

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 1 of 88

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Newsweek Bulletin](#)
- [2- GDP Help Wanted](#)
- [3- Letter to the Editor](#)
- [3- Prairie Mixed Bowling](#)
- [3- Grils game added to schedule](#)
- [3- GDILIVE.COM - Silver Skates](#)
- [4- GDILIVE.COM: Boys - DAK-12](#)
- [5- Silver Skates Ad](#)
- [6- February Community Events Calendar](#)
- [10- Boys beat Webster Area](#)
- [11- Robotics Pancake Feed Ad](#)
- [12- GDILIVE.COM: BBB at Webster](#)
- [13- SD Searchlight: Noem-backed food tax cut clears first committee hearing](#)
- [14- SD Searchlight: SD tribes would lose millions for tribal government if state eliminates food sales tax](#)
- [15- SD Searchlight: Term limits lead to legislative whack-a-mole](#)
- [17- SD Searchlight: Teachers would get \\$60K minimum salary under bill in Congress making grants to states](#)
- [19- SD Searchlight: Offshore wind will need major investments in transmission, supply chain, reports say](#)
- [22- SD Searchlight: Bill to tax lithium as an energy mineral passes House](#)
- [22- SD Searchlight: National Dems give New Hampshire, Georgia more time to change 2024 primary dates](#)
- [25- Weather Pages](#)
- [30- Daily Devotional](#)
- [31- 2023 Community Events](#)
- [32- Subscription Form](#)
- [33- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [34- News from the Associated Press](#)



Groton Community Calendar Friday, Jan. 27

Groton Area 2 hours late today

Senior Menu: Potato soup, chicken salad sandwich, tomato spoon salad, cinnamon apple sauce, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Biscuits and gravy.

School Lunch: Fish and nuggets, spudsters.

Girls Basketball hosts Webster: C game at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity.

Saturday, Jan. 28

NEC-DAXXII boys basketball clash at Madison. (Groton vs. Elk Point-Jefferson at 2 p.m.)

Groton Area Wrestling Tournament, 10 a.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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

© 2023 Groton Daily Independent

The Bulletin

by Newsweek

JANUARY 24, 2023

World in Brief

- Classified documents found in the possession of Joe Biden, Donald Trump and Mike Pence have raised questions about what other sensitive material could potentially still be out there, putting a renewed focus on former presidents like Barack Obama.

- Some MAGA allies sparred over Donald Trump's role in the movement's future, with conservative organizer Brandon Straka concerned that other voices were being maligned for questioning whether Trump should continue

to lead the GOP in 2024.

- Alex Murdaugh, accused of shooting his wife and son in South Carolina, cried throughout Sergeant Daniel Greene's testimony yesterday as body cam footage from the scene was played.

Senior Biden Administration officials said that the recent U.S. killing of a key Islamic State militant group figure in Somalia showed that the jihadi group has continued to spread despite international efforts.

- Conservatives are appealing to billionaire Twitter boss Elon Musk to purchase DirecTV after the television carrier dropped Newsmax.

- In the ongoing war in Ukraine, the leader of the Wagner Group was locked in a spat with a nationalist rival as the Russian mercenary organization continued to suffer heavy losses in Ukraine, the Institute for the Study of War said.



Position available for full-time Police Officer. Experience and SD Certification preferred. Salary negotiable DOE. Please send application and resume to the City of Groton, PO Box 587, Groton, SD 57445. This position is open until filled. Applications may be found at <https://www.city.grotonsd.gov/forms/Application-ForCityEmployeePO.pdf>. For more information, please call 605-397-8422. Equal opportunity employer.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 3 of 88

Letter to the Editor

Hey Paul

Just wanted to thank you for putting the Angela Kennecke information in the paper. There were many from the community that came. It was a great program and started some great conversations with students and their parents.

Just read the paper and your World of Experience article is so true. As they say with raising a family "it takes a village"I have found that so true in our community. I love where we live. All you have to do is put one request out there and you have tons of help. Thanks for what you always do!

Patti Woods

Groton Prairie Mixed Bowling League Week #13 Results

Team Standings: Coyotes – 16, Jackelopes – 15, Chipmunks – 15, Shihtzus – 9, Foxes – 9, Cheetahs – 8

Men's High Games: TJ Sperry – 232, Randy Stanley – 218, Lance Frohling – 212

Women's High Games: Vicki Walter – 200, Lori Giedt – 176, Michelle Johnson – 173

Men's High Series: TJ Sperry – 568, Lance Frohling – 552, Roger Spanier – 547

Women's High Series: Vicki Walter – 532, Nicole Kassube – 448, Lori Giedt – 440

Fun Game: Most 8 Counts with no fill – Foxes!

Girls game picked up

Thursday, Feb. 9, will be a busy night for the Groton Area basketball teams. The girls picked up a game with Elk Point-Jefferson with the games being played in Groton. The JV game starts at 4 p.m. followed by the varsity game. That is the same night the boys hoop team travels to Redfield.

GDILIVE.COM

85th Annual Carnival of Silver Skates

Sunday, Jan. 29th, 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Broadcast for **FREE VIEWING** on **GDILIVE.COM**

sponsored by the **Carnival of Silver Skates Committee**

Internet Service for **livestreaming** provided free of charge from

**FREE
VIEWING!**

 **MIDCO**

**FREE
VIEWING!**

GDILIVE.COM

Dak XII/NEC Boys Basketball Clash Groton Area vs. Elk Point-Jefferson

Saturday, Jan. 28, 2023, 2 p.m.

Madison High School

Varsity Game

Sponsored by

Bary Keith at Harr Motors

Bierman Farm Service

Blocker Construction

Dacotah Bank

Groton Chamber of Commerce

Groton Ford

John Sieh Agency

Locke Electric

Spanier Harvesting & Trucking

Bahr Spray Foam

Thunder Seed with John Wheeting



\$5 ticket required to watch. Purchased online at GDILIVE.COM

GDI Subscribers will have free access.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 5 of 88

85th Annual Carnival of Silver Skates

Sunday, January 29th—2:00 and 6:30
Groton Ice Rink—west side of Groton

You are cordially invited to attend a great show performed by our local youth. This show will be sure to entertain through music, costumes, and skating talent.

*** Skating Through the Decades ***

Admission:

13 & older—\$3.00

6-12—\$2.00

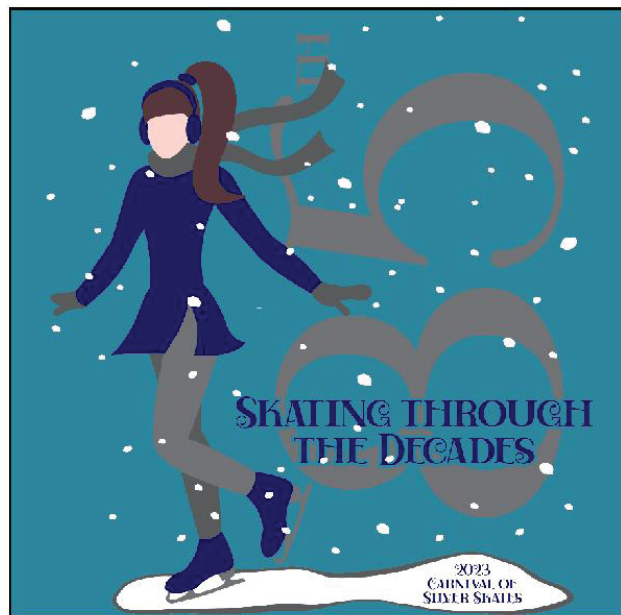
Parking:

-Provided around the rink and on the ice, or cozy up on the bleachers.

-Ice parking begins at 10 am, and again at 4:30 pm.

Check us out on Facebook at
"Silver Skates"

WE HOPE TO
SEE YOU THERE!



Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 6 of 88

**GROTON
VET CLINIC**

1503 N Broadway, Groton, 605/397-8145



Aberdeen
225-6772
1-800-843-1865

Redfield
1-800-247-4650

Webster
1-800-658-2252



February Groton Community Events

Wednesday, Feb. 1

Senior Menu: Breaded cod, parsley buttered potatoes, squash, Mandarin orange salad, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Hashbrown pizza.

School Lunch: Garlic cheese bread, cooked carrots.

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

United Methodist Church: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Book Study with Lindsey Tietz, 4 p.m.; Confirmation, 4 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.; Confirmation, 6 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.

Groton Chamber Board Meeting, noon, at City Hall

Groton Lions Dress Consignment, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., Groton Community Center

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

Thursday, Feb. 2

Senior Menu: Beef stew, biscuit, Waldorf salad, sherbet.

School Breakfast: Oatmeal.

School Lunch: Pasta with meat sauce.

Basketball Doubleheader with Deuel in Groton. (Girls JV at 4 p.m. followed by Boys JV, Girls Varsity and Boys Varsity)

Groton Lions Dress Consignment, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., Groton Community Center

Friday, Feb. 3

Senior Menu: Sloppy Joe on bun, oven roasted potatoes, coleslaw, pumpkin bar.

School Breakfast: Cereal.

School Lunch: Cheese breadstick with marinara, vegetable blend.

Wrestling at Presho

Groton Lions Dress Consignment, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., Groton Community Center

Saturday, Feb. 4

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

DAK12-NEC Girls Clash at Madison

Wrestling at Stanley County, 10 a.m.

Groton Lions Prom and Formal Dress Sale, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Groton Community Center

Sunday, Feb. 5

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

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

Open Gym: Grades JK-8; 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM, Grades 6-12; 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM

United Methodist Church: Worship with communion. Conde Worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 10:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday school after children's sermon; Sunday school sings in worship, 10:45 a.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Installation of council and WELCA; Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.

Groton Lions Prom and Formal Dress Sale, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Groton Community Center

Groton Lions dress pickup of unsold dress, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., Groton Community Center

St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 9:45 a.m.; Zion Lutheran worship with communion, 11 a.m.

Monday, Feb. 6

Senior Menu: Ranch chicken breast, wild rice, mixed vegetables, fruit cocktail, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza.

School Lunch: Chicken legs, scalloped potatoes.

The Pantry, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Junior High BB hosting Aberdeen Christian, 5:30 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 7 of 88



New Construction
Remodeling
Hoop Barns
Shops

13379 Sperry Ln, Bath
605/216-2677
prblocker@hotmail.com

Perry Blocker



TREE TRIMMING & REMOVAL
STUMP GRINDING
STORM DAMAGE CLEANUP

Matt's Tree Service
605/228-3861
www.aberdeentreeservice.com

Tuesday, Feb. 7

Senior Menu: Scalloped potatoes with ham, peas, sunset salad, cookie, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: French toast.

School Lunch: Lasagna hot dish, corn bread.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The Pantry, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Boys Basketball hosts North Central. JV game at 6 p.m. followed by varsity.

United Methodist Church: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

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

Wednesday, Feb. 8

Senior Menu: Chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, peach cobbler, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Egg omelets.

School Lunch: Chicken noodle soup.

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

Small Group Music Contest at the Aberdeen Recreation Cultural Center

United Methodist Church: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Book Study with Lindsey Tietz, 4 p.m.; Confirmation, 4 p.m.; UMYF Bowling at the Jungle, 6:30 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 6 p.m.

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

Thursday, Feb. 9

Senior Menu: Hot turkey combo, mashed potatoes and gravy, mixed vegetables, fruit.

School Breakfast: Muffins.

School Lunch: Chicken sandwich, fries.

Boys Basketball at Redfield (JV game 6 p.m. followed by varsity)

Girls Basketball hosts Elk Point-Jefferson. JV game at 4 p.m. followed by varsity)

Friday, Feb. 10

Senior Menu: Tuna noodle casserole, peas and carrots, swedish apple pie square, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Eggs and sausage.

School Lunch: Pizza crunchers, green beans.

Girls Basketball hosts Redfield. (C game at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity)

MS Pep Band Night!

Saturday, Feb. 11

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

Basketball Double Header at Moberge: (Boys JV in MS Gym, 1 p.m.; Girls JV in HS Gym, 1 p.m.; Varsity Girls to follow in HS Gym and then Varsity Boys).

Northeast Conference Wrestling at Webster, 11 a.m.

Middle School State wrestling at Pierre, 9 a.m.

Junior High Boys Basketball at Moberge, 11 a.m. in the MS Gym - 2 games)

Sunday, Feb. 12

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

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

Youth Wrestling Tournament at the Groton Area Arena, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

United Methodist Church: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday school, 9:30 a.m.; Groton Worship, 10:30 a.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: worship/milestones, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; Worship at Bethesda, 2 p.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 9:45 a.m.; Zion Lutheran worship, 11 a.m.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 8 of 88

Monday, Feb. 13

Senior Menu: Beef stroganoff noodles, mixed vegetables, fruit cocktail, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Mini waffles.

School Lunch: Chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes.

1 p.m.: Senior Citizens Meet at the Groton Community Center.

The Pantry, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 14

Senior Menu: Valentine Dinner: Baked pork chop, baked potato with sour cream, baby glazed carrots, cheesecake with strawberry glaze, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Egg and cheese wrap.

School Lunch: Meatballs, tiny whole potatoes.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The Pantry, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Boys Basketball at Aberdeen Roncalli (C game at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity)

United Methodist Church: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 15

Senior Menu: Teriyaki chicken, rice pilaf, broccoli, pineapple strawberry ambrosia, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Eggs and breakfast potatoes.

School Lunch: Chicken strips, tater tots.

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

United Methodist Church: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Book Study with Lindsey Tietz, 4 p.m.; Confirmation, 4 p.m.; Groton Ad Council, 7 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 6 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.

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

Thursday, Feb. 16

Senior Menu: Tater tot hot dish, green beans, grape juice, apple crisp, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.

School Lunch: Hot dogs, chips.

Parent-Teacher Conferences, 1:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 17

Senior Menu: Ham and bean soup, egg salad sandwich, 7 layer salad, cookies.

NO SCHOOL - Faculty In-Service

Basketball Double Header at Britton. (Girls JV and Boys JV both played at 5 p.m. Then Girls Varsity and Boys Varsity)

Saturday, Feb. 18

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

Boys Basketball hosts Florence-Henry. (7th grade game at 11 a.m. followed by 8th grade game. C game at 1 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity)

Emmanuel Lutheran: Rosewood Court worship, 10 a.m.; Council Retreat at church, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Sunday, Feb. 19

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

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

Open Gym: Grades JK-8; 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM, Grades 6-12; 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM

United Methodist Church: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; No Sunday school; Groton Worship, 10:30 a.m.

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

St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Zion Lutheran worship with communion, 11 a.m. (no Sunday School)

Monday, Feb. 20

Senior Menu: Swiss steak, mashed potatoes, carrots, frosted brownie, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Pancake on stick.

School Lunch: Tater tot hot dish, peas.

1 p.m.: Senior Citizens Meet at the Groton Community Center.

The Pantry, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Junior High Boys Basketball at Clark, 4 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.; Newsletter deadline.

St. John's Lutheran: Christian Literature Circle, 7:30 p.m.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 9 of 88

Tuesday, Feb. 21

Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, mixed vegetables, garlic toast, mandarin orange.

School Breakfast: Doughnuts.

School Lunch: Corn dogs, fries.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The Pantry, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Region 1A Girls Basketball

United Methodist Church: Bible Study, 10 a.m.; Conde Ad Council.

St. John's Lutheran: Quilting, 9 a.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 22 - Ash Wednesday

Senior Menu: Ash Wednesday. Baked fish, Mac and cheese, 3 bean salad, honey fruit salad, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: hash brown pizza.

School Lunch: Beef sticks, baked beans.

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

United Methodist Church: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Book Study with Lindsey Tietz, 4 p.m.; Confirmation, 4 p.m.; Groton Ash Wednesday Service, 6:30 p.m.; UMYF attends Ash Wednesday Service, 6:30 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Soup supper, 6 p.m. (WELCA ex. Board serves), Worship, 7 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Bible Study, 2:45 p.m.; Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.; Lent Service, 7 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 23

Senior Menu: Roast pork, mashed potatoes and gravy, cauliflower and broccoli, apple sauce, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Oatmeal.

School Lunch: Goulash, corn.

Region 1A Girls Basketball

Friday, Feb. 24

Senior Menu: Chili, cornbread, coleslaw, pears.

School Breakfast: Cereal.

School Lunch: Fish nuggets, tritaters.

Boys Basketball hosts Aberdeen Christian. (C game at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity.

Saturday, Feb. 25

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, Feb. 26

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

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

Open Gym: Grades JK-8; 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM, Grades 6-12; 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM

United Methodist Church: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton Worship, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday school after children's sermon.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; Northern Plains Conference meets in Miller, 3 p.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 9:45 a.m.; Zion Lutheran worship, 11 a.m.

Monday, Feb. 27

Senior Menu: Parmesan chicken breast, baked potato with sour cream, lettuce salad with dressings, peaches, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza.

School Lunch: Pepperoni pizza, vegetable blend.

Noon.: Senior Citizens Meet at the Groton Community Center with potluck dinner.

The Pantry, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 28

Senior Menu: Roast beef, mashed potatoes with gravy, beets, chocolate cake, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: French toast.

School Lunch: Tacos.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The Pantry, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Region 1A Boys Basketball

United Methodist Church: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 10 of 88

Boys' Basketball

Tigers have clean sweep over Webster Area

Groton Area's boys basketball teams had another clean sweep Thursday night as the teams brought home three wins against Webster Area. The games were played at the Webster Armory.

Groton Area won the varsity game, 62-21. Webster scored the first bucket for a 2-0 lead, but then the Tigers rattled off 17 unanswered points to take a 17-2 lead at the end of the first quarter. The Tigers led, 40-8 at halftime and 50-11 after three quarters.

Lane Tietz led the Tigers with 16 points, two rebounds, one assist and five steals. Ryder Johnson had 11 points, two rebounds, one assist, one steal and one block. Jacob Zak had 10 points, nine rebounds, three assists and three steals. Tate Larson had six points, one rebound, one assist and one steal. Cade Larson had four points, three rebounds, one assist and one steal. Colby Dunker had four points, four rebounds and one assist. Logan Ringgenberg had four points, one rebound and one steal. Cole Simon had three points, two rebounds, four assists and three steals. Gage Sippel had two points, two rebounds and one block shot. Holden Sippel had two points. Taylor Diegel and Tyson Parrow each had had one rebound. Keegan Tracy had two rebounds.

Groton Area made 19 of 35 two-pointers for 54 percent, five of 13 three-pointers for 38 percent, nine of 18 free throws for 50 percent, 30 rebounds, 14 turnovers, 12 assists, 15 steals, 15 turnovers and two blocks.

Webster was led by Ian Lesnar who came off the bench to hit three three-pointers and finished with nine points. Jaiden McCreary had four points. Jeron McCreary, who fouled out with 2:19 left in the first half, ended with three points. Matthew Mount and Tommy Vergeldt each had two points and Jacob Keller had one free throw.

The Bearcats made eight of 31 field goals for 26 percent, two of nine free throws for 22 percent, had 18 turnovers and 17 team fouls.

Groton won the junior varsity game, 40-31, leading at the quarter breaks at 15-7, 25-14 and 29-22. Scoring for Groton: Taylor Diegel 9, Keegan Tracy 7, Braxton Imrie 6, Logan Ringgenberg 6, Ryder Johnson 4, Colby Dunker 4, Holden Sippel 2, and Get Sippel 2. Martin Dorsett led Webster Area with 11 points.

Groton led at the quarter breaks at 16-6, 25-8 and 32-16 en route to a 40-26 C game win. Scoring for Groton: Caden McInerney 9, Gage Sippel 9, Logan Warrington 6, Jayden Schwan 4, Turner Thompson 4, Carter Simon 2, Karter Moody 2, Blake Pauli 2 and Logan Pearson 2. Thomas Kucker led Webster Area with 10 points.

All three games were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM. The C game was sponsored by Darcie and Eric Moody. The junior varsity broadcast was sponsored by Coach Kyle and The Gerlach. Varsity game sponsors were Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Groton Chamber of Commerce, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Locke Electric, Spanier Harvesting & Trucking, Bahr Spray Foam, Thunder Seed with John Wheeting.

- Paul Kosel

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 11 of 88

GROTON

ROBOTICS



Pancake Feed

Sponsored by Groton Lions Club

Sunday, January 29th, 2023

10:00 AM—1:00 PM

Groton Community Center

Pancakes, Sausage, Coffee, Milk and Juice

FREE WILL DONATION!

Proceeds will go to Groton Robotics

Carnival of Silver Skates performing at 2:00pm & 6:30 pm!



GDILIVE.COM

Groton Area Girls Basketball hosts Webster Friday, Jan. 27, 2023

C Game starts at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity

C Game Sponsor: Doug & Wanda Hamilton

JV Game Sponsor: Mr. Anonymous

Varsity Game Sponsors

Bary Keith at Harr Motors

Bierman Farm Service

Blocker Construction

Dacotah Bank

Groton Chamber of Commerce

Groton Ford

John Sieh Agency

Locke Electric

Spanier Harvesting & Trucking

Bahr Spray Foam

Thunder Seed with John Wheeting



Anyone wanting to sponsor a JV game, Call/Text Paul at 605-397-7460



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Noem-backed food tax cut clears first committee hearing

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - JANUARY 26, 2023 2:31 PM

PIERRE – A tax cut touted by Gov. Kristi Noem as the largest in state history cleared its first legislative hurdle Thursday.

House Bill 1075 would eliminate the state's 4.5% tax on food sales. South Dakota is one of just three states with such a tax. The others are Alabama and Mississippi.

The tax cut was a centerpiece of Gov. Kristi Noem's reelection campaign, and Noem identified it as one of her top legislative priorities at the start of the 2023 legislative session.

The House Taxation Committee meeting was standing room only as proponents and opponents testified Thursday morning at the Capitol.

Opponents argued that eliminating the tax would remove a stable revenue source, that the money could fund other important projects in the state and that the tax cut would take millions in funding from tribal governments.

Proponents such as State Finance Commissioner Jim Terwilliger told the committee that the state's growing population and economy are able to withstand the tax cut, and that it would bring "fair and transparent relief" to South Dakotans.

Rep. Mary Fitzgerald, R-Spearfish, is the bill's prime sponsor in the House of Representatives.

"We have an opportunity to help the people of South Dakota," Fitzgerald said. "We don't have to pick and choose who we're going to help. We can help everyone, and that's pretty special."

The tax brings in an estimated \$102 million to the state. But even with the tax cut, there is another \$280 million in revenue to spend, Terwilliger said. Revenue is \$146 million higher than projected — or 13% higher — for the first six months of the fiscal year.

Opponents like Nathan Sanderson of the South Dakota Retailers Association said that the increased revenue is driven by inflation and federal funding.

"This is poor tax policy," Sanderson said. "Two years of unexpectedly high economic revenue doesn't make it sustainable in the long term."

Other opponents spoke of how the windfall in funding could be used to help deal with other issues across the state. Lobbyist Dianna Miller with the Large Schools Group recalled budget reductions of 2011, when government agencies, Medicaid and education received cuts. South Dakota K-12 schools took an 8% cut, she said.

"The bottom could fall out and we'd be back to making cuts," Miller said. "It's not easy to get up here and be opposed to this. But I think we can look at other options."

Still others pointed to the revenue hit the tax cut would cause for South Dakota's Native American tribes, who rely on taxes for government operations.

Despite the opposition, Sanderson and others encouraged legislators to pass the bill onto House Appropriations for further discussion and to "look at other options."

Two other bills, HB 1095 and HB 1096, would lower the state food sales tax rate and use tax rate to 2.5% and 3.5%, respectively. A lobbyist with the South Dakota Dental Association also suggested an amendment that would retain a tax on candy and soft drinks while eliminating it for fresh produce and other food sales.

The taxation committee voted 12-1 to send the bill to the House Appropriations Committee.

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.

SD tribes would lose millions for tribal government if state eliminates food sales tax

State did not consult with tribes before introducing tax cut bill

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - JANUARY 26, 2023 1:13 PM

PIERRE – A food sales tax cut that passed a House panel Thursday morning has raised concerns for South Dakota's nine tribal governments.

An official with the Bureau of Finance and Management estimated that the tribes would lose about \$2 million in funding for tribal government operations if the food tax is eliminated, but admitted to lawmakers that "the issue has just arisen in the last couple days."

The 4.5% tax on food brings in an estimated \$102 million to the state total. Gov. Kristi Noem vowed to eliminate the tax during her re-election campaign and during her budget address last month.

Each tribal government in South Dakota has an agreement with the state to receive a portion of the food sales taxes that originate on its reservation. State Finance Commissioner Jim Terwilliger told the House Taxation Committee on Thursday that the question of how the food tax cut would impact tribal budgets has not been explored, but that there are "probably workable solutions."

"There are some ways we can address those concerns so tribes aren't adversely affected," Terwilliger said.

Rosebud, Cheyenne River oppose 'devastating' bill

The food sales tax is only a portion of the tax revenues collected by the state on tribal reservations. The revenues include money from taxes on retail sales and services, use taxes, and excise taxes on cigarettes, tobacco, fuel and farm machinery. Food sales tax falls within retail sales and services and use taxes.

The percentage of tax revenue returned to tribal governments varies from tribe to tribe, and is based on agreements with the state. The Rosebud Sioux Tribe, for example, gets back 93% of retail sales and service tax revenue.

For Rosebud, the food sales tax accounts for roughly 25-30% of that figure, according to Whitney Meek, director of revenue for the tribe. A representative for Rosebud testified against the bill at the House Taxation Committee meeting.

"I don't see how the tribe itself could afford to lose that kind of revenue," Meek said, estimating that the Rosebud Sioux Tribe collects close to \$2.5 million annually in various taxes from the state. Aside from taxes, tribal governments also receive funding from federal grants and land leases.

However, she thinks Rosebud "could handle" a 1-2% reduction in food sales tax. Two other bills, HB 1095 and HB 1096, would lower the state food sales tax rate and use tax rate to 2.5% and 3.5%, respectively.

The Department of Revenue has yet to provide South Dakota Searchlight with the monetary amounts received by tribal governments during fiscal year 2022.

The loss in revenue would be "devastating" for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, according to Lynette Dupries of the Cheyenne River revenue department. The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe also had a representative oppose the food sales tax bill at the House Taxation Committee.

"In order for a government to function, they need tax revenue," Dupries said.

Cheyenne River has an 85% tax agreement with the state, which amounted to about \$4.3 million in total tax revenue during fiscal year 2022.

"What do we have here? Just two grocery stores, a few convenience stores, a hardware store and a clothing store," Dupries said. "That's all we have here."

The Cheyenne River Reservation is part of District 28, which includes most of northwestern South Dakota. Sen. Ryan Maher, R-Isabel, said the bill needs to find a way to "hold the tribes harmless." He is opposed to the bill.

"The state would have to subsidize them to hold them harmless. I don't know how that works, since food tax is a moving number and we're in an inflated economy right now," Maher said.

Tribes 'should have been at the table already,' Dems say

South Dakota Democrats held a press conference after the bill passed through the House Taxation Com-

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 15 of 88

mittee reprimanding the state for not having discussed the bill's impact on its tribal governments beforehand.

"They should have been at the table already," said Rep. Oren Lesmeister, D-Parade.

Tribes were not consulted prior to the introduction of the bill, he said, which he described as an insult to the state's nine tribal nations. He urged Noem to reach out now, even if it would be "a little late."

Rep. Peri Pourier, D-Rapid City and member of the House Taxation Committee, voted in favor of the bill and to pass it onto Appropriations in hopes that the bill could be amended to address tribal governments' concerns.

"We have tribal nations who have sovereignty tied to this tax initiative... this wasn't talked to tribal nations beforehand," Pourier said during the hearing. "...They have to have an ability to say if they want this or not."

Tribes taxing reservations themselves is a 'sticky wicket'

If South Dakota's food sales tax is eliminated, the tribal governments could collect food sales taxes themselves. But the tax would only apply to tribal members, Meek said, not non-tribal members living on reservations.

The tribe doesn't have the right to tax non-tribal members, she said.

"It kind of gets into a sticky wicket with jurisdictional issues," Meek said. "They have every right to refuse."

Having the state enforce food sales taxes eliminates that jurisdictional issue.

There are other issues complicating food tax collections on reservations, as well. About one-third of residents in counties located mostly within a reservation — such as Todd, Oglala Lakota, Dewey and Charles Mix counties — receive benefits through the federal Supplemental Nutritional Access Program (SNAP), commonly known as food stamps. People receiving SNAP benefits do not pay sales tax.

If the Rosebud Sioux Tribe enforced its own food sales taxes, Meek said she could easily see someone driving 13 miles off the reservation to White River to buy groceries.

Hiring people to collect the reservations' taxes and developing an infrastructure for online sales would also be difficult, she said. The state has infrastructure for online tax remittances, having won the right to collect such taxes through a Supreme Court victory in 2018.

"There are only, say, 50 businesses located on the whole reservation, and over 1,000 for remote sales and internet sales," Meek estimated. "How would we even begin to go about collecting that? I'd say that's impossible. Send a tax return to Amazon and they'd laugh us off. We don't have the teeth to enforce our laws on someone outside the reservation."

The food tax proposal passed the committee with a 12-1 vote. It will now head to the House Appropriations Committee for further consideration.

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.

Commentary

Term limits lead to legislative whack-a-mole

DANA HESS

JANUARY 26, 2023 8:49 AM

In the 1990s, term limits were a hot topic in a variety of states, including South Dakota. In 1992, voters here endorsed a constitutional amendment that would limit U.S. senators to two consecutive six-year terms, U.S. representatives to six consecutive two-year terms, state constitutional officers to two four-year terms and state legislators to four consecutive two-year terms.

What the term limit backers were really after was a target they couldn't hit. While U.S. senators and representatives were included in the state constitutional amendment, their terms of office, or lack of term limits, are determined by the U.S. Constitution. While the state's ballot measure couldn't make rules that would throw the bums out in Washington, D.C., it did manage to mess things up on the state level.

Voters, for their part, saw "term limits" on the ballot and figured it must be a good thing. The amendment sailed through with 64% of the vote. In 2008 there was an effort to amend the constitution again,

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 16 of 88

this time taking away term limits. That failed on a grand scale with 76% of voters saying they liked term limits just fine.

The folks trying to get rid of term limits could see the damage being done as legislators were ineligible to run for the same office after eight years. The argument against term limits is compelling even if it often falls on deaf ears. They give too much power to bureaucrats and lobbyists who don't have term limits. Since those folks aren't term limited, they develop more policy expertise and serve as the institutional memory for government, often in a way that siphons power away from the legislative branch.

To see how things have changed, let's take a trip back in time to the pre-term limit days of the South Dakota Legislature and see how statesmanship developed when lawmakers didn't come with a sell-by date.

Fresh off her first election victory, our new House member comes to the Capitol happy, eager and clueless. She still has that new legislator smell. Her election campaign ran on the vague notions of her personal reliability and her need to help people but, in reality, she has no idea how that's going to happen. Lawmaking, like everything else in Pierre, is foreign to her. She doesn't even know where the bathrooms are.

