about Trump's call for "termination" of the Constitution.

"Of course I disagree with that," Thune said of Trump's comments. "I swear an oath to uphold the Constitution and it is a bedrock principle — it is the principle, the bedrock of our country. So I couldn't disagree more."

U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson, R-South Dakota, responded to the Searchlight's request for a comment with a written statement.

"I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic," Johnson said. "That's the oath I took when I was sworn in as South Dakota's sole member to the U.S. House. I will always uphold our Constitution. Calls to 'terminate' it are beyond the pale."

Republican Gov. Kristi Noem's spokesman did not immediately respond to a message from South Dakota Searchlight.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story has been updated to include a statement from Rep. Dusty Johnson, which was not available when the article was originally published.



SETH TUPPER  

Seth is editor-in-chief of South Dakota Searchlight. He was previously a supervising senior producer for South Dakota Public Broadcasting and a newspaper journalist in Rapid City and Mitchell.

Here's when drug prices will start to decrease for Medicare recipients

BY: CASEY QUINLAN - DECEMBER 5, 2022 5:40 PM



Medicare recipients who take insulin will be the first to benefit from the drug pricing provisions in the Inflation Reduction Act. Additional drug costs will start to decrease in 2026. (Photo by Joe Raedle/Getty Images)

Starting next month, a \$35 cap on insulin prices will go into effect for millions of Medicare recipients. The lower pricing is one of the first of several policy measures Americans will see in the coming months and years under the Inflation Reduction Act signed into law in August.

The bill also requires pharmaceutical companies to pay Medicare rebates for drugs where prices surpass inflation for Medicare Part D and mandates that the government negotiate drug prices on some prescription drugs for people who have Medicare — the first time Medicare has been given that power. While it's unclear how many people will ultimately benefit from the various changes, 49 million people are enrolled in Medicare Part D plans, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation.

The Medicare Part D rebates began in October. That same month, Medicare also began paying more for some biosimilar drugs to create more competition, lower the cost and improve access to those drugs for consumers. Biosimilars are drugs that are very similar to an existing drug, and have an average sales price that isn't higher than the other drug.

The insulin cap that goes into effect next month benefits Medicare Part D recipients, who also no longer have to meet a deductible on their insulin. A \$35 cap on insulin pumps for Medicare Part B recipients goes into effect July 1, according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Richard Frank, senior fellow in economic studies and director of the University of Southern California-Brookings Schaeffer Initiative on Health Policy, said there are a couple reasons that the law reduces the cost for insulin before other measures.

"The whole history of health reform in this country is that you really want to try to frontload real benefits to real people. And insulin, because of the relative technical simplicity, is a great place for that right away. You give sick people who really need the help, and where there's been a lot of crazy cost-sharing for patients, earlier, so the benefits of the legislation start to become apparent pretty quickly," he said.

Medicare patients spent \$1 billion on insulin in 2020, according to Kaiser Family Foundation, and an estimated 16.5% of people with diabetes rationed their insulin in the past year, which can be extremely harmful to their health, according to an *Annals of Internal Medicine* article published in October.

But the Health and Human Services Department's process for negotiating drug prices will take much longer. This process will apply to certain types of drugs, including biologics, or drugs that come from biological sources like sugars or proteins that don't have generic or biosimilar competitors, or brand-name drugs where the company holds the patent, known as single-source drugs. Here's the timeline:

- In September, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services will list the 10 Part D drugs whose negotiated prices will take effect in 2026. Negotiations begin in October and end in August 2024, according to Kaiser Family Foundation's timeline.
- Another round of negotiations for 15 Part D drugs starts in February 2025 and ends November 2025, with prices to take effect in 2027.
- The negotiation process for 15 Part D or Part B drugs starts in 2026 and prices will go into effect in 2028.
- In 2027, 20 Part D or Part B drugs will be announced and in 2029, those prices will hit consumers.
- In 2028, 20 more Part D and Part B drugs would be chosen to be fully implemented in 2030.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 15 of 75

• The last round of 20 Part B and D drugs prices would be seen in 2031.

"The bill is designed to have Medicare negotiate for the drugs that have the highest aggregate spending, so it really does give you the most bang for the buck," said Emily Gee, vice president and coordinator for health policy at the Center for American Progress.

The price changes should start to have a real impact on Americans in 2026. "They'll get roughly a 30% haircut on that deductible portion of their drug in a lot of cases. Most people would notice that," Frank said.

According to an analysis of the impact of the Inflation Reduction Act from the Center for American Progress, an elderly middle class couple living in Pittsburgh, where one person is diabetic and takes insulin, could save \$575 on insulin each year starting next year, and as much as \$2,430 each year for their household — because of the \$2,000 limit on annual out-of-pocket costs — beginning in 2025.

How will pharma respond?

A U.S. Department of Health and Human Services report released in September showed drug companies increased prices for several drugs by more than 500% between 2016 and 2022, and some experts worry that pharmaceutical companies could find loopholes in the new law.

Juliette Cubanski, deputy director for the program on Medicare policy at the Kaiser Family Foundation, said there may not be very much drug companies can do to stop from being selected for the first negotiation process at this point. But in general, they could try to put up barriers to implementation, such as raising legal challenges against the law. Cubanski said one other response could be higher launch prices for new drugs.

"That's just one of those side effects from this legislation that we can't really control in this country because we don't have any sort of organized approach to setting the price of drugs the way that other countries do," Cubanski said. "The Inflation Reduction Act provisions are expected to be helpful at constraining the growth in drug prices for existing drugs, but doesn't have any provisions in it to limit the level at which drug prices are set for new drugs coming to market."

The government can only negotiate for drugs that have been on the market for a certain number of years — nine years for small molecule drugs, typically pills, including some cancer treatments, and 13 for biologics, which use living cells and are difficult and more expensive to manufacture.

"I think there is an effort by pharmaceutical companies to bring innovative products to the market because there is, I think, a recognition among the pharmaceutical industry that that is where they have kind of the upper hand in prices and price negotiations — when we're talking about drugs that are truly unique and innovative and don't have competitor products," Cubanski said.

She added that the possibilities of how drug companies could respond are largely unknowable at this point, however, because there is still so much to be done on the policy level.

They could also try to take their financial burden to the private insurance market or use citizen petitions to try to halt generic drugs from being approved by the FDA, at least for a while, NBC News reported.

Gee said she sees those messages about cost-shifting or raising launch prices as a scare tactic from pharmaceutical companies and said there isn't really anything holding them back from raising prices now.

"But there's very little discipline for them now because the market is so concentrated," she said. "If they could raise their price another \$10, why wouldn't they do that now? It's hard to see why they would be leaving money on the table today."



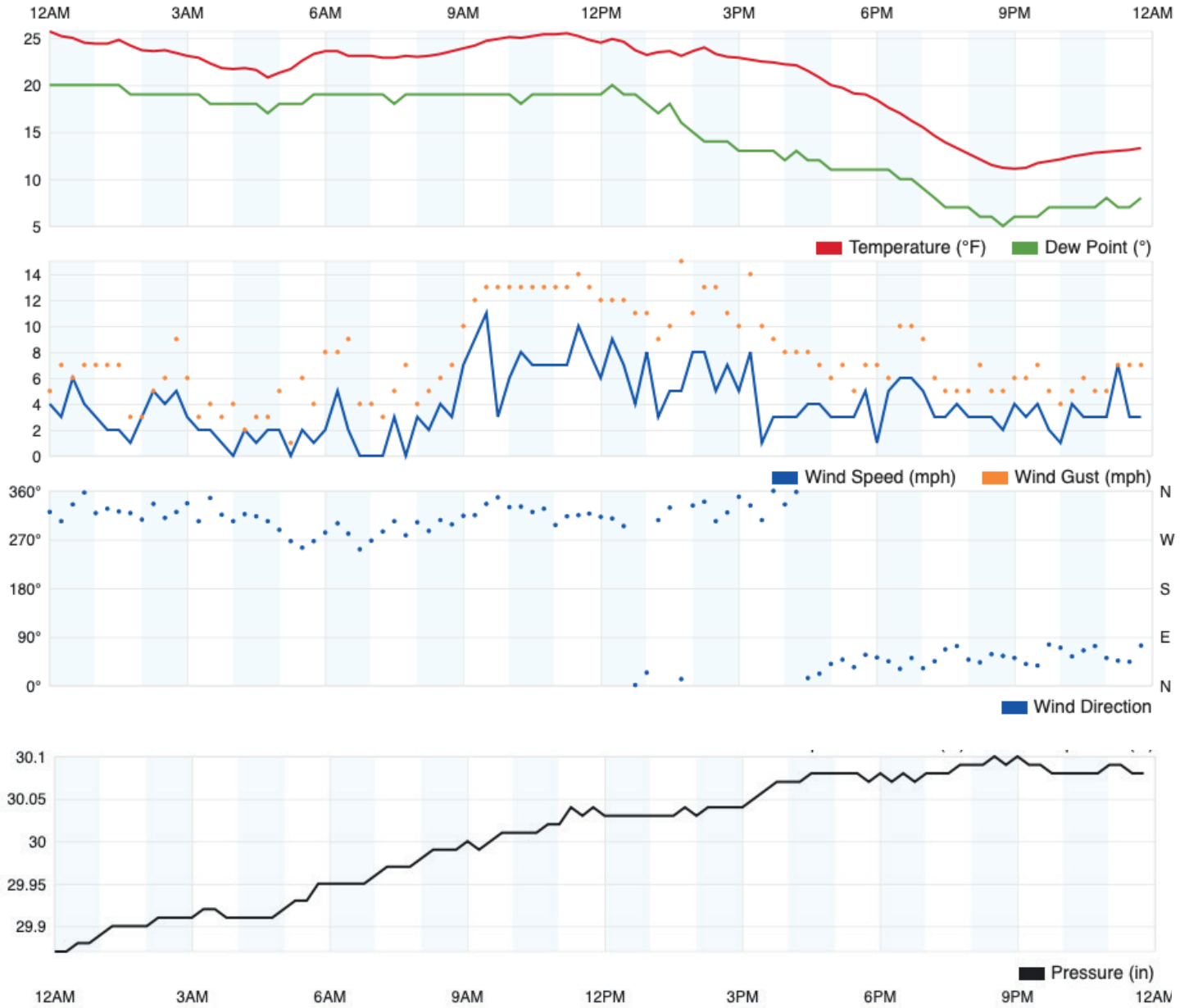
CASEY QUINLAN

Casey Quinlan is an economy reporter for States Newsroom, based in Washington, D.C. For the past decade, they have reported on national politics and state politics, LGBTQ rights, abortion access, labor issues, education, Supreme Court news and more for publications including The American Independent, ThinkProgress, New Republic, Rewire News, SCOTUSblog, In These Times and Vox.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 16 of 75

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 17 of 75

Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
Slight Chance Snow then Mostly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy then Snow Likely	Chance Snow then Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Sunny
High: 27 °F	Low: 2 °F	High: 14 °F	Low: 2 °F	High: 29 °F	Low: 15 °F	High: 32 °F

Snow Moving Through This Evening/Early Wednesday Snow Band Impacting Northern S.Dakota, Southern N.Dakota into Western MN

Expected Snowfall - Official NWS Forecast

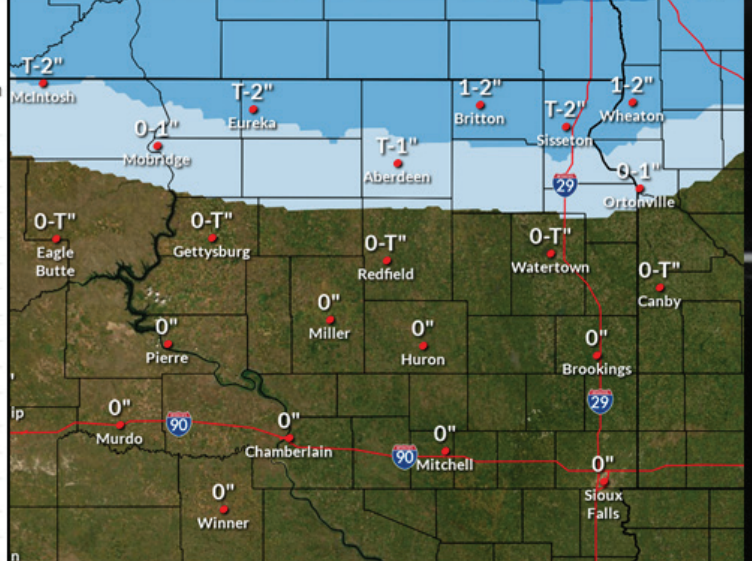
Weather Forecast Office
Aberdeen, SD
Issued Dec 06, 2022 2:07 AM CST

Timing Snow

Valid Tue 6:00AM through Wed 6:00PM CST

Probability of Precipitation Forecast

	12/6 Tue											12/7 Wed										
	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm
Aberdeen	1	1	4	11	11	11	12	14	12	46	49	51	57	60	60	26	26	26	26	26	0	
Britton	1	2	4	10	10	10	10	10	10	39	52	60	68	70	72	43	43	43	43	43	0	
Eagle Butte	2	2	5	13	13	13	16	16	15	17	17	17	18	18	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Eureka	3	5	10	29	32	31	32	31	32	71	73	71	76	77	77	13	13	13	13	13	0	
Jettysburg	1	1	2	11	12	12	14	15	14	25	26	25	28	31	31	4	4	4	4	4	0	
Jennebec	0	0	0	1	1	1	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	5	5	1	1	1	1	1	0	
McIntosh	8	21	25	65	65	65	66	68	68	76	76	76	80	78	77	2	2	2	2	2	0	
Milbank	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	3	3	25	26	26	36	38	42	25	25	25	25	25	1	
Miller	1	1	1	4	4	4	5	5	5	11	11	11	12	17	19	9	9	9	9	9	0	
Moabridge	5	6	9	31	32	32	35	36	37	56	57	56	60	62	60	2	2	2	2	2	0	
Murdo	0	0	0	1	1	1	4	4	4	1	1	1	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Pierre	0	0	0	4	4	4	7	6	6	7	7	6	8	10	12	1	1	1	1	1	0	
Redfield	1	1	1	5	5	6	6	7	6	17	18	19	23	27	29	13	13	13	13	13	0	
Sisseton	0	1	2	5	4	4	5	6	5	28	39	48	61	64	66	41	41	41	41	41	1	
Watertown	0	0	0	4	4	3	4	4	4	16	16	17	21	26	31	20	20	20	20	20	0	
Webster	0	1	2	6	5	4	7	8	7	27	30	33	43	50	53	29	29	29	29	29	0	
Wheaton	0	0	0	2	2	2	3	3	3	24	32	43	62	64	68	50	50	50	50	50	1	

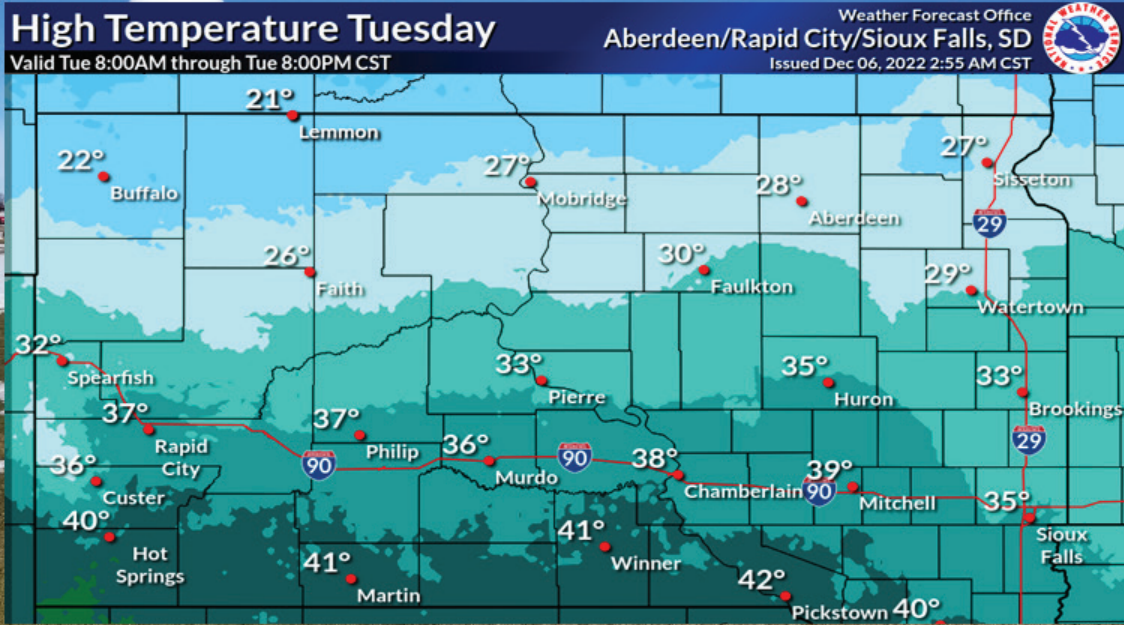


A band of snow will move west to east along the state line this evening and overnight passing into Minnesota Wednesday morning. Most of the snow currently looks to fall in southern North Dakota but there is the risk for some light accumulations this side of the border.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 18 of 75

Seasonal Temperatures Today - Turning Colder Wednesday Increasing Clouds Through The Day



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

Updated: 12/6/2022 3:25 AM Central

Temperatures will be about near normal for today, and it will be a little breezy. Expect a turn towards colder readings for Wednesday.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 19 of 75

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 26 °F at 12:00 AM

Low Temp: 11 °F at 8:50 PM

Wind: 15 mph at 1:39 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 8 hours, 55 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 69 in 1939

Record Low: -30 in 1972

Average High: 32°F

Average Low: 11°F

Average Precip in Dec.: 0.12

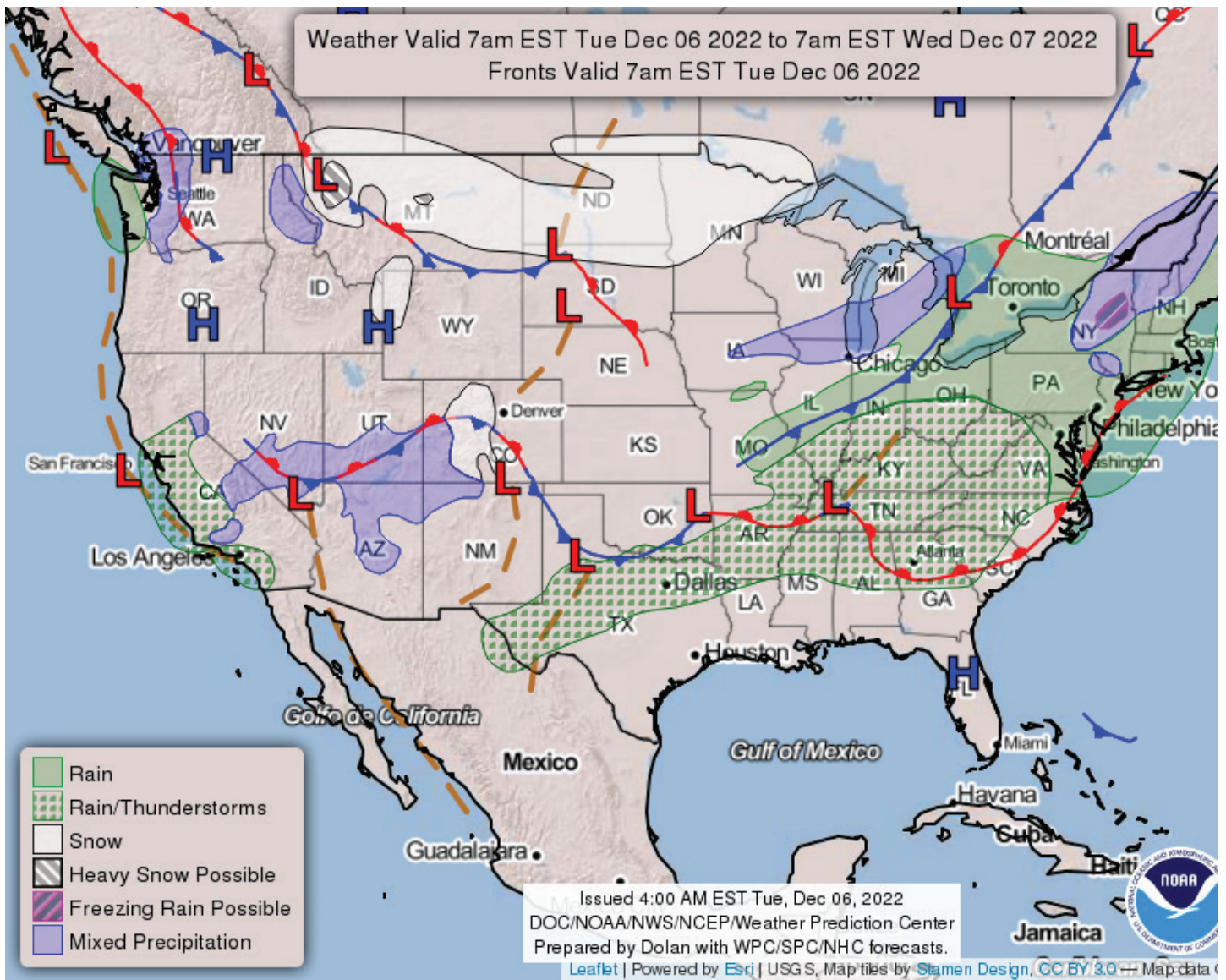
Precip to date in Dec.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 21.33

Precip Year to Date: 16.50

Sunset Tonight: 4:51:11 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:56:51 AM



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 20 of 75

Today in Weather History

December 6, 1969: An unusual period of almost continuous snow began in southern Minnesota and eastern South Dakota on the afternoon of the 5th and continued until late on the 10th. The Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport reported 88 2/3 consecutive hours of snowfall, which amounted to 14.2 inches total. The snowfall was 3-9 inches in the western half of Minnesota, with slightly lesser amounts in eastern South Dakota. Two inches snow fell at Summit and Sisseton; 2.5 inches at Watertown and Waubay; 3.0 inches at Clear Lake; 3.1 inches at Aberdeen; and 4.0 inches at Artichoke Lake, Webster, and Milbank.

December 6, 1913: A snowstorm from December 1st through the 6th dumps a record total of 45.7 inches in Denver, Colorado. This storm produced the most snow ever recorded in a single Denver snowstorm.

December 6, 1970: The National Christmas tree in 1970 was a 78 foot spruce from South Dakota. On the way to Washington, the train carrying the tree derailed twice in Nebraska. On the weekend before the lighting event, the tree toppled in gusty winds and required new branches to fill it out.

1886 - A great snowstorm hit the southern Appalachian Mountains. The three day storm produced 25 inches at Rome GA, 33 inches at Asheville NC, and 42 inches in the mountains. Montgomery AL received a record eleven inches of snow. Columbia SC received one to two inches of sleet. (4th-6th) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1970 - A windstorm toppled the National Christmas Tree at the White House. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1987 - Another in a series of storms brought high winds and heavy rain to the northwestern U.S., with heavy snow in some of the higher elevations. In northern California, Crescent City was drenched with 2.58 inches of rain, and winds gusted to 90 mph. Up to fourteen inches of snow blanketed the mountains of northern California, and snow and high winds created blizzard conditions around Lake Tahoe NV. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - The morning low at Bismarck, ND, was eleven degrees warmer than the record low of 25 degrees at Meridian MS, and during the afternoon half a dozen cities in the north central and northwestern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Alpena MI with a reading of 57 degrees. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Heavy snow blanketed the Central Rocky Mountain Region. Totals in the southern foothills of Colorado ranged up to 17 inches at Rye. Arctic air invaded the north central U.S. Lincoln NE, which reported a record high of 69 degrees the previous afternoon, was 35 degrees colder. International Falls MN was the cold spot in the nation with a morning low of 9 degrees below zero, and temperatures in northern Minnesota hovered near zero through the daylight hours. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 21 of 75

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

NEVER MIND, SANTA...

Chris was sitting in Santa's lap and going over a long list of presents that he wanted for Christmas. "I want a bicycle," he said, "and I also want a wagon, a chemistry set, a telescope, an electric train, a football, a Kindle FIRE, and a pair of rollerblades."

