

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 1 of 85

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- GHS Wrestling](#)
- [4- Re:Set Ad](#)
- [5- Region 1A Standings](#)
- [6- Region 1 Girls starts Monday](#)
- [7- Boys have clean sweep over Florence-Henry](#)
- [9- NSU Women's Basketball](#)
- [10- NSU Men's Basketball](#)
- [11- Democratic Leadership: Democrats Put South Dakota First](#)
- [12- Sunday Extras](#)
- [30- Gov. Noem's Weekly Column](#)
- [31- Thune's Weekly Column](#)
- [32- Johnson's Weekly Column](#)
- [33- Rev. Snyder's Column](#)
- [35- EarthTalk - 30x30 Initiative](#)
- [36- Weather Pages](#)
- [42- Daily Devotional](#)
- [43- 2023 Community Events](#)
- [44- Subscription Form](#)
- [45- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [46- News from the Associated Press](#)

## Groton Community Calendar 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

**Moved to Monday:** Region 1A Girls Basketball at Milbank

Senior Menu: Swiss steak, mashed potatoes, car-

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

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

"We know nothing of tomorrow; our business is to be good and happy today."

-SYDNEY SMITH



rots, 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.

## 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.

**Moved to Monday:** Region 1A Girls Basketball

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

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

**OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton**

© 2023 Groton Daily Independent

## GHS Wrestling

### Four Groton Area wrestlers head to state

Four Groton Area wrestlers will advance to the state tournament after placing in the Region 1B Tournament held at Sioux Valley on Saturday.

Christian Ehresmann is the Region 1B champion at 138 pounds after pinning all three of his opponents. Korbin Kucker placed second at 160 pounds, Cole Bisbee took third place at 170 pounds and Walker Zoellner placed fourth at 120 pounds.

The state tournament will be held February 23-25 at The Monument in Rapid City.

#### **106: Lincoln Krause (1-11)**

\* Quarterfinal - Cooper Pommer (Clark/Willow Lake) 34-4 won by fall over Lincoln Krause (Groton Area) 1-11 (Fall 0:34)

\* Cons. Round 1 - Lane Stuwe (Potter County) 28-23 won by fall over Lincoln Krause (Groton Area) 1-11 (Fall 0:25)

#### **120: Walker Zoellner (21-15) placed 4th and scored 14.0 team points.**

\* Champ. Round 1 - Walker Zoellner (Groton Area) 21-15 received a bye () (Bye)

\* Quarterfinal - Austin Vig (Clark/Willow Lake) 19-17 won by fall over Walker Zoellner (Groton Area) 21-15 (Fall 3:57)

\* Cons. Round 2 - Walker Zoellner (Groton Area) 21-15 won by decision over David Lopez (Redfield) 2-8 (Dec 7-2)

\* Cons. Round 3 - Walker Zoellner (Groton Area) 21-15 won by fall over Tyson Hagberg (Deuel/Deubrook Area) 7-24 (Fall 2:27)

\* Cons. Semi - Walker Zoellner (Groton Area) 21-15 won by disqualification over Brady Unser (Ipswich/Bowdle) 22-10 (DQ)

\* 3rd Place Match - Austin Vig (Clark/Willow Lake) 19-17 won by injury default over Walker Zoellner (Groton Area) 21-15 (Inj. 0:00)

#### **126: Kellen Antonson (4-16)**

\* Champ. Round 1 - Gannon Gilligan (Kingsbury County) 34-5 won by fall over Kellen Antonson (Groton Area) 4-16 (Fall 1:27)

\* Cons. Round 1 - Kellen Antonson (Groton Area) 4-16 received a bye () (Bye)

\* Cons. Round 2 - Payton Moore (Redfield) 17-20 won by fall over Kellen Antonson (Groton Area) 4-16 (Fall 0:48)

#### **132: Tristan McGannon (2-19)**

\* Quarterfinal - Jaxon Quail (Deuel/Deubrook Area) 30-12 won by fall over Tristan McGannon (Groton Area) 2-19 (Fall 1:11)

\* Cons. Round 1 - John Boothe (Redfield) 6-12 won by fall over Tristan McGannon (Groton Area) 2-19 (Fall 2:48)

#### **138: Christian Ehresmann (33-3) placed 1st and scored 28.0 team points.**

\* Champ. Round 1 - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 33-3 received a bye () (Bye)

\* Quarterfinal - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 33-3 won by fall over Tate Everson (Hamlin/Castlewood) 19-22 (Fall 1:20)

\* Semifinal - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 33-3 won by fall over Clayton Dulany (Warner/Northwestern) 38-13 (Fall 3:22)

\* 1st Place Match - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 33-3 won by fall over Josh Kannegieter (Clark/Willow Lake) 23-8 (Fall 2:39)

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 3 of 85

## **145: Nick Morris (5-18)**

\* Champ. Round 1 - Brock Gisselbeck (Hamlin/Castlewood) 33-12 won by fall over Nick Morris (Groton Area) 5-18 (Fall 1:39)

\* Cons. Round 1 - Nick Morris (Groton Area) 5-18 received a bye () (Bye)

\* Cons. Round 2 - Charlie Dulany (Warner/Northwestern) 17-10 won by fall over Nick Morris (Groton Area) 5-18 (Fall 0:35)

## **152: Easten Ekern (4-18)**

\* Champ. Round 1 - Elliot Bratland (Clark/Willow Lake) 19-9 won by fall over Easten Ekern (Groton Area) 4-18 (Fall 1:15)

\* Cons. Round 1 - Easten Ekern (Groton Area) 4-18 received a bye () (Bye)

\* Cons. Round 2 - Collin Beaner (Britton-Hecla) 26-14 won by fall over Easten Ekern (Groton Area) 4-18 (Fall 0:58)

## **160: Korbin Kucker (11-4) placed 2nd and scored 19.0 team points.**

\* Champ. Round 1 - Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 11-4 received a bye () (Bye)

\* Quarterfinal - Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 11-4 won by major decision over Braeden Johnson (Clark/Willow Lake) 7-20 (MD 9-0)

\* Semifinal - Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 11-4 won by decision over Tucker Anderson (Kingsbury County) 20-18 (Dec 3-2)

\* 1st Place Match - Carter Luikens (Potter County) 24-12 won by fall over Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 11-4 (Fall 1:01)

## **170: Cole Bisbee (22-14) placed 3rd and scored 16.0 team points.**

\* Quarterfinal - Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 22-14 won by fall over Andrew Gunderson (Sioux Valley) 11-22 (Fall 1:24)

\* Semifinal - Drake Mueller (Faulkton Area) 24-19 won by decision over Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 22-14 (Dec 7-6)

\* Cons. Semi - Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 22-14 won by fall over Conner Glines (Britton-Hecla) 13-17 (Fall 2:54)

\* 3rd Place Match - Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 22-14 won by decision over Dylan Murray (Redfield) 18-22 (Dec 5-2)

## **220: Gavin Englund (6-18)**

\* Quarterfinal - Chase McGillivary (Redfield) 22-5 won by fall over Gavin Englund (Groton Area) 6-18 (Fall 1:58)

\* Cons. Round 1 - Sage Hermann (Potter County) 14-24 won by decision over Gavin Englund (Groton Area) 6-18 (Dec 4-2)



*You're Invited!*

**RESET**

*women's conference*

**ROSE HILL CHURCH**

**12099 ROSE HILL RD, LANGFORD SD**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 2023**

**9:30 AM - 2:00 PM**

*Women and girls of all generations  
are welcome to enjoy a day to reset.*

**GUEST SPEAKERS**

**PASTORS LISA PALMER  
AND MICAH LOMBARDI, A  
MOTHER-DAUGHTER TEAM**



**REGISTER ONLINE**

**THIS IS A FREE EVENT.  
REGISTER BY SCANNING  
THE QR CODE OR AT  
ROSEHILLEFC.COM**

**CHILDCARE WILL BE AVAILABLE**



# Groton Daily Independent









Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 5 of 85









## Region 1A Standings

Saturday

Sunday

### Boys Basketball

#	Name	Season			Seed Pts
		W	L	PCT	PTS
1	 Waubay/Summit	15	3	.833	43.000
2	 Groton Area	13	4	.765	42.118
3	 Milbank	12	6	.667	41.667
4	 Tiospa Zina	10	7	.588	41.588
5	 Aberdeen Roncalli	9	11	.450	39.600
6	 Redfield	8	12	.400	39.050
7	 Webster Area	4	14	.222	37.444
8	 Sisseton	1	18	.053	36.263

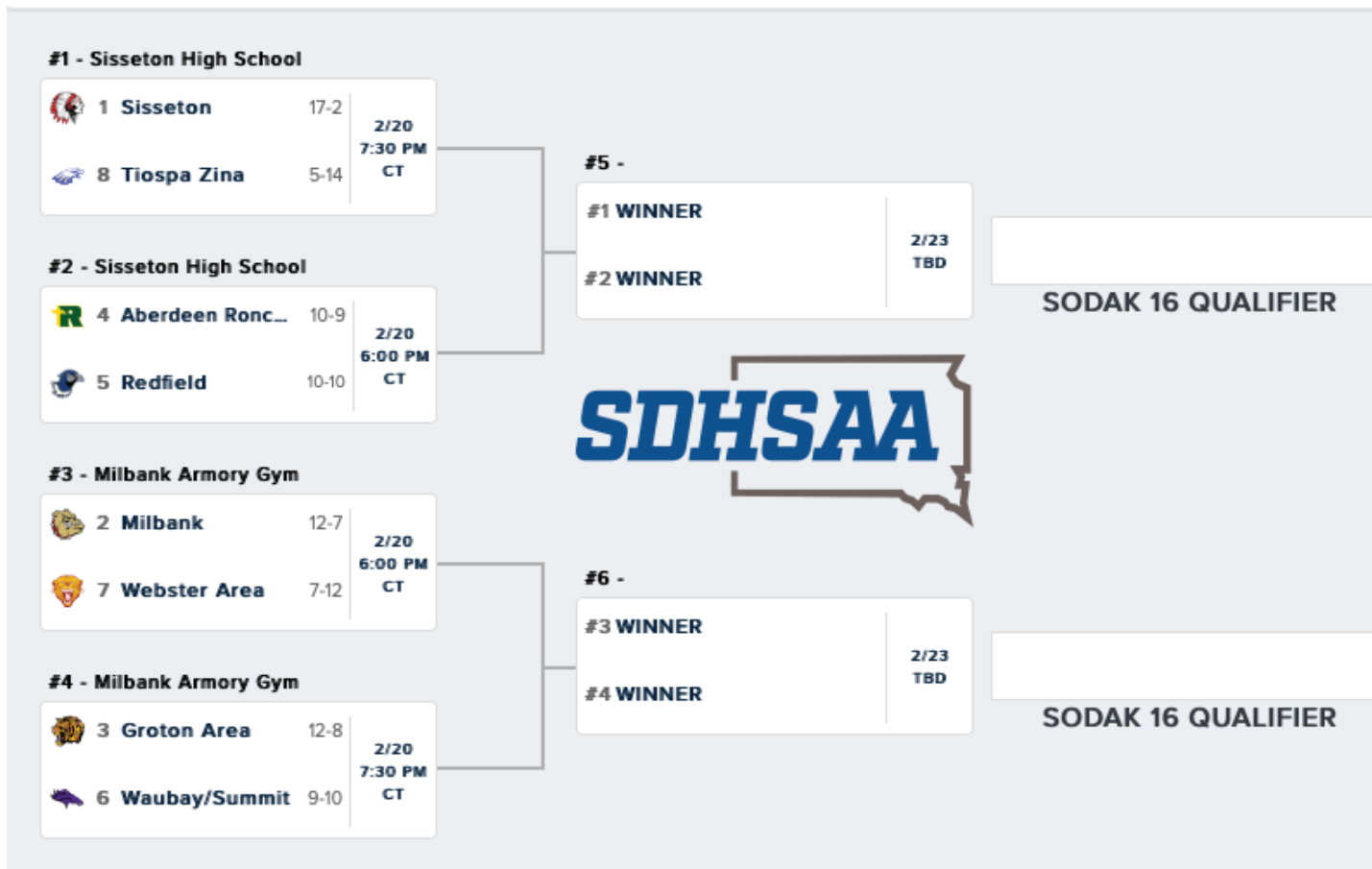
#	Name	Season			Seed Pts
		W	L	PCT	PTS
1	 Waubay/Summit	15	3	.833	42.833
2	 Groton Area	14	4	.778	42.222
3	 Tiospa Zina	10	7	.588	41.588
4	 Milbank	12	6	.667	41.500
5	 Aberdeen Roncalli	9	11	.450	39.600
6	 Redfield	8	12	.400	39.050
7	 Webster Area	4	14	.222	37.444
8	 Sisseton	1	18	.053	36.105

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 6 of 85

## Girls Region 1A now starts on Monday, not Tuesday

### Class A - Region 1



Due to the severe winter weather outlook for next week, the Region 1A Girls Basketball first round games have been moved to Monday from Tuesday.



## Tigers have clean sweep over Florence-Henry



**Paul Kosel (right) presented Boys Coach Brian Dolan with a brush for Tiger's clean sweep win over Florence-Henry on Saturday.**

(Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

Groton Area had a 10-point run and a 15-point run to defeat Florence-Henry in boys basketball action played Saturday in Groton. It was part of a five-game day as the Tigers came away with a clean sweep for the day.

The Tigers led after the first quarter, 13-11, at half-time, 31-14, and after three quarters of play, 48-20.

Eleven was the magic number as four players scored 11 points on the night with three from Groton Area and one from Florence-Henry.

Jacob Zak had 11 points, seven rebounds, two assists, two steals and three blocks. Lane Tietz had 11 points, one rebound and one assist. Taylor Diegel had 11 points, one rebound, and four steals. Ryder Johnson had nine points, three rebounds, one assist and one steal. Cole Simon had six points, three assists and one steal. Tate Larson had six points, seven rebounds, one assist and one steal. Keegan Tracy had four points, one rebound and two steals. Braxton Imrie had two points and two rebounds. Cade Larson had two assists. Logan Ringgenberg, Gage Sippel and Holden Sippel each had one rebound.

Groton Area made 23 of 36 two-pointers for 64 percent, three of 13 three-pointers for 23 percent, five of 19 free throws for 56 percent, had 25 rebounds, six turnovers, 10 assists, 11 steals, 12 fouls and three blocks.

Mehki Keller led the Falcons with 11 points followed by Tegan Sumner with seven, Ty Bergh had four, Adam Moe three, Peyton Roe two and James Schroeder one.

Florence-Henry made 11 of 39 field goals for 28 percent, three of seven free throws for 47 percent, and seven team fouls and 15 turnovers.

Broadcast sponsors for the varsity game were Bahr Spray Foam, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Groton Chamber of Commerce, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Locke Electric, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc., Spanier Harvesting & Trucking, Thunder Seed with John Wheeting.

The boys won the junior varsity game, 60-35. The game was tied once and there were four lead changes early in the contest. Groton Area held an 8-7 lead after the first quarter. Trailing 10-8, the Tigers went on an 14-point run to take a 22-10 lead and led at halftime, 22-12. Groton Area took a 39-24 lead into the fourth quarter.

Ryder Johnson led the Tigers with 15 points followed by Keegan Tracy with eight, Colby Dunker and Taylor Diegel each had six points, Holden Sippel five, and adding four points apiece were Braxton Imrie, Dillon Abeln, Gage Sippel, Logan Ringgenberg and Logan Pearson.

Caron Vavruska led the Falcons with 19 points while Logan Vavruska had eight, Tate Hartley five and James Schroeder added four points.

The junior varsity game broadcast was sponsored by Steve and Betty Dunker.

Groton Area won the C game, 41-20. Groton held a 14-3 first quarter lead and a 20-8 lead at half time. Late in the third quarter, the Falcons came within nine points, 29-20, but then the Tigers would score the last 12 points of the game to get the win.

# Groton Daily Independent

**Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 8 of 85**

Gage Sippel and Turner Thompson each had 12 points for Groton Area while Carter Simon and Caden McInerney each had four points, Jayden Schwan had three, and adding two points apiece were Blake Pauli, Keegan Harry and Ben Hoeft.

The seventh grade team won its game, 54-12. Groton Area led at the quarter stops at 17-4, 30-4 and 43-9. Scoring for Groton Area: Easten Weber 16, Ryder Schelle 8, Ethan Kroll 8, Karson Zak 7, Alex Abeln 7, Jace Johnson 4 and Braeden Flihs 4.

The eighth graders won their game, 48-15, leading at the quarter stops at 11-8, 20-10 and 35-15. Scoring for Groton Area: Karson Zak 25, Easten Weber 11, Ryder Schelle 8, Blake Lord 2, Easten Weber. 2

Both junior high games and the C game were broadcast live on GDLIVE.COM, sponsored by GDI.

- Paul Kosel

## **Whisk Broom Hall of Fame**

**by Paul Kosel**

Dale Flihs came up to me yesterday and said I should be carrying around a broom. It caught me off guard and asked why? He said with all of the clean sweep games we've been having. We both laughed and had our little joke.

But when I sat down, I started thinking about. The more I thought, the more I became obsessed with this clean sweep idea. While I was on the air I started letting my thoughts get aired out. I said wouldn't it be cool to present Coach Dolan with a little brush or broom if we happen to win all five games on Saturday. Well, someone was listening! Emma Schinkel brought up this little brush and told Jeslyn that someone had given it to her and to give to me. I couldn't believe it. I couldn't wait to make the presentation. I was so excited! Thank you to whoever was listening and went to the store to get this brush and to bring it to the Arena.

We won the final game so we had a clean sweep. This was going to be the big moment. My big presentation to Coach Dolan. Of course, he had to talk about my wild shirt. Then I said I had a special presentation for him. Dolan is always so quick with come-backs, but when I presented him with the clean-sweep brush, he was actually speechless for a moment. I said that the Whisk Broom Hall of Fame has started in Groton. Oh my!

On Friday we host Aberdeen Christian with a three-game slate. I will be bringing another brush along so if we win all three games, I can present my second clean-sweep whisk broom to Dolan.



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 9 of 85

## NSU Women's Basketball

### **Wolves Cruise to 36-Point Senior Night Victory**

Aberdeen, S.D. – The Northern State women's basketball team ended the regular season on a high note, routing Minot State by a score of 90-54 on Saturday evening. The Wolves will enter the NSIC Tournament with momentum, having won four consecutive games now and have won seven of their last eight homes games.

#### **THE QUICK DETAILS**

Final Score: NSU 90, MINOT 54

Records: NSU 17-11 (12-10 NSIC), MINOT 12-16 (8-14 NSIC)

Attendance: 2,287

#### **HOW IT HAPPENED**

Rianna Fillipi knocked down the opening shot of the game with a 3-pointer from the left wing, however Minot State would hit a pair of their own three's to take an early 10-7 lead

Northern State grabbed momentum in the closing minutes of the first quarter with a 22-5 scoring run to end the opening ten minutes with a 29-15 advantage

The Beavers scored the first three points of the second quarter to cut the lead to 11 points, before Northern responded with another 8-0 scoring run and Zoe Hardwick capped the run with a jumper to push the lead to 19 points mid-way through the second period

NSU held the lead at halftime for the third consecutive game with a 41-26 lead over the Beavers, and they improved to 13-2 when leading at the break

A jumper by Laurie Rogers and back-to-back 3-pointers by Jordyn Hilgemann opened the second half with an 8-0 scoring run, forcing Minot State to call a timeout less than two minutes into the half

After the scoring run to open the third quarter the two teams traded baskets a majority of the period and Northern entered the final quarter with a 64-42 lead

The Wolves once again dominated the fourth quarter, ending the game on an 18-3 scoring run to push the lead to 36 points

Northern State tied a season-high with nine made 3-pointers in the win, shooting 9-21 (42.9%) from beyond the arc; Alayna Benike (3-6) and Hilgemann (3-5) each knocked down three 3-pointers in the game

The Wolves shot 11-14 (78.6%) from the free throw line, while Fillipi (6-6) and Rogers (2-2) were each perfect from the charity stripe

Northern dished out 22 assists in the victory, second-most in a game this season, as Morgan Fiedler collected a game-high five assists while Fillipi and Kailee Oliverson each recorded four

For the fifth consecutive game the Wolves committed eight or fewer turnovers in a game (8) and Northern improved to 10-3 in games where they commit ten or fewer turnovers

Northern State turned 14 Minot State turnovers into 14 points off turnovers

The Wolves also won the rebounding battle 43-36, and turned 14 offensive rebounds into 17 second chance points

Oliverson recorded her seventh double-double of the season (third in past four games) with 14 points and 13 rebounds, while Hilgemann recorded a career-high with 18 points in the win

#### **NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS**

Jordyn Hilgemann: 18 points, 3 rebounds, 3 assists, 1 block, 2 steals

Kailee Oliverson: 14 points, 13 rebounds, 4 assists, 1 block, 1 steal

Rianna Fillipi: 13 points, 4 rebounds, 4 assists, 1 block, 4 steals

Alayna Benike: 11 points, 4 rebounds

#### **UP NEXT**

Northern State clinched the number three seed in next week's NSIC Tournament and will host Upper Iowa in Wednesday's opening round match-up. The Wolves and Peacocks are scheduled for a 6 p.m. tip-off in Wachs Arena.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 10 of 85

## NSU Men's Basketball

### **No. 21 Northern State Concludes Regular Season with 23rd Win**

Aberdeen, S.D. – The No. 21 Northern State University men's basketball team closed out the regular season on a high note, defeating Minot State and celebrating their NSIC Overall and North Division Championships in Wachs Arena. The Beavers kept it a close one throughout, falling by just three points in the contest.

#### THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 74, MiSU 71

Records: NSU 23-5 (19-3 NSIC), MiSU 10-16 (7-15 NSIC)

Attendance: 2764

#### HOW IT HAPPENED

- Northern led 38-33 at the half and added 36 points in the second, fending off an attacking Beaver offensive in the second
- Minot State out-scored the Wolves in the final 20 minutes of action, coming back twice from double figure deficits
- The Wolves buckled down notching 14 points off turnovers and 12 second chance points in the win
- NSU recorded 36 points in the paint, 24 points from beyond the arc, 14 points from the foul line, and seven points off the bench
- Northern shot 40.0% from the floor, 29.6% from the 3-point line, and 100.0% from the foul line in the win
- They out-rebounded the Beavers 35-34 and recorded 15 assists, two blocks, and two steals
- Jacksen Moni led three in double figures with 21 points and a team high nine rebounds

#### NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

- Jacksen Moni: 21 points, 9 rebounds, 2 assists
- Sam Masten: 17 points, 9 rebounds, 4 assists
- Josh Dilling: 15 points, 4 rebounds, 3 assists

#### UP NEXT

Northern State receives a bye in the opening round of the NSIC/Sanford Health Basketball Tournament and will open the post-season on Saturday at 4:30 p.m. from the Sanford Pentagon. Full tournament details will be released later this evening on [nsuwolves.com](http://nsuwolves.com).



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 11 of 85



## **Democratic Leadership: Democrats Put South Dakota First**

**By Senate Democratic Leader  
Reynold Nesiba and  
House Democratic Leader Oren Lesmeister**

Greetings from Pierre! We just wrapped up week five of the legislative session, and we are officially halfway through. Democrats have remained focused on the issues that matter to South Dakotans.

To start, HB 1075, which would reduce the sales tax on food from 4.5% to 0%, passed out of the House Taxation committee and was sent to the House Appropriations committee. This is an initiative that Democrats have long supported.

Republicans have made it clear that they are for limited government, except for when they aren't. While Democrats have been focused on legislation that puts South Dakotans first, Republicans have been focused on fear-mongering legislation. They introduced and passed through the Senate HB 1080, a bill that strips parental rights and denies access to gender-affirming care for young people. We know that this bill is full of misinformation. Republican legislators should be listening to and investing in our youth, not attacking them through legislation.

Senator Reynold Nesiba (D-Sioux Falls) is working on HB 1041, which would legalize the possession of fentanyl testing strips. The hope is that this will lead to fewer overdoses on drugs that are laced with fentanyl as South Dakota faces a deadly drug epidemic.

Representative Kady Wittman (D-Sioux Falls) introduced legislation to waive fees associated with obtaining a State ID for low-income individuals. The initial bill died in the House Transportation committee. However, there was enough interest from other legislators that it was brought back as a committee bill with slightly different language to specifically target homeless South Dakotans. This bill is a great first step in providing the support our homeless population needs to get back on their feet, and would help ensure fair elections. The bill passed out of the House Transportation committee and was sent to the House Appropriations Committee.

Representative Erin Healy (D-Sioux Falls) introduced HB 1159, which would waive the state sales tax on menstrual products. Not having access to menstrual products deprives people of their basic dignity. We don't tax other medical supplies, and menstrual products should not be an exception to this rule. This bill was passed out of committee and is scheduled to be heard in Appropriations.

This week in the Legislature, Republicans have made it clear that they are trying to legislate the most private and personal decisions that people make with their physicians. They're interested in wading into a national culture war on issues that largely have no place in our state. As the Democratic Caucus, we will continue to work hard for all South Dakotans and fight back against the bad bills.

As always, we have an open caucus. We welcome any visitors to stop by if you're in Pierre and weigh in on the political process.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 12 of 85



## THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

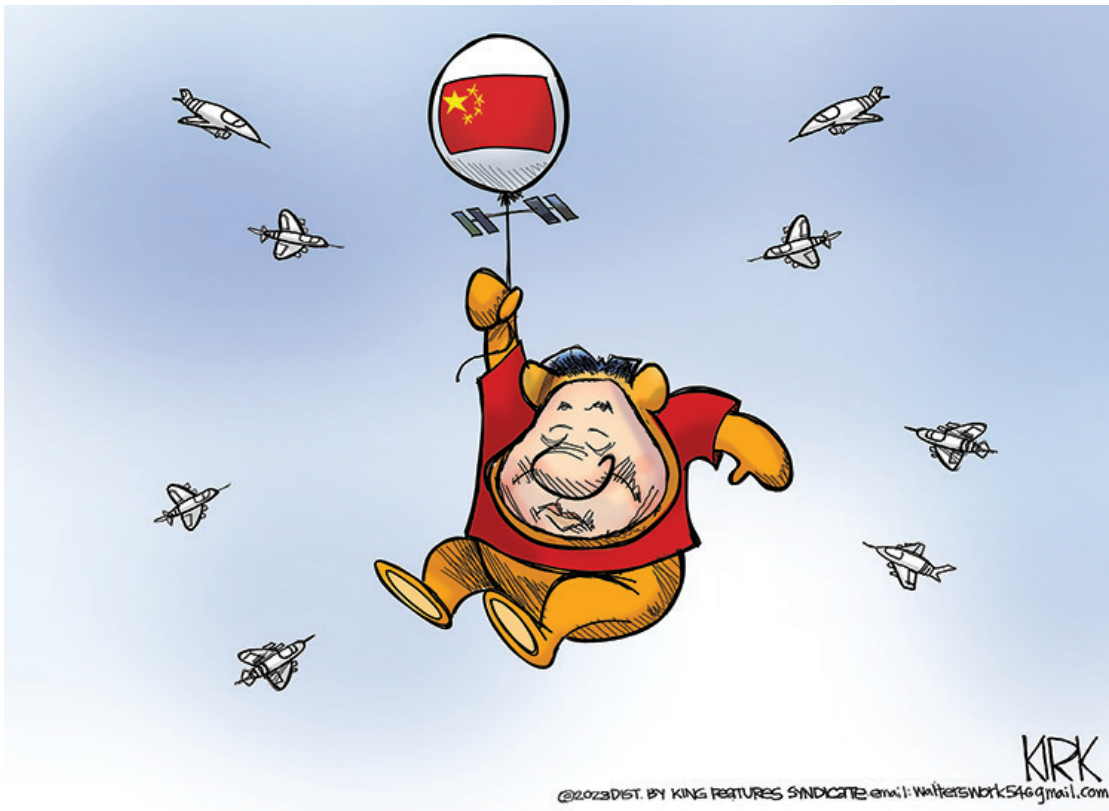
*How blessed is everyone who fears  
the Lord, who walks in His ways.  
When you shall eat of the fruit of  
your hands, you will be happy and  
it will be well with you. Your wife  
shall be like a fruitful vine within  
your house, your children like olive  
plants around your table.*

*PSALM 128:1-3*

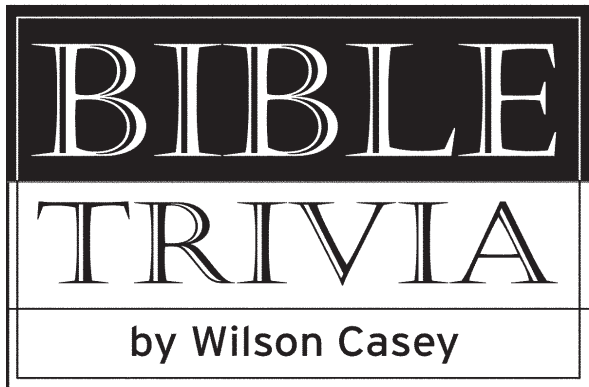
*"Mother & Child Study" by Pablo Picasso (1904)*



© 2023 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.