If she's a wise woman, she'll spend her first two-year term with her eyes open and her mouth shut. She'll learn the arcane language of lawmaking and the rules for legislative decorum. She'll watch her colleagues and determine which ones she should emulate and which ones are in Pierre for the endless buffet of free meals.

With luck and determination, she'll emerge from her first term with a solid understanding of the workings of government. Re-election will bring her back for a second two-year term determined to get down to the business of lawmaking. In this term she'll set her legislative agenda. This can be inspired by her profession — a teacher may want to focus on education issues, a nurse on health care, a rancher on agriculture. It may also develop from her constituency and their needs.

During her second term she'll work with the Legislative Research Council to develop her bills, she'll take them through the committee process, she'll find a partner to work with in the Senate and she'll make speeches and answer questions about the bills on the House floor. She'll emerge from this term with a bit of a legislative resume that will help her get elected a third time.

During her third two-year term, she has some decisions to make about her future. There are two leadership tracks in the Legislature. She could choose committee leadership, helping to shepherd bills in a particular area of her interest, or she could choose a political party leadership role, keeping members informed about leadership's expectations.

After six years in office, she emerges a well-rounded lawmaker, ready to make a difference for South Dakotans. Imagine the good she could do for her constituents and her state if she had another six years or more to hone her craft. South Dakota voters threw away that chance when they instituted term limits.

Now, new lawmakers come to Pierre and, even as they figure out where the bathrooms are, they must walk through the Capitol doors knowing their legislative agenda and their leadership track. They are under an eight-year time crunch to complete as much as they can before getting kicked to the curb or, if they're lucky, getting elected to a seat in the other house.

Term limit backers will say that shuffling the deck every few years will bring new blood into the Legislature. Well, after 30 years of term limits, there's plenty of old blood, too.

This year's 35-member Senate has 11 new members, with six of them sliding directly over from the House. Of those 35 members, 19 have previous stints in the House. It's difficult to tout the benefits of terms limits bringing in new ideas if it's just a case of legislative whack-a-mole as lawmakers disappear from one house and spring up in the other.

Term limits may sound like a way to clean house in Congress, but in the state Legislature that was never necessary. As a small state, South Dakota has a limited number of people with the peculiar skill set of winter driving survival skills coupled with an interest in policymaking. The state should have been looking at a way to hang on to its legislative expertise instead of setting limits that deprive government of the very people who want to take part in lawmaking.

Dana Hess spent more than 25 years in South Dakota journalism, editing newspapers in Redfield, Milbank and Pierre. He's retired and lives in Brookings, working occasionally as a freelance writer.

Teachers would get \$60K minimum salary under bill in Congress making grants to states

BY: ADAM GOLDSTEIN - JANUARY 26, 2023 4:17 PM

WASHINGTON – A panel of policymakers and educators, including author Dave Eggers and former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, gathered at the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday to promote the American Teacher Act.

The bill, if passed, would authorize the federal government to create four-year grants for states to enact and enforce minimum school teacher salary requirements of \$60,000 or more. The program would start in fiscal 2024. It would not mandate teacher raises.

"We're here today to advocate for our teachers, our educators, our saving grace that rescues families and our children every day," said Rep. Frederica Wilson, D-Florida, sponsor of the bill and a former school teacher. "We want our teachers to be paid a livable wage. A wage that is fair, a wage that is commensurate with today's economy."

Rep. Wilson introduced the American Teacher Act in the House of Representatives on Dec. 14, and is expected to re-introduce it in this Congress, though it's likely to run into opposition from Republicans who control the chamber.

The legislation states that 15% of the four-year federal grants could support state-level educational agencies, while the remaining 85% must go directly to a state's local school districts.

The bill includes a cost-of-living adjustment that would peg teacher salaries to inflation, along with a clause allowing for a national awareness campaign on the importance and work of teachers.

Phelton Moss, a senior policy adviser to Wilson, said that the bill also incorporates a maintenance-of-effort provision that requires states not to pull back on their commitment to a \$60,000 minimum salary, if they are to keep their funding. Additional language inside the bill would ensure states prioritize Title I schools and districts in distributing funds.

In the 2020-2021 school year, public school teachers made \$61,600 while working 52 hours per week, on average. Yet there is significant variation in teacher salary between states.

Mississippi, the lowest-paying state for teachers in the 2020-2021 school year, paid an average of \$46,862, according to the National Education Association. Meanwhile, in New York, the average teacher salary sat at \$90,222.

'Heroes' struggle to stay afloat

Wilson commended the dedication of school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic, who taught online or went door-to-door to instruct students who lacked access to technology.

"It was during this time that the world finally saw what we'd known for years, that teachers are heroes," she said. "They deserve a livable, competitive salary that accurately reflects the importance of their role in society."

Wilson said that 1 in 5 teachers across the country currently works a second job to supplement their income, and over 9,000 districts across the country pay teachers less than \$40,000 per year.

She said this lack of adequate pay is largely contributing to some reports of a teacher shortage affecting school districts.

"We should be embarrassed," Wilson said. "The teacher shortage is among the most pressing threats to education access today. And we must address it. Our classrooms are at stake, our children are at stake, and the future of our country is at stake."

Ellen Sherratt of the Teacher Salary Project said that over her 20 years of experience as an economist analyzing teacher salaries and shortages, the pay gap and morale of teachers is the worst it has ever been.

Last fall, the Economic Policy Institute performed an analysis of teacher pay trends from 1970 to 2021, and found that teachers earn 23.5% less on average compared to their peers of similar educational backgrounds.

Sherratt also said that 62% of parents surveyed in a PDK poll on public schools last year said they did

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 18 of 88

not want their child to go into teaching, with low pay the top-listed reason.

Rodney Robinson, the 2019 National Teacher of the Year, estimated that roughly 50% of the Ubers and Lyfts he takes during the week are driven by schoolteachers. The Richmond, Virginia resident added that one of these Uber drivers was a former teacher in Alabama. The driver was studying to be a principal, and had to quit his job as a teacher to pay for school.

"We really need to re-examine what we are doing as a country," Robinson said. "If teachers — who are our most prized possessions, who raise the next generation — have to quit or take on another job just to make ends meet."

Nicholas Ferroni, a history teacher at Union High School in Union, New Jersey, added that teaching is one of the few jobs in which people can have the greatest impact on the greatest number of people. Ferroni lamented the fact that teachers have to use GoFundMe to "beg for supplies."

"I'm just here because I don't want to marry rich, become an administrator, or switch jobs," Ferroni said. "I do want to stay in the classroom."

Teachers and students' futures

Duncan, the former education secretary, said the impacts of a good teacher are not just test scores and graduation rates, but financial security. He said that an economic analysis from Raj Chetty showed that one good middle-school teacher raised the lifetime earnings of a given class by \$250,000.

"So you think about putting two good teachers back-to-back, or three good teachers back-to-back," Duncan said. "What does that do for young people in perpetuity?"

Duncan also spoke to the institutional barriers to socioeconomic equity that high-quality education can surmount.

"No kid grows up wanting to be poor," Duncan said. "The only way I know how to break the cycles of poverty and create upward mobility is to create opportunity. Getting great teachers where we need them most is critically important."

Robinson said the bill could reduce barriers for people of color in entering the profession, and eroding the national achievement gap.

"People don't understand the extra burden for people of color to take on more student loan debt," Robinson said. "We know having educators of color, teachers that look like their students, is the most important thing to lowering that achievement gap and increasing graduation rates."

"By increasing teacher salaries, we can make a dedication to increasing diversity in the teacher workforce."

GDILIVE.COM

Working ahead to try and get next week organized.

Still need sponsors for the following games:

Deuel JV Boys -

Deuel JV Girls -

Call/Text Paul at 605-397-7460 or message me here.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 19 of 88

Blowback predicted

Moss said that there are still details yet to be finalized in the teacher salary bill, including the concrete definition of "teacher" and provisions for veteran educators.

Robinson added that he sees this bill inevitably facing resistance, yet that blowback should not deter its supporters.

"You know, pious D.C.," Robinson said. "How are we gonna pay for this? How are we gonna do this?" "How can we afford not to pay for this? This is an issue of national security."

Duncan challenged claims from some teachers that the American Teachers Act represents federal overreach. "Education is the ultimate bipartisan issue," Duncan said. "This is nation-building. Our teacher workforce in our country is the best offense for our nation."

Robinson added that the bill will put pressure on states to raise and maintain wages even after the grant is over, as they face competition from other states paying teachers more, who leave to work in a higher-paying community.

Eggers praises his teachers

After the roundtable, Eggers talked about the "uninterrupted string of extraordinary teachers" in his education during an interview with States Newsroom. The author said that he still sends his books in manuscript form to a former high school English teacher, Peter Ferry, who is one of his first readers.

"Every single study that has ever tested what's the most important thing in a student's education — it's not the color of the paint on the walls, or the facilities," Eggers said. "The very most important thing is the teachers. It's a school. It has to be teachers first."

The author emphasized that if the pay schedule for teachers rises, talent will enter and stay in the profession, and the nation will grow to recognize the value of what teachers bring to the table.

"We know there's a crisis," Eggers said. "We have hundreds of thousands of empty classrooms. We have schools that only have one or two qualified teachers. This is maybe the most urgent moment in the last 150 years. And so there isn't any other option. We have to start somewhere."

Adam Goldstein is the D.C. Bureau intern for States Newsroom. Goldstein is a graduate student at the University of Missouri School of Journalism, studying digital reporting. He is originally from San Francisco, and loves swimming, cooking, and the San Francisco 49ers.

Offshore wind will need major investments in transmission, supply chain, reports say

BY: ROBERT ZULLO - JANUARY 26, 2023 4:23 PM

Achieving the aggressive offshore wind power goals of the federal government and individual states will require billions of dollars in spending on transmission infrastructure, "unprecedented" cooperation between grid operators and federal and state agencies, and would be aided by major buildout of a domestic supply chain, per a pair of reports released this week.

Coastal states across the country, from California to Louisiana to Maine, are pushing for offshore wind projects, but the reports see potential bottlenecks looming, both in the supply chain to build and install turbines as well as in the ability to bring the electricity ashore.

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory, along with the Business Network for Offshore Wind and Tufts University, among other partners, released a report Monday that found that creating an American supply chain for the offshore wind industry, including manufacturing facilities, ports and vessels, would make hitting the Biden administration's 30-gigawatts-by-2030 target, roughly the equivalent of 30 nuclear reactors, more likely.

"Ambitious global offshore wind energy deployment targets will create substantial demand for the components needed to build these wind turbines and balance-of-system components such as foundations and cables," says the report.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 20 of 88

"The limited global manufacturing capacity for these components creates a risk for U.S. projects that choose to import their components from Europe. Therefore, developing a domestic supply chain would reduce reliance on global manufacturers and create jobs and economic benefits in the United States."

The report's authors envision a supply chain buildout scenario that includes 34 new major U.S. wind turbine component manufacturing facilities, eight East Coast "marshaling ports," four to six dedicated turbine installation vessels (there is currently just one being built now for Virginia's Dominion Energy) another four to six dedicated heavy lift vessels and four to six feeder barges and a workforce about 45,000 strong. The price tag? About \$22.4 billion. And it would take between six and nine years to develop, the report says, but would be worth the investment.

"If individual states leverage their existing manufacturing capabilities to contribute to the offshore wind energy sector, this conceptual supply chain would generate significant workforce and economic benefits throughout the United States, not just in coastal locations with active offshore wind energy programs," the authors wrote.

Uncertainty around potential construction delays, cost overruns, legal complications, or possible changes in government support for offshore wind make it hard to get financing for factories, vessels and port investments that would build the supply chain, the report says.

While the 2022 U.S. Inflation Reduction Act, which extended existing tax credits for clean energy projects and created new advanced manufacturing credits applicable to offshore wind turbine components, among other incentives, will help American-made offshore wind components compete with imports, "additional incentives may be required to encourage domestic manufacturing of components or supply chain assets that are either not considered in the IRA or receive credits that are smaller than the cost premium for domestic manufacturing," the report says.

The authors encourage the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, which leases federal waters for offshore wind, to consistently open new lease areas to encourage a steady stream of development and they note that states and utilities setting new offshore wind procurement targets will help provide "predictability and stability" for the fledgling industry.

The report also makes a range of recommendations on turning high-level cooperative frameworks — like Virginia, Maryland and North Carolina's memorandum of understanding to make the Southeast and mid-Atlantic an offshore wind hub and the Federal-State Offshore Wind Implementation Partnership — into more concrete supply chain moves. Those include standardizing regulations and permitting, identifying prime locations for supply chain facilities and establishing long-term plans for supply chain investment to "provide a strong and clear demand for the industry" in the event of shifting national policy, among other recommendations.

Transmission planning

And then there's the matter of connecting all that new offshore electric generation to the grid.

The second report, prepared by the Brattle Group, a consulting firm specializing in economics, finance and regulation, on behalf of a group of clean energy and climate-focused organizations, urges state and federal policymakers, electric industry regulators and grid managers to begin planning offshore wind transmission now to identify the most cost-effective solutions. The report notes that while the federal government has a goal of 30 gigawatts by 2030, the wind procurements and goals of 11 coastal states will surpass 50 gigawatts by 2035 and will hit 77 gigawatts by 2045. (For comparison, natural gas power plant capacity, the largest single U.S. generation source, was 278 gigawatts in 2021.)

"While the most ambitious state and federal clean energy goals will not have to be attained until 2040 or 2050, we project that starting proactive planning for these long-term offshore wind generation needs now likely will save U.S. consumers at least \$20 billion and reduce environmental and community impacts by 50%," the report says.

The U.S. electric grid was designed to bring electricity to the coast, not the other way around. That means connecting the large amount of power planned to be produced by offshore wind farms to the homes, businesses and industries that will use it will require big upgrades to the transmission system.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 21 of 88

However, the flow of electricity in much of the country is under the jurisdiction of regional transmission operators, which, in addition to matching electric supply and demand, also generally oversee interconnection requests for new generators and plan for necessary transmission upgrades. To accommodate offshore wind cost effectively, the report says, "requires improved and well-coordinated generation interconnection and transmission planning processes by the regional independent transmission system operators," which have been plagued by long interconnection queues and caught up in debates over planning and how the costs of interconnection should be allocated.

Critics have complained that the grid operators have been slow to come to grips with the surge in renewable projects entering their interconnection queues and are stuck in blinkered planning regimes.

Better planning, though, would mean less ocean cable, fewer onshore interconnection points and environmental effects and lower costs for customers. And it needs to start now because of the long timeline (at least a decade) offshore wind transmission projects require, the report says.

"Any planning steps taken today are unlikely to yield significant new transmission infrastructure until the early 2030s," the authors wrote.

The report noted that the largest U.S. grid operator, PJM, struck an agreement with New Jersey to conduct a planning and solicitation process for transmission upgrades necessary to accommodate its offshore wind goals (one of the nation's most ambitious) that will save customers about \$900 million and reduce interconnection risks for developers, making future offshore wind procurements more competitive, among other benefits.

"If the scope of the planning effort had been broader than just for offshore wind and only for New Jersey, the benefits would have been even larger," the report says.

The study calls for beefing up staffing and budgets at state regulatory agencies, empowering new or existing "regional, multi-state decision-making bodies," such as new multistate transmission authorities possibly modeled on the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, proactive identification of feasible interconnection points, streamlined federal permitting for third-party transmission developers, new cost-allocation frameworks and better regional and interregional planning processes, among others.

A proposed rule by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, aimed at improving regional transmission planning by better quantifying the benefits of upgrades, could help offshore wind development down the road, said Johannes Pfeifenberger, a principal at the Brattle Group and a co-author of the report, in an interview.

But in the short term, he says, it's important for states with offshore wind goals to follow New Jersey's lead and team up with each other and grid operators to identify the optimal interconnection locations and transmission corridors, among other planning steps. (All six New England states announced a joint effort Wednesday to pursue federal transmission infrastructure funding in just the sort of regional approach the report contemplates.)

"This is a complex dance that requires multiple steps," he said. "The urgency is certainly important. Unless we do many of these things right now we will have lost opportunities to achieve better outcomes. ... The other takeaway at least in my mind is the governors really have the opportunity to make this work on a multi-state level. But unless the governors get involved or state legislators get involved we don't have any entities that have decision-making powers."

Robert Zullo is a national energy reporter based in southern Illinois focusing on renewable power and the electric grid. Robert joined States Newsroom in 2018 as the founding editor of the Virginia Mercury. Before that, he spent 13 years as a reporter and editor at newspapers in Virginia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Louisiana. He has a bachelor's degree from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va. He grew up in Miami, Fla., and central New Jersey.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 22 of 88

Bill to tax lithium as an energy mineral passes House

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - JANUARY 26, 2023 3:20 PM

PIERRE – The South Dakota House of Representatives sent a bill classifying lithium as an energy mineral to the Senate on Thursday.

If passed, the re-classification would subject the high-demand mineral, used to power cell phones, laptops and electric vehicles, to the state's severance tax.

The severance tax is imposed on the extraction of natural resources, such as oil, coal and gas. The tax is typically based on the value or volume of the resources extracted.

House Bill 1072, which passed the House with a vote of 57-13, aims to generate additional revenue for the state by taxing lithium as the state does oil, coal, or natural gas.

The bill was brought by Rep. Kirk Chaffee, R-Whitewood. Lithium miners already have claims to about 50,000 acres of the Black Hills Forest.

"That's almost a 300% expansion within this last year," Chaffee said.

The bill received support from both sides of the aisle, but Rep. Oren Lesmiester, D-Parade, questioned if the bill would create a slippery slope to the taxation of other metals.

Chaffee said no.

"I consulted with the School of Mines to make sure that I'm talking about the stuff you'd be using to put in the batteries," Chaffee said.

Rep. Rebecca Reimer, R-Chamberlain, asked Chaffee if the companies mining the Black Hills are U.S. companies.

"The research I've done on it shows most of these are out of the country," Chaffee said. "The one that holds, I believe, 30,000 of those 50,000 acres was a company out of Australia."

The bill now moves to the South Dakota Senate. If passed, it will head to the desk of Governor Kristi Noem.

Joshua Haiar is a reporter based in Sioux Falls. Born and raised in Mitchell, he joined the Navy as a public affairs specialist after high school and then earned a degree from the University of South Dakota. Prior to joining South Dakota Searchlight, Joshua worked for five years as a multimedia specialist and journalist with South Dakota Public Broadcasting.

National Dems give New Hampshire, Georgia more time to change 2024 primary dates

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - JANUARY 26, 2023 8:43 AM

WASHINGTON — New Hampshire and Georgia will have a bit longer to implement key changes to when and how they hold Democratic presidential primaries, under an extension a Democratic National Committee panel approved Wednesday.

Election officials will have until June 3 to move New Hampshire's 2024 Democratic presidential primary to Feb. 13 and Georgia's to Feb. 20, if they want to hold early primaries next year.

New Hampshire must also expand access to early voting if it wants to remain one of the first states in the country that votes on Democratic presidential candidates.

The DNC panel in December shook up the longstanding caucus and primary calendar and decided voters in South Carolina would go first in picking Democratic presidential nominees, followed by Nevada, New Hampshire, Georgia and Michigan.

The proposal would move the earliest date away from the longtime first-in-the-nation Iowa caucuses, though New Hampshire would maintain an early role and vote just a week after South Carolina.

GOP state leaders opposed

The extension, the Rules & Bylaws Committee approved Wednesday following a 25-0 vote during a virtual meeting, gives New Hampshire and Georgia several months to make their primary election changes beyond an original Jan. 5 deadline, though the additional time is unlikely to sway GOP state leaders, who

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 23 of 88

remain opposed to the changes.

That factor has elicited concerns from New Hampshire Democrats who are imploring the committee to work with them, given the GOP governor and Republican-controlled state legislature have rebuffed cooperating with Democrats to implement changes to state law.

"I want to be very clear about one thing — we share the president's and the RBCs commitment to elevating the voices of Black, Latino and Hispanic voters," said panel member Joanne Dowdell of New Hampshire. "And we believe it's possible to lift up diverse voices and keep New Hampshire at the start of the process. These two things need not be mutually exclusive."

"We agree that our goal with the early primary window shouldn't just be to tell the story of one state or a single group of voters, it should be to tell the broader story of our party — both our values and our ability to appeal to voters all across the country," Dowdell added.

The new requirements for New Hampshire to remain an early primary state, she said, put the state's Democrats in a "no-win position."

If New Hampshire and Georgia don't make the adjustments, they would need to hold their Democratic presidential primaries in the regular window, which runs from the first Tuesday in March through the second Tuesday in June.

If the states opt to hold their primary elections outside that window without the waiver, they could face repercussions from the national party, including a prohibition on Democratic presidential candidates campaigning in the state and the state losing half its delegates.

Frustration with New Hampshire

Several members of the Rules and Bylaws Committee voiced frustration with some New Hampshire Democrats during the meeting, arguing that some comments being made publicly are harmful to the party.

Leah Daughtry, a panel member representing New York, said it was incumbent on the committee to "set up a calendar that reflects a 21st-century voting reality, as opposed to something that happened 100 years ago."

Daughtry said she was "taken aback and quite frankly shocked" by some New Hampshire Democrats saying they were surprised by the panel's decision to re-work the order of states that get waivers to hold their primary elections early in the process.

"Hanging their argument on this 100-year-old privilege is really, for me as an African American woman, quite disturbing in as much as this law that they passed was passed even before Black people had the right to vote," Daughtry said, adding it was also before women had the right to vote.

Mo Elleithee, representing the District of Columbia on the committee, sought to remind New Hampshire that the state would still hold the second voting day in the process.

"Even I as a veteran of several New Hampshire primaries have to admit, like this notion that New Hampshire is first in the nation is a bit of a fallacy," he said. "New Hampshire has historically been second in the nation behind Iowa. That has been its role."

Elleithee said he understands that Iowa is technically a caucus and that New Hampshire state law says the state's primary election must be the first of its kind, though he challenged the distinction.

"Let's be real ... it has been viewed as the second-in-the nation contest," Elleithee said. "Based on our proposal, it is still the second-in-the nation contest. We have maintained the tradition that New Hampshire has asked us to maintain."

December vote

The DNC Rules & Bylaws panel voted in December to change the order and the states that are granted waivers to hold primaries early in the year, moving slightly away from Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada and South Carolina as the early states.

The new lineup for 2024 would have South Carolina vote first on Feb. 6, followed by Nevada and New Hampshire on Feb. 13, Georgia on Feb. 20 and Michigan on Feb. 27.

President Joe Biden, who in 2020 didn't win a primary until South Carolina, had requested the shift in the party's presidential nomination process.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 24 of 88

The changes were approved on a mostly unanimous voice vote, though Scott Brennan of Iowa and Dowdell voted against the new primary calendar.

Election officials in several of the states and Iowa have rebuked the decision, saying they simply won't change when the state holds its primaries. Iowa and New Hampshire also have state laws requiring them to vote before other states, complicating the matter.

Rules and Bylaws Committee Co-Chair Minyon Moore said during the Wednesday meeting the panel remained "committed to seeing" Biden's vision for the 2024 primary move forward.

"We want to make sure the states have as much time as they need to work through this process," Moore said.

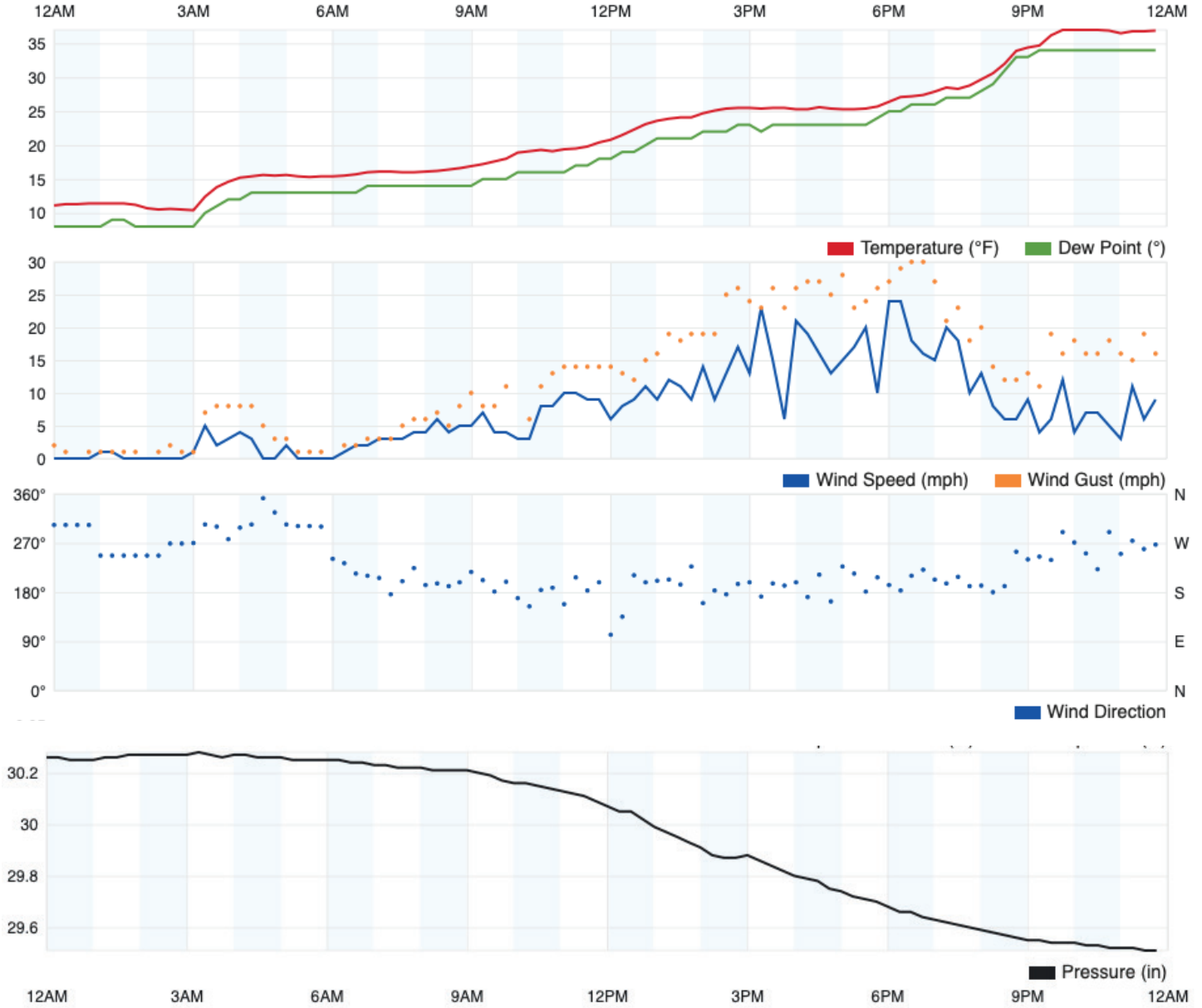
"South Carolina, Nevada and Michigan have all completed their waiver requirements to our satisfaction," she noted. "New Hampshire and Georgia remain working on their progress. Albeit it is for different reasons, but we are still committed to seeing the president's vision and we want to make sure the states have as much time as they need to work through this process."

Jennifer covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include congressional policy, politics and legal challenges with a focus on health care, unemployment, housing and aid to families.

Groton Daily Independent








Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 25 of 88

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Broton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 26 of 88

Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
Scattered Flurries and Blustery then Partly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Cold	Mostly Cloudy	Cold	Mostly Cloudy	Cold
High: 21 °F ↓	Low: -7 °F	High: -3 °F	Low: -16 °F	High: 1 °F	Low: -19 °F	High: 0 °F



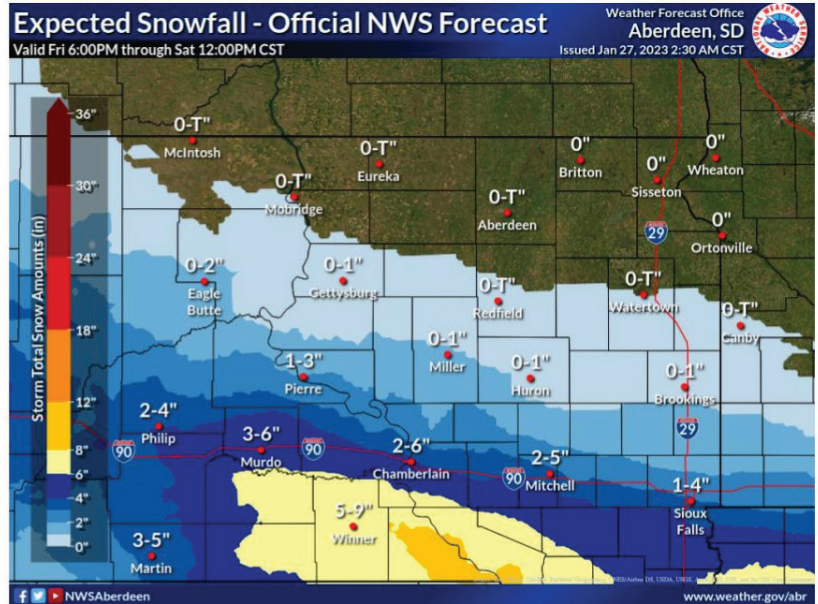
Next Round of Moisture

January 27, 2023
3:58 AM

South Central South Dakota Tonight

Key Messages

- Weak system spreads snow across South Central South Dakota
 - ◆ Impacting Interstate 90
 - ◆ North Winds 20 to 30 mph
 - ◆ Blowing & Drifting
- Otherwise, turning colder
- Readings falling into the single digits either side of zero.



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

A system will produce snow across southern South Dakota tonight, with some potential for blowing and drifting. Snowfall tapering Saturday morning.