"That's a long list," said Santa. "I'll have to check carefully to see if you were a good boy."

After thinking for a moment Chris said, "Don't bother, Santa, I'll just settle for the rollerblades."

Not many of us would be able to "pass" a really thorough investigation to discover if we were worthy of receiving a long list of gifts. We'd probably be like Chris and settle very quickly for very little. Nor would many of us want to have someone investigate our lives and then decide if we deserved a gift or not. We would be quite anxious – if not completely frightened.

But God is so very different. He knows everything there is to know about us and still offers us the most precious gift He has: His Son.

"Now, no one is likely to die for a good person," said Paul, "though someone might be willing to die for someone who is especially good. But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." Christ: the source of eternal life.

There you have it. It is not about whether or not we are good or deserving of eternal life through Him. It is because of God's great love that we can have the gift of eternal life!

Prayer: May we realize during this season, our Father, the great Gift we have because of Your love. May Your Son be our main interest and attraction this year. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Romans 5:5-11 Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.



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

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 22 of 75

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
11/13/2022: Snow Queen Contest
11/19/2022: Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
11/24/2022 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)
12/03/2022 Tour of Homes & Holiday Party at Olive Grove Golf Course
12/10/2022: Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-12pm
01/29/2023 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am-1pm, Community Center
01/29/2023 85th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
04/01/2023 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)
04/22/2023 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
04/23/2023 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)
05/06/2023 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
05/29/2023 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
07/04/2023 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration, 10am Start (4th of July)
07/09/2023 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
09/09/2023 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
10/31/2023 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)
10/31/2023 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 23 of 75

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.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Groton Daily Independent

www.397news.com

Subscription Form

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

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

The following will be used for your log-in information.

E-mail _____

Password _____

Pay with Paypal. Type the following into your browser window:

paypal.me/paperpaul



News from the Associated Press

South Dakota's Noem tries to convince lawmakers on tax cut

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem on Tuesday will try to win over the Republican-controlled Legislature with details of her plan to enact a historic repeal of the state's tax on groceries. But to deliver on the campaign promise, the Republican governor must convince lawmakers the state can also afford to tackle inflation and a long list of items pressing on the state's budget.

Noem, a Republican, was critical of a proposal to repeal the state grocery tax during the final days of the legislative session in March, but this fall, she changed course and made it a centerpiece of her reelection campaign. It would help alleviate the squeeze of inflation on household budgets, she has argued.

Inflation, however, also has lawmakers focused on other budget items. Some Republicans and Democrats say they first want to shore up funding for people who draw their income from state funds — teachers, state employees and health care workers funded through government programs. Lawmakers will also look to pay for a list of upcoming expenses: Medicaid expansion that was approved by voters this year, a \$600 million upgrade to the state's prison system, and plans to address labor shortages in elder care facilities.

Some Republicans are also pushing a plan to reduce property taxes on people's homes by replacing revenue from property taxes that would go to schools with state funds.

"We're going into a year where there's a real interest in cutting taxes but there are also a lot of new demands because of high inflation," said Tony Venhuizen, the former chief of staff to the governor who will next year take a vice-chair position on the House Appropriations Committee. "It will be interesting to see how the governor proposes to check those boxes."

Noem hosted a dinner Monday evening for lawmakers on the committee that irons out the state budget, offering them a preview of her budget plan.

The governor has estimated that repealing the state tax on groceries would cost about \$100 million and argued that state revenue growth can cover it. Revenue growth this year has been \$76 million more than the Legislature's adopted projections, and the state ended the last fiscal year in July with a \$115 million surplus.

During her victory speech on Election Day, Noem was so confident that the state was ready to cut the grocery tax that she also hinted at other projects she would like to fund — incentivizing paid family leave and creating a way for childcare workers to get benefits.

Budget-setting during most of Noem's first term was filled with state revenues swollen by consumer spending and federal pandemic relief. Noem has credited her hands-off approach to governmental COVID-19 protection measures for keeping the state's economy humming.

But lawmakers are also cautioning that those years of plenty — when millions of dollars went to upgrading university campuses — could soon be over.

A potential recession could take a toll on state budget revenues in the coming year and inflation has already left budget holes to fill, said Sen. Lee Schoenbeck, a Republican who presides over the Senate.

As he and Sen. Casey Crabtree, the newly-elected Republican caucus leader, carpooled to the Capitol on Monday, they said they were taking a cautious approach to the budget and expressed skepticism at the idea of cutting taxes that provide ongoing revenue for the state.

Democrats, meanwhile, have pushed for years to repeal the state's tax on groceries. But even Rep. Linda Duba, who will be just one of two Democrats on the Joint Appropriations Committee, predicted that the state could afford only an incremental cut to the tax if it also keeps up with inflation in funding for teachers, state employees and community support providers.

"We are going to see a fight between those who want to do all these tax relief programs — but you've got to care for all the people in our state," she said.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 25 of 75

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Lotto America

04-13-17-24-34, Star Ball: 1, ASB: 3

(four, thirteen, seventeen, twenty-four, thirty-four; Star Ball: one; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$30,790,000

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: 354,000,000

Powerball

35-45-47-54-55, Powerball: 14, Power Play: 2

(thirty-five, forty-five, forty-seven, fifty-four, fifty-five; Powerball: fourteen; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$100,000,000

Monday's Scores

The Associated Press

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL=

Rapid City Stevens 71, Douglas 29

Sisseton 32, Groton Area 24

Vermillion 62, Canton 41

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

Biden to visit Arizona computer chip site, highlight jobs

By JOSH BOAK Associated Press

President Joe Biden on Tuesday plans to visit the building site for a new computer chip plant in Arizona, using it as a chance to emphasize how his policies are fostering job growth in what could be a challenge to the incoming Republican House majority.

Biden has staked his legacy in large part on major investments in technology and infrastructure that were approved by Congress along bipartisan lines. The Democratic president maintains that the factory jobs fostered by \$52 billion in semiconductor investments and another \$200 billion for scientific research will help to revive the U.S. middle class.

"This is actually about building an economic strategy that goes beyond semiconductors," said Brian Deese, director of the White House National Economic Council. "This is a marked departure from the economic philosophy that has governed for much of the last 40 years in this country, which was a sort of trickle-down economic strategy."

But there are signs that past moments of bipartisanship on economic matters may be harder to replicate after November's midterm elections, in which Republicans won a House majority. Biden still pitches the investments as a sign of what happens when lawmakers partner with each other, but Republican House Leader Kevin McCarthy, who could be the next speaker, attacked the legislation in a July floor speech as a "blank check" and "corporate welfare."

Biden is visiting a plant under construction by the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. that was announced in 2020 during Donald Trump's presidency. TSMC will also announce a second plant in Arizona on Tuesday. Biden administration officials said the two TSMC plants as well as new factories by Intel, Micron, Wolfspeed and others could give a decisive edge to the American military and economy at time when competition with China is heating up.

The White House has simultaneously launched a video campaign to highlight the array of non-tech jobs associated with the semiconductor industry. Biden has visited four other computer chip sites since September, with the highly paid factory jobs promising spillover hiring for construction, janitorial services

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 26 of 75

and other businesses.

Featured in the video campaign is Paul Sarzoza, president and CEO of Verde Clean. Sarzoza founded the company in 2019. It won a contract to clean TSMC's construction site, accounting for a third of its 150 jobs. Sarzoza's company will clean the semiconductor plant, with workers wearing what's known as a "bunny suit" to prevent any contamination from hair and skin.

The government's investment was key for his company's growth, and he expects to add 150 to 200 more employees next year.

"It's one step at a time," Sarzoza said. "But it's a tremendous opportunity for us."

Computer chip company Intel has also invested in Arizona, which has become a microcosm of the nation's broader political divides. The state on Monday certified the results of this year's elections, a process drawn out by many GOP officials who falsely claim the 2020 election, in which Biden beat Trump, was rigged.

Republican Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey will attend the event, as will his newly elected Democratic successor, Katie Hobbs, Arizona's current secretary of state.

Biden uses his visits to chip plants to talk about the jobs he expects will come to those regions, a process that could take a decade or longer to come to full fruition. Companies could face a challenge in finding educated workers for jobs with incomes averaging over \$100,000 a year, according to Labor Department figures.

Ronnie Chatterji, White House coordinator for the chip investments, said these investments will shape entire regions of the country in ways that are overlooked now.

"Ten years from now we'll be talking about all the jobs in Arizona," Chatterji said in an interview. "You won't be able to talk about that part of Arizona without thinking about the impact of those companies."

But Biden might need to thread a needle and preserve a sense of bipartisanship for the long-term investments to succeed, said Keith Krach, a business executive who as an under secretary of state in the Trump administration helped bring TSMC to Arizona.

He said the investments will rival NASA's Apollo Program, which didn't just land men on the moon but also made the U.S. a leader in micro electronics, software, computers and aerospace.

Krach said that preserving political unity is key and the way to do that is for political leaders to stress how the chip plants can keep the U.S. ahead of China.

"It's unifying," Krach said, because Chinese President Xi Jinping "is terrified of the United States having a Sputnik moment, which I think this really represents, and declaring a moonshot."

Ukraine: Drone strikes hit Russia as Zelenskyy travels east

By JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — In a new display of defiance from Kyiv, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy traveled to an eastern city near the front line Tuesday while two more strategic sites inside Russia were reportedly hit by drone attacks.

A fire blamed on a drone attack broke out at an airport in Russia's southern Kursk region that borders Ukraine, the region's governor said Tuesday. In a second incident, an industrial plant 80 kilometers (50 miles) from the Ukrainian border was also targeted by drones, Russian independent media reported, apparently missing a fuel depot at the site.

The strikes were carried out a day after Moscow blamed Kyiv for unprecedented drone attacks on two air bases deep inside Russia, and carried out another wave of missile strikes on Ukrainian territory.

Marking Ukraine's armed forces day, Zelenskyy traveled to the eastern Donetsk region and vowed to push Russian forces out of all of Ukraine's territory.

"Everyone sees your strength and your skill. ... I'm grateful to your parents. They raised real heroes," Zelenskyy said in a video address to Ukrainian forces from the city of the Sloviansk, a key Ukrainian stronghold in the east.

Ukrainian officials have not formally confirmed carrying out the drone attacks, maintaining their apparent policy of deliberate ambiguity as they have done in the past when it comes to high-profile attacks on

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 27 of 75

Russian targets.

But presidential adviser Mikhail Podolyak taunted Moscow in comments on Twitter.

"If something is launched into other countries' airspace, sooner or later unknown flying objects will return to the point of departure," Podolyak wrote. "The earth is round."

The attacks on Russian bases — more than 500 kilometers (300 miles) from the border with Ukraine — exposed the vulnerability of some of Russia's most strategic military sites, raising questions about the effectiveness of their air defenses. They also threatened a major escalation of the nine-month war. One of the airfields houses bombers capable of carrying nuclear weapons.

Russia's Defense Ministry said three Russian servicemen were killed and four others wounded by debris, and that two aircraft were slightly damaged.

The ministry didn't say where the drones had originated. But Russian military bloggers said they likely were launched by Ukrainian scouts, and argued that the strikes had inflicted serious reputational damage on Moscow.

The attacks on the Engels base in the Saratov region on the Volga River and the Dyagilevo base in the Ryazan region in western Russia were part of Ukraine's efforts to curtail Russia's long-range bomber force, the ministry said.

The Engels base hosts Tu-95 and Tu-160 nuclear-capable strategic bombers that have been involved in strikes on Ukraine. Dyagilevo houses tanker aircraft used for mid-air refueling.

In a daily intelligence update on the war in Ukraine, Britain's Defense Ministry said Russia was likely to consider the base attacks as "some of the most strategically significant failures of force protection since its invasion of Ukraine."

It said the bombers would likely be dispersed to other airfields.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that Russian authorities will "take the necessary measures" to enhance protection of key facilities in view of the latest Ukrainian attacks.

Speaking in a conference call with reporters Tuesday, Peskov said that "the Ukrainian regime's course for continuation of such terror attacks poses a threat."

Peskov reaffirmed that Russia sees no prospects for peace talks now, adding that "the Russian Federation must achieve its stated goals."

Russia, meanwhile, maintained intense attacks on Ukrainian territory, shelling towns overnight near the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant that left more than 9,000 homes without running water, local Ukrainian officials said.

The towns lie across the Dnieper river from the nuclear plant, which was seized by Russian forces in the early stages of the war. Russia and Ukraine have for months accused each other of shelling at and around the plant.

The head of Ukraine's northern Sumy region, which borders Russia, said that Moscow launched over 80 missile and heavy artillery attacks on its territory. Governor Dmytro Zhyvytsky said the strikes damaged a monastery near the border town of Shalyhyne.

Ukrainian air force spokesman Yuriy Ihnat said the country's ability to shoot down incoming missiles is improving, noting there had been no recent reports of Iranian-made attack drones being used on Ukrainian territory.

He refused to comment on damage caused at the two Russian air bases, adding: "We will have to wait for satellite photos and open-source information."

Officers to receive Congressional Gold Medals for Jan. 6

By MARY CLARE JALONICK, FARNOUSH AMIRI and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top House and Senate leaders will present law enforcement officers who defended the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, with Congressional Gold Medals on Tuesday, awarding them Congress's highest honor nearly two years after they fought with former President Donald Trump's supporters in a brutal and bloody attack.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 28 of 75

To recognize the hundreds of officers who were at the Capitol on Jan. 6, the medals will be placed in four locations — at U.S. Capitol Police headquarters, the Metropolitan Police Department, the Capitol and the Smithsonian Institution. President Joe Biden said when he signed the legislation last year that a medal will be placed at the Smithsonian museum “so all visitors can understand what happened that day.”

The ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda comes as Democrats, just weeks away from losing their House majority, race to finish a nearly 18-month investigation of the insurrection. Democrats and two Republicans conducting the probe have vowed to uncover the details of the attack, which came as Trump tried to overturn his election defeat and encouraged his supporters to “fight like hell” in a rally just before the congressional certification.

Awarding the medals will be among House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s last ceremonial acts as she prepares to step down from leadership. When the bill passed the House more than a year ago, she said the law enforcement officers from across the city defended the Capitol because they were “the type of Americans who heard the call to serve and answered it, putting country above self.”

“They enabled us to return to the Capitol,” and certify Biden’s presidency, she said then, “to that podium that night to show the world that our democracy had prevailed and that it had succeeded because of them.”

Dozens of the officers who fought off the rioters sustained serious injuries. As the mob of Trump’s supporters pushed past them and into the Capitol, police were beaten with American flags and their own guns, dragged down stairs, sprayed with chemicals and trampled and crushed by the crowd. Officers suffered physical wounds, including brain injuries and other lifelong effects, and many struggled to work afterward because they were so traumatized.

Four officers who testified at a House hearing last year spoke openly about the lasting mental and physical scars, and some detailed near-death experiences.

Metropolitan Police Officer Daniel Hodges described foaming at the mouth, bleeding and screaming as the rioters tried to gouge out his eye and crush him between two heavy doors. Metropolitan Police Officer Michael Fanone, who rushed to the scene, said he was “grabbed, beaten, tased, all while being called a traitor to my country.” Capitol Police Officer Harry Dunn said a large group of people shouted the N-word at him as he was trying to keep them from breaching the House chamber.

At least nine people who were at the Capitol that day died during and after the rioting, including a woman who was shot and killed by police as she tried to break into the House chamber and three other Trump supporters who suffered medical emergencies. Two police officers died by suicide in the days that immediately followed, and a third officer, Capitol Police Officer Brian Sicknick, collapsed and later died after one of the rioters sprayed him with a chemical. A medical examiner determined he died of natural causes.

Several months after the attack, in August 2021, the Metropolitan Police announced that two more of their officers who had responded to the insurrection had died by suicide. The circumstances that led to their deaths were unknown.

The June 2021 House vote to award the medals won widespread support from both parties. But 21 House Republicans voted against it — lawmakers who had downplayed the violence and stayed loyal to Trump. The Senate passed the legislation by voice vote, with no Republican objections.

Pelosi, House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell will attend the ceremony and award the medals. Capitol Police Chief Thomas Manger and Metropolitan Police Department Chief Robert Contee are also expected to attend.

The Congressional Gold Medal, the highest honor Congress can bestow, has been handed out by the legislative branch since 1776. Previous recipients include George Washington, Sir Winston Churchill, Bob Hope and Robert Frost. In recent years, Congress has awarded the medals to former New Orleans Saints player Steve Gleason, who became a leading advocate for people struggling with Lou Gehrig’s disease, and biker Greg LeMond.

Signing the bill at the White House last year, Biden said the officers’ heroism cannot be forgotten.

The insurrection was a “violent attempt to overturn the will of the American people,” and Americans have to understand what happened, he said. “The honest and unvarnished truth. We have to face it.”

Many kids are struggling. Is special education the answer?

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH Associated Press

The COVID-19 pandemic sent Heidi Whitney's daughter into a tailspin.

Suddenly the San Diego middle schooler was sleeping all day and awake all night. When in-person classes resumed, she was so anxious at times that she begged to come home early, telling the nurse her stomach hurt.

Whitney tried to keep her daughter in class. But the teen's desperate bids to get out of school escalated. Ultimately, she was hospitalized in a psychiatric ward, failed "pretty much everything" at school and was diagnosed with depression and ADHD.

As she started high school this fall, she was deemed eligible for special education services, because her disorders interfered with her ability to learn, but school officials said it was a close call. It was hard to know how much her symptoms were chronic or the result of mental health issues brought on by the pandemic, they said.

"They put my kid in a gray area," said Whitney, a paralegal.

Schools contending with soaring student mental health needs and other challenges have been struggling to determine just how much the pandemic is to blame. Are the challenges the sign of a disability that will impair a student's learning long term, or something more temporary?

It all adds to the desperation of parents trying to figure out how best to help their children. If a child doesn't qualify for special education, where should parents go for help?

"I feel like because she went through the pandemic and she didn't experience the normal junior high, the normal middle school experience, she developed the anxiety, the deep depression and she didn't learn. She didn't learn how to become a social kid," Whitney said. "Everything got turned on its head."

Schools are required to spell out how they will meet the needs of students with disabilities in Individualized Education Programs, and the demand for screening is high. Some schools have struggled to catch up with assessments that were delayed in the early days of the pandemic. For many, the task is also complicated by shortages of psychologists.

To qualify for special education services, a child's school performance must be suffering because of a disability in one of 13 categories, according to federal law. They include autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, learning disabilities like dyslexia, developmental delays and "emotional disturbances."

It's important not to send children who might have had a tough time during the pandemic into the special education system, said John Eisenberg, the executive director of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education.

"That's not what it was designed for," he said. "It's really designed for kids who need specially designed instruction. It's a lifelong learning problem, not a dumping ground for kids that might have not got the greatest instruction during the pandemic or have major other issues."

In the 2020-2021 school year, about 15% of all public school students received special education services under federal law, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

Among kids ages 6 and older, special education enrollment rose by 2.4% compared with the previous school year, according to federal data. The figures also showed a large drop in enrollment for younger, preschool-age students, many of whom were slow to return to formal schooling. The numbers varied widely from state to state. No data is available yet for last year.

While some special education directors worry the system is taking on too many students, advocates are hearing the opposite is happening, with schools moving too quickly to dismiss parent concerns.

Even now, some children are still having evaluations pushed off because of staffing shortages, said Marcie Lipsitt, a special education advocate in Michigan. In one district, evaluations came to a complete halt in May because there was no school psychologist to do them, she said.

When Heather Wright approached her son's school last fall seeking help with the 9-year-old's outbursts and other behavioral issues, staff suggested private testing. The stay-at-home mom from Sand Creek,

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 30 of 75

Michigan, called eight places. The soonest she could get an appointment was in December of this year — a full 14 months later.

She also suspects her 16-year-old has a learning disability and is waiting for answers from the school about both children.

"I hear a lot of: 'Well, everyone's worse. It's not just yours,'" she said. "Yeah, but, like, this is my child and he needs help."

It can be challenging to tease out the differences between problems that stem directly from the pandemic and a true disability, said Brandi Tanner, an Atlanta-based psychologist who has been deluged with parents seeking evaluations for potential learning disabilities, ADHD and autism.

"I'm asking a lot more background questions about pre-COVID versus post-COVID, like, 'Is this a change in functioning or was it something that was present before and has just lingered or gotten worse?'" she said.

Sherry Bell, a leader in the Department of Exceptional Children at Charleston County School District in South Carolina, said she is running into the issue as well.

"In my 28 years in special education, you know, having to rule out all of those factors is much more of a consideration than ever before, just because of the pandemic and the fact that kids spent all of that time at home," said Bell.

The key is to have good systems in place to distinguish between a student with a lasting obstacle to learning and one that missed a lot of school because of the pandemic, said Kevin Rubenstein, president-elect of the Council of Administrators of Special Education.

"Good school leaders and great teachers are going to be able to do that," he said.

The federal government, he noted, has provided vast amounts of COVID relief money for schools to offer tutoring, counseling and other support to help students recover from the pandemic.

But advocates worry about consequences down the line for students who do not receive the help they might need. Kids who slip through the cracks could end up having more disciplinary problems and diminished prospects for life after school, said Dan Stewart, the managing attorney for education and employment for the National Disability Rights Network.

Whitney, for her part, said she is relieved her daughter is getting help, including a case manager, as part of her IEP. She also will be able to leave class as needed if she feels anxious.

"I realize that a lot of kids were going through this," she said. "We just went through COVID. Give them a break."

World Cup Viewer's Guide: 2 quarterfinals places left

By JENNA FRYER AP National Writer

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — The final day of the round of 16 concludes Tuesday at the World Cup when Morocco faces Spain, and Portugal goes head-to-head with Switzerland for the final two spots in the quarterfinals.

The results will be decided on the field, but for Spain and Morocco, the game will be played against the backdrop of the long and complex relationship between two border nations separated by the Strait of Gibraltar.

As neighboring nations, there are ties between the two teams, and many of Morocco's players speak Spanish and the team's medical staff is Spanish.

Morocco goalkeeper Yassine Bounou and striker Youssef En-Nesyri both play in Spain for Sevilla, right back Achraf Hakimi, a Paris Saint-Germain player, was born in Madrid, and coach Walid Regragui played in Spain with Racing Santander.

The team's also met in the World Cup just four years ago in the final group game in 2018, a 2-2 draw.

As Morocco advanced through this tournament, the national team captivated both its fans at home and Qatari, Saudi and Tunisians fans in Doha as the last Arab team still playing.

"Everyone wants to come to Doha," said Regragui, who became coach in August. "We could fill two stadiums."

Morocco is trying to secure its first appearance in the quarterfinals. The Atlas Lions topped Group F with

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 31 of 75

a draw against Croatia, followed by wins over Belgium and Canada to reach the knockout round for the first time since 1986.

Not a single player on the current squad was born the last time Morocco advanced this deep into the tournament, and its run in Qatar has been a national source of pride back home.

Spain opened the World Cup with a 7-0 win over Costa Rica, followed by a 1-1 draw with Germany. The 2-1 loss to Japan in the final game of group play was tense as La Roja fluctuated between in and out of advancing into the next round because its fate was also tied to other results.

"The match against Japan has to serve as a lesson for what is to come. Luckily, that defeat has been resolved and we are clear about what we have to do," Gavi said. "We are in the round of 16 and there are some very good teams that haven't been able to do it. That's why we have to really think that pressure is a privilege."

The loss to Japan snapped a seven-game unbeaten streak for Spain and got the attention of its players.

"We are not going to lose focus on the goal, which is to win the World Cup," Gavi said. "We are going to look for it by being faithful to what we have been doing all these years. It would be a mistake to give up everything we believe in."

Spain also met Morocco in the teams' final group game in 2018, which ended 2-2.

Morocco is trying to match the longest unbeaten run by an African team at the World Cup, a record set by Cameroon, which went unbeaten for five games between 1982 and 1990.

"We didn't come just to say 'oh, we almost got close,'" Regragui said. "We need to get the results as all the European or South American teams do. We need to emulate them."

If Sergio Busquets plays for Spain, he would tie the national team's World Cup record with 17 appearances, a mark shared by Iker Casillas and Sergio Ramos.