1. Is the book of 4 John (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. In Romans 10, what body part does Paul call “beautiful” on those who bring the good news? *Hands, Mouth, Heart, Feet*

3. Who died after getting his long hair caught in a tree and being found by enemy soldiers? *Absalom, Joash, Ahaz, Asa*

4. From Matthew 22:14, “For many are called, but few are ...”? *Worthy, Chosen, Winners, Liked*

5. What caused the death of Job’s children? *Famine, Flood, Windstorm, Beheaded*

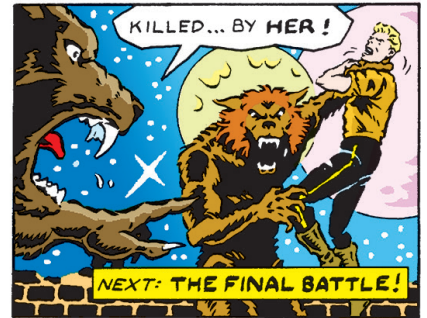
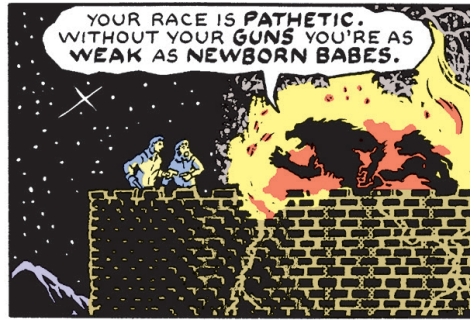
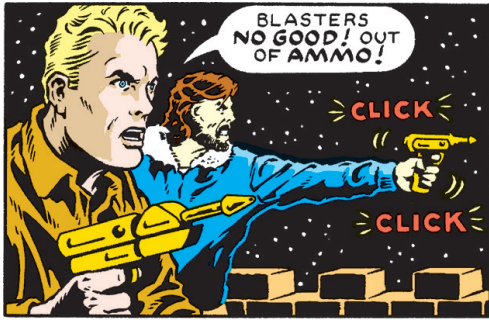
6. Who was the mate of Abigail? *Abraham, Adam, Nabal, Baasha*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Feet, 3) Absalom, 4) Chosen, 5) Windstorm, 6) Nabal

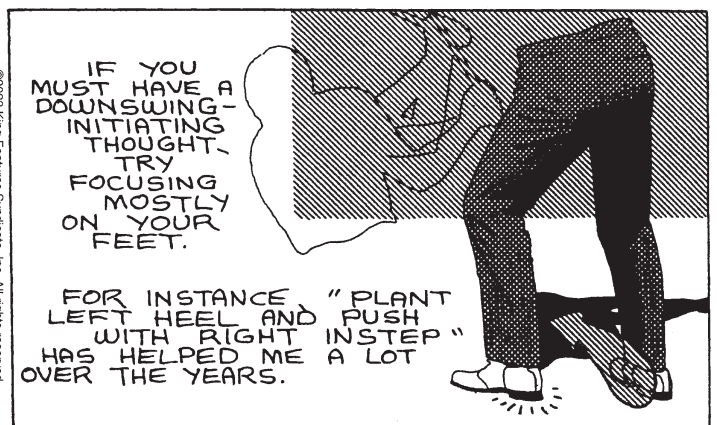
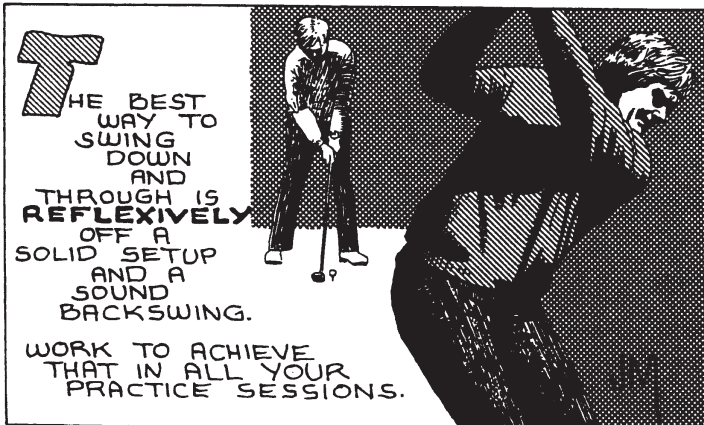
*Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson’s Casey’s latest book, “Test Your Bible Knowledge,” now available in bookstores and online.*

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 14 of 85



## Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



©2023 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.



## High Doses of Vitamins Lead to Vitamin Toxicity

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I have been diagnosed with vitamin D toxicity, according to the blood work from a month ago — my result was 122 ng/mL. I was taking high doses of vitamin D3 in pill form (15,000 IU a day for three years) bought from a drugstore. I have stopped taking it, but I need to know how long it will take to have a normal amount in my body. (Weeks, months?) Can you shed any light on this question? I would like to take it again when my level comes down, but in a lower amount. Also, by any chance, would the high amount of D3 in my system have any correlation to a diagnosis of stenosis of the aortic valve? — *C.I.*

**ANSWER:** Vitamin D toxicity is not common. I have seen one case in my career requiring hospitalization, due to a very high elevation of the blood calcium level. Vitamin D increases absorption of calcium from food through the intestines.

In addition, calcium can come out of bones in people with very high levels of vitamin D. With high vitamin D levels, calcium levels can also become dangerously high. Common symptoms of very high calcium levels include constipation, nausea and vomiting, muscle weakness, kidney stones, and neurological symptoms, including poor concentration and fatigue. These symptoms tend to happen at levels higher than yours, above 150 ng/mL. Years of high calcium levels can absolutely cause existing heart valve disease to worsen quickly.

In cases of acute intoxication from vitamin D, available treatments include steroids and pamidronate (an

nate and other drugs used to treat osteoporosis), which can quickly bring the calcium levels back down to normal.

Without this kind of intervention, a vitamin D level will still come down on its own, only more gradually. Vitamin D3 is removed slowly from the body, because it can go into fat tissue. It takes about two months for half the excess to be removed from the body, but because the active forms are removed more quickly, toxicity from excess vitamin D3 usually only lasts for weeks, not months. Still, you are likely not to need any vitamin D for many months, and if you do take it again, do not exceed the safe dose of 5,000 IU a day. I recommend you also get your blood levels tested. Recent studies have questioned the benefit of supplemental vitamin D for most people, although some people, such as those with osteoporosis and low vitamin D levels, probably still benefit.

I'm very glad you wrote. Many people still don't know that excess of some vitamins can occasionally be dangerous. Vitamin A is the other vitamin where high levels can be very dangerous.

\*\*\*

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I am a 67-year-old female who has been unable to tolerate both liquid and pill forms of colonoscopy preparations. Therefore, my gastroenterologist has been unable to complete a colonoscopy on me. What are my other options? — *F.K.*

**ANSWER:** I would consider an alternate form of colon cancer screening. Home stool tests look for blood and DNA for colon cancer, or both. The data on Cologuard (a commonly available brand) show that it isn't quite as good as a colonoscopy, but much better than not receiving a screening. However, if the result is positive, you will certainly need additional testing, which calls for preparation, possibly requiring you to get the preparation done under supervision.

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



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 16 of 85



**Photo Caption: From left, David Harbour, Anthony Mackie and Jahi Winston star in "We Have A Ghost."**

Courtesy of Netflix

"The Peanut Butter Falcon" (PG-13) -- Although this film released in theaters back in 2019, it was considered a "sleeper hit," garnering more success in the years to come. Starring Shia LaBeouf and Dakota Johnson, this heartwarming indie film is now out on streaming platforms, which might help give it an even bigger reach. In the film, a young man with Down syndrome named Zak has dreams of becoming a professional wrestler, so he escapes from his assisted living facility to go chase his dreams. On the way, he meets Tyler (LaBeouf), who supports his venture and they begin to travel by water to Zak's dream wrestling school in North Carolina. But Zak's caretaker, Eleanor (Johnson), is close behind them to find Zak and return him back to the facility. (Paramount+)

"Smile" (R) -- One of last year's biggest horror successes releases on streaming Feb. 21! "Smile" stars Sosie Bacon as Dr. Rose Cotter, a therapist at a psych ward. In a meeting with student Laura Weaver, Laura informs Rose that she saw her professor die by suicide and, since then, has been terrorized by people smiling at her, telling her she will die soon. Laura then commits suicide in front of Rose, who later sees another patient smiling and telling her that she also will die soon. Rose assumes Laura's curse has been passed onto her, and she takes any means necessary to figure out how to break the curse in time. Who would ever think that a movie about smiling would be so creepy? (Prime Video)

"We Have a Ghost" (PG-13) -- This comedy-horror movie, based on a short story by Geoff Manaugh, premieres Feb. 24, and it's a goofy, spooky watch for the whole family. David Harbour ("Stranger Things" and "Black Widow") stars as a ghost named Ernest, who haunts a home called "The House of Death." A family of four moves into the home and the youngest son, Kevin, shortly thereafter has his first encounter with Ernest. But Ernest really isn't as scary as all the town gossip claims and he can't even speak. Kevin befriends him and begins a YouTube channel featuring Ernest, making them an internet sensation. Kevin's friendship with Ernest prompts him to wonder how Ernest's death truly came to be, so he dives deeper to uncover the truth. (Netflix)

"Liaison" (NR) -- Eva Green ("Casino Royale") and Vincent Cassel ("Black Swan" and the "Ocean's" franchise) star in this new British-French series premiering Feb. 24. Green plays a secret agent tasked with finding out who's behind dangerous cyberattacks taking place in the U.K. Her team tracks the main suspect, who happens to be her ex-lover, Gabriel Delage (played by Cassel). Upon secretly meeting with him, Gabriel provides her with information about the attack and agrees to work alongside her. Their past relationship is full of many secrets that inevitably crop up later and blur lines as she tries to complete her mission. (AppleTV+)

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 17 of 85



1. Which artist released the album titled "All Things Must Pass"?
2. Who was the first to release "Blue Bayou"?
3. Which group released "Tears of a Clown"?
4. Who released "Venus in Blue Jeans"?
5. Name the song that contains these lyrics: "There goes my baby with someone new, She sure looks happy, I sure am blue."

## Answers

1. George Harrison, in 1970, right after the Beatles broke up. It was a triple album: two records of songs and one of jams with other musicians. It went to No. 1 in most places around the globe. The 50th Anniversary box set (2021) did not do nearly as well.
2. The song's writer Roy Orbison, in 1961. Linda Ronstadt released her cover of the song in 1977, and it became her signature song.
3. Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, in 1970. Robinson had been about to leave the group until he saw how well the song charted. He stayed two additional years.
4. Jimmy Clanton, in 1962.
5. "Bye Bye Love," by The Everly Brothers in 1957. While The Everly Brothers' release is the best-known version, others gave it a try over the years, including George Harrison (who changed the lyrics after his wife left him).

(c) 2023 King Features Syndicate

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



"Could you dance around that one again, Senator?"

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

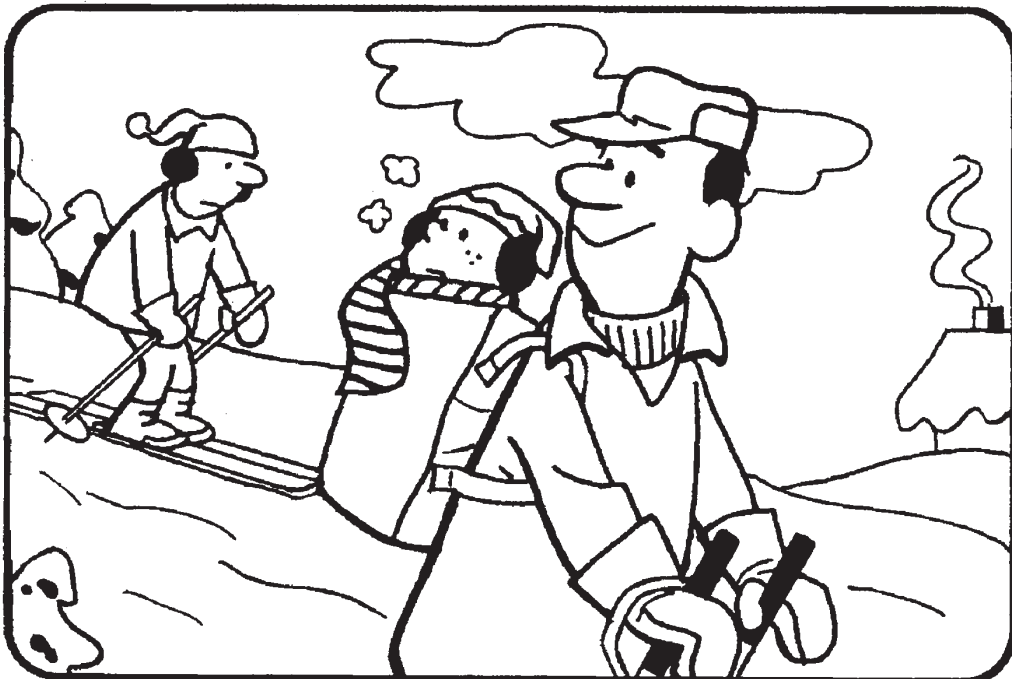


## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY  
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Backpack is missing. 2. Bush is smaller. 3. Scarf is shorter. 4. Strap is moved. 5. Earflap is smaller. 6. Zipper is missing.



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 19 of 85



\* "Revive the look of indoor plant leaves by rubbing the leaves with mineral oil on a soft cloth. Just wipe nicely, and it makes a big difference. Through the years, I have used this tip for both my real plants and plastic plants." -- J.D. in Alabama

\* Lime juice and vinegar both make good meat tenderizers. You can purchase tougher cuts of meat, season with spices and lime/vinegar and marinate for 10-15 minutes before cooking. It is a great way to ease your meat budget. Steaks are getting expensive!

\* "To make onion rings easier to cut (less stinging eyes) and to have the layers separate better when making onion rings, I put my onions in the freezer for about 10 minutes before peeling. They don't freeze, but they do get nice and cold." -- O.F. in Florida

\* Looking for a more natural way to clean? Here's two for the bathroom: Clean chrome with baking soda on a soft, damp cloth. Follow up with vinegar for some shine. Spray lightly and wipe away with a clean cloth.

\* "Men: Make your own after-shave. Thin a bottle of baby lotion with a little rubbing alcohol. Put in a hand lotion bottle, and use half a squirt. No sting, and soft, smooth skin." -- T.G. in Illinois

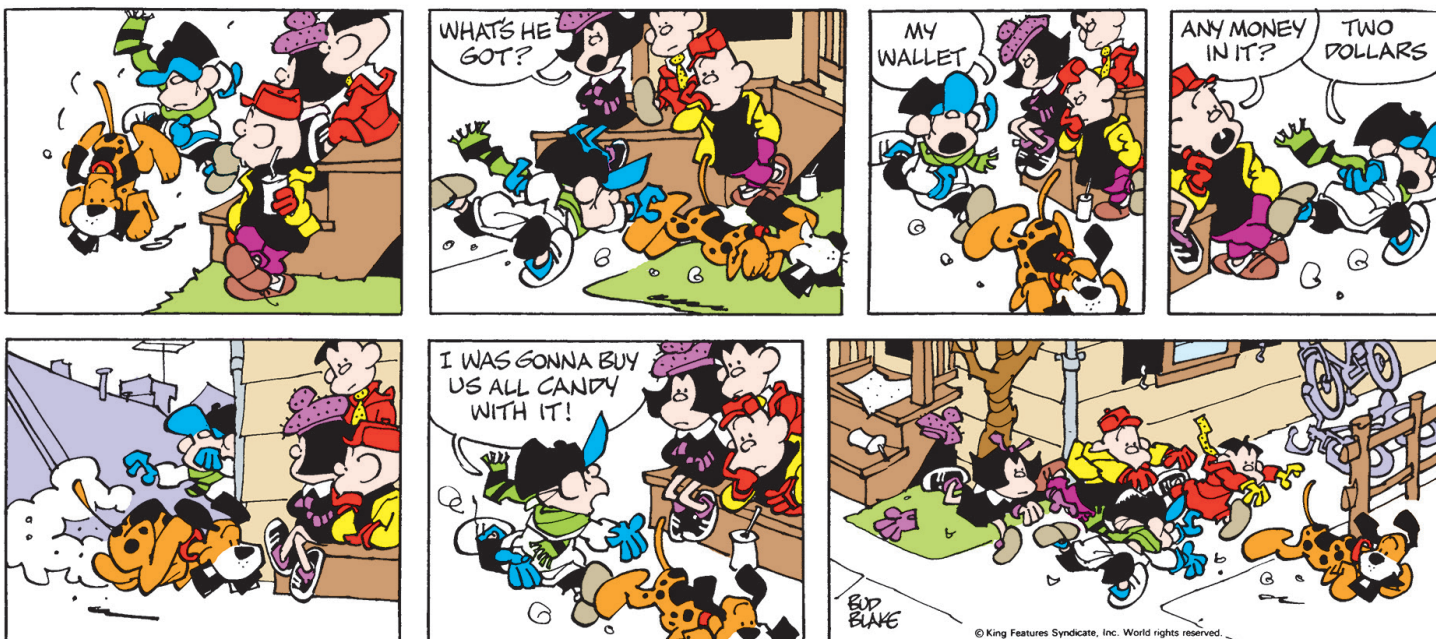
\* Add a single teaspoon of rice to the saltshaker in order to keep too many grains of salt from coming out at a time.

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

(c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

 **TIGER**

by **BUD BLAKE**





# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 20 of 85

## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Shade of blue
- 6 Wanderer
- 11 Physician, slangily
- 12 Lessened
- 14 Veep before Biden
- 15 — del Fuego
- 16 Some fridges
- 17 Egypt's Anwar
- 19 Have a bug
- 20 Sunrise direction
- 22 — Alamos
- 23 Faction
- 24 Cybercommerce
- 26 Pungent relish
- 28 Scratch
- 30 Pub pint
- 31 Passageway for Santa
- 35 "Three Sisters" sister
- 39 — Godiva
- 40 Dict. info
- 42 "Star Trek II" villain
- 43 "Hail, Caesar!"
- 44 Carvey and Delany
- 46 "— had it!"
- 47 Winter, for one
- 49 Lon of horror films
- 51 Inventor's insurance

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

- 52 Oregon city
- 53 Modern messages
- 54 Actions
- DOWN**
- 1 Prepare leftovers
- 2 Black Sea port
- 3 Feminine principle
- 4 High cards
- 5 Faithful
- 6 Boris' cartoon partner
- 7 Final notice
- 8 West of Hollywood
- 9 Subway line in an Ellington song
- 10 Mock
- 11 "Me and Bobby —"
- 13 Longtime Chicago mayor
- 18 Elmer, to Bugs
- 21 "Lassie" lad
- 23 Porterhouse, e.g.
- 25 PC linking system
- 27 Einstein's birthplace
- 29 Stinging insects
- 31 Purse fastener
- 32 Attack
- 33 Think up
- 34 Hankering
- 36 Polished
- 37 Sanctuaries
- 38 In the blink of —
- 41 Confronted
- 44 Word of warning
- 45 Actress Elisabeth
- 48 Gender
- 50 Bio stat

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 21 of 85

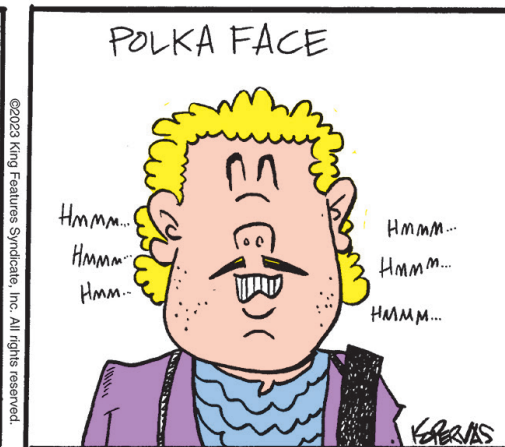
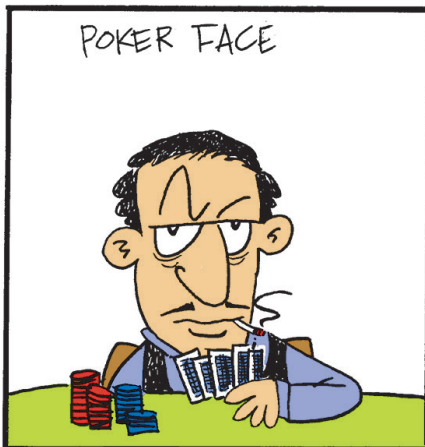
## — King Crossword —

Answers

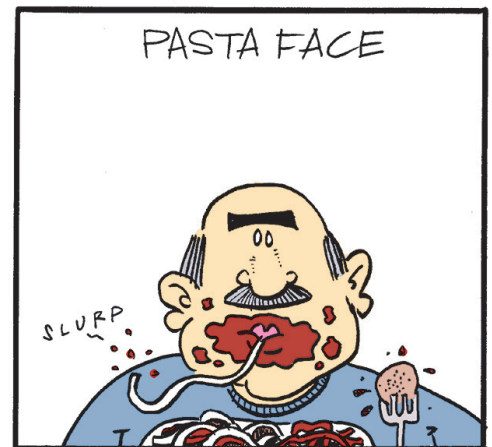
Solution time: 21 mins.

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

Out on a Limb

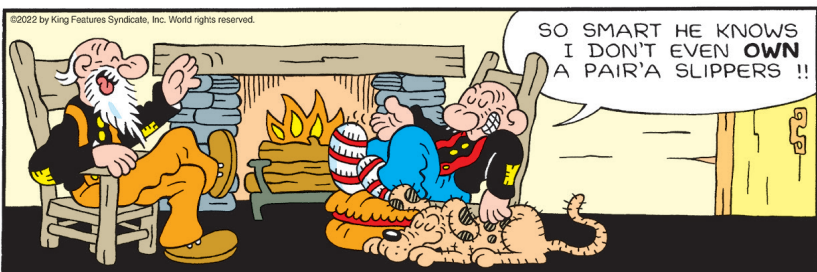
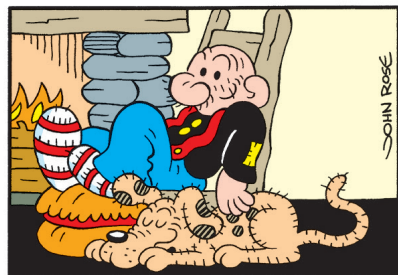
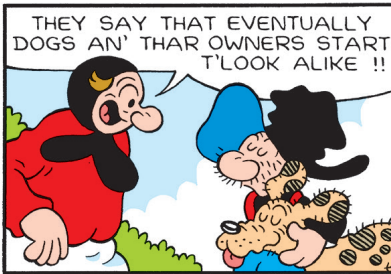
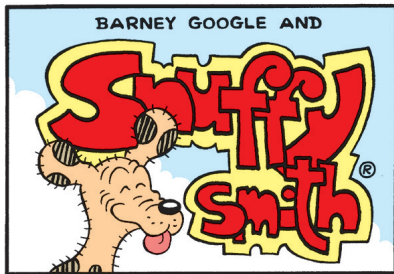
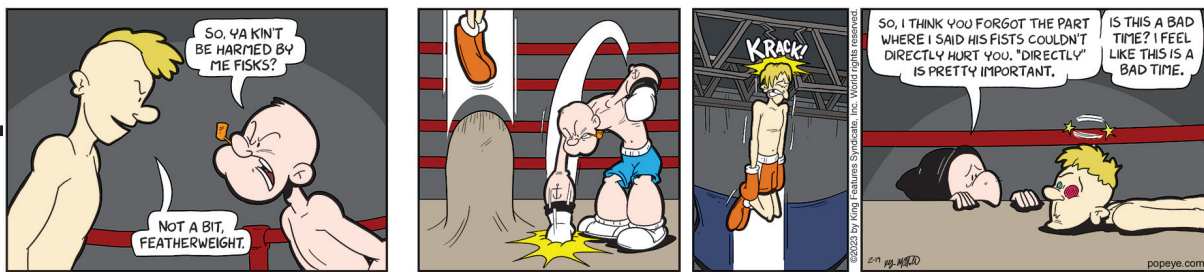
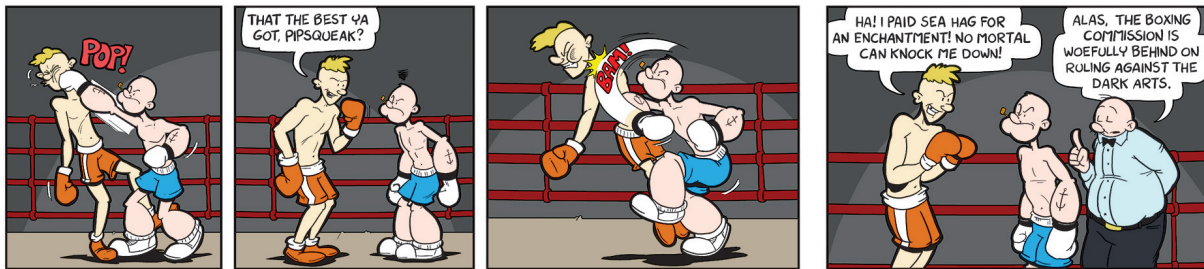
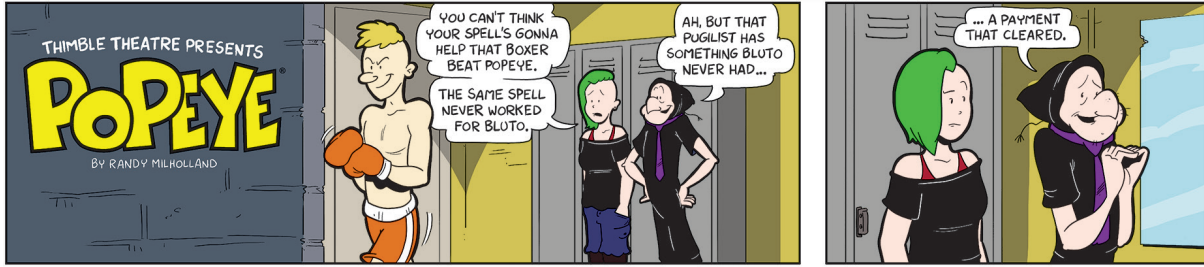


by Gary Kopervas



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 22 of 85





# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 23 of 85



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

OOM FOOYAT CONTINUES HIS TALE: "MY GOLEM SERVED ME WELL - FOR A TIME, BUT HOW COULD I FORESEE SUCH RAPID GROWTH? I COULD NO LONGER REACH THE MAGIC LETTERS ON ITS BROW! I LOST CONTROL - IT RAN AMUCK!



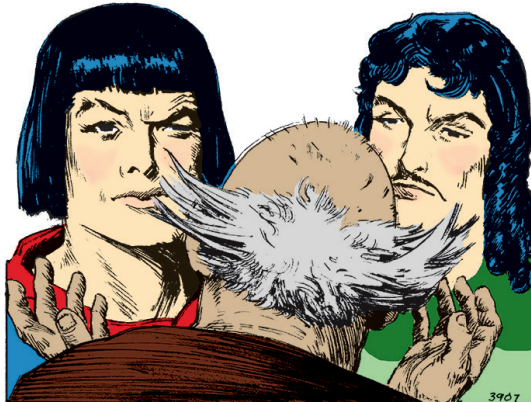
"IT CONTINUED TO GROW, AND NOW TERRORIZES ALL ILLWYNDE! I HAVE CREATED THE VERY CREATURE OF FABLE WE USE TO FRIGHTEN CHILDREN-A GIANT!

©2011 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

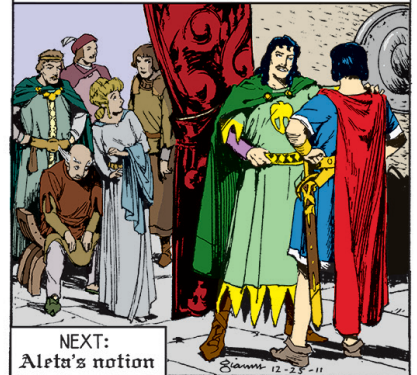
"AT LAST MY DEAR WIFE - YOU REMEMBER LOVELY WINNIE? - CONVINCED ME THAT MY NEXT COURSE OF ACTION WAS TO APPEAL TO CAMELOT'S BRAVE KNIGHTS FOR ASSISTANCE IN RIGHTING THIS WRONG."



HE CONCLUDES MEEKLY, VAL AND GAWAIN SPEND A FEW MINUTES BERATING HIS DANGEROUS INCOMPETENCE...



...BEFORE GLANCING SLYLY AT EACH OTHER, IT WILL BE GOOD TO GET AWAY FROM CAMELOT AND GO ADVENTURING.