Broton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 27 of 88



Temperatures Next Few Days

January 27, 2023
3:59 AM

	Maximum Temperature Forecast							Minimum Temperature Forecast							Minimum Wind Chill Forecast						
	1/27 Fri	1/28 Sat	1/29 Sun	1/30 Mon	1/31 Tue	2/1 Wed	2/2 Thu	1/27 Fri	1/28 Sat	1/29 Sun	1/30 Mon	1/31 Tue	2/1 Wed	2/2 Thu	1/27 Fri	1/28 Sat	1/29 Sun	1/30 Mon	1/31 Tue	2/1 Wed	2/2 Thu
Aberdeen	37	6	3	2	13	4	13	8	-5	-11	-14	-11	-6	-6	-7	-23	-25	-32	-31	-25	-24
Britton	35	3	-2	-3	9	-1	11	5	-9	-15	-17	-9	-8	-7	-10	-25	-29	-35	-31	-26	-25
Eagle Butte	35	15	7	10	22	17	27	17	3	-2	-8	-3	6	8	2	-14	-18	-25	-17	-10	-5
Eureka	34	7	1	2	14	5	18	9	-5	-12	-20	-7	-6	-3	-5	-23	-28	-36	-26	-24	-20
Gettysburg	35	11	4	6	16	9	21	13	-1	-7	-14	-9	-4	2	-1	-18	-24	-30	-25	-18	-14
Kennebec	38	19	8	8	20	16	26	20	2	-4	-6	-3	4	5	7	-15	-18	-21	-21	-11	-10
McIntosh	35	8	2	5	17	10	21	10	-2	-8	-13	-6	0	0	-5	-18	-25	-31	-21	-16	-12
Milbank	37	6	1	1	11	2	13	7	-5	-11	-11	-6	-6	-6	-8	-24	-28	-31	-27	-24	-24
Miller	37	15	5	5	16	9	20	15	-1	-7	-9	-4	1	1	2	-19	-23	-27	-23	-15	-15
Mobridge	36	10	6	7	19	13	21	12	-1	-7	-14	-4	-2	4	-2	-16	-20	-29	-21	-14	-9
Murdo	33	19	9	10	23	19	27	21	3	-1	-3	1	7	9	6	-12	-13	-18	-17	-8	-4
Pierre	40	19	11	12	25	19	30	20	5	0	-2	-4	7	8	7	-10	-12	-15	-16	-6	-6
Redfield	37	12	3	3	14	5	15	12	-3	-10	-13	-9	-4	-4	-1	-20	-24	-30	-27	-22	-21
Sisseton	39	4	0	-1	11	1	13	5	-6	-10	-15	-5	-5	-5	-11	-26	-29	-32	-26	-22	-22
Watertown	36	8	0	-2	9	2	12	10	-6	-12	-14	-9	-6	-6	-5	-24	-28	-32	-30	-24	-25
Webster	34	5	-2	-3	7	1	12	6	-8	-13	-15	-9	-6	-6	-9	-27	-30	-34	-30	-25	-25
Wheaton	36	2	-2	-2	9	-1	8	4	-9	-13	-14	-10	-8	-8	-11	-27	-30	-32	-28	-26	-26



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 28 of 88

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 37.0 °F at 10:30 PM

Low Temp: 10.4 °F at 3:00 AM

Wind: 30 mph at 6:45 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 9 hours, 36 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 53 in 1934

Record Low: -34 in 1915

Average High: 24°F

Average Low: 2°F

Average Precip in Jan.: 0.49

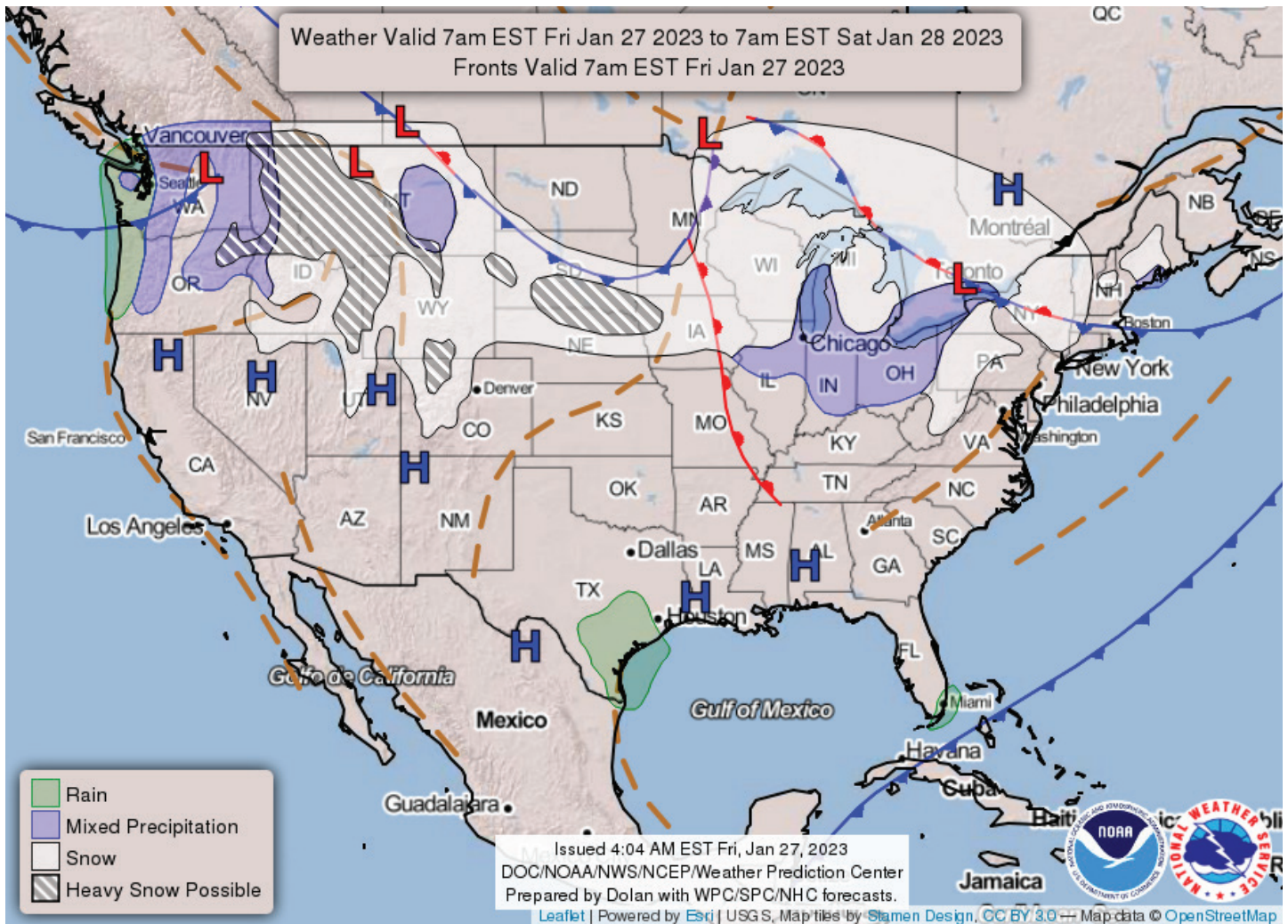
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.49

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 5:33:15 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:55:58 AM



Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 29 of 88

Today in Weather History

January 27th, 1969: Snowfall of 7 to 10 inches combined with winds of 15 to 30 mph caused widespread low visibilities and heavy drifting from the 27th to the 29th across Minnesota. Many roads were blocked or remained blocked. Many schools were closed with many accidents.

1922: On this date through the 29th, a significant snowstorm struck the East Coast from South Carolina to southeastern Massachusetts. Washington, DC, reported 28 inches of snow. The heavy snow on the Knickerbocker Theater's flat roof put a significant strain on the structure. On the evening of the 28th, during a showing of the silent comedy "Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford," the building collapsed, killing 98 people and injuring 130 others. [Click HERE](#) for more information from the Capital Weather Gang.

1772 - The "Washington and Jefferson Snowstorm" occurred. George Washington reported three feet of snow at Mount Vernon, and Thomas Jefferson recorded about three feet at Monticello. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1966 - Oswego, NY, was in the midst of a five day lake effect storm which left the town buried under 102 inches of snow. (David Ludlum)

1967 - Residents of Chicago, IL, began to dig out from a storm which produced 23 inches of snow in 29 hours. The snow paralyzed the city and suburbs for days, and business losses were enormous. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A powerful storm moving into the western U.S. produced 13 inches of snow at Daggett Pass NV, and 16 inches in the Cascade Mountains of Oregon. Winds gusted to 63 mph at Reno NV, and wind gusts in Oregon exceeded 80 mph. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - The nation got a breather from winter storms, however, cold arctic air settled into the southeastern U.S. Hollywood FL reported a record low reading of 39 degrees. (National Weather Summary)

1989 - The last half of January was bitterly cold over most of Alaska. Nearly thirty stations established all-time record low temperatures. On this date Tanana reported a low of -76 degrees. Daily highs of -66 degrees were reported at Chandalar Lake on the 22nd, and at Ambler on the 26th. (The Weather Channel)

1989 - Low pressure in north central Alaska continued to direct air across northern Siberia and the edges of the Arctic Circle into the state. The temperature at Fairbanks remained colder than 40 degrees below zero for the eighth day in a row. Lows of 68 below at Galena, 74 below at McGrath, and 76 below at Tanana, were new records for the date. Wind chill readings were colder than 100 degrees below zero. (National Weather Summary)

1990 - Another in a series of cold fronts brought high winds to the northwestern U.S., and more heavy snow to some of the higher elevations. The series of vigorous cold fronts crossing the area between the 23rd and the 27th of the month produced up to 60 inches of snow in the Cascade Mountains of Washington State. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2005 - Month-to-date snowfall at Boston Logan International Airport totaled 43.1 inches, making January the snowiest month on record.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 30 of 88

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

WATCH YOUR STEP!

We live in a "politically correct" society. Each day brings new challenges and attacks on our faith, beliefs, values, families, churches, and the list actually seems endless. What was once the source of strength, hope, courage, encouragement, inspiration, wisdom, guidance and the guardian of our lives - God's Holy Word - has now become irrelevant, ridiculed constantly, under attack by those who are godless, and has been replaced by humanism.

Listen, however, to the wise insight of Solomon: "The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it." There is a very important distinction between "the prudent" and "the simple." The "simple" are those who are "open-minded" to whatever is popular at the moment. They have no standards or criteria to distinguish between right and wrong. If it is in fashion or fashionable, popular or predominate in the lives of celebrities or politicians, the "simple" fall in line and become believers, then leaders and followers in the revolt to take God from His rightful place in His world.

But "the prudent" are different. They are filled with insight and good judgment. They wisely view all alternatives before making a decision. They are careful and cautious and use good, God-centered wisdom in all decisions. In this verse, "prudent" people are people who apply God's guidance to life's situations and follow His directions.

In another proverb, Solomon wrote, "The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways, but the folly of fools is deception." Thank God for His wisdom! Follow it carefully!

Prayer: Thank You, God, for providing us the path to successful living. May our decisions reflect prudence that comes from knowing Your Word and following Your way. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it. Proverbs 27:12



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

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 31 of 88

2023 Community Events

- 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)
- 03/25/2023 Spring Vendor Fair, 10am-3pm, Community Center
- 04/01/2023 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)
- 04/01/2023 Dueling Duo Baseball/Softball Fundraiser at the Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm
- 04/06/2023 Groton Career Development Event
- 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)
- 06/16/2023 – SDSU Alumni and Friends Golf Tournament
- 07/04/2023 – Couples Firecracker Golf Tournament
- 07/09/2023 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
- 07/26/2023 – GGA Burger Fundraiser Lunch at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 08/04/2023 – Wine on Nine 6pm
- 08/11/2023 – GHS Basketball Golf Tournament
- 09/09/2023 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 09/10/2023 – Couples Sunflower Golf Tournament
- 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)
- 12/02/2023 – Tour of Homes & Holiday Party

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 32 of 88

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



Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 33 of 88



WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
01.24.23

33 41 47 50 62 20

MegaPlier: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 32 Mins 54
DRAW: Secs

GAME DETAILS

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
01.25.23

9 15 28 47 49 7

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$34,420,000

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 32
DRAW: Mins 54 Secs

GAME DETAILS

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
01.26.23

15 17 26 29 35 9

TOP PRIZE:
\$7,000/week

NEXT 15 Hrs 2 Mins 54
DRAW: Secs

GAME DETAILS

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
01.25.23

6 11 15 22 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$30,000

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 32
DRAW: Mins 54 Secs

GAME DETAILS

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
01.25.23

15 32 35 42 47 23

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 31
DRAW: Mins 54 Secs

GAME DETAILS

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
01.25.23

9 17 20 38 40 18

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$572,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 31
DRAW: Mins 54 Secs

GAME DETAILS

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 34 of 88

News from the  Associated Press

Thursday's Scores

The Associated Press

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL=

Boyd County, Neb. 37, Burke 28
Brandon Valley 43, Yankton 25
Dell Rapids St. Mary 52, Alcester-Hudson 48
Elk Point-Jefferson 49, Tri-Valley 44
Ethan 75, Mitchell Christian 23
Flandreau 48, Parker 25
Florence/Henry 58, Great Plains Lutheran 25
Freeman 61, Canistota 43
Garretson 46, Beresford 43
Gayville-Volin 58, Canton 25
Hamlin 52, Sisseton 43
Harrisburg 36, Brookings 29
Irene-Wakonda 39, Freeman Academy/Marion 30
James Valley Christian 35, Miller 28
Leola/Frederick 42, Faulkton 32
Lower Brule 81, Crazy Horse 9
Marty Indian 54, Flandreau Indian 27
McCook Central/Montrose 55, Chester 37
Milbank 65, Deuel 41
Omaha Nation, Neb. 72, Takini 34
Parkston 44, Lennox 39
Potter County 53, North Central Co-Op 38
Rapid City Christian 73, Hot Springs 29
Redfield 51, Clark/Willow Lake 47
Sioux Falls Christian 60, Dakota Valley 48
Sioux Falls Jefferson 52, Sioux Falls Washington 47
Sioux Valley 57, Baltic 33
Spearfish 49, Rapid City Central 35
St. Thomas More 56, Sturgis Brown 10
Stanley County 60, Crow Creek 52
Sully Buttes 50, Hitchcock-Tulare 42
Todd County 63, Pine Ridge 34
Vermillion 51, Dell Rapids 22
Viborg-Hurley 52, Centerville 41
Wagner 68, Scotland 26
Wessington Springs 55, Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 45
Wolsey-Wessington 77, Highmore-Harrold 51
POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS=
Hill City vs. Sundance, Wyo., ccd.

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL=

Aberdeen Roncalli 53, Britton-Hecla 19
Beresford 61, Flandreau 50

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 35 of 88

Brandon Valley 58, Yankton 54
Canton 87, Sioux Falls Lutheran 35
Crazy Horse 76, Wakpala 69
Crow Creek 77, Stanley County 72
Dakota Valley 73, Sioux Falls Christian 57
DeSmet 51, Canistota 39
Dell Rapids 69, Vermillion 48
Dell Rapids St. Mary 76, Alcester-Hudson 38
Elk Point-Jefferson 71, Tri-Valley 54
Elkton-Lake Benton 82, Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 33
Estelline/Hendricks 72, Arlington 39
Ethan 71, Mitchell Christian 50
Faulkton 50, Leola/Frederick 34
Florence/Henry 55, Great Plains Lutheran 52
Gregory 61, Avon 33
Groton Area 62, Webster 21
Hamlin 67, Sisseton 22
Harding County 62, Belle Fourche 48
Harrisburg 66, Brookings 41
Hitchcock-Tulare 62, Sully Buttes 59
Howard 66, Chester 40
Irene-Wakonda 48, Freeman Academy/Marion 43
James Valley Christian 84, Miller 51
Lakota Tech 62, Little Wound 38
Lennox 76, Parkston 42
Lower Brule 113, Takini 43
Marty Indian 85, Tiospaye Topa 59
Milbank 54, Deuel 44
Omaha Nation, Neb. 87, Flandreau Indian 54
Philip 64, Dupree 27
Potter County 65, North Central Co-Op 52
Sioux Falls Jefferson 75, Sioux Falls O'Gorman 52
Sioux Falls Lincoln 80, Sioux Falls Washington 68
St. Francis Indian 74, Bennett County 61
Viborg-Hurley 69, Centerville 43
Wagner 55, Scotland 46
Wall 81, Hill City 78
POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS=
Lemmon vs. McIntosh, ppd.

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

St. Thomas takes 60-54 victory over South Dakota State

SAINT PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Andrew Rohde had 15 points in St. Thomas' 60-54 win against South Dakota State on Thursday night.

Rohde had eight assists and four steals for the Tommies (14-9, 5-5 Summit League). Ahjany Lee scored 12 points and added eight rebounds and three blocks. Brooks Allen finished with nine points, while adding nine rebounds.

Zeke Mayo led the way for the Jackrabbits (11-10, 6-3) with 23 points and two steals. Matt Dentlinger

added 15 points and eight rebounds for South Dakota State. William Kyle III put up six points, six rebounds and two blocks.

Senate moves forward with child witness protections bill

By AMANCAI BIRABEN Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Child witnesses have the right to a safe courtroom, South Dakota state legislators agreed during an initial bill hearing on Thursday.

The Senate Judiciary committee unanimously voted to move forward with a legal amendment that would provide extra support to court witnesses under the age of 16 who are survivors of sexual violence, like rape and trafficking. The bill builds on a closed-circuit television clause of a child welfare law and would grant kids counsel during testimony, physical distance from a defendant who has allegedly abused them, psychological support — like a trusted person or an emotional support animal — to be present, and taking necessary breaks.

Republican Sen. Tim Reed, the bill's prime sponsor, broke down these provisions, emphasizing that children should be treated with softer gloves when it comes to testifying.

"When sexual abuse and trafficking cases are tried in court, we must protect the victim and make sure that justice is served for that very young victim."

Several members of the public testified during Thursday's hearing, including Tifanie Petro, the director of advocacy and prevention for the Children's Home Child Advocacy Center, which has served children impacted by trauma for years.

"It is unreasonable for us professionals to continue to ask children to adjust to a world in the justice system that was not designed for them in mind," she said.

Attorney Lara Roetzel also advocated for the bill — championing the rights of child sexual abuse victims, who she said are some of the bravest humans she's ever met. She highlighted her prosecution of Theodore Guzman, in which she called four child sexual assault survivors to testify in a courtroom where they stood less than eight feet from the defendant.

"I didn't think the youngest would be able to do it. She was seven at the time of the trial," said Roetzel. "But justice demanded that I try her on the stand if I wanted to get a conviction on that count. Six minutes she stood in the doorway sobbing."

A sole opponent to the bill argued that one proposed change was unconstitutional, referring to a section in the bill that would have allowed a witness to have a third party intervene between him or herself and the defendant, should the defendant represent himself. The committee agreed to strike that amendment, pushing the bill on.

At least 13 other states already have advanced protections available when children are required to testify in court. The Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment estimates that 4,000 children experience sexual abuse in South Dakota each year and said it is one of the most underreported crimes nationally.

Massner scores 23 as Western Illinois defeats South Dakota

MACOMB, Ill. (AP) — Trenton Massner scored 23 points as Western Illinois beat South Dakota 75-72 on Thursday night.

Massner had six rebounds and six assists for the Leathernecks (13-8, 6-4 Summit League). Jesiah West scored 11 points and added eight rebounds, five assists, and three blocks. Quinlan Bennett finished 5 of 6 from the floor to finish with 11 points, while adding six rebounds.

The Coyotes (9-12, 4-5) were led by Tasos Kamateros, who posted 17 points and seven rebounds. South Dakota also got 16 points from Mason Archambault. In addition, Kruz Perrott-Hunt had 14 points.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 37 of 88

S. Dakota Senate suspends lawmaker after vaccine exchange

By AMANCAI BIRABEN and STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Senate on Thursday suspended a Republican state senator in a rare move that stripped the lawmaker of all legislative power while keeping the allegations against her a secret.

Sen. Julie Frye-Mueller, who is among a group of right-wing Statehouse Republicans, told reporters earlier Thursday that she was being punished following an exchange she had with a legislative aide about vaccinations.

Sen. Michael Rohl, the Republican lawmaker who initiated the motion to suspend Frye-Mueller, said in a statement that it was based on “serious allegations” and had been made to ensure the Legislature was creating a safe work environment for employees. He likened the Senate’s suspension to the move a business owner or human resources department would make when allegations are raised.

“The Senate will operate swiftly and diligently through the process of an investigation and provide the opportunity for due process to all parties involved,” Rohl said.

The Republican-controlled Senate voted 27-6 to form a committee to investigate Frye-Mueller’s conduct and in the meantime suspend her from voting or holding other rights of an elected official. Republican legislative leaders refused to comment Thursday on the allegations that led to them suspending the Senate rules and stripping their colleague of her ability to represent her constituents.

The Senate Republican leader, Sen. Casey Crabtree said the legislative punishment was “brought after a lot of serious thought,” but offered little else on the allegations. Another high-ranking Republican, Sen. Lee Schoenbeck, said it was meant to “protect the decorum” of the law-making body.

Schoenbeck removed Frye-Mueller from two committee assignments on Wednesday.

One of Frye-Mueller’s Senate allies, Sen. Tom Pischke, spoke against the suspension, saying it was based on a “she said-she said situation” and would deprive Frye-Mueller’s constituents of their representation in the Senate.

Lt. Gov. Larry Rhoden, who serves as the Senate’s president, also opposed the move, cautioning against the precedent of suspending an elected representative without due process. But his objections were overruled in a two-thirds majority vote by the Republican-controlled Senate.

Republicans in the Legislature have become deeply divided in recent years. One of the battlegrounds between right-wing members and Republicans who support the political establishment has been over separate proposals to limit requirements for the COVID-19 vaccine and childhood vaccines.

Frye-Mueller said she did not bring up the COVID-19 vaccine during her exchange with the aide and that she has not been formally presented with the allegations against her.

“I have a right to defend myself,” Frye-Mueller said before the Senate’s vote Thursday.

After the vote succeeded, she exited the Senate chamber.

Childhood vaccines have long been celebrated as public health success stories, but vaccination rates among kindergarteners have dropped nationwide in recent years. Officials with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have said that decreased confidence in vaccines is a likely contributor, as well as disruptions to routine health care during the pandemic.

Falling vaccination rates open the door to outbreaks of diseases once thought to be in the rearview mirror, experts say.

Auschwitz anniversary marked as peace again shattered by war

By VANESSA GERA Associated Press

OSWIECIM, Poland (AP) — Auschwitz-Birkenau survivors and other mourners commemorated the 78th anniversary Friday of the liberation of the Nazi German death camp, some expressing horror that war has again shattered peace in Europe and the lesson of Never Again is being forgotten.

The former concentration and extermination camp is located in the town of Oświęcim in southern Poland, which was under the occupation of German forces during World War II and became a place of systematic

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 38 of 88

murder of Jews, Poles, Soviet prisoners of war, Roma and others targeted for elimination by Adolf Hitler and his henchmen.

In all, some 1.1 million people were killed at the vast complex before it was liberated by Soviet troops on Jan. 27, 1945.

Today the site, with its barracks and barbed wire and the ruins of gas chambers, stands as one of the world's most recognized symbols of evil and a site of pilgrimage for millions from around the world.

Yet it lies only 300 kilometers (185 miles) from Ukraine, where Russian aggression is creating unthinkable death and destruction — a conflict on the minds of many this year.

One survivor, Zdzisława Włodarczyk, said during observances Friday that the war has created a “feeling of horror” in her.

Piotr Cywinski, Auschwitz state museum director, compared Nazi crimes to those the Russians have committed in Ukrainian towns like Bucha and Mariupol. He said they were inspired by a “similar sick megalomania” and that free people must not remain indifferent.

“Being silent means giving voice to the perpetrators,” Cywinski said. “Remaining indifferent is tantamount to condoning murder.”

Russian President Vladimir Putin attended observances marking the 60th anniversary of the camp's liberation in 2005. This year, no Russian official at all was invited due to Russia's attack on Ukraine.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy marked the event, alluding to his own country's situation.

“We know and remember that indifference kills along with hatred,” he said in a social media post.

“Indifference and hatred are always capable of creating evil together only. That is why it is so important that everyone who values life should show determination when it comes to saving those whom hatred seeks to destroy.”

Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni, whose Brothers of Italy party has its roots in the post-World War II neo-fascist Italian Social Movement, called the Holocaust “the abyss of humanity. An evil that touched also our country with the infamy of the racial laws of 1938.”

Bogdan Bartnikowski, a Pole who was 12 years old when he was transported to Auschwitz, said the first images he saw on television last February of refugees fleeing Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine triggered traumatic memories.

He was stunned seeing a little girl in a large crowd of refugees holding her mother with one hand and grasping a teddy bear in the other.

“It was literally a blow to the head for me because I suddenly saw, after almost 80 years, what I had seen in a freight car when I was being transported to Auschwitz. A little girl was sitting next to me, hugging a doll to her chest,” Bartnikowski, now 91, said.

Bartnikowski was among several survivors of Auschwitz who spoke about their experiences to journalists Thursday.

Another, Stefania Wernik, who was born at Auschwitz in November 1944, less than three months before its liberation, spoke of Auschwitz being a “hell on earth.”

She said when she was born she was so tiny that the Nazis tattooed her number — 89136 — on her thigh. She was washed in cold water, wrapped in rags and subjected to medical experiments.

And yet her mother had abundant milk, and they both survived. After the war, her mother returned home and reunited with her husband, and “the whole village came to look at us and said it's a miracle.”

She appealed for “no more fascism, which brings death, genocide, crimes, slaughter and loss of human dignity.”

Among those who attended Friday's commemorations was Doug Emhoff, the husband of U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris. Emhoff, the first Jewish person to be married to one of the top two nationally elected U.S. officials, bowed his head at an execution wall at Auschwitz, where he left a wreath of flowers in the U.S. flag's colors and the words: “From the people of the United States of America.”

The Germans established Auschwitz in 1940 for Polish prisoners; later they expanded the complex, building death chambers and crematoria where Jews from across Europe were brought by train to be murdered.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 39 of 88

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said "the suffering of 6 million innocently murdered Jews remains forgotten — as does the suffering of the survivors."

"We recall our historic responsibility on Holocaust Memorial Day so that our Never Again endures in future," he wrote on Twitter.

The German parliament was holding a memorial event focused this year on those who were persecuted for their sexual orientation. Thousands of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transsexual people were incarcerated and killed by the Nazis. Their fate was only publicly recognized decades after the end of World War II.

Elsewhere in the world on Friday events were planned to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day, an annual commemoration established by a United Nations resolution in 2005.

Storm Cheneso picks up in Madagascar, more flooding to come

By WANJOHI KABUKURU Associated Press

MOMBASA, Kenya (AP) — A severe tropical storm which devastated parts of Madagascar this week is set to continue to wreak havoc on the country as it strengthens over the weekend, the United Nations regional weather monitoring service said.

The storm has killed 8 people and ten are still missing, according to Madagascar's National Bureau of Risk and Disaster Management. It has displaced over 60,000 people and damaged 13,000 houses in northern and central Madagascar.

An alert issued by local authorities on Friday warned of heavy rainfall in central and western parts of the country with an imminent risk of flooding and landslides. Flash floods are expected in the western coastal town of Morombe, raising fears of further destruction and displacement.

Over the next few days Cheneso could dump in some areas of Madagascar more than 200% of their average January rainfall, the U.K.'s meteorological office warned.

Storm Cheneso, currently classed as a severe tropical storm, is expected to be upgraded to a cyclone by the U.N.'s regional weather center. The weather system is also likely move in a southeasterly direction and away from inhabited land, but meteorologists remain cautious.

"Cyclones can shift direction at any moment depending on wind directions and other prevailing conditions. That is why alerts are issued with caution," said Evans Mukolwe, a retired meteorologist. "It can alter course anytime."

Storm Cheneso first made landfall as a moderate storm nine days ago in the Sava region in northeastern Madagascar. Cheneso weakened as it stalled over the country for much of the week and is now strengthening.

Cyclones are typical in southern Africa from December to March, but scientists say climate change has caused storms to be wetter, more frequent and more intense.

Jerusalem, West Bank on edge after Israeli raid, fighting

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's defense minister signaled Friday that the military would stop its airstrikes if Palestinian militant groups halted rocket attacks, a day after the deadliest Israeli raid in decades raised the prospect of a major flare-up in fighting.

The limited exchange of fire between Gaza militants and the Israeli armed forces has so far followed a familiar pattern that allows both sides to respond without leading to a major escalation. Defense Minister Yoav Gallant's instruction to the military to prepare for new strikes in the Gaza Strip "if necessary" also appeared to leave open the possibility that the violence would subside.

Midday prayers at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, often a catalyst for clashes between Palestinians and Israeli police, passed in relative calm, despite a heavy police presence. Still, residents of the holy city and the occupied West Bank remained on edge.

The bombardments followed an Israeli raid in the flashpoint Jenin refugee camp that turned into a gun battle, which killed at least nine people, including seven militants and a 61-year-old woman.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 40 of 88

The raid also sparked clashes elsewhere during which Israeli forces killed a 22-year-old in al-Ram, a Palestinian town north of Jerusalem. At the funeral in al-Ram, crowds of Palestinians carried the young man's body aloft and waved the flags of both Fatah, the party that controls the Palestinian Authority, and militant Hamas, which rules Gaza.

The escalation in the decadeslong Israeli-Palestinian conflict created an early test for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new far-right government, which came to office as tensions with the Palestinians soared and has vowed to take a hard line.

The raid also prompted the Palestinian Authority to halt security coordination with Israel and drew "deep concern" from the State Department just days before U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken was expected to visit the region.

So far, both the Palestinian rockets and Israeli airstrikes seemed limited so as to prevent escalation into a full-blown war. Israel and Hamas have fought four wars and several smaller skirmishes since the militant group seized power in Gaza from rival Palestinian forces in 2007.

Palestinian militants fired rockets from Gaza toward the south of Israel. Israel retaliated with nonlethal airstrikes on militant targets in Gaza, such as training camps and an underground rocket manufacturing site.

Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant claimed the military dealt a "tough blow" to Palestinian militants in Gaza and said the army was preparing to strike "high-quality targets ... until peace is restored to the citizens of Israel."

An uneasy calm prevailed around Al-Aqsa, revered by Jews as the Temple Mount. Tensions at the volatile Jerusalem holy site has triggered violence in the past, including a bloody Gaza war in 2021. The site is considered both the third-most sacred site in Islam, as well as the site of an ancient Jewish temple that is the holiest place in Judaism.

Israeli police were out in force at entrances to the limestone alleys that lead to the sacred compound. Scores of Muslim worshippers gathered in the mosque's stone courtyard before the iconic golden Dome of the Rock and chanted in solidarity with those killed in the Jenin raid.

"In spirit and blood, we will sacrifice you," they shouted. "Greetings Jenin, Greetings Gaza."

Eyad Shafer, a 45-year-old construction worker from Bethlehem who prays weekly at Al-Aqsa, said he was relieved to have a peaceful morning.

"Thank God it was good and there were no problems after that cursed day," he said, referring to Thursday's events.

Tensions have soared since Israel stepped up raids in the West Bank last spring, following a series of Palestinian attacks. Jenin, which was an important militant stronghold during the 2000-2005 intifada and has again emerged as one, has been the focus of many of the Israeli operations.

Nearly 150 Palestinians were killed in the West Bank and east Jerusalem last year, making 2022 the deadliest in those territories since 2004, according to leading Israeli rights group B'Tselem. Last year, 30 people were killed in Palestinian attacks against Israelis.

So far this year, 30 Palestinians have been killed, according to a count by The Associated Press.

Israel says most of the dead were militants. But youths protesting the incursions and others not involved in the confrontations also have been killed.

Anwar Gargash, a senior diplomat in the United Arab Emirates, warned Friday that "the Israeli escalation in Jenin is dangerous and disturbing and undermines international efforts to advance the priority of the peace agenda." The UAE recognized Israel in 2020 along with Bahrain, which has remained silent on the surge in violence.

News of the nine killed in Jenin and the overnight rockets blared from phones and radios in Jerusalem's Old City on Friday as young Palestinians milled around and women hawked raisins.

Ibrahim Salameh, a 21-year-old smoking on the steps of Damascus Gate, said he had never been so scared. On Wednesday, he said, his teenage neighbor was killed as police entered the Shuafat refugee camp to demolish an attacker's home.

"Every day there's more and more fear, more tension," he said. "Somehow I'm living with this idea that

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 41 of 88

at any moment I could be shot dead.”