PORTUGAL-SWITZERLAND

Cristiano Ronaldo plays again in this World Cup when Portugal faces Switzerland for a spot in the quarterfinals, and all the attention is on the superstar.

And not really for the right reasons.

Following his split with Manchester United, there are rumors that Ronaldo could move to a Saudi Arabian club for an astronomical amount of money. He was criticized for the body language he exhibited when he was substituted in a match last week, and a poll in Portugal suggested fans in his home country don't even want him part of the national team anymore.

Portugal coach Fernando Santos was unbothered by the poll and decisions that Ronaldo may make about his club career. After eight years as head of Portugal, Santos is used to the distractions that come from having a global giant on the roster.

But Ronaldo's obvious displeasure with being taken out of the game in the 65th minute of a loss to South Korea? That irritated the coach, who wouldn't say if Ronaldo will be captain against Switzerland on Tuesday.

"I didn't like it, not at all. I really didn't like it. We fixed that in-house and that's it," said Santos, who wouldn't commit on Ronaldo's status as captain against Switzerland.

"I only decide who's going to be the captain when I reach the stadium. I don't know what the lineup is," Santos said.

Ronaldo opened the tournament by becoming the first player to score a goal at five World Cups. But there's a blemish on his record — a fat zero in goals scored at the World Cup in the knockout stage. He heads into what is likely his final World Cup to play a Swiss team that hasn't made it to the quarterfinals since 1954.

That doesn't mean Switzerland can't challenge Portugal. The Swiss eliminated reigning World Cup champion France in the last 16 at the European Championship last year and has been one of the most consistent teams of this tournament.

"We have seen how euphoric Swiss people are about being at this stage," coach Murat Yakin said Monday. "We've proven that we're able to beat them."

Colorado gay club shooting suspect set to return to court

By COLLEEN SLEVIN Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — The suspect accused of entering a Colorado gay nightclub clad in body armor and opening fire with an AR-15-style rifle, killing five people and wounding 17 others, is set to appear in court again Tuesday to learn what charges prosecutors will pursue in the attack, including possible hate crime counts.

Investigators say Anderson Lee Aldrich entered Club Q, a sanctuary for the LGBTQ community in the mostly conservative city of Colorado Springs, just before midnight on Nov. 19 and began shooting during a drag queen's birthday celebration. The killing stopped after patrons wrestled the suspect to the ground, beating Aldrich into submission, they said.

Aldrich, who is nonbinary and uses they/them pronouns according to defense court filings, was arrested at the club by police and held on suspicion of murder and hate crimes while District Attorney Michael Allen determined what charges to pursue against them. Allen has noted that murder charges would carry the harshest penalty — likely life in prison — and charging Aldrich with bias-motivated crimes would not lead to a harsher punishment.

But at a Nov. 21 news conference, Allen did say that, if there was evidence to support bias motivated crimes, it was still important to pursue them to send the message "that we support communities that have been maligned, harassed, intimidated and abused."

According to witnesses, Aldrich fired first at people gathered at the club's bar before spraying bullets across the dance floor during the attack, which came on the eve of an annual day of remembrance for transgender people lost to violence.

More than a year before the shooting, Aldrich was arrested on allegations of making a bomb threat that led to the evacuation of about 10 homes. Aldrich threatened to harm their own family with a homemade bomb, ammunition and multiple weapons, authorities said at the time. Aldrich was booked into jail on suspicion of felony menacing and kidnapping, but the case was apparently later sealed and it's unclear what became of the charges. There are no public indications that the case led to a conviction.

Ring doorbell video obtained by the AP shows Aldrich arriving at their mother's front door with a big black bag, telling her the police were nearby and adding, "This is where I stand. Today I die."

Paulo Dybala, the Serie A standout not needed by Argentina

By STEVE DOUGLAS AP Sports Writer

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — Paulo Dybala posted a photo of himself on Instagram laughing along with his Argentina teammate Lionel Messi, with the accompanying words: "We carry on with a smile! Let's go."

Argentina might be getting ever closer to a place in the World Cup final but, on a purely personal level, the tournament has been nothing much to laugh about for Dybala.

The Roma playmaker hasn't played a minute in Qatar, despite the injuries afflicting Argentina on its turbulent run to the quarterfinals and the declining form of forward Lautaro Martinez.

So what's the deal with Dybala, a player affectionately known as La Joya (or "The Jewel") and a standout in Italian soccer at his best?

His biggest impediment is Lionel Messi himself. Dybala's preferred position is in the No. 10 position or the roving role off the striker -- which happens to be where Argentina's superstar is best deployed.

Given there's no way a healthy Messi is getting dropped, Dybala has to be moved into another position that doesn't necessarily suit his game.

Then there's the thigh injury that almost cost him a place in Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni's squad for the World Cup. It was sustained when he converted a late, winning penalty for Roma in early October and led to him missing eight games for his club.

Dybala returned for Roma's last game before the World Cup, convincing Scaloni that he was healthy enough to be included in the 26-man squad.

The coach insists that fitness problems aren't the reason why Dybala has yet to play at the World Cup.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 33 of 75

"If he is out, it's only a tactical decision," Scaloni said during the group stage. "Paulo is fine, he is supporting the group from the outside. Obviously, he would like to play more."

That much can be said about his overall international career.

Dybala is 29 and has played 34 games — often as a substitute — for Argentina since his debut in 2015, which doesn't seem many for a player of his talent.

The last of his three goals for the Albiceleste came as a late substitute in the 3-0 win over Italy in the Finalissima — a game between the European and South American champions — in London in June.

And his only game time at a World Cup was in 2018, as a 68th-minute substitute in the 3-0 loss to Croatia in the group stage. Argentina eventually exited in the round of 16 against France.

There is a chance Dybala could see some action against the Netherlands in the quarterfinals on Friday, though.

Ángel Di María was injured against Poland in the final group game and Papu Gómez, who replaced Di María in the 2-1 win over Australia in the round of 16, came off in that match with some discomfort in his ankle.

According to Argentine media, neither Di María nor Gómez trained with the rest of the squad on Monday, instead doing recovery work separately.

That might leave a place in the front three up for grabs against the Dutch.

Quoted in Italian newspaper Gazzetta Dello Sport on Monday, Dybala spoke of the "sacrifice" he made to get healthy again after the pre-tournament injury.

"I was scared because I knew that there was little time available to recover and the injury was serious," Dybala said. "They were days of great effort in which I was able to devote little time to my family and my girlfriend, but the dream of recovering was too big."

Collecting a World Cup winner's medal would make that sacrifice worthwhile. Dybala, one of three outfield players yet to feature so far in the tournament, would just like to play an active role along the way.

Warnock or Walker? Georgia runoff to settle last Senate seat

By BILL BARROW and JEFF AMY Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Georgia voters on Tuesday are set to decide the final Senate contest in the country, choosing between Democratic Sen. Raphael Warnock and Republican football legend Herschel Walker after a four-week runoff blitz that has drawn a flood of outside spending to an increasingly personal fight.

This year's runoff has lower stakes than the two in 2021, when victories by Warnock and fellow Georgia Democrat Jon Ossoff gave Democrats control of the Senate. The outcome of Tuesday's contest will determine whether Democrats have an outright 51-49 Senate majority or control a 50-50 chamber based on Vice President Kamala Harris' tiebreaking vote.

The runoff brings to a close a bitter fight between Warnock, the state's first Black senator and the senior minister of the Atlanta church where Martin Luther King Jr. preached, and Walker, a former University of Georgia football star and political novice who has waged his bid in the mold of former President Donald Trump.

A victory for Warnock would solidify Georgia's status as a battleground heading into the 2024 presidential election. A win for Walker, however, could be an indication that the Democratic gains in the state might be somewhat limited, especially given that Georgia Republicans swept every other statewide contest last month.

In that election, Warnock led Walker by about 37,000 votes out of almost 4 million cast but fell shy of a majority, triggering the second round of voting. About 1.9 million votes already have been cast by mail and during early voting, an advantage for Democrats whose voters more commonly cast ballots this way. Republicans typically fare better on voting done on Election Day, with the margins determining the winner.

Last month, Walker, 60, ran more than 200,000 votes behind Republican Gov. Brian Kemp after a campaign dogged by intense scrutiny of his past, meandering campaign speeches and a bevy of damaging allegations, including claims that he paid for two former girlfriends' abortions — accusations that Walker has denied.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 34 of 75

Warnock, whose victory in 2021 was in a special election to serve out the remainder of GOP Sen. Johnny Isakson's term, sounded a confident note Monday during a packed day of campaigning. He predicted that he had convinced enough voters, including independents and moderate Republicans who supported Kemp, that he deserves a full term.

"They've seen that I will work with anybody that helps me to do good work for the people of Georgia," said the 53-year-old senator. "I think they're going to get this right. They know this race is about competence and character."

Walker campaigned Monday with his wife, Julie, greeting supporters and offering thanks rather than his usual campaign speech and full-throated attacks on Warnock.

"I love y'all, and we're gonna win this election," he said at a winery in Ellijay, comparing it to championships he won as an athlete. "I love winning championships."

Warnock's campaign has spent about \$170 million on the campaign, far outpacing Walker's nearly \$60 million, according to their latest federal disclosures. But Democratic and Republican party committees, along with other political action committees, have spent even more.

The senator has paired his push for bipartisanship with an emphasis on his personal values, buoyed by his status as senior pastor of Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church. And, beginning with the closing stretch before the Nov. 8 general election, Warnock added withering takedowns of Walker, using the football star's rocky past to argue that the political newcomer was "not ready" and "not fit" for high office.

Walker, who used his athletics fame to coast to the GOP nomination, has sought to portray Warnock as a yes-man for President Joe Biden. Walker has sometimes made the attack in especially personal terms, complete with accusing Warnock of having his "back bent" and "being on his knees, begging" at the White House — a searing charge for a Black challenger to level against a Black senator about his relationship with a white president.

A multimillionaire businessman, Walker has inflated his philanthropic activities and business achievements, including claiming that his company employed hundreds of people and grossed tens of millions of dollars in sales annually, even though later records indicate he had eight employees and averaged about \$1.5 million a year. He has suggested that he's worked as a law enforcement officer and said he graduated college, though he has done neither.

Walker was also forced to acknowledge during the campaign that he had fathered three children out of wedlock whom he had never before spoken about publicly — in direct conflict with Walker's yearslong criticism of absentee fathers and his calls for Black men, in particular, to play an active role in their kids' lives.

His ex-wife has detailed violent acts, saying Walker once held a gun to her head and threatened to kill her. Walker has never denied those specifics and wrote of his violent tendencies in a 2008 memoir that attributed the behavior to mental illness.

Warnock has countered with his individual Senate accomplishments, touting a provision he sponsored to cap insulin costs for Medicare patients while reminding voters that Republicans blocked his larger idea to cap those costs for all insulin-dependent patients. He hailed deals on infrastructure and maternal health care forged with Republicans Ted Cruz of Texas and Marco Rubio of Florida, mentioning those GOP colleagues more than he did Biden, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer or other Democrats in Washington.

After the general election, Biden, who has struggled with low approval ratings, promised to help Warnock in any way he could, even if it meant staying away from Georgia. Bypassing the president, Warnock decided instead to campaign with former President Barack Obama in the days before the runoff election.

For his part, Walker was endorsed by Trump but avoided campaigning with him until the campaign's final day: The pair conducted a conference call Monday with supporters, according to a Republican National Committee spokesperson.

Walker's candidacy is the GOP's last chance to flip a Senate seat this year. Dr. Mehmet Oz of Pennsylvania, Blake Masters of Arizona, Adam Laxalt of Nevada and Don Bolduc of New Hampshire, all Trump loyalists, already lost competitive Senate races that Republicans once considered part of their path to a majority.

Walker has differentiated himself from Trump in a notable way. Trump has spent two years falsely claim-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 35 of 75

ing that his loss in Georgia and nationally was fraudulent, despite the fact that numerous federal and local officials, a long list of courts, top former campaign staffers and even his own attorney general have all said there is no evidence of the fraud he alleges.

At his lone debate against Warnock in October, Walker was asked whether he'd accept the results even if he lost. He replied with one word: "Yes."

World shares lower as strong data hit hopes for dovish Fed

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

BANGKOK (AP) — World stocks were mostly lower on Tuesday after Wall Street pulled back as surprisingly strong economic reports highlighted the challenges the Federal Reserve faces in battling inflation.

Germany's DAX lost 0.2% to 14,421.84 and the CAC 40 in Paris also was down 0.2%, at 6,682.03. Britain's FTSE 100 lost 0.3% to 6,679.98. The futures for the S&P 500 and the Dow industrials were 0.1% lower.

Highlighting worries over recession, Fitch Ratings revised its forecasts for world economic growth downward on Tuesday to reflect the Fed's and other central banks' interest rate hikes.

The ratings agency's Global Economic Outlook report estimated global growth at 1.4% in 2023, revised down from 1.7% in its September forecast. It put U.S. growth in 2023 at 0.2%, down from 0.5%, as the pace of monetary policy tightening increases.

China's growth forecast was cut to a 4.1% annual pace from 4.5%.

Markets have been lifted by expectations China will press ahead with easing its stringent pandemic restrictions, relieving pressures on trade, manufacturing and consumer spending.

In Asian trading, Hong Kong's Hang Seng fell 0.4% to 19,441.18 and the Kospi in South Korea fell 1.1% to 2,393.16. The Shanghai Composite index was flat at 3,212.53.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index closed 0.2% higher at 27,885.87.

Shares fell in Bangkok and Taiwan.

Investors have been hoping the Fed might slow the pace of its interest rate hikes aimed at curbing stubbornly high inflation.

The services sector, which makes up the biggest part of the U.S. economy, showed surprising growth in November, the Institute for Supply Management reported Monday. Business orders at U.S. factories and orders for durable goods in October also rose more than expected.

That news is positive for the broader economy, but it complicates the Fed's fight against inflation because it likely means the central bank will have to keep raising interest rates to bring down price pressures.

"Inflation will likely prove to be stickier and with the service part of the economy refusing to weaken. The risks that the Fed might need to do more remain elevated," Edward Moya of Oanda said in a statement.

The Fed is meeting next week and is expected to raise interest rates by a half-percentage point, which would mark an easing of sorts from a steady stream of three-quarters of a percentage point rate increases. It has raised its benchmark rate six times since March, driving it to a range of 3.75% to 4%, the highest in 15 years. Wall Street expects the benchmark rate to reach a peak range of 5% to 5.25% by the middle of 2023.

The aim is to cool growth without slamming on the brakes and causing a recession that would cascade through the global economy, slowing trade and consumer spending.

The S&P 500 fell 1.8% Monday while the Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 1.4%. The tech-heavy Nasdaq skidded 1.9% and the Russell 2000 index tumbled 2.8%.

A weekly update on U.S. unemployment claims is due Thursday and November's monthly report on producer prices will be released on Friday.

In other trading Tuesday, U.S. benchmark crude oil lost 84 cents to \$76.09 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It lost \$3.05 to \$76.93 per barrel on Monday.

Brent crude, the pricing basis for international trading, shed 89 cents to \$81.79 per barrel.

The U.S. dollar fell to 136.54 Japanese yen from 136.71 yen late Monday. The euro climbed to \$1.0496 from \$1.0491.

Indonesia's Parliament votes to ban sex outside of marriage

By NINIEK KARMINI Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Indonesia's Parliament unanimously passed a long-awaited revision of the country's penal code on Tuesday that criminalizes sex outside of marriage for citizens as well as foreigners, prohibits promotion of contraception and bans defamation of the president and state institutions.

The amended code also expands an existing blasphemy law and maintains a five-year prison term for deviations from the central tenets of Indonesia's six recognized religions: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism.

Citizens can face a 10-year prison term for associating with organizations that follow Marxist-Leninist ideology and a four-year sentence for spreading communism.

The code maintains the previous criminalization of abortion but adds exceptions for women with life-threatening medical conditions and for rape, provided that the fetus is less than 12 weeks old, in line with what is already provided in a 2004 Medical Practice Law.

Rights groups criticized some of the revisions as overly broad or vague and warned that adding them to the code could penalize normal activities and threaten freedom of expression and privacy rights.

However, some advocates hailed the passage as a victory for the country's LGBTQ community. During fierce deliberation, lawmakers eventually agreed to remove an article proposed by Islamic groups that would have made gay sex illegal.

The revised code also preserves the death penalty within the criminal justice system despite calls from the National Commission on Human Rights and other groups to abolish capital punishment, as dozens of other countries have done. But under the new code, the death penalty has a probationary period. If within a period of 10 years the convict behaves well, then the death penalty will be changed to life imprisonment or 20 years' imprisonment.

Under Indonesian regulations, legislation passed by Parliament becomes law after being signed by the president. But even without the president's signature, it automatically takes effect after 30 days unless the president issues a regulation to cancel it.

President Joko Widodo is widely expected to sign the revised code in light of its extended approval process in Parliament. But the law is likely to gradually take effect over a period of up to three years, according to Deputy Minister of Law and Human Rights Edward Hiariej.

"A lot of implementing regulations must be worked out, so it's impossible in one year," he said.

The amended code says sex outside marriage is punishable by a year in jail and cohabitation by six months, but adultery charges must be based on police reports lodged by a spouse, parents or children.

It restores a ban on insulting a sitting president or vice president, state institutions and the national ideology. Insults to a sitting president must be reported by the president and can lead to up to three years in jail.

Hiariej said the government provided "the strictest possible explanation that distinguishes between insults and criticism."

The penal code had languished for decades while legislators in the world's biggest Muslim-majority nation struggled with how to adapt its traditional culture and norms to the code, a legacy of the Dutch colonial administration. Indonesia proclaimed independence on Aug. 17, 1945.

A previous revised code was poised for passage in 2019, but President Widodo urged lawmakers to delay a vote amid mounting public criticism that led to nationwide protests in which tens of thousands of people participated. Opponents said it contained articles that discriminated against minorities and that the legislative process lacked transparency. Widodo instructed Law and Human Rights Minister Yasonna Laoly to obtain input from various groups as lawmakers debated the articles.

A parliamentary taskforce finalized the bill in November and lawmakers unanimously approved it on Tuesday, in what Laoly praised as a "historic step."

"It turns out that it is not easy for us to break away from the colonial living legacy, even though this

nation no longer wants to use colonial products," Laoly said in a news conference.

"Finalizing this process demonstrates that even 76 years after the Dutch Criminal Code was adopted as the Indonesian Criminal Code, it is never too late to produce laws on our own," Laoly said. "The Criminal Code is a reflection of the civilization of a nation."

Human Rights Watch said Tuesday that laws penalizing criticism of public leaders are contrary to international law, and the fact that some forms of expression are considered insulting is not sufficient to justify restrictions or penalties.

"The danger of oppressive laws is not that they'll be broadly applied, it's that they provide avenue for selective enforcement," said Andreas Harsono, a senior Indonesia researcher at the group.

Many hotels, including in tourism areas such as Bali and metropolitan Jakarta, will risk losing visitors, he added.

"These laws let police extort bribes, let officials jail political foes, for instance, with the blasphemy law," Harsono said.

EU, Western Balkans to boost partnership amid Ukraine war

By SAMUEL PETREQUIN and LLAZAR SEMINI undefined

TIRANA, Albania (AP) — EU leaders and their Western Balkan counterparts gathered Tuesday for talks aimed at strengthening their partnership as Russia's war in Ukraine threatens to reshape the geopolitical balance in the region.

The EU wants to use the one-day summit in Albania's capital to tell leaders from Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia that they have futures within the wealthy economic bloc and give them concrete signs, rather than just promises, that they will join one day.

European Council President Charles Michel, who is jointly chairing the summit, hailed it as a "symbolic meeting" that will cement the futures of the six countries within Europe.

"I am absolutely convinced that the future of our children will be safe and more prosperous with the Western Balkans within the EU, and we are working very hard in order to make progress," he told reporters.

As proof of the bloc's commitment, Michel underscored EU energy support to the region in light of the war's impact on supplies and prices, as well as a mobile telephone roaming charges agreement.

Since Russia invaded Ukraine in February, the EU's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, has been repeating that stepping up the bloc's engagement with the six nations is more crucial than ever to maintaining Europe's security.

As Europe's relationship with Russia deteriorates further because of the war, tensions have also mounted in the Balkans and the EU wants to avoid other flashpoints close to its borders.

"The war is sending shockwaves, it affects everybody, and especially this region," Borrell told reporters in Tirana, adding that the aim of the summit would be to mitigate the consequences of the war in a neighborhood that was torn by conflicts following the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

According to a draft of the declaration to be adopted at the summit, the EU will repeat "its full and unequivocal commitment to the European Union membership perspective of the Western Balkans" and call for an acceleration of accession talks with the incumbents.

In return, the EU expects full solidarity from its Western Balkans partners and wants them fully aligned with its foreign policies.

That particular point has been problematic with Serbia, whose president, Aleksandar Vucic, claims he wants to take Serbia into the European Union but has cultivated ties with Russia.

Although Serbia's representatives voted in favor of various U.N. resolutions condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Vucic has refused to explicitly condemn Moscow. His country has not joined Western sanctions against Russia over the war.

"The Western Balkans have decided to embark on the European path, this is a two-way street," Borrell said. "And we also expect the region to deliver on key reforms, and certainly to show the will to embrace the European Union's ambition and spirit. Many do, but we see also hesitations."

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 38 of 75

Although the progress of the six nations toward EU membership had stalled recently, there has been some progress over the past few months.

This summer, the EU started membership negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia following years of delays. And Bosnia moved a small step closer on its path to joining the powerful economic bloc when the commission advised member countries in October to grant it candidate status despite continuing criticism of the way the nation is run.

Kosovo has only started the first step, with the signing of a Stabilization and Association Agreement. It said it would apply for candidate status later this month.

The EU last admitted a new member — Croatia, which is also part of the Balkans — in 2013. Before that, Bulgaria and Romania joined in 2007. With the withdrawal of the United Kingdom in 2021, the EU now has 27 member nations.

“We need the EU to move from words to deeds,” said Kosovo president Vjosa Osmani.

To help households and businesses weather the impact of Russia’s war on energy and food security, the EU has earmarked one billion euros in grants to the Western Balkans, hoping the money will encourage double the investment.

Leaders will also discuss migration issues that remains one of Europe’s biggest concerns in light of the number of migrants trying to enter the bloc without authorization via the Western Balkans, notably through Serbia.

The EU’s border agency Frontex said it had detected more than 22,300 attempted entries in October, nearly three times as many as a year ago.

Around 500 Frontex officers are working along the EU’s borders with Balkan nations but staff will soon be deployed inside the region itself. Serbia’s border with Hungary is a notorious hotspot. Late last month, a man was shot and wounded and a number of others were detained following reports of a clash between migrants in a town on the Serbian side of the border. Europol police agents will also be sent there.

One cause of the movements is that Serbia, which wants to join the EU, has not aligned its visa policies with the bloc. People from several countries requiring visas to enter the bloc arrive in Serbia without such paperwork then slip through. Many from Burundi, Tunisia, India, Cuba and Turkey enter the EU this way.

Youngkin’s early shine faces test as he eyes White House bid

By STEVE PEOPLES and SARAH RANKIN Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Glenn Youngkin swept into office as a Republican sensation with a fresh formula for victory as the GOP contemplated its future beyond Donald Trump.

But one year after Youngkin became the first Republican in more than a decade to win the Virginia governorship, some in his party believe the shine of his national star is being tested just as he quietly contemplates a 2024 presidential run.

Most of the midterm candidates Youngkin tried to help this fall were defeated. Major presidential donors, even those who support him, see the 55-year-old former private-equity chief as simply one in a crowded class of would-be Trump alternatives. And there’s concern that Youngkin has few resonant accomplishments to sell skeptical Republican primary voters.

“Youngkin’s only campaign talking point right now is, ‘I won Virginia.’ He’s going to need something more than that,” said Iowa Family Leader CEO Bob Vander Plaats, an influential voice in the state’s first-in-the-nation Republican presidential caucus.

With the next presidential primary season already underway, Virginia’s upcoming legislative session offers Youngkin a critical opportunity to demonstrate executive leadership and burnish his conservative bona fides on issues including guns and abortion.