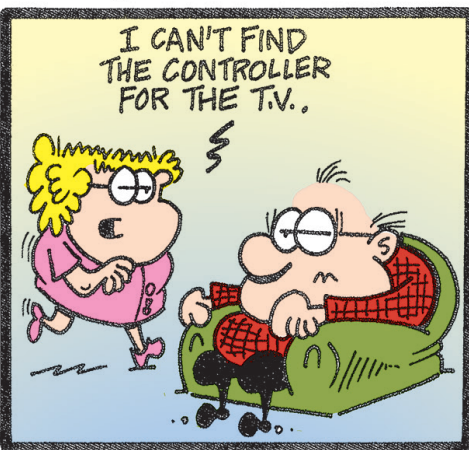


NEXT:  
Alta's notion

Gianni 12-23-11

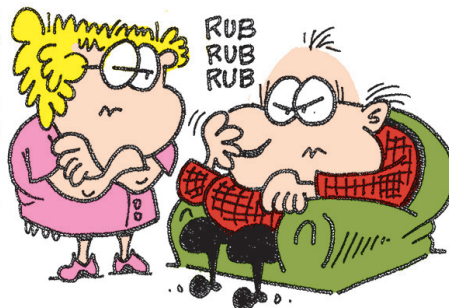
## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

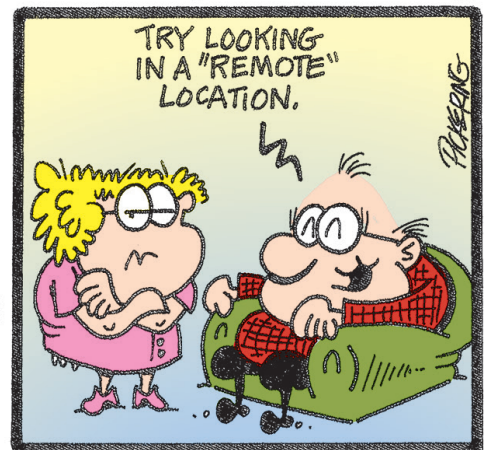


I CAN'T FIND THE CONTROLLER FOR THE TV.

©2023 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.



RUB RUB RUB



TRY LOOKING IN A "REMOTE" LOCATION.

PICKERING



## SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

### Is It Taxable?

After preparing my own taxes annually for over 40 years, I'm about to have someone else do them for me for the first time.

This is not without concerns, of course, but the people who volunteer to prepare taxes at the senior center are trained. They're part of the AARP income tax assistance program, which means they're IRS-certified and therefore will know about any recent changes to tax law ... which will be handy at this point.

As of this writing, the IRS is telling people to hold off sending in their tax returns for 2022. The reason: So many states handed out so many types of money during the pandemic that the IRS isn't sure yet what is and isn't taxable. For example, checks designated as "rebates" might or might not be taxable. A Covid disaster emergency relief check is not. However, in some cases, the issue is complicated by whether you do or do not itemize. People in at least 22 states are caught in this dilemma.

If you haven't done your taxes yet and want help, or if you want to make a note for next year, do an online search for "AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Locator." Once on the site, scroll down and enter your ZIP code or town in the search field to find the locations near you.

Be sure to ask about the forms you'll need to pick up and fill out before your appointment, and whether you'll be going inside or waiting in the parking lot.

The other good news is that this AARP service is free. For me it means I don't need to spend \$50 once again to buy the computer software and do it myself and hope I haven't made an error somewhere ... perhaps with guessing wrong about whether that state check I received is or isn't taxable.

(c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 25 of 85

1. Who penned an article -- intended to be an April Fools' Day joke -- for the April 1, 1985, issue of Sports Illustrated about Sidd Finch, a fictional New York Mets pitching prospect who threw a 168-mph fastball?

2. Eric Piatkowski, a 1994 first-round NBA Draft pick for the Indiana Pacers, has his No. 52 jersey retired by what college team?

3. What figure skater from Japan became the first woman to land a triple axel in the Olympics when she accomplished the feat at the 1992 Albertville Winter Games?

4. Name the Kansas City Chiefs running back who died while attempting to save three children from drowning in a Louisiana pond in 1983.

5. What U.S. swimmer won four medals at the 2012 Paralympic Games in London and was a contestant on Season 25 of ABC's "Dancing with the Stars"?

6. Basketball Hall of Famer "Phog" Allen was head coach of what college team from 1919-56?

7. South Africa's senior national rugby team is commonly known by what name?



by Ryan A. Berenz

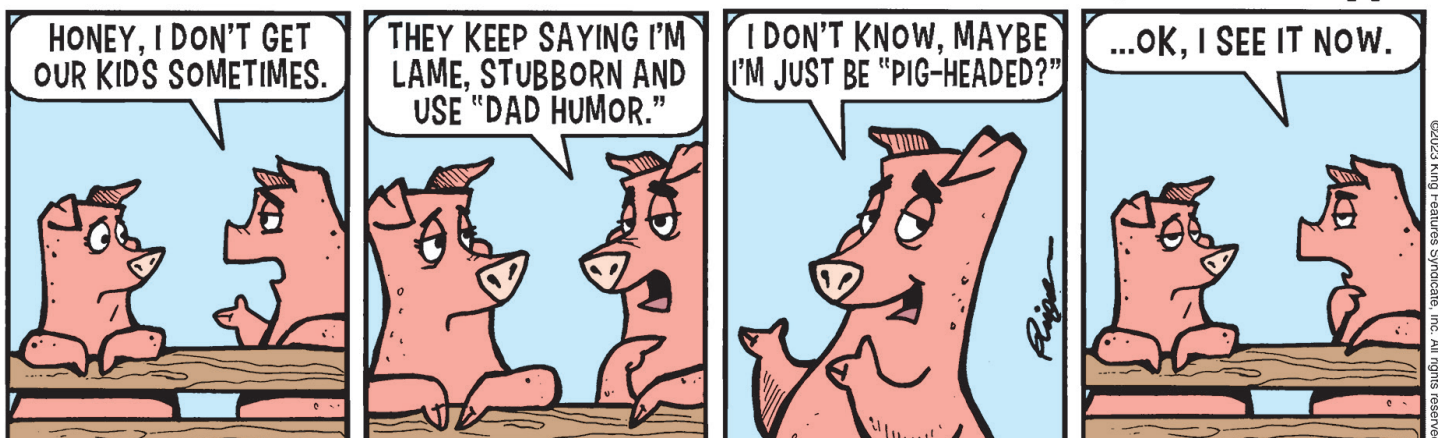
## Answers

1. George Plimpton.
2. The Nebraska Cornhuskers.
3. Midori Ito.
4. Joe Delaney.
5. Victoria Arlen.
6. The Kansas Jayhawks.
7. The Springboks.

(c) 2023 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





## Positive Reinforcement Will Nip Cat's Negative Behaviors

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My cat Huey will let me pet him for a few seconds, and then he'll nip at my fingers or knuckles. Am I doing something wrong? How can I get him to stop that behavior? -- Sarah W., Boston

DEAR SARAH: Nipping at your hand while being petted is a very common cat behavior (or misbehavior, depending on which end of the bite you're on). It stems from instinctive behaviors that a cat learns from the time they're born through adulthood.

Ideally, the best time to curb biting behavior is when they're kittens, but not everyone has that luxury -- people who've adopted adult cats, for example, or owners who thought a kitten nipping their knuckles was cute, until that kitten turned into a full-grown, biting cat.

As you've probably noticed, yelling, "No" at a cat doesn't always get the desired effect. Instead, gently discourage this behavior. Pet your cat as usual, but as soon as he begins to bite, withdraw your hand and turn your body partly or totally away from him. You want to communicate that biting means he won't get your attention any longer.

Another option, before settling in front of the television with Huey snuggled up next to you, is to smear a tiny bit of peanut butter or another favorite treat across your knuckles. Let him lick your knuckles periodically while you pet him. The instant he tries to bite, take your hand away. Essentially, you want Huey to not see your hand as a toy or an attention-getter. It will take a few tries, but most cats pick up on your intentions after a while, so be patient and consistent with this training.

Does your cat bite? How did you solve it? Tell us at [ask@pawscorner.com](mailto:ask@pawscorner.com).

(c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.



## Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

\* In 2015, a study found that having more than 10 trees on their block made folks feel as healthy as if they were seven years younger or made an additional \$10,000 a year.

\* The medical term for ice cream headache is sphenopalatine ganglioneuralgia. Now you know why we call it an ice cream headache or brain freeze.

\* In the NHL, if both the goalie and backup goalie are unable to play, the team can substitute any available goalie who isn't bound by a professional contract with another team. To date, such replacements have

included an accountant, a facilities manager and an equipment manager.

\* A course called The Science of Batman was offered at the University of Victoria in Canada in 2016, with the design of examining "how the human body can be adapted and improved based on the metaphor of the caped crusader himself."

\* While still a teenager, Dasia Taylor used beet juice to develop surgical sutures that change color to indicate an infection.

\* The ant-eating assassin bug piles its victims onto its body to scare predators.


\* In 1829, some Victorians were gripped with pteridomania, or "fern fever," and began eagerly collecting the plants after botanist George Loddiges spread the (quite unsubstantiated) claim that they could not only improve mood, but increase both intelligence and virility.

\* Asia is bigger in surface area than the moon.

\* Ever heard that old claim that watching scary movies will help you burn calories because they get your heart racing? Sorry, but the "study" that produced this finding was meant more for publicity than to be taken seriously. You're more likely to burn the same amount just by lounging on your sofa ... and watching something like, say, "Bambi."

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day: "Action speaks louder than words but not nearly as often." -- Mark Twain



**The Garden Bug**

### Growing catnip

Set out catnip seedlings in a sunny, well-drained spot after the last frost of spring, spacing them 18"-24" apart (some can grow to 5 feet tall). Water regularly, and pinch back any spindly growth to get fuller, more robust foliage. Outdoor cats can be rough on these plants, as they like to roll and lay on them; try placing bamboo stakes every few inches to prevent their destroying them. For "indoor" kitties, pick off a sprig and bring it inside for your cat to enjoy on the floor or in its favorite bedding. - *Brenda Weaver*

Source: [bonnieplants.com](http://bonnieplants.com)



by Freddy Groves

## A 48-Year Theft

Forty-eight years is a long time to pull off a scam, but one woman managed to keep it going for that long. The crime: forging her mother's signature on the back of checks for widows' benefits ... for 48 years.

During all those years she continued to send in fraudulent paperwork while impersonating her mother -- who died in 1973 -- and continued to collect the money. Her excuse, when finally caught, was that her abusive husband told her to keep cashing the checks. She divorced him and was then out from under his

control, yet she continued to cash the checks.

Yes, when her mother died she had to take in and raise her younger siblings, so it's possibly understandable that she assumed she could take the money that had been meant for her mother. But eventually those children grew up and were no longer minors living at home.

In the middle of the decades-long theft, she filed for bankruptcy and claimed she had no income, even though she was receiving the Department of Veterans Affairs benefits checks all along.

She'll need to repay the \$416,000 that she stole (not likely to happen), but there's no jail sentence, only a year of home confinement, because the perp in this case is now 76 years old.

Why, inquiring minds want to know, does the VA not demand proof of life or some type of verification about where the money is going when benefits are paid year after year, decade after decade?

Surely someone could have done the math. If the mother was X years old when she started collecting the widow benefits, what were the odds she was still living 20 years, 30 years or 40 years later? Couldn't someone have asked for verification? Or gone to the door? Just receiving handwritten forms over the years doesn't seem like much of an effort to safeguard the funds that are sent out.

That \$416,000 (that they'll likely never see again) is a lot of money.

(c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 29 of 85

## Wishing Well®

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

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

©2023 King Features Syndicate



1. TELEVISION: Which cable TV series features a character named Don Draper?
2. MOVIES: What subject does Professor Minerva McGonagall teach at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry?
3. HISTORY: Where was civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated?
4. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president had a sign on his desk that read, "The Buck Stops Here"?
5. GEOGRAPHY: Where is the world's largest desert?
6. LITERATURE: What is the real name of the author Lemony Snicket?
7. FOOD & DRINK: What is the fruit that gives the liqueur creme de cassis its flavor?
8. MUSIC: What inspired the Beatles' song "Blackbird"?
9. CELEBRITIES: What is singer/actress Judy Garland's birth name?
10. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What are squirrels' nests called?

### Answers

1. "Mad Men."
2. Transfiguration.
3. Memphis, Tennessee.
4. Harry Truman.
5. Antarctica.
6. Daniel Handler.
7. Black currants.
8. Civil rights unrest in Little Rock, Arkansas, according to Paul McCartney.
9. Frances Ethel Gumm.
10. Dreys.

© 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.



South Dakota Governor

**Kristi Noem**



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

## South Dakota's Blueprint to Fight Communist China

South Dakota is a beacon of Freedom – an example of the good that comes from trusting people to exercise personal responsibility. And now, we're setting an example by drawing the blueprint for a state-led response to the Chinese Communist Party. We first drew that blueprint in our COVID-19 response. We expanded it by banning TikTok for government devices. And we will add to it by blocking Communist China from buying South Dakota ag land, participating in state contracts, or infiltrating our telecommunications.

The Chinese Communist Party is trying to infiltrate every aspect of our way of life, and we have a president with no interest in stopping them. That was made clear when President Biden did nothing to stop a Chinese spy balloon that spent days hovering over the American homeland until it crossed the entire country. . It is up to governors to step up and take the lead. This is South Dakota's blueprint: More Freedom, Less China.

When China unleashed the COVID-19 virus on the world, countries and states locked down thinking they had no other choice. South Dakota made another choice. I respected the Constitution. I respected the liberty that our nation was built on. I respected Freedom. I was the only governor who never ordered a single business or church to close – I don't believe governors have the authority to decide what businesses are essential. And South Dakota came out of the pandemic with the strongest economy in America, the fastest growing incomes, and the fastest growth in new housing developments.

We rejected the Communist model.

COVID-19 wasn't the only thing China exported in 2020. That's when TikTok became the most downloaded app worldwide, and every single phone that downloads the app is essentially a new spy device for the CCP. I signed an Executive Order banning TikTok for state government. We took action to protect the personal information of our citizens. The nation was quick to follow our lead. Nearly 30 states have taken action against TikTok, and Congress has banned it for U.S. government devices.

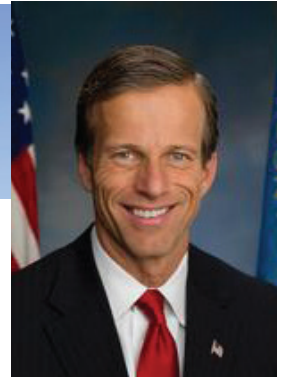
TikTok isn't the only Chinese company posing a threat to our national security. I signed an Executive Order banning state government from doing business with certain telecommunications companies associated with 6 evil foreign governments, including China.

The next part of the blueprint may be the most important yet. If Communist China controls America's food supply, they control us. They own over 350,000 acres of American ag land. Last year, they purchased land in North Dakota with clear ulterior motives. We cannot let that happen in South Dakota, especially with Ellsworth Air Force Base becoming the one and only home of the new B-21 bomber. China will want intel on that bomber, so we have to be proactive to protect it.

This legislative session, I'm working with legislators to block nations that hate us from purchasing South Dakota ag land . By creating a Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States – South Dakota, we will rely on ag experts, national and state security experts, and legal counsel to review any purchases, leases, and transfers of ag land in the state. Purchases made by foreign entities will be brought to my desk, and I'll ensure purchases from our enemies don't go forward. The country is looking to South Dakota, and if we fail here, it will have a negative effect across the nation.

States must stand up for the security of their people. I will use my authority to advance the blueprint of a state-led response to the Chinese Communist threat. I will continue to put South Dakota first and America first – and I hope other states will keep following that lead.

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



## A Tribute to Jim Abdnor

February 13 would have been former U.S. Sen. Jim Abdnor's 100th birthday. Known as "the People's Senator," Jim represented South Dakota values in Washington for almost two decades. Jim Abdnor was the real deal. He treated everyone like a close friend, expressing genuine interest in people's lives wherever he went. He was a public servant driven by a sense of the common good, not "good politics" or personal ambition. And he was a selfless mentor who inspired the people around him to be better. Most everything I know about public service that's good, I learned from him.

Jim Abdnor grew up in the small West River town of Kennebec. Working in his father's general store, he learned the values that are embodied in so many South Dakota towns: our strong work ethic, sense of personal responsibility, and belief in responsibility to the broader community. He believed in hard work and living with integrity, and he brought these principles to everything he did, whether it was as a farmer, coach, teacher, or public servant. And they are the values that informed so many great lessons Jim taught me and countless others he took under his wing.

In small towns like Kennebec and Murdo, where I grew up, you can count on the whole town turning out for a high school sporting event. Jim was a common fixture at these events, always looking for the nearest game wherever his duties took him around South Dakota. In fact, I first met Jim after he came to one of my high school basketball games. I made five out of six free-throws in that game, and when I later met Jim, he said, "I noticed you missed one." That was Jim for you. He was ever the coach striving to make you better, the teacher always with a lesson at the ready, the farmer planting seeds with confident patience that they will one day grow into something great.

Jim took an interest in me, like he did in so many others, because he genuinely liked people and wanted to see future leaders reach their potential. It was from that basketball game in small-town South Dakota that Jim and I began a decades-long friendship that would take me to Washington to work for him in the U.S. Senate and at the Small Business Administration under President Ronald Reagan. Jim was a great boss, often choosing to hire talented young leaders who didn't have much experience to give them opportunities to grow.

Working for Jim, it didn't take long before I found that he had the same genuine "nice guy" reputation in Washington as he did in South Dakota. It came as no surprise, Jim treated everyone with the same dignity and respect whether they were the custodian in the Capitol or the Queen of England. Former Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole once remarked, "If there was such a thing as a decency index, Jim Abdnor would be off the charts."

Many of us have someone in our life who challenged us to think bigger, to consider our purpose, and to live for others. Jim Abdnor was that person for me, and I consider myself extraordinarily lucky to have had Jim as a mentor. Jim was truly "the People's Senator," and his legacy of living with integrity and purpose lives on in the people he inspired to do the same.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 32 of 85



CONGRESSMAN

**DUSTY JOHNSON**

Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



## The Dignity of the Purple Heart

Specialist Marcus Rothlisberger was wounded in action during his deployment to Afghanistan. He sustained traumatic brain injuries from enemy attack when he was guarding a helicopter landing zone. Those injuries still impact him today.

Our country failed to honor him with a Purple Heart in the immediate aftermath – our team was proud to right that wrong this week.

I had the honor of bestowing a Purple Heart on Spc. Rothlisberger's chest on Wednesday, after 18 months of working with him and the Department of the Army to make this possible. A tremendous crowd of friends and supporters turned out to witness this important ceremony. Spc. Rothlisberger shared his experience and brought awareness to the traumatic brain injuries that many servicemembers like himself battle on a daily basis. Spc. Rothlisberger was surrounded by family and friends who took time off work and braved the winter storm to support him at the ceremony.

The Purple Heart is awarded to any servicemember who has been wounded, killed, or died after wounding in action, who was serving with the U.S. Armed Services in any capacity. This medal is the oldest military award that is still presented to servicemembers, dating back to the American Revolution when General George Washington created the Badge of Military Merit. In 1932, General MacArthur created what we now know as the Purple Heart. The medal bears the image of George Washington and the color purple was chosen for its representation of courage and bravery.

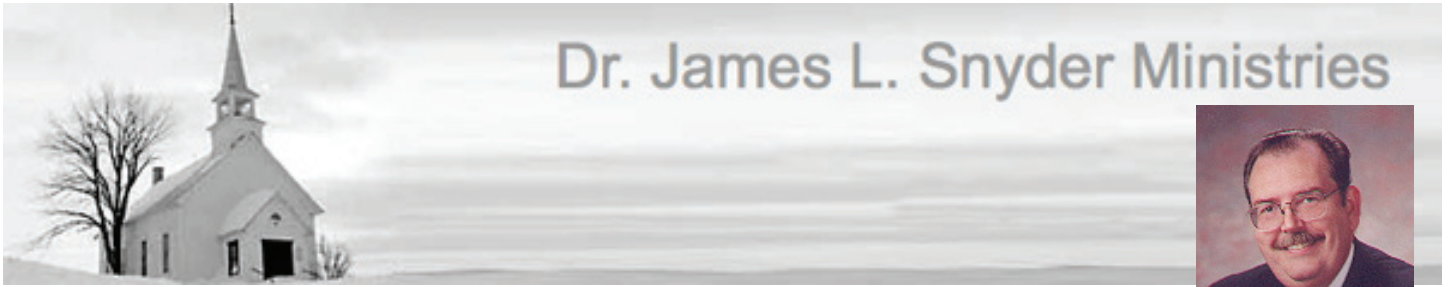
Since the first official Purple Heart Medal was awarded nearly 91 years ago, nearly two million service men and women in our Armed Forces have been bestowed on those who have sacrificed and experienced loss. Too often, service comes with sacrifice. It's important to remember and honor those who have sacrificed and are living with the impacts of it. I'm grateful for the men and women who serve and sacrifice to protect the greatest country in history.

America, its people, and its freedoms are worth defending. It comes at a price, and Spc. Marcus Rothlisberger understands that.



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 33 of 85



## If I'm Not Crazy Nobody Is



Last Sunday, we were driving to our Sunday morning church service and encountered a lot of crazy drivers. As The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage was driving, I kept my cool and, more importantly, my mouth closed.

Every once in a while, she would say, "What's wrong with these crazy drivers?"

I could tell she was a little agitated by these drivers swaying in and out of the lanes.

"Why are people so crazy when they are driving? How did they get a driver's license?"

Certainly, I could have enhanced the conversation, but I knew I would not come out on the winning side. There are times when a person should just keep their mouth shut. After all these years as a husband, I am learning more about keeping my mouth shut.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has often looked at me and said, "Are you crazy or what?"

You don't know how often I wanted her to define what she meant by "or what." But, of course, I'm not sure I would have liked her definition at that time.

I'm unsure if I was born crazy or just learned it as I grew up. But the facts remain that I am crazy in a variety of ways.

It would be nice to sit down with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and get her to explain how she thinks I am crazy. I'm not sure she could ever stop talking about it if I did.

Some people's crazy is another person's lifestyle. So I'm leaning towards the latter.

Not long ago, she had to go thrift store shopping which would take up most of her day. I was rather excited because I've been thinking about getting an Apple Fritter for several weeks. These are not on my diet, and I'm not allowed to bring them into the house.

A few minutes after she left, I jumped in my truck, went, got an Apple Fritter and brought it home. I was in Apple Fritter heaven.

On my third bite of that Apple Fritter, I heard the front door open, and in walked The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. She stopped, looked at me with both hands on her hips, and said, "Are you crazy or what? You're not allowed to have Apple Fritters, especially in this house.."

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 34 of 85

Well, when you're crazy, I guess you're crazy.

I've been thinking about this, and the thought that has dominated my thinking is, what's so wrong about being crazy? Some of the best people I know are crazy.

Driving home from church about three weeks ago, some old man on a motorcycle was weaving back and forth, passing cars. When he passed us, he was smiling like a really crazy man.

When my wife saw him, she looked at me and said, "What is wrong with that crazy man?"

I laughed and wanted to say, but I didn't, "Well, that crazy man is just having fun. He's enjoying his life."

Looking at me, she might have said, "He better enjoy it now because that crazy guy isn't going to last very long."

I would have loved to stop him and query him, "Sir, what does your wife think of your driving like a crazy man?" I would have loved his answer about that. I probably could have learned a lesson or two about being crazy myself.

The wise man was pretty close to accurate when he said, "Crazy is as crazy does."

I remember once getting in trouble with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

I was in my easy chair reading a book, she came in very anxious and said, "Have you seen my glasses? I can't find them."

I looked at her and assumed this was a trick question and she was setting me up for something because her glasses were on the top of her head. I didn't know where this "joke" was going, but I thought I would just play along.

Looking at her, I said, "Are you crazy or what?" Then I laughed hysterically as she stared at me.

"I am not crazy; I just cannot find my glasses." She wasn't laughing.

Looking through the living room, she finally reached to the top of her head and said, "Oh, here they are on top of my head. Why didn't you tell me? Are you crazy or what?"

It's crazy people like me that have all the fun in the world from people who don't think they're crazy. There's not a day in the week that I would ever suggest to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage that I thought she was crazy. I do think that way, but I will never expose that thought to her because I love my life as it is.

What would life be without a little bit of craziness?

From my long experience with being crazy, I have concluded that being crazy is an art. It takes a long time to learn how to be crazy, and I think I am very close to a Ph.D. in crazyology.

I couldn't help but think of my favorite Bible verse. Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

No matter how crazy the world around me is, I can trust God to lead me in the right direction.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 35 of 85

## EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What is the "30x30 Initiative" for conservation all about? – Mary S., Albany, NY

Put simply, the goal of the 30x30 Initiative is the conservation of 30 percent of terrestrial and marine habitat across the globe by 2030. The High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, an intergovernmental organization for the protection of nature, first proposed the initiative in 2020 and got 50 nations including the U.S. to sign on. Since then, the 30x30 Initiative has grown rapidly, with 100 signatories in 2021 (when it was signed at the COP 15 Convention on Biological Diversity). By the end of 2022, over 190 countries were enlisted in the battle for conservation.

But why the sudden focus on conservation? "Biodiversity is essential for the processes that support all life on earth, including humans," reports the Royal Society, the UK's independent scientific academy. If one species dies off, others that feed on it will go hungry, and this withering works its way along the food chain until it reaches us, humans. And it won't only affect our health. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), biodiversity loss can "affect livelihoods, income, local migration and ... may even cause or exacerbate political conflict."

Wildlife conservation can be as simple as introducing legal protection of the land, halting excessive human activity, and a large helping of what the Rewilding Institute calls "benign neglect." In other areas, the process is more intensive, requiring the reconstruction of land, and the (re)planting of flora. The larger the mass of land for conservation, the more complex it becomes, encompassing land politics and ownership rights as well as purely logistical hurdles.

In America, adhering to the 30x30 framework would mean saving an area twice the size of Texas. As a step towards this goal, Biden's administration has deployed the 'America the Beautiful' program. The importance of getting landowners engaged is clear, with the initiative's pledge of "listening and learning from the families and communities that know and care for American lands."

Scaling this kind of planning and implementation across more than 190 countries will be quite a daunting task. In the U.S., 80 percent of voters were behind Biden's 'America the Beautiful' initiative, whereas public support for such initiatives in less developed, less wealthy nations is another matter entirely. To wit, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a country that contains natural diversity of vast importance to global conservation efforts, biodiverse forests provide sustenance and security for over 40 million of its inhabitants. Conserving these forests in DRC, one of the five poorest nations on the planet, is quite a challenge when so many locals derive their livings from it.

While, for some, the complexity of the issues the 30x30 initiative has confirms its ambitiousness, it also has its skeptics. For Brian O'Donnell, the director of the Campaign for Nature, 30x30 should be considered a "floor not a ceiling." Likewise, the large group of scientists following biologist E.O. Wilson's theory believes that half of the earth should be protected to stifle the downward spiral following biodiversity loss. The jury remains out on whether or not 30x30 will be enough to protect our climate, but what they all agree on is the importance of conservation for the survival of life on Earth.



