

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Groton Community Calendar

### Friday, April 14

Senior Menu: Potato soup, ham salad sandwich, tomato spoon salad, carrot bars  
School Breakfast: Eggs and sausage.  
School Lunch: Pizza crunchers, peas.  
All School Play, 7 p.m.  
Indoor track meet at Barnett Center, 10 a.m.

### Saturday, April 15

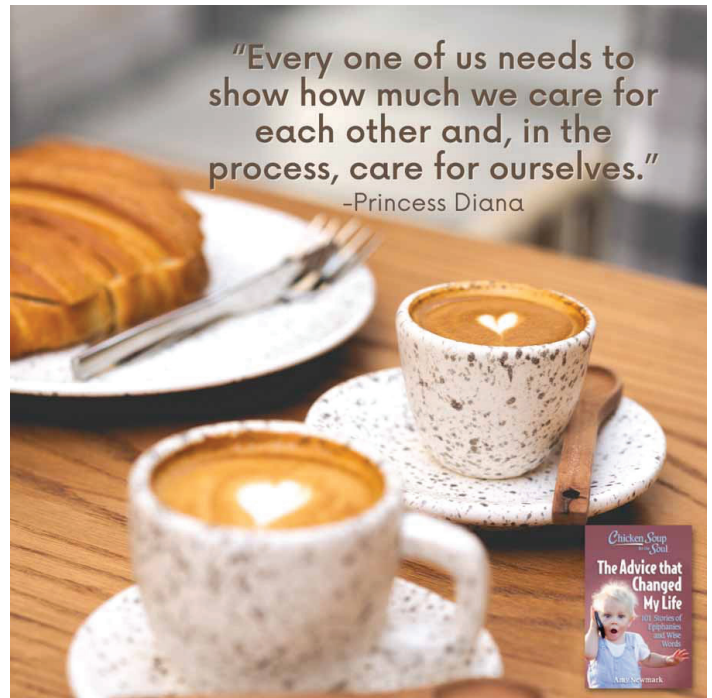
Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.  
Emmanuel Lutheran worship at Rosewood Court, 10 a.m.  
All School Play, 4 p.m.

### Sunday, April 16

Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Worship Service at 10:30 a.m.  
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m., SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45

**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.**



a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 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 at St. John's, 9 a.m., and Zion, 11 a.m.; Sunday school, 9:45 a.m.

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

State FFA Convention at SDSU, Brookings

### Monday, April 17

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

School Breakfast: Waffles

School Lunch: Chicken nuggets, tater tots.

Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6 p.m.

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

State FFA Convention at SDSU, Brookings

**OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton**

## The Bulletin by Newsweek

JANUARY 24, 2023

### World in Brief

his actions were "innocent" and had been misinterpreted. The recent controversy "hurt" the sentiments of his followers.

- A \$6 billion settlement that will erase the student debt of thousands of people who claim they were misled by their colleges will move forward after the Supreme Court refused to block it.
- A judge rejected a request to delay Donald Trump's trial over a columnist's claims that the former president raped her in the 1990s but granted his attorney's request to gather more evidence about who is financing the accuser's lawyers.
- Cyclone Ilsa hit Western Australia as a category 5 storm, with wind speeds that broke an earlier record set more than 10 years ago. A red alert remains in place, although the storm has weakened.
- North Korea said it tested a new solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile, the most "powerful" missile to date, warning that it would make the country's rival "experience a clearer security crisis."
- In the ongoing war in Ukraine, beaches in Crimea are reportedly closed to swimmers throughout the Black Sea peninsula as Russian forces dig trenches and prepare new defensive positions ahead of an expected Ukrainian counteroffensive this spring.

- Republican Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene defended Pentagon leak suspect Jack Teixeira, claiming he is an "enemy of the Biden regime" due to his being "white, male, Christian [sic], and antiwar." Read more about the Pentagon leak below.

- Joe Biden will conclude his trip to Ireland with a visit to his ancestral home in Ballina, County Mayo, in what the town's mayor Mark Duffy has called a "homecoming event."

- Penpa Tsering, the head of the Tibetan government-in-exile, defended spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, saying

## Groton City Sump Pump Alert



**Sump pumps must be discharged outside (not in the sanitary sewer).**



**Thanks for your immediate compliance!**

**Failure to comply will result in fines.  
Groton City Council**



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**The Olive Grove Golf Course quickly went under water this week as the snow melt increased with the rising temperature. Even with the warm temperature, this area of the state has been about 20 degrees cooler than the rest of the state. (Photo by Paul Kosel)**





**Turkey Vultures have been roosting in the trees in Groton.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*) is the most widespread of the New World vultures. One of three species in the genus *Cathartes* of the family Cathartidae, the turkey vulture ranges from southern Canada to the southernmost tip of South America. It inhabits a variety of open and semi-open areas, including subtropical forests, shrublands, pastures, and deserts.

Like all New World vultures, it is not closely related to the Old World vultures of Europe, Africa, and Asia. The two groups strongly resemble each other because of convergent evolution; natural selection often leads to similar body plans in animals that adapt independently to similar conditions.

The turkey vulture is a scavenger and feeds almost exclusively on carrion. It finds its food using its keen eyes and sense of smell, flying low enough to detect the gasses produced by the beginnings of the process of decay in dead animals. In flight, it uses thermals to move through the air, flapping its wings infrequently. It roosts in large community groups. Lacking a syrinx—the vocal organ of birds—its only vocalizations are grunts or low hisses. It nests in caves, hollow trees, or thickets. Each year it generally raises two chicks, which it feeds by regurgitation. It has very few natural predators. In the United States, the vulture receives legal protection under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.

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## Groton Chamber April Meeting

Groton Chamber of Commerce April 12, 2023 (postponed from April 5) 12pm City Hall

- Individuals present: Carol Kutter, April Abeln, Doug Heinrich, Ashley Bentz, Kellie Locke, Katelyn Nehlich, Karyn Babcock.
- Minutes from the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Heinrich and seconded by Locke. All members voted aye.
- Treasurer's report was given. Dacotah Bank checking account balance is \$43,140.94. \$1,764.40 is currently in the Chamber Bucks account. Report was approved by Abeln and seconded by Locke. All members voted aye.
- Correspondence was received from Bio Girls thanking the Chamber for their donation.
- Abeln informed the board that rack cards are complete and can be dropped off in Watertown on May 10, 2023. Abeln and Locke will deliver on that day.
- Highway 12 advertising signage from giveaway has been installed and looks great. Expense for signage was higher than last year.
- Easter Egg Hunt was a great event but was held at the Elementary School this year due to the Winter weather.
- Abeln informed the board that the advertisement for the SD Magazine is due by April 28, 2023.
- 2023 Groton Chamber Scholarships were awarded to Ethan Clark and Jacob Lewandowski. Photo Day is May 11, 2023, at 1:30pm at Groton Area High School.
- Locke informed the board of the 2023 Groton Chamber shirt idea and will post after pricing has been confirmed. Motion by Abeln and seconded by Bentz to have funds raised go towards benches on Main Street. All members voted aye. Shirt deadline is July 1, 2023.
- Motion by Abeln seconded by Heinrich to spend \$100 on a boosted Facebook post on June 1 for 2023 Groton Chamber shirt sales. All members voted aye.
- Motion by Heinrich and seconded by Nehlich to waive Kay's Computing Chamber dues in lieu of web design services. All members voted aye.
- Motion by Abeln and seconded by Babcock to apply for the POET Community Impact Grant for speakers in the City Park. All members voted aye.
- Motion by Babcock and seconded by Locke to donate \$400 to the Groton Lions Club for the Groton Transit Fundraiser. All members voted aye.
- Motion by Abeln and seconded by Bentz to donate \$400 to the Groton Lions Club for Summerfest July 2023. All members voted aye.
- Motion by Babcock and seconded by Heinrich to donate \$100 to The Pantry for their 1- year Anniversary celebration. All members voted aye.
- New business welcome at Smith's Autobody is April 13, 2023, at 12 noon.
- Next Meeting is May 3rd at City Hall @ noon BYOL
- **Upcoming events**
  - o 04/22/2023 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am
  - o 04/22/2023 GHS Prom
  - o 04/23/2023 Princess Prom at GHS Arena 4:30-8pm
  - o 04/26/2023 Baseball, Softball, T-ball Parent Meeting at the Legion 7:30pm
  - o 04/29/2023 Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip 9am-6pm
  - o 04/30/2023 Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip 12-4pm
  - o 04/30/2023 The Pantry 1 Year Anniversary Lunch at the Community Center 10:30am- 1:00pm
  - o 05/06/2023 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
  - o 05/15-16/2023 Baseball, Softball, T-ball Uniform Pickup at City Hall 1-6pm
  - o 05/29/2023 Memorial Day Services Groton Union Cemetery with lunch at Legion 12pm o 06/01/2023 JVT Lunch & Annual Meeting at the GHS Arena at 11:30am
  - o 06/15/2023 Transit Fundraiser at the Community Center 4-7pm
  - o 06/16/2023 SDSU Alumni & Friends Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 12pm





## Life Defense Fund

### South Dakotans: Be Informed



Learn about the proposed extreme abortion amendment to the South Dakota State Constitution that would **legalize abortion to the point of birth.**

Pro-abortion groups are currently circulating petitions to put this amendment up for a vote and into our Constitution.

**Learn more and have your questions answered at this free event, which includes a soup supper and dessert.**



**Jon Hansen**

*Co-Chair, Life Defense Fund*

**Sunday, April 16th**

**4:30 p.m.**

**St. John's Lutheran Church**

**308 2nd St. - Groton, SD**

A free will offering will be taken.

**[www.lifedefensefund.com](http://www.lifedefensefund.com)**

## Gov. Noem to Sign Executive Order at NRA Convention

INDIANAPOLIS, IN – Governor Kristi Noem will deliver remarks at the National Rifle Association’s Institute for Legislative Action Leadership Forum. Her remarks will take place at 2:15 pm CT on Friday, April 14, 2023.

During her remarks, Governor Noem will sign an executive order to further protect the 2nd Amendment rights of South Dakotans.