He’ll hardly be alone. Other ambitious Republican governors in Arkansas, Florida, New Hampshire and South Dakota are eyeing legislative successes to bolster their national political standing.

Youngkin, who downplayed his opposition to abortion rights during his campaign but has said he would sign “any bill” to “protect life,” wants allies in the General Assembly to pass a 15- or 20-week ban. But

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 39 of 75

with Democrats narrowly controlling the state Senate, those plans face steep odds.

At the same time, he's facing pressure on both sides of the gun debate after a fresh series of deadly shootings rocked the state, leaving 13 victims dead in three shootings last month alone. Youngkin, who was not endorsed by the National Rifle Association during his campaign last year, vowed to release a comprehensive mental health platform in January but said any consideration of new gun safety measures before criminal investigations into the shootings conclude is premature. Any push on guns would face a serious hurdle in the GOP-controlled state House.

Some close to Youngkin, who publicly downplays the 2024 speculation, are actively encouraging him to seek the presidency, seeing no downside given that Virginia law prevents him from seeking a second consecutive term as governor. But they are under no illusion it will be easy for a lower-profile first-term governor entering a field that already includes Trump and is expected to include Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, among other nationally known Republican heavyweights.

Still, donors and early state operatives believe there is an opening for a candidate who can appeal to moderates, independents and suburban voters while offering a clear stylistic contrast with the likes of Trump and DeSantis.

"This year is a big test for Glenn," said prominent Republican donor Bobbie Kilberg, who attended a private retreat Youngkin hosted in September. "He is sophisticated, he is smart, he can work across the aisle with Democrats."

Kilberg says she's eager for her party to move past Trump. And she is not inclined to support DeSantis, saying, "I'm looking for someone whose edges are not quite so sharp." Still, she isn't ready to commit to a prospective Youngkin 2024 bid.

"Glenn is one of four or five individuals that I would be very pleased to support," she said.

Youngkin captured national attention by winning in a state that Joe Biden carried by 10 percentage points just one year earlier in his successful Democratic presidential campaign. Youngkin did it by keeping Trump at arm's length and focusing on education, parental rights, public safety and the economy — all the while casting himself as an upbeat suburban dad and political outsider.

With no election of his own this fall, he spent recent months traveling the country to stump for other Republican candidates.

The national tour didn't go particularly well.

Trump is often blamed for elevating flawed candidates, but Youngkin's endorsement record was worse. The Virginia governor publicly campaigned with at least 15 Republican candidates for governor between July and early November, including Arizona's Kari Lake and Michigan's Tudor Dixon. Of the group of 15, just five won, and of those, only one — Gov.-elect Joe Lombardo of Nevada — flipped a seat from Democrat to Republican.

Youngkin did equally poorly at home in Virginia, where he stumped with the Republican challengers in Virginia's three most competitive congressional districts. Only one unseated the Democratic incumbent.

Youngkin also drew Trump's ire as talk of his presidential ambitions grew.

Just three days after the election, Trump unleashed a racist attack against Youngkin on social media, suggesting his name "sounds Chinese," while taking credit for his political rise. Hinting at a perceived lack of accomplishments, Trump also noted that Youngkin was "having a hard time with the Dems in Virginia."

John Fredericks, a right-wing radio host who previously led Trump's campaign in Virginia, said it was a mistake for the former president "to punch down" at Youngkin.

"He's not a serious candidate in 2024," Fredericks said of the Virginia governor, describing him as "a poor man's DeSantis."

"What does Youngkin bring to the table? He doesn't have a record in Virginia to run on, and before that he was CEO of a company that was shipping jobs to China," Fredericks said.

Francis Rooney, a businessman, major GOP donor and former congressman and ambassador, disagrees. Rooney, who also attended the retreat and whose company has donated to Youngkin, credits the governor with notching economic development wins, sparking a parents' rights "movement" in education and signing

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 40 of 75

into law a budget that included tax cuts as well as raises for teachers and law enforcement.

Kristin Davison, a political adviser, said Youngkin is leading "with results, not just words," also noting his administration's efforts to improve government efficiency and end school mask mandates.

"Many folks across the country look to Governor Youngkin as an example of leadership and the future of the Republican Party," she said.

Youngkin, who did not grant an interview for this story, will soon be heading into his second legislative session with a lengthy to-do list. He has said he wants to find bipartisan solutions to curtail violent crime, while pursuing additional tax cuts. He also recently rolled out a multifaceted plan to address the strained housing supply and has pledged to advance Chesapeake Bay cleanup goals and decouple Virginia from California's clean car standards.

He'll have another chance to demonstrate his political skills later in 2023, when every state legislative seat is on the ballot in an off-year election. That will give Youngkin the chance to rally Republicans to defend their House majority and retake the Senate.

For now, Youngkin continues to be a regular feature in the early 2024 conversation, according to Eric Levine, a New York-based Republican donor who's actively encouraging his party to find an alternative to Trump.

"I never heard anyone say, 'Youngkin, he's my guy,' but he comes up almost all the time on people's relatively short list," Levine said, acknowledging that he'd want to learn much more about Youngkin before deciding whether he could support him. "The one impression I have of Glenn Youngkin is that he's a very rational actor, a very smart guy, and he's not going to damage his brand by jumping into a race he can't win."

Samuel Eto'o filmed in altercation outside World Cup game

By GRAHAM DUNBAR AP Sports Writer

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — Cameroon soccer federation president and former star player Samuel Eto'o was filmed apparently kicking a man to the ground in an altercation outside a World Cup stadium early Tuesday.

Eto'o had paused to pose for photos with fans near Stadium 974 after Brazil beat South Korea 4-1. Footage circulating on social media showed him then reacting to comments by a man holding a camera.

The former Barcelona and Inter Milan forward was initially held back by people in his entourage then got clear and appeared to aim a kick at the man, who fell backwards to the ground.

Eto'o has been in Qatar as president of the soccer federation of Cameroon, which was eliminated in the group stage last week.

He also represents Qatar's World Cup organizing committee as a Global Legacy Ambassador since 2019 and is part of the FIFA Legends program that uses former players to promote soccer.

It was unclear in what capacity Eto'o attended the game Monday night.

Qatari organizers said Eto'o had not been their guest at the game. FIFA did not immediately respond to a request for comment. A spokesman for the Cameroon federation did not immediately answer phone calls or respond to messages seeking comment.

Qatar's Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, which oversees the World Cup, and its government did not immediately respond to questions about the incident.

Eto'o played at four World Cups for Cameroon between 1998 and 2014, and was elected to lead its soccer federation one year ago.

Late Chinese leader Jiang hailed in memorial service

BEIJING (AP) — China's leaders eulogized the late Jiang Zemin on Tuesday as a loyal Marxist-Leninist who oversaw their country's rapid economic rise while maintaining rigid Communist Party control over society.

President and current party leader Xi Jinping praised Jiang in an hour-long address at Beijing's Great Hall of the People as senior officials, military brass and rank-and-file soldiers stood at attention.

Xi emphasized Jiang's role in maintaining political stability in allusion to his sudden elevation to top leader

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 41 of 75

just ahead of the army's bloody suppression of the 1989 student-led pro-democracy movement centered on Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

"Comrade Jiang Zemin emphasized that our party is leading the people in a great struggle to build socialist modernization, and inevitably will encounter many complex situations," Xi said.

"The severe situation at home and abroad and the confrontation and struggle between different social systems and different ideological systems often test every member of our party," he said.

Jiang died at age 96, just days after China's largest street protests since 1989, which were driven by anger over draconian COVID-19 restrictions. Acting to quell the protests, authorities flooded the streets with security personnel and an unknown number of people have been detained.

Those attending Tuesday's memorial observed three minutes of silence and trading was paused on the country's stock exchanges.

On Monday, state broadcaster CCTV showed Xi, his predecessor Hu Jintao and others bowing before Jiang's body laid out in a bed of flowers and evergreens and covered in a party flag at a military hospital in Beijing. Jiang's body was sent for cremation at the Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery, where many Chinese leaders are interred.

Crowds stood silently as Jiang's glass-topped coffin was driven slowly to the cemetery amid high security, possibly as a safeguard against a recurrence of recent protests.

Jiang led China out of diplomatic isolation over the 1989 crackdown and supported economic reforms that spurred a decade of explosive growth. The economy has slowed as it matures and confronts an aging population, trade sanctions, high unemployment and the fallout from lockdowns and other anti-COVID-19 restrictions imposed by Xi.

A trained engineer and former head of China's largest city, Shanghai, Jiang was president for a decade, and led the ruling Communist Party for 13 years until 2002. After taking over from reformist leader Deng Xiaoping, he oversaw the handover of Hong Kong from British rule in 1997 and Beijing's entry into the World Trade Organization in 2001.

Jiang died of leukemia and multiple organ failure on Nov. 30 in Shanghai, state media reported. The party declared him a "great proletarian revolutionary" and "long-tested Communist fighter."

Hu's appearance was his first in public since Oct. 22, when he was unexpectedly guided off the stage during the closing ceremony of the national congress of the Communist Party.

No official explanation was given, and speculation over his abrupt departure has ranged from a health crisis to a signal of protest by the 79-year-old former leader against Xi, who has eliminated term limits on his position and appointed loyalists to all top positions.

In Hong Kong, officials, lawmakers and judges observed three minutes of silence Tuesday morning.

The Hong Kong Stock Exchange did not halt trading but its external screens at Exchange Square downtown stopped showing data for three minutes. The Chinese Gold and Silver Exchange, also in Hong Kong, suspended trading briefly to mark the occasion.

An official memorial for Jiang drew large crowds over the weekend, mostly older Hong Kongers who credit him with overseeing a smooth transition from British to Chinese rule. The handover was made with a pledge by China that Hong Kong would maintain its own social, economic and legal systems for 50 years.

A sweeping crackdown on freedom of speech and assembly, electoral reforms that effectively eliminated the political opposition and the imposition of a draconian national security law under Xi have drained most of the substance from the "one country, two systems" framework as promised under Jiang.

Biden's efforts to protect abortion access hit roadblocks

By AMANDA SEITZ and COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration is still actively searching for ways to safeguard abortion access for millions of women, even as it bumps up against a complex web of strict new state laws enacted in the months after the Supreme Court stripped the constitutional right.

Looking to seize on momentum following a midterm election where voters widely rebuked tougher abor-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 42 of 75

tion restrictions, there's a renewed push at the White House to find ways to help women in states that have virtually outlawed or limited the treatment, and to keep the issue top of mind for voters.

In reality, though, the administration is shackled by a ban on federal funding for most abortions, a conservative-leaning Supreme Court inclined to rule against abortion rights and a split Congress unwilling to pass legislation on the matter.

Meanwhile, frustration on the ground in the most abortion-restricted states is mounting.

"This is not going away anytime soon," said Jen Klein of the Biden administration's Gender Policy Council. "Tens of millions of Americans are living under bans of various sorts, many of them quite extreme, and even in states where abortion is legal, we're all seeing the impact on providers and on systems being loaded by people who are coming across state lines."

Since the U.S. Supreme Court decision in June, roughly half the states have some type of abortion restrictions in place, with at least 11 states essentially banning the procedure.

Administration officials are meeting Tuesday and Wednesday with state lawmakers ahead of their 2023 sessions, including in states with more extreme bans on the table, and will discuss safeguarding rights and helping women access care as top issues. The meetings follow sit-downs with roughly nine governors, attorneys general and Democratic state legislators from more than 30 states.

The administration, meanwhile, is implementing Biden's executive orders signed in July and August that directed federal agencies to push back on abortion restrictions and protect women traveling out of their state to seek one, though some women's rights advocates say it doesn't go far enough.

And there are still other avenues left for the administration to explore, said Kathleen Sebelius, a former U.S. health and human services secretary.

HHS might look to wield its power around federal protections for health care providers, life-saving abortions, abortion pills and travel for women in abortion-restricted states, she said. During her tenure, for example, the agency did some policy maneuvering to expand rights for same-sex couples, including a requirement that any hospitals receiving federal funds allow their patients to select a same-sex partner as a visitor, years before gay marriage was legalized.

"It's amazing how broad a lot of the agency's authorities are and how much creative thinking can go on," Sebelius said.

Already, the Justice Department has sued Idaho over its restrictive abortion policy and indicted at least 20 people who have been accused of obstructing access to abortion clinics. Attorney General Merrick Garland has said he would protect the right for women to travel between states for medical care.

Veterans and their beneficiaries are able to access abortion, even in states that have outlawed it, through the Department of Veteran Affairs in cases where the woman's life or health is at risk or in cases of rape or incest. The Defense Department will cover leave and travel costs for troops seeking abortions if they are not available in their state.

The Federal Trade Commission has sued at least one data broker for selling information that tracks people at reproductive health care clinics, while the Federal Communication Commission reminded 15 mobile carriers of privacy laws in a recent letter.

Perhaps most consequentially, the Department of Health and Human Services told hospitals they "must" provide abortions if a mother's life is at risk. The agency cited federal law, called the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act, or EMTALA, that requires medical facilities to provide treatment if a person may be in labor or faces an emergency health situation.

But "no executive action can replace a precedent of nearly 50 years," Klein said. "The most important thing is to fight for national legislation."

None is upcoming in the lame-duck session before Republicans take control of the House. And Biden is limited in what else he can do.

Indeed, the administration's moves so far have made little difference in Ohio, said Kellie Copeland, the executive director at Pro-Choice Ohio. A law that would essentially ban abortion once fetal cardiac activity is detected is awaiting a court ruling. Currently, abortion is banned at 22 weeks, state Medicaid funds

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 43 of 75

can't be used for abortion and parental consent is required for a minor to receive care.

"I can say as an advocate in Ohio, no one is saying, 'Oh wow, this has made a difference,'" Copeland said. "The impact has not been felt."

Copeland's organization is one of about 50 local advocacy groups and abortion clinics entrenched in states and cities that asked the president in an August letter to offer federal travel and childcare vouchers for people living in states where abortion is banned, introduce federal protections for mailing abortion pills, and gather hospital attorneys to reiterate that doctors must give abortions in life-saving situations.

Meanwhile, there's chaos at hospitals located in the country's most restrictive states, where doctors treating critically ill pregnant patients must weigh their medical recommendations against potential punishments like prison time. Reports of sick pregnant women turned away by doctors or facing unsafe delays in medical care are pouring in.

HHS is investigating at least one hospital in Missouri after officials there refused to let doctors perform an abortion on a woman during a medical emergency, but won't say how many complaints it has received against providers or hospital system for failing to provide life-saving care.

In August, HHS also invited states to apply for Medicaid waivers that would unlock federal funds to pay for travel costs for women who live in states where abortion procedures have been severely restricted.

Not a single state has applied, although the agency said it is in talks with officials in some states about applications.

In Louisiana, where abortion is banned except in certain cases where a mother's life is at stake, federal policies around travel are likely to have the most impact, said Michelle Erenberg of the New Orleans-based abortion rights advocacy group Lift Louisiana.

She's not hopeful that other federal proposals will ease how women access abortion directly in the state.

"It's a little frustrating," Erenberg said. "Also, we understand there's only so much the administration is going to be able to do when a state like Louisiana has decided to enact a near total ban on abortion care."

Asian shares lower as strong data hit hopes for dovish Fed

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

BANGKOK (AP) — Stocks were mostly lower in Asia on Tuesday after Wall Street pulled back as surprisingly strong economic reports highlighted the difficulty of the Federal Reserve's fight against inflation.

Tokyo rose while other regional markets declined. U.S. futures gained and oil prices also advanced.

Adding to worries over the potential for recession, Fitch Ratings revised its forecasts for world economic growth downward on Tuesday to reflect the Fed and other central banks' interest rate hikes.

Its Global Economic Outlook report estimated global growth at 1.4% in 2023, revised down from 1.7% in its September forecast. It put U.S. growth in 2023 at 0.2%, down from 0.5%, as the pace of monetary policy tightening increases.

China's growth forecast was cut to a 4.1% annual pace from 4.5%.

Markets have been lifted by expectations China will press ahead with easing its stringent pandemic restrictions, relieving pressures on trade, manufacturing and consumer spending.

But investors are also eyeing the Fed, hoping it might slow the pace of interest rate hikes aimed at curbing stubbornly high inflation.

The services sector, which makes up the biggest part of the U.S. economy, showed surprising growth in November, the Institute for Supply Management reported Monday. Business orders at U.S. factories and orders for durable goods in October also rose more than expected, other reports said.

That news is positive for the broader economy, but it complicates the Fed's fight against inflation because it likely means the central bank will have to keep raising interest rates to bring down price pressures.

"Inflation will likely prove to be stickier and with the service part of the economy refusing to weaken. The risks that the Fed might need to do more remain elevated," Edward Moya of Oanda said in a statement.

The Fed is meeting next week and is expected to raise interest rates by a half-percentage point, which would mark an easing of sorts from a steady stream of three-quarters of a percentage point rate in-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 44 of 75

creases. It has raised its benchmark rate six times since March, driving it to a range of 3.75% to 4%, the highest in 15 years. Wall Street expects the benchmark rate to reach a peak range of 5% to 5.25% by the middle of 2023.

The aim is to cool growth without slamming on the brakes and causing a recession that would cascade through the global economy, slowing trade and consumer spending .

Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine continues agitating an already volatile global energy market. U.S. crude oil prices bounced around before settling 3.8% lower after a group of world leaders agreed to a boycott of most Russian oil. They also committed to a price cap of \$60 per barrel on Russian exports.

In Asian trading, Hong Kong's Hang Seng fell 1.1% to 19,300.90 and the Kospi in South Korea fell 0.6% to 2,404.39. The Shanghai Composite index edged 0.1% lower to 3,209.27.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index picked up 0.3% to 27,909.65. Shares also fell in Bangkok and Thailand.

The S&P 500 fell 1.8% Monday to 3,998.84. The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 1.4% to 33,947.10 and the tech-heavy Nasdaq gave back 1.9%, closing at 11,239.94. Small-company stocks fell even more, sending the Russell 2000 index 2.8% lower to 1,840.22.

Oil and gas company stocks fell amid a broad pullback in energy prices, including an 11.2% slump in natural gas. Exxon Mobil fell 2.7%.

All told, roughly 95% of the stocks in the benchmark S&P 500 index were in the red, with technology companies, banks and retailers among the biggest weights on the market. Chipmaker Nvidia fell 1.6%, Bank of America slid 4.5% and Amazon dropped 3.3%.

Bond yields mostly climbed. The yield on the 10-year Treasury, which influences mortgage rates, rose to 3.59% from 3.49% late Friday.

Wall Street will get a weekly update on unemployment claims Thursday. November's monthly report on producer prices is due Friday.

In other trading Tuesday, U.S. benchmark crude oil gained 63 cents to \$77.56 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It lost \$3.05 to \$76.93 per barrel.

Brent crude, the pricing basis for international trading, advanced 57 cents to \$83.25 per barrel.

The U.S. dollar rose to 136.88 Japanese yen from 136.71 yen late Monday. The euro climbed to \$1.0497 from \$1.0491.

Kirstie Alley, Emmy-winning 'Cheers' star, dies at 71

By ANDREW DALTON and ALICIA RANCILIO Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Kirstie Alley, a two-time Emmy winner whose roles on the TV megahit "Cheers" and in the "Look Who's Talking" films made her one of the biggest stars in American comedy in the late 1980s and early 1990s, died Monday. She was 71.

Alley died of cancer that was only recently discovered, her children True and Lillie Parker said in a post on Twitter. Alley's manager Donovan Daughtry confirmed the death in an email to The Associated Press.

"As iconic as she was on screen, she was an even more amazing mother and grandmother," her children's statement said.

She starred opposite Ted Danson as Rebecca Howe on "Cheers," the beloved NBC sitcom about a Boston bar, from 1987 to 1993. She joined the show at the height of its popularity after the departure of original star Shelley Long.

Alley would win an Emmy for best lead actress in a comedy series for the role in 1991.

"I only thank God I didn't have to wait as long as Ted," Alley said in her acceptance, gently ribbing Danson, who had finally won an Emmy for his "Cheers" role as Sam Malone in his eighth nomination the previous year.

She would take a second Emmy for best lead actress in a miniseries or television movie in 1993 for playing the title role in the CBS TV movie "David's Mother."

She had her own sitcom on the network, "Veronica's Closet," from 1997 to 2000.

In the 1989 comedy "Look Who's Talking," which gave her a major career boost, she played the mother

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 45 of 75

of a baby who's inner thoughts were voiced by Bruce Willis. She would also appear in a 1990 sequel "Look Who's Talking Too," and another in 1993, "Look Who's Talking Now."

John Travolta, her co-star in the trilogy, paid her tribute in an Instagram post.

"Kirstie was one of the most special relationships I've ever had," Travolta said, along with a photo of Alley. "I love you Kirstie. I know we will see each other again."

She would play a fictionalized version of herself in the 2005 Showtime series "Fat Actress," a show that drew comedy from her public and media treatment over her weight gain and loss.

She dealt with the same subject matter in the 2010 A&E reality series "Kirstie Alley's Big Life," which chronicled her attempt to lose weight and launch a weight-loss program while working as a single mother in an unconventional household that included pet lemurs.

Alley said she agreed to do the show in part because of the misinformation about her that had become a tabloid staple.

"Anything bad you can say about me, they say," Alley told the AP at the time. "I've never collapsed, fainted, passed out. Basically, anything they've said, I never. The only true thing is I got fat."

In recent years she appeared on several other reality shows, including a second-place finish on "Dancing With the Stars" in 2011. She appeared on the competition series "The Masked Singer" wearing a baby mammoth costume earlier this year.

She appeared in the Ryan Murphy black comedy series "Scream Queens" on Fox in 2015 and 2016.

One of her co-stars on the show, Jamie Lee Curtis, said on Instagram Monday that Alley was "a great comic foil" on the show and "a beautiful mama bear in her very real life."

Alley's "Cheers" co-star Kelsey Grammer said in a statement that "I always believed grief for a public figure is a private matter, but I will say I loved her."

Another "Cheers" co-star, Rhea Pearlman, recounted how she and Alley became friends almost instantly after she joined the show. She said Alley organized large Easter and Halloween parties and invited everyone. "She wanted everyone to feel included. She loved her children deeply. I've never met anyone remotely like her. I feel so thankful to have known her."

A native of Wichita, Kansas, Alley attended Kansas State University before dropping out and moving to Los Angeles.

Like Travolta, she would become a longtime member of the Church of Scientology.

Her first television appearances were as a game show contestant, on "The Match Game" in 1979 and "Password" in 1980.

She made her film debut in 1982's "Star Trek: The Wrath of Khan."

Other film roles included 1987's "Summer School," 1995's "Village of the Damned" and 1999's "Drop Dead Gorgeous."

Alley was married to her high school sweetheart from 1970 to 1977, and to actor Parker Stevenson from 1983 until 1997.

She told the AP in 2010 if she married again, "I'd leave the guy within 24 hours because I'm sure he'd tell me not to do something."

Jazzy 'Charlie Brown Christmas' swings on after 57 years

By DAVID BAUDER AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Mendelson family would love to find the envelope where their father, Lee, scribbled some lyrics to jazz musician Vince Guaraldi's composition "Christmas Time is Here" for an animated TV special featuring the "Peanuts" gang in 1965.

The producer always said it had taken less than half an hour to write, and he likely tossed the scrap of paper away. He was in a rush. Everything was rushed. No one even knew, once the special aired, whether it would ever be seen again.

Instead, "A Charlie Brown Christmas" became an indelible holiday tradition and so, too, has Guaraldi's music — perhaps even more so.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 46 of 75

"Christmas just doesn't feel like Christmas without hearing that album in the background," said Derrick Bang, author of the biography "Vince Guaraldi at the Piano."

The special itself was a bit of an oddity: a cartoon story of the meaning of Christmas soundtracked by a sophisticated, mostly instrumental jazz trio of piano, bass and drum.

Yet it worked. Guaraldi's cascading piano evokes both motion and lightly falling snow on "Skating." The driving melody of "Linus and Lucy" is the eternal backdrop to a swinging party. "O Tannenbaum" shifts from the traditional carol to a bass-driven groove. A children's choir adds charm to "Christmas Time is Here."