**The High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People first proposed the 30x30 Initiative in 2020 and these days some 190 countries have signed on to participate.**

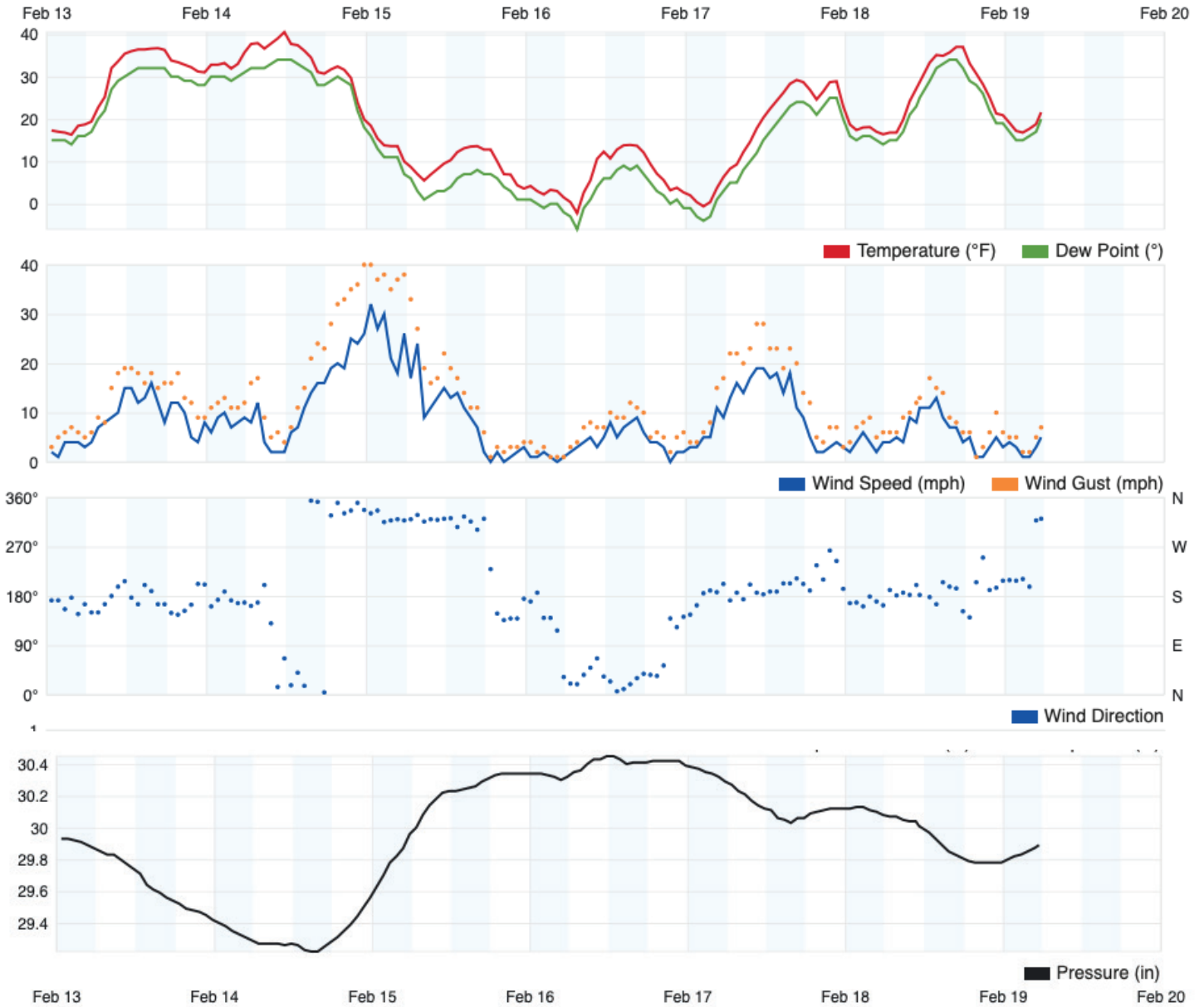


# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 36 of 85








## Past Week's Groton Weather Graphs

February 13, 2023 - February 19, 2023



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 37 of 85

Today	Tonight	Washington's Birthday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
						
Patchy Fog then Mostly Cloudy	Breezy. Mostly Cloudy then Slight Chance Snow	Partly Sunny and Breezy	Mostly Cloudy	Chance Snow then Snow and Patchy Blowing Snow	Snow and Patchy Blowing Snow	Chance Snow and Blowing Snow then Snow and Blowing Snow
High: 27 °F	Low: 15 °F	High: 35 °F	Low: -1 °F	High: 12 °F	Low: -3 °F	High: 4 °F



## Prolonged Widespread Winter Storm

February 19, 2023  
4:58 AM

### Key Messages

- Two rounds of snow: one on Tuesday and another, potentially more significant round Wednesday into Thursday
- Strong winds enter the scene by Tuesday night
- Arctic cold air and dangerous wind chills Wednesday through Friday morning

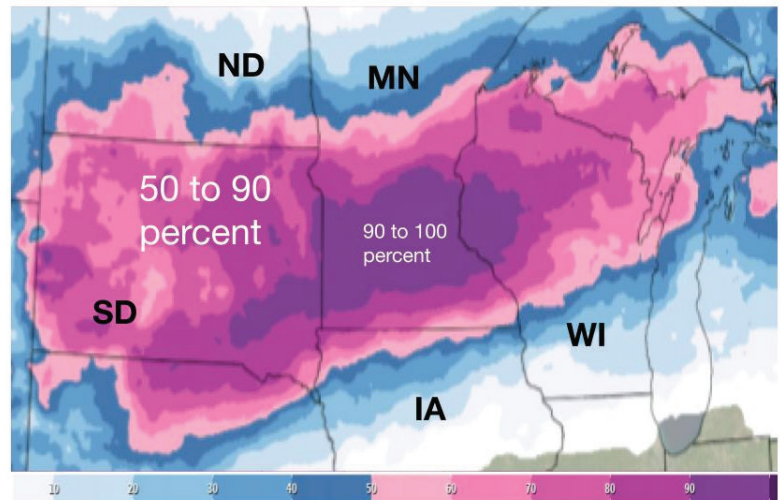
### NEW Important Updates

- Winter Storm Watch decisions to come this afternoon after a better grasp on timing.

### Next Scheduled Briefing

- Sunday afternoon

### Probability (% chance) of 8 or more inches snowfall



### Tuesday through Thursday



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

A couple rounds of impactful winter weather will affect most of central and northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota beginning Tuesday and lasting through Thursday. The first wave is forecast to move through the area on Tuesday with the second, perhaps more stronger wave anticipated for Wednesday into Thursday. Keep in touch often through the next couple of days for the latest forecast details.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 38 of 85



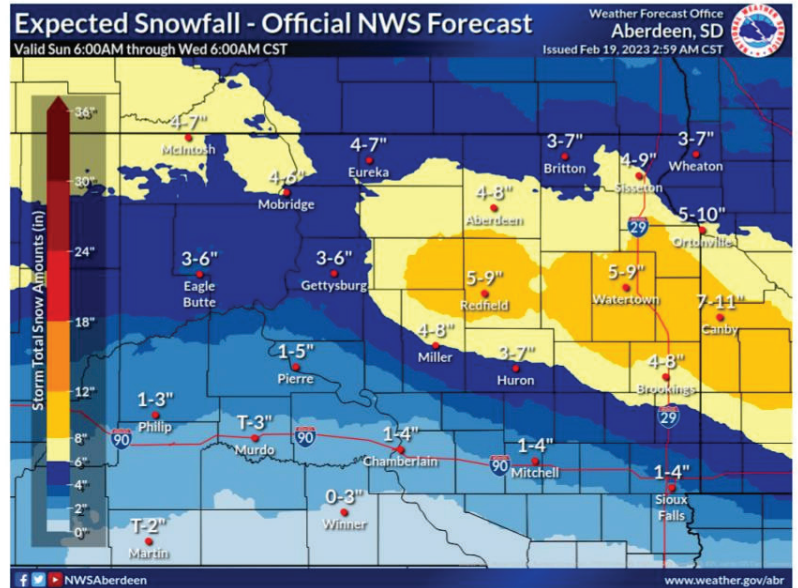
## First Round of Snowfall Projections

February 19, 2023  
4:58 AM

High forecast confidence for a significant winter storm mid-week

This graphic shows projected snowfall amounts **Tuesday through Tuesday night**. Shifts in the storm system could alter these amounts.

This will only be the first round of snow, with the potential for more significant snowfall across the region Wednesday and Thursday.



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD



## Precipitation Chances and Timing

February 19, 2023  
5:22 AM

### Weather Forecast

	2/21 Tue				2/22 Wed				2/23 Thu			
	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	6pm
<b>Aberdeen</b>	0%	45%	80%	80%	65%	50%	75%	95%	95%	65%	20%	5%
<b>Britton</b>	0%	25%	75%	80%	60%	45%	70%	90%	95%	80%	25%	10%
<b>Eagle Butte</b>		70%	70%	80%	80%	80%	90%	95%	85%	30%	10%	5%
<b>Eureka</b>	5%	60%	85%	75%	65%	50%	70%	90%	95%	55%	15%	5%
<b>Gettysburg</b>		65%	80%	80%	80%	70%	85%	95%	95%	40%	10%	5%
<b>Kennebec</b>				50%	65%	85%	95%	100%	85%	25%	10%	5%
<b>McIntosh</b>	15%			85%	70%	60%	75%	90%	95%	35%	10%	5%
<b>Milbank</b>	0%			80%	70%	55%	80%	95%	95%	80%	30%	10%
<b>Miller</b>				80%	80%	75%	90%	100%	95%	45%	15%	5%
<b>Mobridge</b>	10%			80%	70%	60%	80%	95%	95%	45%	15%	5%
<b>Murdo</b>		35%	40%	55%	75%	85%	95%	100%	80%	20%	10%	5%
<b>Pierre</b>		55%	55%	70%	70%	80%	95%	100%	85%	25%	10%	5%
<b>Redfield</b>	5%	50%	80%	85%	75%	60%	85%	100%	95%	55%	15%	5%
<b>Sisseton</b>	0%	15%	65%	80%	65%	45%	70%	90%	95%	85%	30%	10%
<b>Watertown</b>	0%	25%	65%	85%	75%	55%	80%	95%	95%	65%	15%	10%
<b>Webster</b>	0%	30%	70%	80%	70%	50%	75%	95%	95%	75%	20%	10%
<b>Wheaton</b>	0%	10%	55%	75%	60%	40%	60%	90%	90%	85%	30%	10%

\*Created: 3 am CST Sun 2/19/2023. Shows most impactful weather for the period beginning at the time shown. Weather symbols display where Probability of Precipitation ≥ 0%.

**- Snow +**



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 39 of 85



## Potential Wind Gusts This Week

February 19, 2023  
5:32 AM

Highest Wind Gusts will be Tuesday night and Wednesday

### Maximum Wind Gust Forecast

	2/20 Mon				2/21 Tue				2/22 Wed				2/23 Thu			Maximum
	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	
<b>Aberdeen</b>	30	37	41	29	16	18	36	52	53	46	39	39	39	33	26	53
<b>Britton</b>	35	32	38	31	18	17	30	47	48	46	37	38	38	35	28	48
<b>Eagle Butte</b>	38	39	39	31	24	31	37	46	45	43	35	33	30	26	23	46
<b>Eureka</b>	30	40	43	30	13	30	40	45	49	46	36	35	35	28	24	49
<b>Gettysburg</b>	29	38	41	32	17	36	40	49	47	46	36	35	32	26	25	49
<b>Kennebec</b>	26	36	36	29	21	31	32	41	43	43	35	31	30	30	26	43
<b>McIntosh</b>	36	40	43	29	18	31	37	45	45	40	33	33	30	25	22	45
<b>Milbank</b>	26	32	37	35	25	10	22	32	43	43	36	36	35	32	30	43
<b>Miller</b>	28	40	40	29	14	29	32	43	47	45	36	36	35	30	25	47
<b>Mobridge</b>	26	35	39	30	14	28	38	41	40	38	33	33	31	24	22	41
<b>Murdo</b>	33	36	36	29	22	28	26	44	45	41	32	30	30	26	24	45
<b>Pierre</b>	24	32	35	32	20	29	33	45	44	37	32	31	30	26	23	45
<b>Redfield</b>	24	35	37	31	15	23	35	43	48	46	37	38	36	33	26	48
<b>Sisseton</b>	30	33	38	36	26	10	22	33	39	39	36	35	35	32	29	39
<b>Watertown</b>	26	35	38	35	20	15	31	43	49	48	43	43	40	35	29	49
<b>Webster</b>	36	38	43	40	22	18	37	48	54	54	41	41	39	35	29	54
<b>Wheaton</b>	22	25	35	33	28	13	17	28	36	35	33	33	32	30	26	36

\*Table values in mph

Don't see your city? Check out [weather.gov/forecastpoints](https://weather.gov/forecastpoints)

\*\*Created: 3 am CST Sun 2/19/2023

\*\*\*Values are maximums over the period beginning at the time shown.



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 40 of 85

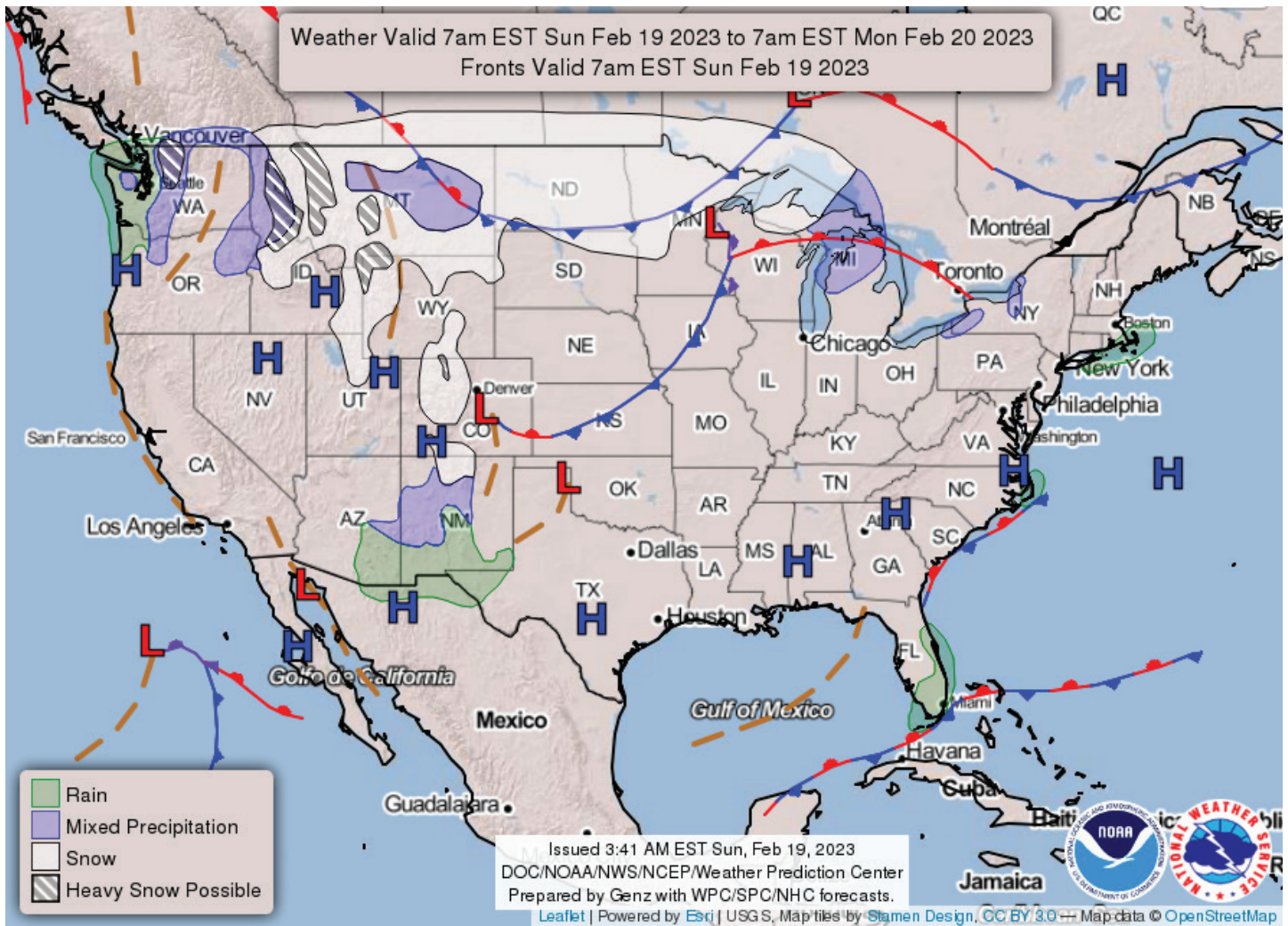
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 37 °F at 5:00 PM**  
**Low Temp: 15.2 °F at 7:30 AM**  
**Wind: 17 mph at 12:15 PM**  
**Precip: : 0.00**

Day length: 10 hours, 40 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 62 in 1930  
Record Low: -34 in 1929  
Average High: 30  
Average Low: 8  
Average Precip in Feb.: 0.40  
Precip to date in Feb.: 0.00  
Average Precip to date: 0.95  
Precip Year to Date: 0.25  
Sunset Tonight: 5:06:26 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:24:19 AM





# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 41 of 85

## Today in Weather History

February 19th, 2000: Due to the arid and windy conditions, a fire believed to have been started by a discarded cigarette burnt about 1,300-acre of grassland between Kennebec and Lower Brule. The fire threatened a ranch but changed directions before anyone had to be evacuated.

February 19th, 2008: An Arctic air mass and blustery northwest winds brought extreme wind chills during the evening and early morning hours to northeast South Dakota. Wind chills ranged from 35 to 50 degrees below zero. The winds diminished in the early morning hours of the 20th, allowing air temperatures to fall to record or near-record lows across northeast South Dakota. Ten new record lows, ranging from 23 to 30 degrees below zero, were set for February 20th. Several water pipes were broken in Aberdeen and Roslyn. Also, many vehicles did not start along with late school starts or closings.

1884: Severe thunderstorms spawned sixty tornadoes in the southeastern U.S., killing more than 420 people and causing three million dollars damage. The tornado outbreak hit Georgia and the Carolinas the hardest.

1888: Severe thunderstorms over southern Illinois spawned a violent tornado in Jefferson County and devastated the southeast half of Mount Vernon. The tornado killed 24 people, injured 80 others, and destroyed or damaged 300 homes and 50 businesses. In addition, overturned wood stoves ignited many fires in the wreckage. The tornado currently stands as the 9th deadliest Illinois tornado on record and was one of the first disasters to which the American Red Cross responded.

1954 - High winds across the southern half of the Great Plains, gusting to 85 mph, caused the worst duststorms since the 1930s. Graders were needed in places to clear fence high dirt drifts. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A winter storm over the southern and central Rockies produced 28 inches of snow at Echo Lake CO, and two feet of snow at Gascon NM and Los Alamos NM. Mora County NM was declared a disaster area following the storm. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Showers and thunderstorms in the southeastern U.S. drenched Valdosta GA with more than five inches of rain, and the 24 hour rainfall total of 7.10 inches at Apalachicola FL more than doubled their previous 24 hour record for February. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - An upper level weather disturbance brought heavy snow to parts of Nebraska, with six inches reported at Loup City and Surprise. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - A moist Pacific storm worked its way into New Mexico and southern Colorado. Up to 36 inches of snow blanketed the Wolf Creek and Red Mountain passes of southwest Colorado, and up to 15 inches of snow was reported around Trinidad. In New Mexico, the eastern slopes of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains were blanketed with 9 to 28 inches of snow, and 50 to 60 mph wind gusts were reported from Taos to Albuquerque. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2011 - Strong winds reaching as high as 40 mph with gusts to 53 mph topple the 48 year old National Christmas tree. The 42 foot tall Colorado blue spruce sat just south of the White House on the Ellipse. It was transplanted there from York, Pennsylvania in 1978. The Weather Doctor



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 42 of 85

Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### A MOTHER'S INFLUENCE

As her son was about to leave home for college, his mother asked, "Robert, will you promise me one thing?"

"Yes, ma'am, I will," he answered.

"Promise me," she begged, "that you will read one chapter from the Bible each day."

"I will," he agreed.

That promise led to his coming to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Later, Robert Moffat went to Africa as a missionary where he labored for his Lord for forty-five years. He became famous as an educator, explorer, evangelist, and translator of the Bible.

What better request can any mother ask of a child than to be faithful to read God's Word. We are confronted from every direction with challenges to our faith, tempted by friends to engage in behaviors that cause self-destruction, and often provided with endless opportunities that may destroy the plans God has for us.

In his letter to Timothy, Paul expressed a true sense of urgency and warning for him. He knew that people who believed in God would be misunderstood, challenged, tempted and ridiculed because of their faith. So Paul encouraged him to remain faithful to what he had been taught. Why? God's Word and wisdom will guide us and guard us when we are tempted to sin.

Prayer: Father, parents have a great responsibility to raise their children to love, honor, and obey Your Word. Grant them courage and a willingness to do so. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. 2 Timothy 3:14-16



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

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 43 of 85

## 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)
- 01/31/2023-02/03/2023 Lion's Club Prom & Formal Dress Consignment Drop Off 6-9pm, Community Center
- 02/04/2023-02/05/2023 Lion's Club Prom & Formal Dress Consignment Sale 1-5pm, Community Center
- 02/25/2023 Littles and Me, Art Making 10-11:30am, Wage Memorial Library
- 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
- 10/14/2023 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
- 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
- 12/09/2023 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9-11am

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 44 of 85

## 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](mailto:paperpaul@grotonsd.net)

## Groton Daily Independent

[www.397news.com](http://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](https://paypal.me/paperpaul)







## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.17.23

2 33 38 57 70 13

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$104,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.18.23

5 17 25 48 52 1

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$37,560,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.18.23

9 10 22 24 34 10

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 38 Mins  
20 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.18.23

1 2 18 27 31

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$60,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.18.23

4 36 39 44 46 20

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.18.23

8 21 31 32 37 23

Power Play: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$87,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 46 of 85

News from the  Associated Press

## Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL=

Aberdeen Central 57, O Gorman 55  
Alcester-Hudson 69, Burke 61  
Avon 50, Andes Central/Dakota Christian 19  
Brandon Valley 58, Harrisburg 44  
Canton 78, Highmore-Harrold 67  
Centerville 69, Scotland 33  
Corsica/Stickney 65, Gayville-Volin High School 42  
Estelline/Hendricks 84, Langford 47  
Groton Area 60, Florence/Henry 27  
Hamlin 71, Flandreau 42  
Herreid 59, Hitchcock-Tulare 45  
Hettinger/Scranton, N.D. 57, Lemmon 41  
Hot Springs 51, Custer 47  
Ipswich 50, Tiospa Zina Tribal 39  
Iroquois/ Lake Preston Co-op 67, Elkton-Lake Benton 54  
Lower Brule 59, Wolsey-Wessington 52  
Marty Indian 74, Colome 47  
Mitchell 63, Watertown 47  
Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 67, Great Plains Lutheran 36  
Pine Ridge 78, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 37  
Sioux Falls Lutheran 58, Wilmot 56  
Sioux Falls Washington 39, Sioux Falls Jefferson 38  
St. Thomas More 66, Hill City 31  
Sturgis Brown 53, Red Cloud 44  
Tripp-Delmont/Armour 52, Freeman Academy/Marion 44  
Wall 82, Newell 59  
Warner 73, Timber Lake 45  
Waverly-South Shore 74, Sully Buttes 68  
West Central 66, McCook Central/Montrose 47

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL=

Sioux Falls Jefferson 51, Sioux Falls Lincoln 31  
Sioux Falls Washington 63, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 25

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

## Tainamo's 17 help Denver take down South Dakota 86-68

DENVER (AP) — Touko Tainamo's 17 points helped Denver defeat South Dakota 86-68 on Saturday. Tainamo added six rebounds for the Pioneers (14-16, 5-12 Summit League). Marko Lukic scored 15 points while going 6 of 7 (3 for 4 from distance) and added five rebounds. Justin Mullins finished 6 of 9 from the field to finish with 13 points, while adding five rebounds and six steals.

The Coyotes (11-17, 6-10) were led in scoring by Mason Archambault, who finished with 16 points and three steals. Paul Bruns added 14 points for South Dakota. A.J. Plitzuweit also had 12 points.

## South Dakota State defeats Omaha 91-70

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Matt Dentlinger's 26 points helped South Dakota State defeat Omaha 91-70 on Saturday night.

Dentlinger also contributed seven rebounds for the Jackrabbits (17-11, 12-4 Summit League). Zeke Mayo added 18 points while shooting 6 for 13 (3 for 6 from 3-point range) and 3 of 3 from the free throw line, and also had nine rebounds. Charlie Easley shot 5 for 6, including 3 for 4 from beyond the arc to finish with 14 points. The Jackrabbits picked up their sixth straight win.

Frankie Fidler led the Mavericks (8-21, 4-13) in scoring, finishing with 20 points and three blocks. Omaha also got 11 points and six assists from JJ White. In addition, Dylan Brougham finished with nine points.

## North Korea confirms ICBM test, warns of more powerful steps

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea said Sunday its latest intercontinental ballistic missile test was meant to further bolster its "fatal" nuclear attack capacity against its rivals, as it threatened additional powerful steps in response to the upcoming military training between the United States and South Korea.

The United States responded by flying long-range supersonic bombers later Sunday for a joint exercise with South Korean warplanes in a demonstration of strength against North Korea.

Saturday's ICBM test, the North's first missile test since Jan. 1, signals its leader Kim Jong Un is using his rivals' drills as a chance to expand his country's nuclear arsenal to get the upper hand in future dealings with the United States. An expert says North Korea may seek to hold regular operational exercises involving its ICBMs.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said its launch of the Hwasong-15 ICBM was organized "suddenly" without prior notice at Kim's direct order.

KCNA said the launch was designed to verify the weapon's reliability and the combat readiness of the country's nuclear force. It said the missile was fired at a high angle and reached a maximum altitude of about 5,770 kilometers (3,585 miles), flying a distance of about 990 kilometers (615 miles) for 67 minutes before accurately hitting a pre-set area in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan.

The steep-angle launch was apparently to avoid neighboring countries. The flight details reported by North Korea, which roughly matched the launch information previously assessed by its neighbors, show the weapon is theoretically capable of reaching the mainland U.S. if fired at a standard trajectory.

The Hwasong-15 launch demonstrated the North's "powerful physical nuclear deterrent" and its efforts to "turn its capacity of fatal nuclear counterattack on the hostile forces" into an extremely strong one that cannot be countered, KCNA said.

Whether North Korea has a functioning nuclear-tipped ICBM is still a source of outside debate, as some experts say the North hasn't mastered a way to protect warheads from the severe conditions of atmospheric reentry. The North says it has acquired such a technology.

The Hwasong-15 is one of North Korea's three existing ICBMs, all of which use liquid propellants that require pre-launch injections and cannot remain fueled for extended periods. The North is pushing to build a solid-fueled ICBM, which would be more mobile and harder to detect before its launch.

"Kim Jong Un has likely determined that the technical reliability of the country's liquid propellant ICBM force has been sufficiently tested and evaluated to now allow for regular operational exercises of this kind," said Ankit Panda, an expert with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Chang Young-keun, a missile expert at Korea Aerospace University in South Korea, said that North Korea appeared to have launched an upgraded version of the Hwasong-15 ICBM. Chang said the information provided by North Korea showed the missile will likely have a longer potential range than the standard Hwasong-15.

Later Sunday, the U.S. sent B-1B bombers streaking over the Korean Peninsula to train with South Korean and U.S. fighter jets, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff. It said Sunday's training reaffirmed



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 48 of 85

Washington's "iron-clad" security commitment to South Korea.

North Korea is sensitive to the deployment of U.S. B-1B bombers, which are capable of carrying a huge payload of conventional weapons.

The North's launch came a day after it vowed an "unprecedentedly" strong response over a series of military drills that Seoul and Washington plan in coming weeks.

In a statement Sunday, Kim Yo Jong, the influential sister of Kim Jong Un, accused South Korea and the U.S. of "openly showing their dangerous greed and attempt to gain the military upper hand and predominant position in the Korean Peninsula."

"I warn that we will watch every movement of the enemy and take corresponding and very powerful and overwhelming counteraction against its every move hostile to us," she said.

North Korea has steadfastly slammed regular South Korea-U.S. military drills as an invasion rehearsal though the allies say their exercises are defensive in nature.

"By now, we know that any action taken by the U.S. and South Korea — however justified from the vantage point of defense and deterrence against (North Korea's) reckless behavior — will be construed and protested as an act of hostility by North Korea," said Soo Kim, a security analyst at the California-based RAND Corporation. "There will always be fodder for (Kim Jong Un's) weapons provocations."

"With nuclear weapons in tow and having mastered the art of coercion and bullying, Kim does not need 'self-defense.' But pitting the U.S. and South Korea as the aggressors allows Kim to justify his weapons development," Soo Kim said.

U.S. National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said the U.S. will take all necessary measures to ensure the security of the American homeland and South Korea and Japan. South Korea's presidential National Security Council said it will seek to strengthen its "overwhelming response capacity" against potential North Korean aggression based on the military alliance with the United States.

The South Korean and U.S. militaries plan to hold a table-top exercise this week to hone a joint response to a potential use of nuclear weapons by North Korea. The allies are also to conduct another joint computer simulated exercise and field training in March.

The foreign ministers of South Korea and Japan, meeting on the sidelines of a security conference in Germany on Saturday, agreed to boost a trilateral cooperation involving the United States and exchanged in-depth views on the issue of Japan's colonial-era mobilization of forced Korean laborers — a key sticking point in efforts to improve their ties, according to Seoul's Foreign Ministry.

South Korea and Japan are both key U.S. allies but often spat over issues stemming from Tokyo's 1910-45 colonial occupation of the Korean Peninsula. But North Korea's recent missile testing spree is pushing the two countries to explore how to reinforce their security cooperation.

## Ukrainian grain shipments drop as ship backups grow

By COURTNEY BONNELL Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The amount of grain leaving Ukraine has dropped even as a U.N.-brokered deal works to keep food flowing to developing nations, with inspections of ships falling to half what they were four months ago and a backlog of vessels growing as Russia's invasion nears the one-year mark.

Ukrainian and some U.S. officials are blaming Russia for slowing down inspections, which Moscow has denied. Less wheat, barley and other grain getting out of Ukraine, dubbed the "breadbasket of the world," raises concerns about the impact to those going hungry in Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia — places that rely on affordable food supplies from the Black Sea region.

The hurdles come as separate agreements brokered last summer by Turkey and the U.N. to keep supplies moving from the warring nations and reduce soaring food prices are up for renewal next month. Russia is also a top global supplier of wheat, other grain, sunflower oil and fertilizer, and officials have complained about the holdup in shipping the nutrients critical to crops.

Under the deal, food exports from three Ukrainian ports have dropped from 3.7 million metric tons in December to 3 million in January, according to the Joint Coordination Center in Istanbul. That's where

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 49 of 85

inspection teams from Russia, Ukraine, the U.N. and Turkey ensure ships carry only agricultural products and no weapons.

The drop in supply equates to about a month of food consumption for Kenya and Somalia combined. It follows average inspections per day slowing to 5.7 last month and 6 so far this month, down from the peak of 10.6 in October.

That has helped lead to backups in the number of vessels waiting in the waters off Turkey to either be checked or join the Black Sea Grain Initiative. There are 152 ships in line, the JCC said, a 50% increase from January.