In the West Bank, Fatah announced a general strike and most shops were closed in Palestinian cities. The PA declared Thursday that it would halt the ties that its security forces maintain with Israel in a shared effort to contain Islamic militants. Previous threats have been short-lived, in part because of the benefits the authority enjoys from the relationship, and also due to U.S. and Israeli pressure.

The PA has limited control over scattered enclaves in the West Bank, and almost none over militant strongholds like the Jenin camp.

Israel says its raids are meant to dismantle militant networks and thwart attacks. The Palestinians say they further entrench Israel's 55-year, open-ended occupation of the West Bank, which Israel captured along with east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip in the 1967 Mideast war. The Palestinians want those territories to form any eventual state.

Israel has established dozens of settlements in the West Bank that now house 500,000 people. The Palestinians and much of the international community view settlements as illegal and an obstacle to peace, even as talks to end the conflict have been moribund for over a decade.

Djokovic tops Paul; faces Tsitsipas in Australian Open final

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Of all of his considerable talents, Novak Djokovic's ability to cast aside whatever appears to stand in his way might be the most valuable.

So forget about the potential distraction of his father's decision to stay away from Rod Laver Arena for Djokovic's semifinal against unseeded American Tommy Paul at the Australian Open on Friday. Forget about the heavily taped left hamstring that was an issue for Djokovic last week. Forget about just how physical the points were against Paul. Forget about how Djokovic produced twice as many unforced errors, 24, as winners, 12, in the opening set. Forget about the lull of four games in a row that went to Paul. Forget about the brief back-and-forth with the chair umpire.

And simply remember this: Djokovic simply does not lose semifinals or finals at Melbourne Park. Does. Not. Lose. And so, not surprisingly, he overcame some shaky play in the early going and took over the match, beating Paul 7-5, 6-1, 6-2 to close in on a 10th Australian Open championship and 22nd Grand Slam title overall.

"I'm really thankful that I still have enough gas in my legs to be able to play at this level," said Djokovic, a 35-year-old from Serbia. "Some long rallies, you could really feel them. We both had heavy legs in the first set. I was really fortunate to kind of hold my nerves toward the end of the first set. That was a key. After that, I started swinging through the ball more."

He extended his Australian Open winning streak to 27 matches, the longest in the Open era, which dates to 1968.

There was a pause in that string of victories a year ago, of course, when Djokovic was deported from Australia before competition began because he was not vaccinated against COVID-19. He still has not gotten the shots, but the strict border controls established by the country during the pandemic have been eased.

On Sunday, No. 4 seed Djokovic will take on No. 3 seed Stefanos Tsitsipas, who eliminated Karen Khachanov 7-6 (2), 6-4, 6-7 (6), 6-3 to reach his first final at Melbourne Park and second at a Slam.

Whoever wins the final will rise to No. 1 in the ATP rankings. For Djokovic, that would mark a return to a spot he has occupied for more weeks than anyone; for Tsitsipas, it would mark a debut there.

"I like that number. It's all about you. It's singular. It's '1,'" said Tsitsipas, who was 0-3 in Australian Open semifinals before Friday. "These are the moments that I've been working hard for."

Djokovic is now a perfect 19-0 over the last two rounds in Melbourne, and his nine triumphs there already are a men's record. If he can add one more to go alongside his seven titles at Wimbledon, three at the U.S. Open and two at the French Open, Djokovic would equal Nadal for the most Grand Slam trophies earned by a man.

"Winning Grand Slams and being the No. 1 in the world is probably the two biggest peaks that you can

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 42 of 88

climb as a professional tennis player," said Djokovic, who is 10-2 against Tsitsipas, taking the last nine encounters in a row. "So let's see what happens."

Tsitsipas' other major final came at the 2021 French Open, when he grabbed the first two sets before blowing that big lead and losing to Djokovic in five.

Which was all related to an amusing moment this week, when Djokovic said about Tsitsipas: "He has never played a final, am I wrong?" Reminded by reporters about what happened at Roland Garros, Djokovic replied: "That's right. Sorry, my bad."

Asked about that exchange, Tsitsipas responded with a deadpan expression and the words: "I don't remember, either."

Until this week, the 35th-ranked Paul never had been past the fourth round in 13 previous appearances at majors.

The 25-year-old was born in New Jersey and grew up in North Carolina, playing tennis at a club where the walls were festooned with posters of Andy Roddick — the last American man to win a Grand Slam singles title, way back at the 2003 U.S. Open. That drought will continue for now, because even though Djokovic was not at his best in the opening set, he was good enough at the end of it, breaking in the last game, and never relented.

The blips for Djokovic arrived right at the outset.

The footwork was not up to his usual reach-every-ball standard. The shotmaking was subpar. The serving was so-so. He started gesturing and shouting in the direction of coach Goran Ivanisevic and the rest of this entourage.

In the first game, Djokovic flubbed an overhead, a weakness he's never solved. He dumped a backhand into the net. He double-faulted. Still, he overcame that to get off to a 5-1 lead. Then came a quick switch in direction.

Djokovic got broken when serving for the set there. And again at 5-3, when Paul walloped a down-the-line forehand and Djokovic's backhand on a 29-stroke point landed out. Paul held for 5-all.

Might he be making a match of it?

Not for much longer. Djokovic, the greatest returner of his, or maybe any, generation, broke to close that set, when Paul sent a forehand wide. Serbian flags were displayed throughout the stands and Rod Laver Arena was filled with chants of Djokovic's two-syllable nickname, "No-le! No-le!"

The contest was never much of a contest from there on out.

Tsitsipas had a harder time strictly following the rules governing the 25-second serve clock and foot-faults than he did outplaying Khachanov for nearly three full sets, then recovered after blowing two match points late in the third.

Tsitsipas regained his footing quickly, going up 3-0 in the fourth and closing out the win about 40 minutes after his initial opportunity.

Looking ahead to Sunday, he declared: "Couldn't be more ready for this moment."

Gunman kills security chief at Azerbaijan Embassy in Iran

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — A man armed with a Kalashnikov-style rifle stormed the Azerbaijan Embassy in Iran's capital Friday, killing the head of security at the diplomatic post and wounding two guards, authorities said.

Tehran's police chief, Gen. Hossein Rahimi, blamed the attack on "personal and family problems," according to Iranian state television. However, the assault comes as tensions have been high for months between neighboring Azerbaijan and Iran.

Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry said it would evacuate its diplomatic mission, accusing Iran of not taking reported threats against it seriously in the past. Meanwhile, Iranian authorities replaced Rahimi as police chief hours later after footage emerged that appeared to show a police officer doing nothing to stop the

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 43 of 88

attack.

Video purportedly from the scene of the attack showed an empty diplomatic police post just near the embassy, with one man apparently wounded in an SUV parked outside. Inside the embassy past a metal detector, paramedics stood over what appeared to be a lifeless body in a small office as blood pooled on the floor beneath.

A statement from Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry said that "an investigation is currently underway into this treacherous attack." The ministry also described the attacker as destroying a guard post with assault rifle fire before being stopped by the wounded guards, whom authorities described as being in a "satisfactory" condition after being shot.

However, the ministry said a "recent anti-Azerbaijani campaign against our country in Iran has encouraged such attacks against our diplomatic mission."

"There have been attempts to threaten our diplomatic mission in Iran before, and measures to prevent such situations and to ensure the safety of our diplomatic missions have been constantly raised before Iran," the ministry said. "Unfortunately, the last bloody terrorist attack demonstrates the serious consequences of not showing proper sensitivity to our urgent appeals in this direction."

Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev called the attack a "terrorist act."

"A terrorist attack against diplomatic missions is unacceptable!" he said in a statement.

Iranian state TV had quoted Rahimi as saying the gunman had entered the embassy with his two children during the attack. However, surveillance footage from inside the embassy released in Azerbaijan, which matched details of the other video of the aftermath and bore a timestamp matching the Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry's statement, showed the gunmen burst through the embassy's doors alone.

Those inside tried to push through metal detectors to take cover. The man opens fire with the rifle, its muzzle flashing, as he chases after the men into the small side office. Another man bursts from a side door and fights the gunman for the rifle as the footage ends.

Another surveillance video from outside the embassy which also corresponded to the same details showed the gunman slam his car into another in front of the embassy. The gunman then got out and leveled his rifle at a figure inside of the Iranian police stand, likely a police guard, who stood still and did nothing as the man stormed the embassy.

Associated Press journalists saw the embassy's front door pocked with bullet holes after the attack.

Iranian prosecutor Mohammad Shahriari reportedly said that the gunman's wife had disappeared in April after a visit to the embassy. The Iranian judiciary's Mizan news agency quoted Shahriari as saying the gunman believed his wife was still in the embassy at the time of the attack — even though it was some eight months later.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Nasser Kanaani, also said his country strongly condemned the attack, which was under investigation with "high priority and sensitivity."

Azerbaijan borders Iran's northwest. There have been tensions between the two countries as Azerbaijan and Armenia have fought over the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Iran in October launched a military exercise near the Azerbaijan border, flexing its martial might amid the nationwide protests rocking the Islamic Republic. Azerbaijan also maintains close ties to Israel, which Tehran views as its top regional enemy. The Islamic Republic and Israel are locked in an ongoing shadow war as Iran's nuclear program rapidly enriches uranium closer than ever to weapons-grade levels.

Turkey, which has close ties to Azerbaijan, condemned the attack, called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice and for measures to be put in place to prevent similar attacks in the future. Turkey has backed Azerbaijan against Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh.

"Turkey, which has been subjected to similar attacks in the past, deeply shares the pain of the Azerbaijani people," a Turkish Foreign Ministry statement said. "Brotherly Azerbaijan is not alone. Our support to Azerbaijan will continue without interruption, as it always has."

DA: 5 Memphis cops 'all responsible' for Tyre Nichols' death

By ADRIAN SAINZ and REBECCA REYNOLDS Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Five fired Memphis police officers were charged Thursday with murder and other crimes in the killing of Tyre Nichols, a Black motorist who died three days after a confrontation with the officers during a traffic stop.

Shelby County District Attorney Steve Mulroy told a news conference that although the officers each played different roles in the killing, "they are all responsible."

The officers, who are all Black, each face charges of second-degree murder, aggravated assault, aggravated kidnapping, official misconduct and official oppression.

Video of the Jan. 7 traffic stop will be released to the public sometime Friday evening, Mulroy said. Nichols' family and their lawyers said the footage shows officers savagely beating the 29-year-old FedEx worker for three minutes in an assault that the legal team likened to the infamous 1991 police beating of Los Angeles motorist Rodney King. His family urged supporters to protest peacefully.

Nichols' stepfather, Rodney Wells, told The Associated Press by phone that he and his wife, RowVaughn Wells, who is Nichols' mother, discussed the second-degree murder charges and are "fine with it." They had sought first-degree murder charges.

"There's other charges, so I'm all right with that," he said.

Asked about the kidnapping charges, the district attorney said: "If it was a legal detention to begin with, it certainly became illegal at a certain point and was an unlawful detention."

David Rausch, director of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, said he saw the video and found it "absolutely appalling."

"Let me be clear: What happened here does not at all reflect proper policing. This was wrong. This was criminal," Rausch said during the news conference.

Court records showed that all five former officers — Tadarrius Bean, Demetrius Haley, Desmond Mills Jr., Emmitt Martin III and Justin Smith — were taken into custody.

Martin's lawyer, William Massey, confirmed that his client had turned himself in. He and Mills' lawyer, Blake Ballin, said their clients would plead not guilty. Lawyers for Smith, Bean and Haley could not be reached.

"No one out there that night intended for Tyre Nichols to die," Massey said.

Both lawyers said they had not seen the video.

"We are in the dark about many things, just like the general public is," Ballin said.

Second-degree murder is punishable by 15 to 60 years in prison under Tennessee law.

Later Thursday, Nichols' mother and stepfather were joined by several dozen supporters on a cold night for a candlelight vigil and prayer service at a Memphis skate park. Nichols, who had a 4-year-old son, was an avid skateboarder.

RowVaughn Wells thanked those who attended, then added that her family is "grief stricken."

She warned supporters of the "horrific" nature of the video set to be released Friday, but she pleaded with supporters to "protest in peace."

"I don't want us burning up our city, tearing up the streets, because that's not what my son stood for," she said. "If you guys are here for me and Tyre, then you will protest peacefully. You can get your point across but we don't need to tear up our cities, people, because we do have to live in them."

Activists and clergy led the group in prayer and a drummer played a steady rhythm to lead into the spoken part of the vigil. Afterwards, skaters rode their boards as Wells and her husband watched.

The attorneys for Nichols' family, Ben Crump and Antonio Romanucci, issued a statement saying that Nichols "lost his life in a particularly disgusting manner that points to the desperate need for change and reform to ensure this violence stops occurring during low-threat procedures, like in this case, a traffic stop."

The Rev. Al Sharpton, who runs the National Action Network and will deliver the eulogy at Nichols' funeral service next week, called the charges "a necessary step in delivering justice" for Nichols.

"There is no point to putting a body camera on a cop if you aren't going to hold them accountable when the footage shows them relentlessly beating a man to death," Sharpton said. "Firings are not enough."

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 45 of 88

Indictments and arrests are not convictions. As we've done in the past ... we will stand by this family until justice is done."

At the White House, President Joe Biden said the Nichols family and the city of Memphis deserve "a swift, full and transparent investigation."

"Public trust is the foundation of public safety, and there are still too many places in America today where the bonds of trust are frayed or broken," Biden said in a statement.

The Memphis police chief has called the officers' actions that night "heinous, reckless and inhumane."

"This is not just a professional failing. This is a failing of basic humanity toward another individual," Memphis Police Director Cerelyn "CJ" Davis said in a video statement released late Wednesday on social media.

Davis said the five officers found to be "directly responsible for the physical abuse of Mr. Nichols," were fired last week, but other officers are still being investigated for violating department policy. In addition, she said "a complete and independent review" will be conducted of the department's specialized units, without providing further details.

Two fire department workers were also removed from duty over the Nichols' arrest.

As state and federal investigations continue, Davis promised the police department's "full and complete cooperation" to determine what contributed to Nichols' Jan. 10 death.

Mulroy told The Associated Press on Tuesday that local and state investigators wanted to complete as many interviews as possible before releasing the video. The timetable has rankled some activists who expected the video to be released after Nichols' family and the family's lawyers viewed it Monday.

Crump said the video showed that Nichols was shocked, pepper-sprayed and restrained when he was pulled over near his home. He was returning home from a suburban park where he had taken photos of the sunset.

Police have said Nichols was stopped for reckless driving and at some point fled from the scene.

Relatives have accused the police of causing Nichols to have a heart attack and kidney failure. Authorities have only said Nichols experienced a medical emergency.

When video of the arrest is publicly released, Davis said she expects people in the community to react, but she urged them to do so peacefully.

"None of this is a calling card for inciting violence or destruction on our community or against our citizens," she said.

One of the officers, Haley, was accused previously of using excessive force. He was named as a defendant in a 2016 federal civil rights lawsuit while employed by the Shelby County Division of Corrections.

The plaintiff, Cordarius Sledge, stated that he was an inmate in 2015 when Haley and another corrections officer accused him of flushing contraband. The two officers "hit me in the face with punches," according to the complaint.

A third officer then slammed his head to the ground, Sledge said. He lost consciousness and woke up in the facility's medical center.

The claims were ultimately dismissed after a judge ruled that Sledge had failed to file a grievance against the officers within 30 days of the incident.

Analysis: Nick Sirianni won over fans who didn't want him

By ROB MAADDI AP Pro Football Writer

Nick Sirianni is getting his flowers figuratively instead of thrown at his face.

The chest-bumping, sideline-prancing, expletive-tossing head coach of the Philadelphia Eagles has won over a tough city that questioned his credentials and mocked his introductory news conference when he was hired two years ago.

Sirianni has the Eagles in the NFC championship game and now he's becoming more popular than Rocky Balboa in the city of cheesesteaks and Liberty Bell.

The Eagles (15-3) will host the San Francisco 49ers (15-4) on Sunday with a chance to reach the Super Bowl for the fourth time in franchise history and second time in six seasons.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 46 of 88

Sirianni is leading the way with his swagger and an offensive system labeled “unstoppable” by CBS analyst Tony Romo, the former Dallas Cowboys quarterback.

Things didn’t start out so well for Sirianni, however.

He made a poor first impression on people more concerned with style than substance. Sirianni came across as nervous, rambling and overmatched in a video conference. The former offensive coordinator for the Indianapolis Colts wasn’t used to a media contingent like the one that greeted him in Philadelphia. Also, the video setup made it difficult for him to be comfortable because he didn’t see the reporters asking the questions.

Philly, as it’s known to do, piled on unfairly.

Sirianni, who isn’t afraid to admit mistakes, was ticked about his performance. He told players in his first full team meeting that he messed up and had to do better. It set the tone for a team goal to see daily improvement from the coaching staff and the players.

Still, the worst moment came later in his first season.

After the Eagles started 2-5, Sirianni used a flower analogy that sent Philly into a frenzy and had some fans and media calling for his job.

“This is what I said to the team. ... the results aren’t there right now, but what’s going on here is that there’s growth under the soil,” Sirianni said on Oct. 27, 2021. “I put a picture of a flower up, and it’s coming through the ground, and the roots are growing out. The roots are continuing to grow out. Everybody wants to see results. Shoot, nobody wants to see results more than us, right? We want to see results, too.

“But it’s really important that the foundation is being built and that the roots are growing out. And the only way the roots grow out every single day and they grow stronger and they grow better is if we all water, we all fertilize, we all do our part, each individual, each individual coach, each individual player, everybody in the building, that we do our part to water to make sure that, when it does pop out, it really pops out and it grows. ... But just keep doing what we’re doing, keep watering, and look at yourself first and know are you watering and are you fertilizing every day? So, when it’s time to pop, it will pop.”

The Eagles beat the Lions on the road in their next game but lost at home to the Chargers on Nov. 7, 2021. As Sirianni was leaving the field after that loss, a fan threw a bouquet of flowers at him. He stopped, looked up and said a few words before being escorted under the tunnel.

The Eagles went 6-2 the rest of the way and earned a wild-card berth. They were blown out by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the playoffs but opened this season 8-0 and were 13-1 before Jalen Hurts missed two games with a shoulder injury.

Sirianni has helped develop Hurts into a finalist for AP NFL MVP and Offensive Player of the Year. He’s designed an offense that can dominate opponents on the ground or in the air.

And, Sirianni is still talking. From cursing at officials to screaming at opposing coaches to loving on his players, Sirianni is a quote machine. He compared Hurts to Michael Jordan after the Eagles whipped the New York Giants 38-7 in the divisional round.

The Eagles have responded to Sirianni’s “dawg mentality” and blossomed into championship contenders.

As for those fickle Philly fans, they’re angry he wasn’t a finalist for AP NFL Coach of the Year. They’ve got his back now. Well, until he loses or mentions gardening again.

SUPREME COURT NOTEBOOK: Warren is 5th justice with Navy ship

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren’s name is on the U.S. Navy’s newest fuel ship. Justice Elena Kagan smashed a champagne bottle against its hull in a shipyard ceremony in San Diego last weekend.

Two other justices soon will join Warren, who in 1954 wrote the Brown v. Board of Education decision that outlawed segregation in public schools, in a group of ships being named for civil rights leaders. The Navy has awarded contracts for the construction of the Thurgood Marshall and the Ruth Bader Ginsburg. The first ship in this group is named for John Lewis, the longtime congressman and civil rights icon.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 47 of 88

It may be unsurprising that Warren, who died in 1974, is not the first justice with a naval vessel bearing his name. But the four earlier justices who have been similarly honored are not among the better-known of the 116 men and women who have served on the Supreme Court.

Instead, the Navy has seen fit to name ships for James Iredell, Alfred Moore, Smith Thompson and Levi Woodbury.

Woodbury was on the court for nearly six years until his death in 1851 and earlier was secretary of the Navy. He was the first to be recognized, and several vessels were named for him, including a destroyer that ran aground off the California coast in 1923 in what has been called the Navy's largest peacetime disaster.

Twenty-three men died, and the Woodbury was among seven destroyers lost in the Honda Point disaster. Another vessel named for Woodbury was one of four World War II Liberty ships bearing the justices' names. More than 2,700 Liberty ships, which carried cargo and troops, were built quickly and cheaply during the war.

Like Woodbury, Thompson also had served as the Navy secretary before joining the court. He died in office in 1843 after serving 20 years. Iredell was among the first justices, named by President George Washington.

Moore took Iredell's seat but produced only one recorded opinion in his four years as a justice and resigned in poor health. "Moore's career made scarcely a ripple in American judicial history," according to "The Oxford Companion to the Supreme Court of the United States."

Kagan, incidentally, is not the first of the current justices to have christened a ship. Justice Sonia Sotomayor did the honors for the USNS Puerto Rico in 2018.

Another accident at sea involving a Navy ship was at the heart of a Supreme Court case decided Monday, ending the longest ever wait for the term's first decision.

In July 1980, the USS Midway, an aircraft carrier, collided with a freighter off the coast of the Philippines, killing two sailors and injuring others.

Among those aboard was Adolfo Arellano, who was nearly swept into the sea, according to court papers. He was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and other serious mental health issues that doctors attributed to the accident.

But Arellano didn't apply for disability benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs until 2011. His claim was approved going forward but was rejected for the 30 years between his discharge in 1981 and his application.

Arellano appealed, asking courts to excuse his delay in filing. One doctor reported that Arellano was so ill that he did not understand the severity of his condition or "his right and need to apply" for disability benefits.

But Justice Amy Coney Barrett wrote for a unanimous court in rejecting that appeal, saying judges did not have the discretion to grant more time under the statute that governs disability pay.

Barrett's was the court's only opinion Monday, although it also dismissed a case that was argued earlier in January in a one-sentence order. Barrett read a summary of the decision from the bench in the courtroom, marking a return of the practice, which had been paused because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Thirty-two cases argued in the fall and the winter remain undecided, and with the justices on a 24-day midwinter recess, they won't be back on the bench until Feb. 21.

A letter written by one of Warren's predecessors offers some interesting tidbits about lobbying for a court appointment and choosing when to step down.

William Howard Taft is the only person who was both the nation's president and, later, chief justice. He had a long and well-known interest in joining the court. But when President-elect Warren Harding sounded Taft out about becoming a justice, Taft wrote that he would only accept being chief justice, according to a letter found by Walter Stahr in Harding's papers. Stahr is working on a biography of Taft and wrote about the letter for the Supreme Court Historical Society.

At 63, Taft explained he didn't expect to serve more than 10 years. What's more, he wrote, he appointed

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 48 of 88

three justices who remained on the court and publicly opposed the confirmation of another, Louis Brandeis. Taft wrote that he "would feel ill at ease to come into the Court after having been President as the junior of my own appointees and of the man I tried to defeat."

He also strongly suggested that then-Chief Justice Edward White had been determined not to retire while Woodrow Wilson was president.

Though initially appointed by Democratic President Grover Cleveland, White "in the years past has said to me that he was holding on for me and to return the place to a Republican administration," Taft wrote.

White died in May 1921, less than three months after Harding took office. By early summer, Taft had the job he wanted.

5 women, immense power: Can they keep US from fiscal brink?

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and SEUNG MIN KIM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — They are now among the most powerful women in Congress. But when they were first elected in the 1990s, they were often overlooked, or even talked down to.

Rep. Kay Granger, R-Texas, remembers that men would avoid asking her questions, addressing other men in the room instead. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn., says a male colleague once challenged her at a hearing to describe a military tank engine produced in her district without looking at her notes. (She shot back: "Damn straight I can!")

Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, says that one of the first times she chaired a committee hearing, she looked around the room and realized she was the only female senator there. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., recalls being seated on the far edge of the committee dais, with the more senior men making the decisions in the middle.

"I remember finally just standing up at the end of the table going, 'Excuse me!' Because you couldn't get their attention," Murray says. "Everything was decided in the middle of this table. I think it's pretty amazing that we're at the middle of the table now."

This year, for the first time in history, the four leaders of the two congressional spending committees are women. Granger is chairwoman of the House Appropriations Committee, while DeLauro is the top Democrat; Murray is Senate Appropriations chairwoman and Collins is the top Republican.

Sitting down with The Associated Press on Thursday for their first joint interview — and joined by Shalanda Young, the first Black woman to lead the Office of Management and Budget and a former House aide — the women talked like old friends, nodding and laughing in agreement when listening to each others' stories about the way things used to be for women, and sometimes still are.

When they were elected, Collins says, men were automatically accepted once they came to Congress but women still had to prove themselves. "That extra barrier that was definitely in place still exists to some extent, but far less than it used to," Collins said. "Women bring different life experiences and different perspectives. And that's why it matters."

The women said their camaraderie, friendship and willingness to collaborate will be crucial as they shoulder the massive responsibility of keeping the government running and open — an annual task that will be made even harder this year as conservatives in the new GOP House majority are insisting on major spending cuts and the U.S. is at risk of default. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., won his post only after agreeing to several demands of those far-right members, creating a dynamic that could prove perilous for negotiations as Congress must raise the debt ceiling in the coming months.

"This is a moment in time," DeLauro says. "You are really looking at five women who have control of the most powerful levers of government."

Still, she says, "none of us have our head in the sand. We know there are difficulties that are going to be involved."

Granger is in the trickiest position as she tries to balance the demands of the House GOP conference with her own responsibility to keep the government running. One important task ahead, she said, is explaining what appropriators do to the public. While the committees are rarely in the spotlight, they are the beating

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 49 of 88

heart of Congress, writing “must-pass” bills that keep the government running. Decisions about funding levels for almost everything the government pays for — from the military to health care to food safety to federal highways — pass through the hands of appropriators.

Asked about the challenge ahead, Granger says “deadlines are very important” when communicating to the Republican conference. She said there will come a time when she’ll have to tell GOP colleagues, “This is when it has to be final.”

Another key to the negotiations will be Young, who is the former Democratic staff director for the House appropriations panel and has maintained a close relationship with all four women since becoming the Cabinet-level OMB director for President Joe Biden. DeLauro and Granger threw her a baby shower before she gave birth to her daughter in 2021, she says, and “you cannot replace those relationships.”

Young’s relationships were helpful at the end of last year as lawmakers labored to pass a massive, \$1.7 trillion spending bill that funded federal agencies through September and provided another significant round of military and economic aid to Ukraine. Signaling potential troubles ahead, though, Granger did not sign off on the final bill as GOP leadership balked.

Young joked that the four lawmakers probably wouldn’t have invited any other OMB director to do an interview with them. Murray agreed, saying she answers their calls and texts immediately, “and that is new for me.”

The women were gathered in Murray’s office, an enviable spot on the West front of the Capitol with a dead-on view of the Washington Monument. It was once the domain of legendary appropriator Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W.Va. Murray recalled when she entered the same room just after she was elected in 1992 — the so-called “year of the woman” — she asked outright for a seat on the powerful spending panel.

As one of the only women in the Senate, Murray immediately won the coveted seat. But she found that she had to assert herself in what was still very much an old boys’ club. Thirty years later, she became chairwoman of the panel, replacing the retiring Vermont Sen. Patrick Leahy. She also replaced Leahy as the Senate pro tempore, a senior member of the majority who presides over the Senate and is third in line to the presidency.

Her Capitol office, Murray says, “has been inhabited by numerous men who smoke cigars.”

Murray and Collins, in particular, have a long history together. In 2013, they were both key to efforts to end a government shutdown. And as they replaced Leahy and retiring Republican Sen. Richard Shelby as committee leaders this year, they immediately issued a joint statement calling for a return to the regular process of passing individual spending bills “in a responsible and bipartisan manner,” instead of shoving them all into one massive bill at the end of the year.

Collins said no one on either side of the aisle, in either chamber wants to fund the government again with a huge, end-of-the-year bill. “I truly believe we can make real progress by working closely together,” she said.

All of them give credit to their female predecessors on the committees, including former Sen. Barbara Mikulski, a Maryland Democrat who was the first chairwoman of the Senate appropriations panel and used to invite new senators to her office for what she called a “workshop” on the appropriations process so they could become more familiar with the elaborate workings of the committee.

In an interview, Mikulski, who retired in 2017 after 30 years in the Senate, says the women are “brilliant strategists” who may disagree on policy but won’t let rancor come between them.

“What I’m excited about is that they have not only broken the glass ceiling, but they have the keys to the vault,” Mikulski says.

Djokovic’s dad to stay away from Australian Open semifinal

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Novak Djokovic’s father decided to stay away from the 21-time Grand Slam champion’s semifinal after getting embroiled in a flap involving spectators who brought banned Russian flags to Melbourne Park, Tennis Australia said Friday.

In a release e-mailed to reporters about 2 1/2 hours before Djokovic was scheduled to face Tommy Paul

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 50 of 88

for a berth in the men's singles final, tournament organizers said Srdjan Djokovic "has issued a statement confirming that he will not attend" the match.

"Throughout the event, we've spoken with players and their teams about the importance of not engaging in any activity that causes distress or disruption," Tennis Australia said.

"We will continue to strive for the safety of fans at the event and reiterate our position banning flags from Belarus and Russia," the group added. "Tennis Australia stands with the call for peace and an end to war and violent conflict in Ukraine."

After the younger Djokovic's quarterfinal victory over Russian player Andrey Rublev on Wednesday, Srdjan Djokovic was filmed standing with a group of people waving Russian flags — at least one showing an image of Vladimir Putin — outside Rod Laver Arena.

Four people were kicked out of the tournament because of the flags and for threatening security guards that night, police and Tennis Australia said.

On Jan. 17, the second day of the Australian Open, flags from Russia and Belarus were banned from Melbourne Park after more than one was brought into the stands by spectators the day before.

Normally, flags can be displayed during matches at Melbourne Park. But Tennis Australia reversed that policy for the two countries involved in the invasion of Ukraine that began nearly a year ago, saying the flags were causing disruption.

Athletes from Russia and Belarus were barred last year from competing in various sports events, including the men's World Cup in soccer and Wimbledon, the Billie Jean King Cup and Davis Cup in tennis, because of the war in Ukraine. Russia invaded, with help from Belarus, in February.

Russian and Belarusian players have been allowed to play at the Australian Open, French Open and U.S. Open, but as "neutral" athletes, so their nationalities are not acknowledged on any official schedules or results for the event and their countries' flags are not displayed on TV graphics.

78 years on, Jewish Holocaust rescuers want their story told

By ALON BERNSTEIN Associated Press

KIBBUTZ HAZOREA, Israel (AP) — Just before Nazi Germany invaded Hungary in March 1944, Jewish youth leaders in the eastern European country jumped into action: They formed an underground network that in the coming months would save tens of thousands of fellow Jews from the gas chambers.

This chapter of the Holocaust heroism is scarcely remembered in Israel. Nor is it part of the official curriculum in schools. But the few remaining members of Hungary's Jewish underground want their story told. Dismayed at the prospect of being forgotten, they are determined to keep memories of their mission alive.

"The story of the struggle to save tens of thousands needs to be a part of the chronicles of the people of Israel," said David Gur, 97, one of a handful of members still alive. "It is a lighthouse during the period of the Holocaust, a lesson and exemplar for the generations."