The soundtrack has sold more than five million copies. Its nostalgia-fueled popularity has only grown, getting a crucial boost in 1998 when Starbucks began selling it in stores, and fed steadily by new products. The latest, a box set of outtakes from Guaraldi's recording sessions, was released this year.

"A Charlie Brown Christmas" has aired every year since 1965, although that tradition is about to change.

The special's run on broadcast television ends this year. Apple TV+ bought the rights, and will stream it exclusively starting next year. While a recognition of television's new direction, will that reduce the chances of new generations of children happening upon the story and music?

"I just remember, back in the days of three channels and scheduled programming, that was one of those things we were excited about because we knew it was coming on and we were familiar with it," said Harry Connick Jr., who covered "Christmas Time is Here" for his own holiday disc just out.

"It was actually an amazing opportunity for music like that to be heard by a lot of people," added Connick, a jazz devotee even as a youngster. "It was not necessarily the kind of music that would be played on regular radio."

That's even less likely now, as jazz recedes into the history books or the background of dinner parties, said Nathaniel Sloan, musicologist at the University of Southern California and co-host of the "Switched on Pop" podcast.

During the 1960s, jazz was closer to the mainstream and more likely to be played alongside pop music, he said.

The music Guaraldi created for the soundtrack is ambiguous and more complex than most holiday music, Sloan said. Tied to warm feelings for illustrator Charles M. Schulz's classic comic page characters, time has made it traditional holiday music.

The list of people who have recorded "Christmas Time is Here" is long and varied. They include John Legend, Alicia Keys, Gloria Estefan, Mariah Carey, Mel Tormé, Dave Brubeck, Sarah McLachlan, Stone Temple Pilots, Chicago, and Toni Braxton.

Similarly, the unexpected places where the melody to "Linus and Lucy" have appeared testifies to how ingrained it is in American life. Michelle Obama played it on the piano when returning to her childhood home in the "Becoming" documentary. Foo Fighters included it in a rocking "Saturday Night Live" holiday medley. Prince banged it out during his last concert.

It all started in the San Francisco area, home base for Guaraldi, as it was for Mendelson and Schulz. Mendelson's popular documentary on Willie Mays — Schulz's favorite baseball player — convinced the reclusive cartoonist to participate in a "day in the life" film about his work. One of Mendelson's favorite songs was Guaraldi's breezy hit, "Cast Your Fate to the Wind," so the jazzman was recruited for a soundtrack.

In the days before cable and streaming, Mendelson couldn't sell the documentary, so it went unseen.

After the popularity of "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" in 1964, a sponsor asked Mendelson if he'd considered making a "Peanuts" Christmas special. He lied that he had. Schulz agreed to outline a story, and Guaraldi came aboard, too, recycling "Linus and Lucy" from the documentary.

Animation is time-consuming, so the team had a tight deadline to make it onto television. It was Mendelson who decided that "Christmas Time is Here" was missing something without lyrics. He asked several songwriters to take on the task, but the deadline was too daunting.

So Mendelson sat in his office and did it himself: "Christmas time is here, happiness and cheer..."

"I've always loved the music and the melody, but I really didn't understand how beautiful the lyrics were until I recorded it," said Norah Jones, who included her take on the song on a disc released last year.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 47 of 75

"The version with the children singing is so special," she told The Associated Press. "There's something very unique and heartwarming about children singing."

The St. Paul's Church Choir from San Rafael, California, was hired to sing "Christmas Time is Here" and "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing." Producers infuriated the choir director by choosing a slightly out-of-tune version of the carol; they thought it captured an innocence they were seeking, said Bang, who wrote liner notes for the box set.

Some at CBS were nervous before the special aired. Executives wondered if viewers would accept their favorite comic strip characters come to "life" with voices and movement. Schulz's insistence that the show quote from the Bible gave it a religious focus that television entertainment typically steered clear of.

But it was a hit, winning Peabody and Emmy awards, and never went away.

Guaraldi never had the chance to see his music age into standards. He died of a heart attack in 1976, only 47 years old.

"He's the best-known jazz musician whose name you don't know, because the music from the Christmas special has become so ubiquitous," Bang said.

Lee Mendelson died at 86 in 2019 — on Christmas Day. His son Jason, one of four children, is reluctant to say how much money his father earned from his few minutes of writing the "Christmas Time is Here" lyrics. Here's one hint: The song makes enough money, every year, to pay for all of the extended family's holiday shopping.

And he never tires of hearing Guaraldi's music, frequently attending concerts where the holiday songs are recreated live.

"I've never seen a bad one," he said.

Justices spar in latest clash of religion and gay rights

By JESSICA GRESKO and MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court's conservative majority sounded sympathetic Monday to a Christian graphic artist who objects to designing wedding websites for gay couples, the latest collision of religion and gay rights to land at the high court.

The designer and her supporters say that ruling against her would force artists — from painters and photographers to writers and musicians — to do work that is against their beliefs. Her opponents, meanwhile, say that if she wins, a range of businesses will be able to discriminate, refusing to serve Black, Jewish or Muslim customers, interracial or interfaith couples or immigrants.

Over more than two hours of spirited arguments, the justices repeatedly tested out what ruling for the designer could mean, using detailed and sometimes colorful hypothetical scenarios. Those included a Black Santa asked to take a picture with a child dressed in a Ku Klux Klan outfit, a photographer asked to take pictures for the marital infidelity website Ashley Madison, and an invented food business called "Grandma Helen's Protestant Provisions."

The case comes at a time when the court is dominated 6-3 by conservatives and follows a series of cases in which the justices have sided with religious plaintiffs. Across the street from the court, meanwhile, lawmakers in Congress are finalizing what would be a landmark bill protecting same-sex marriage, legislation prompted by a different high court case from earlier this year.

During arguments Monday the court's three liberal justices expressed concerns about ruling for website designer and graphic artist Lorie Smith while conservatives suggested support for her.

Justice Neil Gorsuch, one of three high court appointees of former President Donald Trump, described Smith as "an individual who says she will sell and does sell to everyone, all manner of websites, (but) that she won't sell a website that requires her to express a view about marriage that she finds offensive."

Smith, who is based in Colorado, doesn't currently create wedding websites. She wants to but says her Christian faith prevents her from creating websites celebrating same-sex marriages.

Colorado, like most other states, has what's called a public accommodation law that says if Smith offers wedding websites to the public, she must provide them to all customers. Businesses that violate the law can be fined, among other things.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 48 of 75

Smith says the law violates her First Amendment rights. The state disagrees.

A looming question during Monday's arguments: At what point does an objection to serving someone cross the legal line?

Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, one of the court's three liberals, asked whether a photography store in a shopping mall could refuse to take pictures of Black people on Santa's lap.

"Their policy is that only white children can be photographed with Santa in this way, because that's how they view the scenes with Santa that they're trying to depict," said Jackson, one of the court's two Black justices.

Jackson's fellow liberal Justice Sonia Sotomayor said if the court rules for Smith, it would be the first time the justices would say that a "commercial business open to the public, serving the public, that it could refuse to serve a customer based on race, sex, religion or sexual orientation."

Sotomayor repeatedly pressed Smith's lawyer on what business owners could refuse to do. "How about people who don't believe in interracial marriage? Or about people who don't believe that disabled people should get married? Where's the line?" Sotomayor asked.

But conservative Justice Samuel Alito, who seemed to favor Smith, asked whether it's "fair to equate opposition to same-sex marriage to opposition to interracial marriage." And he pointed to language in the court's 2015 opinion declaring a nationwide right to same-sex marriage about "honorable people who object to same-sex marriage."

Alito was also the justice who asked whether a Black person dressed as Santa could refuse to take a picture with a child dressed in a Ku Klux Klan outfit. Eric Olson, arguing on behalf of Colorado, responded "No," because Ku Klux Klan outfits wouldn't be protected under public accommodation laws.

Justice Elena Kagan added that Olson's response wasn't based on the race of the child wearing the outfit. In an awkward moment, Alito responded: "You do see a lot of Black children in Ku Klux Klan outfits, right? ... All the time."

The case is the second in which the court has wrestled with a case involving a Christian business owner who doesn't want to provide a service for a same-sex wedding. Five years ago, the justices heard a different challenge involving Colorado's law and a baker, Jack Phillips, who objected to designing a wedding cake for a gay couple. That case ended with a limited decision and set up a return of the issue to the high court. Smith's lawyer, Kristen Waggoner of the Alliance Defending Freedom, also represented Phillips.

Smith's opponents include the Biden administration, the American Civil Liberties Union and the NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund. Twenty mostly liberal states, including California and New York, are supporting Colorado, while 20 other mostly Republican states are supporting Smith.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre declined to weigh in on the case specifically following oral arguments Monday but said the "administration believes that every person, no matter their sex, race, religion or who they love, should have an equal access to society."

The White House is currently awaiting final passage in Congress of the bill protecting same-sex and interracial marriage. It gained momentum following the Supreme Court's decision earlier this year to end constitutional protections for abortion. That decision to overturn the 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling prompted questions about whether the court — now that it is more conservative — might also overturn its decision declaring a nationwide right to same-sex marriage. Justice Clarence Thomas explicitly said that decision, *Obergefell v. Hodges*, should be reconsidered.

During arguments at the court Monday, Justice Brett Kavanaugh asked Waggoner, Smith's lawyer, about what would happen if the court sides with her. And he pointed to a section of her written submission to the high court where she said Smith as an artist is different from other business people including hairstylists, landscapers, plumbers, caterers, tailors, jewelers and restaurants that do not generally communicate a message through their work.

If she wins, Waggoner said, she might bring similar cases on behalf of others whose work involves creative inspiration. But, she said, "I won't be coming back with a caterer."

California eyes penalties for oil companies' big profits

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 49 of 75

By ADAM BEAM and SOPHIE AUSTIN Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California could become the first state to fine big oil companies for making too much money, a reaction to the industry's supersized profits following a summer of record-high gas prices in the nation's most populous state.

Gov. Gavin Newsom and his Democratic allies in the state Legislature introduced the proposal Monday as lawmakers returned to the state Capitol in Sacramento for the start of a special legislative session focused solely on the oil industry.

But the proposal was missing key details, including how much profit is too much for oil companies and what fine they would have to pay for exceeding it. Newsom's office said those details would be sorted out later after negotiations with lawmakers. Any money from the fines would be returned to the public.

Gas prices are always higher in California because of taxes, fees and environmental regulations that other states don't have. But in October, the average price of a gallon of gasoline in California was more than \$2.60 higher than the national average — the biggest gap ever.

Newsom said there was no good way to justify that.

Speaking to reporters, Newsom compared the actions of oil companies to price gougers charging more for hand sanitizer during the pandemic. He said the goal of the penalty is to prevent gas prices from shooting up similarly in the future, calling it "a proactive effort in order to change behavior."

"We're burning up. We're choking up. We're heating up because of these folks," Newsom said, referring to the oil industry and its impact on the environment. "And people are barely able to pay their bills because of these folks."

It could be a popular proposal with voters, who have been paying more than \$6 per gallon of gasoline on average for much of the year. But that doesn't mean it will be easy to get it through the state Legislature, where the oil industry is one of the top spenders on both lobbyists and campaign contributions.

Crucially, the proposal classifies the fine as a "civil penalty" and not a tax. That means only a simple majority would be needed for passage, instead of the two-thirds majority that is required to raise taxes.

"Whatever Gov. Newsom wants to call it, this is a tax and it's going to have the same impact that all taxes do on consumers, and that is to raise costs, not bring them down," said Kevin Slagle, spokesperson for the Western States Petroleum Association. "We think the governor should be honest about what this is and let the legislators vote on a tax and sell it to the California public as a tax and see how people feel about it."

The California Legislature is in session most of the year, typically considering hundreds of bills. The governor can call lawmakers into a special session limited to discussing issues he specifies. Newsom said he called the special session on gas prices because it would help lawmakers focus on the issue.

But legislative leaders don't appear in any hurry to pass the bill. Lawmakers convened in a special session for mere minutes Monday, long enough to adopt rules and appoint leaders. They won't reconvene again until January.

Many lawmakers said they had no idea what Newsom was proposing. A few senators joined reporters at Newsom's news conference outside Senate chambers just to hear what he had to say.

"I don't think anybody objects to (oil companies) having a business model that makes a profit, but the extent to which they're taking advantage of people really does appear to be unfair," said state Sen. Ben Allen, a Democrat from Santa Monica, expressing general support for Newsom's concept.

Republicans, who don't have enough votes to influence legislation, denounced the proposal.

"The last thing that we need to do is increase the cost on Californians who are already paying far too much," Assembly Republican Leader James Gallagher said.

Adding to the uncertainty is an unusually high number of newly elected lawmakers about to take seats for the first time. Roughly a quarter of the Legislature's 120 members are new, with two close races still unresolved.

Among the new state senators is Angelique Ashby, a Democrat who narrowly won election after an intense campaign. The oil industry spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on radio and TV ads supporting

Ashby's campaign, a trend noticed by critics who tried to use it against her.

Ashby said she hasn't been approached by lobbyists or others from the oil industry asking how she would vote on a potential penalty. She noted the oil industry spent the money as "independent expenditures," meaning she had no control over that spending during the campaign.

"Campaign slogans and strategies of my opponent are a thing of the past," said Ashby, whose district includes Sacramento. "I'm fixated on the people of Senate District 8 and I will make my decision based on what is in their best interest."

USS Arizona survivor: Honor those killed at Pearl Harbor

By AUDREY McAVOY and HAVEN DALEY Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — USS Arizona sailor Lou Conter lived through the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor even though his battleship exploded and sank after being pierced by aerial bombs.

That makes the now 101-year-old somewhat of a celebrity, especially on the anniversary of the Dec. 7, 1941, assault. Many call him and others in the nation's dwindling pool of Pearl Harbor survivors heroes.

Conter rejects the characterization.

"The 2,403 men that died are the heroes. And we've got to honor them ahead of everybody else. And I've said that every time, and I think it should be stressed," Conter said in a recent interview at his Grass Valley, California, home north of Sacramento.

On Wednesday, the U.S. Navy and the National Park Service will host a remembrance ceremony at Pearl Harbor in honor of those killed.

Last year about 30 survivors and some 100 other veterans of the war made the pilgrimage to the annual event. But the U.S. Navy and the National Park Service anticipate only one or two survivors will likely attend in person this year. Another 20 to 30 veterans of World War II are also expected to be there.

Conter won't be among them. He attended for many years, most recently in 2019. But his doctor has told him the five-hour flight, plus hours of waiting at airports, is too strenuous for him now.

"I'm going on 102 now. It's kind of hard to mess around," Conter said.

Instead he plans to watch a video feed of this year's 81st anniversary observance from home. He's also recorded a message that will be played for those attending.

Conter's autobiography "The Lou Conter Story" recounts how one of the Japanese bombs penetrated five steel decks on the Arizona and ignited over 1 million pounds of gunpowder and thousands of pounds of ammunition.

"The ship was consumed in a giant fireball that looked as if it engulfed everything from the mainmast forward," he wrote.

He joined other survivors in tending to the injured, many of whom were blinded and badly burned. The sailors only abandoned ship when their senior surviving officer was sure they had rescued all those still alive.

The Arizona's 1,177 dead account for nearly half the servicemen killed in the bombing. The battleship today sits where it sank 81 years ago, with more than 900 of its dead still entombed inside.

Conter wasn't injured at Pearl Harbor, during World War II or the Korean War.

This year's remembrance ceremony is the first to be open to the public since the 2019. The pandemic forced the adoption of strict public health measures for the last two years.

David Kilton, the National Park Service's chief of interpretation for Pearl Harbor, said he's not sure how many people will attend but they're anticipating between 2,000 to 3,000 people.

It will be held at the Pearl Harbor National Memorial visitors center which overlooks the water and the white structure built to honor those killed on the Arizona.

Organizers have set a theme of "Everlasting Legacy" for this year's ceremony, highlighting how fewer and fewer survivors remain.

"We honestly have to know and be prepared that eventually we won't have the ability to connect with their stories and have them with us anymore," Kilton said. "And it's hard to to come to grips with that reality."

Conter went to flight school after Pearl Harbor, earning his wings to fly PBV patrol bombers, which the

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 51 of 75

Navy used to look for submarines and bomb enemy targets. He flew 200 combat missions in the Pacific with a "Black Cats" squadron, which conducted dive bombing at night in planes painted black.

One night in 1943 he and his crew had to avoid a dozen or so nearby sharks after they were shot down near New Guinea.

When one sailor expressed doubt they would survive, Conter responded "baloney."

"Don't ever panic in any situation. Survive is the first thing you tell them. Don't panic or you're dead," he said. They were quiet and treaded water until another plane came and dropped them a lifeboat hours later.

In the late 1950s, he was made the Navy's first SERE officer — which is an acronym for survival, evasion, resistance and escape. He spent the next decade training Navy pilots and crew on how to survive if they're shot down in the jungle and captured as a prisoner of war. Some of his pupils used his instruction to live through years as POWs in Vietnam.

These days, he spends his time going to his favorite breakfast spot twice a week and going out for Mexican food every Friday night. He enjoys visiting with friends and watching TV.

Conter hasn't forgotten his shipmates. He said he'd like the military to try to identify 85 Arizona sailors who were buried as unknowns in a Honolulu cemetery after the war.

"They should never give up on that issue. If they're ever identified, I'm sure their families would want to bury them at home or wherever, but they should never give up on trying to identify them," he said.

Man who shot Lady Gaga's dog walker gets 21 years in prison

By STEFANIE DAZIO Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The man who shot and wounded Lady Gaga's dog walker while stealing her French bulldogs last year took a plea deal and was sentenced to 21 years in prison on Monday, officials said.

The Lady Gaga connection was a coincidence, authorities have said. The motive was the value of the French bulldogs, a breed that can run into the thousands of dollars, and detectives do not believe the thieves knew the dogs belonged to the musician.

James Howard Jackson, one of three men and two accomplices who participated in the violent robbery and its aftermath, pleaded no contest to one count of attempted murder, according to the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office. It was not immediately clear which attorney represented Howard on Monday.

The pop star's dog walker, Ryan Fischer, was seriously wounded in the attack and addressed the court Monday to give an impact statement, which he posted on Instagram.

"It's hard to believe that it's nearing two years since I was taking Asia, Koji and Gustav out for an evening stroll when — in an instant — I suddenly found myself fighting with everything I had to protect those dogs from being stolen. But it wasn't enough: I was beaten, strangled, shot and left to die bleeding out on a sidewalk and gasping for my life. And Koji and Gustav were gone."

Jackson and two others drove around Hollywood, the city of West Hollywood and the San Fernando Valley on Feb. 24, 2021 "looking for French bulldogs," prosecutors said previously. They found Fischer with the pop star's three pets.

Jackson shot Fischer during the robbery off the famed Sunset Boulevard, during which two of the dogs were taken. A nearby doorbell camera recorded the dog walker screaming "Oh, my God! I've been shot!" and "Help me!" and "I'm bleeding out from my chest!"

Fischer later called the violence a "very close call with death" in social media posts. In his statement Monday, he said he is still healing physically and mentally from the shooting. Part of his lung had to be removed and he is still undergoing physical therapy.

Fischer also addressed Jackson directly in the statement, and said he forgives him and the others involved in the attack. "You completely altered my life, and I know I can't fully move forward from the night you shot me until I said those words to you."

The stolen dogs were returned several days later by Jennifer McBride, who was also charged in the crime. The pop star had offered a \$500,000 reward — "no questions asked" — to be reunited with the dogs

at the time.

Jackson also admitted the allegation of inflicting great bodily injury and to a prior strike, the DA's office said Monday. The prosecutor's office did not immediately say what the prior strike was.

"The plea agreement holds Mr. Jackson accountable for perpetrating a coldhearted violent act and provides justice for our victim," the office said in a statement. Howard had been charged with attempted murder, conspiracy to commit a robbery and assault with a semiautomatic firearm.

Jackson was mistakenly released from jail earlier this year due to a clerical error. He was recaptured nearly five months later.

Another accomplice, Harold White, pleaded no contest Monday to a count of ex-convict in possession of a gun. White, who was in a relationship with McBride at the time, will be sentenced next year. McBride's case is ongoing.

The couple had allegedly tried to help White's son, Jaylin White, avoid arrest in the aftermath of the shooting.

Jaylin White and Lafayette Whaley earlier this year pleaded no contest to robbery.

Whaley drove Jackson and the younger White around last year as they searched for the pricy dogs. Jackson and White jumped out and attacked Fischer, prosecutors said previously. They hit and choked the dog walker, and Jackson pulled out a semiautomatic gun and fired, striking Fischer once before the trio fled.

Lady Gaga's representatives did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

North Carolina blackouts caused by shootings could last days

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM Associated Press/Report for America

CARTHAGE, N.C. (AP) — Tens of thousands of people braced Monday for days without electricity in a North Carolina county where authorities say two power substations were shot up by one or more people with apparent criminal intent.

Across Moore County, many businesses and restaurants displayed "Closed" signs in windows and had empty parking lots at a time of year when they are normally full of tourists and holiday shoppers. Others handed out free food or coffee, or were able to open by conducting transactions in cash.

The county, located about 60 miles (95 kilometers) southwest of the state capital of Raleigh, announced schools would be closed Tuesday for a second day.

Duke Energy has restored power to roughly 9,000 customers after a peak of about 45,000 customers were without electricity in the county of about 100,000 inhabitants. Jeff Brooks, a Duke spokesman, said recovery will be gradual, noting "a pretty sophisticated repair with some fairly large equipment" will continue into Thursday.

Gov. Roy Cooper said state and federal investigators "are leaving no stone unturned in this investigation to find those who are responsible.

"Protecting critical infrastructure like our power system must be a top priority," Cooper said at a news conference. "This kind of attack raises a new level of threat. We will be evaluating ways to work with our utility providers and our state and federal officials to make sure that we harden our infrastructure where necessary."

Moore County Sheriff Ronnie Fields declined to elaborate Monday about the shootings other than to say the damage was done by gunfire. But whoever was responsible, he said, "knew exactly what they were doing to ... cause the outage that they did."

Meanwhile, traffic lights were out countywide. Drivers treated intersections as four-way stops, snarling traffic in places such as downtown Carthage amid a consistent hum of honks at each nonfunctional light.

Noah Hartford, an 18-year-old civil engineering student at Sandhills Community College, said his family has been struggling to stay warm since losing power at their home in Aberdeen. Temperatures dropped below freezing early Monday, and lows in the 40s were expected during the week.

"It's real cold," Hartford said as he warmed beside a fire pit in nearby Southern Pines. "It's just me, my mom and my brother. We have a fire and stuff outside and a fireplace, but we're really hoping we get the

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 53 of 75

heat back soon.”

Kalai and Christine Balutski of Pinebluff sat under a heater Monday morning drinking warm beverages at the Red’s Corner food truck lot in Southern Pines. The couple has been without power since 7 p.m. Saturday. They said they have been driving to restaurants the next county over to eat warm meals and watch football while awaiting updates.

“We got two dogs at home, so we can’t just up and leave,” Kalai Balutski said. “We’re working off of a power brick to keep our phones charged and candles in one room to keep it warm enough to sleep.”

Bundled in a beanie, boots and a Pittsburgh Steelers jacket, Christine Balutski said she has been struggling to get work done for her remote IT job for the hospital system without home WiFi access.

About 20 people spent the night at an emergency shelter at the county sports complex in Carthage, said Phil Harris, executive director of the local American Red Cross chapter. Harris said plenty more have stopped by for food, warmth or to charge their devices.

“If you’ve got no power, you probably don’t have any heat, so with winter weather coming in, it’s a nice place to stay,” Harris said.

The Pinehurst Resort & Country Club also was affected. With limited power generation capability at The Carolina Hotel, the resort consolidated all guests into rooms with available power. Golf courses remained open but the main clubhouse was closed.

Golf is played year-round in the Sandhills region and the Pinehurst resort is the No. 3 employer in Moore County -- behind the local hospital and school systems, according to government employment data. Moore County generated a record in visitor spending in 2021, leading to an economic impact of \$673 million from the tourism industry, the county’s economic development office said.

Moore County has dozens of golf courses, anchored by nine at the Pinehurst Resort. Pinehurst’s famed No. 2 course has hosted three men’s U.S. Opens. The World Golf Hall of Fame is also moving soon from Florida to Pinehurst.