This month, vessels are waiting an average of 28 days between applying to participate and being inspected, said Ruslan Sakhautdinov, head of Ukraine's delegation to the JCC. That's a week longer than in January.

Factors like poor weather hindering inspectors' work, demand from shippers to join the initiative, port activity and capacity of vessels also affect shipments.

"I think it will grow to be a problem if the inspections continue to be this slow," said William Osnato, a senior research analyst at agriculture data and analytics firm Gro Intelligence. "In a month or two, you'll realize that's a couple a million tons that didn't come out because it's just going too slowly."

"By creating the bottleneck, you're creating sort of this gap of the flow, but as long as they're getting some out, it's not a total disaster," he added.

U.S. officials such as USAID Administrator Samantha Power and U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Linda Thomas-Greenfield have blamed Russia for the slowdown, saying food supplies to vulnerable nations are being delayed.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba and Infrastructure Minister Oleksandr Kubrakov said in statement Wednesday on Facebook that Russian inspectors have been "systematically delaying the inspection of vessels" for months.

They accused Moscow of obstructing work under the deal and then "taking advantage of the opportunity of uninterrupted trade shipping from Russian Black Sea ports."

Osnato also raised the possibility that Russia might be slowing inspections "in order to pick up more business" after harvesting a large wheat crop. Figures from financial data provider Refinitiv show that Russian wheat exports more than doubled to 3.8 million tons last month from January 2022, before the invasion.

Russian wheat shipments were at or near record highs in November, December and January, increasing 24% over the same three months a year earlier, according to Refinitiv. It estimated Russia would export 44 million tons of wheat in 2022-2023.

Alexander Pchelyakov, a spokesman for the Russian diplomatic mission to U.N. institutions in Geneva, said last month that the allegations of deliberate slowdowns are "simply not true."

Russian officials also have complained that the country's fertilizer is not being exported under the agreement, leaving renewal of the four-month deal that expires March 18 in question.

Without tangible results, extending the deal is "unreasonable," Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Vershinin on Monday told RTVI, a privately owned Russian-language TV channel.

U.N. officials say they have been working to unstick Russian fertilizer and expressed hope that the deal will be extended.

"I think we are in slightly more difficult territory at the moment, but the fact is, I think this will be conclusive and persuasive," Martin Griffiths, U.N. undersecretary-general for humanitarian affairs, told reporters Wednesday. "The global south and international food security needs that operation to continue."

Tolulope Phillips, a bakery manager in Lagos, Nigeria, has seen the impact firsthand. He says the cost of flour has exploded 136% since the war in Ukraine began. Nigeria, a top importer of Russian wheat, has seen costs for bread and other food surge.

"This is usually unstable for any business to survive," Phillips said. "You have to fix your prices to accommodate this increase, and this doesn't only affect flour — it affects sugar, it affects flavors, it affects the price of diesel, it affects the price of electricity. So, the cost of production has generally gone up."

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 50 of 85

Global food prices, including for wheat, have dropped back to levels seen before the war in Ukraine after reaching record highs in 2022. In emerging economies that rely on imported food, like Nigeria, weakening currencies are keeping prices high because they are paying in dollars, Osnato said.

Plus, droughts that have affected crops from the Americas to the Middle East meant food was already expensive before Russia invaded Ukraine and exacerbated the food crisis, Osnato said.

Prices will likely stay high for more than a year, he said. What's needed now is "good weather and a couple of crop seasons to become more comfortable with global supplies across a number of different grains" and "see a significant decline in food prices globally."

## Russia's year of war: Purge of critics, surge of nationalism

By DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — Moscow's nights display few signs of a nation at war.

Cheerful crowds packed restaurants and bars in the Sretenka neighborhood on a recent Saturday night, watched by officers marked as "tourist police." Nearby, a top-hatted guide led about 40 sightseers to a 300-year-old church.

There's only an occasional "Z" — the symbol of Russia's "special military operation," as the Ukraine invasion is officially known — seen on a building or a shuttered store abandoned by a Western retailer. A poster of a stern-faced soldier, with the slogan "Glory to the heroes of Russia," is a reminder the conflict has dragged on for a year.

Western stores are gone, but customers can still buy their products — or knockoffs sold under a Russian name or branding.

The painful, bruising changes to Russian life require more effort to see.

A broad government crackdown has silenced dissent, with political opponents imprisoned or fleeing abroad. Families have been torn apart by the first mobilization of reservists since World War II. State TV spews hatred against the West and reassuring messages that much of the world still is with Russia.

And Russia's battlefield deaths are in the thousands.

### QUASHING THE CRITICS

"Indeed, the war has ruined many lives — including ours," Sophia Subbotina of St. Petersburg told The Associated Press.

Twice a week, she visits a detention center to bring food and medicine to her partner, Sasha Skochilenko, an artist and musician with serious health issues. Skochilenko was arrested in April for replacing supermarket price tags with antiwar slogans.

She is charged with spreading false information about the military, one of President Vladimir Putin's new laws that effectively criminalize public expression against the war. The crackdown has been immediate, ruthless and unparalleled in post-Soviet Russia.

Media cannot call it a "war," and protesters using that word on placards are hit with steep fines. Most who took to the streets were swiftly arrested. Rallies fizzled.

Independent news sites were blocked, as were Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. A prominent radio station was taken off the air. The Novaya Gazeta newspaper, led by 2021 Nobel Peace Prize laureate Dmitry Muratov, lost its license.

Skochilenko, who says she is not an activist but simply someone horrified by war, faces up to 10 years in prison.

Prominent Putin critics either left Russia or were arrested: Ilya Yashin got 8½ years, Vladimir Kara-Murza is jailed awaiting trial and Alexei Navalny remains in prison.

Entertainers opposing the war quickly lost work, with plays and concerts canceled.

"The fact that Putin has managed to intimidate a significant part of our society is hard to deny," Yashin told AP from jail last year.

### PUSHING THE GOVERNMENT LINE

The purge of critics was followed by a splurge of propaganda. State TV suspended some entertainment



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 51 of 85

shows and expanded political and news programs to boost the narrative that Russia was ridding Ukraine of Nazis, a false claim Putin used as pretext for the invasion. Or that NATO is acting via puppets in Kyiv but that Moscow will prevail.

"A new structure of the world is emerging in front of our eyes," proclaimed anchor Dmitry Kiselev in a December rant on his weekly show. "The planet is getting rid of Western leadership. Most of humanity is with us."

These messages play well in Russia, says Denis Volkov, director of the country's top independent pollster Levada Center: "The idea that NATO wants to ruin Russia or at least weaken ... it has been commonplace for three-fourths (of poll respondents) for many years."

The Kremlin is pushing its narrative to the young. Schoolchildren were told to write letters to soldiers, and some schools designated "A Hero's Desk" for graduates fighting in Ukraine.

In September, schools added a subject loosely translated as "Conversations about Important Things." Lesson plans for eighth to 11th graders seen by AP describe Russia's "special mission" of building a "multipolar world order."

At least one teacher who refused to teach the lessons was fired. Although not mandatory, some parents whose children skip them face pressure from administrators or even police.

A fifth grader was accused of having a Ukraine-themed photo on social media and asking classmates about supporting the war, and she and her mother were detained briefly after administrators complained, said her lawyer, Nikolai Bobrinsky. When she skipped the new lessons, authorities apparently decided to make "an example" of her, he added.

## SURVIVING SANCTIONS

The sanctions-hit economy outperformed expectations, thanks to record oil revenues of about \$325 billion after the war sent energy prices soaring. The Central Bank stabilized the plummeting ruble by raising interest rates, and the currency is stronger against the dollar than before the invasion.

McDonald's, Ikea, Apple and others left Russia. The golden arches were replaced by Vkusno — i Tochka ("Tasty — Period"), while Starbucks became Stars Coffee, with essentially the same menus.

Visa and Mastercard halted services, but banks switched to the local MIR system, so existing cards continued to work in the country; those traveling abroad use cash. After the European Union banned flights from Russia, airline ticket prices rose and destinations became harder to reach. Foreign travel is now available to a privileged minority.

Sociologists say these changes hardly bothered most Russians, whose average monthly salary in 2022 was about \$900. Only about a third have an international passport.

Inflation spiked nearly 12%, but Putin announced new benefits for families with children and increased pensions and the minimum wage by 10%.

MacBooks and iPhones are still easily available, and Muscovites say restaurants have Japanese fish, Spanish cheese and French wine.

"Yes, it costs a bit more, but there's no shortage," said Vladimir, a resident who asked not to be fully identified for his own safety. "If you walk in the city center, you get the impression that nothing is happening. Lots of people are out and about on weekends. There are fewer people in cafes, but they are still there."

Still, he admitted the capital seems emptier and people look sadder.

## 'IN THE TRENCHES, OR WORSE'

Perhaps the biggest shock came in September, when the Kremlin mobilized 300,000 reservists. Although billed as a "partial" call-up, the announcement sent panic through the country since most men under 65 — and some women — are formally part of the reserve.

Flights abroad sold out in hours and long lines formed at Russia's border crossings. Hundreds of thousands were estimated to have left the country in the following weeks.

Natalia, a medical worker, left Moscow with her boyfriend after a summons was delivered to his mother. Their income was cut in half and she misses home, but they've decided to try it for a year, said the woman, who asked that her last name and location not be revealed for their safety.

"Between ourselves, we're saying that once things calm down, we will be able to come back. But it

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 52 of 85

wouldn't resolve the rest of it. That huge snowball is rolling downhill, and nothing will be back (as it was)," Natalia said.

Draftees complained of poor living conditions at bases and shortages of gear. Their wives and mothers claimed they were deployed to the front without proper training or equipment and were quickly wounded.

A woman who is contesting her husband being drafted said her family life fell apart after she suddenly had to care for her children and frail mother-in-law.

"It was hard. I thought I'd lose my mind," said the woman, who spoke on condition of anonymity because his legal case is continuing. Her husband came home on leave — suffering from pneumonia — and needs psychological care because he jumps at every loud sound, she said.

Vasily, a 33-year-old Muscovite, learned authorities tried twice this month to deliver a summons to a former apartment where he is officially registered. Although not sure if the summons was to draft him or to clear up his enlistment records, especially after a September attempt to deliver call-up papers, he doesn't intend to find out.

"All my friends who went (to the enlistment office) to figure it out are in the trenches now, or worse," added Vasily, who withheld his last name for his own safety.

Volkov, the pollster, said the dominating sentiment among Russians is that the war is "somewhere far away, it is not affecting us directly."

While anxiety over the invasion and mobilization came and went over the year, "people started feeling again that it indeed doesn't affect everyone. 'We're off the hook. Well, thank god, we're moving on with our lives.'"

Some fear a new mobilization, which the Kremlin denies.

## LIVES LOST

As the war became bogged down by defeats and setbacks, families got the worst news possible: a loved one was killed.

For one mother, it was too much to bear.

She told AP she became "hysterical" and "started shaking" when told her son was missing and presumed dead while serving on the Moskva, the missile cruiser that sank in April. The woman, who at the time spoke on condition of anonymity because she feared reprisal, said she found it hard to believe he was killed.

The military has confirmed just over 6,000 deaths, but Western estimates are in the tens of thousands. Putin promised generous compensation to families of those listed as killed in action — 12 million rubles (about \$160,000).

In November, he met with a dozen mothers, which Russian media said were hand-picked among Kremlin supporters and officials, and told one of them her son's death wasn't in vain.

"With some people ... it is unclear why they die -- because of vodka or something else. When they are gone, it is hard to say whether they lived or not -- their lives passed without notice," he told her. "But your son did live -- do you understand? He achieved his goal."

## 'I just want my legs back': Myanmar landmine casualties soar

By VICTORIA MILKO and DAVID RISING Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — The 3-year-old boy had taken only two steps from his mother's lap when a deafening explosion rang out. The blast caught the woman in the face, blurring her vision. She forced her eyes open and searched for her son around the busy jetty where they'd been waiting for a ferry, near their small village in south-central Myanmar.

Through the smoke, she spotted him. His small body lay on the ground, his feet and legs mangled with flesh peeled away, shattered bones exposed.

"He was crying and telling me that it hurt so much," she said. "He didn't know what just happened." But she did.

The woman's son had detonated a landmine, an explosive device designed to mangle or destroy what-

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 53 of 85

ever comes into its path.

Landmines have been banned for decades by most countries, since the United Nations Mine Ban Treaty was adopted in 1997. But in Myanmar, which is not party to the treaty, the use of mines has soared since the military seized power from the democratically elected government in February 2021 and armed resistance has skyrocketed.

Landmines are planted by all sides of the bloody conflict in Myanmar, and they're responsible for surging civilian casualties, including an alarming number of children as victims, according to an AP analysis based on data and reports from nonprofit and humanitarian organizations, interviews with civilian victims, families, local aid workers, military defectors and monitoring groups.

In 2022, figures from the U.N. show, civilian casualties from landmine and unexploded ordnance spiked by nearly 40%. Experts say this and other official tallies are vastly undercounted, largely due to difficulties monitoring and reporting during the conflict.

Despite incomplete numbers, experts agree that the increase in Myanmar is the largest ever recorded.

Virtually no area is immune to the threat. Over the past two years, mine contamination has spread to every state and region except for the capital city, Naypyitaw, according to Landmine Monitor, a group that tracks global landmine use.

The military also uses civilians as human shields, a practice widespread in the country for decades but raising alarms with increasing mine incidents. AP's analysis found the military, known as the Tatmadaw, forced people to walk ahead of troops to detonate potential landmines in their path, protecting their own troops.

According to local and international human rights groups, the Tatmadaw has mined homes, villages, walking paths, church compounds, farms, cellphone towers and a Chinese-backed oil and gas pipeline and copper mine.

The Myanmar military, which has acknowledged mine use in the past, did not respond to a list of questions AP sent to their official spokesperson's email.

Even when the fighting moves on, the landmines don't. The mines left behind can indiscriminately maim or kill those who happen upon them for years after hostilities have ended.

It raises the specter of casualties for years to come. In countries including Egypt and Cambodia, people continue to die from millions of mines left behind long after conflicts has ended.

"Leaving an activated mine like this is the same as releasing a monster," said a 26-year-old military defector who worked as a combat engineer platoon commander in Myanmar. "Mines don't have friends or enemies. Even a gun only shoots in the direction it's pointed."

Like most who were interviewed by AP, the defector spoke on condition of anonymity to protect himself and his family from military retaliation. Many in Myanmar who speak with reporters can face detainment or violence.

Landmines and unexploded ordnance have been a persistent issue in Myanmar for more than four decades. The problem has grown exponentially since the military takeover, with heavier use of landmines in more parts of the country, said Kim Warren, a U.N. landmine specialist who's monitored issues in Myanmar.

In 2022, 390 people were victims of landmines and unexploded ordnance in Myanmar, more than a 37% increase from 2021, according to figures compiled by UNICEF. Overall, 102 people were killed and 288 were wounded, with children making up some 34% of the victims, compared with 26% in 2021.

Still, Warren said, incidents are underreported. She cited the lack of a robust information management system, the sensitivities around reporting conflict-related data, and difficulties getting care for victims.

Yeshua Moser-Puangsuwan, Landmine Monitor's Myanmar expert, said his group counts only casualties it can confirm with confidence.

"We've always been undercounting," he said. "How many more? Double? Almost certainly. Triple? Could be."

Experts concede the total number of casualties may seem small, with Myanmar's population of about 56 million, but say the rapid increase is distressing nonetheless, given the underreported cases, the destruc-



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 54 of 85

tive nature of mines and their use amid the decades-long conflict.

Experts are particularly concerned about children victims, like the boy who triggered the mine at the jetty. Many are unaware of how lethal landmines and unexploded munitions are; some pick them up and play with them.

Most children are no longer in school amid the conflict, leading to more unsupervised time. Violence has also forced more than 1.2 million people from their homes, according to the U.N., so children and others frequently move around in unfamiliar areas.

Many civilian victims encounter landmines during daily routines — just going about their days until life changes forever.

In March 2021, two teenage cousins were working on a small family-run plot in Shan state. They had just left to dig for sweet potatoes when the father of one of the boys heard a blast from his home. He rushed to help, but he was too late. They'd been killed instantly. They'd triggered a mine.

The father, 47, tears up when he returns to the fields, where he found tattered clothes and mangled bodies.

"But it's my family's business, so I have to come to the farm to make a living," said the man, who spoke on condition of anonymity to protect himself and his relatives.

On the other side of the country, in western Chin state, a 20-year-old farmer was returning home from weeding a rice paddy field on a sunny May day when he triggered a mine buried on a path he'd walked many times before.

"The explosion engulfed me, and my entire surroundings were clouded in smoke. I thought I was dying," he told AP on condition of anonymity, out of fear for his safety. "I could see bones. The right leg was completely destroyed up to the ankle. My whole body was hot as if it was on fire and my skin was black."

During his 18-day stay in the hospital, his right leg was amputated about four inches below the knee.

Many victims and families won't know who was responsible for the blasts — the Tatmadaw or anti-military groups — as all sides of the conflict use mines.

A member of a militia that operates in Sagaing said his group has removed nearly 100 mines thought to be planted by the military and plans to reuse them to augment its arsenal of homemade devices.

"A mine is an indispensable weapon to attack the enemy," said the member, who spoke by phone on condition of anonymity over the sensitive information and fear the military would retaliate against his family.

It's a common practice: Militias and armed groups announcing they've demined areas where they operate, only to reuse the weapons.

"They just move the mines to a new location," Moser-Puangsuwan said. "And that is not what we call demining."

The militia member said villagers are warned of mine locations and civilians are rarely harmed. But Moser-Puangsuwan and other experts said it's just not possible to prevent civilian casualties.

"They're using an indiscriminate weapon," Moser-Puangsuwan said. "Once it's out there, it will kill or injure the next person who comes across it, whether they're the enemy, whether they're one of the soldiers on your side, or whether they are civilians."

One man in Myanmar's western Chin state described how soldiers took him, his pregnant wife and their 5-year-old daughter captive, making them and 10 other civilians to walk ahead, beating them with rifles if they refused.

The civilians moved slowly ahead through the suspected minefield, expecting with each step to trigger a blast, while a firefight between an anti-government militia and the soldiers broke out, he said.

"I thought: 'Today is the day I die,'" said the man, who also spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal. They later escaped, with no mines detonated during their march.

Landmine Monitor documented similar incidents in other states, calling it a "grave violation of international humanitarian and human rights law" in its most recent report.

Myanmar and Russia were the only states with documented new use of mines in 2022, according to

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 55 of 85

Landmine Monitor, though Human Rights Watch in January alleged Ukraine also used antipersonnel mines when Russian forces occupied the city of Iziom. Non-state armed groups have also been confirmed to be using them in at least five countries in 2022, including anti-government forces in Myanmar.

Myanmar and Russia are among countries that aren't signatories to the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, along with China, North and South Korea, and the United States.

Landmine Monitor also confirmed the military has been increasingly mining infrastructure such as mobile phone towers and power lines to deter attacks. Military-planted mines also are protecting at least two major Chinese-backed projects — a copper mine in Sagaing and a pipeline pumping station in northeastern Shan state that is part of China's Belt and Road initiative, Moser-Puangsuwan said.

"We are not aware of the situation you mentioned," a spokesperson for China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote in a fax to AP. "The cooperation project between China and Myanmar is in line with the common interests of both sides and has brought tangible benefits to the people of Myanmar."

It made no reference to any of those who had been maimed.

For those who survive a blast, health care is difficult to access. Many areas are remote, with limited road infrastructure or access to medical facilities. Staffing is low; health workers are often forced to go into hiding or leave Myanmar over participation in anti-military protests. Few victims can afford prosthetics and rehabilitation.

At the jetty, the explosion that maimed the 3-year-old boy set off a frantic search for help, with his mother traveling dozens of kilometers across rural countryside by motorbike and boat.

A small clinic on the other side of the river gave basic first aid and morphine for pain. A larger rural clinic bandaged wounds and provided a blood transfusion. It wasn't until the pair got to the main hospital in the regional capital that doctors were able to amputate both of the boy's legs — the right below the knee and the left just below his hip.

The hospital bill was more than six times the family's monthly income of 400,000 Myanmar Kyat (\$190).

For months, the boy used a wheelchair. He would stare out the window of their small wooden home, watching friends play. "I just want my legs back," he'd say.

In November, he was admitted to an orthopedic rehabilitation center. The Red Cross paid for quality prosthetic limbs and taught him to use them.

Now 4, the boy is back home and can move around on his own, allowing his mother to go back to work in the bean fields.

He speaks frequently about the blast, but his mother isn't sure he'll ever process what happened. And the family will never be the same.

"Maybe he still doesn't understand," she said. "He is still young."

## Mac McClung soars to slam dunk title at All-Star Saturday

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Mac McClung might have single-handedly restored the shine on a dunk contest that has been widely panned in recent years.

McClung, the 6-foot-2 Philadelphia guard on a two-way contract, defeated New Orleans' Trey Murphy III in the finals of the dunk contest, culminating an NBA All-Star Saturday that may have finally answered the question as to whether what used to be the league's signature event can be glitzy again.

McClung had the answer: Absolutely.

"I'm truly blessed and grateful for the NBA giving me this opportunity," McClung said.

A 540-degree dunk — not a 360, but a 540, him doing one-and-a-half rotations in the air, a move more reserved for figure skaters and skateboarders than basketball players — was his third perfect score of the night out of four dunks. By the time the judges' scores came up it was already decided. Everyone in the building knew he'd already won.

"It's over," McClung said.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 56 of 85

It was. And he immediately committed to defending his title at Indianapolis at All-Star Saturday next year. "If you guys will have me, I'll be back," McClung said.

The final score, not that it mattered, was McClung 100.0, Murphy 98.0.

His is an unbelievable story: McClung has played mostly in the G League, where he ranks 36th in scoring this season at 19 points per game. He was undrafted in 2021 after spending three college seasons at Georgetown and Texas Tech. He was signed by Golden State last year but never played in a regular-season game for the Warriors, and spent a little time on USA Basketball's World Cup qualifying team last year as well.

"Ever since the beginning, I was the underdog," said McClung, who put on a Gate City jersey — his high school and hometown in Virginia, population 1,600 — for the final dunk. "Proving others right instead of others wrong brings a little more satisfaction."

Philadelphia would become his third NBA team, and he hasn't even played for the 76ers yet. He played in one game last season for the Chicago Bulls, one other game for the Los Angeles Lakers.

He has three NBA baskets.

He had four dunks on Saturday night. A guy with more dunks than actual NBA field goals might have saved the dunk contest.

"Give this man his flowers, man," TNT commentator Kenny Smith said.

McClung set the tone for the night with a dunk that had NBA superstars in disbelief — he leaped over two people, took the ball out of the hands of one of them, tapped it on the backboard and then threw down a reverse slam.

And that was just for starters.

Riding the momentum of that perfect dunk, he wound up hoisting the trophy that was newly renamed for dunking legend — and former 76ers star — Julius "Dr. J" Erving.

"I'm super happy," McClung said.

McClung was nearly perfect on his second dunk as well; four judges gave him a perfect 50, Lisa Leslie gave him a 49 as the only dissenter, but it didn't matter — he was already assured a spot in the final round against Murphy.

New York's Jericho Sims gave himself a 50 on his second dunk, where he attached an envelope to the net, pulled it down after the dunk and displayed "50" to the world. No judge agreed, and his two-dunk score of 95.4 wasn't good enough to make the final round.

Also eliminated after Round 1: Houston's Kenyon Martin Jr., with a score of 93.2.

## 3-POINT CONTEST

Damian Lillard represented his school and his brand, doing them both proud.

Lillard, the Portland star, won the 3-point contest by topping Indiana teammates Buddy Hield and Tyrese Haliburton in the final round.

Lillard wore a Weber State jersey with "Dolla" on the back. Weber State is his college; he performs music under the name Dame D.O.L.L.A. And when he got the trophy, he had a Blazers warmup shirt on for that moment.

"They say the third time's the charm," said Lillard, who got his first 3-point title in his third try at the event. "And I'm happy that it happened here. It's a perfect situation. I'm happy that I did it in my home, coming back here to Utah."

Lillard won the final round with 26 points. Hield had 25 and Haliburton scored 17.

Lillard played his college games in Ogden, Utah, about a half-hour outside of Salt Lake City. And the historic ramification of finally getting a 3-point title wasn't lost on him.

"The best shooters in the history of our game, most of them have one of these," Lillard said as he held the trophy. "I just wanted to get it done at least one time. And now I have it, so I can retire from it."

Haliburton won the first round with 31 points. Lillard had 26, and Hield had 23.

Eliminated in the first round were Boston's Jayson Tatum, Utah's Lauri Markkanen, Miami's Tyler Herro, New York's Julius Randle and Sacramento's Kevin Huerter.



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 57 of 85

## SKILLS CHALLENGE

Utah got a win to open All-Star Saturday night.

The Jazz — a roster composed of Utah players Jordan Clarkson, Walker Kessler and Collin Sexton — won the Skills Challenge on Saturday night, prevailing in two of the three competitions.

"It feels good, especially to do it in front of the home team," Sexton said.

The Rooks were second, with Orlando's Paolo Banchero, Detroit's Jaden Ivey and Houston's Jabari Smith Jr. getting 100 points.

"I had a lot of fun just doing that even though we took the L," said Banchero, who was part of the winning squad in Friday's Rising Stars games. "It was really fun getting out there in front of the fans. Skills Challenge, watched that all the time growing up during All-Star Weekend. So being a part of it was great."

The Antetokounmpos were third, with Thanasis Antetokounmpo, Alex Antetokounmpo and Jrue Holiday — a fill-in for injured Milwaukee Bucks teammate Giannis Antetokounmpo — getting shut out.

The Rooks won the team relay for 100 points, after having the best time on a course where teams had to complete a 35-foot outlet pass, do downcourt dribbling, a short jumper, a left corner 3-pointer and then a dunk at the other end.

Next up was the team passing event, won by the Jazz — giving them 100 points — after they were the most accurate in a series of 35-foot outlet passes, 20-foot bounce passes and 25-foot chest passes.

It ended with the Team Shooting event — worth 200 points — with the Jazz prevailing there to clinch the win.

"We did it for Utah, man," Clarkson said.

## Spartans pregame ceremony honors 3 killed in campus shooting

By LARRY LAGE AP Sports Writer

EAST LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Michigan State women's basketball players wiped away tears as they stood shoulder to shoulder during a moment of silence before losing to No. 8 Maryland 66-61 on Saturday, less than a week after three students were killed in a shooting on campus.

"I'm really proud of us for just showing up," said Julia Ayrault, who led the Spartans with 15 points. "It's hard to come back and play a game that seems so small."

Diamond Miller scored 29 points and helped the Terrapins (22-5, 13-3 Big Ten) hold on for the win after leading by 16 points in the second half.

"We knew today would be extremely emotional," Maryland coach Brenda Frese said. "Michigan State was one possession away from taking this game from us."

The Spartans (13-13, 5-10) rallied to have a chance at pulling off an upset, coming up short after DeeDee Hagerman missed a 3-pointer with 3 seconds left.

"They're strong," Miller said. "They're resilient. They did not stop."

Michigan State players wore white shirts with "Spartan Strong" and the school's logo in green during warmups while coaches, support staff, administrators, cheerleaders and mascot sported the tops all afternoon.

"We all need healing and sports can do that," said Michigan State acting coach Dean Lockwood, who has filled in for Suzy Merchant since she was in a car crash last month. "We wanted this to be a healing event for our community."

The victims, and survivors, were honored with pregame remarks as athletic events resumed on a campus and community reeling from the tragedy. On Saturday, four of the wounded students remained in critical condition at a Lansing hospital and one was still hospitalized in stable condition.

Funerals were held earlier in the day for Brian Fraser and Alexandria Verner while Arielle Anderson's funeral is scheduled for next week. They were among eight students shot two buildings that are one-third of a mile apart on winding sidewalks on campus.

Police say Anthony McRae, a 43-year-old man with no connection to the school, went into Berkey Hall where evening classes were being held and opened fire in a classroom then walked about 5 minutes away

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 58 of 85

to the MSU Student Union and fired more shots before fleeing and dying from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot.

The union, which would normally be open on a Saturday afternoon, had signs in door windows that informed visitors it was closed until further notice.

Red and yellow flowers were placed in door handles at the the northern entrance and on the other side, a slew of flower bouquets were strewn on steps on a sun-splashed, relatively warm afternoon. Near the Berkey Hall sign, flowers and candles were placed in a tree bed where Michigan State graduate Pedro Kuyenga bowed his head for a few minutes.

"I prayed for the souls of the students who departed unexpectedly and sadly," he said. "I prayed to give the families affected comfort, and the knowledge and wisdom to the hospital staff helping the students recover."

Streams of people also visited "The Rock," a community gathering place that has become a makeshift memorial in the days since the attack, and the Spartan Statue, where a sea of flowers have been placed this week.

The Michigan State men's basketball team, which like the women had a game postponed earlier in the week, traveled to play rival Michigan on the road Saturday night.

The rivalry rested during a poignant pregame in Ann Arbor, where a long moment of silence was broken by the Michigan band playing "MSU Shadows," while Crisler Arena was dimly lit with green and white lights from LED wristbands that were given to fans.