## Commissioner Scott Bollinger Announces Retirement Governor Noem Merges Bureaus of Administration and Human Resources

PIERRE, S.D. – Scott Bollinger, Commissioner of the Bureau of Administration (BOA), announced that he will be retiring in June of 2023. Governor Noem thanked Commissioner Bollinger for his years of service to the state and announced plans to merge the Bureau of Administration and the Bureau of Human Resources. Governor Noem also appointed Chas Olson as Interim Director of the South Dakota Housing Development Authority.

“Scott’s dedication to his work and to the people of South Dakota has left an impact on so many lives,” said Governor Noem. “He is an example of the wonderful opportunities that come from a career in state government. I thank Scott for his years of public service.”

With Bollinger’s retirement, Governor Noem announced the merger of the Bureaus of Human Resources and Administration. The combined bureaus will provide centralized services to state government agencies including fleet and travel, buildings and grounds, human resources, risk management, and others. Current BHR Commissioner Darin Seeley will lead the combined organization.

“This merger will streamline government processes for state employees and reduce bureaucratic overhead, making us more responsible with taxpayer dollars,” continued Governor Noem.

Commissioner Bollinger has served in state government for 40 years across a variety of positions in multiple agencies including the Department of Corrections and the Bureau of Finance and Management.

“I would like to thank Governor Noem for the opportunity to serve in her administration,” said Commissioner Bollinger. “I will miss working with BOA staff and other agency personnel. I wish them all the best in their futures.”

Scott looks forward to spending more time with his kids and six grandchildren. He also hopes to attend a Green Bay Packers football game at Lambeau Field.

Chas Olson has served as Director of Rental Housing at SDHDA since January 2021. Prior to that, he was a Housing Development Officer for SDHDA from 2014 to 2021. Chas holds an Associate’s in Pre-Economics from South Dakota State University, a Bachelor’s in Business Administration from the University of South Dakota (USD), and a certificate for the State Government Leadership Excellence program, which is a graduate program at USD.



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### Telecom group intervenes as companies plan cell service for low-income customers

**BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - APRIL 13, 2023 4:40 PM**

Two companies are seeking permission from state regulators to provide discounted mobile phone service to eligible people across South Dakota under a federal program, but those plans are facing scrutiny from some existing telecommunications organizations in the state.

On Thursday, the Public Utilities Commission authorized the South Dakota Telecommunications Association to intervene in a matter involving Dish Wireless, doing business as Gen Mobile, and GO MD USA Mobile. The two companies want to offer mobile phone service to low-income residents in the state, including on tribal lands.

The federal program, known as Lifeline, subsidizes discounted phone or internet services for low-income people. The two companies would be the first in the state to use those subsidies for mobile phone plans.

Eighteen telecommunications organizations represented by the telecommunications association already offer the Lifeline discount for landline phones and internet service in rural areas. Because a customer can only use the Lifeline discount with one provider at a time, some customers could potentially have to choose between existing services and the new discounted mobile service.

Kara Semmler, the telecommunication association's executive director, said her members have concerns about the quality of services customers might receive from the mobile providers.

"We want to ensure they are going to be able to actually provide the services they are advertising," Semmler told South Dakota Searchlight.

To be eligible for the discount program, customers must meet income requirements or participate in federal assistance programs such as Medicaid or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Only one mobile phone per household would be eligible.

GO MD USA Mobile filed a petition with state regulators on March 18. Dish Wireless filed a petition on March 29. The companies are petitioning regulators to be designated as Eligible Telecommunications Carriers in the state, which would allow them to provide the Lifeline service to qualifying consumers. The companies use the AT&T and T-Mobile wireless networks.

The companies would offer 1,000 minutes of talk, 1,000 texts and 4.5 gigabytes of data at a \$9.25 per month federally subsidized discount, and unlimited talk, text and 11 gigabytes of data at a \$34.25 discount for qualifying individuals living on reservations.

As an intervenor, the telecommunications association is now entitled to appear at hearings, present evidence to state regulators, submit briefs, make and argue motions and objections, and more.

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



## **Paid family leave expansion for state employees clears first administrative hurdle**

**BY: JOHN HULT - APRIL 13, 2023 3:10 PM**

A Thursday vote from South Dakota's Civil Service Commission sent the question of expanded paid family leave for state employees to lawmakers.

The commission voted unanimously to move from eight weeks of paid leave at 60% pay for new parents to 12 weeks of leave at 100% pay. The leave can be used for "bonding following the birth of a child of the employee or placement of a child for adoption," according to the proposed rule.

That puts the ball in the court of the Legislature's Rules Review Committee, which meets next in May. If lawmakers sign off, state employees would be eligible for the benefit 20 days after the committee delivers confirmation of the vote to the Secretary of State's Office.

The paid leave rule change represents part of a wider policy package proposed by Gov. Kristi Noem prior to the recently finished 2023 legislative session. Noem's plan would have extended family leave benefits to those caring for sick loved ones or for children during a spouse's military deployment, and would have created an insurance pool for the state and private businesses to lower the cost of the benefit and encourage the private sector to offer paid family leave.

Lawmakers balked at the creation of a new, public-private partnership insurance program, but some representatives told Noem's policy staff that the state could expand leave for employees without legislation.

On Tuesday, the Civil Service Commission heard from state Bureau of Human Resources attorney Mallori Barnett that the limited rule change had the support of lawmakers, and that it would make the state more competitive in a tight labor market.

Paid family leave is also sound public policy, Barnett said.

"Providing paid family leave promotes strong families and allows employees to spend quality bonding time with their new child, which research has shown has tremendous benefits for the employee, the child and the employer," Barnett said.

Commissioner Kim Jensen asked if the benefit would help those working to care for family members. Barnett said it would not, but commissioners also noted that state employees are allowed to take as much of their accrued vacation and sick leave as they'd like to care for family. All employees are permitted to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave by the federal Family Medical Leave Act.

*John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux falls Argus Leader.*

## **U.S. Justice Department to ask Supreme Court to reject limits on access to abortion pill**

**BY: JANE NORMAN AND JENNIFER SHUTT - APRIL 13, 2023 9:12 AM**

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Justice Department announced Thursday it will ask the Supreme Court on an emergency basis to keep access to the abortion medication mifepristone exactly as it is now, amid the appeals process in a much-watched case out of Texas.

Attorney General Merrick Garland said in a statement the department "strongly disagrees" with a decision from the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans that only partly granted the federal government's request to place on hold the ruling from a district court judge.

The 5th Circuit's partial stay, issued late Wednesday night, would keep the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's 2000 approval of mifepristone in place, reversing the district court while the case is on appeal.

The three-judge panel, however, said it would let stand the part of the ruling that reverts prescribing and use of mifepristone to pre-2016 instructions.

"The Justice Department strongly disagrees with the Fifth Circuit's decision in Alliance for Hippocratic

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Medicine v. FDA to deny in part our request for a stay pending appeal," Garland said.

"We will be seeking emergency relief from the Supreme Court to defend the FDA's scientific judgment and protect Americans' access to safe and effective reproductive care," Garland added.

## Circuit court ruling

The appeals court in New Orleans partly blocked the judge's order that would have overturned federal approval of the abortion pill — which means the pill remains available across the nation for now.

But the 5th Circuit also let part of the Texas judge's order stand. The effect of the appeals court decision appears to be that while the case is on appeal, the abortion medication mifepristone is approved for use in pregnancies up to seven weeks, not 10 weeks, and it can't be dispensed through the mail.

The Department of Justice appeal to the Supreme Court would seek to continue to allow mail delivery and the 10-week limit for pregnancies while the lawsuit goes on.

U.S. District Court Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk, in the Northern District of Texas, had ruled Friday, April 7, to overturn the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's 2000 approval of the abortion drug mifepristone.

Kacsmaryk put a seven-day delay in his ruling and the U.S. Justice Department filed an appeal to the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, asking the court to put the Texas ruling on hold. The manufacturer, Danco Laboratories, also appealed.

In the 42-page ruling in the 5th Circuit, a panel of three judges wrote, "At this preliminary stage, and based on our necessarily abbreviated review, it appears that the statute of limitations bars plaintiffs' challenges to the Food and Drug Administration's approval of mifepristone in 2000." They granted a stay, or pause, of that part of the Texas decision.

But they said the arguments of anti-abortion groups are more likely to succeed in connection with the actions taken by the FDA in 2016 and later to make the abortion pill more widely available, including through the mail, and allow it to be used beyond seven weeks of pregnancy.

The 2016 changes by the FDA increased maximum gestational age to 70 days when the pill could be used; reduced required in-person office visits to one; allowed non-doctors to prescribe and administer mifepristone; and eliminated reporting of non-fatal adverse events.

In 2021, the FDA announced "enforcement discretion" to allow mifepristone to be dispensed through the mail during the COVID-19 pandemic. Earlier this year the FDA permanently removed the in-person dispensing requirement.

## Appeals to continue

The lawsuit was brought by the anti-abortion Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine and others against the FDA.

Kirsten Moore, director of the Expanding Medication Abortion Access Project, or the EMAA Project, said in a statement the appeals court ruling "shows exactly why courts have no place interfering in health care."

"This middle of the night ruling, while keeping mifepristone on the market, rolls back years of medical progress by reinstating restrictions that were lifted in 2016 and forcing people to go back to picking up their medications in person, essentially eliminating telehealth access and forcing people to travel, in some cases hundreds of miles, just to receive care," Moore said.

The three-judge appeals court panel that issued Wednesday night's order was made up of Judge Catharina Haynes, appointed by former President George W. Bush; Judge Kurt D. Engelhardt, appointed by former President Donald Trump; and Judge Andrew W. Oldham, also appointed by Trump.

Haynes said in a footnote that she concurred in part, including on the grant of an expedited appeal and the denial of the motion to dismiss the case. She said she would have granted a stay of the Texas order "for a brief period of time" and defer the question until oral arguments.

It was not immediately clear how the 5th Circuit ruling would affect — or not affect — a separate ruling from U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Washington Judge Thomas Rice.