Andrew Wilkins, a conservation advocate who grew up in Moore County, was driving Saturday night from Washington to his parents’ small farm in Whispering Pines when he noticed the street lights were out in Carthage. He arrived to a “pitch black street.”

Wilkins spent the weekend helping his parents prepare for cold nights without heat, and linked a generator to their well to pump fresh drinking water.

Said Wilkins, “People are going to really feel the pinch from this as it goes on.”

Boxing powerhouse Cuba lets women boxers compete

By MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Legnis Cala Massó carefully removes her necklace and smiles as her coach slides her bright red boxing gloves over her French tip nails.

The 31-year-old swings her wiry body into the ring and pounds her fellow boxer – also a young woman – with a series of punches, just as she’s done countless times before.

Today is a day she’s been waiting for since she started to box seven years ago.

Cuban officials announced Monday that women boxers would be able to compete officially after decades of restrictions, though they didn’t yet confirm if that would be taken to a professional level like it was with Cuban male boxers earlier this year.

Still, it sparked excitement in women like Cala Massó who have spent years fighting to be recognized.

“Saying that boxing is not for Cuban women – that’s always been the problem,” she said, leaning on the side of a blue boxing ring in downtown Havana. “Where we are now, we never thought we would get here.”

Cuba is known worldwide for boxing, home to many legendary male boxers – among them Félix Savón, Teófilo Stevenson and Julio César La Cruz – and owner of a dozens of Olympic medals in the sport.

But the island has also sparked controversy by not allowing women to compete, despite permitting them to do so in other contact sports like taekwondo and wrestling.

Perhaps most notably in 2009, the former head coach of Cuba’s men’s team Pedro Roque told a group

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 54 of 75

of journalists that "Cuban women are there to show their beautiful faces, not to take punches."

It was a sentiment Cala Massó and other women who have embraced the sport have rejected as they've sought to change the rules.

Cala Massó began boxing in Havana with just one other women, spending long hours training despite being turned away by many coaches and boxing rings. With time, interest in boxing among women has only grown.

On Monday morning, officials with Cuba's National Institute for Sports, INDER, announced in a press conference that they would hold a competition of 42 women boxers in mid-December to choose 12 athletes for a women's team.

The team, they said, will compete in the Central American and Caribbean Games in El Salvador, their first international debut. The competition will be a first step toward the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. Women were first allowed to box in the Olympics in 2012.

Cala Massó, who now trains with five other women, hopes the decision means their community will only grow.

The announcement comes shortly after Cuban boxers made a comeback in May in Mexico, with male boxers competing professionally – and getting paid – for the first time since the communist government prohibited professional sports 60 years ago. It was a big change in a country where athletes, namely boxers and baseball players, regularly leave for paychecks elsewhere.

Down the line, once the team is built, those women could also potentially compete in a professional capacity, INDER officials said.

Meanwhile, they said Cuban women boxers will be able to train in state sports centers starting in January.

Emilia Rebecca Hernández, of INDER, said that the changes would make it so "Cuban women athletes can move up to the place where they belong – right next to men."

Yet Hernández, who spoke only briefly, was the only woman on a panel of male officials who said their delay in allowing women to practice the sport was because they had to investigate "the risks that women could run."

Women will wear additional padding, they said.

Yet for 22-year-old Giselle Bello García, who boxed alongside Cala Massó after having only started boxing one year earlier for exercise, said the news offers them a chance to show what they're made of.

"I have a new hope for life, because my life has changed. From now on, I'm going to focus solely on boxing," she said. "I want my whole life, up until my death, to be connected to boxing."

"I have to be the best," she added.

Russia claims Kyiv hit its air bases, fires more missiles

By JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian drones struck two air bases deep inside Russian territory, the Kremlin said Monday, shortly before Russian forces unleashed a massive missile barrage in Ukraine that struck homes and buildings and killed civilians.

The unprecedented attack in Russia threatened a major escalation of the nine-month war because it hit an airfield housing bombers capable of carrying nuclear weapons. President Vladimir Putin has threatened to use all available means to defend his land, a remark many have interpreted to include nuclear weapons.

Russia has been launching almost weekly bombardments of Ukraine in retaliation for another bold attack — the Oct. 8 truck bombing of a vital bridge linking its mainland to the Crimean Peninsula.

On Monday, Putin tried to show his country could bounce back from that embarrassment by driving a car across the partially repaired bridge. Putin personally opened the 19-kilometer (12-mile) bridge in 2018 as part of an expensive effort to solidify his claim on Crimea, which Russia illegally annexed in 2014.

In Monday's retaliatory barrage, missiles knocked out basic services in several Ukrainian regions in Moscow's strategy to inflict more pain just as winter approaches. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said four people were killed in Monday's barrage.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 55 of 75

Ukraine's air force claimed it shot down more than 60 of the 70 missiles, and Zelenskyy again showed defiance, praising workers who immediately tried to restore power.

"Every downed Russian missile is concrete proof that terror can be defeated," Zelenskyy said in his nightly address.

Ukraine said early indications showed Russia fired 38 cruise missiles from carriers in the Caspian Sea and from the southern Rostov region. In addition, 22 Kalibr cruise missiles were fired from Russia's Black Sea fleet, and long-range bombers, fighter jets and guided missiles were also involved, it said.

Electricity provider Ukrenergo said its facilities had been hit, triggering some blackouts, although the prime minister said later that power facilities were damaged in only three areas, not as widespread as in previous attacks.

In the capital of Kyiv, scores of people quickly filled the central Zoloti Vorota metro station after air raid warnings. There were no immediate signs the city or surrounding region had been hit.

Ukrainian media reported explosions south of Kyiv, in Cherkasy, Krivyi Rih and Odesa. Officials said water, electricity and central heating were cut to many parts of Odesa.

"The enemy is again attacking the territory of Ukraine with missiles!" Kyrylo Tymoshenko, the deputy head of the Ukrainian president's office, wrote on Telegram.

In neighboring Moldova, the Interior Ministry said on its Facebook page that border patrol officers had found a rocket in an orchard near the northern city of Briceni, near the border with Ukraine. A bomb squad went to the scene, but it was not immediately clear when the rocket fell or who fired it.

In detailing the attacks on the air bases, the Russian Defense Ministry said it had shot down two Ukrainian drones. It said three Russian servicemen were killed and four others wounded by debris, and that two aircraft were slightly damaged.

The attacks on the Engels base in the Saratov region on the Volga River and the Dyagilevo base in the Ryazan region in western Russia were part of Ukraine's efforts to curtail Russia's long-range bomber force, the ministry said.

The Engels base, located more than 600 kilometers (more than 370 miles) east of the border with Ukraine, houses the Tu-95 and Tu-160 nuclear-capable strategic bombers that have been involved in launching strikes on Ukraine. The Dyagilevo air base, which houses tanker aircraft used to refuel other planes in flight, is about 500 kilometers (over 300 miles) northeast of the Ukrainian border.

The attacks showed the vulnerability of some of Russia's most strategic military sites, raising questions about the effectiveness of their air defenses if drones could come so close to them.

The ministry didn't say where the drones had originated, but Russian military bloggers said they likely were launched by Ukrainian scouts.

Russian news agencies earlier had reported explosions at both sites, giving slightly different details than the Defense Ministry on casualties.

Ukraine's armed forces published a photo purporting to show blood on snow under a military vehicle at one of the air bases. The authenticity of the photo could not be verified.

Zelenskyy's adviser, Mykhailo Podolyak, trolled the Russians over the drone attack on Engels, stopping short of claiming responsibility.

"If something is launched into other countries' airspace, sooner or later unknown flying objects will return to departure point," Podolyak tweeted.

In other developments, Zelenskyy's office said three rockets hit his hometown of Krivyi Rih in south-central Ukraine, killing a factory worker and injuring three other people. In the northeastern region of Kharkiv, a person was killed in strikes by S-300 missiles on civilian infrastructure in the town of Kupiansk, it said.

The war that began with Russia's invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24 has displaced millions from their homes, killed and injured tens of thousands of people and shaken the world economy — driving up the price and curtailing the availability of food, fertilizer and fuel that are key exports from Ukraine and Russia.

Western countries on Monday imposed a \$60-per-barrel price cap and a ban on some types of Russian oil, part of new measures aimed at stepping up pressure on Moscow over the war.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 56 of 75

The Kremlin rejected the move, and Zelenskyy has criticized it as insufficient.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak, in charge of energy, warned Sunday that Russia won't sell its oil to countries that try to apply the price cap.

"We will only sell oil and oil products to the countries that will work with us on market terms, even if we have to reduce output to some extent," Novak said.

In another step that took effect Monday, the 27-country European bloc imposed an embargo on Russian oil shipped by sea.

Russia, the world's No. 2 oil producer, relies on oil and gas to underpin its economy, already under sweeping international sanctions.

Sale jumpstarts floating, offshore wind power in US waters

By GILLIAN FLACCUS Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Tuesday marks the first-ever U.S. auction of leases to develop commercial-scale floating wind farms, in the deep waters off the West Coast.

The live, online auction for the five leases — three off California's central coast and two off its northern coast — has attracted strong interest and 43 companies from around the world are approved to bid. The wind turbines will float roughly 25 miles offshore.

The growth of offshore wind comes as climate change intensifies and need for clean energy grows. It also is getting cheaper. The cost of developing offshore wind has dropped 60% since 2010 according to a July report by the International Renewable Energy Agency. It declined 13% in 2021 alone.

Offshore wind is well established in the U.K. and some other countries but is just beginning to ramp up off America's coasts, and this is the nation's first foray into floating wind turbines. Auctions so far have been for those anchored to the seafloor.

Europe has some floating offshore wind — a project in the North Sea has been operating since 2017 — but the potential for the technology is huge in areas of strong wind off America's coasts, said Josh Kaplowitz, vice president of offshore wind at the American Clean Power Association.

"We know that this works. We know that this can provide a huge slice of our our electricity needs, and if we're going to solve the climate crisis we need to put as many clean electrons online as we can, particularly given increases in load demand with electric vehicles," he said. "We can reach our greenhouse gas goals only with offshore wind as part of the puzzle."

Similar auctions are in the works off Oregon's coast next year and in the Gulf of Maine in 2024. President Joe Biden set a goal of deploying 30 gigawatts of offshore wind by 2030 using traditional technology that secures wind turbines to the ocean floor, enough to power 10 million homes. Then the administration announced plans in September to develop floating platforms that could vastly expand offshore wind in the United States.

The nation's first offshore wind farm opened off the coast of Rhode Island in late 2016, allowing residents of small Block Island to shut off five diesel generators. Wind advocates took notice, but with five turbines, it's not commercial scale.

Globally, as of 2021, there were only 123 megawatts of floating offshore wind operating, but that number is projected to increase to nearly 19 gigawatts — 150 times more — by 2030, according to a report last week by Offshore Wind California.

The California sale is designed to promote a domestic supply chain and create union jobs. Bidders can convert part of their bids into credits that benefit those affected by the wind development — local communities, tribes and commercial fishermen.

As envisioned, the turbines — possibly nearly as tall as the Eiffel Tower — will float on giant triangular platforms roughly the size of a small city block or buoyant cylinders with cables anchoring them underwater. They'll each have three blades longer than the distance from home plate to the outfield on a baseball diamond, and will need to be assembled onshore and towed, upright, to their open-ocean destination.

Modern tall turbines, whether on or offshore, can produce more than 20 times more electricity than

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 57 of 75

shorter machines, say, from the early 1990s.

As for visibility, "in absolutely perfect conditions, crystal clear on the best days, at the highest point, you might be able to see small dots on the horizon," said Larry Oetker, executive director of the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Conservation and Recreation District, which has been preparing its deep-water port for the projects.

Offshore wind is a good complement to solar energy, which shuts down at night. Winds far out to sea are stronger and more sustained and also pick up in the evening, just when solar is going offline yet demand is high, said Jim Berger, a partner at the law firm Norton Rose Fulbright who specializes in financing renewable energy projects.

California has a 2045 goal of carbon neutrality. But "when the sun goes down we're relying more on fossil fuel generation," Berger said. "These projects are huge so when you add a project or a couple projects, you're adding significantly to the power generation base in the state," he said.

The lease areas have the potential to generate 4.5 gigawatts of energy -- enough for 1.5 million homes — and could bring big changes to communities in the rural coastal regions nearest the leases.

In remote Humboldt County, in northern California, the offshore projects are expected to generate more than 4,000 thousand jobs and \$38 million in state and local tax revenue in an area that's been economically depressed ever since the decline of the timber industry in the 1970s and 1980s, according to the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Conservation and Recreation District.

The district already received \$12 million from California to prepare its deep-water port for the potential assembly of the massive turbines, which are too tall to fit under most bridges as they are towed out to sea, said Oetker, the district's executive director.

"We have hundreds of acres of vacant, underutilized industrial property right on the existing navigation channel ... and there's no overhead bridges or power lines or anything," he said.

But some are also wary of the projects, despite favoring a transition to clean energy.

Environmentalists are concerned about the impacts on threatened and endangered whales, which could become entangled in the cables that will anchor the turbines. There are also concerns about birds and bats colliding with the turbine blades and whales getting struck by vessels towing components to the site. Federal regulators have set a boating speed limit for the project of less than 12 mph to address that concern, said Kristen Hislop, senior director of the marine program at the Environmental Defense Center.

"Floating offshore wind is brand new and there's only a couple projects in the world and we don't know how that's going to impact our coast," she said.

Tribes in the vast coastal regions also worry about damage to their ancestral lands from turbine assembly plants and transmission infrastructure. They fear that the farms will be visible on clear days from sacred prayer spots high in the mountains.

Frankie Myers, vice chairman of the Yurok Tribe, has attended four wind developer conferences in the past year. Tribes worked with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, which is overseeing the leasing process, to secure a 5% bid credit that includes tribal communities for the first time, he said. The agency also helped with a cultural assessment of the potential impact on views from sacred prayer spots, he said.

The tribes are so engaged now, early on, because they are used to outside industries coming to them with promises that aren't fulfilled. They've seen things done wrong, and knowing this windswept area intimately, they want this to be done right, he said.

"Before they even showed us the map, before they even showed us all of their breakdowns ... we were like, 'We know exactly where it's going,'" Myers said. "There's no question where the best wind comes from, we all understand that. We've been here for a couple of thousand years."

Lost Stephen Sondheim musical reveals insight into a giant

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A copy of what's being called Stephen Sondheim's first original cast recording has been found on a misplaced CD, capturing the legendary composer's budding skills in a student-led musical while at Williams College in 1948.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 58 of 75

Sondheim was an 18-year-old sophomore when he wrote the music for "Phinney's Rainbow," a show that had just four performances sponsored by Williams' theatrical organization Cap and Bells.

Paul Salsini, a journalist and the author of the new memoir "Sondheim & Me: Revealing a Musical Genius," recently found the CD while putting away material he had amassed for his book and realized it contained "Sondheim's first original cast recording."

"I played it and I thought, 'My goodness, this is really rare,'" Salsini, who also founded and edited The Sondheim Review, told The Associated Press from his home in Milwaukee. "It's a find."

The college show had music by Sondheim and a book and lyrics by Sondheim and another student, Josiah T.S. Horton. Sondheim was at the piano and there was no orchestra.

Salsini suspects Sondheim himself recorded one of the shows on an acetate recorder, noting that his mentor Oscar Hammerstein II had urged him to buy such a device. "I'm 90% sure that Sondheim put this tape recorder next to his piano."

The show's title has two playful references — one to "Finian's Rainbow," which had recently opened on Broadway, and the other to James Phinney Baxter III, president of Williams.

The show was a satire centered on a school named Swindlehurst Prep, whose students are divided into three types — athletes, wolves and intellectuals. When the president is away, the students go wild. Salsini calls the humor "collegiate." In one quip, someone says: "The students are revolting." The reply: "The faculty isn't so good either."

Sondheim wrote 25 musical numbers for "Phinney's Rainbow," including a dream ballet. The show had a cast of 52 students — all men, since Williams didn't admit women until 1971. The budget was \$1,035.

Salsini's CD consists of 19 tracks, for a total running time of 1 hour and 20 minutes. Somehow, the disc had gotten misplaced and he couldn't include it in his book, to his regret. He's not sure how he got it in the first place. Salsini believes other copies might be out there, although none have been found at the Library of Congress or Williams, in Massachusetts.

The sound quality is pretty poor — with laughing and clapping sometimes overwhelming the lyrics — but the find is thrilling, nonetheless. Many of the songs hint at the musical theater giant to become, like the first act's "How Do I Know?" with clever wordplay: "And I asked you when/ And you said I would know!/ But how will I know/When I know that you said 'no'?/I just don't know!"

Salsini points to that song as an early example of a theme that Sondheim would return to often. "That is a precursor for so many of Sondheim's songs in which he expresses a longing, a longing for love, a longing for affection, that runs through many of his songs in the course of his career."

Sondheim, who died in 2021, became a giant in musical theater, influencing several generations of songwriters, particularly with such landmark musicals as "Company," "Follies" and "Sweeney Todd."

Six of Sondheim's musicals won Tony Awards for best score, and he also received a Pulitzer Prize ("Sunday in the Park"), an Academy Award (for the song "Sooner or Later" from the film "Dick Tracy"), five Olivier Awards and the Presidential Medal of Honor. In 2008, he received a Tony Award for lifetime achievement.

"Phinney's Rainbow" gave Sondheim an early professional boost. Cap and Bells signed an agreement with Broadcast Music, Inc. for the rights to publish three songs from the score: "Phinney's Rainbow," "How Do I Know?" and "Still Got My Heart."

Salsini, who earned a journalism degree and a master's from Marquette University and returned there to teach, plans to donate all his Sondheim material to the school's research collection, including the CD. It's open to the public, meaning anyone can hear the music. "This belongs there," he said.

But Salsini knows Sondheim well enough to suspect how he would react. "He does not like his juvenilia recovered and made public so I don't think he would like this out there," he said. "But that's not my concern. I'm a journalist and this is news."

EXPLAINER: US power grid has long faced terror threat

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN, JONATHAN DREW and REBECCA SANTANA Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Investigators believe a shooting that damaged power substations in North Carolina

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 59 of 75

was a crime. What they haven't named yet is a suspect or a motive.

Whatever the reason, the shooting serves as a reminder of why experts have stressed the need to secure the U.S. power grid. Authorities have warned that the nation's electricity infrastructure could be vulnerable targets for domestic terrorists.

Tens of thousands of people lost their electricity over the weekend after one or more people opened fire on two Duke Energy substations in Moore County, which is roughly 60 miles southwest of Raleigh. Nobody has been charged in the shooting as of Monday.

Here's a look at what is known about the shooting and why it could have implications across the U.S.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE SHOOTING?

The outages in North Carolina began shortly after 7 p.m. on Saturday when one or more people opened fire on two power substations in Moore County, the county's sheriff said. The outages left tens of thousands of people without electricity, and the equipment could take days to repair, according to Duke Energy.

Moore County Sheriff Ronnie Fields said at a Sunday news conference that authorities have not determined a motive. He said someone pulled up and "opened fire on the substation, the same thing with the other one." The sheriff said that it appeared gates were breached at both sites. The Pilot newspaper in Southern Pines, North Carolina reported that a wooden post holding up a gate had been snapped at one of the substations and that it was lying in an access road Sunday morning.

The sheriff noted that the FBI was working with state investigators to determine who was responsible. He also said "it was targeted."

"It wasn't random," Fields said.

Duke Energy spokesman Jeff Brooks said that the company has multiple layers of security at each of its facilities but declined to provide specifics. He said that the company has planning in place to recover from events like the shooting and that they are following those plans.

Department of Homeland Security spokesperson Ruth Clemens said the department's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency has offered support to Duke Energy as it efforts the restoration of power.

TARGETS FOR EXTREMIST GROUPS

Federal authorities have warned that the power grid could be a prime target for extremist groups that embrace "accelerationism," a fringe philosophy that promotes mass violence to fuel society's collapse.

In January, a U.S. Department of Homeland Security report warned that domestic extremists have been developing "credible, specific plans" to attack electricity infrastructure since at least 2020. The DHS report warns that extremists "adhering to a range of ideologies will likely continue to plot and encourage physical attacks against electrical infrastructure."

The department wrote that attackers would be unlikely to produce widespread, multistate outages without inside help. But its report cautioned that an attack could still do damage and cause injuries.

Members of white supremacist and antigovernment groups have been linked to plots to attack the power grid. In February, three men pleaded guilty to conspiring to attack U.S. energy facilities. Authorities said they were driven by white supremacist ideologies to "sow mayhem and division among Americans."

OTHER ATTACKS

Fears of an attack on the nation's electricity infrastructure are nothing new. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ordered grid operators to increase security following a still-unsolved April 2013 sniper attack on a California electric substation.

The attack on the Pacific Gas & Electric Company's Metcalf Transmission Substation in an isolated area near San Jose, California, caused power outages and led to calls for millions of people to conserve energy.

The attack involved snipping fiber-optic phone lines and firing shots into the PG&E substation. The FBI said at the time that it found no evidence that it was an act of terrorism.

Former U.S. Sen. Mary Landrieu, who chaired the Senate Energy Committee in 2014, said at the time that it was fortunate the attack didn't cause a blackout in Silicon Valley, "the horrors of which could only be imagined."

In the wake of that attack, FERC and other agencies recommended utilities to take specific measures to protect vulnerable substations, like adding walls, sensors or cameras. Still, many remain exposed in rural

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 60 of 75

areas of the U.S. And experts have warned for years that taking out a few substations could cause rolling blackouts in the U.S., leaving millions without power.

A Utah man was arrested in 2016 and later sentenced to federal prison time after he used a rifle to shoot the cooling fins of a substation, rupturing the radiator piping and causing the substation to overheat and fail. Court documents said the man had planned to attack other substations as part of an effort to take down power in a large chunk of the western United States.

WHAT'S THE CHALLENGE IN PROTECTING THE GRID?

The vastness of American electricity infrastructure makes it difficult to defend. Power plants and substations like those targeted in North Carolina are dispersed in every corner of the country and connected by transmission lines that transport electricity through farmland, forests and swamps.

"The grid is massive," said Erroll Southers, a former FBI official and professor of homeland security at the University of Southern California.

The targets also present an increasing challenge to secure because attackers don't always have to get as close as they did in North Carolina in order to do damage, Southers said. With the right rifle, skill and line of sight a sniper could take a shot from as far as 1,500 meters (about 4,900 feet) away.

Protecting substations against a long range rifle shot is "extremely challenging, if not impossible," he said.

Southers said all of these challenges mean that protecting the electricity infrastructure can come down to response and backup systems more than defense. "Those are the kinds of things that you put in place to protect, knowing that you may not be able to stop the rifle shot."

New this week: Will Smith, 'Pinocchio' and 'George & Tammy'

By The Associated Press undefined

Here's a collection curated by The Associated Press' entertainment journalists of what's arriving on TV, streaming services and music and video game platforms this week.

MOVIES

— Will Smith's comeback campaign is in full swing thanks to the new Antoine Fuqua movie "Emancipation," which begins streaming on Apple TV+ on Friday. The film follows the escape of an enslaved man, Peter (Smith), from a Louisiana plantation during the Civil War. In his review, AP Film Writer Jake Coyle writes that the film is "something distinct from many recent big-screen treatments of slavery and also more shallow. Fuqua's film is often harrowing and gripping but also less nuanced and too narrowly confined in genre conventions than its real-life protagonist deserves."

— "Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio" is a dream almost 15 years in the making for the Oscar-winning filmmaker, who first announced his plans to make an adaptation of Carlo Collodi's story in 2008. After many years of false starts, Netflix helped del Toro realize his vision, with beautifully intricate stop-motion puppets and voice actors like David Bradley (Geppetto) and Ewan McGregor (Sebastian J. Cricket). He's set the story in Italy between the two world wars during the rise of fascism. The "Pan's Labyrinth" filmmaker told Vanity Fair that though the film is challenging, he hopes it will appeal to all generations. "These are times that demand from kids a complexity that is tremendous," he said. Co-directed by Mark Gustafson, "Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio" hits Netflix on Friday.