"I thought it was a very classy move on their part," Michigan State coach Tom Izzo said after losing to Michigan 84-72.

The Wolverines, and their student section, wore maize shirts with Michigan Basketball Stands with MSU across the chest.

## BIG PICTURE

Maryland: Miller, the Big Ten player of the week, needs more teammates to make shots than they did Saturday to make a deep runs in the conference and NCAA Tournaments.

Michigan State: Athletic director Alan Haller said he hoped the game that drew about 3,439 fans gave the grieving community a place to gather after athletic events were cancelled earlier in the week.

## UP NEXT

Maryland: Host No. 7 Iowa on Tuesday. The Hawkeyes handed the Terrapins a 96-82 loss two weeks ago.

Michigan State: Host Minnesota on Wednesday, the last home game for the Spartans

## Ukraine in mind, US frantic to avert Mideast showdown at UN

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration is scrambling to avert a diplomatic crisis over Israeli settlement activity this week at the United Nations that threatens to overshadow and perhaps derail what the U.S. hopes will be a solid five days of focus on condemning Russia's war with Ukraine.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken made two emergency calls on Saturday from the Munich Security Conference, which he is attending in an as-yet unsuccessful bid to avoid or forestall such a showdown. It remained unclear whether another last-minute intervention might salvage the situation, according to diplomats familiar with the ongoing discussions who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Without giving details, the State Department said in nearly identical statements that Blinken had spoken to Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from Munich to "re-affirm the U.S. commitment to a negotiated two-state solution and opposition to policies that endanger its viability."

"The secretary underscored the urgent need for Israelis and Palestinians to take steps that restore calm and our strong opposition to unilateral measures that would further escalate tensions," the statements said.

Neither statement mentioned the proposed U.N. Security Council resolution demanding an immediate halt to Israeli settlements. The Palestinians want to bring that resolution to a vote on Monday. And neither

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 59 of 85

statement gave any indication as to how the calls ended.

But diplomats familiar with the conversations said that in his call to Abbas, Blinken reiterated an offer to the Palestinians for a U.S. package of incentives to entice them to drop or at least delay the resolution.

Those incentives included a White House meeting for Abbas with President Joe Biden, movement on reopening the American consulate in Jerusalem, and a significant aid package, the diplomats said.

Abbas was noncommittal, the diplomats said, but also suggested he would not be amenable unless the Israelis agreed to a six-month freeze on settlement expansion on land the Palestinians claim for a future state.

Blinken then called Netanyahu, who, according to the diplomats, was similarly noncommittal about the six-month settlement freeze. Netanyahu also repeated Israeli opposition to reopening the consulate, which was closed during President Donald Trump's administration, they said.

The U.S. and others were hoping to resolve the deadlock on Sunday, but the diplomats said it was unclear if that was possible,

The drama arose just ahead of the one-year anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which will be the subject of special U.N. General Assembly and Security Council sessions on Thursday and Friday.

The U.S. opposes the Palestinian resolution and is almost certain to veto it. Not vetoing would carry considerable domestic political risk for Biden on the cusp of the 2024 presidential race and top House Republicans have already warned against it.

But the administration also fears that using its veto to protect Israel risks losing support at the world body for measures condemning Russia's war in Ukraine.

Senior officials from the White House, the State Department and the U.S. Mission to the U.N. have already engaged frantic but fruitless diplomacy to try to persuade the Palestinians to back down. The dire nature of the situation prompted Blinken's calls on Saturday, the diplomats said.

The Biden administration has already said publicly that it does not support the resolution, calling it "unhelpful." But it has also said the same about recent Israeli settlement expansion announcements.

U.N. diplomats say the U.S. wants to replace the Palestinian resolution, which would be legally binding, with a weaker presidential statement, or at least delay a vote on the resolution until after the Ukraine war anniversary.

The Palestinian push comes as Israel's new right-wing government has reaffirmed its commitment to construct new settlements in the West Bank and expand its authority on land the Palestinians seek for a future state.

Israel captured the West Bank, along with east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, in the 1967 Mideast war. The United Nations and most of the international community consider Israeli settlements illegal and an obstacle to ending the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Some 700,000 Israeli settlers live in the West Bank and Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem.

Ultrationalists who oppose Palestinian statehood comprise a majority of Israel's new government, which has declared settlement construction a top priority.

The draft resolution, circulated by the United Arab Emirates, the Arab representative on the council, would reaffirm the Security Council's "unwavering commitment" to a two-state solution with Israel and Palestine living side-by-side in peace as democratic states.

It would also reaffirm the U.N. Charter's provision against acquiring territory by force and reaffirm that any such acquisition is illegal.

Last Tuesday, Blinken and the top diplomats from Britain, France, Germany and Italy condemned Israel's plans to build 10,000 new homes in existing settlements in the West Bank and retroactively legalize nine outposts. Netanyahu's Cabinet had announced the measure two days earlier, following a surge in violence in Jerusalem.

In December 2016, the Security Council demanded that Israel "immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem." It stressed that halting settlement activities "is essential for salvaging the two-state solution."

That resolution was adopted after President Barack Obama's administration abstained in the vote, a



reversal of the United States' longstanding practice of protecting its close ally Israel from action at the United Nations, including by vetoing Arab-supported resolutions.

The draft resolution before the council now is much shorter than the 2016 document, though it reiterates its key points and much of what the U.S. and Europeans already said last week.

Complicating the matter for the U.S., the Security Council resolution was introduced and is supported by the UAE, an Arab partner of the United States that has also normalized relations with Israel, even as it has taken a tepid stance on opposing Russia's attack on Ukraine.

The U.S. will be looking to the UAE and other council members sympathetic to the Palestinians to vote in favor of resolutions condemning Russia for invading Ukraine and calling for a cessation of hostilities and the immediate withdrawal of all Russian forces.

## **Sheriff: Gunman kills 6, including ex-wife, in Mississippi**

By MICHAEL GOLDBERG and EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS Associated Press

ARKABUTLA, Miss. (AP) — A lone gunman killed six people including his ex-wife and stepfather Friday at multiple locations in a tiny rural community in northern Mississippi, the sheriff said, leaving investigators searching for clues to what motivated the rampage.

Armed with a shotgun and two handguns, 52-year-old Richard Dale Crum, who a family friend said had a history of mental illness, opened fire at about 11 a.m. and killed a man in the driver's seat of a pickup truck parked outside a convenience store in Arkabutla, near the Tennessee state line, Tate County Sheriff Brad Lance said.

Deputies were working the crime scene when a second 911 call alerted authorities to another shooting a few miles away. After arriving at a home, they found a woman, whom the sheriff identified as Crum's ex-wife, shot dead and her current husband wounded.

Lance said deputies caught up with Crum outside his own home and arrested him. Behind the residence they found two handymen slain by gunfire — one in the road, another in an SUV. Inside a neighboring home, they discovered the bodies of Crum's stepfather and his stepfather's sister.

"Everybody has crime, and from time to time we have violent crime, but certainly nothing of this magnitude," Lance said in an interview. He added: "Without being able to say what triggered this, that's the scary part."

Crum, 52, was jailed without bond on a single charge of capital murder, and Lance said investigators were working to bring additional charges. It was not immediately known if Crum had an attorney who could speak on his behalf.

That initial murder charge was for the killing of Chris Eugene Boyce, 59, the man who was shot outside the store. Boyce's brother was in the truck with him at the time and fled, according to the sheriff. Lance added that Crum chased the brother through a wooded area before he escaped unharmed.

Deputy Tate County Coroner Ernie Lentz identified the others killed as Debra Crum, 60; Charles Manuel, 76; John Rorie, 59; George McCain, 73; and Lynda McCain, 78. Lentz also said Boyce was from Lakeland, Florida.

Ethan Cash, who lives near the store, told WREG-TV he heard a gunshot from inside his house.

"I had just woken up and I look back here, and I see dude walking back here with a shotgun," he said.

Cash added that he went to the scene and found one person who had been shot. He checked for a pulse, but found none.

In the lobby of the Sheriff's Office, Norma Washington told The Associated Press that Boyce was her nephew. She said he and the brother, Doug, who lives in Alaska, had been in town cleaning up a property they inherited from their deceased uncle.

"I lost my brother, and now this one," Washington said. "This has been something else."

It was unclear whether Crum knew either of the brothers.

Ashley McKinney, a 38-year-old from Memphis, Tennessee, dated Debra Crum's son, Sid Furniss, when the two were teens and has remained friends with the family ever since.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 61 of 85

She recalls when Debra Crum started dating Richard Dale Crum. At first all was well, but then signs of Richard Dale Crum's mental illness became apparent, with him suddenly imitating the moves of Hong Kong action star Jackie Chan. Sometimes he even had swords.

"He ain't never been right," McKinney said.

Debra Crum was hopeful that the psychiatric facilities could fix him. But eventually she grew uncomfortable working her overnight shifts at the Waffle House restaurant alone, unsure what Richard Dale Crum would do, and asked McKinney to keep her company.

McKinney had no knowledge he was physically abusive, saying, "I don't know how to put it other than that he wasn't all there."

She said that Richard Dale Crum largely worked odd jobs, like cutting firewood. McKinney said he told Debra Crum that when he qualified for disability that he would leave her. And that is exactly what happened, said McKinney, adding that he was living with his stepfather.

Debra Crum had survived breast cancer and was getting ready to undergo surgery in March for another medical condition. But McKinney said she was the "sweetest person" and happy with her fiancé.

The killings stunned residents of Arkabutla, home to 285 people and located about 30 miles (50 kilometers) south of Memphis, Tennessee. It's the hometown of famed actor James Earl Jones, and nearby Arkabutla Lake is a popular fishing and recreational destination.

An elementary school and a high school in nearby Coldwater both went on lockdown while the suspect was being sought, according to the Coldwater Elementary School Facebook page. A short time later, a second post on the page said the lockdown had been lifted and "all students and staff are safe."

April Wade, who lives in Arkabutla and grew up in Coldwater, said both are small communities where most people know each other, "but if you don't, you know somebody who knows somebody."

Speaking from a local tire store in the afternoon, Wade said she and her husband were aware of the shootings but had not yet heard the names of the suspect or victims.

"I think it's crazy," Wade said. "You do not expect something like that to happen so close to home."

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives said its agents were providing assistance to the sheriff's department and state investigators. Lance said one of their top priorities was to determine a motive.

The sheriff, who has lived in the area his entire life and served in law enforcement for 25 years, said he could recall no prior problems with Crum.

The U.S. has seen a deadly start to 2023, including six mass killings in a three-week period in January, according to an Associated Press/USA Today database. It defines a mass killing as four or more people dead, not including the perpetrator.

There have also been a number of mass shootings in which fewer people were slain, such as Monday's shooting at Michigan State University in which three people were killed and five were wounded.

In a statement, President Joe Biden said he and first lady Jill Biden were mourning the six victims and praying for the survivors. He urged Congress to act now on gun law reforms to address what he called "an epidemic" of gun violence.

## Tesla driver killed after plowing into firetruck on freeway

WALNUT CREEK, Calif. (AP) — A Tesla driver was killed and a passenger was critically injured Saturday when the car plowed into a fire truck that was parked on a Northern California freeway to shield a crew clearing another accident, fire officials said.

Four firefighters who were in the truck when it was struck on Interstate 680 were treated for minor injuries, said Tracie Dutter, assistant chief of the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District.

The driver was declared dead at the scene, Dutter said. The car needed to be cut open to remove the passenger, who was taken to the hospital.

Photos showed the front end of the car was crushed and the \$1.4 million ladder truck was damaged.

California Highway Patrol Officer Adam Lane said it was not clear whether the driver may have been

intoxicated or whether the Tesla Model S was operating with automation or driving assistance features. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is investigating how Tesla's Autopilot system detects and responds to emergency vehicles parked on highways. At least 14 Teslas have crashed into emergency vehicles while using the system.

Dutter said the truck had its lights on and was parked diagonally on northbound lanes of the freeway to protect responders to an earlier accident that did not result in injuries.

The fatal accident occurred around 4 a.m., and it took several hours to clear the freeway. The firetruck had to be towed away.

The Model S was among the nearly 363,000 vehicles Tesla recalled on Thursday because of potential flaws in its "Full Self-Driving" system. While the recall is aimed at correcting possible problems at intersections and with speed limits, it comes amid a broader investigation by U.S. safety regulators into Tesla's automated driving systems.

## North Korea fires missile as US, S. Korea prepare for drills

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea on Saturday fired a long-range missile from its capital into the sea off Japan, according to its neighbors, a day after it threatened to take strong measures against South Korea and the U.S. over their joint military exercises.

According to the South Korean and Japanese militaries, the missile was fired on a high angle, apparently to avoid reaching the neighbors' territories, and traveled about 900 kilometers (560 miles) at a maximum altitude of 5,700 kilometers (3,500 miles) during an hourlong flight.

The details were similar to North Korea's Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile test flight in November, which experts said demonstrated potential to reach the U.S. mainland if fired on a normal trajectory.

Japanese government spokesperson Hirokazu Matsuno said no damage was reported from the missile, which landed within Japan's exclusive economic zone, about 200 kilometers (125 miles) west of Oshima island. Oshima lies off the western coast of the northernmost main island of Hokkaido.

North Korea's Foreign Ministry on Friday threatened with "unprecedentedly" strong action against its rivals, after South Korea announced a series of military exercises with the United States aimed at sharpening their response to the North's growing threats.

While the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said the launch did not pose an immediate threat to U.S. personnel, territory, or its allies, the White House National Security Council said it needlessly raises tensions and risks destabilizing the security situation in the region.

"It only demonstrates that the DPRK continues to prioritize its unlawful weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs over the well-being of its people," it said, calling it a "flagrant violation of multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions."

The office of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said his national security director, Kim Sung-han, presided over an emergency security meeting that accused the North of escalating regional tensions. It denounced North Korea for accelerating its nuclear arms development despite signs of worsening economic problems and food insecurity, saying such actions would bring only tougher international sanctions.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Tokyo was closely communicating with Washington and Seoul over the launch, which he called "an act of violence that escalates provocation toward the international order."

The launch was North Korea's first since Jan. 1, when it test-fired a short-range weapon. It followed a massive military parade in Pyongyang last week, where troops rolled out more than a dozen ICBMs as leader Kim Jong Un watched in delight from a balcony.

The unprecedented number of missiles underscored a continuation of expansion of his country's military capabilities despite limited resources while negotiations with Washington remain stalemated.

Those missiles included a new system experts say is possibly linked to the North's stated desire to acquire a solid-fuel ICBM. North Korea's existing ICBMs, including Hwasong-17s, use liquid propellants that require



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 63 of 85

pre-launch injections and cannot remain fueled for prolonged periods. A solid-fuel alternative would take less time to prepare and is easier to move around on vehicles, providing less opportunity to be spotted.

It wasn't immediately clear whether Saturday's launch involved a solid-fuel system.

"North Korean missile firings are often tests of technologies under development, and it will be notable if Pyongyang claims progress with a long-range solid-fuel missile," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor of international studies at Ewha Womans University in Seoul. "The Kim regime may also tout this launch as a response to U.S. defense cooperation with South Korea and sanctions diplomacy at the United Nations."

North Korea is coming off a record year in weapons demonstrations with more than 70 ballistic missiles fired, including those with potential to reach the U.S. mainland. The North also conducted a slew of launches it described as simulated nuclear attacks against South Korean and U.S. targets in response to the allies' resumption of large-scale joint military exercise that had been downsized for years.

North Korea's missile tests have been punctuated by threats of preemptive nuclear attacks against South Korea or the United States over what it perceives as a broad range of scenarios that put its leadership under threat.

Kim doubled down on his nuclear push entering 2023, calling for an "exponential increase" in the country's nuclear warheads, mass production of battlefield tactical nuclear weapons targeting "enemy" South Korea and the development of more advanced ICBMs.

The North Korean statement on Friday accused Washington and Seoul of planning more than 20 rounds of military drills this year, including large-scale field exercises, and described its rivals as "the arch-criminals deliberately disrupting regional peace and stability."

South Korea's Defense Ministry officials told lawmakers earlier that Seoul and Washington will hold an annual computer-simulated combined training in mid-March. The 11-day training will reflect North Korea's nuclear threats, as well as unspecified lessons from the Russia-Ukraine war, according to Heo Tae-keun, South Korea's deputy minister of national defense policy. Heo said the countries will also conduct joint field exercises in mid-March that would be bigger than those held in the past few years.

South Korea and the U.S. will also hold a one-day tabletop exercise next week at the Pentagon to sharpen a response to a potential use of nuclear weapons by North Korea.

North Korea has traditionally described U.S.-South Korea military exercises as rehearsals for a potential invasion, while the allies insist that their drills are defensive in nature.

The United States and South Korea had downsized or canceled some of their major drills in recent years, first to support the former Trump administration's diplomatic efforts with Pyongyang and then because of COVID-19. But North Korea's growing nuclear threats have raised the urgency for South Korea and Japan to strengthen their defense postures in line with their alliances with the United States.

South Korea has been seeking reassurances that United States will swiftly and decisively use its nuclear capabilities to protect its ally in face of a North Korean nuclear attack. In expanding its military exercises with South Korea, the United States has also expressed commitment to increase its deployment of strategic military assets like fighter jets and aircraft carriers to the Korean Peninsula in a show of strength.

In December, Japan made a major break from its strictly self-defense-only post-World War II principle, adopting a new national security strategy that includes preemptive strikes and cruise missiles to counter growing threats from North Korea, China and Russia.

## **Blinken: China's balloon incursion 'must never happen again'**

By KARL RITTER and MATTHEW LEE Associated Press

MUNICH (AP) — The top diplomats from the United States and China met on Saturday in the first high-level contact between their countries since the U.S. shot down an alleged Chinese spy balloon two weeks ago, with Secretary of State Antony Blinken sending the message that Beijing's surveillance program had been "exposed to the world."

Blinken and Wang Yi, the Chinese Communist Party's most senior foreign policy official, held the hour-long talks in Munich, where they were attending an international security conference, according to the

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 64 of 85

U.S. State Department.

"I made very clear to him that China sending its surveillance balloon over the United States in violation of our sovereignty, in violation of international law, was unacceptable and must never happen again," Blinken said Saturday in an interview for CBS' "Face the Nation."

His spokesman, Ned Price, said in a statement that Blinken also told the Chinese official that his nation's "high-altitude surveillance balloon program — which has intruded into the airspace of over 40 countries across five continents — has been exposed to the world."

Blinken had canceled a trip to Beijing earlier this month due to the balloon incident, which has become a major issue of contention between the two countries. A meeting at the conference in Germany had been widely anticipated.

Blinken also told Wang that the U.S. does not seek conflict with China, repeating a standard talking point that the Biden administration has provided since it has come into office.

"The United States will compete and will unapologetically stand up for our values and interests, but that we do not want conflict with the PRC and are not looking for a new Cold War," Price said. Blinken "underscored the importance of maintaining diplomatic dialogue and open lines of communication at all times."

In addition to the balloon incident, Price said Blinken had reiterated a warning to China on providing assistance to Russia to help with its war against Ukraine, including assisting Moscow with evading sanctions the West has imposed on Russia.

"I warned China against providing materiel support to Russia," Blinken said in a tweet. "I also emphasized the importance of keeping open lines of communication."

Earlier Saturday, Wang had renewed Beijing's criticism of the United States for shooting down the balloon, arguing that the move did not point to U.S. strength.

Beijing insists the white orb shot down off the Carolina coast on Feb. 4 was just an errant civilian airship used mainly for meteorological research that went off course due to winds and had only limited "self-steering" capabilities.

Wang, the director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs, repeated that insistence in a speech at the conference and accused the U.S. of violating international legal norms in destroying the object with a missile fired from an U.S. fighter jet.

"The actions don't show that the U.S. is big and strong, but describe the exact opposite," Wang said.

Wang also accused the U.S. of denying China's economic advances and seeking to impede its further development.

"What we hope for from the U.S. is a pragmatic and positive approach to China that allows us to work together," Wang said.

His comments came shortly before an address to the conference by Vice President Kamala Harris, who didn't mention the balloon controversy or respond to Wang's comments. She stressed the importance of upholding the "international rules-based order."

She said Washington is "troubled that Beijing has deepened its relationship with Moscow since the war began" in Ukraine and that "looking ahead, any steps by China to provide lethal support to Russia would only reward aggression, continue the killing and further undermine a rules-based order."

## Republican losses fan election conspiracies in rural Arizona

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

BISBEE, Ariz. (AP) — James Knox was glad to get out of the big city.

Part of a network of activists who believe U.S. elections are unreliable, Knox has unsuccessfully tried to convince supervisors in Maricopa County, Arizona's most populous county and home to Phoenix, that they should throw out elections that Republicans lost and get rid of voting machines.

So earlier this past week, Knox went somewhere more hospitable to his project — nearly 200 miles south of his home in the Phoenix exurb of Queen Creek to Cochise County. During last year's elections, the county's conservative-majority Board of Supervisors tried to count all ballots by hand — until a judge

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 65 of 85

blocked that — and then refused to certify the results until a judge ordered them to do so.

“Here, it’s a little bit easier to be heard by the board,” Knox said before the latest supervisors’ meeting, where members discussed replacing the respected elections director, who resigned after objecting to the board’s decisions.

Last year was a tough one for the election denial movement in Arizona. Its candidates for U.S. Senate, governor, secretary of state and attorney general all lost. But it’s still thriving in rural Cochise County, a vivid example of how paranoia about elections fanned by former President Donald Trump maintains a stubborn grip in rural parts of the country.

Trump last year backed a slate of candidates for top state election positions in Arizona and elsewhere who parroted his lie about losing the 2020 presidential election due to voter fraud. Every one of those candidates lost in the battleground states that typically decide the presidency. But the election conspiracy movement maintains a firm hold in beet-red rural spots such as Cochise County, a swath of the Sonoran Desert dotted with ranches, small towns and U.S.-Mexico border communities that encompasses an area larger than Rhode Island and Connecticut combined.

The county’s respected elections director, Lisa Marra, who had opposed the board’s voting moves, recently resigned from the nonpartisan position after five years in the job. The two Republicans on the three-member board are seeking to replace her with the elected county recorder, David Stevens, another Republican.

Stevens is a friend of former GOP state Rep. Mark Finchem, who attended Trump’s rally in Washington on Jan. 6, 2021, that preceded the Capitol riot and who ran unsuccessfully last year for secretary of state, Arizona’s top election post. Finchem had said he would not have certified President Joe Biden’s 2020 win in Arizona.

Stevens was prepared to oversee Cochise County’s hand count when Marra objected last year, and only stopped once a judge ruled that it violated state law. Stevens and the two Republican board members have appealed that ruling. The recorder recently joined a nonprofit founded by Finchem to focus on election “integrity.”

In Arizona, elected recorders such as Stevens already play a part in elections. They register voters, distribute mail ballots and verify signatures on the ones sent back, while the nonpartisan election director handles the counting. Stevens said he has always been a fair broker in elections and that in 2020, he spoke more to Democratic groups about voting than Republican ones.

Still, many residents are furious at Stevens’ new role.

“Recorder Stevens has proven he’s part of the crazy conspiracy crowd,” said Jennifer Druckman, a retiree who was one of dozens who spoke out against Stevens getting expanded responsibilities to oversee elections in the county.

Cochise is staunchly conservative — Trump won the county by 20 percentage points in 2020 even as Biden took the state. But the backlash to the election chaos has been palpable.

Activists are circulating petitions to recall Supervisor Tom Crosby, one of the two Republicans who voted for the hand count in October. Crosby also refused to certify the county’s vote tallies as a way to stop the state from finalizing election results in December after Democrat Katie Hobbs defeated Republican Kari Lake for governor.

After a judge ordered the Cochise County board to certify the election, Crosby skipped the next meeting, leaving fellow Republican Peggy Judd and Democrat Ann English to take the vote. It was a dramatic example of how the once-routine task of formalizing election results became charged with politics as Trump allies in scattered rural counties in the West targeted certification as a way to disrupt elections.

In an interview after this past week’s meeting, Crosby scoffed at speakers’ claims that he represents a threat to democracy.

“The ‘Big Lie’ is that checking voting machines is subverting democracy,” Crosby said. “My constituents feel like, if we can’t check ‘em, we don’t want ‘em.”

Election officials, including in Cochise County, check the accuracy of their machines by comparing their

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 66 of 85

tabulations with paper ballot receipts, but Crosby said he still had broader suspicions. Crosby also dismissed the recall effort.

"If it's leftists bashing me or patriots saying I'm wonderful, the message is the same," he said.

But not everyone upset at Crosby is a leftist. Greg Lamberth, a retired engineer and lifelong Republican, is one of the people circulating petitions to recall the supervisor.

"I don't see Mr. Crosby as acting in a way that gives us a functional government in Cochise County," Lamberth said in an interview, noting the county has already spent more than \$100,000 in legal fees related to its election adventures.

A former Marine, Lamberth is also disappointed in Stevens, a onetime military information technology specialist.

"He knows damn well that a hand count is less accurate than a machine count," Lamberth said.

That's why election officials decades ago largely turned away from hand counts and used tabulators to tally up ballots. Trump and his allies have attacked those devices, making unsupported allegations they were rigged against him in 2020, sometimes insinuating that foreign powers such as Venezuela were behind it. Those allegations triggered pushes for hand counts in a few rural counties in Nevada and New Mexico.

Stevens said in an interview that last October, a small group of conservative citizens approached him and asked whether the county could tally all ballots by hand rather than rely on machines. Stevens said he told them no — it was too close to the election to change procedure.

But Stevens suggested the county conduct a parallel hand count to check the machines' accuracy. Other election officials were alarmed, warning it could fan misinformation about the true tally in statewide races. A judge ruled the county didn't have discretion to pursue a full hand count; the county is appealing.

Stevens stressed that none of this was his idea or that of the supervisors.

"All this comes from the grassroots," he said in an interview in his office in the county building, where a pockmarked target from a shooting range hung from the wall and assembled Lego Star Wars sets sat on his coffee table.

While Stevens knocked down some prominent Arizona election conspiracy theories, saying most were a product of people not understanding the complexity of the elections process, he said he didn't want to dismiss the value of a hand count.

"I try not to have preconceived notions — let's find out," Stevens said.

Elisabeth Tyndall, the chairwoman of the county's Democratic Party, said the problem is that Cochise's Republican power structure simply cannot say "no" to its base.

"We have had Republican leadership pretty much forever," Tyndall said. "They haven't held their fellow Republicans accountable for nonsense."

Despite their overwhelming numerical advantages at the ballot box, many Cochise Republicans still see themselves as an aggrieved minority that needs to get more aggressive.

Bob McCormick, 82, a retired real estate agent, was a member of the small group that initially met with Stevens. He said their numbers are now more than 100.

Still, McCormick knew as he waited to enter the supervisors meeting that he was outnumbered by angry Democrats wanting to vent at the Republican supervisors and Stevens.

"For every 10 of them, one of us shows up," McCormick said of Democrats. "We really don't fight. Until we change the whole system, we're going to be in trouble."

## Turkish teen filmed 'last moments' from quake-hit apartment

By ROBERT BADENDIECK and MUCAHIT CEYLAN Associated Press

ADIYAMAN, Turkey (AP) — A 17-year-old high school student has captured Turkish hearts after he filmed a farewell message to his loved ones as he was trapped under the rubble of his home during last week's earthquake.

Taha Erdem and his family were fast asleep when a 7.8 magnitude quake hit their hometown of Adiyaman in the early hours of Feb. 6.



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 67 of 85

Taha was abruptly woken by violent tremors shaking the four-story apartment building in a blue-collar neighborhood of the central Anatolian city.

Within 10 seconds, Taha, his mother, father and younger brother and sister were plunging downward with the building.

He found himself alone and trapped under tons of rubble, with waves of powerful aftershocks shifting the debris, squeezing his space amid the mangled mess of concrete and twisted steel. Taha took out his cellphone and began recording a final goodbye, hoping it would be discovered after his death.

"I think this is the last video I will ever shoot for you," he said from the tight space, his phone shaking in his hand as tremors rocked the collapsed building.

Showing remarkable resilience and bravery for a teenager believing he was speaking his last words, he lists his injuries and speaks of his regrets and the things he hopes to do if he emerges alive. During the video, the screams of other trapped people can be heard.

"We are still shaking. Death, my friends, comes at a time when one is least expecting it." says Taha, before reciting a Muslim prayer in Arabic.

"There are many things that I regret. May God forgive me of all my sins. If I get out of here alive today there are many things that I want to do. We are still shaking, yes. My hand isn't shaking, it's just the earthquake."

The teen goes on to recount that he believes his family are dead, along with many others in the city, and that he will soon join them.

But Taha was destined to be among some of the first saved from the destroyed building. He was pulled from the rubble two hours later by neighbors and taken to an aunt's home.

Ten hours after the quake, his parents and siblings were also saved by local residents who dug at the wreck of the building with their bare hands and whatever tools they could find.

When The Associated Press spoke to the family on Thursday they were living in a government-provided tent, along with hundreds of thousands of others who survived the disaster that hit southern Turkey and north Syria, killing more than 43,000.