Rice on Friday, just minutes after the Texas order, barred the FDA from changing "the status quo and rights as it relates to the availability of Mifepristone" in the 17 states and District of Columbia that filed a lawsuit about the pharmaceutical in his court.

The U.S. Justice Department has asked Rice to clarify his ruling, saying it "appears to be in significant

tension" with the Texas opinion.

## Doctors 'face a harm,' appeals court says

The 5th Circuit rejected arguments from the federal government that the anti-abortion medical organizations that brought the lawsuit didn't have standing to sue, writing that "not only have these doctors suffered injuries in the past, but it's also inevitable that at least one doctor in one of these associations will face a harm in the future."

The four medical organizations and four doctors argued they were negatively impacted by having to treat patients in emergency departments or elsewhere experiencing complications from medication abortion, given the doctors' opposition to elective pregnancy termination.

The appeals panel, however, emphasized the "narrowness" of that decision.

"We do not hold that doctors necessarily have standing to raise their patients' claims," they wrote. "We do not hold that doctors have constitutional standing whenever they're called upon to do their jobs. And we do not hold that doctors have standing to challenge FDA's actions whenever the doctor sees a patient experiencing complications from an FDA-approved drug."

Lawmakers, attorneys general and pharmaceutical companies have raised concerns the Texas judge's ruling could set a problematic precedent where any federal judge might be able to overturn the FDA's approval of a medication.

The panel did seem to question the prescribing and use of mifepristone, writing it "is an exceedingly unusual regime."

"In fact, as far as the record before us reveals, FDA has not structured the distribution of any comparable drug in this way," they wrote.

On timing of the lawsuit, the appeals panel mostly rejected Kacsmark's ruling that the FDA changing prescribing and administration of mifepristone in 2016 and 2021 reopened the 2000 approval to legal challenges.

Everyone in the case, they wrote, acknowledged the "six-year limitations period applies to all of this case's challenged actions."

"Although a close call, we are unsure at this preliminary juncture and after truncated review that FDA reopened the 2000 Approval in its 2016 Major REMS Changes and its 2021 Petition Denial," they wrote.

The FDA applies Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies, or REMS, to 61 pharmaceuticals that have "serious safety concerns to help ensure the benefits of the medication outweigh its risks."

The judges later added the changes didn't appear to rise to the level of FDA substantively reconsidering the original approval, but then said that the anti-abortion groups "might very well prevail on that claim later in this litigation."

## FDA and data

The appeals court wrote the federal government at this stage failed "to show that FDA's actions were not arbitrary and capricious."

The judges wrote the FDA failed to "examine the relevant data" when it changed how mifepristone is prescribed and used in 2016.

"That's because FDA eliminated REMS safeguards based on studies that included those very safeguards," they wrote.

"True, FDA studied the safety consequences of eliminating one or two of the 2000 Approval's REMS in isolation," they wrote. "But it relied on zero studies that evaluated the safety-and-effectiveness consequences of the 2016 Major REMS Changes as a whole."

The appeals court noted that in 2016 the FDA eliminated a requirement that non-fatal adverse events must be reported to the agency and then in 2021 the FDA "declared the absence of non-fatal adverse-event reports means mifepristone is 'safe.'"

The judges added the "ostrich's-head-in-the-sand approach is deeply troubling" and suggested the "FDA's actions are well 'outside the zone of reasonableness.'"

Question of 'irreparable harm'



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In deciding to put part of the Texas district court's ruling on hold while leaving the other part to take effect, the appeals court wrote neither the federal government nor the manufacturer of mifepristone met a standard called irreparable harm for the entire ruling.

"FDA's assertion that the district court's injunction will harm pregnant women or other members of the public does not speak to the irreparable injury factor (although it may speak to other factors), because those persons are not stay applicants in this case," they wrote.

"Since FDA does not articulate any irreparable harm that FDA will suffer absent a stay, it makes no showing on this 'critical' prong," they added.

Danco, which solely manufactures mifepristone, did note that it would have to shut down if the 2000 approval was overturned. But the appeals court wrote, "irreparable injury alone does not entitle Danco to a stay."

"And even if it did, neither FDA nor Danco articulates why this, or any other, injury would require a stay of all of the district court's order, rather than only part," they wrote.

## Reactions pour in

Anti-abortion organizations and abortion rights supporters quickly reacted to the 5th Circuit's decision to keep the 2000 approval of mifepristone in place, while pushing use of the medication back to pre-2016 prescribing and administration guidelines.

Alliance Defending Freedom CEO and President Kristen Waggoner wrote Thursday morning on Twitter the 5th Circuit's "decision is a step forward for the rule of law." The legal organization argued the case on behalf of the anti-abortion groups.

"Critical safeguards removed by the @US\_FDA will be restored and abortion by mail will end," she wrote.

"The FDA put politics over science when it unlawfully approved dangerous chemical abortion drugs. It has evaded legal responsibility for years and has jeopardized the health of women and girls," Waggoner added. "While there is still work to do to hold the FDA accountable for its lawlessness, girls and women are safer today."

Morgan Hopkins, president of All Above All, an abortion rights organization, said in a statement the 5th Circuit's "decision to roll back recent measures that have ensured greater access to medication abortion care undermines the FDA's authority and science, all while real people pay the price."

"It proves just how entrenched anti-abortion extremism is in our judicial system and shows just how far they will go to take away our rights and freedom," Hopkins added.

Democratic Rep. Hillary Scholten of Michigan tweeted that "women shouldn't have to live in a world where we have rights one day and not the next."

"We must create a stable healthcare system where women have consistent and equal access to the healthcare they need," Scholten added.

New Hampshire Democratic Sen. Jeanne Shaheen tweeted that mifepristone is safe and effective, though she didn't specifically mention the appeals court decision.

"The safety of women is on the line as GOP lawmakers & unelected jurists enact & uphold anti-woman laws rooted in political rhetoric, not science," Shaheen wrote. "Mifepristone has been safely prescribed by health care providers for decades."

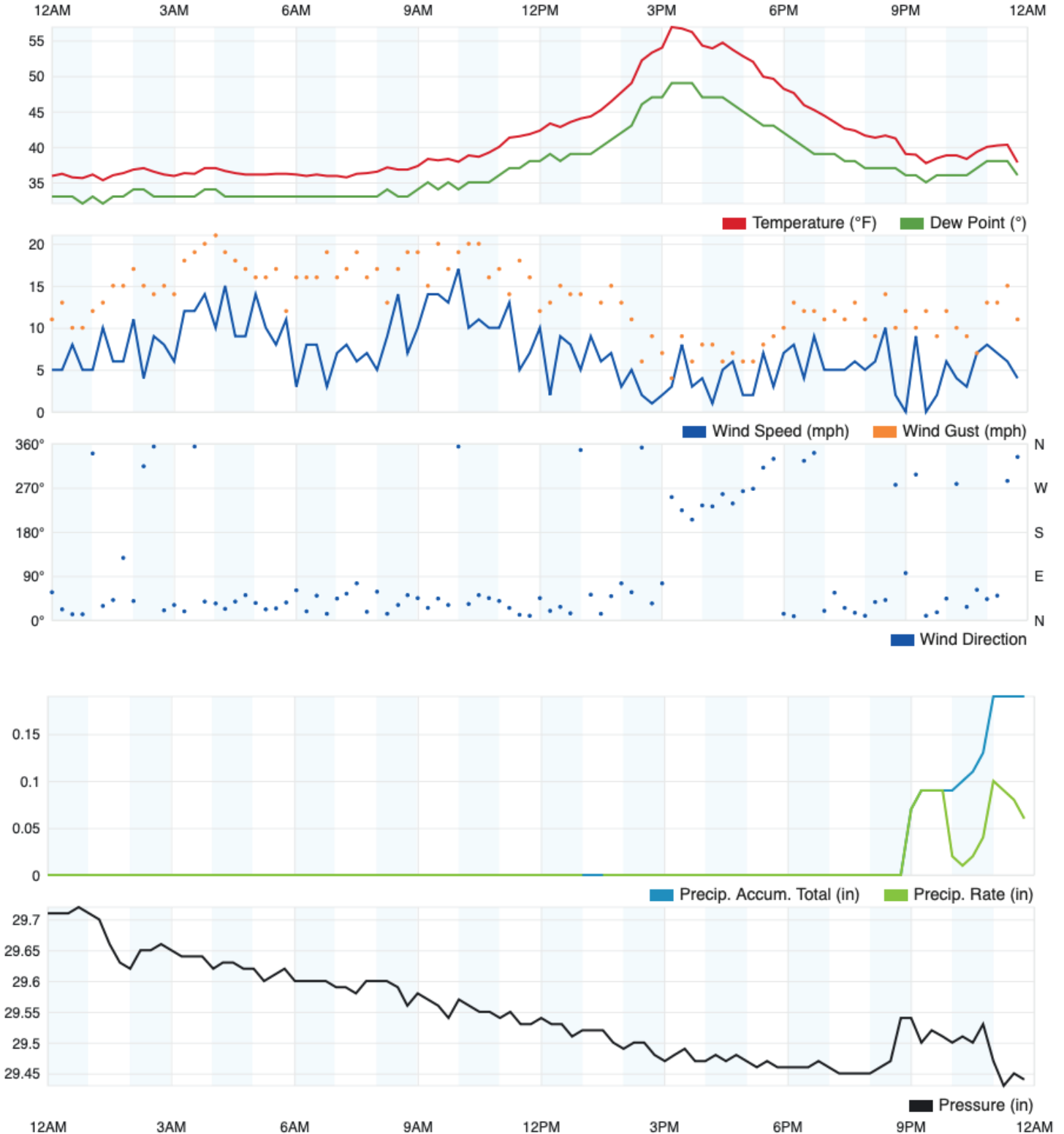
*As the Washington Bureau Chief of States Newsroom, Jane directs national coverage, managing staff and freelance reporters in the nation's capital and assigning and editing state-specific daily and enterprise stories. Jane is a veteran of more than three decades in journalism.*

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

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs








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Friday	Friday Night	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
60% → 20%	50%	20%				
Rain Likely then Slight Chance T-storms	Chance Rain/Snow	Breezy. Cloudy then Slight Chance Rain	Mostly Cloudy and Blustery	Mostly Sunny and Breezy	Clear and Blustery then Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 43 °F	Low: 33 °F	High: 38 °F	Low: 25 °F	High: 45 °F	Low: 20 °F	High: 52 °F

## Cool This Weekend - Turning Milder

Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
				
Shows & Rumbles of Thunder Breezy	Light Rain & Light Snow Breezy			
HI: 43 to 50	HI: 36 to 49	HI: 42 to 57	HI: 54 to 68	HI: 60 to 75
	LO: 32 to 35	LO: 26 to 30	LO: 20 to 30	LO: 32 to 43

Updated: 4/14/2023 3:56 AM Central  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
FARGO, SD

**'Warmer' range for central SD & 'Colder' range for far northeast South Dakota and western Minnesota**

Light precipitation will move across the area today and Saturday with cool temperatures and a north breeze. Moderation starts Sunday and persist into mid week.