As the world marks International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Friday, historians, activists, survivors and their families are all preparing for the time when there will no longer be living witnesses to share first-person accounts of the horrors of the Nazi genocide during World War II. In the Holocaust, 6 million Jews were wiped out by the Nazis and their allies.

Israel, which was established as a refuge for Jews in the wake of the Holocaust, has gone to great lengths over the years to recognize thousands of "Righteous Among the Nations" — non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust.

Accounts of Jewish resistance to the Nazis, such as the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, are mainstays in the national narrative but rescue missions by fellow Jews — such as the Hungarian resistance — are less known.

Hungary was home to around 900,000 Jews before the Nazi invasion. Its government was allied with Nazi Germany, but as the Soviet Red Army advanced toward Hungary, the Nazis invaded in March 1944, to prevent its Axis ally from making a separate peace deal with the Allies.

Over the 10 months that followed, as many as 568,000 Jews were killed by the Nazis and their allies in Hungary, according to figures from Yad Vashem, Israel's official Holocaust memorial.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 51 of 88

Gur said he and his colleagues knew that disaster was looming when three Jewish women arrived at Budapest's main synagogue in the fall of 1943. They had fled Nazi-occupied Poland and bore disturbing news about people being shipped off to concentration camps.

"They had fairly clear information about what was happening, and saw the many trains, and it was obvious to them what was happening," said Gur.

Gur oversaw a massive forgery operation that provided false documents for Jews and non-Jewish members of the Hungarian resistance. "I was an 18-year-old adolescent when the heavy responsibility fell upon me," he said.

There was great personal risk. In December 1944, he was arrested at the forgery workshop and brutally interrogated and imprisoned, according to his memoir, "Brothers for Resistance and Rescue." The Jewish underground broke him out of the central military prison in a rescue operation later that month.

The forged papers were used by Jewish youth movements to operate a smuggling network and run Red Cross houses that saved thousands from the Nazis and their allies.

According to Gur's book, at least 7,000 Jews were smuggled out of Hungary, through Romania to ships on the Black Sea that would bring them to British-controlled Palestine. At least 10,000 forged passes offering protection, known as Shutzpasses, were distributed to Budapest's Jews, and around 6,000 Jewish children and accompanying adults were saved in houses ostensibly under the protection of the International Red Cross.

Robert Rozett, a senior historian at Yad Vashem, said that although it was "the largest rescue operation" of European Jews during the Holocaust, this episode remains off "the main route of the narrative."

"It's very significant because these activities helped tens of thousands of Jews stay alive in Budapest," he said.

In 1984, Gur founded "The Society for Research of the History of the Zionist Youth Movements in Hungary," a group that has promoted awareness about this effort.

Last month at a kibbutz in northern Israel, Sara Epstein, 97, Dezi Heffner-Reiner, 95, and Betzalel Grosz, 98, three of the remaining survivors who helped save Jews in Nazi-occupied Hungary, received the Jewish Rescuers Citation for their role in the Holocaust. The award is given by two Jewish groups — B'nai B'rith World Center-Jerusalem and the Committee to Recognize the Heroism of Jewish Rescuers During the Holocaust.

"There aren't many of us left, but this is important," said Heffner-Reiner.

More than 200 other members of the underground were given the award posthumously. Gur received the award in 2011, the year it was created.

Yuval Alpan, a son of one of the rescuers and an activist with the society, said the citations were meant to recognize those who saved lives during the Holocaust.

"This resistance underground youth movement saved tens of thousands of Jews during 1944, and their story is not known," he said. "It's the biggest rescue operation in the Holocaust and nobody knows about it."

International Holocaust day falls on the anniversary of the Red Army's liberation of the Auschwitz death camp 78 years ago. Israel is home to some 150,600 Holocaust survivors, almost all of them over the age of 80, according to government figures. That is 15,193 less than a year ago.

The United Nations will be holding a memorial ceremony at the General Assembly on Friday, and other memorial events are scheduled around the globe.

Israel marks its own Holocaust Remembrance Day in the spring.

World champion says Rubik's Cube and violin go hand in hand

By MIKE HOUSEHOLDER Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (AP) — A University of Michigan student is one of the world's foremost "speedcubers," a person capable of quickly solving a Rubik's Cube. He also is an accomplished violinist.

Stanley Chapel says the two fields go hand in hand.

Not only does Chapel say he has equal interest in both, but the 21-year-old says the violin has aided in

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 52 of 88

his speedcubing success.

"Repetition, breaking things down into their smallest fundamental elements, all of these different things that we use to improve at an instrument, and being able to take these into the world of cubing has certainly been a huge help to my progression," said Chapel, a junior majoring in violin performance at the university's school of music, theater and dance.

Chapel, who grew up in Ann Arbor not far from the Michigan campus, solved his first 3x3 Rubik's Cube as a 14-year-old. Five weeks later, Chapel entered his first competition, solving the cube in an average of 22 seconds.

Fast-forward a year to 2017 in Paris, with Chapel placing fifth in both the 4x4 blindfolded and 5x5 blindfolded categories at the World Cube Association World Championship.

At the 2019 world championship in Melbourne, Australia, the recent high school graduate won both events.

Factoring in the time it takes for him to review the cube before placing the blindfold over his eyes, Chapel can solve one in around 17 seconds.

"The deeper I go into the realm of cubing technique, the more I find interest in pushing the boundaries of what's possible there," he said.

Chapel has certain inherent abilities: He is capable of remembering and applying thousands of algorithms to solve a Rubik's Cube and performing one of Johann Sebastian Bach's violin sonatas from memory.

But he also spends hours upon hours honing his craft, including doing regular hand stretches that help Chapel avoid the kinds of aches and pains that come with the frequent and frenetic turning of the cube's sides.

Chapel says years of playing the violin also has contributed to him having "very, very fine motor control already built up."

Later this year, Chapel intends to defend his world titles in South Korea. Since the 2021 event was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Chapel is the reigning champion in both heading into the 2023 event in Seoul.

Once he's done with school, though, Chapel isn't sure how speedcubing fits into his future plans.

"I guess it's cool to know that nobody is able to do this," he said. "But, at the same time, giving myself a little bit of a reality check, it's like, 'How much does that actually matter?'"

"It's not going to pay the bills when I'm older," Chapel said, laughing.

RNC Chair McDaniel fights for reelection in leadership feud

By STEVE PEOPLES AP National Political Writer

DANA POINT, Calif. (AP) — Republican National Committee Chair Ronna McDaniel is fighting for reelection in a bitter leadership feud that's testing former President Donald Trump's grip on his own "Make America Great Again" movement.

The high-profile contest to lead the GOP through the 2024 presidential election will be decided Friday afternoon in a secret vote at the committee's winter meeting in Southern California.

The former president is privately backing McDaniel, whom he picked for the job after his victory in 2016. But rebel factions inside his own MAGA movement have lined up behind her challenger, Trump attorney Harmeet Dhillon.

Dhillon has waged an aggressive challenge against McDaniel that featured allegations of chronic mis-spending, mismanagement and even religious bigotry against Dhillon's Sikh faith — all claims that McDaniel has denied. Above all, the case against McDaniel, a niece of Utah Sen. Mitt Romney, has been focused on conservative frustration with repeated election losses on her watch.

The vote comes as the Republican Party struggles to unify behind a message or a messenger as the 2024 presidential season begins. Similar divisions plagued the House GOP's dayslong fight to elect a House speaker earlier in the month. And on Friday, those same forces are threatening to derail McDaniel's bid to become the longest-serving RNC chair since the Civil War.

Ahead of Friday's vote, Dhillon cited the Republican base's overwhelming desire for change and threat-

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 53 of 88

ened political retribution for the RNC members who dared support McDaniel's reelection.

"Ignoring the will of the voters in your state is a good way not to be elected again," Dhillon told The Associated Press.

McDaniel is fighting MAGA frustration even after Trump dispatched his lieutenants to California in the days leading up to the vote to help boost McDaniel. The former president's senior adviser Susie Wiles was among those Trump allies hosting private conversations with RNC members on Thursday.

Trump avoided making a public endorsement only at McDaniel's request, according to those with direct knowledge of the situation. McDaniel's team was confident she would win without his public backing, allowing her to maintain a sense of neutrality heading into the 2024 presidential primary season.

Former Trump White House chief of staff Reince Priebus, a former RNC chair, was among those who gathered at the Waldorf Astoria this week to lobby for McDaniel.

"It appears as though Ronna's in very good shape to get reelected," Priebus said.

Meanwhile, Dhillon's allies were hard at work as well.

Former Arizona candidate for governor Kari Lake was on site to lobby RNC members on Dhillon's behalf. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, considered a top 2024 presidential prospect, also spoke out against McDaniel on the eve of the vote.

"I think we need a change. I think we need to get some new blood in the RNC," DeSantis said in an interview with Florida's Voice, citing three "substandard election cycles in a row" under McDaniel's leadership.

The next RNC chair will lead the committee through the 2024 presidential election.

The RNC controls much of the presidential nominating process — including the debates and voting calendar — while directing GOP fundraising efforts and the sprawling nationwide infrastructure designed to elect the next Republican president.

According to its rules, the RNC must remain neutral in the presidential primary. Trump is the only announced GOP candidate so far, but other high-profile contenders are expected in the coming months.

Dhillon, whose law firm earned more than \$400,000 representing Trump and his political organizations in the 2022 midterms, promised to leave her law practice if elected. The California attorney also vowed to remain independent in the 2024 Republican primary should she win.

Also in the race is MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell, a pro-Trump conspiracy theorist who secured enough support to qualify for the ballot.

Lindell has already endorsed Trump's 2024 campaign and said he would not change his mind if his long-shot bid is successful Friday.

"I've never not endorsed Donald Trump," Lindell said. "I'm never moving off that space."

Hong Kong to ban CBD, label it a 'dangerous drug'

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong will ban CBD starting Wednesday, categorizing it as a "dangerous drug" and mandating harsh penalties for its smuggling, production and possession, customs authorities announced Friday.

Supporters say CBD can treat a range of ailments including anxiety and that, unlike its more famous cousin THC — which is already illegal in Hong Kong — CBD doesn't get users high. Cannabidiol, derived from the cannabis plant, was previously legal in Hong Kong, where bars and shops sold products containing it.

But Hong Kong authorities decided last year to prohibit the marijuana-derived substance — a change that will soon go into effect. Residents were given three months from Oct. 27 to dispose of their CBD products in special boxes set up around the city.

"Starting from February 1, cannabidiol, aka CBD, will be regarded as a dangerous drug and will be supervised and managed by the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance," customs intelligence officer Au-Yeung Ka-lun said at a news briefing.

"As of then, transporting CBD for sale, including import and export, as well as producing, possessing and consuming CBD, will be illegal," Au-Yeung said.

Penalties include up to life in prison and Hong Kong \$5 million (\$638,000) in fines for importing, exporting

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 54 of 88

or producing CBD. Possession of the substance can result in a sentence of up to seven years and Hong Kong \$1 million (\$128,000) in fines.

In announcing the ban last year, the Hong Kong government cited the difficulty of isolating pure CBD from cannabis, the possibility of contamination with THC during the production process and the relative ease by which CBD can be converted to THC.

"We will tackle all kinds of dangerous drugs from all angles and all ends, and the intelligence-led enforcement action is our major goal," Chan Kai-ho, a divisional commander with the department's Airport Command, told reporters Friday.

Despite the harsh penalties mandated, Chan said authorities would handle enforcement on a case-by-case basis and "seek legal advice from our Department of Justice to determine what the further actions will be."

Hong Kong maintains several categories of "dangerous drugs," which include "hard drugs" such as heroin and cocaine, as well as marijuana.

Hong Kong's first CBD cafe opened in 2020 and the ban will force scores of businesses to remove CBD-infused gummies, drinks and other products, or shut down altogether.

The ban is in keeping with a zero-tolerance policy toward drugs in Hong Kong, a semi-autonomous southern Chinese business hub, as well as on mainland China, where CBD was banned in 2022.

Chinese authorities have waged battles against heroin and methamphetamines, particularly in the southwest bordering on the drug-producing Golden Triangle region spanning parts of Myanmar, Thailand and Laos.

Criminal penalties for both sale and usage are also enforced for marijuana. In one of the most high-profile cases, Jaycee Chan, the son of Hong Kong action star Jackie Chan, served a six month sentence in 2014-2015 for allowing people to consume marijuana in his Beijing apartment amid a crackdown on illegal narcotics in the Chinese capital.

At the same time, China has been a main source of the precursor chemicals used to manufacture the dangerous drug fentanyl, a trade often facilitated through social media.

A wealthy Asian financial center with a thriving commercial port and major international airport, Hong Kong is a key point of entry to China as well as a market for some drugs, especially cocaine. Police have recently seized hundreds of kilograms (pounds) of the drug worth tens of millions of dollars, some of it hidden in a shipment of chicken feet from Brazil.

Most Asian nations maintain strict drug laws and enforce harsh penalties for violators, including the death penalty, with the exception of Thailand, which made it legal to cultivate and possess marijuana last year.

Debate over CBD policy continues in many countries and regions.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration said Thursday there's not enough evidence about CBD to confirm that it's safe for consumption in foods or as a dietary supplement. It called on Congress to create new rules for the massive and growing market.

Marijuana-derived products have become increasingly popular in lotions, tinctures and foods, while their legal status has been murky in the U.S., where several states have legalized or decriminalized substances that remain illegal federally.

Farm where 4 were killed had separate shooting last summer

By JANIE HAR and AO GAO Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The shooting that left four dead at a California mushroom farm on Monday was at least the second time an employee tried to kill a coworker on the property, records show.

Martin Medina, a manager at California Terra Garden, was charged with attempted murder after he threatened to kill another manager and then fired a shot into the man's trailer. The bullet went through the trailer and into a neighboring one that was home to Yetao Bing, one of the workers killed on Monday, a prosecutor told The Associated Press. No one was injured.

Law enforcement interviewed Bing's wife, Ping Yang, but it's not clear from those interviews whether Bing was at home during the shooting, said Sean Gallagher, chief deputy district attorney for San Mateo County.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 55 of 88

Medina remains in custody on \$5 million bail and appeared in court Monday for a preliminary hearing, hours before authorities say Chunli Zhao shot and killed four coworkers and wounded a fifth at California Terra Garden. Prosecutors say Zhao then drove to a nearby farm where he used to work and killed three more people.

The Bay Area News Group first reported last summer's shooting.

Zhao, 66, told KNTV-TV in a courthouse interview Thursday that he committed the fatal shootings. Zhao said he was bullied and worked long hours on the farms and that his complaints were ignored, the station reported.

Eric Hove, one of Zhao's attorneys, did not immediately respond to a phone message seeking comment.

Zhao spoke in Mandarin with the television station reporter during a 15-minute interview at a county jail in Redwood City. Zhao said he has been in the U.S. for 11 years and has a green card. He said he has a 40-year-old daughter in China and lived with his wife in Half Moon Bay.

Zhao told the station he bought the gun used in the killings in 2021 and didn't run into any obstacles when making the purchase. He was planning to turn himself in to authorities when he was spotted by deputies who arrested him Monday.

The San Mateo County District Attorney's Office has declined to release information from an interview Zhao gave to investigators after he was arrested.

David Oates, California Terra Garden spokesman, confirmed Zhao lived on the farm along with his wife and said the farm has "no knowledge of any complaints by anyone on allegations of bullying."

Huizhong Li said he hired Zhao in January 2016 at Mountain Mushroom Farm, which is now California Terrace Garden.

Li, a longtime mushroom farmer, said living conditions were not too comfortable but that working conditions were pretty good. He said, though, that Zhao would tattle on people he didn't like, to Li.

"He likes to take advantage of small things. Let's say he doesn't like somebody, he likes to report things," Li said in Mandarin.

Zhao spoke of returning to China to retire but Li did not know anything about when Zhao moved to the U.S. or how he wound up in California. Zhao's wife lived on the farm with him but did not work there, Li said. Li stopped running the farm in 2017.

The charges against Zhao include additional allegations that could result in the death penalty or life in prison without parole, though Gov. Gavin Newsom has issued a moratorium on executions. Among those allegations are that Zhao used a gun, caused great bodily injury and killed multiple people.

The coroner's office named six of the victims: Zhishen Liu, 73, of San Francisco; Marciano Martinez Jimenez, 50, of Moss Beach, California; Aixiang Zhang, 74, of San Francisco; Qizhong Cheng, 66, of Half Moon Bay; Jingzhi Lu, 64, of Half Moon Bay; and Bing, 43, whose hometown was unknown.

The charging documents identify Jose Romero Perez as the other person killed and Pedro Romero Perez as the eighth victim, who survived the shooting.

Few details about the victims are known, but officials have said some were migrant workers. Chinese workers make up a small percentage of the farmworker population in the coastal region.

The state's labor department is looking into possible labor, workplace safety and health violations at the farms where the shootings happened, a spokeswoman for the Department of Industrial Relations said Thursday. Newsom's office said some of the farmworkers told him they made \$9 an hour and lived in shipping containers. The state minimum wage is \$15.50.

"The conditions farmworkers shared with the Governor ... are simply deplorable. Many workers have no choice but to tolerate the conditions provided to them by their employers," Newsom spokesperson Daniel Villaseñor said in a statement.

House GOP seeks new restrictions on use of US oil stockpile

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — For the second time this month, House Republicans are seeking to restrict presidential use of the nation's emergency oil stockpile — a proposal that has already drawn a White House veto threat.

A GOP bill set for a vote Friday would require the government to offset any non-emergency withdrawals from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve with new drilling on public lands and oceans. Republicans accuse President Joe Biden of abusing the reserve for political reasons to keep gas prices low, while Biden says tapping the reserve was needed last year in response to a ban on Russian oil imports following President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

Biden withdrew 180 million barrels from the strategic reserve over several months, bringing the stockpile to its lowest level since the 1980s. The administration said last month it will start to replenish the reserve now that oil prices have gone down.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre attacked the latest GOP proposal, which follows a bill approved two weeks ago that would prohibit the Energy Department from selling oil from the strategic reserve to companies owned or influenced by the Chinese Communist Party.

"House Republicans will vote to raise gas prices on American families ... and help Putin's war aims by interfering with our ability to release oil," Jean-Pierre said, referring to the current GOP bill. "These extreme policies would subject working families to immense financial pain and balloon our deficit, all just to benefit the wealthiest taxpayers and big corporations."

Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, appearing with Jean-Pierre at the White House, said the bill would make it "harder to offer Americans relief in the future" from oil disruptions that could raise prices.

Republican Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Committee and sponsored the GOP bill, accused Granholm and the White House of multiple misleading claims, including an erroneous assertion that the bill could affect use of the reserve during a presidentially declared emergency.

"At a time when gas prices are on the rise, Secretary Granholm and the Biden administration need to be transparent with the American people about their efforts to cover up how they've abused the Strategic Petroleum Reserve as an election-year gimmick," McMorris Rodgers said.

"Republicans want durable, long-lasting relief at the pump. The best way to do this is by unleashing American energy," which her legislation helps accomplish, added McMorris Rodgers, of Washington state.

The heated rhetoric is part of a larger fight over oil drilling and climate change. Republicans say restrictions on oil leasing imposed by the Biden administration hamper U.S. energy production and harm the economy, while Democrats tout a sweeping climate law approved last year as a crucial step to wean the nation off fossil fuels such as oil, coal and natural gas. The measure authorizes billions in spending to boost renewable energy such as wind and solar power and includes incentives for Americans to buy millions of electric cars, heat pumps, solar panels and more efficient appliances.

Biden, citing the dangers of climate change, canceled the controversial Keystone XL oil pipeline in his first days in office and suspended new oil and gas leases on federal lands. The moratorium has since been lifted, under court order, but Republicans complain that lease sales for new drilling rights are still limited.

Biden campaigned on pledges to end new drilling on public lands, and climate activists have pushed him to move faster to shut down oil leasing. Fossil fuels extracted from public lands account for about 20% of energy-related U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, making them a prime target for emissions reductions intended to slow global warming.

"Whether on land or at sea, oil drilling poses an unacceptable risk for our wildlife, wild places and waterways," said Lisa Frank of Environment America, an advocacy group. "When we drill, we spill. At a time when we should be moving away from this destructive, dangerous practice — and expanding use of renewable power — this bill doubles down on the outmoded energy of the past."

Frank urged lawmakers to reject the GOP bill and instead move to permanently ban new drilling off U.S. coasts and in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 57 of 88

Conservative and industry groups support the bill.

"We can continue making the Strategic Petroleum Reserve the nation's sole response to future disruptions, or we can also utilize more of the vast oil supplies sitting beneath the lands and offshore areas currently kept off limits by the president," the Competitive Enterprise Institute and other conservative groups said in a letter to Congress.

The Treasury Department estimates that release of oil from the emergency stockpile lowered prices at the pump by up to 40 cents per gallon. Gasoline prices averaged about \$3.50 per gallon on Thursday, down from just over \$5 per gallon at their peak in June, according to the AAA auto club.

Morris Rodgers accused Biden of using the reserve to "cover up his failed policies" that she said are driving up energy prices and inflation. Average gas prices are up more than 30 cents from a month ago and are higher than when Biden took office in January 2021, she and other Republicans noted.

"Millions of Americans are paying more at the pump as a result of the Biden administration's radical 'rush-to-green' agenda that has shut down American energy," McMorris Rodgers said.

Granholm, citing thousands of unused leases by oil companies, said GOP claims of obstructionism on drilling were off-base. "There's nothing standing in the way of domestic oil and gas production," she said, a claim McMorris Rodgers disputed.

"There are plenty of barriers to unleashing domestic oil and gas production, including burdensome regulations and this administration's discouragement of financial investment in domestic oil and gas industries," she said, noting that U.S. oil production is well below its 2019 peak of 13 million barrels of oil a day.

Israel, Gaza fighters trade fire after deadly West Bank raid

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Gaza militants fired rockets and Israel carried out airstrikes early Friday as tensions soared following an Israeli raid in the occupied West Bank that killed nine Palestinians, including at least seven militants and a 61-year-old woman.

It was the deadliest single raid in the territory in over two decades. The flare-up in violence poses an early test for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's far-right government and casts a shadow on U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken's expected trip to the region next week.

Of the five rockets fired at Israel, three were intercepted, one fell in an open area and another fell short inside Gaza, the military said. It said the airstrikes targeted an underground rocket manufacturing site for Hamas as well as militant training areas.

The rockets set off air raid sirens in southern Israel but there were no reports of casualties on either side.

Both the Palestinian rockets and Israeli airstrikes seemed limited so as to prevent escalation into a full-blown war. Israel and Hamas have fought four wars and several smaller skirmishes since the militant group seized power in Gaza from rival Palestinian forces in 2007.

Thursday's deadly raid in the Jenin refugee camp was likely to reverberate on Friday as Palestinians gather for weekly Muslim prayers that are often followed by protests. Hamas had earlier threatened revenge for the raid.

Raising the stakes, the Palestinian Authority said it would halt the ties that its security forces maintain with Israel in a shared effort to contain Islamic militants. Previous threats have been short-lived, in part because of the benefits the authority enjoys from the relationship and also due to U.S. and Israeli pressure to maintain it.

The Palestinian Authority already has limited control over scattered enclaves in the West Bank, and almost none over militant strongholds like the Jenin camp. But the announcement could pave the way for Israel to step up operations it says are needed to prevent attacks.

On Thursday, Israeli forces went on heightened alert as Palestinians filled the streets across the West Bank, chanting in solidarity with Jenin. President Mahmoud Abbas declared three days of mourning, and in the refugee camp, residents dug a mass grave for the dead.

Palestinian Authority spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh said Abbas had decided to cut security coordination in "light of the repeated aggression against our people." He also said the Palestinians planned to file

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 58 of 88

complaints with the U.N. Security Council, International Criminal Court and other international bodies.

Barbara Leaf, the top U.S. diplomat for the Middle East, said the Biden administration was deeply concerned about the situation and that civilian casualties reported in Jenin were "quite regrettable." But she also said the Palestinian announcement to suspend security ties and to pursue the matter at international organizations was a mistake.

Thursday's gun battle that left nine dead and 20 wounded erupted when Israel's military conducted a rare daytime operation in the Jenin camp that it said was meant to prevent an imminent attack on Israelis. The camp, where the Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant group has a major foothold, has been a focus of near-nightly Israeli arrest raids.

Hamas' armed wing claimed four of the dead as members, while Islamic Jihad claimed three others.

The Palestinian Health Ministry identified the 61-year-old woman killed as Magda Obaid, and the Israeli military said it was looking into reports of her death.

The Israeli military circulated aerial video it said was taken during the battle, showing what appeared to be Palestinians on rooftops hurling stones and firebombs on Israeli forces below. At least one Palestinian can be seen opening fire from a rooftop.

Later in the day, Israeli forces fatally shot a 22-year-old and wounded two others, the Palestinian Health Ministry said, as Palestinians confronted Israeli troops north of Jerusalem to protest Thursday's raid. Israel's paramilitary Border Police said they opened fire on Palestinians who launched fireworks at them from close range.

Tensions have soared since Israel stepped up raids in the West Bank last spring, following a series of Palestinian attacks.

Israel's new national security minister, far-right politician Itamar Ben-Gvir, who seeks to grant legal immunity to Israeli soldiers who shoot Palestinians, posted a video of himself beaming triumphantly and congratulating security forces.

The raid left a trail of destruction in Jenin. A two-story building, apparently the operation's target, was a charred wreck. The military said it entered the building to detonate explosives.

Palestinian Health Minister May Al-Kaila said paramedics struggled to reach the wounded during the fighting, while Akram Rajoub, the governor of Jenin, said the military prevented emergency workers from evacuating them.

Both accused the military of firing tear gas at the pediatric ward of a hospital, causing children to choke. Video at the hospital showed women carrying children into a corridor.

The military said forces closed roads to aid the operation, which may have complicated rescue efforts, and that tear gas had likely wafted into the hospital from nearby clashes.

The Israeli rights group B'Tselem said Thursday marked the single bloodiest West Bank incursion since 2002, at the height of an intense wave of violence known as the Second Intifada, or Palestinian uprising, which left scars still visible in Jenin.

U.N. Middle East envoy Tor Wennesland said he was "deeply alarmed and saddened" by the violence. Condemnations came from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and Turkey, which recently reestablished full diplomatic ties with Israel. Neighboring Jordan, as well as Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries also condemned the Israeli raid.

The Islamic Jihad branch in Gaza has repeatedly fought against Israel, most recently in a fierce three-day clash last summer that killed dozens of Palestinians and disrupted the lives of hundreds of thousands of Israelis.

Nearly 150 Palestinians were killed in the West Bank and east Jerusalem last year, making 2022 the deadliest in those territories since 2004, according to B'Tselem. So far this year, 30 Palestinians have been killed.

Israel says most of the dead were militants. But youths protesting the incursions and others not involved in the confrontations also have been killed. So far this year, not including Thursday, one-third of the Palestinians killed by Israeli troops or civilians had ties to armed groups.

Last year, 30 people were killed in Palestinian attacks against Israelis.

Israel says its raids are meant to dismantle militant networks and thwart attacks. The Palestinians say

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 59 of 88

they further entrench Israel's 55-year, open-ended occupation of the West Bank, which Israel captured along with east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip in the 1967 Mideast war. The Palestinians claim those territories for their hoped-for state.

Israel has established dozens of settlements in the West Bank that now house 500,000 people. The Palestinians and much of the international community view settlements as illegal and an obstacle to peace, even as talks to end the conflict have been moribund for over a decade.

California winter storms boost water allocations for cities

By ADAM BEAM Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Weeks of historic rainfall in California won't be enough to end a severe drought, but it will provide public water agencies serving 27 million people with much more water than the suppliers had been told to expect a month ago, state officials announced Thursday.

The Department of Water Resources said public water agencies will now get 30% of what they had asked for, up from the 5% officials had previously announced in December. That's because for the first three weeks of January nine atmospheric rivers dumped an estimated 32 trillion gallons of rain and snow on California. It was enough water to increase storage in the state's two largest reservoirs by a combined 66%.

"We're not out of drought in California, but this certainly makes a significant dent," said Karla Nemeth, director of the California Department of Water Resources.

California pumps water from its major rivers and streams and stores it in a bunch of reservoirs known as the State Water Project. State officials then deliver that water to 29 public agencies that supply the state's major population centers with drinking water and irrigate 1,151 square miles (2,981 square kilometers) of farm land.

Years of drought have depleted many of those reservoirs to dangerously low levels, forcing significant cuts to water agencies across the state. Many agencies imposed mandatory restrictions on customers, and Gov. Gavin Newsom called on people and businesses to voluntarily reduce their water use by 15%.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, which includes major population centers like Los Angeles and San Diego counties, last month declared a drought emergency for all of its 19 million customers. It has imposed mandatory restrictions on 7 million customers, meaning they can only water their lawns one day per week.

Thursday's announcement did not automatically end those restrictions. Adel Hagekhalil, the district's general manager, said the extra water "will certainly help communities hit hardest by this drought." But he warned that "Southern California's water challenges are far from over."

The district gets about a third of its water from the State Water Project, a third from the Colorado River and a third from other sources. The Colorado River system has benefited from the recent storms, but not to the same extent as California's water system. Hagekhalil warned Southern California may "see significant reductions" from the Colorado river beginning next year.

"To replenish local storage and reduce reliance on imported supplies, we must all use water as efficiently as possible," he said.

The U.S. Drought Monitor said Thursday that severe drought was reduced to moderate drought in most of the San Joaquin Valley and the lowest category — abnormal dryness — has replaced moderate drought on the entire central coast, including Monterey Bay.

Most of the state, however, remains in moderate or severe drought, with only a fraction on the far north coast entirely free of drought.

The worst categories of drought — exceptional and extreme — were eliminated from California earlier this month.

The recent storms have highlighted how difficult it is to manage water in the West, where long dry spells are often punctuated by intense periods of rain and snow that leave officials scrambling to capture it all before it flows out to the Pacific Ocean. Environmental regulations limit the amount of water state officials

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 60 of 88

can take out of rivers, making sure to protect habitat for endangered species of fish.

But when strong storms hit, like the ones that pummeled the state in January, state officials say they are limited more by outdated infrastructure than they are by environmental rules. The State Water Project has been pumping at maximum capacity the past few weeks, pulling out water at 9,500 cubic feet per second (269 cubic meters per second). Meanwhile, Nemeth said water is running into the ocean at 150,000 cubic feet per second (4,247 cubic meters per second).

California is trying to build seven new water storage projects, paid for in part by a \$7.5 billion bond voters approved in 2014. But it has taken those projects nearly a decade to get off the ground amid a long permitting and approval process.

Meanwhile, it has been 17 years since the State Water Project has delivered 100% of its water allocation. State officials say part of the problem is a climate change that causes more rain to evaporate into the warmer air and seep into the drier ground instead of flowing into the state's rivers and streams.

State officials said Thursday they're cautiously optimistic about the rest of this year. California has twice as much snow in the Sierra Nevada compared to its historical average, and Thursday's water announcement did not include the amount of water it will generate when it melts in the spring.