"This is my home," said Taha's mother Zeliha, 37, as she watched excavators digging up their old life and dumping it into heavy trucks.

"Boom-boom-boom, the building went down floor by floor on top of us," she recalled, describing how she had kept yelling her son's name while trapped under the debris in the hope that all five of them could die together as a family.

The Erdems' younger children — daughter Semanur, 13, and 9-year-old son Yigit Cinar — were sleeping in their parents' room when the quake hit.

But Taha could not hear his mother's calls through the mass of concrete. Nor could she hear her son's cries in the dark, and both believed the other was lying dead in the destroyed building.

It was only when Zeliha, her husband Ali, 47, a hospital cleaner, and the other children were taken to her sister's home that they realized Taha had survived.

"The world was mine at that moment," Zeliha said. "I have nothing, but I have my kids."

The story of the Erdem family is one of many emotional tales of human fortitude to emerge from the widespread disaster area. Many vividly recount the horrors of being trapped beneath their homes.

Ibrahim Zakaria, a 23-year-old Syrian who was rescued in the coastal Syrian town of Jableh on Feb. 10, told the AP that he survived by licking water dripping down the wall next to him, slipping in and out of consciousness and losing hope of survival in his waking moments.

"I almost surrendered because I thought I will die," he said from his hospital bed. "I thought: 'There is no escape.'"

In the Turkish city of Gaziantep, 17-year-old Adnan Muhammed Korkut, was trapped for four days before he was rescued. He told the private IHA news agency that he grew so thirsty that he drank his own urine.

Muhammet Enes Yeninar, 17, and his 21-year-old brother were saved after 198 hours in nearby Kahramanmaras.

He said they cried for the first two days, mostly wondering about their mother and whether she had

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 68 of 85

survived, IHA reported. They later began to comfort each other — “talking about brotherhood” and eating powdered protein.

Also in Kahramanmaras, Aleyna Olmez, 17, was pulled free after 248 hours under the rubble. “I tried to pass the time on my own,” she said.

Stories of remarkable survival often emerge during disaster, especially following earthquakes, when the world’s media records the fading hope of recovering survivors as each hour ticks by.

Following the 2010 Haiti earthquake, a 16-year-old girl was rescued in Port-Au-Prince 15 days after an earthquake devastated the city. Three years later, a woman trapped under a collapsed building in Dhaka, Bangladesh, was saved after 17 days.

## Jimmy Carter, 39th US president, enters hospice care at home

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Former President Jimmy Carter, who at 98 years old is the longest-lived American president, has entered home hospice care in Plains, Georgia, a statement from The Carter Center confirmed Saturday.

After a series of short hospital stays, the statement said, Carter “decided to spend his remaining time at home with his family and receive hospice care instead of additional medical intervention.”

The statement said the 39th president has the full support of his medical team and family, which “asks for privacy at this time and is grateful for the concern shown by his many admirers.”

Carter was a little-known Georgia governor when he began his bid for the presidency ahead of the 1976 election. He went on to defeat then-President Gerald R. Ford, capitalizing as a Washington outsider in the wake of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal that drove Richard Nixon from office in 1974.

Carter served a single, tumultuous term and was defeated by Republican Ronald Reagan in 1980, a landslide loss that ultimately paved the way for his decades of global advocacy for democracy, public health and human rights via The Carter Center.

The former president and his wife, Rosalynn, 95, opened the center in 1982. His work there garnered a Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

Jason Carter, the couple’s grandson who now chairs The Carter Center governing board, said Saturday in a tweet that he “saw both of my grandparents yesterday. They are at peace and—as always—their home is full of love.”

Carter, who has lived most of his life in Plains, traveled extensively into his 80s and early 90s, including annual trips to build homes with Habitat for Humanity and frequent trips abroad as part of the Carter Center’s election monitoring and its effort to eradicate the Guinea worm parasite in developing countries. But the former president’s health has declined over his 10th decade of life, especially as the coronavirus pandemic limited his public appearances, including at his beloved Maranatha Baptist Church where he taught Sunday School lessons for decades before standing-room-only crowds of visitors.

In August 2015, Carter had a small cancerous mass removed from his liver. The following year, Carter announced that he needed no further treatment, as an experimental drug had eliminated any sign of cancer.

Carter celebrated his most recent birthday in October with family and friends in Plains, the tiny town where he and Rosalynn were born in the years between World War I and the Great Depression.

The Carter Center last year marked 40 years of promoting its human rights agenda.

The Center has been a pioneer of election observation, monitoring at least 113 elections in Africa, Latin America, and Asia since 1989. In perhaps its most widely hailed public health effort, the organization recently announced that only 14 human cases of Guinea worm disease were reported in all of 2021, the result of years of public health campaigns to improve access to safe drinking water in Africa.

That’s a staggering drop from when The Carter Center began leading the global eradication effort in 1986, when the parasitic disease infected 3.5 million people. Carter once said he hoped to live longer than the last Guinea worm parasite.

Carter was born Oct. 1, 1924, to a prominent family in rural south Georgia. He went on to the U.S. Naval

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 69 of 85

Academy during World War II and pursued a career as a Cold War Naval officer before returning to Plains, Georgia, with Rosalynn and their young family to take over the family peanut business after Earl Carter's death in the 1950s.

A moderate Democrat, the younger Carter rapidly climbed from the local school board to the state Senate and then the Georgia governor's office. He began his White House bid as an underdog with a broad smile, outspoken Baptist mores and policy plans reflecting his education as an engineer. He connected with many Americans because of his promise not to deceive the American people after Nixon's disgrace and U.S. defeat in southeast Asia.

"If I ever lie to you, if I ever make a misleading statement, don't vote for me. I would not deserve to be your president," Carter said often as he campaigned.

Carter, who came of age politically during the civil rights movement, was the last Democratic presidential nominee to sweep the Deep South, before the region shifted quickly to Reagan and the Republicans in subsequent elections.

He governed amid Cold War pressures, turbulent oil markets and social upheaval over racism, women's rights and America's global role.

Carter's foreign policy wins included brokering Mideast peace by keeping Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin at the bargaining table for 13 days in 1978. That Camp David experience inspired the post-presidential center where Carter would establish so much of his legacy. At home, Carter partially deregulated the airline, railroad and trucking industries and established the departments of Education and Energy, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. He designated millions of acres in Alaska as national parks or wildlife refuges. He appointed a then-record number of women and non-whites to federal posts. He never had a Supreme Court nomination, but he elevated civil rights attorney Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the nation's second highest court, positioning her for a promotion in 1993.

Carter also built on Nixon's opening with China, and though he tolerated autocrats in Asia, pushed Latin America from dictatorships to democracy.

Yet Carter's electoral coalition splintered under double-digit inflation, gasoline lines and the 444-day hostage crisis in Iran. His bleakest hour came when eight Americans died in a failed hostage rescue in April 1980, helping to ensure his landslide defeat.

For years after his loss, Carter largely receded from electoral politics. Democrats were hesitant to embrace him. Republicans made him a punchline, caricaturing him as a hapless liberal. In reality, Carter governed more as a technocrat, more progressive on race and gender equality than he had campaigned but a budget hawk who often angered more liberal Democrats, including Ted Kennedy, the Massachusetts senator who waged a damaging primary battle against the sitting president in 1980.

Carter said after leaving office that he had underestimated the importance of dealing with Washington power brokers, including the media and lobbying forces anchored in the nation's capital. But he insisted his overall approach was sound and that he achieved his primary objectives — to "protect our nation's security and interests peacefully" and "enhance human rights here and abroad" — even if he fell spectacularly short of a second term.

And years later, upon his cancer diagnosis as a nonagenarian, he expressed satisfaction with his long life. "I'm perfectly at ease with whatever comes," he said in 2015. "I've had an exciting, adventurous and gratifying existence."

## **US: Russia has committed crimes against humanity in Ukraine**

By KARL RITTER and GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

MUNICH (AP) — The United States has determined that Russia has committed crimes against humanity in Ukraine, Vice President Kamala Harris said Saturday, insisting that "justice must be served" to the perpetrators.

Speaking at the Munich Security Conference, Harris said the international community has both a moral and a strategic interest in pursuing those crimes, pointing to a danger of other authoritarian governments taking advantage if international rules are undermined.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 70 of 85

"Russian forces have pursued a widespread and systemic attack against a civilian population — gruesome acts of murder, torture, rape, and deportation," Harris said. She also cited "execution-style killings, beatings, and electrocution."

The Biden administration formally determined last March that Russian troops had committed war crimes in Ukraine and said it would work with others to prosecute offenders. A determination of crimes against humanity goes a step further, indicating that attacks against civilians are being carried out in a widespread and systematic manner.

"Russian authorities have forcibly deported hundreds of thousands of people, from Ukraine to Russia, including children," Harris said. "They have cruelly separated children from their families."

She also pointed to the attack in mid-March on a theater in the strategic port city of Mariupol where civilians had been sheltering, which killed hundreds, and to the images of civilians' bodies left on the streets of Bucha after the Russian pullback from the Kyiv area last spring.

Harris said that as a former prosecutor and former head of California's Department of Justice, she knows "the importance of gathering facts and holding them up against the law."

"In the case of Russia's actions in Ukraine, we have examined the evidence, we know the legal standards, and there is no doubt," she said. "These are crimes against humanity."

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who also was attending the Munich conference, said in a statement issued as Harris spoke that "we reserve crimes against humanity determinations for the most egregious crimes."

The new determination underlines the "staggering extent" of suffering inflicted on Ukrainian civilians and "also reflects the deep commitment of the United States to holding members of Russia's forces and other Russian officials accountable for their atrocities," he said.

In an address to his country on Saturday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Kyiv this week had gotten "strong signals from our partners, specific agreements on the inevitability of holding Russia accountable for aggression, for terror against Ukraine and its people."

"Every Russian attack ... on every corner of our state will have concrete legal consequences for the terrorist state," Zelenskyy said, citing attacks not just in the past year of war but dating back to 2014, when fighting with Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine first broke out.

The president did not refer specifically to Harris' remarks or name any countries that had provided agreements on Russian accountability.

Russia's nearly yearlong invasion of Ukraine, has dominated discussions at the Munich conference, an annual gathering of security and defense officials from around the world. Harris told the assembled participants: "Let us all agree — on behalf of all the victims, both known and unknown, justice must be served."

"Such is our moral interest," she said. "We also have a significant strategic interest."

If Russian President Vladimir Putin succeeds in attacking international rules and norms, she said, "other authoritarian powers could seek to bend the world to their will, through coercion, disinformation and even brute force."

Harris' audience Saturday didn't include any Russian officials. Conference organizers decided not to invite them this year.

While Western officials defended arms supplies to Ukraine, China's top diplomat, Wang Yi, called for an end to the war through peace talks, saying Beijing was "deeply worried about the expansion and long-term effect of this war."

China has refused to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine or to impose sanctions on Moscow like Western nations have done. Without naming any countries, Wang said "there may be forces" that don't want the war to stop anytime soon.

"What they care about is not the life and death of the Ukrainian people, nor the increasing damage to Europe. They probably have bigger strategic goals than Ukraine," he said.

Asked on the sidelines of the event about the U.S. determination of crimes against humanity, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba replied that "Russia waged a genocidal war against Ukrainians because they do not recognize our identity and they do not think we deserve to exist as a sovereign nation."



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 71 of 85

"Everything that stems from that is crimes against humanity, war crimes and various other atrocities committed by the Russian army in the territory of Ukraine," he said. "Let lawyers sort out specifically which act belongs where in terms of legal qualification."

Zelenskyy had urged Western allies in a video address to the conference on Friday to quicken their military support for Ukraine.

Kuleba voiced confidence that Ukraine would eventually receive fighter jets from its partners, despite their current reluctance. He noted that they initially pushed back on providing other heavy weapons that were later delivered or promised.

In Munich on Friday, a Ukrainian deputy prime minister, Oleksandr Kubrakov, called for cluster munitions and phosphorous bombs, German media reported. Cluster munitions are banned by an international treaty.

Asked whether he supported calling for such weapons, Kuleba said Ukraine has evidence that Russia uses them.

"We are not party to the convention on the prohibition of cluster ammunition, so legally there are no obstacles for that," he said. "And if we receive one, we will be using it exclusively against military forces of the Russian Federation."

## **FBI records deepen mystery of dig for Civil War-era gold**

MICHAEL RUBINKAM Associated Press

CLEARFIELD, Pa. (AP) — The court-ordered release of a trove of government photos, videos, maps and other documents involving the FBI's secretive search for Civil War-era gold has a treasure hunter more convinced than ever of a coverup — and just as determined to prove it.

Dennis Parada waged a legal battle to force the FBI to turn over records of its excavation in Dents Run, Pennsylvania, where local lore says an 1863 shipment of Union gold disappeared on its way to the U.S. Mint in Philadelphia. The FBI, which went to Dents Run after sophisticated testing suggested tons of gold might be buried there, has long insisted the dig came up empty.

Parada and his advisers, who have spent countless hours poring over the newly released government records, believe otherwise. They accuse the FBI of distorting key evidence and improperly withholding records in an apparent effort to conceal the recovery of a historic, extremely valuable gold cache. The FBI defends its handling of the materials.

Parada's dispute with the FBI is playing out in federal court, where a judge overseeing the case must decide whether the FBI will have to release its operational plan for the gold dig and other records it wants to keep secret. The judge could also order the FBI to keep looking for additional materials to turn over to the treasure hunter.

"We feel we were double-crossed and lied to," Parada said in an interview at his cramped, wood-paneled office, where huge drill bits and high-end metal detectors compete for space with rusty miners' picks, Civil War-era cannon parts and other odds and ends he's dug up over the years.

"The truth will come out," said Parada, co-founder of the treasure-hunting outfit Finders Keepers. Solving the mystery is not his only goal — he had hoped to earn a finder's fee from the potential recovery of hundreds of millions of dollars worth of gold.

An FBI spokesperson declined to answer questions about the agency's gold dig records or respond to the coverup allegations, citing the ongoing litigation. Last year, the FBI released a statement publicly acknowledging for the first time that it had been looking for gold in Dents Run. The statement said the FBI did not find any, adding the agency "continues to unequivocally reject any claims or speculation to the contrary."

There is little evidence in the historical record to suggest that an Army detachment lost a gold shipment in the Pennsylvania wilderness — possibly the result of an ambush by Confederate sympathizers — but the legend has inspired generations of treasure hunters, Parada among them.

He and his son spent years looking for the fabled gold of Dents Run, eventually guiding the FBI to a remote woodland site 135 miles (220 kilometers) northeast of Pittsburgh where they say their instruments identified a large quantity of metal. The FBI brought in a geophysical consulting firm whose sensitive

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 72 of 85

equipment detected a 7- to 9-ton mass suggestive of gold.

Armed with a warrant, a team of FBI agents came in March 2018 to dig up the hillside. An FBI videographer was on hand to document it, at one point interviewing a Philadelphia-based agent on the FBI's art-crime team who explained why the FBI was in the woods of one of Pennsylvania's most sparsely populated counties.

"We've identified through our investigation a site that we believe has U.S. property, which includes a significant sum of base metal which is valuable ... particularly gold, maybe silver," the agent said on the video, his face blurred by the FBI to protect his privacy.

Calling it a "155-year-old cold case," he said the FBI had corroborated Parada's information about the location of the reputed gold through "scientific testing." He stressed the test results did not prove the presence of gold. Only a dig would help law enforcement "get to the bottom of this story once and for all," the agent said.

Parada obtained the video and other FBI records through a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit, hoping they would help answer lingering questions about what took place at Dents Run five years ago. Parada was mostly kept away from the dig site while the FBI did its work.

He suspects the agency conducted a clandestine, overnight dig between the first and second days of the court-authorized excavation, found the gold, and spirited it away. Residents have previously told of hearing a backhoe and jackhammer overnight — when the dig was supposed to have been paused — and seeing a convoy of FBI vehicles, including large armored trucks. The FBI has denied it conducted an overnight dig.

Parada and a consultant, Warren Getler, have focused on a handful of FBI photos and an accompanying photo log that have them questioning the FBI's official gold dig timeline. At issue is the presence or absence of snow in the images and the timing of a storm that briefly disrupted operations. For example, an FBI image that was supposed to have been taken about an hour after the squall does not show any snow on a large, moss-covered boulder at the dig site. That same boulder is snow-covered in a photo that FBI records indicate was taken the next morning — some 15 hours after the storm.

They accuse the FBI of altering the sequence of events to conceal an overnight excavation.

"We have compelling evidence a night dig took place, and that the FBI went to some large effort to cover up that night dig," said Getler, co-author of "Rebel Gold," a book exploring the possibility of buried Civil War-era caches of gold and silver.

There are other seeming anomalies in the records, according to Finders Keepers' legal motion. Among them:

— The FBI initially turned over hundreds of photos, but rendered them in low-resolution, high-contrast black-and-white, making it impossible to tell the time of day they were taken or even, in some cases, what they show. The treasure hunters went back and requested several dozen of the photos in color, which the FBI provided.

— The agency did not provide any video of the second and final day of the dig. Nor did it produce any photos or video showing what the FBI's own hand-drawn map described as a 30-foot-long, 12-foot-deep trench — which the treasure hunters claim could have only been dug overnight. Government lawyers acknowledged these gaps in the photo and video record but did not elaborate in a court filing last week.

— The consulting firm hired by the FBI to assess the possibility of gold produced a report on its findings, but the version given to the treasure hunters seems to be missing key pages.

— The FBI did not provide any of its agents' travel and expense invoices, which could shed further light on the dig timeline.

The records released so far "cast doubt on the FBI's claim to have found nothing and raise serious and troubling questions about the FBI's conduct during the dig and in this litigation, where it has gone to great lengths to distort critical evidence," Anne Weismann, a lawyer for Finders Keepers, wrote in a legal filing that seeks records, including the FBI's operational plan, that she says were improperly withheld.

The Justice Department did not address the treasure hunters' most explosive claims of a possible coverup in its latest legal filing. The government instead told a federal judge in Washington, D.C., that the FBI had

satisfied its legal obligation to the treasure hunters to search for its records of the dig, and asked for the case to be closed.

The judge has yet to rule.

Parada said he will keep asking questions until he gets satisfactory answers.

"I will stick at this until the end, until I know everything that happened to that gold," he said. "How much, where it went to, who has it now. I gotta know."

## Turmoil in courts on gun laws in wake of justices' ruling

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER and LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision on the Second Amendment is upending gun laws across the country, dividing judges and sowing confusion over what firearm restrictions can remain on the books.

The high court's ruling that set new standards for evaluating gun laws left open many questions, experts say, resulting in an increasing number of conflicting decisions as lower court judges struggle to figure out how to apply it.

The Supreme Court's so-called Bruen decision changed the test that lower courts had long used for evaluating challenges to firearm restrictions. Judges should no longer consider whether the law serves public interests like enhancing public safety, the justices said.

Under the Supreme Court's new test, the government that wants to uphold a gun restriction must look back into history to show it is consistent with the country's "historical tradition of firearm regulation."

Courts in recent months have declared unconstitutional federal laws designed to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers, felony defendants and people who use marijuana. Judges have shot down a federal ban on possessing guns with serial numbers removed and gun restrictions for young adults in Texas and have blocked the enforcement of Delaware's ban on the possession of homemade "ghost guns."

In several instances, judges looking at the same laws have come down on opposite sides on whether they are constitutional in the wake of the conservative Supreme Court majority's ruling. The legal turmoil caused by the first major gun ruling in a decade will likely force the Supreme Court to step in again soon to provide more guidance for judges.

"There's confusion and disarray in the lower courts because not only are they not reaching the same conclusions, they're just applying different methods or applying Bruen's method differently," said Jacob Charles, a professor at Pepperdine University's law school who focuses on firearms law.

"What it means is that not only are new laws being struck down ... but also laws that have been on the books for over 60 years, 40 years in some cases, those are being struck down — where prior to Bruen — courts were unanimous that those were constitutional," he said.

The legal wrangling is playing out as mass shootings continue to plague the country awash in guns and as law enforcement officials across the U.S. work to combat an uptick in violent crime.

This week, six people were fatally shot at multiple locations in a small town in rural Mississippi and a gunman killed three students and critically wounded five others at Michigan State University before killing himself.

Dozens of people have died in mass shootings so far in 2023, including in California, where 11 people were killed as they welcomed the Lunar New Year at a dance hall popular with older Asian Americans. Last year, more than 600 mass shootings occurred in the U.S. in which at least four people were killed or wounded, according to the Gun Violence Archive.

The decision opened the door to a wave of legal challenges from gun-rights activists who saw an opportunity to undo laws on everything from age limits to AR-15-style semi-automatic weapons. For gun rights supporters, the Bruen decision was a welcome development that removed what they see as unconstitutional restraints on Second Amendment rights.

"It's a true reading of what the Constitution and the Bill of Rights tells us," said Mark Oliva, a spokesman for the National Shooting Sports Foundation. "It absolutely does provide clarity to the lower courts on how

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 74 of 85

the constitution should be applied when it comes to our fundamental rights.”

Gun control groups are raising alarm after a federal appeals court this month said that under the Supreme Court’s new standards, the government can’t stop people who have domestic violence restraining orders against them from owning guns.

The New Orleans-based 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals acknowledged that the law “embodies salutary policy goals meant to protect vulnerable people in our society.” But the judges concluded that the government failed to point to a precursor from early American history that is comparable enough to the modern law. Attorney General Merrick Garland has said the government will seek further review of that decision.

Gun control activists have decried the Supreme Court’s historical test, but say they remain confident that many gun restrictions will survive challenges. Since the decision, for example, judges have consistently upheld the federal ban on convicted felons from possessing guns.

The Supreme Court noted that cases dealing with “unprecedented societal concerns or dramatic technological changes may require a more nuanced approach.” And the justices clearly emphasized that the right to bear arms is limited to law-abiding citizens, said Shira Feldman, litigation counsel for Brady, the gun control group.

The Supreme Court’s test has raised questions about whether judges are suited to be poring over history and whether it makes sense to judge modern laws based on regulations — or a lack thereof— from the past.

“We are not experts in what white, wealthy, and male property owners thought about firearms regulation in 1791. Yet we are now expected to play historian in the name of constitutional adjudication,” wrote Mississippi U.S. District Judge Carlton Reeves, who was appointed by President Barack Obama.

Some judges are “really parsing the history very closely and saying ‘these laws aren’t analogous because the historical law worked in a slightly different fashion than the modern law,’” said Andrew Willinger, executive director of the Duke Center for Firearms Law.

Others, he said, “have done a much more flexible inquiry and are trying to say ‘look, what is the purpose of this historical law as best I can understand it?’”

Firearm rights and gun control groups are closely watching many pending cases, including several challenging state laws banning certain semi-automatic weapons and high-capacity magazines.

A federal judge in Chicago on Friday denied a bid to block an Illinois law that bans the sale of so-called assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, finding the law to be constitutional under the Supreme Court’s new test. A state court, however, already has partially blocked the law — allowing some gun dealers to continue selling the weapons — amid a separate legal challenge.

Already, some gun laws passed in the wake of the Supreme Court decision have been shot down. A judge declared multiple portions of New York’s new gun law unconstitutional, including rules that restrict carrying firearms in public parks and places of worship. An appeals court later put that ruling on hold while it considers the case. And the Supreme Court has allowed New York to enforce the law for now.

Some judges have upheld a law banning people under indictment for felonies from buying guns while others have declared it unconstitutional.

A federal judge issued an order barring Delaware from enforcing provisions of a new law outlawing the manufacture and possession of so-called “ghost guns” that don’t have serial numbers and can be nearly impossible for law enforcement officials to trace. But another judge rejected a challenge to California’s “ghost gun” regulations.

In the California case, U.S. District Judge George Wu, who was nominated by President George W. Bush, appeared to take a dig at how other judges are interpreting the Supreme Court’s guidance.

The company that brought the challenge — “and apparently certain other courts” — would like to treat the Supreme Court’s decision “as a ‘word salad,’ choosing an ingredient from one side of the ‘plate’ and an entirely-separate ingredient from the other, until there is nothing left whatsoever other than an entirely-bulletproof and unrestrained Second Amendment,” Wu wrote in his ruling.



## Dogs in costumes take over at Rio Carnival street party

By DIARLEI RODRIGUES Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — As Rio de Janeiro kicked off its Carnival on Saturday, about 100 dogs barked and wagged their tails to the tune of samba music as they paraded in front of pet lovers in a canine costume competition.

The “Blocao” — a mixture of “bloco” which refers to Carnival street parties and “cao,” or dog in Portuguese — brought about 300 people to Rio’s Barra da Tijuca. Dog costumes ranged from fairies, and superheroes to clowns and cartoon characters.

Edson Chianca, 36, brought his 12-year-old Saori to the parade in a Minnie Mouse costume. He dressed the same way so the pair matched.

“It is a great initiative, this is a good moment for pets to socialize,” said Chianca.

Mari Jordão, 52, has attended the Blocao since 2014. Dog “mothers need to be careful, bring water, carry their dog if the pavement is too hot,” she said.

Blocao is one of the few events that challenged a city ban on street parties last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has taken place for about 20 years.

Marco Antonio Vieira, the organizer of Blocao, said he has no intention of humanizing pets with the pet parade and the contest that picks the top five best dressed dogs.

“Thirty years ago they lived in our backyard, now they live on our beds. It is good for them to be with the owner. When the dog sees the owner happy, he is happy too,” Vieira said.

“Some people have worked on their dog costumes for three months,” Vieira said. “There’s nothing but happy people here.”

## From a secret safehouse, Peru’s Indigenous revolt advances

By JOSHUA GOODMAN Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — In an industrial corridor of Peru’s capital, a dingy stairwell leads to a second-floor safehouse. Dozens of Quechua and Aymara activists lie on mattresses strewn on the floor, resting up for more anti-government demonstrations as volunteers cook a breakfast of donated rice, pasta and vegetables.

Among the makeshift refuge’s occupants is Marcelo Fonseca. The 46-year-old watched as a friend was shot and killed in December as they battled security forces in the southern city of Juliaca. Within hours, Fonseca joined a caravan of demonstrators that descended on the capital, Lima, to demand the resignation of interim President Dina Boluarte.

“Our Andean blood burns when we become furious,” Fonseca, whose native language is Quechua, said in a halting Spanish. “It runs faster. That’s what brings us here.”

Two months into Peru’s angry insurrection, emotions have hardened. While the unrest has barely disturbed the late-night revelry in Lima’s beachside enclaves, roadblocks still rage across the countryside, scaring away foreign tourists and leading to shortages of gas and other staples.

The tumult, which has left at least 60 dead, was triggered by the impeachment in December of President Pedro Castillo. To Peruvians like Fonseca, the leftist rural teacher was a symbol of their own exclusion, while Boluarte’s ascension to power from the vice presidency in cahoots with Castillo’s conservative enemies in Congress is seen as an unforgivable class betrayal.

The impasse has given a jolt of self-confidence to Peru’s Indigenous movement. Unlike neighboring Bolivia, where Indigenous groups were emboldened by Aymara coca-grower Evo Morales’ election as president in 2006, or Ecuador, where ethnic groups have a long tradition of toppling unpopular governments, Peru’s Indigenous groups had long struggled to gain political influence.

Although Peruvians of all backgrounds take pride in the history of the Inca Empire, the country’s Indigenous population is often treated with neglect and even hostility. Little is done to promote Quechua, despite its being spoken by millions and being an official language since 1975. Not until the 2017 census were Peruvians even asked whether they identify with any one of 50-plus Indigenous groups.

Tarcila Rivera, a prominent Quechua activist and former adviser to the United Nations on Indigenous

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 76 of 85

issues, attributes the disdain to systemic racism stretching back to the Spanish conquest.

"Despite the two hundred years since the founding of our republic, the reality is that those of us who come from pre-Hispanic civilizations haven't obtained our rights, nor are those rights taken into account," said Rivera.

The current turmoil has also unleashed a torrent of racism. One lawmaker from the floor of Congress disparaged the rainbow-colored Wiphala flag, which represents the native people of the Andes, as little more than a "chifa tablecloth," using the word for a cheap Chinese restaurant. Another urged security forces to send protesters to Bolivia with a big "kick."

Rivera says the crackdown has radicalized younger protesters. Meanwhile, the spread of smartphones and the Internet during the past few decades of economic stability has made Indigenous Peruvians more aware of their rights, the country's gaping inequalities and the sacrifices of previously unheralded Indigenous heroes, whose achievements contrast with narratives of perennial victimhood.

"All our kids are ever been taught is that we're losers, miserable souls who were conquered without a fight," Rivera said.

The current protest movement is centered in the southern Andes, where Indigenous identity is strongest. The area is the source of much of Peru's mineral wealth and is home to archeological jewels that attracted more than 4 million tourists a year before COVID.

Its peasants are also among Peru's most neglected.

Those inequalities were on vivid display this month at a roadblock near Cusco, where a group of campesinos sat vigil for hours over a roadblock of tires, tree trunks and boulders. As the line of stranded vehicles grew, tensions flared as motorists complaining that they had family emergencies.