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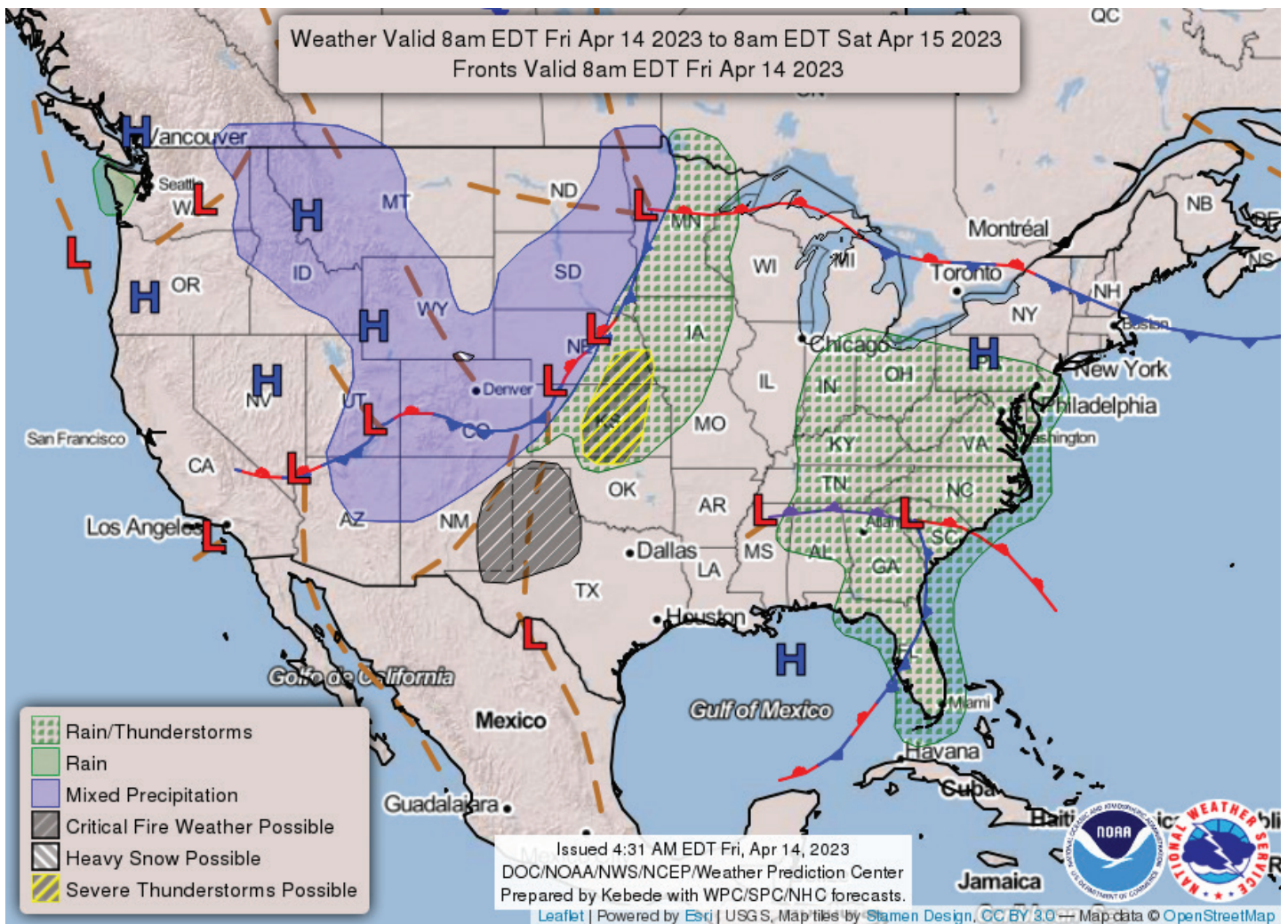
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 57 °F at 3:21 PM**  
**Low Temp: 35 °F at 1:10 AM**  
**Wind: 23 mph at 8:45 AM**  
**Precip: : 0.19 + .08 after midnight**

Day length: 13 hours, 31 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 89 in 1908  
Record Low: 9 in 1928  
Average High: 57  
Average Low: 31  
Average Precip in April.: 0.67  
Precip to date in April.: 0.75  
Average Precip to date: 2.73  
Precip Year to Date: 4.68  
Sunset Tonight: 8:18:21 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:45:12 AM



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## Today in Weather History

April 14, 1991: Thawing ice on top of a television tower fell onto buildings below in Garden City, Clark County. The ice had accrued during a freezing rain event on the 11th and 12th. No one was injured, but damage estimates ranged from \$35,000-\$40,000.

April 14, 2005: A dust devil developed on the west side of Bison as a dry cold front passed through the area. As it moved east across town, it blew out windows on several automobiles, damaged a 160 square foot section of roof from a house, and tore shingles off several buildings. The dust devil also pulled a flagpole out of the ground. No one was injured. The dust devil was approximately 20 feet wide, and the path length was one and a half miles.

1873 - A famous Easter blizzard raged across Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota. Gale force winds blew the wet snow into massive drifts, however there were few deaths due to the sparse population and due to the gradual increase of the storm. (David Ludlum)

1886: The deadliest tornado in Minnesota history razed parts of St. Cloud and Sauk Rapids, leaving 72 dead and 213 injured. 11 members of a wedding party were killed including the bride and groom. The bottom of the Mississippi River was seen during the tornado's crossing.

1912: On her maiden voyage, the RMS Titanic rammed into an iceberg just before midnight. The "unsinkable ship" sank two hours and forty minutes later into the icy water of the Atlantic Ocean near Newfoundland, Canada. Tragically, 1,517 passengers including the crew were lost. A nearby ship, the Carpathia, rushed to the Titanic and was able to save 706 people.

1922: The Mississippi River reached a record height of 21.3 feet at New Orleans, Louisiana, and the river was still rising, with the crest still a week away. Understandably, the City of New Orleans was nervous as reports of levees failing upriver reached the city. A crevasse below New Orleans would relieve the pressure on the town's strained levees on the 27th, spared the city from disaster.

1935: Black Sunday refers to a particularly severe dust storm that occurred on April 14, 1935, as part of the Dust Bowl. During the afternoon, the residents of the Plains States were forced to take cover as a dust storm, or "black blizzard," blew through the region. The storm hit the Oklahoma Panhandle and Northwestern Oklahoma first and moved south for the remainder of the day. It hit Beaver around 4:00 p.m., Boise City around 5:15 p.m., and Amarillo, Texas, at 7:20 p.m. The conditions were the most severe in the Oklahoma and Texas panhandles, but the storm's effects were felt in other surrounding areas.

1987 - A storm system moving slowly northeastward across the Middle Mississippi Valley produced severe thunderstorms which spawned three tornadoes around Ottumwa IA, and produced up to four inches of rain in southeastern Nebraska, flooding rivers and streams. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A weather disturbance off the southern coast of California brought parts of southern California their first rain in six weeks. Rain-slickened roads resulted in numerous accidents in southern California, including a ten car pile-up at Riverside. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Late afternoon thunderstorms in northern Florida soaked the town of Golden Gate with 4.37 inches of rain in about two hours, resulting in local flooding. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced severe weather in southeastern Texas during the mid morning hours. Thunderstorms produced dime size hail at Galveston, and wind gusts to 59 mph at Port Arthur. Afternoon thunderstorms over southeast Louisiana spawned tornadoes south of Bogalusa and at Rio. (Storm Data)

1999: In Sydney, Australia, a hailstorm causes \$1.6 billion in damage, making it the costliest hailstorm to strike a populated city in the country. The hail damaged some 22,000 homes and more than 60,000 vehicles. Also, aircraft damage at Sydney Airport was extensive.



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Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### WHAT A SURPRISE!

Two men had not seen each other for quite some time and were renewing their friendship.

"How's your wife, Fred?" asked Al.

"Haven't you heard? She's in heaven," said Fred.

"Oh, I'm sorry," replied Al. Catching himself, he apologized and said, "I mean, I'm glad."

But it still did not sound right, so he said, "What I really mean is that I'm surprised."

Seeing the confusion on Fred's face, Al tried once again. "What I'm trying to say is that I'm sure you are relieved."

Sometimes, no matter how hard we try, our words just do not come out right. We get them twisted or turned in the wrong direction. What we want to say is not what we actually say. Our words become quite discouraging or devastating to the person we are talking to.

The wise writer of Proverbs said, "We gather our thoughts, but the Lord gives us the right answer." When others come to us for help or counsel, we must always be thoughtful and ask the Lord to guide us as we talk. When we speak without thinking or give advice without carefully considering all of the possibilities or alternatives, we may do more harm than good. We must watch our words, put a "guard" on our lips, and speak after thinking.