— Or for a holiday-themed romantic comedy (with some earnestly blatant brand tie-ins), head over to Amazon Prime for "Something from Tiffany's," in which a jewelry mix-up sends two relationships into a spiral. Kendrick Sampson plays a man about to propose to his longtime girlfriend and Zoey Deutch plays a woman in a dead-end relationship who accidentally gets an engagement ring meant for someone else. This mishap is an elaborate set-up that gets Sampson and Deutch to meet. Directed by Daryl Wein and produced by Reese Witherspoon's Hello Sunshine, "Something from Tiffany's" starts streaming Friday.

— AP Film Writer Lindsey Bahr

MUSIC

— Can't get to New York but still want to hear chart-toppers? Join the iHeartRadio Jingle Ball Tour at Madison Square Garden concert on Friday with Dua Lipa, Lizzo, The Kid Laroi, Backstreet Boys, Charlie Puth, AJR, Demi Lovato, Lauv, Ava Max, Dove Cameron and Jax. The concert will be carried live across

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 61 of 75

the country on all iHeartRadio CHRstations and will livestream exclusively via The CW App and CWTV.com. Not happy with just listening? There's also an exclusive IMAX Live presentation in IMAX theatres nationwide for the first time.

— Broadway star Idina Menzel opens up about her career and her life in the documentary "Idina Menzel: Which Way to the Stage?" Menzel has starred in "Rent" and "Wicked" as well as created the legendary voice of Elsa in Disney's "Frozen." Cameras follow Menzel on a national tour over the course of 16 shows as she juggles the challenges of being a working mom with a grueling travel schedule, all while preparing finally to realize her dream of singing at Madison Square Garden in her hometown of New York City. Join her Friday on Disney+.

— AP Entertainment Writer Mark Kennedy

TELEVISION

— In the new TV series "George & Tammy," Jessica Chastain and Michael Shannon play out the passionate but tumultuous relationship between country music stars Tammy Wynette and George Jones. The couple divorced in 1975 after six years together, but they remained a major influence in each other's lives. Chastain and Shannon also sing the artist's legendary songs in the series including Wynette's "Stand By Your Man" and Jones' "He Stopped Loving Her Today." The show premiered Sunday simultaneously on Showtime and the Paramount Network, and the remainder of the series will be available exclusively on Showtime.

— The true crime genre is booming but ID/discovery+ explores a case perhaps you haven't heard of. "The Tetris Murders" is a three-part look at the murder of Vladimir Pokhilko, one of the creators of the video game "Tetris," died along with his family in their California home in 1998. Originally believed to be a murder-suicide, investigators revisit the case and find it's much more complicated than once thought. "The Tetris Murders" debuts Monday on ID and discovery+.

— Spoiler alert: "The Masked Singer" has already unveiled its season eight winner but the hit Fox show has one more episode to air just in time for the holidays. A special singalong edition airs Wednesday on Fox, featuring new performances, bloopers and behind-the-scenes material.

— Season two of the heartwarming "Little America" debuts on Apple TV+ on Friday. Created by Academy Award winner Siân Heder, actor Kumail Nanjiani, and Emmy-nominee Lee Eisenberg ("The Office," "WeCrashed,") the scripted anthology series tells the unique stories of immigrants in the United States who are trying to achieve their dream. New episodes include stories of a Somali chef preparing for the Minnesota State Fair; a Korean medical student whose passion is hat design and a Japanese woman in Ohio trying to form a women's baseball team.

— Alicia Rancilio

VIDEO GAMES

— "Dragon Quest Treasures" is the latest spinoff of Square Enix's long-running series of role-playing epics. It's an origin story of sorts for two of the characters from 2018's "Dragon Quest XI," Erik and Mia. We meet them as children living on a Viking ship before they're magically transported to the land of Draconia. Familiar monsters, from slimes to sabercats, abound, but now the kids can recruit the beasts to help them hunt for loot. And they can spend their fortune building an elaborate castle while they search for seven elusive Dragonstones. It's a more lighthearted take on the "DQ" franchise, and it comes to the Nintendo Switch on Friday.

— Lou Kesten

Croatia going deep again at World Cup after shootout win

By STEVE DOUGLAS AP Sports Writer

AL WAKRAH, Qatar (AP) — Croatia is going deep at another World Cup, and the team is taking the long route once again.

Goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic saved three penalty kicks in Croatia's 3-1 win over Japan in a shootout on Monday, securing a return to the quarterfinals for the runner-up in the 2018 tournament. The match

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 62 of 75

was tied at 1-1 after extra time.

On its surprising run to the final in Russia four years ago, Croatia needed extra time in each round in the knockout stage — and twice came through a penalty shootout.

"History keeps repeating itself," Croatia coach Zlatko Dalic said with a smile.

Livakovic was the backup goalkeeper to Danijel Subasic in 2018 but took center stage this time, diving to his left to keep out Japan's first penalty by Takumi Minamino, to his right to block Kaoru Mitoma's effort from the second penalty, and then again to his right to deny Maya Yoshida off the fourth.

That gave Mario Pasalic the chance to put away the clinching penalty. The substitute joined the rest of Croatia's jubilant players in heading right for Livakovic after hitting the back of the net.

"In Croatia, we do things this way," Livakovic said. "I continued the tradition."

The similarities with 2018 do not stop there. Just like in every game in the knockout stage that year, Croatia fell behind to Japan when Daizen Maeda swept in a close-range finish in the 43rd.

Ivan Perisic equalized by meeting Dejan Lovren's cross from the right with a header into the bottom corner from near the penalty spot in the 57th.

Dalic said his team's ability to recover from losing positions "reflects the Croatian people," with a nod to a psyche the players forged growing up in a country ravaged by war as the former Yugoslavia broke up in the 1990s.

"We never give up ... We have been through so much pain and the players have great pride," Dalic said. "The whole of Croatia is supporting us and this is a way of giving them faith for a better tomorrow."

While Croatia — also a semifinalist in 1998 — prepares to take on Brazil in the quarterfinals, Japan exits a World Cup in the round of 16 for the fourth time, just like in 2002, 2010 and 2018. The Asian team also lost in a penalty shootout to Paraguay at that stage in 2010.

Asia is still waiting for a second team to advance beyond the last 16, after South Korea on home soil in 2002.

Japan made its mark in Qatar, though, beating Germany and Spain — two of the last three World Cup champions — in huge upsets in the group stage.

"The players showed a new era of Japanese football, I think," Japan coach Hajime Moriyasu said. "They should use this feeling of being upset and try to go further next time.

"We cannot be superheroes in one go. We have to improve step by step. But Japan is reaching a level where we can play on the world stage."

The result guarantees at least one more World Cup game for 37-year-old Croatia captain Luka Modric, one of the best midfielders of his generation. The 2018 world player of the year had a quiet game, save for one pass with the outside of his right foot that sent Perisic away for a shot on goal in the first half.

Modric was substituted in the first half of extra time and wasn't part of the shootout.

COACH'S CONFIDENCE

Dalic never doubted Livakovic in the shootout. "Yesterday during training, we practiced penalty kicks and he really saved many shots," Dalic said. "So when we started the shootout, I was very confident. He proved to be like Subasic in Russia." Three of Croatia's four penalty-takers were substitutes.

CROATIA'S ENDURANCE

Since 1998, all of Croatia's knockout matches at a World Cup or European Championship have gone to extra time except for the 2018 World Cup final loss to France.

RECORD SCORER

With his goal, Perišić became the first Croatia player to score 10 goals at major tournaments.

Warnock, Walker: Starkly different choices for Black voters

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Raphael Warnock is the first Black U.S. senator from Georgia, having broken the color barrier for one of the original 13 states with a special election victory in January 2021, almost 245 years after the nation's founding.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 63 of 75

Now he hopes to add another distinction by winning a full six-year term in a Tuesday runoff. Standing in the way is another Black man, Republican challenger Herschel Walker.

Both men have common upbringings in the Deep South in the wake of the civil rights movement and would make history as the first Black person elected from Georgia to a full Senate term. Yet Warnock and Walker have cut different paths and offer clearly opposing visions for the country, including on race and racism.

Black voters say the choice is stark: Warnock, the senior minister of Martin Luther King's Atlanta church, echoes traditional liberal notions of the Black experience; and Walker, a University of Georgia football icon, speaks the language of white cultural conservatism and mocks Warnock's interpretations of King, among other matters.

"Republicans seem to have thought they could put up Herschel Walker and confuse Black folks," said Bryce Berry, president of Georgia's Young Democrats chapter and a senior at Morehouse College, a historically Black campus where both King and Warnock graduated.

Standing beneath a campus statue of King, Berry continued: "We are not confused."

Other Black voters raised questions about Walker's past — his false claims about his business and professional accomplishments, instances of violence against his ex-wife — and the way he stumbles over some public policy discussions as a candidate. Some said they believe GOP leaders are taking advantage of Walker's fame as a beloved Heisman Trophy winner and national champion running back for the Georgia Bulldogs.

"How can you let yourself be used that way as a Black person?" asked Angela Heard, a state employee from Jonesboro. "I think you should be better in touch with your people instead of being a crony for someone."

Even some Black conservatives who back Walker lament his candidacy as a missed opportunity to expand Republicans' reach to a key part of the electorate that remains overwhelmingly Democratic.

"I don't think Herschel Walker has enough relatable life experience to the average Black American for them to identify with him," said Avion Abreu, a 34-year-old realtor who lives in Marietta and has supported Walker since the GOP primary campaign.

Warnock led Walker by about 37,000 votes out of almost 4 million cast in the November general election. AP VoteCast, a survey of more than 3,200 voters in the state, showed that Warnock won 90% of Black voters. Walker, meanwhile, won 68% of white voters.

VoteCast data in the 2021 runoff suggested that Black voters helped fuel Warnock's victory over then-Sen. Kelly Loeffler, comprising almost a third of that electorate, slightly more than the Black share of the 2020 general electorate.

The senator's campaign has said since then that he'd have to assemble a multiracial coalition, including many moderate white voters, to win reelection in a midterm election year. But they've not disputed that a strong Black turnout would be necessary regardless.

The Republican National Committee has answered with its own uptick in Black voter outreach, opening community centers in several heavily Black areas of the state. But the general election results raise questions about the effectiveness, at least for Walker.

Abreu said she believes Walker still can win the runoff but has to do it with the usual, overwhelmingly white GOP coalition moved by party loyalty and the 60-year-old candidate's emphasis on cultural issues. His campaign, she said, "hasn't told the full story of Herschel's life and related that to people, with an explanation of how he is going to help them."

Indeed, Walker and Warnock share their stories as Black men quite differently.

Warnock doesn't often use phrases like "the Black church" or "the Black experience," but infuses those institutions and ideas into his arguments.

The senator sometimes notes that others "like to introduce me and say I'm the first Black senator from Georgia." He says Georgia voters "did an amazing thing" in 2021 but adds that it's more about the policy results from a Democratic Senate. Born in 1969, he calls himself a "son of the civil rights movement." He talks of King's desire for "a beloved community," an inclusive society Warnock says is anchored in the

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 64 of 75

belief that “we all carry a spark of the divine.”

He touts his Senate work to combat maternal mortality, noting the issue is acute among Black women. He campaigns with Black fraternity and sorority alumni. And he tells of his octogenarian mother using her “hands that once picked somebody else’s cotton” to “cast a ballot for her youngest son to be a United States senator.”

“Only in America is my story possible,” he concludes.

Walker, alternately, is often more direct in identifying himself by race, usually with humor.

“You may have noticed I’m Black,” he tells audiences that are often nearly all-white. But that jovial aside is the precursor to his indictment of a society — and a political rival — he says are consumed by discussions of race and racism.

“My opponent say America ought to apologize for its whiteness,” Walker says in most campaign speeches, a claim based on some of Warnock’s sermons referencing institutional racism.

Walker invokes King — “a great man” — with a line from his 1963 “I Have a Dream Speech” and accuses Warnock and “trying to divide us” by race. “He’s in a church where a man talked about the content of your character, not the color of your skin,” Walker told supporters in Canton on Nov. 10, his first rally of the runoff campaign. In Forsyth County last week, he blasted schools he insisted teach “Critical Race Theory.”

“Don’t let anyone tell you you’re racist,” he said in August at a “Women for Herschel” event, which included Alveda King, the conservative evangelical niece of the slain civil rights leader.

He blasts Warnock as anti-law enforcement but without any context about police killings of Black citizens. “What I want to do is get behind our men and women in blue,” Walker said in Forsyth.

Walker touts his “minority-owned food services company.” Talking to reporters at one fall campaign stop, he recalled being a freshman at the University of Georgia just a decade after the football program integrated with its first Black scholarship players. But when telling voters of his athletics and professional successes, he doesn’t allude to race, instead talking in terms of faith.

“The Lord blessed me,” he says of each milestone.

It’s a contrast to Warnock’s framing of growing up in public housing in Savannah, choosing Morehouse because of King, and receiving a Pell Grant for tuition assistance. “I’m talking about good public policy,” the senator says.

Doyal Siddell, a 66-year-old Black retiree from Douglasville, said Walker’s pitch is disconnected from many Black voters. “Just because you’re from the community doesn’t mean you understand the community,” he said.

It’s a contrast not entirely explained by partisan identity of philosophy.

Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina, the Senate’s lone Black Republican, talks openly of his his family’s struggles through Jim Crow segregation, including his grandfather, who never learned to read or write, and he highlights his status as the only Black American in history elected to both the House and Senate.

“Our family went from cotton to Congress in one lifetime,” Scott said as a featured speaker of the 2020 Republican National Convention.

At Morehouse, Berry said Walker could find some Black conservatives and nonpartisans. But he’d have to show up and acknowledge his surroundings.

“You see the senator in the suburbs, in Republican areas,” Berry said. “Herschel Walker has not even been to our campus. He’s not running a campaign that suggests he wants to represent all Georgians.”

Unmarked graves, an ‘ugly history’: W.Va. weighs mine safety

By LEAH WILLINGHAM Associated Press

HAVACO, W.Va. (AP) — Mayapple plants sprout in the sunken soil where the bodies lie, their leaves sheltering the unmarked graves like tiny umbrellas. The forgotten burial ground is overrun by four-wheel tire tracks near a path strewn with discarded bottles and other trash.

More than a century of overgrowth on this West Virginia hillside has erased any trace of the graveyard known locally as Little Egypt, the resting place for dozens of coal miners who died in a 1912 mine explo-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 65 of 75

sion. Most people living in McDowell County — a dwindling community that once was the world's leading coal producer — don't know this place exists.

"There are 80 people here that nobody has said a prayer over in a long, long time," said Ed Evans, a state lawmaker and retired public school teacher as he side-stepped a patch of sunken earth on a rainy summer day.

For Evans the burial ground is a reminder of the sacrifices by workers who inspired safety regulations when the coal industry was rapidly expanding in the early 20th century, the deadliest era for miners in U.S. history. It's more important than ever now, he said, amid a push to undo regulations as the industry declines.

West Virginia's Republican supermajority has introduced multiple bills over the past year that would eliminate worker protections in an attempt to bolster the shrinking coal industry, including a sweeping overhaul of the state agency that inspects coal mines.

The bill, which would strip the state's power to cite coal companies for unsafe working conditions, failed to advance after union representatives and dozens of miners came to the Capitol to testify against it, as well as Democrats like Evans, who recalled Little Egypt in a Feb. 25 speech on the House floor. That same week, a miner was killed while working in a mine in McDowell County.

Evans said he worries about what will happen now that many advocates of mine safety regulations, himself included, were defeated in the Nov. 8 election.

In a state where the coal industry has been severely diminished by both market economics and a shift toward cleaner energy, coal interests still wield considerable power to push back against regulation. With Republicans gaining an even tighter grip on the Legislature, lawmakers are expected to make another run at further deregulating the agency that monitors mine safety.

The scars left by the mining industry are ubiquitous in West Virginia, nowhere more so than in the southern coalfields where abandoned mine tipples tower beside mountains disfigured by long gone coal companies. Less obvious are sites like Little Egypt, a silent monument to what Evans calls West Virginia's "ugly history," where vulnerable workers were exploited for profit and forgotten.

There's a tendency to glorify the coal boom, he said, while the legacy of brutal exploitation of cheap labor in Appalachia is glossed over — forgotten or literally overgrown.

"And what do they get for their sacrifice? All these people have are the bushes that grow around them and the rattle of the coal trucks that drive by from an industry they passed away from," he said.

Amid hollows crowded with houses darkened by coal dust, the unincorporated community of Havaco is nestled near a bridge on the Tug Fork River, across railroad tracks where trains still move tons of coal.

There are no active mines in Havaco now, but families who lived there for generations have passed down the story of Little Egypt. Their ancestors came to work in the mines, living in "coal camps," rows of modest homes built by mining companies.

Buford Brown, a 73-year-old retired coal miner and Vietnam veteran, remembers seeing the graves as a child. Even then they'd started sinking into the earth.

"They didn't care about them people years ago," he said.

The unkempt dirt path to Little Egypt begins at the end of a dead-end road, hidden by sugar maples.

On March 26, 1912, the site was a chaotic scene of hurriedly dug graves as bodies were recovered from the depths of the Jed Coal and Coke Company mine, placed in wooden coffins and carried down the mountain. The underground explosion was set off when a miner's open-flame lamp ignited methane gas — the cause of many mining disasters at the time.

Members of the community gathered around the mine shaft, desperate to know if their loved ones had survived.

"Many held babies, others cuddled fatherless children," read an account in the Washington Times. "Old women, many of whom had tasted the bitterness of West Virginia mining life before, sought vainly to comfort them."

"With the rising of the sun hope fled, and the faltering women settled down with mute stoicism to await

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 66 of 75

the inevitable — the identification of the mangled bodies of the dead.”

Many of the miners killed were European immigrants from countries like Italy and Poland, who came to the U.S. with very little and were employed to work the most dangerous jobs underground. Half of West Virginia coal miners at the time were Black Americans who fled the Jim Crow South or immigrants, many recruited by mining companies as they arrived on Ellis Island. When a miner was killed or disabled, his family was kicked out of company housing and left destitute.

A 1912 report by West Virginia’s Department of Mines praised the growth of the state’s mining industry, even as it said 409 people were killed in mining operations that year.

The Jed mine employed non-union workers. A push to organize the coal fields in the ensuing years led to the 1912-1921 West Virginia mine wars, the area’s first major effort to unionize.

In the decades following, safety regulations gradually increased, often precipitated by disasters. In 1969, the U.S. government passed a law requiring four federal mine safety inspections per year, in addition to four by state inspectors.

The bill proposed by GOP lawmakers this year in the West Virginia Legislature would remove almost all penalties mining companies faced from the state for safety violations. The proposal’s sponsors said the existence of federal inspectors made state inspectors redundant, and that companies would feel freer to bring up concerns about safety violations if they weren’t at risk of being fined.

Under current law, companies can face thousands of dollars in fines and even prison time for failing to implement safety measures. The state can also close down portions of a mine, or even an entire mine.

The proposed bill eliminated the requirement for a minimum number of annual inspector visits and the mandate that mines not be warned ahead of time. It also cut the requirement that a miner representative attend — something the union adamantly opposed because it would take away a vital avenue for miners to voice concerns.

When he took to the House floor to decry the bill, Evans recalled the miners who lost their lives because of lax safety in West Virginia coal mines — and he spoke of the derelict burial ground called Little Egypt.

“We forgot about them,” he said of the men and boys buried in Havaco. “Are we going to forget about today’s miners, too?”

Last year, 10 people died while working in coal mines across the U.S., including six in West Virginia. Four West Virginians have died in mines so far this year. The last major mining disaster — at West Virginia’s Upper Big Branch, in which 29 people died — was in 2010 and resulted in a coal operator being convicted of a misdemeanor for conspiring to willfully violate safety standards. He was sentenced to one year in prison.

Mike Hairston, 75, lives on Jed Bottom Road between the shaft of the old Jed mine and the graveyard. He is the last of four generations of Hairston men to work the mines.

He’s known about Little Egypt since he was a child but has never been there, he said.

He recalled the day 15 years ago when a woman from Florida pulled up. She said she was looking for a place called Little Egypt where she’d been told one of her ancestors was buried. She’d stopped at the county courthouse for information, but couldn’t find anyone who knew anything about it.

Hairston drove her to the dead-end road and showed her the path, but he didn’t venture down it himself.

When Hairston’s generation is gone, he said, this will all be forgotten. “Hardly anyone here knows about it now,” he said.

As Evans gazed at the burial plots, rain cascading over the hood of his jacket, he offered a brief prayer: “Lord, I ask that you bless the souls that left us and departed us in that mine.”

“They didn’t get the recognition they deserved at the time,” he said. “What they got were these laws that were put in place to prevent disasters like this from happening again.”

“The mine safety laws are written in blood. They’re all written in blood.”

Pelé to watch Brazil’s World Cup match from the hospital

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazilian soccer great Pelé will be cheering on his country's national team on Monday in its World Cup game against South Korea from the hospital, where he is being treated for a respiratory infection aggravated by COVID-19.

"In 1958, I walked the streets thinking about fulfilling the promise I made to my father," the three-time World Cup winner wrote on Twitter, alongside a photograph of a then-17-year-old Pelé. "I know that today many have made similar promises and are also seeking their first World Cup. I'll be watching the game from hospital and I'll be rooting for each one of you. Good luck!"

The 82-year-old Pelé was admitted to the hospital on Tuesday but is under no imminent risk of death, according to several family members.

The soccer great is also undergoing chemotherapy in his fight against cancer. He is expected to leave the Albert Einstein hospital in Sao Paulo once he fully recovers from the respiratory infection, although neither the family nor the hospital know when that might happen.

Sudan's generals, pro-democracy group ink deal to end crisis

By ASHRAF IDRIS and JACK JEFFERY Associated Press

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP) — Sudan's coup leaders and the main pro-democracy group signed a deal Monday to establish a civilian-led transitional government following the military takeover last year. But key players refused to participate, and no deadline was set for the transition to begin.

The framework — signed by Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo and the leaders of the Forces for the Declaration of Freedom and Change — appears to offer only the broadest outlines for how the country will resume its progression to democracy. That process was upended in October 2021, when Burhan unseated the civilian half of Sudan's ruling Sovereignty Council with Dagalo's backing.

Since the coup, international aid has dried up and bread and fuel shortages, caused in part by the war in Ukraine, have become routine, plunging Sudan's already inflation-riddled economy into deeper peril. Security forces have ruthlessly suppressed near-weekly pro-democracy marches. Deadly tribal clashes have flared in the country's neglected peripheries.

It's not clear whether or how quickly the deal signed Monday can offer a way out for Sudan, given that it appears to leave many thorny issues unresolved and doesn't have the support of key political forces, including the grassroots pro-democracy Resistance Committees. That network's leaders called for demonstrations against the agreement.

Several former rebel leaders, who have formed their own political bloc, have also rejected the deal.

Many of the points in a draft of the deal were already promised in a 2020 agreement that saw Sudan's previous transitional government make peace with several rebels in Sudan's far-flung provinces.

According to the draft, the deal envisions Sudan's military eventually stepping back from politics. The document says it will form part of a new "security and defense council" under the appointed prime minister. But it does not address how to reform the armed forces, saying only they should be unified and controls should be imposed on military-owned companies.

It makes specific mention of Sudan's wealthy paramilitary force, the Rapid Support Forces, headed by Dagalo. The force amassed wealth through its gradual acquisition of Sudanese financial institutions and gold reserves in recent years.

It also does not address creating a transitional judiciary system or say when the transitional government will be put in place. Only then will a two-year transition officially begin — the end goal of which is elections.

Analysts have cast doubt over whether the aims of the agreement are achievable, given its lack of detail on key issues and the boycott of key players.

"Realistically none of these complex processes can be dealt with within a transitional time frame of two years," said Kholood Khair, founder and director of Confluence Advisory, a think tank in Khartoum.

Sudan has been plunged into turmoil since the coup threw off course a democratic transition that began after three decades of autocratic rule by President Omar al-Bashir. The former leader was toppled in April 2019, following a popular uprising.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 68 of 75

The U.N. special envoy to Sudan, Volker Perthes, attended Monday's signing and later, at a speech at the palace, described the deal as "Sudanese-owned and Sudanese-led."