"Don't yell at me when I'm speaking to you with manners!" barked one motorist who faulted the protesters for voting for Castillo, who lived in an adobe home in one of Peru's poorest districts before winning the presidency. "Don't let shameless politicians, who are often from the same community, trick you," he said repeating a false narrative held by elites that Castillo's victory was the result of bribes, fraud and chicanery.

Eventually, the demonstrators yielded to the pressure and briefly opened the road, after a harangue against the "millionaires" and powerful interests blamed for driving their community to desperate actions.

Back in Lima, the safehouse is a hive of activity as another day of demonstrating awaits. Hand-written signs list daily chores to keep the cramped quarters safe and clean. Dozens more activists from Cusco are expected soon and need to be lodged in one of the few dozen homes, apartments and businesses across the capital that have opened their doors, like clandestine rebel bases.

Discretion is a must. Like Fonseca, many of the demonstrators were already detained when security forces firing tear gas last month stormed a university campus at breakfast and arrested hundreds for trespassing. As a result, occupants are encouraged to leave the safehouse one or two at a time, turn off lights early and immediately report any police intrusion to two human-rights attorneys on permanent standby. The windows are covered with newspapers and dog-food bags to block out would-be snoops.

But more than fear, the mood is one of hope.

"No matter what happens, I dare say we've already won," said Victor Quinones as he stuffs a wad of coca leaves into his cheek.

At 60, Quinones is one of the group's veterans. He says the past few weeks in the capital have strengthened his resolve to push forward and no longer accept the status quo — or futile standoffs with police back home as the best way to change it.

"We broke the barrier. We've started our long march — and look at all this support we've garnered along the way," he reflects. "We've won because, now, the world knows."

## Why balloons are now in public eye — and military crosshairs

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Wafting across the United States and into the attention of an alarmed national and global public, a giant Chinese balloon has changed Americans' awareness of all the stuff floating in

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 77 of 85

the air and how defense officials watch for it and respond.

President Joe Biden said Thursday that the U.S. is updating its guidelines for monitoring and reacting to unknown aerial objects. That's after the discovery of a suspected Chinese spy balloon transiting the country triggered high-stakes drama, including the U.S. shootdowns of that balloon, and three smaller ones days later.

Biden said officials suspect the three subsequent balloons were ordinary ones. That could mean ones used for research, weather, recreational or commercial purposes. Officials have been unable to recover any of the remains of those three balloons, and late Friday the U.S. military announced it had ended the search for the objects that were shot down near Deadhorse, Alaska, and over Lake Huron on Feb. 10 and 12.

In all, the episodes opened the eyes of the public to two realities.

One: China is operating a military-linked aerial surveillance program that has targeted more than 40 countries, according to the Biden administration. China denies it.

Two: There's a whole lot of other junk floating up there, too.

A look at why there are so many balloons up there — launched for purposes of war, weather, science, business or just goofing around; why they're getting attention now; and how the U.S. is likely to watch for and respond to slow-moving flying objects going forward.

WHAT ARE ALL THOSE BALLOONS DOING UP THERE?

Some are up there for spying or fighting. Humans have hooked bombs to balloons since at least the 1840s, when winds blew some of the balloon-borne bombs launched against Venice back on the Austrian launchers. In the U.S. Civil War, Union and Confederate soldiers floated up over front lines in balloons to assess enemy positions and direct fire.

And when it comes to peacetime uses, the cheapness of balloons makes them a favorite aerial platform for all kinds of uses, serious and idle. That includes everything down to "college fraternities with nothing better to do and \$10,000," joked Rep. Jim Himes of Connecticut, the ranking Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee.

Himes' role on the committee involved him in a congressionally mandated intelligence and military review of the most credible of sightings of unidentified aerial phenomena, or UFOs. That review also drove home to him and other lawmakers "how much stuff there is floating around, in particular balloons," Himes said.

For the National Weather Service, balloons are the main means of above-ground forecasting. Forecasters launch balloons twice daily from nearly 900 locations around the world, including nearly 100 in the United States.

High-altitude balloons also help scientists peer out into space from near the edges of the Earth's atmosphere. NASA runs a national balloon program office, helping coordinate launches from east Texas and other sites for universities, foreign groups and other research programs. School science classes launch balloons, wildlife watchers launch balloons.

Commercial interests also send balloons up — such as Google's effort to provide internet service via giant balloons.

And \$12 gets hobby balloonists — who use balloons for ham radio or just for the pleasure of launching and tracking — balloons capable of getting up to 40,000 feet and higher.

That's roughly around the altitude that the U.S. military says the three smaller balloons were at when U.S. missiles ended their flights.

Most pilots probably wouldn't even be aware of a collision with such a balloon, said Ron Meadows, who produces balloons — with transmitters the size of a popsicle stick — for middle schools and universities to use for science education.

All it "does is report its location and speed," Meadows said. "It's not a threat to anyone."

Among hobby balloonists, there are suspicions that a balloon declared missing by the Northern Illinois Bottlecap Brigade was one of the ones shot down, as the publication Aviation Week Network first reported. White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said Friday the administration was not able to confirm those reports

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 78 of 85

And it's not just the United States' Mylar, foil and plastic overhead. Wind patterns known as the Westerlies sweep airborne things ranging from Beijing's tailpipe soot and the charred chunks of Siberian forest fires swinging over the Arctic and into the United States. China says its big balloon was a meteorological and research one that got picked up by the Westerlies. The U.S. says the balloon was at least partly maneuverable.

WHY ARE WE JUST NOW SPOTTING ALL THESE BALLOONS?

Short answer: Because we are just now looking for them.

Balloons' rise to global prominence got a lift starting in the past few years. Congress directed the Director of National Intelligence to pull together everything the government has learned about unidentified aerial phenomena. That included creating a Defense Department UAP task force.

Last year, in the first congressional hearing on unidentified airborne objects in a half-century, Scott W. Bray, the deputy director of Naval intelligence, told lawmakers that improved sensors, an increase in drones and other non-military unmanned aerial systems, and yes, "aerial clutter" including random balloons were leading to people noticing more unidentified airborne objects.

That awareness kicked into overdrive this month, after the U.S. military and then the U.S. public spotted the Chinese balloon floating down from the High North. While the U.S. says previous Chinese balloons have entered U.S. territory, this was the first one of them to slowly cross the United States in plain view of the public.

That balloon, and what had been growing official awareness of a Chinese military-linked balloon surveillance campaign that had targeted dozens of countries, led U.S. officials to change radar and other sensor settings, screening more closely for slow-moving objects in the air as well as fast ones.

SIDEWINDER MISSILES: A LONG-TERM BALLOON STRATEGY?

Post big Chinese balloon, U.S. defense officials are expected to keep up broader monitoring so that balloons remain on the radar, but fine-tune the response.

Biden's order to the Air Force to shoot down the three smaller airborne objects with Sidewinder missiles left him fending off Republican accusations he was too trigger-happy. Biden says all four shootdowns were warranted since the balloons could have posed dangers to civilian aircraft. Hobby balloons with payloads of only a few pounds are not covered by many FAA airspace rules.

Biden says the U.S. is developing "sharper rules" to track, monitor and potentially shoot down unknown aerial objects.

He directed national security adviser Jake Sullivan to lead an interagency team to review the procedures.

## Fox pit reporter Sims a symbol of NASCAR's diversity goals

By DAN GELSTON AP Sports Writer

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP) — When Josh Sims reports on NASCAR this season, the stock car series these days -- from the garage to the grandstands to top brass -- looks more like him.

Yes, Sims takes pride in the fact that he will become the first Black pit reporter for the Daytona 500 and that his rapid rise at Fox has made him one of the primary faces of the network's NASCAR coverage.

More than that, Sims sees that NASCAR may finally be running out of unconquered firsts for people of color. For women. For any minority who perhaps has experienced an uneasy relationship with a series founded in the South 75 years ago, a generation before the civil rights era.

Sims' journey from NASCAR novice through a sports anchor gig in Charlotte, North Carolina, that sparked his passion in the sport had led to his biggest assignment yet: pit reporting as a Black man from one of auto racing's signature events.

"I never set out to be a first," the 35-year-old Sims said. "I never set out to make history. I just wanted to be the best at what I was doing, whether it was hosting or reporting. At the same time, I kind of understand the platform and what it means for me to be doing this."

Sims has a full workload this season. He is the Cup Series pit reporter, teams with Regan Smith as an Xfinity Series reporter and is part of the host rotation for the FS1 show "Race Hub."



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 79 of 85

And this season, he wants to share the stories on what he sees at the track beyond the in-race reports and fantastic finishes. Minorities may not necessarily become the dominant demographic for the series, but they can certainly grab a larger share of the marketplace.

"I think if more people out there saw it, saw people that looked them, instead of just driver, crew chief, you might be more inclined to feel like, hey, I feel a little more comfortable going to the track," Sims said. "Getting that out there might help in terms of more people coming to the track and getting more different faces to the stands. It's not necessarily about getting more people in, it's showing what you already have."

It was, of course, a very low bar but the garage and grid and fans certainly appears to be more diverse now than before 2020 when NASCAR banned the Confederate flag from its tracks and properties. NASCAR is still overwhelmingly white, but NASCAR President Steve Phelps isn't exaggerating when he says you notice the change when walking through the garage.

"I think the events of 2020 allowed the sport to get younger and more diverse," he said at his state-of-the-sport address in November.

Among the notable achievements: Jusan Hamilton, who last year became the first Black race director in Daytona 500 history, will do it again this season. Amanda Oliver, a Black woman, negotiates high-profile deals as NASCAR's senior vice president. John Ferguson, a Black man, is the chief human resources officer.

Owners now include Pitbull and Michael Jordan, whose team features Bubba Wallace, the Black driver who prompted the flag ban. Rising stars in the developmental series include Rajah Caruth, a 20-year-old graduate of the "Drive for Diversity" program.

Phelps said NASCAR was committed to strengthening ties to various programs that can attract a broader fan base, from Boys & Girls Clubs to "some of the other areas we have from a partnership standpoint that really speak to what's happening in the African American community, what's happening in the Hispanic, Latino community (to) what's happening in the LGBTQ community."

While the frequently toxic nature of social media makes it easier for haters to reach Sims and others, he's a popular personality each weekend at the track.

"I never necessarily felt uncomfortable," he said. "You get stuff here and there in terms of messages that's emailed to you or sent to you but that's par for the course if you're a minority in the sport, a woman in the sport, even white drivers get stuff like that. But for every one or two of those, I get a lot more stuff from people excited that I'm here. You know, focus on the good."

Raised in East Brunswick, New Jersey, Sims is a Villanova graduate who followed the Wildcats in NCAA Tournament games in 2009 and remained a fan of most Philly teams.

"I grew up in Jersey, so not exactly NASCAR country," Sims said. "Growing up, you know the Jimmies and the Dale Seniors and the Tony Stewarts and everybody but it wasn't something I followed week in and week out."

His interest in NASCAR picked up in 2015 when he moved to Charlotte and hosted a pre-race show on the local Fox affiliate. Sims covered his first Daytona 500 in 2016 when Denny Hamlin nipped Martin Truex Jr. in the closest finish in race history.

"I was like, I am all in," Sims said.

Charlotte can feel like a small town for a city and Sims kept bumping into friends and contacts in NASCAR. Fox Sports executives hired Sims in 2021 as a reporter for their slate of NASCAR shows. He also became the first Black pit reporter in any NASCAR series, for Trucks races.

"I kind of hope that young people that look like me, can see me doing it and now recognize that it's possible," Sims said. "I hope I can kind of blaze a trail for them to one day say, hey, because Josh Sims did it, I can do it, too. And that's what's important."

## Why sick minks are reigniting worries about bird flu

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A recent bird flu outbreak at a mink farm has reignited worries about the virus spreading more broadly to people.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 80 of 85

Scientists have been keeping tabs on this bird flu virus since the 1950s, though it wasn't deemed a threat to people until a 1997 outbreak in Hong Kong among visitors to live poultry markets.

As bird flu hits more and varied animals, like at the mink farm, the fear is that the virus could evolve to spread more easily between people, and potentially trigger a pandemic.

Scientists say another kind of bird flu was likely behind the devastating 1918-1919 flu pandemic, and avian viruses played roles in other flu pandemics in 1957, 1968, and 2009.

Still, the risk to the general public now is low, says Dr. Tim Uyeki of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

A look at the bird flu virus and why it is getting renewed attention:

## WHAT IS BIRD FLU?

Some flu viruses mainly affect people, but some others chiefly occur in animals. For example, there are flus that occur in dogs, plus pig — or swine — flu viruses. And then there are avian viruses that spread naturally in wild aquatic birds like ducks and geese, and then to chickens and other domesticated poultry.

The bird flu virus drawing attention today — Type A H5N1 — was first identified in 1959, by investigators looking into a flu outbreak in chickens in Scotland. Like other viruses, it has evolved over time, spawning newer versions of itself.

By 2007, the virus was found in more than 60 countries. In the U.S., it has recently been detected in wild birds in every state, as well as in commercial poultry operations or backyard flocks in 47 states. Since the beginning of last year, tens of millions of chickens have died of the virus or been killed to stop outbreaks from spreading, one of the reasons cited for soaring egg prices.

## HOW OFTEN DO PEOPLE GET BIRD FLU?

The Hong Kong outbreak in 1997 was the first time this bird flu was blamed for severe human illness. Out of 18 people infected, six died. To contain the outbreak, the Hong Kong government closed live poultry markets, killed all the birds in the markets, and stopped bringing in chickens from southern China. It worked, for a while.

Symptoms are the similar to that of other flus, including cough, body aches and fever. Some people don't have noticeable symptoms, but some develop severe, life-threatening pneumonia.

Globally, nearly 870 human infections and 457 deaths have been reported to the World Health Organization in 20 countries. But the pace has slowed and there have been about 170 infections and 50 deaths in the last seven years. In the vast majority of cases, the infected people got it directly from infected birds.

The first and only U.S. case occurred just last April. A prison inmate in a work program picked it up while killing infected birds at a poultry farm in Montrose County, Colorado, in the western part of the state. His only symptom was fatigue and he recovered.

## CAN IT SPREAD BETWEEN PEOPLE?

In some instances, investigators concluded that the bird flu virus apparently did spread from one person to another. That happened in Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, China and Pakistan, most recently in 2007.

In each cluster, it spread within families from a sick person in the home. Scientists do not believe it can spread easily through casual contact, as seasonal flu can. But viruses mutate and change. Scientists worry about the ever-increasing number of opportunities for bird flu to mix with other flu viruses in infected people or animals and mutate, making it easier to spread to people.

It wouldn't take much for that to happen "and then we would be in a really tough situation," said Dr. Luis Ostrosky, chief of infectious diseases and epidemiology at University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

The CDC's Uyeki said the most worried he's been about H5N1 was during the earlier clusters. That kind of human-to-human spread does not appear to be happening right now, he said.

## WHAT HAPPENED AT THE MINK FARM?

Recent concern among public health experts has been fueled, in part, by detection of infections in a variety of mammals. The growing list includes foxes, raccoons, skunks, bears and even marine mammals like seals and porpoises. Officials in Peru said three sea lions found dead in November tested positive for,

and the recent deaths of hundreds of others may be due to bird flu.

Then last month, a European medical journal reported on a bird flu outbreak in October at a mink farm in Spain with nearly 52,000 animals, where the illness spread like wildfire.

The mink were fed poultry, and wild birds in the region had been found to have bird flu. But researchers said that however it started, they believe the virus then spread from mink to mink — a worrisome scenario. No workers were infected, though they wore masks as part of COVID-19 precautions.

Jennifer Nuzzo, director of the Pandemic Center at Brown University School of Public Health, said the outbreak virus is being watched for mutations that could make it more easily transmitted to people, and potentially between people.

“That’s the real worry,” said Nuzzo.

## Will Alex Murdaugh testify? Takeaways from his murder trial

By JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press

The defense team at disgraced South Carolina attorney Alex Murdaugh’s double murder trial finally get their chance to present their version of events after more than three weeks of testimony.

Murdaugh, 54, is accused of killing his wife, Maggie, 52, and their 22-year-old son, Paul, at their home in June 2021 as the once-prominent attorney’s career and finances were crumbling. Murdaugh, whose family dominated the legal system in tiny Hampton County for generations, has denied any role in the fatal shootings.

Prosecutors called 61 witnesses and introduced more than 550 pieces of evidence over 17 days of testimony — from descriptions of the brutality of the killings to numbing details about bank records.

Here are some key takeaways so far.

### WILL ALEX MURDAUGH TESTIFY?

Murdaugh’s lawyers haven’t given any indication publicly if the disbarred attorney will take the stand.

Doing so would allow him to explain some of the evidence prosecutors presented.

For example, Murdaugh told police he wasn’t at his Colleton County home in the hours before the killings, but several witnesses said they heard his voice on video taken from the dog kennels there just minutes before his wife and son were shot. Their bodies were found near the kennels.

Murdaugh also could respond to his sister-in-law’s testimony that he didn’t appear scared in the weeks after the slayings even as other family members were worried that they, too, were potential targets.

Testifying also could come with risks.

Defendants who choose to do so sometimes give jurors evidence of their guilt.

For Murdaugh, he could open himself up to questions about some of the roughly 100 other charges he is awaiting trial for. Those include allegations that he stole millions from clients and others.

He faces 30 years to life if convicted of murder.

### TRIALS WITHIN A TRIAL

Throughout the double murder trial, Judge Clifton Newman has allowed prosecutors to present evidence related to those other charges — from insurance fraud for allegedly trying to arrange his own killing to theft to money laundering to tax evasion.

Prosecutors have argued that evidence is central to the murder case. They say Murdaugh wanted sympathy to buy time to cover up his financial crimes that were about to be discovered. They also say it shows that when Murdaugh is about to face dire consequences, he chooses violence.

His defense team has strongly objected, saying the crimes are unrelated to murder. They say that evidence is intended to convince a jury that Murdaugh is so bad he must have killed his family, even if prosecutors haven’t proved that.

Newman’s decisions in favor of prosecutors have led to trials within a trial, with days spent on testimony related to the other allegations.

If Murdaugh is convicted of murder, that’s likely to be a huge part of any appeal.

### ALEX MURDAUGH’S HEIGHT

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 82 of 85

The defense has made Murdaugh's height an issue, suggesting he's too tall to have fired the shot that killed his son.

At one point, defense attorney Jim Griffin got out a tape measure during a courtroom break and stretched to log his client's height, thought to be about 6-foot-4 (1.93 meters).

A pathologist and a crime scene expert testified the bullet that killed Paul Murdaugh entered through his abdomen and traveled at a steep angle up through his head, and that the barrel of the shotgun was held away from his skin. The defense suggested a tall man would have to stand at an odd, off-balance angle with a shotgun with a strong kickback to fire that way.

Jurors also heard about a blue rain jacket with gunshot residue on the inside lining. Prosecutors suggested Alex Murdaugh used it to take away the murder weapons, which have not been found.

The jacket was recorded as a large on the crime lab's evidence log sheet, a lab tech said under questioning from Murdaugh's attorneys.

They later asked the housekeeper and family friend who washed the family's clothes what size Murdaugh wore.

Her answer: XXL.

EVIDENCE TEASED

A receipt with a \$1,021.10 item from Gucci circled. Hair in Maggie Murdaugh's hands. Footprints near the kennels that seemed to be from her flip flops.

Those are among the evidence that prosecutors have presented but not yet explained.

Out of nowhere Thursday, prosecutor John Meadors mentioned a cooler that a caretaker at the Murdaugh home mentioned was there before the killings and he hadn't seen since.

Meadors asked a state agent if someone could theoretically take wet clothing or guns away in a cooler and not get the inside of their vehicle dirty. No cooler has been placed in evidence and that was the only mention of it so far.

## Brazil's glitzy Carnival is back in full form after pandemic

By MAURICIO SAVARESE and DAVID BILLER Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazil's Carnival is back.

Glittery and outrageous costumes were prepared again. Samba songs were ringing out 'til dawn at Rio de Janeiro's sold-out parade grounds. Hundreds of raucous, roaming parties were flooding the streets. And working-class communities were buoyed, emotionally and economically, by the renewed revelry.

The COVID-19 pandemic last year prompted Rio to delay Carnival by two months, and watered down some of the fun, which was attended mostly by locals. Brazil's federal government expects 46 million people to join the festivities that officially began Friday and run through Feb. 22. That includes visitors to cities that make Carnival a world-famous bash, especially Rio but also Salvador, Recife and metropolitan Sao Paulo, which has recently emerged as a hotspot.

These cities have already begun letting loose.

Many Brazilian mayors, including Rio's, were marking the start of the celebrations on Friday by symbolically handing the keys to their cities to their Carnival Kings. And the first street parties of the Carnival weekend kicked off, with revelers' costumes ranging from Pope Francis to the devil himself.

"We've waited for so long, we deserve this catharsis," Thiago Varella, a 38-year-old engineer wearing a Hawaiian shirt drenched by the rain, said at a bash in Sao Paulo.

Most tourists were eager to go to the street parties, known as blocos. Rio has permitted more than 600 of them, and there are more unsanctioned blocos. The biggest blocos lure millions to the streets, including one bloco that plays Beatles songs with a Carnival rhythm for a crowd of hundreds of thousands. Such major blocos were called off last year.

"We want to see the partying, the colors, the people and ourselves enjoying Carnival," Chilean tourist Sofia Umaña, 28, said near Copacabana beach.

The premier spectacle is at the Sambadrome. Top samba schools, which are based in Rio's more working-class neighborhoods, spend millions on hour-long parades with elaborate floats and costumes, said Jorge



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 83 of 85

Perlingeiro, president of Rio's league of samba schools.

"What's good and beautiful costs a lot; Carnival materials are expensive," Perlingeiro said in an interview in his office beside the samba schools' warehouses. "It's such an important party ... It's a party of culture, happiness, entertainment, leisure and, primarily, its commercial and social side."

He added that this year's Carnival will smash records at the Sambadrome, where some 100,000 staff and spectators are expected each day in the sold-out venue, plus 18,000 paraders. While President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is not expected to be among them, his wife Rosângela da Silva has said she will be at the parade.

The first lady's attendance signals a shift from the administration of former President Jair Bolsonaro, who kept his distance from the nation's marquee cultural event.

Nearly 700,000 Brazilians died in the pandemic, the world's second-highest national total, after the U.S., and many blamed Bolsonaro's response, weakening the bid for reelection that he ultimately lost. Many at this year's street parties are celebrating not just the return of Carnival, but also Bolsonaro's defeat.

That was the case at the Heaven on Earth street party in Rio's bohemian Santa Teresa neighborhood on Feb. 11. Musicians pounded their drums as some revelers climbed fences to watch the scene from above the pulsing throng. Anilson Costa, a stilt-walker, already had a prime view from his elevated perch. Covered in flowers and brightly colored pom-poms, he poured a watering can labeled "LOVE" over people dancing below him.

"Seeing this crowd today is a dream, it's very magical," said Costa. "This is the post-pandemic Carnival, the Carnival of democracy, the Carnival of rebirth."

This year shares some of the spirit of the 1919 edition, which took place right after Spanish influenza killed tens of thousands of Brazilians, but was no longer a significant threat. WWI had just ended, too, and people were eager to unburden themselves, said David Butter, the author of a book about that year's celebration.

"There were so many people in Rio's city center for Carnival that the whole region ran out of water within hours," said Butter.

Carnival's cancelation in 2021 and its lower-key version last year pummeled an industry that is a nearly year-long source of jobs for carpenters, welders, sculptors, electricians, dancers, choreographers and everyone else involved in bringing parades to the public. As such, Carnival's full-fledged return is a shot in the arm for local economies.

"Yesterday, I went to sleep at 3 in the morning. Today, I'll leave earlier, because I've lost my voice," said seamstress Luciene Moreira, 60, as she sewed a yellow costume in samba school Salgueiro's warehouse. "You have to sleep later one day, earlier the next; otherwise, the body can't handle it. But it is very enjoyable!"

Rio expects some 5 billion reais (about \$1 billion) in revenue at its bars, hotels and restaurants, the president of the city's tourism agency, Ronnie Costa, told the AP. Rio's hotels are at 85% capacity, according to Brazil's hotel association, which expects last-minute deals to bring that figure near to its max. Small businesses are benefiting, too.

"Carnival is beautiful, people are buying, thank God all my employees are paid up to date," said Jorge Francisco, who sells sequined and sparkled Carnival accoutrements at his shop in downtown Rio. "For me, this is an immense joy, everyone smiling and wanting. That's how Carnival is."

## Today in History: FEB 19, Castro steps down after 49 years

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Feb. 19, the 50th day of 2023. There are 315 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 19, 2008, an ailing Fidel Castro resigned the Cuban presidency after nearly a half-century in power; his brother Raul was later named to succeed him.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 84 of 85

On this date:

In 1473, astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus was born in Torun, Poland.

In 1807, former Vice President Aaron Burr, accused of treason, was arrested in the Mississippi Territory, in present-day Alabama. (Burr was acquitted at trial.)

In 1878, Thomas Edison received a U.S. patent for "an improvement in phonograph or speaking machines."

In 1942, during World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which paved the way for the relocation and internment of people of Japanese ancestry, including U.S.-born citizens.

In 1945, Operation Detachment began during World War II as some 30,000 U.S. Marines began landing on Iwo Jima, where they commenced a successful month-long battle to seize control of the island from Japanese forces.

In 1959, an agreement was signed by Britain, Turkey and Greece granting Cyprus its independence.

In 1976, President Gerald R. Ford, calling the issuing of the internment order for people of Japanese ancestry in 1942 "a sad day in American history," signed a proclamation formally confirming its termination.

In 1985, the British soap opera "EastEnders" debuted on BBC Television.

In 1986, the U.S. Senate approved, 83-11, the Genocide Convention, an international treaty outlawing "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group," nearly 37 years after the pact was first submitted for ratification.

In 1997, Deng Xiaoping (dung shah-oh-ping), the last of China's major Communist revolutionaries, died at age 92.

In 2003, an Iranian military plane carrying 275 members of the elite Revolutionary Guards crashed in southeastern Iran, killing all on board.

In 2017, three former elite U.S. gymnasts, including 2000 Olympian Jamie Dantzscher, appeared on CBS' "60 Minutes" to say they were sexually abused by Dr. Larry Nassar, a volunteer team physician for USA Gymnastics. (Nassar would be sentenced to decades in prison after hundreds of girls and women said he sexually abused them under the guise of medical treatment.)

In 2019, President Donald Trump directed the Pentagon to develop plans for a new Space Force within the Air Force, accepting less than the full-fledged department he had wanted.

Ten years ago: The United Nations said the number of U.S. drone strikes in Afghanistan had risen sharply in 2012 compared with 2011. A bail hearing began in Pretoria, South Africa, for double-amputee Olympian Oscar Pistorius, charged with killing girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp on Valentine's Day; the defense said Pistorius had mistaken Steenkamp for an intruder while prosecutors said he had deliberately opened fire on Steenkamp as she cowered behind a locked bathroom door.

Five years ago: Syrian government forces began a bombing campaign in the northeastern suburbs of Damascus, the last major stronghold for rebels in the area of the capital; the campaign left hundreds dead. President Donald Trump endorsed Mitt Romney in Utah's Senate race, a sign that the two Republicans were burying the hatchet after a strained relationship. The U.S. women's Olympic hockey team reached the title game, shutting out Finland 5-0 in the semifinals.

One year ago: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, facing a sharp spike in violence in and around territory held by Russia-backed rebels and increasingly dire warnings that Russia plans to invade, called for Russian President Vladimir Putin to meet him and seek a resolution to the crisis. Vice President Kamala Harris says the world had arrived at "a decisive moment in history" and that the United States was committed to Ukraine's sovereignty against the threat of what the West called an imminent threat of invasion by Russia. (Russia would invade Ukraine on Feb. 24.) China's Sui Wenjing and Han Cong captured the Olympic gold medal that eluded them by a razor-thin margin four years earlier, edging Russian rivals Evgenia Tarasova and Vladimir Morozov to win the pairs figure skating competition at the Beijing Games.

Today's birthdays: Singer Smokey Robinson is 83. Singer and actor Carlin Glynn is 83. Former Sony Corp. Chairman Howard Stringer is 81. Singer Lou Christie is 80. Rock musician Tony Iommi (Black Sabbath, Heaven and Hell) is 75. Actor Stephen Nichols is 72. Author Amy Tan is 71. Actor Jeff Daniels is 68. Rock singer-musician Dave Wakeling is 67. Talk show host Lorianne Crook is 66. Actor Ray Winstone is 66. Actor

# Groton Daily Independent

**Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 226 ~ 85 of 85**

Leslie David Baker is 65. NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell is 64. Britain's Prince Andrew is 63. Tennis Hall of Famer Hana Mandlikova is 61. Singer Seal is 60. Actor Jessica Tuck is 60. Rock musician Jon Fishman (Phish) is 58. Actor Justine Bateman is 57. Actor Benicio Del Toro is 56. Actor Bellamy Young is 53. Rock musician Daniel Adair is 48. Pop singer-actor Haylie Duff is 38. Actor Arielle Kebbel is 38. Christian rock musician Seth Morrison (Skillet) is 35. Actor Luke Pasqualino is 33. Actor Victoria Justice is 30. Actor David Mazouz (TV: "Gotham") is 22. Actor Millie Bobby Brown is 19.