The intense rainfall has saturated the ground, meaning when the snow melts in the Sierra Nevada this spring less of the water will be absorbed by dry ground and more of it will flow into the state's reservoirs.

Still, even with the series of intense rainfall, it's possible California's water year — which runs from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30 — will be average.

"We can have intense dry conditions and intense wet conditions all in the same year," Nemeth said.

NYC bike path killer convicted, could face the death penalty

By LARRY NEUMEISTER and BOBBY CAINA CALVAN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — An Islamic extremist who killed eight people with a speeding truck in a 2017 rampage on a popular New York City bike path was convicted Thursday of federal crimes and could face the death penalty.

Sayfullo Saipov bowed his head as he heard the verdict in a Manhattan courtroom just a few blocks from where the attack ended. Prosecutors said the Halloween rampage was inspired by his reverence for the Islamic State militant group.

The dozen jurors deliberated for about seven hours over two days before convicting Saipov, 34, of 28 counts of crimes that include murder in aid of racketeering and supporting a foreign terrorist organization. Jurors will return to court no earlier than Feb. 6 to hear more evidence to help them decide whether he should be executed or spend the rest of his life in prison.

A death sentence for Saipov, a citizen of Uzbekistan, would be an extreme rarity in New York. The state no longer has capital punishment and the last state execution was in 1963. A federal jury in New York has not rendered a death sentence that withstood legal appeals in decades, with the last execution in 1954.

Even before the trial, there was no doubt Saipov was a killer.

His lawyers conceded to the jury that he rented a pickup truck near his New Jersey home, steered it onto the path along the Hudson River and mowed down bicyclists for blocks before crashing into a school bus near the World Trade Center.

He emerged from his truck yelling "God is great," in Arabic, with pellet and paintball guns in his hands before he was shot by a police officer who thought they were real firearms.

The vehicle attack killed a woman visiting from Belgium with her family, five friends from Argentina and two Americans. It left others with permanent injuries, including a woman who lost her legs.

"His actions were senseless, horrific, and there's no justification for them," defense attorney David Patton told the jury during the trial.

The defense asked jurors to acquit Saipov of racketeering charges, saying he intended to die a martyr and was not conspiring with the Islamic State organization, despite voluminous amounts of propaganda from the group found on his electronic devices and at his home.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 61 of 88

Saipov did not testify at his trial.

He sat quietly each day, unlike at a 2019 pretrial hearing where he insisted on questioning the judge about why he should be judged for eight deaths when “thousands and thousands of Muslims are dying all over the world.”

Saipov moved legally to the U.S. from Uzbekistan in 2010 and lived in Ohio and Florida before joining his family in Paterson, New Jersey.

Prosecutors said Saipov attacked civilians to impress the Islamic State group so he could become a member and appeared pleased with his work, smiling when he spoke to an FBI agent afterward.

Among those testifying were several family members from Belgium who were injured in the attack. Aristide Melissas, a father, said he had challenged family members to race their bikes to the World Trade Center, with the loser paying for ice cream. When he was struck by Saipov’s truck, his skull was fractured. He underwent brain surgery.

His wife, Marion Van Reeth, spoke of waking up in a hospital to learn her legs had been amputated.

Saipov’s lawyers have said the death penalty process was irreparably tainted by former President Donald Trump, who tweeted a day after the attack that Saipov “SHOULD GET DEATH PENALTY!”

President Joe Biden subsequently instituted a moratorium on executions for federal crimes.

Until Saipov’s trial, Biden’s Justice Department, under Attorney General Merrick Garland, had not launched any new attempt to obtain the death penalty in a federal case. But Garland has allowed U.S. prosecutors to continue advocating for capital punishment in cases inherited from previous administrations.

It has been a decade since a jury in New York last considered the death penalty.

Federal juries in Brooklyn twice gave a death sentence to a man who murdered two New York police detectives, once in 2007 and again in 2013, but both sentences were tossed out on appeal. A judge ultimately ruled the killer was intellectually disabled.

In 2001, just weeks before the Sept. 11 attacks, federal jurors in Manhattan declined to impose a death sentence on two men convicted in the deadly bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa. The men’s lawyers had urged jurors not to make the defendants into martyrs.

Trump adviser Eastman faces California disciplinary charges

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Conservative attorney John Eastman, a lead architect of some of former President Donald Trump’s efforts to remain in power after the 2020 election, was slapped Thursday with a series of disciplinary charges in California that could lead to his disbarment.

The State Bar of California’s chief trial counsel, George Cardona, said in a statement that the 11 charges stem from allegations that Eastman assisted Trump with a strategy — not supported by facts — to overturn the legitimate results of the 2020 election by obstructing the count of electoral votes of certain states.

The office intends to seek Eastman’s disbarment.

Eastman, the former dean of Chapman University law school in Southern California, was one of Trump’s lawyers during the election. He wrote a memo that argued former Vice President Mike Pence could keep Trump in power by overturning the results of the election during a joint session of Congress convened to count electoral votes. Critics have likened that to instructions for staging a coup.

The State Bar said Eastman faces charges that he violated the business and professions code by making false and misleading statements that constitute acts of “moral turpitude, dishonesty, and corruption.”

Eastman disputes “every aspect” of the charges filed by the State Bar, which are based on his role as counsel to the former president after the election, his attorney, Randall A. Miller, said in a statement.

The State Bar’s action “is part of a nationwide effort to use the bar discipline process to penalize attorneys who opposed the current administration in the last presidential election. Americans of both political parties should be troubled by this politicization of our nation’s state bars,” Miller’s statement said.

In advising Trump, “Eastman’s assessments were the product of comprehensive research of the law and historical records — including the 12th Amendment and Electoral Count Act — supported by reasonable interpretation of legal and historical precedent, scholarly analysis, and legislative history,” Miller added.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 62 of 88

"He was a lawyer, not Rasputin," Miller said.

The bar disclosed in March that it was investigating Eastman for possible ethics violations.

As the State Bar's chief trial counsel, Cardona investigates and prosecutes attorney disciplinary matters before the State Bar Court, which can recommend attorneys be either suspended or, in some cases, lose their licenses to practice law. The California Supreme Court ultimately decides what to do.

Eastman has been a member of the California Bar since 1997, according to its website. He was a law clerk for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas and a founding director of the Center for Constitutional Jurisprudence, a law firm affiliated with the Claremont Institute. He ran for California attorney general in 2010, finishing second in the Republican primary.

Eastman retired as dean of the Chapman University law school last year after more than 160 faculty members signed a letter calling for the university to take action against him.

In his statement, Cardona said the charges allege that Eastman "violated this duty in furtherance of an attempt to usurp the will of the American people and overturn election results for the highest office in the land — an egregious and unprecedented attack on our democracy."

Past US presidents, VPs asked to recheck for classified docs

By COLLEEN LONG, JILL COLVIN and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The National Archives has asked former U.S. presidents and vice presidents to recheck their personal records for any classified documents following the news that President Joe Biden and former Vice President Mike Pence had such documents in their possession.

The Archives sent a letter Thursday to representatives of former presidents and vice presidents extending back to Ronald Reagan to ensure compliance with the Presidential Records Act, according to a copy obtained by The Associated Press. The act states that any records created or received by the president are the property of the U.S. government and will be managed by the Archives at the end of an administration.

The Archives sent the letter to representatives of former Presidents Donald Trump, Barack Obama, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush and Ronald Reagan, and former Vice Presidents Pence, Biden, Dick Cheney, Al Gore and Dan Quayle.

Responsibility to comply with the Presidential Records Act "does not diminish after the end of an administration," the Archives wrote in the letter. "Therefore, we request that you conduct an assessment of any materials held outside of (the Archives) that relate to the administration for which you serve as a designated representative under the PRA, to determine whether bodies of materials previously assumed to be personal in nature might inadvertently contain Presidential or Vice Presidential records subject to the PRA, whether classified or unclassified."

Spokespeople for former Presidents Trump, Obama, Clinton and former Vice Presidents Pence, Dick Cheney, Al Gore and Dan Quayle did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Freddy Ford, chief of staff to former President George W. Bush, suggested in his response to the Archives that Bush's office did not believe a search was necessary, saying, "Thank you for your note. We understand its purpose and remain confident that no such materials are in our possession."

Biden's lawyers came across classified documents from his time as vice president in a locked cabinet as they were packing up an office he no longer uses in November. Since then, subsequent searches by the FBI and Biden's lawyers have turned up more documents. Former Vice President Pence, too, this week, discovered documents and turned them in after saying previously he did not believe he had any.

The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment but the searches by Biden's attorneys and the FBI appear to fulfill the Archives' request.

The Archives had no comment.

Handling of classified documents has been a problem off and on for decades, from presidents to Cabinet members and staff across multiple administrations stretching as far back as Jimmy Carter. But the issue has taken on greater significance since former President Donald Trump willfully retained classified material at his Florida estate, prompting the unprecedented FBI seizure of thousands of pages of records last year.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 63 of 88

Attorney General Merrick Garland appointed a special counsel to investigate Trump's handling of the documents, and also Biden's.

It turns out that officials from all levels of government discover they are in possession of classified material and turn it over to authorities at least several times a year, according to another person familiar with the matter who spoke on the condition of anonymity due to the sensitive nature of classified documents.

Current and former officials involved in the handling of classified information say that while there are clear policies for how such information should be reviewed and stored, those policies are sometimes pushed aside at the highest levels. Teams of national security officials, secretaries and military aides who share responsibility for keeping top-level executives informed — and the executives themselves — may bend the rules for convenience, expediency or sometimes simple carelessness.

While much of the attention has been on classified information, the Presidential Records Act actually requires that, from the Reagan administration onward, all records must be transferred to the Archives regardless of classification.

It's against federal law to have classified documents at an unauthorized location, but it's only a crime if it was done intentionally.

Speaking Thursday at an unrelated news conference, FBI Director Christopher Wray said that though he could not discuss any specific ongoing investigation, "We have had for quite a number of years any number of mishandling investigations. That is unfortunately a regular part of our counterintelligence division's and counterintelligence program's work."

He said there was a need for people to be conscious of laws and rules governing the handling of classified information. "Those rules," he said, "are there for a reason."

FDA's advisers back plan to simplify COVID-19 vaccinations

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

The U.S. is poised to make COVID-19 vaccinations more like a yearly flu shot, a major shift in strategy despite a long list of questions about how to best protect against a still rapidly mutating virus.

The Food and Drug Administration asked its scientific advisers Thursday to help lay the groundwork for switching to once-a-year boosters for most Americans -- and how and when to periodically update the shots' recipe.

"This is a consequential meeting to determine if we've reached the point in the pandemic that allows for simplifying the use of current COVID-19 vaccines," said FDA's Dr. David Kaslow.

The advisory panel mostly agreed with the FDA's approach.

COVID-19 vaccines have saved millions of lives and booster doses continue to help the most vulnerable even as more contagious variants have popped up. But protection does wane and the shots don't fend off milder infections for long.

And people are tired of getting vaccinated. While more than 80% of the U.S. population has had at least one COVID-19 shot, only 16% of those eligible for the latest boosters -- so-called bivalent doses updated to better match more recent virus strains -- have gotten one.

That makes for tough decisions on how to move forward: Who really needs another shot, how often and what kind?

"We're still protected against severe disease, thank goodness," even after the latest mutated omicron strains cropped up, noted FDA adviser Dr. Paul Offit, a vaccine expert at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

The first step: The FDA advisory panel voted unanimously that people should get the same vaccine formula whether they're receiving their initial vaccinations or a booster. Today, Americans get one formula based on the original coronavirus strain that emerged in 2020 for their first two or three doses — and their latest booster is a combination shot made by Pfizer or Moderna that adds omicron protection.

The FDA would have to decide how to phase in that change.

But "this isn't only a convenience thing" to ease confusion about different kinds of shots, said Dr. Archana Chatterjee, dean of Chicago Medical School. Since the original coronavirus strain has disappeared, "moving

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 64 of 88

towards the strains that are circulating is very important.”

Who needs another shot and when sparked more debate.

Looking ahead, the FDA said most Americans should do fine if they get a once-a-year booster targeted to the newest variants in the fall. The agency asked if some people might need two doses -- adults with weakened immune systems and very young children who've never been previously vaccinated. That's similar to how youngsters get their first-ever flu vaccination.

But more data is needed to show exactly who might need two yearly doses — such as a careful count of who still gets hospitalized with COVID-19 despite being up-to-date with today's vaccinations, Offit said.

“Only then can we really best make the decision about who gets vaccinated with what and when,” he said.

Nor is it clear that younger, healthier people would need a COVID-19 booster every year.

“It's hard to say it's going to be annual at this point,” said Harvard's Dr. Eric Rubin.

Fall might not even be the best time to boost, something that would depend on when infections start rising and how long a booster's protection might last, said FDA adviser Dr. Arthur Reingold of the University of California, Berkeley.

Unlike flu which in the U.S. circulates mostly during late fall and winter, COVID-19 waves have occurred year-round.

As for the recipe, the FDA's plan is to call its advisory panel for another meeting in late May or early June to decide if the vaccine recipe needs tweaking — including which virus strain to target and whether it should be a single-strain or multi-strain shot. Pfizer and Moderna said that would give enough time to produce needed doses by fall while a third manufacturer, Novavax, urged an earlier start to any recipe change.

Also Thursday, U.S. officials updated how they're tracking that the newest COVID-19 boosters are safe. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention spotted a possible warning signal that seniors getting Pfizer's updated booster might have a slightly higher risk of stroke. But FDA safety expert Richard Forshee said data from Medicare and multiple other health systems — including in other countries — found no sign of trouble, leading the government to conclude it's unlikely the red flag was real.

Why Brazil's Yanomami are being decimated by disease, mining

By ELEONORE HUGHES and EDMAR BARROS Associated Press

BOA VISTA, Brazil (AP) — Severe malnutrition and disease, particularly malaria, are decimating the Yanomami population in Brazil's Amazon rainforest, and on Jan. 20 the federal government declared a public health emergency. While many in Brazil were left wondering how the calamity could materialize seemingly overnight, it didn't come as a surprise to those familiar with the Yanomami's circumstances, who have issued warnings for several years.

The AP explains how the Yanomami reached this tragic point.

WHO ARE THE YANOMAMI?

An estimated 30,000 Yanomami people live in Brazil's largest indigenous territory, which covers an area roughly the size of Portugal and stretches across Roraima and Amazonas states in the northwest corner of Brazil's Amazon. Some also live in southern Venezuela. They provide food for themselves by hunting, gathering, fishing, and growing crops in large gardens cleared from the forest. Every few years, the Yanomami move from one area to another, allowing the soil to regenerate.

WHAT IS CAUSING THE CRISIS?

Illegal gold miners were first present in Yanomami territory during the 1980s, but then were largely expelled. They have flooded back in recent years, attracted by high gold prices and urged on by former President Jair Bolsonaro. Their numbers surged to 20,000 during Bolsonaro's administration, according to estimates from environmental and Indigenous rights groups.

Miners destroy the habitat of animals that the Yanomami hunt, and occupy fertile land that the Yanomami

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 65 of 88

use to farm. The miners also process ore with mercury that poisons the rivers that the Yanomami depend upon for fish. Mining creates pools of stagnant water where mosquitoes that transmit illness breed. And miners relocating to exploit new areas spread sickness to native people who possess low immunity due to limited contact with outsiders.

"The impacts accumulate," said Estêvão Senra, a geographer and researcher at Instituto Socioambiental, an environmental and Indigenous rights non-profit. "If (the Yanomami) are sick, they miss the right moment to open a new area for farming, compromising their future."

An AP investigative series last year detailed how the scale of prospecting on Indigenous lands exploded in recent years, illegally mined gold seeps into global supply chains, and mining stokes divisions within Indigenous territories.

WAS THIS A SUDDEN DISASTER?

No. It has spiraled over the course of several years. Eight of 10 children aged 5 or under had chronic malnutrition in 2020, according to a study in two Yanomami regions by UNICEF and Brazilian state health research institute Fiocruz. There were 44,069 cases of malaria in two years, meaning the entire population was contaminated, some people more than once, Roraima state's public prosecutor's office said in 2021, citing data from Brazil's country-wide disease notification system.

Curable conditions like flu, pneumonia, anemia and diarrhea become life-threatening. At least 570 Yanomami children died from untreated diseases during Bolsonaro's term, from 2019 to 2022, according to Health Ministry data obtained by independent local news website Sumauma. That marked a 29% increase from the prior four years.

There was a greater need for medical care, but services for Indigenous peoples deteriorated under Bolsonaro, according to Adriana Athila, an anthropologist who has studied public healthcare for the Yanomami, which is provided by one of the special districts designed for the needs of Indigenous communities. There have also been reports of miners taking control of health facilities and airstrips in Yanomami territory for their own use. Local leaders themselves have been sounding the alarm for years.

"The miners are destroying our rivers, our forest and our children. Our air is no longer pure, our game is disappearing and our people are crying out for clean water," Júnior Hekurari Yanomami, president of the Yanomami local health council, wrote on Twitter last March. "We want to live, we want our peace back and our territory."

The recent influx of miners severely exacerbated the disruption of traditional Yanomami life that took place over the prior two decades. That was caused by the introduction of social welfare programs that forced people to make weeks-long trips to collect their benefits in cities, where they often remain for extended periods in squalid conditions, as well as the establishment of non-Indigenous institutions, such as military bases, medical posts, and religious missions, which transformed some temporary villages into permanent settlements, depleting hunting and soil resources.

WHAT WAS BOLSONARO'S ROLE?

As a young lawmaker in the 1990s, Bolsonaro fiercely opposed the creation of the Yanomami territory. More recently, he openly championed mining in Indigenous lands and the integration of native peoples into modern society. Environmentalists, activists and the vast majority of Indigenous groups slammed his efforts and warned of devastating impacts. He pressured Congress for an emergency vote on the bill his mining and justice ministries drafted and presented in 2020 to regulate the mining of Indigenous lands, but lawmakers demurred. Even large mining companies repudiated the proposal.

Wildcat gold miners, for their part, were undeterred, "because they knew the government would turn a blind eye," Senra said.

Hekurari on Saturday also accused Bolsonaro's administration of ignoring some 50 letters pleading for help. That is in part why some, including President Lula, have accused Bolsonaro of genocide.

Bolsonaro called such claims "another left-wing farce" on his Telegram channel Sunday, and said Indig-

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 66 of 88

enous healthcare was one of the government's priorities, citing implementation of a sanitary protocol for entry into their territories during the COVID-19 pandemic. He said that during his administration the health ministry provided more than 53 million basic-care services to Indigenous peoples.

HOW HAS LULA RESPONDED?

After defeating Bolsonaro in the October election, Lula took power Jan. 1. The change created an expectation that the burgeoning crisis would finally receive attention, said Senra, given the sharp reversal for Amazon policy Lula had outlined on the campaign trail. Indeed, Lula dispatched a team to Yanomami territory last week and on Saturday traveled to Boa Vista, the nearby capital of Roraima, where many Yanomami people have been medevaced for treatment.

Following Lula's declaration of a medical emergency, the army began flying food kits into Yanomami territory and set up a field hospital in Boa Vista, while the health ministry put out a nationwide call for medical professionals to volunteer.

Marcos Pelligrini, a former doctor within Yanomami territory and professor of collective health at the Federal University of Roraima in Boa Vista, said that he felt relief upon seeing army helicopters transporting food kits.

"It's a moment of hope," he said.

But going forward, the miners still must be removed from the region by the Federal Police and environment regulator Ibama, with help from the defense ministry, Minister for Indigenous Peoples Sonia Guajajara told newspaper Estado de S. Paulo.

US military kills senior Islamic State official in Somalia

By AAMER MADHANI and COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. special operations forces have killed a senior Islamic State group official and 10 other terrorist operatives in remote northern Somalia, the Biden administration announced Thursday.

The operation carried out on Wednesday targeted Bilal al-Sudani, a key financial facilitator for the global terrorist organization, in a mountainous cave complex.

"This action leaves the United States and its partners safer and more secure, and it reflects our steadfast commitment to protecting Americans from the threat of terrorism at home and abroad," Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said in a statement.

President Joe Biden was briefed last week about the proposed mission, which came together after months of planning. He gave final approval to carry out the operation this week following the recommendation of Austin and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Mark Milley, according to two senior Biden administration officials who briefed reporters on the operation on the condition of anonymity.

Al-Sudani, who has been on the radar for U.S. intelligence officials for years, played a key role in helping to fund IS operations in Africa as well as the ISIS-K terrorist branch operating in Afghanistan, Austin said.

The U.S. Treasury Department alleged last year that al-Sudani had worked closely with another IS operative, Abdella Hussein Abadigga, who had recruited young men in South Africa and sent them to a weapons training camp.

Abadigga, who controlled two mosques in South Africa, used his position to extort money from members of the mosques. Al-Sudani considered Abadigga a trusted supporter who could help the IS supporters in South Africa become better organized and recruit new members, according to Treasury.

Al-Sudani had originally been designated the Treasury Department in 2012 for his role with al-Shabab, another terrorist organization operating in Somalia. He helped foreign fighters travel to an al-Shabab training camp and facilitated financing for violent extremists in Somalia, according to a senior administration official.

No civilians were injured or killed in the operation, Pentagon officials said. One American involved in the operation was bitten by a military dog, but was not seriously injured, according to an administration official.

U.S. officials provided scant details about how the operation was carried out or the circumstances surrounding al-Sudani's killing. One official said that U.S. forces had intended to capture al-Sudani but that

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 67 of 88

did not prove to be "feasible" as the operation was carried out.

The operation comes days after Africa Command said it had conducted a collective self-defense strike northeast of Mogadishu, the capital, near Galcad. In that incident, Somalia National Army forces were engaged in heavy fighting following an extended and intense attack by more than 100 al-Shabab fighters.

The U.S. estimated approximately 30 al-Shabab fighters were killed in that operation.

The offensive by Somali forces against al-Shabab has been described as the most significant in more than a decade.

Al-Shabab holds a much larger footprint in Somalia than does IS.

New barrage of Russian strikes in Ukraine kills at least 11

By HANNA ARHIROVA and SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia fired more missiles and self-exploding drones at nearly a dozen Ukrainian provinces early Thursday, causing the first war-related death in Kyiv this year and killing at least 11 people overall, according to Ukrainian authorities.

The attacks adhered to Russia's recent pattern of striking power plants and other critical infrastructure about every two weeks. However, the latest onslaught came after Germany and the United States upped the ante in Russia's 11-month war by promising Wednesday to send high-tech battle tanks to Ukraine and green-lighting other allies to do the same.

The spokesperson for Ukraine's State Emergency Service, Oleksandr Khorunzhyi, said that in addition to the dead at least 11 people were wounded.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said one person was killed during the attacks, the city's first such death since New Year's Eve. Two others were injured, he said. The head of the Kyiv city administration, Serhii Popko, said Ukrainian air defenses shot down 15 cruise missiles heading to the area.

The regional prosecutor's office in Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia province said three people were killed and seven injured in a strike on an energy facility. Valerii Zaluzhnyi, the commander of Ukraine's armed forces, said Thursday's volley involved a total of 55 missiles, of which 47 were intercepted.

Self-exploding drones swept in overnight before the missile strikes. As air raid sirens echoed across the country, civilians, some tugging pet dogs on leashes, poured into subway stations, underground parking lots and basements to seek shelter.

It was the first such barrage of Russian firepower across the country since Jan. 14.

Russia has carried out massive strikes on Ukrainian energy facilities since early October, part of a strategy to try to hamper Ukrainian forces and to keep civilians in the cold and dark this winter before what many experts predict could be a springtime offensive as more conscripts reach the battlefields.

Ukrainian Energy Minister Herman Halushchenko acknowledged that some sites were hit, resulting in emergency power outages.

In Kyiv's southern Holosiivsky district, Arkadii Kuritsyn, 53, said he heard a loud explosion that blew out windows of several trucks parked next to his scrap metal business and snapped several trees in a nearby wooded area in half.

But the strikes did not reach what appeared to be the intended target: a nearby district power plant. The industrial area has witnessed several missile attacks already, due to its proximity to the power station, said Andrii Tarasenko, 36, who works in a factory nearby.

"I am not surprised it was targeted again," he said. "We've gotten used to it."

In Hlevakha, an urban area about 35 kilometers (about 22 miles) southwest of the capital, a barrage of missiles followed a drone attack that damaged the two-story home of Halyna Panasian. The damage included a deep crater in the courtyard, a large hole in the roof and pieces of debris scattered about the house.

"I was in my bedroom when the house was hit. I had to crawl out through the destroyed walls," Panasian, 59, said of the blast at about 2 a.m. "Such grief: What can I say? How can I have a happy life now? I can't. I'm so sad. My life is broken."

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 68 of 88

The attacks came a day after Germany said it would supply 14 high-tech Leopard 2 battle tanks to Ukraine and authorize other European countries to send up to 88 more. The U.S. said it planned to ship 31 Abrams M1 tanks to Ukrainian forces.

Along with Germany and the U.S., Britain, Poland, the Netherlands and Sweden are among the nations that have sent or announced plans to supply hundreds of tanks and heavy armored vehicles to fortify Ukraine as it enters a new phase of the war and tries to break through entrenched Russian lines.

Gian Gentile, a U.S. Army veteran and senior historian with the Rand think tank, said the M1 Abrams and the Leopards would give Ukraine a "mechanized armored punching force."

The British government said Thursday it would start training Ukrainian troops next week on how to use and fix Challenger 2 tanks. The U.K. is giving 14 of the tanks to Ukraine's forces, and Defense Minister Alex Chalk said they should arrive in Ukraine by the end of March.

German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said Ukrainian crews will start their training in Germany in coming days on German-made Marders, which are infantry fighting vehicles, while training on the heavier Leopard 2 tanks would start "a little later."

"In any case, the aim with the Leopards is to have the first company in Ukraine by the end of March, beginning of April," he added. "I can't say the precise day."

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg declined to speculate on the timing of the tanks' arrival but told Britain's Sky News the "allies are extremely focused on the importance of speed."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the move to provide Ukraine with modern tanks reflected the West's growing involvement in the conflict.

"Both European capitals and Washington keep saying that the delivery of various kinds of weapons systems, including tanks, to Ukraine, absolutely does not mean the involvement of these countries or the alliance in the hostilities ongoing in Ukraine," Peskov told reporters. "We categorically disagree with that."

"Moscow views everything that has been done by the alliance and the capitals I have mentioned as direct involvement in the conflict," he added. "We can see it growing."

French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna, who happened to be in Ukraine's Black Sea port city of Odesa on Thursday, in part to meet with Ukraine's foreign minister, told France's LCI television that Thursday's attacks went beyond retaliation.

"What we saw this morning — that is, new strikes on civilian installations — that is not making war. It is making war crimes."

US economy slowed but still grew at 2.9% rate last quarter

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. economy expanded at a 2.9% annual pace from October through December, ending 2022 with momentum despite the pressure of high interest rates and widespread fears of a looming recession.

Thursday's estimate from the Commerce Department showed that the nation's gross domestic product — the broadest gauge of economic output — decelerated last quarter from the 3.2% annual growth rate it had posted from July through September. Most economists think the economy will slow further in the current quarter and slide into at least a mild recession by midyear.

The economy got a boost last quarter from resilient consumer spending and the restocking of supplies by businesses. Federal government spending also helped lift GDP. But with higher mortgage rates undercutting residential real estate, investment in housing plummeted at a 27% annual rate for a second straight quarter.

For all of 2022, GDP expanded 2.1% after growing 5.9% in 2021.

The economy's expected slowdown in the months ahead is an intended consequence of the Federal Reserve's aggressive series of rate increases. The Fed's hikes are meant to reduce growth, cool spending and crush the worst inflation bout in four decades. Last year, the Fed raised its benchmark rate seven times. It is set to do so again next week, though this time by a smaller amount.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 69 of 88

The resilience of the U.S. job market has been a major surprise. Last year, employers added 4.5 million jobs, second only to the 6.7 million that were added in 2021 in government records going back to 1940. And last month's unemployment rate, 3.5%, matched a 53-year low.

"The news couldn't have been any better," President Joe Biden said of Thursday's GDP report. "We're moving in the right direction. Now, we've got to protect those gains."

Yet the good times for America's workers aren't likely to last. As higher rates make borrowing and spending increasingly expensive across the economy, many consumers will spend less and employers will likely hire less.

"Recent data suggest that the pace of expansion could slow sharply in (the current quarter) as the effects of restrictive monetary policy take hold," Rubeela Farooqi, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics, wrote in a research report. "From the Fed's perspective, a desired slowdown in the economy will be welcome news."

Consumer spending, which fuels about 70% of the entire economy, rose at a sturdy 2.1% annual rate from October through December, down slightly from 2.3% in the previous quarter.

More recent numbers, including a 1.1% drop in retail sales last month, indicate that consumers have begun to pull back.

"That suggests higher rates were starting to take a bigger toll and sets the stage for weaker growth in the first quarter of this year," said Andrew Hunter, senior U.S. economist at Capital Economics.

Economists at Bank of America expect growth to slow to a 1.5% annual rate in the January-March quarter and then to contract for the rest of the year — by a 0.5% rate in the second quarter, 2% in the third and 1.5% in the fourth.

The Fed has been responding to an inflation rate that remains stubbornly high even though it has been gradually easing. Year-over-year inflation was raging at a 9.1% rate in June, the highest level in more than 40 years. It has since cooled — to 6.5% in December — but is still far above the Fed's 2% annual target.

"The U.S. economy isn't falling off a cliff, but it is losing stamina and risks contracting early this year," said Sal Guatieri, senior economist at BMO Capital Economics. "That should limit the Fed to just two more small rate increases in coming months."

One additional threat to the economy this year is rooted in politics: House Republicans could refuse to raise the federal debt limit if the Biden administration rejects their demand for broad spending cuts. A failure to raise the borrowing cap would prevent the federal government from being able to pay all its obligations and could shatter its credit.

Moody's Analytics estimates that the resulting upheaval could wipe out nearly 6 million American jobs in a recession similar to the devastating one that was triggered by the 2007-2009 financial crisis.

At least the economy is likely beginning the year on firmer footing than it did at the start of 2022. Last year, the economy shrank at an annual pace of 1.6% from January through March and by a further 0.6% from April through June. Those two consecutive quarters of economic contraction raised fears that a recession might have begun.

On corporate earnings calls for the April-June quarter of 2022, nearly half of companies in the S&P 500 had cited a "recession" — the highest such proportion since 2010 — according to the data provider FactSet. Forecasters at Bank of America and Nomura had predicted that a recession would hit by the October-December quarter.

But the economy regained strength over the summer, propelled by resilient consumer spending and higher exports.

How classified documents became a schoolgirl's show-and-tell

By CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — On a winter's day in 1984, a briefcase stuffed with classified government documents showed up in a building in Pittsburgh, borne by someone who most certainly wasn't supposed to have them.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 70 of 88

That someone was 13-year-old Kristin Preble. She took the papers to school as a show-and-tell project for her eighth grade class. Her dad had found them in his Cleveland hotel room several years earlier and taken them home as a souvenir.