Prayer: Help us Father, to be careful in all that we say. May our words encourage and enlighten. May we speak only after thinking, wanting to be helpful. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: We gather our thoughts, but the Lord gives us the right answer. Proverbs 16:1



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



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## 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 Dueling Duo Baseball/Softball Fundraiser at the Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm
- 04/06/2023 Groton Career Development Event
- 04/08/2023 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)
- 04/22/2023 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 04/23/2023 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)
- 05/06/2023 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/29/2023 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
- 06/16/2023 SDSU Alumni and Friends Golf Tournament
- 06/17/2023 Groton Triathlon
- 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

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:  
04.11.23

31 35 53 54 55 24

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$476,000,000**

NEXT 16 Hrs 1 Mins 40  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:  
04.12.23

18 36 45 48 51 5

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$2,250,000**

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 1  
DRAW: Mins 39 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:  
04.13.23

4 11 19 28 37 12

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$7,000/week**

NEXT 15 Hrs 31 Mins 39  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:  
04.12.23

5 10 22 32 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$25,000**

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 1  
DRAW: Mins 40 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:  
04.12.23

16 19 32 33 41 19

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$10,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 40  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:  
04.12.23

9 36 41 44 59 4

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$219,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 40  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)



## News from the Associated Press

### DeSantis signs Florida GOP's 6-week abortion ban into law

By ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis signed into law a bill approved by the Republican-dominated Florida Legislature to ban abortions after six weeks of pregnancy.

The governor's office said in a statement late Thursday that he had signed the legislation. The ban gives DeSantis a key political victory among Republican primary voters as he prepares to launch an expected presidential candidacy built on his national brand as a conservative standard bearer.

The six-week ban will take effect only if the state's current 15-week ban is upheld in an ongoing legal challenge that is before the state Supreme Court, which is controlled by conservatives.

The policy would have wider implications for abortion access throughout the South in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision last year overturning *Roe v. Wade* and leaving decisions about abortion access to states. Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi have banned abortion at all stages of pregnancy, while Georgia forbids the procedure after cardiac activity can be detected, which is around six weeks.

"We have the opportunity to lead the national debate about the importance of protecting life and giving every child the opportunity to be born and find his or her purpose," said Republican Rep. Jenna Persons-Mulicka, who carried the bill in the House.

Democrats and abortion-rights groups have criticized Florida's proposal as extreme.

"This ban would prevent four million Florida women of reproductive age from accessing abortion care after six weeks — before many women even know they're pregnant," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said in a statement issued after Thursday's vote. "This ban would also impact the nearly 15 million women of reproductive age who live in abortion-banning states throughout the South, many of whom have previously relied on travel to Florida as an option to access care."

The law contains some exceptions, including to save the woman's life. Abortions for pregnancies involving rape or incest would be allowed until 15 weeks of pregnancy, provided a woman has documentation such as a restraining order or police report. DeSantis has called the rape and incest provisions sensible.

Drugs used in medication-induced abortions — which make up the majority of those provided nationally — could be dispensed only in person or by a physician under the Florida law. Separately, nationwide access to the abortion pill mifepristone is being challenged in court.

"I can't think of any bill that's going to provide more protections to more people who are more vulnerable than this piece of legislation," said Republican Rep. Mike Beltran, who said the bill's exceptions and six-week timeframe represented a compromise.

Abortion bans are popular among some religious conservatives who are part of the GOP voting base, but the issue has motivated many others to vote for Democrats. Republicans in recent weeks and months have suffered defeats in elections centered on abortion access in states such as Kentucky, Michigan and Wisconsin.

"Have we learned nothing?" House Democratic Minority Leader Fentrice Driskell said of recent elections in other states. "Do we not listen to our constituents and to the people of Florida and what they are asking for?"

DeSantis, who often places himself on the front lines of culture war issues, had said he backs the six-week ban but had appeared uncharacteristically tepid on the bill. He has often said, "We welcome pro-life legislation," when asked about the policy.

DeSantis is expected to announce his presidential candidacy after the session ends in May, with his potential White House run in part buoyed by the conservative policies approved by the Republican supermajority in the Statehouse this year.

Democrats, without power at any level of state government, had mostly turned to stall tactics and protests to oppose the bill, which easily passed both chambers on largely party-line votes. The Senate approved

it last week, and the House did so Thursday.

A Democratic senator and chairwoman of the Florida Democratic Party were arrested and charged with trespassing during a protest in Tallahassee against the six-week ban. In a last ditch move to delay the bill's passage in the House on Thursday, Democrats filed dozens of amendments to the proposal, all of which were rejected by Republicans.

"Women's health and their personal right to choose is being stolen," said Democratic Rep. Felicia Simone Robinson. "So I ask: Is Florida truly a free state?"

## China vows not to sell arms to any party in Ukraine war

BEIJING (AP) — China won't sell weapons to either side in the war in Ukraine, the country's foreign minister said Friday, responding to Western concerns that Beijing could provide military assistance to Russia.

China has maintained that it is neutral in the conflict, while backing Russia politically, rhetorically and economically at a time when Western nations have imposed punishing sanctions and sought to isolate Moscow for its invasion of its neighbor.

Qin Gang is the highest-level Chinese official to make such an explicit statement about arms sales to Russia. He added that China would also regulate the export of items with dual civilian and military use.

"Regarding the export of military items, China adopts a prudent and responsible attitude," Qin said at a news conference alongside visiting German counterpart Annalena Baerbock. "China will not provide weapons to relevant parties of the conflict, and manage and control the exports of dual-use items in accordance with laws and regulations."

The minister also reiterated China's willingness to help find a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

At the same news conference, Qin also blamed Taiwan's government for heightened regional tensions after Beijing held large-scale military drills in an attempt to intimidate the island it claims as its own territory.

In February, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the U.S. had intelligence suggesting China was considering providing arms and ammunition to Russia — and warned that such involvement in the Kremlin's war effort would be a "serious problem."

In recent days, European leaders have issued similar warnings, even as they visited China, and the European Union's foreign policy chief lashed out at Beijing, saying its support of Russia during the invasion was "a blatant violation" of its United Nations commitments.

In her remarks, Baerbock also referred to China's role as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, saying it bore a special responsibility for helping end the conflict.

"But I have to wonder why the Chinese positioning so far does not include a call for the aggressor, Russia, to stop the war," she said. "We all know that President (Vladimir) Putin would have the opportunity to do so at any time, and the people in Ukraine would like nothing more than to finally be able to live in peace again."

A visit to Moscow last month by Chinese leader Xi Jinping underscored how Beijing is increasingly becoming the senior partner in the relationship as it provides Russia with an economic lifeline and political cover. China announced Friday that Defense Minister Gen. Li Shangfu would visit Russia next week for meetings with counterpart Sergei Shoigu and other military officials.

On both Ukraine and Taiwan, Qin articulated well-worn defenses of Chinese policies that underscore Beijing's rejection of criticisms from the West, particularly the U.S. Under the ardently nationalist Xi, China has sharpened its rhetoric, particularly on the issue of Taiwan, which split from mainland China amid civil war in 1949.

Tensions around the island rose significantly after China deployed warships and fighter planes near Taiwan last weekend in retaliation for a meeting between U.S. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy and the island's president, Tsai Ing-wen.

China insists that self-governing Taiwan submit to its rule, either peacefully or by force, and Qin said the pursuit of independence by Taiwan's government and its foreign supporters — a veiled reference to chief ally the United States — were the reason for the tensions.

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Baerbock warned that a conflict in the Taiwan Strait, through which much of the world's international trade passes, would bring global disaster.

"We therefore view the increasing tensions in the Taiwan Strait with great concern," she said. "Conflicts must be resolved peacefully. A unilateral change of the status quo would not be acceptable to us as Europeans."

Apparently rejecting Baerbock's concerns, Qin said Taiwan was "China's internal affair."

"Taiwan independence and peace cannot co-exist," he said.

## Welcomed in Ireland, 'Cousin Joe' Biden jokes of staying

By COLLEEN LONG, DARLENE SUPERVILLE and CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press

DUBLIN (AP) — In Ireland this week, well-wishers have lined the streets to catch a mere glimpse of President Joe Biden. Photos of his smiling face are plastered on shop windows, and one admirer held a sign reading, "2024 — Make Joe President Again."

No wonder Biden keeps joking about sticking around.

Back home, Biden's approval rating is near the lowest point of his presidency. And even some fellow Democrats have suggested he shouldn't run for reelection. On trips within the U.S. to discuss his economic and social policies, Biden often gets a smattering of admirers waving as he drives by, and friendly crowds applaud his speeches. But the reception doesn't compare with the overwhelming adoration he's getting here in the old sod.

Expect more of the same on Friday, when Biden wraps up his visit to Ireland by spending a day in County Mayo in western Ireland, where his great-great-grandfather Patrick Blewitt lived until he left for the United States in 1850. The locals have been abuzz for weeks with preparation for Biden's visit, giving buildings a new coat of paint and hanging American flags from shopfronts.

It's a dynamic that most of Biden's predecessors also have faced: The world abroad tends to love American presidents. Back home, not always. Not so much.

"With the greatest of respect, Mr. President, I must say, you sure can draw a crowd," Ceann Comhairle Seán Ó Feargháil, speaker of the lower chamber of Ireland's parliament, said as he introduced Biden's joint address to lawmakers on Thursday. "Perhaps afterwards you might give me some hints on how we could ensure good attendance around here."

A U.S. president's overseas trips often offer a backdrop and substance that are difficult to replicate on home turf. Biden's Ireland trip has been heady with nostalgia and fellowship — grand sweeping hills and cozy towns fitting for just such a mood.

Presidential visits come with the pageantry of Air Force One landings, long motorcades and "the beast," Biden's limo, which other world leaders, like Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, delight in riding.

"He can feel the love in a way that's hard to do at home," presidential historian Douglas Brinkley said. "There's something about an American president being in your country that makes a nation's press and public go gaga."

"With the exception of the pope, the American president is usually the most coveted global figure," Brinkley said.

During Biden's visit to Warsaw, Poland, in February, thousands of people gathered at the foot of the Royal Castle to hear the president deliver a speech on the eve of the one-year anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

With the castle lit in the colors of the Ukrainian flag behind him, Biden vowed that "Democracies of the world will stand guard over freedom today, tomorrow and forever" to a rapt audience. As Biden exited the stage, he paused one more time to take in the scene, and a man in the audience bellowed out: "You're our hero!"

When Biden spoke to the Canadian parliament in March, the chamber broke into applause 34 times. In a country in which English and French are spoken, Biden produced a thunderous round of clapping by



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simply opening his speech with "Bonjour, Canada."