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres hoped the agreement will pave the way for the return to a civilian-led transition, said U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric.

He called on "all Sudanese stakeholders to work without delay on the next phase of the transition process to address outstanding issues with a view to achieving a lasting, inclusive political settlement," Dujarric said.

Monday's development came after months of negotiations between the military and the Forces for the Declaration of Freedom and Change, facilitated by a mediating team of the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Britain.

In a joint statement issued after the signing, the four countries commended the agreement.

"A concerted effort to finalize negotiations and reach agreement quickly to form a new civilian-led government is essential to address Sudan's urgent political, economic, security, and humanitarian challenges," the group said.

The hope is the deal could draw in new international aid, after donor funds dried up in response to the coup.

Sudan has also seen a sharp increase in inter-tribal violence in the country's west and south. In the southern Blue Nile province, two days of clashes between the Berta and Hausa killed over 170 people in October. Last month some 48 were killed in tribal clashes in Darfur. Many commentators have attributed the rising tribal violence to the power vacuum caused by last year's military takeover and the subsequent political and economic crisis.

UN summit: Don't repeat mistakes on nature, scientists warn

By WANJOHI KABUKURU Associated Press

MOMBASA, Kenya (AP) — Scientists around the world are warning governments who will be gathering in Montreal this week for the United Nations biodiversity summit to not repeat past mistakes and are urging officials to "avoid trade-offs" between people and conservation needs in a report Monday.

The study published in the One Earth Journal found that even though there has been an increase in investment in conservation over the last three decades governments "have not succeeded in bending the curve on biodiversity decline."

The conference known as COP15, which begins Tuesday, hopes to set the goals for the world for the next decade to help conserve the planet's biodiversity and stem the loss of nature. So far the world has failed to meet goals set at previous meetings.

The scientists proposed six areas for action for delegates working toward what's known as the global biodiversity framework. They include greater involvement of local communities and addressing both direct causes of nature decline such as the destruction of land and habitats as well as indirect causes such as climate change.

In the report scientists repeatedly called for officials to be "nature and people positive" in their approach, highlighting the need for solutions that are realistic and have support from local communities in order to best protect nature.

Instead of conserving areas by making them inaccessible to local people, the scientists said greater inclusion of communities and particularly Indigenous groups will be vital in curbing even more biodiversity loss.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions which fuel climate change that leads to the loss of land and species also needs to be addressed, the scientists said.

"No amount of conservation or restoration actions may be effective in stopping biodiversity loss if the accelerating drivers of decline continue and intensify, as has been the case to date, especially in wealthier countries and among elites, who often express commitment to conservation action," said David Obura, who is one of the report authors.

The growing demands of rich nations, in particular "excess consumption and unsustainable trade and investments" also need to be halted if groups are to be protected, co-author Diana Liverman said. "Consumption footprints in richer countries consistently drive biodiversity loss in poorer countries," she added.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 69 of 75

Outside experts' views of how the summit can be a success were in line with the report's findings.

"The Montreal COP needs to send that signal that the global economy is transitioning to be nature positive," said The Nature Conservancy's Linda Kreuger who wasn't part of the report.

"Much of the conversation in Montreal is likely to revolve around money and specifically how much of it wealthier countries are willing to make available to support the conservation efforts of emerging economies."

Indigenous rights groups led by Survival International and Amnesty International agreed that local communities were central to protecting local biodiversity.

"Indigenous peoples are the best guardians of the natural world and an essential part of human diversity," said Fiore Longo of Survival International. "The best way to protect biodiversity is to respect the land rights of Indigenous peoples."

Preseason No. 1 North Carolina drops out of AP Top 25

By AARON BEARD AP Basketball Writer

Houston and Texas remain firmly entrenched atop The Associated Press men's college basketball poll, while preseason No. 1 North Carolina has dropped out entirely after a fourth straight loss.

The Cougars earned 37 of 62 first-place votes in Monday's poll, extending the program's first stay at No. 1 since the "Phi Slama Jama" days in the 1980s for another week. Houston (8-0) beat Norfolk State and Saint Mary's in its first week at the top.

"I don't dwell on it," coach Kelvin Sampson said last week about the No. 1 ranking. "We're not running around here pushing our chest out, thinking we're something we're not."

The Longhorns received 14 first-place votes. No. 3 Virginia got three votes and No. 4 Purdue got the remaining eight.

Connecticut (9-0) climbed to No. 5, the program's highest ranking since early in the 2011-12 season. Other than the top five, there are three other teams in the AP Top 25 that entered Monday undefeated (No. 11 Auburn, No. 13 Maryland and No. 23 Mississippi State).

SWIFT FALL

North Carolina is only the sixth team to go from preseason No. 1 to unranked since at least the 1961-62 season, most recently with Michigan State during the 2019-20 season.

Of that group, the Tar Heels had the swiftest exit from the poll to start the season (four weeks) except for UCLA in 1965-66. The Bruins fell out of the poll after just three weeks back when only 10 teams were ranked.

Ranked No. 18 last week, the Tar Heels (5-4) lost their fourth straight game over the weekend at Virginia Tech while playing without banged-up big man Armando Bacot. They appeared on a single ballot this week from the 62-member panel that votes on the AP Top 25.

"I told them also that I'm not panicked, I'm not any of that," coach Hubert Davis said afterward. "I'm convinced we're going to be a great basketball team by the end of the season."

Last year's Tar Heels were on the bubble to even make the NCAA Tournament well into February in Davis' debut season. They went on a final-month tear all the way to the NCAA championship game before falling to Kansas.

THE TOP TIER

Kansas climbed to No. 6, followed by three Southeastern Conference teams in Tennessee, Alabama and Arkansas. For the Volunteers and Crimson Tide, it marked their first appearances inside the top 10 this year. Arizona rounded out the top 10, falling six spots after a loss at Utah.

RISING

No. 13 Maryland had the biggest jump of the week, vaulting nine spots after wins against Louisville and Illinois last week in the Terrapins' first year under Kevin Willard. That marks the program's highest ranking since pushing into the top 10 during the 2019-20 season.

Tennessee was next up with a six-spot climb, while No. 11 Auburn rose four spots.

In all, 13 teams climbed from last week.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 70 of 75

SLIDING

Creighton had the week's biggest fall, tumbling 14 spots to No. 21 after losing at Texas and at home to Nebraska last week.

No. 12 Baylor fell six spots after a loss to Marquette, though the Bears responded by beating Gonzaga on Friday in a rematch of the 2021 NCAA championship game won by Baylor.

The Zags, now No. 18, fell four spots to their lowest ranking since checking in at No. 20 on Christmas Day in 2017.

In all, four teams slid from last week.

STATUS QUO

Beyond the top three, No. 25 Ohio State remained in place after a tough loss at No. 15 Duke last week.

WELCOME

No. 23 Mississippi State and No. 24 TCU were the new additions to the poll, with the Bulldogs (8-0) earning their first AP Top 25 ranking under first-year coach Chris Jans since January 2019.

The Horned Frogs were ranked 14th and 15th, respectively, in the first two polls before falling out for two weeks.

FAREWELL (FOR NOW)

In addition to UNC, Michigan State (No. 20) fell out after losses to Notre Dame and Northwestern.

CONFERENCE WATCH

The SEC led the way with six ranked teams, including No. 16 Kentucky. The Big Ten and Big 12 each had five ranked teams, followed by two each for the Atlantic Coast, Pac-12 and Big East conferences.

The American Athletic, West Coast and Mountain West conferences each had one.

Oxford Dictionaries names 'goblin mode' its word of the year

LONDON (AP) — Asked to sum up 2022 in a word, the public has chosen a phrase.

Oxford Dictionaries said Monday that "goblin mode" has been selected by online vote as its word of the year.

It defines the term as "a type of behavior which is unapologetically self-indulgent, lazy, slovenly, or greedy, typically in a way that rejects social norms or expectations."

First seen on Twitter in 2009, "goblin mode" gained popularity in 2022 as people around the world emerged uncertainly from pandemic lockdowns.

"Given the year we've just experienced, 'goblin mode' resonates with all of us who are feeling a little overwhelmed at this point," said Oxford Languages President Casper Grathwohl.

The word of the year is intended to reflect "the ethos, mood, or preoccupations of the past twelve months." For the first time this year's winning phrase was chosen by public vote, from among three finalists selected by Oxford Languages lexicographers: goblin mode, metaverse and the hashtag IStandWith.

Despite being relatively unknown offline, goblin mode was the overwhelming favorite, winning 93% of the more than 340,000 votes cast.

The choice is more evidence of a world unsettled after years of pandemic turmoil, and by the huge changes in behavior and politics brought by social media.

Last week Merriam-Webster announced that its word of the year is "gaslighting" — psychological manipulation intended to make a person question the validity of their own thoughts.

In 2021 the Oxford word of the year was "vax" and Merriam-Webster's was "vaccine."

Trump faces peril in docs probe after decades of scrutiny

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As a businessman and president, Donald Trump faced a litany of lawsuits and criminal investigations yet emerged from the legal scrutiny time and again with his public and political standing largely intact.

But he's perhaps never confronted a probe as perilous as the Mar-a-Lago investigation, an inquiry focused

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 71 of 75

on the potential mishandling of top-secret documents. The sense of vulnerability has been heightened in recent weeks not only by the Justice Department's appointment of a special counsel with a reputation for aggressiveness but also by the removal of a Trump-requested independent arbiter in the case and by judges' unequivocal rejection of his lawyers' arguments.

It's impossible to predict how much longer the investigation will last or whether the Justice Department will take the unprecedented step of indicting a former president and current candidate. But Trump is no longer shielded from prosecution the way he was as president, and some legal experts regard the Mar-a-Lago investigation as centered on more straightforward factual and legal questions than the prior probes he has dealt with.

"Unlike many of these past investigations which involved these complex financial frauds where prosecutors have to explain to a jury why the conduct is even a crime to begin with, here prosecutors won't have that difficulty, won't have that challenge to explain what the crime is about" if charges are ultimately filed, said former Justice Department prosecutor Robert Mintz.

One investigative hurdle for the Justice Department was lifted last week when an appeals court panel that included two Trump-appointed judges ended the work of a special master who'd been tasked with an independent review of the thousands of documents seized in the FBI's search of Mar-a-Lago. The decision enables prosecutors to use the entire cache of records for their investigation.

In a scorching opinion that reached deep back into history, the court acknowledged that a search of an ex-president's property is extraordinary but not so extraordinary as to afford him special treatment.

"It's not often you see cases cited in a court of appeals decisions that were decided in 1794, in the 1800s," said David Weinstein, a Florida criminal defense lawyer and former federal prosecutor. "These are bedrock principles of law that have long existed that they relied on."

Of course, investigations are nothing new for Trump, and speculation about his legal jeopardy has been off-course before.

Last year, state prosecutors in New York indicted Trump's business, the Trump Organization, and its longtime chief financial officer — but did not charge the former president. In September, the New York attorney general accused Trump of padding his net worth by billions of dollars and misleading banks — but those allegations were made in a lawsuit, not a criminal case.

As president, he was investigated by an earlier special counsel, former FBI Director Robert Mueller, over whether his successful 2016 campaign had illegally colluded with Russia and whether he had tried to obstruct that probe. Mueller ultimately found insufficient evidence to allege a criminal conspiracy between the campaign and Russia and also cited longstanding Justice Department policy that prohibits the indictment of a sitting president.

The obstruction prong of that investigation involved an analysis of constitutional law and the scope of presidential power. But prosecutors in the Mar-a-Lago probe have largely dismissed the relevance of Trump's status as a former president, asserting during a court fight over the special master that the classified records he had access to as commander-in-chief don't still belong to him.

And the appeals panel in its opinion last week rejected the idea that Trump was entitled to the return of the records seized from his home or to have an independent arbiter go through them, something it said would create a "special exception."

The records investigation had simmered for months before bursting into view with an Aug. 8 FBI search of Mar-a-Lago, with agents removing roughly 100 documents with classification markings. By that point, Justice Department officials say they'd developed probable cause to believe crimes had been committed related to the retention of national defense information as well as obstruction.

The investigation has since shown signs of accelerating, with the Justice Department presenting evidence before a grand jury and granting immunity last month to a Trump ally to secure his testimony.

The probe is being run by Jack Smith, who previously led the Justice Department's public integrity section and more recently has served as a war crimes prosecutor in the Hague. Smith is also overseeing key aspects of a separate Justice Department investigation related to efforts by Trump and his allies to undo the results of the 2020 presidential election. The Fulton County, Georgia, district attorney is separately

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 72 of 75

investigating attempts to overturn that state's results too.

Smith's appointment by Attorney General Merrick Garland came three days after Trump declared his White House candidacy. The announcement won't stop the investigation, though it may quicken the pace so as to avoid colliding with the heart of the 2024 presidential race.

His candidacy could theoretically infuse the investigation with greater import, said former federal prosecutor Franklin Monsour Jr., since it will no longer be just about a former president. "It's now about someone trying to become president again, and trying to possess national security material again."

Yet, legal experts expect the Justice Department to weigh more than just the strength of evidence in deciding whether to proceed with a case. There will be questions over how much classified evidence it can present to a jury — and the feasibility of picking an impartial jury given Trump's ubiquitous name recognition and the impassioned reactions he produces on both sides.

A prosecution of a former president also risks being seen as political, further polarizing an already divided country, as well as transforming a court into a circus-like atmosphere.

"It's basically weighing the principle that no individual is above the law against the practical political fallout that bringing these kinds of charges against a former president, particularly one who is once again running for president, will engender," Mintz said.

"It's an extraordinarily difficult decision," he added.

Pfizer asks FDA to clear updated COVID shot for kids under 5

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

Pfizer is asking U.S. regulators to authorize its updated COVID-19 vaccine for children under age 5 — not as a booster but part of their initial shots.

Children ages 6 months through 4 years already are supposed to get three extra-small doses of the original Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine — each a tenth of the amount adults receive — as their primary series. If the Food and Drug Administration agrees, a dose of Pfizer's bivalent omicron-targeting vaccine would be substituted for their third shot.

Pfizer and its partner BioNTech said Monday that may help prevent severe illness and hospitalization from COVID-19 in little kids, at a time when children's hospitals already are packed with youngsters hit by other respiratory illnesses.

Few of the nation's youngest children have gotten their COVID-19 vaccinations since the shots were OK'd in June: Just 2% of tots under 2 and about 4% of 2- to 4-year-olds have gotten their primary doses so far, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The FDA has authorized the new bivalent COVID-19 shots — versions made by Pfizer and rival Moderna — as a booster for everyone ages 5 and older. Those combination shots contain half the original vaccine and half tweaked to match the BA.4 and BA.5 omicron strains that until recently were dominant. Now BA.5 descendants are responsible for most COVID-19 cases.

The CDC last month released the first real-world data showing that an updated booster, using either company's version, does offer added protection to adults. The analysis found the greatest benefit was in people who'd never had a prior booster, just two doses of the original COVID-19 vaccine -- but that even those who'd had a summertime dose were more protected than if they'd skipped the newest shot.

World Cup fans find booze at hotels, Qatar's 1 liquor store

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — In a dusty neighborhood on the outskirts of Qatar's capital, guards stand duty at a gated compound ringed with razor wire, carefully checking passports and permits before allowing anyone inside. But this isn't a prison or a high-security area associated with the ongoing World Cup.

It's the liquor store.

Rigid limits on alcohol are a fact of life in this conservative Muslim nation on the Arabian Peninsula, which follows the same strict Wahhabi interpretation of Islam as its neighbor Saudi Arabia. Soccer fans coming

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 73 of 75

to Qatar for the World Cup got a taste of that just before the tournament as authorities cancelled beer sales at stadiums.

Yet corks continue to be popped in luxury boxes at games. Fans are filling pints from beer towers at dozens of hotel bars, lounges and nightclubs with liquor licenses. Sales of \$14 Budweisers at Doha's FIFA Fan Zone continue unabated.

"Not to say that you need alcohol to fuel your life, but it's a good time," said Ed Ball, an American who created an online map for imbibers in Doha to find bars. "The idea being passed around that you can't drink in Qatar is wrong. There are places."

In addition to the bars, there's the liquor store where non-Muslim residents and visitors can shop after applying for a government-issued license. Located next to an Indian school in Doha's dusty Abu Hamour neighborhood, it is run by the Qatar Distribution Co., a state-owned enterprise under the umbrella of Qatar Airways, which holds exclusive rights to distribute alcohol and pork in the country.

The store — currently the only one selling liquor in Qatar — operates on an appointment system, harkening back to the strict coronavirus regulations that governed this country prior to just before the World Cup.

On a recent visit, guards twice checked an Associated Press reporter's identifications and appointments. Razor wire tops the compound's high walls, which bar the public from a peek inside. Signs warn that any abuse aimed at the guards can result in an alcohol license being revoked. Empty silver-colored beer kegs are piled up in the parking lot.

At the end of a chlorine-scented walkway, customers reach the entrance to the store. Inside, the shelves and stands are stocked with bottles of wine largely running from \$12.50 up to \$45. A liter of Absolut vodka goes for \$42, while a liter of Jack Daniels whiskey sets a shopper back \$70. A 24-pack of standard Budweiser cans costs nearly \$52.

A small section of the store offers frozen pork pepperoni pizzas, slabs of bacon, Spam and cans of pork and beans.

Customers filled their carts or carried bottles and cans in their hands, checking against shopping lists or texting family members to double check what was needed. Several wore FIFA passes for the tournament around their necks.

Outside the shop, a 31-year-old British woman who works as a school teacher in Qatar, filled the trunk of her car. She declined to offer her name, given the connotations drinking can carry in Qatari society, but dismissed criticism surrounding drinking and the tournament.

"It's really not that big of a deal," she said of the licensing system in Qatar. "It's like going to the supermarket — for alcohol."

She added that she thought the restrictions on sales for the matches also made sense. "I'm British. I know what it's like to be around drunk people all the time."

Across the wider Persian Gulf, alcohol remains banned in Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the sheikhdom of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates. Drinking alcohol is considered haram, or forbidden, in Islam. Imams point to a verse in the Quran calling wine "the work of Satan."

But the region as a whole has a long history with alcohol, itself an Arabic word. The 8th century poet Abu Nawas even was known for his "khamriyyat," or "wine poems."

Both alcohol and pork face a 100% import duty. Qatar says it uses the tax revenue to improve health care, infrastructure, education and other public services.

Visitors are not allowed to bring alcohol into the country. Many hotels are dry and prohibit guests from bringing alcohol to their rooms.

Even with those restrictions, Qatar sold 23.2 million liters of alcoholic drinks in 2021, according to data from Euromonitor International. Though dwarfed by the United Arab Emirates' 115 million liters sold in the same period, Qatar's numbers show a 14.6% growth as the pandemic waned.

Meanwhile, Ball's online map of bars in Qatar has been viewed over 875,000 times. An accompanying Twitter account shows him downing two pints of beer in 10 seconds.

"For me, drinking is just like eating. It just goes along with the culture," Ball told the AP after returning home to Seattle, where he works for Boeing Co. "I know it's not part of Qatar ... but it's also part of the

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 74 of 75

World Cup. One of the biggest sponsors is Budweiser so it just goes to show you it kind of goes hand in hand."

Bars in Qatar typically scan IDs of those heading in, with many working on a voucher system during the tournament to make sure fans spend at least certain amount.

On Saturday night, a group of Russians screamed expletives at the U.S. team during its match with the Netherlands as they downed shots and posed for photographs with servers at Doha's Irish Harp.

Dermot O'Callaghan, a 66-year-old soccer fan from Dublin, Ireland, enjoyed a much calmer pint at the bar, swaying along to the Cuban band Chicas Melao.

"It's very enjoyable, you can get a drink here if you want in the evenings," O'Callaghan said. "You do have a cohort of fans roaming around, looking for a drink."

Today in History: December 6, 13th Amendment is ratified

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Dec. 6, the 340th day of 2022. There are 25 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 6, 1865, the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, abolishing slavery, was ratified as Georgia became the 27th state to endorse it.

On this date:

In 1790, Congress moved to Philadelphia from New York.

In 1907, the worst mining disaster in U.S. history occurred as 362 men and boys died in a coal mine explosion in Monongah, West Virginia.

In 1917, some 2,000 people were killed when an explosives-laden French cargo ship, the Mont Blanc, collided with the Norwegian vessel Imo at the harbor in Halifax, Nova Scotia, setting off a blast that devastated the Canadian city. Finland declared its independence from Russia.

In 1922, the Anglo-Irish Treaty, which established the Irish Free State, came into force one year to the day after it was signed in London.

In 1923, a presidential address was broadcast on radio for the first time as President Calvin Coolidge spoke to a joint session of Congress.

In 1947, Everglades National Park in Florida was dedicated by President Harry S. Truman.

In 1957, America's first attempt at putting a satellite into orbit failed as Vanguard TV3 rose about four feet off a Cape Canaveral launch pad before crashing down and exploding.

In 1962, 37 coal miners were killed in an explosion at the Robena No. 3 Mine operated by U.S. Steel in Carmichaels, Pennsylvania.

In 1969, a free concert by The Rolling Stones at the Altamont Speedway in Alameda County, California, was marred by the deaths of four people, including one who was stabbed by a Hell's Angel.

In 1973, House minority leader Gerald R. Ford was sworn in as vice president, succeeding Spiro T. Agnew.

In 1989, 14 women were shot to death at the University of Montreal's school of engineering by a man who then took his own life.

In 1998, in Venezuela, former Lt. Col. Hugo Chavez (OO'-goh CHAH'-vez), who had staged a bloody coup attempt against the government six years earlier, was elected president.

Ten years ago: Shocking some of his closest Republican colleagues, Sen. Jim DeMint of South Carolina announced he would resign his seat to head Washington's conservative Heritage Foundation think tank. Marijuana possession became legal in Washington state, the day a measure approved by voters to regulate marijuana like alcohol took effect.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump declared Jerusalem to be Israel's capital, defying warnings from the Palestinians and others around the world that he would be destroying hopes for Mideast peace. Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that he would seek reelection, putting him on track to become Russia's longest-serving ruler since Soviet dictator Josef Stalin.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 06, 2022 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 151 ~ 75 of 75

One year ago: The Justice Department said it was ending its investigation into the 1955 lynching of the Black teenager Emmett Till, who was killed after witnesses said he whistled at a white woman in Mississippi. The White House said the U.S. would stage a diplomatic boycott of the upcoming Winter Olympics in Beijing to protest Chinese human rights abuses; U.S. athletes would compete, but no U.S. dignitaries would be sent to attend the games. The Biden administration reinstated a Trump-era policy to make asylum-seekers wait in Mexico for hearings in U.S. immigration court. Medina Spirit, a 3-year-old colt whose Kentucky Derby victory in May came under scrutiny because of a positive drug test, collapsed and died after a workout at Santa Anita in Southern California.

Today's Birthdays: Comedy performer David Ossman is 86. Actor Patrick Bauchau is 84. Country singer Helen Cornelius is 81. Actor James Naughton is 77. Former Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood is 77. R&B singer Frankie Beverly (Maze) is 76. Former Sen. Don Nickles, R-Okla., is 74. Actor JoBeth Williams is 74. Actor Tom Hulce is 69. Actor Wil Shriner is 69. Actor Kin Shriner is 69. Actor Miles Chapin is 68. Rock musician Rick Buckler (The Jam) is 67. Comedian Steven Wright is 67. Singer Tish Hinojosa is 67. Rock musician Peter Buck (R.E.M.) is 66. Rock musician David Lovering (Pixies) is 61. Actor Janine Turner is 60. Rock musician Ben Watt (Everything But The Girl) is 60. Writer-director Judd Apatow is 55. Rock musician Ulf "Buddha" Ekberg (Ace of Base) is 52. Writer-director Craig Brewer is 51. Actor Colleen Haskell is 46. Actor Lindsay Price is 46. Actor Ashley Madekwe is 41. Actor Nora Kirkpatrick is 38. Christian rock musician Jacob Chesnut (Rush of Fools) is 33. Tennis player CoCo Vandeweghe is 31. NBA star Giannis Antetokounmpo (YAH'-nihs an-teh-toh-KOON'-poh) is 28.