As a different sort of show and tell unfolds in Washington over the mishandling of state secrets by the Trump and now Biden administrations, the schoolgirl episode from four decades ago stands as a reminder that other presidents, too, have let secure information spill.

The Grade 8 escapade and one known as Debategate both involved the mishandling of classified documents that Democratic President Jimmy Carter used to prepare for a debate with Republican rival Ronald Reagan in Cleveland on Oct. 28, 1980. In the latter instance, the Reagan campaign obtained — some said stole — Carter's briefing materials for the debate.

In today's docu-dramas, special counsels have been assigned to investigate Donald Trump's post-presidential cache of classified documents, which he initially resisted turning over, and Joe Biden's pre-presidential stashes, which he willingly gave up when they were discovered but did not disclose to the public for months.

With classified material also found at former Vice President Mike Pence's home, there is now a palpable sense in the halls of power that as more officials or ex-officials scour their cabinets or closets, more such oops moments will emerge.

On Thursday, the National Archives wrote to representatives of all ex-presidents and ex-vice presidents back to the Reagan administration to ask that their personal records be checked anew for any classified documents, according to two people familiar with the matter. They were not authorized to speak about document investigations and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Carter files fell into Kristin's hands through a somewhat meandering route.

Two days after the 1980 debate, businessman Alan Preble found the papers in his Cleveland hotel room, apparently left behind by Carter press secretary Jody Powell. Preble took them to his Franklin Park home, where they sat for more than three years as a faintly appreciated keepsake.

"We had looked through them but didn't think they were important," Carol Preble, Kristin's mother, said back then, apparently unimpressed by the classified markings. But for social studies class, Kristin "thought they'd be real interesting. I thought they'd be great, too."

Off the girl went to Ingomar Middle School on Jan. 19, 1984, with the zippered briefcase.

Teacher Jim DeLisio's eyes popped when he saw the warnings on the documents inside. Among them: "Classified, Confidential, Executive" and "Property of the United States Government."

"I truly didn't want to look at it," he said then. "I was just too ... scared. I didn't want to know."

Curiosity got the better of him. That night, he said, he and his wife and daughter pored over the documents, containing "everything you'd want to know from A to Z" on world and U.S. developments. One folder was marked "Iran." Libya was also in the mix.

Unable to reach Kristin's family by phone, DeLisio the next day called the FBI, which swiftly retrieved the papers.

A Justice Department official who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity at the time said the bundle of documents was 4 inches (10 centimeters) thick.

Despite steering the secrets back to their proper place, DeLisio was reprimanded by school officials for calling the authorities before reaching the Preble family or them. The discovery fed into a broader investigation by a Democratic-led congressional committee of the official Carter papers obtained by the winning Reagan campaign.

The Reagan Justice Department declined calls by the committee to appoint a special counsel in that matter. A court case trying to force that appointment failed, and no criminal case was brought. Debategate faded, but not the concern over how classified documents are handled by those in power.

As for Kristin, she earned a niche in history and a "B" on her school project.

NASA marks 20 years since space shuttle Columbia disaster

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — NASA marked the 20th anniversary of the space shuttle Columbia tragedy with somber ceremonies and remembrances during its annual tribute to fallen astronauts on Thursday.

More than 100 people gathered under a gray sky at Kennedy Space Center to remember not only Columbia's crew of seven, but the 18 other astronauts killed in the line of duty. NASA's two shuttle accidents account for more than half of the names carved into the black granite of the Space Mirror Memorial; plane crashes are to blame for the rest.

None of the Columbia astronaut family members attended the morning ceremony. But Zvi Konikov, a local rabbi, recalled how Israel's first astronaut, Ilan Ramon, asked him before the flight how to observe the Sabbath during two weeks in orbit with multiple sunsets a day.

"Ilan taught us a powerful message. No matter how fast we're going, no matter how important our work, we must pause and think about why we're here on Earth, and that's what we're doing today. We pause to recall the memory of all those courageous souls," said Konikov.

Columbia was destroyed during reentry on Feb. 1, 2003, after a piece of fuel-tank foam came off and punctured the left wing during liftoff 16 days earlier. The shuttle broke apart over Texas, just 16 minutes from its planned Florida touchdown.

NASA managers dismissed the impact during the flight despite the concerns of others. That same kind of cultural blunder led to the loss of shuttle Challenger during liftoff on Jan. 28, 1986, killing all seven aboard, including schoolteacher Christa McAuliffe.

The Apollo 1 launch pad fire claimed three astronauts' lives on Jan. 27, 1967.

Because of the clustering of these three dates, NASA sets aside the last Thursday of every January to commemorate its fallen astronauts. At space centers across the country, flags were lowered to half-staff, with ceremonies held along with spaceflight safety discussions.

Like NASA's earlier tragedies, Columbia's loss was avoidable, said former shuttle commander Bob Cabana, now NASA's associate administrator.

"When we look back, why do we have to keep repeating the same hard lessons?" he said. "I don't ever want to have to go through another Columbia."

Besides Ramon, Columbia's last crew included commander Rick Husband, pilot Willie McCool, Michael Anderson, Kalpana Chawla, David Brown and Laurel Clark.

A ship's bell pealed after each of the 25 names were read as the ceremony drew to a close.

Bob and Diane Kalander interrupted their sailing trip from their home in Jamestown, Rhode Island, to Florida's Key West to honor the lost shuttle crews. Their daughter and her boyfriend joined them at Kennedy.

"It's fading from people's memory," Diane Kalander said. "There's been a de-emphasis on space because people say, 'Let's worry about problems on Earth as opposed to the future.' We've got to look toward the future."

Monterey Park, an Asian cultural hub, shaken by shooting

By TERRY TANG and DEEPA BHARATH Associated Press

MONTEREY PARK, Calif. (AP) — For decades, Monterey Park has been a haven for Asian immigrants seeking to maintain a strong cultural identity — and a culinary heaven worth visiting for anybody near Los Angeles craving authentic Asian cuisine.

Signs across the vibrant suburb are written in English and Chinese. Families raise bilingual children. And residents in their golden years enjoy karaoke, the Chinese tile game mah jong and — as the outside world learned last week after a horrific mass shooting — ballroom dancing.

"It's a very quiet, humble place. And we mind our own," says Denny Mu, a second-generation American who runs the popular Mandarin Noodle House started by his grandfather.

That sense of peace was shattered after a gunman killed 11 people in their 50s, 60s and 70s and wounded

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 72 of 88

nine others last Saturday during a Lunar New Year celebration at the Star Dance Ballroom. But while residents of the tight-knit community work through the trauma — just as they did during the coronavirus pandemic, when anti-Asian sentiment rose nationwide — the tragedy has only sharpened their feelings about what makes Monterey Park so special, and worth protecting.

Kristina Hayes, who started staging tango events at Star Ballroom when the studio reopened after the pandemic, said dance is “hugely important” for Monterey Park’s seniors.

“It’s a pastime, hobby and even competitive — but in the best way possible.”

Mu, whose restaurant is known for its scallion pancakes and beef noodle soup, said he has no plans of leaving Monterey Park, and believes the slowdown in visitors over the past week will be fleeting.

“It’s the food mecca, especially if you like any sort of Asian food,” said Mu, who is Chinese.

Monterey Park’s transformation to a predominantly Asian city was the brainchild of Fred Hsieh, a Chinese immigrant who was also a savvy real estate developer. He is credited with first coining the city’s nickname of the “Chinese Beverly Hills.” In the ’70s and ’80s, he used that phrase in Asian newspapers abroad to lure people from Hong Kong and Taiwan to the land of opportunity. He cleverly highlighted the city’s area code, 818. In Chinese culture, the number eight is seen by some as a symbol of prosperity and good fortune.

When Hsieh died in 1999, Monterey Park had at the time become the only U.S. city with an Asian-majority population, with 65% Asian residents, according to an Associated Press obituary. Today, nearly 70% of the residents are Asian, mostly of Chinese descent.

As residents deal with the shock and grief that the shooting brought, they hope people will continue to see the city of about 60,000 for the vibrant community it is.

The backstory of Mandarin Noodle House, which at 43 years old remains one of the oldest restaurants in Monterey Park, is the story of many Asian immigrant families who have stayed faithful to the community and elevated it beyond some cookie-cutter suburb. For decades, the city has been revered as the flagship location in Southern California for authentic Asian food, particularly Chinese cuisine from various regions.

For the 36-year-old Mu, the regular customers at Mandarin Noodle House are one reason he can’t see himself leaving Monterey Park.

“It’s nice to go to a restaurant and ask the customer ‘How was your day? How was your kid’s dance recital? ... All that stuff,” Mu said. “It’s all about community.”

Hayes said her specialty over the years has been creating dance programs for seniors, especially for those who have lost mobility or have dementia. Some dedicated dancers who came to the ballroom showed up after work and on the weekends.

“In the Asian American community across the country, seniors have kept ballroom dancing alive,” said Hayes, who is white.

Betina Hsieh, a second-generation Taiwanese American and an associate professor at Cal State Long Beach’s College of Education, knows at least one person whose parents went to Star Ballroom. Dance halls and churches in Asian communities have traditionally been safe spaces for older people.

“There is a big separation or tension between immigrant parents and people like me who are second generation,” Hsieh said. “Our families bought into this idea of helping us kids assimilate. But, they remained in their ethnic enclaves and mingled among themselves, which means they have limited spaces to gather as they age.”

Kevin Mok, 32 and of Chinese descent, runs Japanese dessert shop Mr. Obanyaki with his parents and brother. Since the shooting, he said he still feels “there’s a sense of fear in this community,” because there are less people on the streets.

“It’s quieter than usual,” Mok said, while eating lunch at Mu’s restaurant. “I feel like my sales have dropped like 15 to 20% at night. Hopefully, it’ll come back.”

The gunman — a 72-year-old Asian man known in the community — shot and killed himself.

Hsieh, the professor, grew up in Santa Clarita, but has deep connections to Monterey Park. Her grandparents lived there or went there for doctor’s appointments because it was the only place they could find Mandarin-speaking physicians.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 73 of 88

"It was the first 'ethnoburb' in Southern California for Asians," Hsieh said. "Monterey Park was this place we had before we even knew how to have an Asian American identity, a place where our families could gather and stay connected to their home and culture."

Immigrant-run restaurants and shops flourished in the burgeoning ethnoburb because immigrants are the least likely group to tolerate watered-down versions of their food.

"Within five minutes I can get access to all the good food," said Yvonne Yiu, a former Monterey Park mayor. "Because they are very competitive, they have to be good. A lot of people travel far away to Monterey Park to eat and dine."

Ballroom dancing is also embedded in the city's culture, and Hayes of Star Ballroom is confident the community will rekindle its dance-floor joy.

"People are going to come, and they are going to dance again," she said.

Wrexham eyes Hollywood ending in impressive FA Cup run

By KEN MAGUIRE AP Sports Writer

LONDON (AP) — The Hollywood owners of Wrexham are still learning the vernacular of British soccer.

They don't need guidance, though, to set the scene for this weekend's FA Cup match against second-division Sheffield United.

Rob McElhenney, who co-owns the fifth-tier club with fellow actor Ryan Reynolds, joked that he's visited Sheffield and likes the people but "they of course are the enemy now and their tyrannical reign through the Championship must be stopped a la Goliath."

Wrexham is lowest-ranked team left in the world's oldest soccer knockout competition, 71 places below its opponent in English soccer's pyramid.

The teams play on Sunday at Wrexham's sold-out Racecourse Ground in northeast Wales, about 28 miles south of Liverpool.

McElhenney says he's still getting used to British soccer sayings like "squeaky-bum time" — made famous by former Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson when describing the tense late moments of a game. He said that one is his "absolute favorite" so far.

The celebrity owners, who completed a \$2.5 million takeover of the team in November 2020, might pick up some more colloquial phrases if Wrexham can pull off another big upset in the FA Cup.

Wrexham beat second-tier Coventry City 4-3 to reach the fourth round of the competition for the first time since 2000. Reynolds, a Canadian best known for starring in the "Deadpool" movies, said the win over Coventry left him "totally speechless" after the team built a 4-1 lead and held on at the end.

"We have got a huge tradition in the FA Cup," said Chris Jones, a member of the Wrexham Supporters Trust. "It's a great atmosphere at the grounds. The crowd is always very vociferous. When we do play those big games, there's a real advantage."

Wrexham achieved one of the FA Cup's greatest upsets by beating then-English champion Arsenal in the third round in 1992. Wrexham also reached the quarterfinals in the 1996-97 season, when it was in the third tier.

The club leads the National League standings and is on course for promotion to League Two — English soccer's fourth tier.

"It's a complete turnaround," said Jones, who credits Reynolds and McElhenney. "They're really doing everything that they promised to do. They're very keen to listen to the fans."

NOT ALL SUNNY

Wrexham, the world's third-oldest professional club, has torn down a portion of its stands and will replace it with new and expanded seating capacity.

But the club's hopes — through the multi-stakeholder Wrexham Gateway project — for UK government support on the construction of a new Kop stand were dashed last week when a proposed grant was rejected.

Humphrey Ker, a British actor who is Wrexham's executive director, said the news "was received with bitter disappointment" but he said the club has a "Plan B."

"The Kop will rise again, it will just have to do so via a different method to the one for which we had so long planned. More to come on that," he said in a statement on the club's website.

Trump impeachment leader Schiff joins California Senate race

By MICHAEL R. BLOOD Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff, who rose to national prominence as the lead prosecutor in President Donald Trump's first impeachment trial, said Thursday he is running for the Senate seat held by long-serving Democrat Dianne Feinstein.

The 2024 race is quickly emerging as a marquee Senate contest, even though the 89-year-old Feinstein, the oldest member of Congress, has yet to announce if she will seek another term, though her retirement is widely expected. Schiff is jumping in two weeks after Rep. Katie Porter became the first candidate to declare her campaign for the safe Democratic seat.

Schiff, a former federal prosecutor, made clear he intends to anchor his candidacy to his role as Trump's chief antagonist in Congress. In his campaign kickoff video, he said the "biggest job of his life" was serving as impeachment manager, and he promised to continue to be a "fighter" for democracy.

"If our democracy isn't delivering for Americans, they'll look for alternatives, like a dangerous demagogue who promises that he alone can fix it," Schiff said of Trump, who has announced his 2024 campaign for the presidency.

Feinstein, a former San Francisco mayor who joined the Senate in 1992, told reporters in Washington this week that she will make a decision about 2024 in the "next couple of months."

The jockeying for the seat has created a politically awkward dynamic for Feinstein, who has broken gender barriers throughout her decadeslong career in local and national politics. In recent years, questions have arisen about her cognitive health and memory, though she has defended her effectiveness in representing a state that is home to nearly 40 million people.

Schiff, 62, said in an interview Thursday that he had spoken to Feinstein a day earlier to inform her about his plans.

"I want to make sure that everything I did was respectful of her and that I did so with her knowledge and her blessing," Schiff told The Associated Press.

Asked if he was aware of the senator's plans, Schiff said, "I don't want to presume to speak for Sen. Feinstein, and I think she's earned the right to announce her decision when she's ready to make that announcement."

Schiff was first elected to Congress in 2000 and represents parts of Hollywood. He has been a frequent target of conservatives — Trump in particular — since the then-GOP-led House Intelligence Committee he served on started investigating Trump's ties to Russia in the 2016 election. Schiff appeared frequently on television to question Trump's actions.

That criticism intensified when Democrats took the House majority in early 2019 and he became the committee chair, and it reached a full-on roar with his role in the impeachment investigation of Trump's dealings with Ukraine. Trump was impeached in December 2019 on charges he abused the power of the presidency to investigate rival Joe Biden and obstructed Congress' investigation.

In an impassioned plea to the Senate in early 2020, Schiff urged Trump's removal from office and framed the choice in moral terms. "If right doesn't matter, we're lost," he said at the time.

"You know you can't trust this president do what's right for this country," Schiff said. "You can trust he will do what's right for Donald Trump. He'll do it now. He's done it before. He'll do it for the next several months, he'll do it in the election if he's allowed to. This is why if you find him guilty you must find that he should be removed. Because right matters."

The Republican-led Senate acquitted Trump of both charges. In 2021, he became the first president in U.S. history to be impeached twice, this time for inciting the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol after he lost the 2020 election. He was again acquitted by the Senate.

Republicans are still angry about Schiff's starring role at the impeachment trial, with new House Speaker

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 75 of 88

Kevin McCarthy accusing him of using his leadership position to “lie to the American public again and again.” McCarthy, R-Calif., said this week that he intended to block Schiff from continuing his service on the House Intelligence Committee.

With the centrist Feinstein in the twilight of her career, the race in the heavily Democratic state already is shaping up as a showcase for an ambitious, younger generation on the party’s left wing.

Both Schiff and Porter are nationally recognized — Schiff through his leading impeachment role and Porter, a favorite of the party’s progressive wing, through her tough questioning of CEOs and other witnesses at congressional hearings. Each is also a formidable small-dollar fundraiser.

Neither has run statewide before, and each would face the challenge of becoming better known beyond their Southern California districts. Democrats are expected to dominate the contest — a Republican hasn’t won a statewide race in California since 2006, and the past two Senate elections had only Democrats on the November ballot.

The field is expected to grow, with other possible contenders including Democratic Rep. Barbara Lee, a former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Asked how he would stand out in what is expected to be a crowded field, Schiff said he would emphasize his central role of national struggles over democracy and the economy.

“I think that record of leadership, that record of staunch defense of our democracy, and the way that I’ve championed an economy that works for everyone, I think are a powerful record to run on,” he said.

In his announcement video, Schiff mixed shots of his family and highlights from his courtroom work with video from the impeachment proceedings and clips of Trump and other Republicans.

He warns that the threat of extremism is not over.

“Today’s Republican Party is gutting the middle class, threatening our democracy” Schiff says. “They aren’t going to stop. We have to stop them.”

Analysis: Stakes rise as Iran can fuel ‘several’ atom bombs

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran has enough highly enriched uranium to build “several” nuclear weapons if it chooses, the United Nations’ top nuclear official is now warning. But diplomatic efforts aimed at again limiting its atomic program seem more unlikely than ever before as Tehran arms Russia in its war on Ukraine and as unrest shakes the Islamic Republic.

The warning from Rafael Mariano Grossi of the International Atomic Energy Agency, in response to questions from European lawmakers this week, shows just how high the stakes have become over Iran’s nuclear program. Even at the height of previous tensions between the West and Iran under hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad before the 2015 nuclear deal, Iran never enriched uranium as high as it does now.

For months, nonproliferation experts have suggested Iran had enough uranium enriched up to 60% to build at least one nuclear weapon — though Tehran long has insisted its program is for peaceful purposes. While offering a caveat on Tuesday that “we need to be extremely careful” in describing Iran’s program, Grossi bluntly acknowledged just how large Tehran’s high-enriched uranium stockpile had grown.

“One thing is true: They have amassed enough nuclear material for several nuclear weapons, not one at this point,” Grossi said.

The Argentine diplomat then referred to Benjamin Netanyahu’s famous 2012 speech to the United Nations, in which the Israeli prime minister held up a placard of a cartoon-style bomb with a burning wick and drew a red line on it to urge the world to not allow Tehran’s program to highly enrich uranium. While the 2015 nuclear deal drastically reduced Iran’s uranium stockpile and capped its enrichment to 3.67%, Netanyahu successfully lobbied then-President Donald Trump to withdraw from the accord and set up the current tensions.

“You remember there was to be this issue of the breakthrough and Mr. Netanyahu drawing things at the U.N. and putting lines — well, that is long past. They have 70 kilograms (155 pounds) of uranium enriched at 60%. ... The amount is there,” Grossi said. “That doesn’t mean they have a nuclear weapon. So they

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 76 of 88

haven't proliferated yet."

But the danger remains. Analysts point to what happened with North Korea, which had reached a 1994 deal with the U.S. to abandon its nuclear weapons program. The deal fell apart in 2002. By 2005 and wary of U.S. intentions after its invasion of Iraq, Pyongyang announced it had built nuclear weapons. Today, North Korea has ballistic missiles designed to carry nuclear warheads that are capable of reaching the U.S.

Iranian diplomats for years have pointed to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's preachings as a binding fatwa, or religious edict, that Iran wouldn't seek an atomic bomb. However, Iranian officials in recent months have begun openly talking about the prospect of building nuclear weapons.

Talks between Iran and the West ended in August with a "final text" of a roadmap on restoring the 2015 deal that Iran until today hasn't accepted.

Iran's mission to the U.N., responding to questions about Grossi's remarks, insisted in comments to The Associated Press on Thursday that Tehran "is prepared to stick to its commitments within the framework of the (deal) provided the other parties do the same."

"The Iranian nuclear program has never been about making nuclear weapons and enriching has nothing to do with deviating from it," the mission said, despite Iran accelerating its enrichment after the deal's collapse.

Iranian state television separately quoted Mohammad Eslami, the head of the country's civilian nuclear program, as saying Tehran would welcome a visit by Grossi to the country.

As Iran's rial currency plunges further to historic lows against the dollar amid its crises, Iranian officials including Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian also have made unsupported claims about American officials agreeing to their demands or frozen money abroad being released.

At the State Department, the denials about Iran's claims have grown more and more pointed.

"We've heard a number of statements from the Iranian foreign minister that are dubious if not outright lies, so I would just keep that broader context in mind when you point to statements from the Iranian foreign minister," State Department spokesperson Ned Price said Monday in a response to a question.

Price and others in President Joe Biden's administration say any future talks with Iran remain off the table as Tehran cracks down on the months-long protests after the death of Mahsa Amini, a young woman detained in September by the country's morality police. At least 527 people have been killed and over 19,500 arrested amid the unrest, according to Human Rights Activists in Iran, a group monitoring the protests.

Another part of the Americans' exasperation — and increasingly of the Europeans as well — comes from Iran arming Russia with the bomb-carrying drones that repeatedly have targeted power plants and civilian targets across Ukraine. It remains unclear what Tehran, which has a strained history with Moscow, expects to get for supplying Russia with arms. One Iranian lawmaker has suggested the Islamic Republic could get Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets to replace its aging fleet comprised primarily of pre-1979 American warplanes, though such a deal hasn't been confirmed.

Such fighter jets would provide a key air defense for Iran, particularly as its nuclear sites could increasingly be eyed. Israel, which has carried out strikes to halt nuclear programs in Iraq and Syria, has warned it will not allow Iran to obtain a nuclear bomb.

The U.S. and Israel also launched their largest-ever joint air, land and sea exercise this week with over 140 warplanes, an aircraft carrier group and nearly 8,000 troops called Juniper Oak. The Pentagon described the drill as "not meant to be oriented around any single adversary or threat." However, it comes amid the heightened tensions with Iran and includes aerial refueling, targeting and suppressing enemy air defenses — capabilities that would be crucial in conducting airstrikes.

For now, Grossi said there was "almost no diplomatic activity" over trying to restore the Iran nuclear deal, an agreement he now describes as "an empty shell." But he still urged more diplomacy as Tehran still would need to design and test any possible nuclear weapon.

"We shouldn't give up," he said.

Trump's return to Facebook could be major fundraising boost

By JILL COLVIN and BARBARA ORTUTAY Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The decision by Facebook's parent company to soon reinstate Donald Trump's account comes at a critical moment for the former president as he tries to build campaign momentum for a return to the White House.

Reclaiming his social media megaphone could open an important new stream of revenue for the 2024 contest's only declared candidate, whose campaign has faced criticism for its lackluster launch.

Trump is considering a return to Twitter, as well, rejoining both of the social media giants that he used to great effect to widely and personally connect with his supporters in previous campaigning.

He was banned from posting on both Facebook and Twitter, along with other social media sites, for his role in inciting violence in the deadly insurrection at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021,

In considering a return to the platforms that shunned him, Trump is essentially recognizing that the social media company he launched last year, Truth Social, pales in comparison to the reach of the highest profile platforms. He currently has 4.84 million followers on Truth Social, dramatically fewer than the 87.7 million who follow his account on Twitter, the 34 million who follow him on Facebook and the 23.4 million who follow him on Meta's Instagram.

Trump's Twitter account was unlocked in November, shortly after Elon Musk purchased the company, but Trump has refrained from using it, insisting that he is happier on Truth.

But while Twitter was long Trump's instrument for shouting his opinions — and received far more attention — for his new campaign, Facebook is ultimately about money.

The 2016 campaign of the business executive and reality TV star was a trailblazer when it came to harnessing the power of Facebook's digital advertising tools. And his 2016 and 2020 campaigns spent millions on ads that were key to his small-dollar fundraising efforts.

The decision on Wednesday by Meta, Facebook's parent company, to reinstate him, is likely to be a similar boon to his current campaign's efforts to raise millions, as well as to collect emails and identify voters.

"I think first and foremost this is about fundraising for Trump," said Katie Harbath, a fellow at the Bipartisan Policy Center who served as Facebook's former public policy director. "He wants to continue to have access to get emails and addresses for fundraising, which is something the platform was always really important to the campaign for."

During his suspension from Facebook, Trump's political operation continued to fundraise on the site but couldn't run ads directly from him or in his voice — appeals that Harbath said are much more powerful.

"Personal appeals are always the best," she said. "And folks haven't seen that in their feeds in a long time."

The reinstatement comes at an opportune time for Trump, who has struggled in the opening months of his 2024 White House campaign to reclaim the energy of his previous two bids. He's planning his first official campaign event Saturday, with plans to visit two early-voting states, New Hampshire and South Carolina.

But even as Trump and his team mull how best to harness the social media brands that helped power his initial rise, there could be significant hurdles.

The former president created Truth Social, a Twitter lookalike, after he was suspended from Twitter and Facebook. He usually posts on his social media site multiple times a day, sharing thoughts, insults and campaign videos and reposting messages from his supporters, just as he had on Twitter.

As part of his deal with Digital World Acquisition Corp. to take Truth Social public, Trump agreed — so he wouldn't compete against his own company — that it would be the "first channel" for "any and all social media communications and posts coming from his personal profile," according to a filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission last May.

That includes an exclusivity clause in which the former president was "generally obligated to make any social media post on TruthSocial and may not make the same post on another social media site for 6 hours" for a period of 18 months, beginning Dec. 22, 2021.

It adds, however, that, Trump "may make a post from a personal account related to political messaging, political fundraising or get-out-the-vote efforts on any social media site at any time."

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 78 of 88

Some Trump allies believe that that line gives him license to post political messages anytime he'd like, though he continues to abstain.

Former Republican Rep. Devin Nunes, CEO of the Trump Media & Technology Group, told The Associated Press on Wednesday that the SEC filing makes Trump's obligations clear, but he declined to elaborate. Neither Digital World nor its CEO Patrick Orlando responded to requests for comment.

"I think this is less of a legal question than an ego question," said Harbath, who expects Trump to begin advertising on Facebook before he resumes messaging. "The man likes to put on a show."

Questions also remain about whether Digital World will get approval from federal stock market regulators to join with Truth Social and go public. Without the merger, Truth Social and its biggest owner, Trump, won't get shares in the combined company potentially worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

Since rumors began spreading of Trump possibly posting again on rival social media platforms, stock in Digital World has plunged. The potential Truth Social partner is down 30% since Twitter reinstated Trump's personal account last year even as the broader comparative market has barely moved.

Trump has so far insisted he is sticking with Truth, saying he prefers the engagement on the site, where fringe content dominates.

But Trump in recent weeks has been talking about returning to Twitter, according to two people familiar with the discussions who spoke on condition of anonymity to disclose private conversations. That has included discussing possible first tweets that would generate maximum impact, NBC News first reported.

A Trump campaign spokesperson declined to discuss Trump's social media plans including his plans for a possible return.

But as Meta mulled its decision, Trump's campaign lobbied for his reinstatement.

In a letter this month, lawyer Scott Gast pressed the company to allow Trump's return, arguing that continuing the ban "would basically constitute, in the words of Mr. Clegg, a deliberate effort by a private company to silence Mr. Trump's political voice."

That's Nick Clegg, Meta's vice president of global affairs.

"Moreover, every day that President Trump's political voice remains silenced furthers an inappropriate interference in the American political and election process," wrote lawyer Gast.

Trump also faces potential limitations on the content he can share on the platform.

In a post announcing Meta's decision, Clegg wrote that the "public should be able to hear what their politicians are saying — the good, the bad and the ugly — so that they can make informed choices at the ballot box."

At the same time, however, he said the company would be putting new "guardrails" in place and that Trump would face additional suspensions should he post "further violating content."

And if Trump or anyone else posts material that doesn't violate Facebook's rules but is otherwise harmful — such as content that tries to delegitimize an upcoming election or is related to the QAnon conspiracy theory — Clegg said Meta will act to limit that material's reach.

It could also temporarily restrict Trump's access to its advertising tools.

A fridge too far? Living sustainably in NYC by unplugging

By KATHERINE ROTH Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — There are those for whom recycling and composting are not nearly enough, who have reduced their annual waste to almost zero, ditched their clothes dryer or given up flying, and are ready to take the next step in exploring the frontiers of sustainable living.

For Manhattanite Josh Spodek, that has meant going without a refrigerator, which he identified as the biggest source of electrical use in his Greenwich Village apartment.

Spodek began by deciding to go packaging-free, and one small step led to another. Now, he is living virtually grid-free in a city that in many ways is the epitome of grids.

"It was a mindset shift followed by continual improvement," Spodek says. He first unplugged the fridge for three winter months, and then the next year for around six months (from November to early spring, when food generally kept for about two days on his windowsill). Now, he's been fridge-free for over a year.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 79 of 88

Spodek is quick to point out that he's not against refrigeration in general, but views it as unnecessary for everyone to have running 24/7. In many parts of the world, he notes, refrigerators are a rarity.

"People in Manhattan lived without refrigeration until the mid 20th century," he says, "so it's clearly doable."

Critics are quick to point out that this experiment should not be taken lightly.

"People's lives can be at risk if certain foods go off. Certain dairy products go off very easily and quickly if you're not careful," says Frank Talty, founder and president of the New York-based Refrigeration Institute, which trains students to install and service refrigerators and air conditioners.

When he first unplugged his fridge, Spodek says, "I honestly wasn't sure I could survive a week without it. I didn't really have a plan for how I would get by without one. But I figured it wouldn't kill me, and I could always plug it in again."

Being a vegan without the need to refrigerate meat or dairy products certainly helps.

Skeptics -- and there are many -- point out that going without a refrigerator requires near-daily food shopping. For those with large families or who need to drive to get groceries, more frequent shopping trips could cancel out the energy savings. Not to mention, the inconvenience would be untenable for most.

Also, improvements to fridges over the years mean they typically use less power now than, say, a heating system or water heater.

"While using less energy is always laudable, most households could make more of an impact by switching to more efficient ways of heating and cooling their home, like a heat pump," says Joe Vukovich, an energy efficiency advocate at the Natural Resources Defense Council.

While refrigerators "used to be massively inefficient in the '70s and '80s, their energy efficiency has increased dramatically since then," and continues to improve, he says. Many stores will also recycle old refrigerators, and some utility companies offer incentives for retiring older models.

Also, just using your fridge differently can make a difference, Vukovich says: Opening the door less frequently, for example, saves energy.

"I don't want to say there's no room for improvement, but the story of more environmentally friendly refrigerators is a massive success story," Vukovich says.