Even in Ireland, though, the acclaim was not universal. The small left-wing party People Before Profit vowed to boycott Biden's speech to parliament because of opposition to U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and elsewhere.

People Before Profit lawmaker Paul Murphy said the president's trip was being "treated as a visit by an interesting Irish-American celebrity, as opposed to a visit of the most powerful person in the world who needs to be asked hard questions about the kinds of policies that he is pursuing."

But Biden's critics overseas tend to be far less personal with their jibes than what he gets in the U.S.

One demonstrator Thursday held up a paper sign that said "Arrest War Criminal Biden" as the president's motorcade headed for the Irish president's house. During his Warsaw trip, a group stood in a square across the street from his hotel and chanted for hours, asking him to supply fighter jets to Ukraine. In 2021, when Biden met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Switzerland, protesters urged the U.S. president to press the case of jailed Russian leader Alexei Navalny.

In the U.S., a few demonstrators routinely line up along the presidential motorcade route with flags emblazoned with "Let's Go Brandon" — a coded insult for something far more vulgar that's been embraced by some on the right. He's also often confronted with signs claiming "Trump won," a reference to former President Donald Trump's repeated lie that the 2020 election was stolen.

Biden is far from the only U.S. president to find appreciation abroad that seems more elusive at home.

Then-President Bill Clinton found refuge overseas from the investigations pressing in on him at home. In his last year in office, President George W. Bush was about as well liked at home as Richard Nixon right before he resigned in scandal, according to the Pew Research Center. Bush's reputation also plunged around the world as the Iraq War devolved into a quagmire.

But Bush remained more popular in Africa, where he boosted foreign aid and battled the AIDS epidemic. He visited five countries on a trip to the continent in 2008, touting his accomplishments at a time of domestic backlash.

His successor, President Barack Obama, saw his fortunes diverge in his first term. The grinding fallout from the Great Recession dragged down his approval ratings in the U.S., but views elsewhere in the world remained untarnished.

The Irish response to Biden has been overwhelmingly positive for Cousin Joe, as many have called him. In the town of Dundalk, in County Louth, thousands of people waited nearly eight hours to see him. As he made his way through streets filled with admirers, some strained to get even a touch from him.

Biden took selfies. He smiled at children. And he took a whirlwind tour of ancestral sites, pausing at Carlingford Castle, which could well have been the last Irish landmark that Owen Finnegan, his maternal great-great-grandfather, saw before sailing for New York in 1849. As he gazed at the sea, thousands cheered to him from the streets below, mixing with the sound of bagpipes that wafted from the green hills.

"I don't know why the hell my ancestors left here," Biden said. "It's beautiful."

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Megerian reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Amer Madhani, Josh Boak and Zeke Miller in Washington, Jill Lawless in London and David Keyton in Dublin contributed to this report.

## Latest ruling on pill shifts US abortion landscape again

By GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

A federal appeals court has kept an abortion pill available, clarifying the U.S. abortion landscape but not settling it. The court's decision late Wednesday preserved but narrowed access to an abortion pill across the U.S. It was a major development in a fast-shifting landscape in flux since June, when the Supreme Court overturned the nationwide right to an abortion.

WHAT'S NEW?

The majority of abortions in the U.S. are obtained using a combination of two medications. Anti-abortion groups have been trying to limit access to one of them, mifepristone.

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The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans ruled that the Food and Drug Administration's initial approval of mifepristone in 2000 should remain in effect, overriding a district court ruling from less than a week before. Without Wednesday's ruling, the drug would have been unavailable in at least some places starting on Saturday.

The 2-1 ruling came with a catch: The judges put on hold a series of regulatory changes beginning in 2016 that relaxed some prescribing and dispensing rules. The decision means that the drug can be used only in the first seven weeks of pregnancy, rather than 10, and it can't be dispensed by mail to a person who doesn't visit a doctor's office first.

## THE COURTS: WHAT'S NEXT?

Either side could appeal Wednesday's ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court.

In the meantime, what it means isn't completely clear.

The latest ruling came in response to one last week from a judge in Amarillo, Texas, who ruled that mifepristone should not be available while its approval is reexamined. The same day, another federal judge in Spokane, Washington, ruled in favor of attorneys general for 17 Democrat-led states that sued to try to keep it on the market.

Those states are: Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington, plus the District of Columbia.

The U.S. Department of Justice has asked the Washington court for clarity on its ruling. It's also not clear what the 5th Circuit decision means for it.

In the meantime, some Democrat-controlled states are stockpiling abortion pills, while Wyoming last month became the first state to explicitly prohibit abortion drugs.

## THE COURTS NATIONWIDE:

Across the U.S., advocates have sued over dozens of abortion laws.

In 2019, the Iowa Supreme Court blocked a law prohibiting abortion once cardiac activity can be detected, which occurs after about six weeks of pregnancy and often before women know they are pregnant. Officials in the Republican-dominated state have been pushing to overturn that ruling.

On Tuesday, the issue went before the state Supreme Court, where all seven justices are GOP appointees. A decision is expected this summer.

Also on Tuesday, a Montana judge denied Planned Parenthood of Montana's request to preemptively block legislation that would ban dilation and evacuation abortions, the kind most commonly used in the second trimester of pregnancy. Opponents said they wanted to act quickly because the law would take effect immediately if Gov. Greg Gianforte signs it. Gianforte has previously approved other abortion restrictions.

## LAWMAKERS NATIONWIDE: WHAT'S NEXT?

Nebraska lawmakers advanced a bill on Wednesday that would ban abortion once cardiac activity can be detected.

In February, the South Carolina Senate passed such a ban. The same month, the House approved one that would apply throughout pregnancy. The two chambers have not yet negotiated which version to send to the governor.

In Florida, Gov. Ron DeSantis, who is expected to run for the GOP presidential nomination next year, has supported ending abortion access earlier than the 15-week mark already in effect there. On Thursday, he signed into law a ban on abortions after six weeks of pregnancy after the Republican-dominated Florida Legislature approved the proposal earlier in the day.

Most Democrat-controlled states adopted laws, made executive orders — or both — to protect abortion access. After Senate passage Monday, both chambers of the state legislature in Washington state have passed one, but it has not yet been signed by the governor.

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## LAWMAKERS: WHAT'S ALREADY HAPPENED?

Abortion is already effectively banned at all stages of pregnancy in 13 states, and when cardiac activity can be detected in one.

Courts have blocked bans throughout pregnancy in another five states, and one, Georgia, where abortion is forbidden once cardiac activity can be detected.

Republicans in many places are pushing for even tougher policies.

This month, Idaho Gov. Brad Little signed a law making it a crime for an adult to help a minor get an abortion without parental consent.

Iowa's attorney general took another step this month, announcing her office will stop paying for emergency contraception and abortions for sexual assault victims while it studies the policy.

## THE IMPACT

Abortion bans have big impacts on where woman go to end pregnancies.

A report released this week by the Society of Family Planning finds that the number of monthly abortions inside states with bans on them throughout pregnancy dropped to zero or nearly so, and the number of abortions at medical facilities overall dropped.

But big increases in the number of abortions came in states that have kept abortion legal and are near to, and easily reachable from, those with the deepest restrictions.

Among those states with big increases: Florida, Illinois and North Carolina.

Some other states that have taken the boldest steps to preserve access to abortion have seen relatively modest increases in the number provided.

The survey does not measure the number of self-managed abortions, such as with pills that were not prescribed to the user.

Mulvihill reported from Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Associated Press reporters Margery Beck in Omaha, Nebraska; Amy Beth Hanson in Helena, Montana; Anthony Izaguirre in Tallahassee, Florida; Scott McFetridge in Des Moines, Iowa, and James Pollard in Columbia, South Carolina, contributed to this report.

## MLB players find less time for small talk with pitch clock

By PAT GRAHAM AP Sports Writer

DENVER (AP) — Home plate used to be a place where the sociable Brandon Crawford would touch base with catchers and umpires.

Just a casual conversation to catch up: How's the family? What's up? That sort of thing.

These days, the San Francisco Giants infielder keeps the chatter to a minimum. There's simply no spare time for small talk while on a pitch clock.

Because that 15 seconds between pitches — 20 when someone's on base — goes by fast at the plate. The penalty for idle chatter could be stiff — a called strike on the hitter.

Social hour just has to wait.

"You have to figure out a different time to get your conversations in, whether it's pregame or going to dinner or breakfast," Crawford said.

The pitch clock hasn't just made baseball quicker. It's quieter now, too. There's no real chance to talk shop on the bases with former teammates, good friends or umpires. Batters only get 30 seconds between at-bats to get set.

Dodgers manager Dave Roberts can't even imagine the strikes he might've had called on him if he was playing under these rules. He's well known for his affable personality and would always greet the home-plate umpire when he batted, along with the catcher. He'd carry it right over to the bases, too, when he got aboard.

"Some guys are having a little harder time with it," Roberts said of cutting back on conversations. "I think the salutations and stuff like that have to be more minimized."



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Roberts joked that he could strategize around his gift for gab — maybe engage players he knows before they dig into the box.

“Try to get his attention and get that clock going,” Roberts cracked.

The players, though, are starting to realize that silence is golden. This is no social call when they step up. They can’t afford to fall behind 0-1 in the count.

Last week, Padres slugger Manny Machado became the first player ejected in an argument that followed a pitch clock violation, which carries a penalty of an automatic strike for hitters and an automatic ball for pitchers. It wasn’t for talking, but rather he thought he had called timeout as the pitch clock wound down to eight seconds — the deadline for batters to be alert to the guy on the mound.

A cautionary tale, though, that every second matters.

“It’s all business,” Giants outfielder Joc Pederson said.

Rangers first baseman Nathaniel Lowe once received friendly advice from longtime umpire Joe West: Greet each ump by their first name and make a little small talk.

It’s guidance Lowe took to heart. It’s guidance that’s now hard to follow.

“It feels like I’m more worried about, ‘Am I facing the pitcher with 14, 12 seconds? Should I have my foot on the gas?’” Lowe explained. “I think the pitch clock definitely takes away from the social aspect of it.”