Still, Spodek notes that refrigerators are typically on nonstop: "If everyone could live without a fridge for, say, two weeks over the course of the year, it would save an extraordinary amount of power."

And they might learn something.

Beyond the energy savings, Spodek — who works as an executive coach, teaches leadership as an adjunct professor at New York University, and blogs and podcasts about his experiences — says that going fridge-free has improved his quality of life. He buys fresh produce at farmers markets, receives boxes of produce from a farm cooperative (CSA, or community-supported agriculture), keeps a stock of dried beans and grains, and has become adept at some fermentation techniques.

He cooks with an electric pressure cooker and, very rarely, a toaster oven, powering them with a portable solar panel and battery pack. Since he lives in a city apartment, that means schlepping the panel and battery pack up (and down) 11 flights of stairs a couple of times a day to the roof of his building.

It's an exercise he describes as "almost spiritual." When he's climbing the stairs, he says, he thinks about people around the world who live without modern amenities. "Through doing this, I'm definitely learning more about their cultures than if I just flew somewhere for a week."

Without a refrigerator, he also has learned to cook better and use a wider variety of seasonal produce.

"In the winter, it's just beets and carrots and potatoes and onions, plus dried beans and grains. I realized that that's how cuisine happens. You take what you have and you make it taste good," he says. "And now I just have to eat what I buy before it goes bad, or pickle it so it lasts a bit longer."

Other aspects of his efforts to live more sustainably: Spodek says he has not taken out the trash since 2019 (he hasn't produced enough non-compostable, non-recyclable waste to fill it yet) and hasn't flown since 2016 (his parents live nearby).

While it might not change the world if one person consumes a bit less power by unplugging their fridge, Spodek notes that, as with the Zero Waste movement, "What I do does matter."

"Setting an example for millions of people so that they see that this is even possible? That's huge."

Rybakina, Sabalenka to meet in Australian Open women's final

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — What all seemed so different, so daunting, even, about trying to win a Grand Slam title to Elena Rybakina a little more than six months ago is now coming rather naturally.

And if she can win one more match, she will add a championship at the Australian Open to the one she collected at Wimbledon.

Rybakina, a 23-year-old who represents Kazakhstan, reached her second final in a span of three major tournaments by beating Victoria Azarenka 7-6 (4), 6-3 at Melbourne Park on Thursday, signaling a rapid rise toward the top of tennis.

"Everything was new at Wimbledon," Rybakina said after hitting nine aces in the semifinals to raise her tournament-leading total to 44. "Now I more or less understand what to expect."

That could come in handy Saturday, when she will face No. 5 seed Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus. Sabalenka reached her first Grand Slam title match at age 24 by beating unseeded Magda Linette 7-6 (1), 6-2 in Thursday's second semifinal.

Sabalenka improved to 10-0 in 2023, winning all 20 sets she has contested this season.

More importantly, the victory over Linette gave Sabalenka her first taste of success in a Slam semi after going 0-3 at that stage until now, losing each previous attempt by a 6-4 score in the third set.

Rybakina and Sabalenka employ a somewhat similar brand of tennis, relying on big serves and big hitting at the baseline. Sabalenka is far less cautious, though, and her penchant for high-risk, high-reward play was evident against Linette, who had never before been past the third round in 29 appearances at majors.

Sabalenka finished with a whopping 33-9 edge in winners, but also compiled more unforced errors — including a trio that led to a break at love by Linette in the opening game.

The key to both semifinals turned out to be a first-set tiebreaker. Azarenka lost the mark on her strokes, for the most part, making things smoother for Rybakina, while Sabalenka raced to a 6-0 lead in hers. It wasn't the case that each and every shot Sabalenka hit landed right on a line, but it must have seemed that way to Linette.

"In the tiebreaker, I really found my rhythm," Sabalenka said. "Started trusting myself. Started going for my shots."

Rybakina's win over Azarenka, the champion at Melbourne Park in 2012 and 2013, added to what already was an impressive run through a string of top opponents. She also beat No. 1 Iga Swiatek and No. 17 Jelena Ostapenko — both owners of major titles — and 2022 Australian Open runner-up Danielle Collins.

"For sure, they're very experienced players," said Rybakina, whose parents and sister have been in town throughout the Australian Open. "I knew that I have to focus on every point."

She delivered serves at up to 117 mph (189 kph) and stinging groundstrokes that she used to close points seemingly at will on Thursday. Her performance was particularly noteworthy against a returner and defender as established on hard courts as Azarenka, a former No. 1 and a three-time runner-up at the U.S. Open.

"Kind of hard to digest," Azarenka said. "Obviously, I had quite a few chances that I gave myself."

Rybakina is just 23, 10 years younger than Azarenka, and the future sure looks bright at the moment.

Rybakina might be seeded just 22nd in Melbourne, and ranked just 25th, but those numbers are rather misleading and not indicative at all of her talent and form. She did not get the usual bump from her title last July at Wimbledon, where zero rankings points were awarded after the All England Club banned players from Russia and Belarus because of the invasion of Ukraine.

Rybakina was born in Moscow; she switched to Kazakhstan in 2018, when that country offered to fund her tennis career.

It was breezy and chilly at Rod Laver Arena from the start of Rybakina vs. Azarenka, with the temperature dipping below 70 degrees Fahrenheit (20 degrees Celsius).

That had a role in the way the first set was as much of a seesaw as can be, with each player seeming to gain the upper hand — and then ceding it just as quickly. Both found the conditions slowed down the tennis balls.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 81 of 88

"Kind of misjudged a lot of balls," Azarenka said.

Rybakina encountered similar issues and her occasional inconsistency was encapsulated by the very first game. She began, inauspiciously enough, with a double-fault, before holding with the help of three aces.

Azarenka nosed ahead by breaking for a 3-2 lead on a leaping, full-extension volley winner with both women at the net. Rybakina, though, broke right back, and then once more to go up 5-3.

Azarenka saved a set point at 5-3 with a terrific down-the-line forehand passing shot, wound up taking the game with a backhand she accented with a shout of "Let's go!"

A mistake-filled tiebreaker ended with Azarenka pushing a forehand wide to cap an 11-shot exchange, and the set belonged to Rybakina. She broke at love for a 2-1 lead in the second, and while they competed for another 25 minutes, the outcome was never really much in doubt.

Sure, Rybakina again faltered for a bit while trying to serve out the victory at 5-2. No one expected Azarenka to go quietly. But one last break, aided by a double-fault from Azarenka, allowed Rybakina to take another step toward another trophy.

"Ready," she said, "to give everything I have left."

Russia plays down West's move on tanks, attacks Ukraine anew

By The Associated Press undefined

From Washington to Berlin to Kyiv, a Western decision to send battle tanks to Ukraine was hailed enthusiastically. Moscow first shrugged it off — and later launched a new barrage of attacks.

The Kremlin has previously warned that such tank deliveries would be a dangerous escalation of the conflict in Ukraine, and it has strongly denounced the watershed move by Germany and the United States to send the heavy weaponry to its foe.

But it insists the new armor won't stop Russia from achieving its goals in Ukraine.

"The potential it gives to the Ukrainian armed forces is clearly exaggerated," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. "Those tanks will burn just like any others."

Moscow played down the move right after the announcement in an apparent attempt to save face as the West raised the stakes in Ukraine. Some Russian experts also emphasized that the supply of the deadly armor will be relatively limited and could take months to reach the front.

On Thursday, Russia launched a new wave of missiles and self-exploding drones across Ukraine — the latest in a series of strikes, many of which have targeted power plants and other key infrastructure.

Russian military bloggers and commentators say that such attacks involve meticulous preparation — so the latest barrage was likely planned in advance and was not necessarily linked to the tank announcement.

Yohann Michel, of the International Institute for Strategic Studies think tank, observed that while Western arms supplies irk Russia, it can do nothing to stop them. "It's a problem that they can't necessarily address," he said, noting that earlier decisions by the U.S. and its allies to supply air-defense weapons to Ukraine could have been even more worrying for Moscow.

President Vladimir Putin, his diplomats and military leaders have repeatedly warned the West that supplying long-range weapons capable of striking deep inside Russia would mark a red line and trigger a massive retaliation.

While other weapons like tanks and certain air defense systems have drawn warnings from Russian officials, the wording has been deliberately vague, perhaps to allow the Kremlin to avoid getting cornered by making specific threats.

Poland, the Czech Republic and other NATO countries have already provided Ukraine with hundreds of smaller Soviet-made tanks from the Cold War era when they were part of the Soviet bloc. Ukrainian armed forces, who have used similar aging weaponry, needed no extra training to use them. They played an important role on the battlefield, helping Ukraine reclaim broad swaths of territory in 11 months of fighting.

As Ukraine's armored units suffered attrition and stockpiles of the old T-72 tanks ran dry in the arsenals of its allies in Central and Eastern Europe, Kyiv has increasingly pushed for delivery of German-made Leopard 2 and U.S. M1 Abrams tanks.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 82 of 88

After weeks of hesitation, Germany said Wednesday it will provide Ukraine with 14 Leopard 2 tanks and allow other allies willing to follow suit to deliver 88 Leopards to form two tank battalions. The U.S. announced it will send 31 M1 Abrams tanks.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and his officials, who long have said the country needs hundreds of tanks to counter a foe with a far superior number as well as other weapons, greeted the Western decision as a major breakthrough, voicing hope that more supplies would follow.

"The deliveries of Leopard 2 will take our ground forces to a qualitatively new level," Ukrainian military expert Oleh Zhdanov told The Associated Press. Even though Leopard 2s are heavier than Soviet-designed tanks, they have a strong edge in firepower and survivability.

"One Leopard 2 could be equivalent to three or five Russian tanks," Zhdanov said.

But he noted that the promised number of Western tanks represents only the minimum that Ukraine needs to repel a likely offensive by Moscow, adding that Russia has thousands of armored vehicles.

"Kyiv is preparing for a defensive operation, and its outcome will determine the future course of the conflict," Zhdanov said.

Russian military analysts were more skeptical about the Western tanks, arguing that while Abrams proved clearly superior to older models of Soviet-built tanks during the war in Iraq, newer Russian models are more closely matched. They also charged that Leopard 2 tanks used by the Turkish army against the Kurds in Syria proved vulnerable to Soviet-era anti-tank weapons.

Some Russian online media quickly posted diagrams of the vulnerable points of the Leopard 2. "Hit Leopard as your grandfather hit Tiger and Panther!" one headline said, referring to Nazi tanks in World War II.

Andrei Kartapolov, a retired general who heads the defense affairs committee in the lower house of the Russian parliament, argued that both Leopard 2 and Abrams are inferior to Russia's T-90, a modified version of the T-72.

The latest Russian tank, the T-14 Armata, has been manufactured only in small numbers and so far hasn't been used in the war. The British Ministry of Defense said in its latest intelligence update that Russia has worked to prepare a small batch of T-14s for deployment in Ukraine, but said it had engine and other problems.

Russian observers, meanwhile, noted it could take a significant time for the Western tanks to reach Ukraine, adding that training Ukrainians to use them and properly maintain them would add to the challenge.

"It likely means that the Ukrainian military will probably receive a few small batches of tanks that could be incompatible with each other," Moscow-based defense analyst Ilya Kramnik said in a commentary.

Zhdanov, the Ukrainian military analyst, argued that by agreeing to provide Ukraine with tanks, the West crossed an important psychological barrier and could eventually follow up by supplying even more deadly weapons.

"Handing over Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine marks a major change in the policy of Western allies, who stopped fearing escalation and are now ready to challenge Russia in the war of resources," he said. "The West is forced to more widely open the doors to its military arsenals to Ukraine."

Speaking in a video address late Wednesday, Zelenskyy hailed the creation of what he called a "tank coalition" and said Ukraine now will seek more artillery and push for unlocking supplies of long-range missiles and, ultimately, warplanes.

Ukrainian officials long have expressed hope for getting U.S. F-16 fighter jets and long-range rockets for the High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, known as HIMARS, to hit targets far behind the front lines.

Such desires drew ominous remarks from Russian diplomat Konstantin Gavrillov, similar to the kind voiced earlier by Putin and others.

"If Washington and NATO give Kyiv weapons to strike peaceful cities deep inside Russia and try to seize the territories that constitutionally belong to Russia, it will force Moscow to take harsh retaliatory action," Gavrillov told a meeting of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. "Don't tell us then that we haven't warned you."

Church helps mining community evolve in dark, warming Arctic

By GIOVANNA DELL'ORTO Associated Press

LONGYEARBYEN, Norway (AP) — The warm glow of Svalbard Kirke's lights gleams on the snow-covered mountain slope from where the church stands like a beacon over this remote Norwegian Arctic village, cloaked in the polar night's constant darkness.

A century after it was founded to minister to the coal miners who settled Longyearbyen, the Lutheran house of faith is open 24/7, serving as a crucial gathering point for a community navigating a drastic change in its identity.

The last Norwegian coal mine in Svalbard — an archipelago that's one of the world's fastest warming spots — was slated to close this year and only got a reprieve until 2025 because of the energy crisis driven by the war in Ukraine.

For the lone pastor in this fragile, starkly beautiful environment, the challenge is to fulfill the church's historical mission of ministering to those in crisis while addressing a pressing and divisive contemporary challenge.

"We pray every Sunday for everyone who's affected by climate change," the Rev. Siv Limstrand said. "We also have a role to play as church when it comes to thinking theologically, about what are we doing to the creation."

On treeless land hemmed by glaciers, mountains and deep fjords, Longyearbyen is a town of visible paradoxes.

The open water of the rapidly warming sea laps up against old coal mining conveyors. Tourists come by the environmentally unfriendly planeload to seek pristine wilderness they can only explore with guides armed against polar bears.

Right below where the first mine was built, Svalbard Kirke beckons to its fireplace-warmed lounge that opens into the sanctuary. A cup of coffee or hymnbooks in multiple languages are always available — as long as visitors first remove their shoes in the entryway, as miners used to do with soot-covered boots.

"You don't have to be very religious. They have room for everybody," said Leonard Snoeks, whose daughter sings in Polargospel, the church's children's choir, and whose wife is working on the city's transition to renewable energy.

The switch this year from coal-fired to diesel-powered energy production at the plant — which prompted the mine's original decision to shut down — is expected to halve carbon dioxide emissions even as the search for long-term, cleaner alternatives continues, said Torbjørn Grøtte, Longyearbyen's energy transition project leader.

As change swirls faster than the snowdrifts covering Longyearbyen's few miles of paved roads, the church's anchoring role seems poised to remain the only constant.

It attracts miners who have attended funerals for colleagues who died on the job over the decades, as well as newly arrived scientists and tourism workers seeking to integrate in the increasingly diverse community where people now tend to stay only a couple of years.

Store Norske, the Norwegian company still operating the remaining mine, built the first church in 1921 in Longyearbyen — which translates as "the town of Longyear," the surname of the American who established the first mining operation here.

For decades, the town's two supreme authorities were the mine's executive and the church's pastor, old-timers say.

The first pastor was also the teacher in the company town that for most of the 20th century was inhabited by single miners and the mining executives' families. Outside town limits, a few trappers continued to hunt, a long tradition in these glacier-covered islands.

Miners and their families also made up the Russian towns in Svalbard. At the surviving one, Barentsburg, coal is still extracted under a century-old international treaty that grants rights to all signatory countries. Relations with Longyearbyen, which had normalized after the end of the Cold War as miners traded visits by boat and snowmobile, have been strained again by Russia's invasion of Ukraine nearly a year ago.

Trond Johansen was 17 when he arrived in Longyearbyen in 1971 on a plane chartered by the mining

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 84 of 88

company that landed on an ice field – the airport would be built a few years later.

Sipping black coffee on a mid-January morning in the town's sleek café that offers knitted wear and artisanal chocolates, the retired miner recalled when the main entertainment was at the church.

Before TVs, let alone anything like the plush cinema soon to open in the town's new art gallery, Johansen and fellow miners gathered on Wednesdays to watch four-week-old videocassettes of news broadcasts from the mainland – though they skipped over the weather forecast, Johansen added with a chuckle.

"It was a fantastic place to grow up, more free probably than many places, and you had the wild and the excitement with polar bears lurking around," said Bent Jakobsen, who was born on Svalbard and works at the Norwegian coal mine like his father and brothers before him.

But today he jokes the mine's closing will turn him into an endangered species just like the iconic Arctic predator.

"I can be stuffed and put in the museum, me and the polar bear," Jakobsen said.

Svalbard's natural environment has been changing fast, too. There's no more ice on Isfjorden, which translates as "ice fjord" and whose feet-thick ice cover used to be traversed by polar bears in winter until a dozen years ago.

"Everything except the darkness has changed," said Kim Holmén, a special advisor to the Norwegian Polar Institute who has researched climate in Svalbard for decades. At this latitude, only the January moon glows around the clock.

Swept by the Gulf Stream ocean current and increasingly surrounded by open water, which accelerates heating, Svalbard is warming even faster than the rest of the Arctic, according to both Holmén and data from the Norwegian Meteorological Institute.

Compared to the 1961-1990 normal, winter temperatures of the last decade averaged 7.3 degrees Celsius (13.2 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer. It's been a dozen years since Svalbard hit -30 degrees Celsius (-22 degrees Fahrenheit), which used to happen regularly decades ago.

"Plants, animals, birds, the whole ecosystem is changing," Holmén added, as cold-adjusted species struggle and new ones arrive.

Unusual winter rains unsettle the snowpack, which has led to more avalanches, including a deadly one a few days before Christmas in 2015 that ripped through town, killing two people.

One of them was a friend of Svalbard Kirke's then-pastor, the Rev. Leif Magne Helgesen, who had already been working on raising awareness of the changes he was observing on the island.

"As a pastor on Svalbard, you're the northernmost religious leader in the world. That gives you a pulpit," Helgesen said.

"There are three main ethical challenges we need to deal with and have a prophetic voice in the church: Poverty, conflict, and climate," he added. "It's hypocritical to only talk about life after death. We also strongly believe in life on earth and life today."

He started including prayers about climate in regular worship services. He also worked with the church's then music director, Espen Rotevatn, to create vocals and instrumentals for a climate change Mass – including a rite of penance for piano with deep, haunting notes and upbeat, Blues-inspired passages.

"Some lyrics are dark, but much of it is filled with hope," said Rotevatn. He has been lobbying for the mine to close, which he said was a very unpopular cause just a few years ago.

From a Christian perspective, some might argue that God can fix everything – but Rotevatn shares a different view he believes is more common in the Norway's churches.

"We have a responsibility for the earth that is given to us, to (not) destroy it, which is what we may be doing now," he said.

Rotevatn is now the principal of Svalbard Folkehøgskole, an alternative higher-ed institution in Longyearbyen that he hopes to run as "green" as possible, including with solar panels. For several months in the spring and summer, the sun never sets in Svalbard, just like it never rises in winter.

In that constant darkness, keeping a light burning becomes more than a metaphor for Svalbard Kirke.

"Physical openness and accessibility to me not only symbolizes, but it is also ... an ideal for what a church

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 85 of 88

should be," said Limstrand, who became pastor here in 2019, nearly thirty years after her ordination. "People can come in totally on their own terms."

Among a couple dozen congregants at a mid-January Sunday afternoon Mass was a Hindu family from the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh – two scientists and their 18-month-old daughter, whom they named Svalbie after the archipelago.

"God is God, it doesn't matter which religion. We feel good, peaceful and calm, similar to how we feel when we go to temple," said environmental chemist Neelu Singh.

She and Svalbie started coming to church for the weekly "baby song hour." To the church piano's accompaniment, new parents sing to their babies in a circle before sharing lunch with the pastor and church staff.

"You feel connected with the community and get a chance to be social," said Singh, who believes hers was the only Indian family in Longyearbyen when they moved here four years ago.

What Limstrand calls "spiritual hospitality" also extends outwards from the red-slatted church.

Before the pandemic, she hosted regular visits by Catholic and Orthodox priests to minister to their congregations – including Poles at remote research stations, Russians and Ukrainians in Barentsburg, and a few Filipino workers at the town's only supermarket who happily reminisced recently about those moments.

The pastor herself travels to celebrate services beyond the church – including once at Green Dog, a dogsledding outfit half a dozen miles from Longyearbyen in a broad valley.

"How many priests can you ask to come to a dog yard in -11 (degrees Celsius, 12 degrees Fahrenheit) to baptize two kids?" said their mother, Karina Bernlow, who runs Green Dog with her husband and arrived in Svalbard 11 years ago after a stint in Greenland.

In this time, Bernlow has already seen Longyearbyen transform from a community where mining families lived for generations and extended a warm welcome to outsiders, to a mix of short-term workers who hardly ever meet outside their jobs.

"A place without history, that's what it's turning into. I can see how it's disappearing," she said as the wind, and the dogs, howled outside a log cabin near her yard. Bright lights marked the entrance to the last Norway-operated mine on the opposite mountainside.

"The church is a bridge-builder. A place like this, with so many nationalities, it's really important to have," she added. "I don't go to church very often, but I know it's there if I need it."

That is exactly the kind of church Limstrand wants to foster in order to serve this changing community.

Here, people feel at home when they come to worship by the rose-filled altar, because they have already attended a concert, or a community gathering, or the Tuesday night coffee hour, when hot-off-the-griddle waffles are smothered in brunost, Norway's traditional caramel-tasting cheese.

"It's not the pastor's church, it's not the Church's church, it's not the church council's church, but it's our church," Limstrand said. "It's something that is shared, it's not something that is guarded."

Youth program founder hurt in shooting 'has biggest heart'

By JIM SALTER and HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH Associated Press

Will Keeps was a 15-year-old member of a Chicago gang when he witnessed rival members kill his friend. He escaped the streets and moved to Iowa to help other young people from troubled backgrounds.

Now, Keeps is hospitalized and in serious condition following just the sort of violence he has devoted his life to stopping: a shooting that killed two teenagers at the Starts Right Here education program he founded in Des Moines. Keeps was also shot in Monday's attack, which police say was gang-related, and underwent surgery.

Keeps, 49, is a rapper and activist whose given name is William Holmes. He launched Starts Right Here in 2021 and partners with Des Moines Public Schools to help kids who are otherwise falling through the cracks of the educational system. One of Keeps' songs, "Wake Up Iowa," sends a message, "You don't gotta do illegal stuff, you don't gotta kill somebody just to feel tough."

School leaders and police all agree the shooting won't stop the program — or Keeps.

"Amazing. Incredibly passionate. Creative," interim schools Superintendent Matt Smith said. "Has the

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 86 of 88

biggest heart for kids and for our community — is a fierce advocate for justice and for serving students. He's a genuine man. He's a really good man."

Preston Walls, 18, a program participant, was charged Tuesday with two counts of first-degree murder, one count of attempted murder and one count of criminal gang participation. Police said the killings of 18-year-old Gianni Dameron and 16-year-old Rashad Carr were gang-related, though Dameron's father said his son was not involved in a gang, and Carr's friends told the Des Moines Register he was not in a gang, either. Walls is jailed on \$1 million bond, and the public defender's office handling his case has declined to comment.

In a LinkedIn profile, Keeps said he was 7 when he was sexually abused by his stepfather. Confused and angry, he ended up in a Chicago gang at age 13.

Two years later, after rival gang members killed his friend, they pointed the gun at Keeps, but it jammed, he said. So they cut him, beat him with baseball bats and left him for dead.

He survived and moved to Des Moines in his 20s.

"We owe it to our children to create a world where youth do not experience the challenges, barriers, and issues that I did," Keeps said in the profile.

"Will has a huge heart for kids," Brian Herbel, vice president of the Starts Right Here Board of Directors, said in an email. "He has made it his life's mission to help lost kids and is like a father figure for many of them. He is able to connect with the kids because he had his own troubled past and has overcome it."

Keeps has an unmistakable presence and passion, Smith said, though he's soft-spoken — except for his laugh.

"You can hear it all the way down the hallway," Smith said. "It's very high-pitched. You don't even know what he's laughing about, but you can't help but laugh with him."

Starts Right Here is funded by grants and donors. Some students are directed to the program by the school district. Others are sent by their parents.

The program operates two tracks. One is for students 17 or older who have accumulated very few credits and helps them catch up so they can graduate. The second track is for students who have difficulty staying focused in a traditional school setting. All told, Starts Right Here serves about 40 students.

The program fills a void, Smith said.

"Students and families just felt lost," Smith said. "They just felt like they couldn't find their footing in our education system and Des Moines Public Schools, and in connecting with Will, they felt a different sort of focus, a different sort of attention, and found incredible success."

The program's Facebook feed is filled with some of those success stories, and Keeps sometimes brags about them on his own social media. In one tweet last spring, he posed with a student who floundered in virtual school after COVID-19 hit. "She gave up," he said, until she gave Starts Right Here a try. Now: "GRADUATED!" he proclaimed.

The Starts Right Here website says 70% of the students it serves are members of minority groups. Thirty participants have graduated from high school, the district said, and five others are on track to graduate this spring.

No previous violence has occurred at the school, Smith said. But Ronald Stephens, executive director of the National School Safety Center, said programs that serve at-risk students need to be especially vigilant.

"If you are enrolling someone who has had a background of extensive criminal misbehavior, it's incumbent upon the school officials to take additional steps to provide a closer level of supervision," he said.

The doors at the program are always locked, Smith said. He wasn't sure if guards were present Monday. The program offers classes in the morning only; many students have internships at businesses in the afternoon. The shooting happened just before 1 p.m. Authorities haven't said who else, if anyone, was in the building at the time.

Police have said the shooting was premeditated. Walls was on supervised release for a weapons charge last year and was wearing an ankle monitor, which he cut off 16 minutes before the shooting, police said.

Investigators say in a charging document that Walls had a concealed, semiautomatic handgun with a

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 87 of 88

high-capacity extended magazine when he entered a common area. Keeps tried to escort him out, but Walls pulled away, drew the gun and shot the two teenagers several times, the document stated. Keeps was also struck.

One teenage victim tried to flee, according to the document, but Walls chased him down "and shot him multiple more times." Walls was captured a short time later.

Keeps' family said in a statement Tuesday that he "has a long recovery ahead" but is determined to continue his mission of helping at-risk youth.

Advocates understand the challenges Keeps faces.

Police Chief Dana Wingerts, who is a member of the Starts Right Here Board of Directors, said in a statement Wednesday that it was especially tragic that the violence happened at a place Keeps created to "provide hope and opportunity to some of our most troubled youth."

Wingerts left no doubt he expects Keeps to bounce back.

"As troubling as this is, it would be a mistake to underestimate the passion and energy that he will bring to this important work upon his recovery," Wingerts said.

Today in History: JAN 27, Auschwitz and Birkenau liberated

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Friday, Jan. 27, the 27th day of 2022. There are 338 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 27, 1967, astronauts Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom, Edward H. White and Roger B. Chaffee died in a flash fire during a test aboard their Apollo spacecraft.

On this date:

In 1756, composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salzburg, Austria.

In 1880, Thomas Edison received a patent for his electric incandescent lamp.

In 1888, the National Geographic Society was incorporated in Washington, D.C.

In 1944, during World War II, the Soviet Union announced the complete end of the deadly German siege of Leningrad, which had lasted for more than two years.

In 1945, during World War II, Soviet troops liberated the Nazi concentration camps Auschwitz and Birkenau in Poland.

In 1973, the Vietnam peace accords were signed in Paris.

In 1981, President Ronald Reagan and his wife, Nancy, greeted at the White House the 52 former American hostages released by Iran.

In 1984, singer Michael Jackson suffered serious burns to his scalp when pyrotechnics set his hair on fire during the filming of a Pepsi-Cola TV commercial at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

In 2006, Western Union delivered its last telegram.

In 2010, Apple CEO Steve Jobs unveiled the iPad tablet computer during a presentation in San Francisco. J.D. Salinger, the reclusive author of "The Catcher in the Rye," died in Cornish, New Hampshire, at age 91.

In 2013, Flames raced through a crowded nightclub in southern Brazil, killing 242 people.

In 2017, President Donald Trump barred all refugees from entering the United States for four months — and those from war-ravaged Syria indefinitely — declaring the ban necessary to prevent "radical Islamic terrorists" from entering the nation.

In 2020, China confirmed more than 2,700 cases of the new coronavirus with more than 80 deaths in that country; authorities postponed the end of the Lunar New Year holiday to keep the public at home. U.S. health officials said they believed the risk to Americans remained low and that they had no evidence that the new virus was spreading in the United States; they advised Americans to avoid non-essential travel to any part of China.

Ten years ago: Flames raced through a crowded nightclub in southern Brazil, killing 242 people. Novak Djokovic beat Andy Murray 6-7 (2), 7-6 (3), 6-3, 6-2 to become the first man in the Open era to win three

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Jan. 27, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 203 ~ 88 of 88

consecutive Australian Open titles. The CIA thriller "Argo" won top honor for overall cast performance at the Screen Actors Guild Awards; Jennifer Lawrence won leading actress for "Silver Linings Playbook" while Daniel Day-Lewis won leading actor for "Lincoln."

Five years ago: A suicide bombing in the Afghan capital of Kabul killed more than 100 people; the attacker was driving an ambulance full of explosives and raced through a security checkpoint after saying he was transferring a patient to a hospital. Comic strip artist Mort Walker, a World War II veteran who satirized the Army with the antics of the lazy private "Beetle Bailey," died in Connecticut at the age of 94. Caroline Wozniacki won the women's final at the Australian Open, her first victory in a Grand Slam tournament after 43 tries, beating top-seeded Simona Halep.

One year ago: Liberal Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer confirmed that he would step down from the court later in the year. President Joe Biden strongly affirmed that he would nominate the first Black woman to the Supreme Court to replace Breyer, declaring that such historic representation is "long overdue." (Biden's nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson, would be confirmed in April.) Millions of health care workers across the country were required to be vaccinated against COVID-19, as a mandate from the Biden administration took effect in about half the states. Longtime Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger announced his retirement after 18 seasons and two Super Bowl wins.

Today's birthdays: Actor James Cromwell is 83. Rock musician Nick Mason (Pink Floyd) is 79. R&B singer Nedra Talley (The Ronettes) is 77. Ballet star Mikhail Baryshnikov is 75. Latin singer-songwriter Djavan is 74. U.S. Chief Justice John Roberts is 68. Country singer Cheryl White is 68. Country singer-musician Richard Young (The Kentucky Headhunters) is 68. Actor Mimi Rogers is 67. Rock musician Janick Gers (Iron Maiden) is 66. Actor Susanna Thompson is 65. Political and sports commentator Keith Olbermann is 64. Rock singer Margo Timmins (Cowboy Junkies) is 62. Rock musician Gillian Gilbert is 62. Actor Tamlyn Tomita is 60. Actor Bridget Fonda is 59. Actor Alan Cumming is 58. Country singer Tracy Lawrence is 55. Rock singer Mike Patton is 55. Rapper Tricky is 55. Rock musician Michael Kulas (James) is 54. Actor-comedian Patton Oswalt is 54. Actor Josh Randall is 51. Country singer Kevin Denney is 45. Tennis player Marat Safin is 43. Rock musician Matt Sanchez (American Authors) is 37. Actor Braeden Lemasters is 27.