Know this about Dominic Smith: He’s not going to be as inviting at first base this season. The slick-fielding Washington Nationals player means no offense by the silent treatment, either.

“I’m trying to just kick people’s butt, I guess, so I don’t talk as much as I used to,” Smith said with a smile. “I don’t mind not talking to guys over there. I like being in my own space, thinking about the game, trying to figure out ways to help us win.”

Dodgers pitcher Dustin May never quite understood being on speaking terms with the opposition during a game.

“Once I cross the lines, I didn’t really talk to anybody” on the other team, May said.

Consider May a fan of the new rules. Batters can’t step out as much to re-fasten their batting gloves over and over.

“We’d stand on the mound forever waiting on them,” May said. “Now they’re kind of forced to get in. They’re on our pace now.”

Rockies first baseman C.J. Cron prefers the quicker pace, too. He can afford to be a little more antisocial due to the time crunch.

“I’m not much of a converser over there,” Cron said. “Just say, ‘What’s up?’ and then move on with my life.”

The lack of talk on the bases may actually fuel more rivalries — or at least that’s the thinking of Dodgers infielder Max Muncy.

“Because you’re not having a chance to converse with people and you don’t get to know people as much,” Muncy said. “Maybe there’s a chance of that?”

But it takes some getting used to. Crawford would greet the umpire behind the plate before the game and the catcher as he stepped into the box. It was almost part of his routine.

The times have changed.

“It’s such a rush from the on-deck circle to the plate that you don’t have time to do that,” Crawford said. “I’ll say that real quick as I’m walking by. But there’s no more conversations after that.”

That’s good, said Giants manager Gabe Kapler.

“I don’t love seeing players talking to the first baseman and umpires,” Kapler said. “I hope that is erased by the time.”

Some players, though, simply enjoy holding conversations while holding on runners.

“If I know the guy or if I’ve got a pretty good rapport with him, for sure, absolutely,” Mets first baseman Pete Alonso said. “If it’s just like an awkward silence, that’s no fun.”

AP Baseball Writers Janie McCauley and Mike Fitzpatrick, and AP Sports Writer Schuyler Dixon contrib-

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uted to this report.

AP MLB: <https://apnews.com/hub/MLB> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sport](https://twitter.com/AP_Sport)

## Review: Blood sloshes and Nicolas Cage feasts in 'Renfield'

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

"Renfield" is not Nicolas Cage's first blush with a vampire.

In 1988's "Vampire's Kiss," he played a New York literary agent who thought he was an immortal blood-sucker. His bug-eyed performance was essentially the birth of the over-the-top, kabuki-inflected mythology of Cage. Years later, it would launch a thousand memes — a kind of digital version of becoming undead.

Thirty-five years later with "Renfield," Cage is finally playing the genuine article, complete with blood-thirsty fangs and a dapper velvet smoking jacket. Casting Cage, our grandest of ghouls, as Dracula is so predestined that it almost risks being too on the nose. The good news is that, no, he's perfect as Dracula. The bad news is that Cage's Dracula is only a supporting role here, making "Renfield" more of a tasty morsel than a satisfying feast.

That's no discredit to Nicholas Hoult, who plays Bram Stoker's devoted henchman to Dracula in Chris McKay's "Renfield," which opens in theaters Friday. The film, penned by Ryan Ridley, fashions Robert Montague Renfield less as Dracula's doting, "yes Master" lackey than a distinctive and sensitive person — or kinda person; his supernatural powers are sustained, for some reason, by eating bugs — in his own right. "Renfield," a fast and loose horror-comedy splattered top to bottom with blood, is about Renfield trying to break free of Dracula's fearsome sway — "a destructive relationship" as Renfield describes in a self-help group.

It's a nifty enough idea (Robert Kirkman gets a story by credit) that the filmmakers have wisely chosen not to over complicate. Even though "Renfield" features a monster with growing desires for world domination and an alarming number of exploding human heads, the stakes are low in this Dracula spinoff. The tone is antic and blood-splattery, slotting in closer to a gory, middle-of-the-road "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" episode than, say, the wittier "What We Do in the Shadows."

Vampires have been in vogue for some time, but usually in more extrapolated interpretations with greater sympathies for vampires — elegant, sexy or childlike — as worldly outsiders. Edging closer to Dracula, himself, has been rarer, and it's probably a sign of the lesser, shlocky ambitions of "Renfield" that he still remains off to the side. But whenever Cage's Prince of Darkness is around, the movie has a bite.

Cage, returning to major studio territory after an often thrilling, sometimes befuddling decade in indie pastures, is, as always, fully prepared for the moment. The actor, long a devoted fan of F.W. Murnau's "Nosferatu," channels some of the classic interpretations of Dracula — including Bela Lugosi, over whom Cage is superimposed in an early flashback taken from 1931's "Dracula" — while animating the character with his own comic, campy rhythm. It may be worth the price of admission to see Cage's Dracula let out a brief "Wool!" while awakening to a new sense of himself as a god.

Yet "Renfield" oddly gravitates away from tapping this rich vein to instead consume the New Orleans-set film with not just R.M.'s bid for personal freedom but a busy plot involving a local crime family and police corruption. Awkwafina co-stars as Rebecca Quincy, an honest traffic cop who wants to avenge her father's death and bring justice to the Lobo family, a drug-dealing gang led by the matriarch Ella (Shohreh Aghdashloo), with her less sharp son, Teddy (Ben Schwartz), among the lieutenants.

It's easy to see the purpose in some of this: Bring in some funny people to populate the backdrop for Renfield's attempted succession from Dracula duties (which consist mostly of bringing him fresh corpses, preferably of more innocent blood). Awkwafina is a welcome presence with her own comedy chops. But by trying to amp things up, McKay, the director of "The Tomorrow War" and "The Lego Batman Movie," loses what ought to have been the film's focus.

Still, "Renfield" is enjoyable enough in a disposable sort of way. A lack of self-seriousness is a quality to be appreciated in any movie like this. And Hoult manages to be remarkably sweet while at the same

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time using human limbs to decapitate other victims. Some of the best scenes are of him sitting in on a support group meeting to talk through toxic relationships. (Brandon Scott Jones, who plays the group's leader, is quite good.) But "Renfield" never lets Cage really sink his teeth into the movie, leaving us still hungry for more.

"Renfield," a Universal Pictures release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for bloody violence, some gore, language throughout and some drug use. Running time: 93 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

Follow AP Film Writer Jake Coyle on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/jakecoyleAP>

## Red Cross: Yemen rebels, Saudi coalition begin prisoner swap

By AHMED AL-HAJ and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen (AP) — An exchange of more than 800 prisoners linked to Yemen's long-running war began Friday, the International Committee for the Red Cross said. The United Nations-brokered deal, in the works for months, comes amid concerted diplomatic efforts to negotiate an end to the conflict.

It is most significant prisoner exchange in Yemen since the Saudi-led coalition and their rivals, the Houthi rebels, released more than 1,000 detainees in October 2020. Thousands of people are believed to be held as prisoners of war by all sides since the conflict erupted.

In Sanaa, the Houthi-held capital, dozens of former prisoners descended from a plane to a marching band and traditional Yemeni dancers, wearing ribbons with the colors of the Yemeni flag. The former prisoners were greeted with hugs and kisses by family members and a reception line of Houthi political leaders. An injured man was supported by medical workers.

The flight arrived from Aden, the seat of the country's internationally-recognized government allied with Saudi Arabia.

As part of the three-day exchange, flights will transport prisoners from government-controlled cities inside Yemen and Saudi Arabia to Sanaa, said Majed Fadail, a deputy minister for human rights for Yemen's government. The Red Cross said there would be two rounds of simultaneous flights Friday between Aden and Sanaa to transfer prisoners.

Yemen's conflict began in 2014 when the Houthis seized Sanaa and much of the country's north. The internationally recognized government fled to the south and then into exile in Saudi Arabia.

The Houthi takeover prompted a Saudi-led coalition to intervene months later. The conflict has in recent years turned into a regional proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran, with the United States long involved on the periphery, providing intelligence assistance to the kingdom. However, international criticism over Saudi airstrikes killing civilians saw the U.S. pull back its support.

The war has killed more than 150,000 people, including fighters and civilians, and created one of the world's worst humanitarian disasters.

The prisoner exchange had been scheduled to start earlier in the week but was delayed because of apparent logistical reasons.

"With this act of goodwill, hundreds of families torn apart by conflict are being reunited during the holy month of Ramadan, a glimmer of hope amidst great suffering," Fabrizio Carboni, the Red Cross' regional director for the Near and Middle East, said in a statement. "Our deep desire is that these releases provide momentum for a broader political solution, leading to even more detainees returning to their loved ones."

The deal calls for the Houthis to release more than 180 prisoners, including Saudi and Sudanese troops fighting with the Saudi-led coalition, and four Yemeni journalists. The journalists were detained in recent years and sentenced to death by a Houthi-controlled court in a trial described by Amnesty International as "grossly unfair."

The deal also will see the release of top military officials held by the Houthis since the start of the war. Those include Maj. Gen. Mahmoud al-Subaihi, who was the defense minister when the war erupted; Nasser



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Mansour Hadi, the brother of former Yemeni President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi; and relatives of late strongman President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

In return, the Saudi-led coalition and Yemeni government are scheduled to release more than 700 Houthi prisoners, the rebels said.

Saudi Arabia has already freed 13 Houthi detainees who returned to Sanaa on April 9 ahead of a trip by Saudi ambassador to Yemen, Mohammed bin Saeed al-Jaber, to the Yemeni capital. Including those detainees, the deal will see a total of 869 prisoners released, the Red Cross says.

Al-Jaber visit to Sanaa was part of Oman-brokered talks between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis, aiming to revive a nationwide cease-fire that expired in October and relaunch inter-Yemeni peace talks to end the conflict.

A deal last month between Saudi Arabia and Iran to restore ties has boosted negotiations between the kingdom and the Houthis and invigorated hopes of a negotiated settlement to the Yemeni conflict.

However, some analysts fear that Saudi Arabia's withdrawal could see a new version of the conflict erupt between Yemen's rival governments. Then there are also secessionists who want to restore a separate country of South Yemen, which existed from 1967 to 1990.

"I see prospects for temporary peace between the Saudis and the Houthis but escalation of violence within Yemen," said Nadwa Dawsari, a nonresident scholar with the Middle East Institute, a Washington-based think-tank.

She said that the Houthis have not shown themselves to be willing to compromise to reach peace with other Yemeni groups.

"That is their ideology, they feel they are entitled to rule," she said.

Yemen also remains home to al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, viewed by Washington as a dangerous offshoot of the Islamic extremist group.

Magdy reported from Cairo. Associated Press writer Jon Gambrell in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, contributed to this report.

## Here's why downpour in Florida just wouldn't stop

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

In some ways, it was the Florida Man of storms – not quite knowing when to say when.

Usually, thunderstorms fizzle out after they run out of rain or get cold air sucked in. They run out of gas. But not Wednesday, when the storm that hit Fort Lauderdale had a gas station nearby -- the warm and moisture-rich Gulf Stream.

The end result was more than 25 inches of rain drenching and flooding Fort Lauderdale in six to eight hours. That ranked among the top three in major U.S. cities over a 24-hour period, behind Hilo, Hawaii's, 27 inches in 2000 and Port Arthur, Texas's 26.5 inches in 2017, according to weather historian Chris Burt.

While it could happen in other places in coastal America, Florida has the right topography, plenty of warm water nearby and other favorable conditions, said Greg Carbin, forecast branch chief at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Weather Prediction Center.

Just two days before the downpour, Weather Prediction Center forecaster David Roth told colleagues that conditions were lining up similar to April 25, 1979, when 16 inches of rain fell on Fort Lauderdale, Carbin said.

What parked over Fort Lauderdale on Wednesday was a supercell — the type of strong thunderstorm that can spawn killer tornadoes and hail and plows across the Great Plains and Mid-South in a fierce, fast-moving but short path of destruction, several meteorologists said.

Normally a cell like that would "snuff itself out" in maybe 20 minutes or at least keep moving, Carbin said. But in Fort Lauderdale the supercell was in a lull between opposing weather systems, Carbin said. It lasted six to eight hours.

"You had this extreme warmth and moisture that was just feeding into the cell and because it had a bit

of a spin to it, it was essentially acting like a vacuum and sucking all that moisture back up into the main core of the system," said Steve Bowen, a meteorologist and chief science officer for GallagherRe, a global reinsurance broker. "It just kept reigniting itself, essentially."

What was key, said former NOAA chief scientist Ryan Maue, was "the availability of warm ocean air from the Gulf Stream was essentially infinite."

Other factors included a strong low pressure system, with counterclockwise winds, churning away in the toasty Gulf of Mexico, Maue and Carbin said. There was a temperature difference between the slightly cooler land in Florida and the 80-degree-plus Gulf Stream waters. Add to that wind shear, which is when winds are flowing in opposite directions at high and low altitude, helping to add some spin.

Many of those conditions by themselves are not unusual, including the location of the Gulf Stream. But when they combined in a precise way, it acted like a continuous feeding loop that poured rain in amounts that the National Weather Service in Miami called a 1-in-1,000 chance.

"We continue to see more and more of these thousand-year" weather extremes in major cities, Bowen said. "The whole definition of normal is changing."

Physics states that a warmer climate holds more moisture in the air, about 4% more for every degree Fahrenheit (7% for every degree Celsius). But warming also increases the intensity of storms amplifying that moisture level, said Pennsylvania State University climate scientist Michael Mann.

And that moisture then falls as rain.

One-day downpours have "increased in frequency and magnitude over the last several decades and will continue to increase in both in the coming decades," University of Oklahoma meteorology professor Jason Furtado said in an email. "These heavy rainfall events coupled with sea level rise on the Florida coast need to serve as significant 'wake up calls' for the residents of South Florida about the severe risks that climate change poses to them."

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## South Floridians mop up, recall fear after historic deluge

By FREIDA FRISARO, DANIEL KOZIN and TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — The water was rising around her car, and Amanda Valentine thought she was going to die. She had just gotten a warning on her phone about flash flooding, and now it was all around her.

"I called my parents like, 'I'm going to die. Like I'm going to drown. There's no way for me to get out of this car,'" Valentine said. "And they couldn't help me. I called 911, and they told me they couldn't help me."

She eventually forced the door open and got to safety.

Parts of South Florida began cleaning up Thursday after the unprecedented storm that trapped Valentine and other motorists dumped upward of 2 feet (60 centimeters) of rain in a matter of hours, caused widespread flooding, closed a key airport and turned thoroughfares into rivers. There were no immediate reports of injuries or deaths.

Residents still waded through knee-high water or used canoes and kayaks to navigate the streets Thursday in Fort Lauderdale's Edgewood neighborhood, where window screen installer Dennis Vasquez towed some of his neighbor's belongings on an inflatable mattress to a car on dry land. He himself lost all of his possessions when water rose chest-high in his house Wednesday night.

"Everything, it's gone," he said in Spanish. "But I will replace it."

In Broward County, where rains started Monday before the heaviest rains arrived Wednesday afternoon,

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crews worked Thursday to clear drains and fire up pumps to clear standing water.

Fort Lauderdale issued a state of emergency as flooding persisted in parts of the city. Crews worked through the night to attend rescue calls. Fort Lauderdale Hollywood International Airport, which closed Wednesday evening, said it would not reopen until 5 a.m. Friday because of debris and flooding.

Enough water had drained by early Thursday to allow people to drive on the upper level — or departures — road to pick up waiting passengers. But the entrance to the lower-level, or arrivals, road remained closed.

Airlines were forced to cancel or change flights to and from the airport. Southwest canceled about 50 departures through Friday morning, and the number could grow, a spokeswoman said. The airline is letting customers rebook on flights to and from Miami and Palm Beach at no additional charge, she said.

Frontier Airlines moved two flights from Fort Lauderdale to Miami but canceled about 15 other round trips, a spokeswoman said. Allegiant Air also canceled some flights and rerouted others to the Tampa, Orlando and Punta Gorda areas.

More than 650 flights were canceled at Fort Lauderdale on Thursday, according to FlightAware.

Broward County schools initially canceled classes Thursday, including after-school and extracurricular activities, after water flooded hallways and classrooms at some schools. Officials announced in the evening that schools would remain closed Friday. Service was restored on South Florida's high-speed commuter rail, Brightline, after it briefly shut down Wednesday evening.

The Red Cross set up a staging area to help residents whose homes were flooded, providing them with blankets and coffee, officials said.

Fort Lauderdale City Hall remained closed Thursday with ground-floor flooding and no power. A tunnel carrying U.S. Route 1 under a river and a major street in downtown Fort Lauderdale was also closed, along with some ramps to Interstate 95.

Tow truck driver Keith Hickman said he saw abandoned cars "floating like boats" in the streets of Fort Lauderdale.

"There were hundreds of cars up and down here," he said. "It was unbelievable. I have never seen cars bumper-boating each other and floating. And a truck would come by and the wake would push the cars into the other cars and they were just floating. I've never seen anything like it."

In the Sistrunk neighborhood of Fort Lauderdale, 74-year-old Bobbie Ponder hiked up her dress to push her bicycle the last block to Ray's Market to get a money order for her internet bill, only find it flooded and closed. Bags of potato chips and Cheetos floated in a foot of water as workers tried to clean up.

Ponder, who lives in a third-floor apartment, said she didn't think the flooding would be that bad until she tried to ride her bike. She was trying to keep the flooding in perspective, comparing it against tornadoes that recently hit other states, killing dozens of people.

"We are blessed — a lot of them died," she said.

In the Edgewood neighborhood, Christopher Alfonso and Tony Mandico, neighbors for 50 years, said their homes are likely total losses.

"That storm ... just poured down on us for hours and hours and hours," Alfonso said. Pointing to the tightly packed homes with tiny yards, he said, "All this asphalt, concrete, no grass — there was no place for (the water) to go."

Both said the area never severely flooded until a sanitary sewer system replaced septic tanks 10 years ago, making some streets higher than others and channeling rain onto lower roads.

Shawn Bhatti, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Miami, said the region received "an unprecedented amount" of rain. The weather service was still confirming totals, but some gauges showed up to 25 inches (63.5 centimeters) of rainfall.

"For context, within a six-hour period the amount that fell is about a 1 in 1,000 chance of happening within a given year," Bhatti said. "So it's a very historical type of event."

Kozin and Frisaro both reported from Fort Lauderdale. Associated Press reporter Kathy McCormack contributed from Concord, New Hampshire.



## France awaits constitutional ruling on higher retirement age

PARIS (AP) — An elite French institution was expected to rule Friday on whether President Emmanuel Macron's contested plan to raise the retirement age is constitutional, a decision that could calm or further enrage opponents of the change.

All eyes were on the heavily guarded Constitutional Council, which can nix all or parts of a complex pension reform plan that Macron pushed through without a vote by the lower house of parliament. Spontaneous demonstrations were likely around France ahead of the nine-member court's ruling.

The president's drive to increase the retirement age from 62 to 64 has provoked months of labor strikes and protests. Violence by pockets of ultra-left radicals marked the 12 otherwise peaceful nationwide marches that unions organized since January.

In addition to ruling on the pension reforms, the Constitutional Council also will decide on a request by lawmakers who oppose the plan to use a little-used and lengthy process that could ultimately lead to a referendum on a proposal for the legal retirement age not to exceed 62.

The court members can reject the pension legislation in whole or in part. Any sections they conclude pass constitutional muster must be promulgated into law, whether or not the council also grants the referendum request.

Union leaders have said the body's decisions would be respected. However, they also have vowed to continue protest actions in an attempt to get Macron to simply withdraw the measure.

"As long as this reform isn't withdrawn, the mobilization will continue in one form or another," Sophie Binet, head of the leftist CGT union, said Thursday.

The leader of the moderate CFDT, Laurent Berger, warned that "there will be repercussions" if the Constitutional Council gives the French government a green light.

Polls have consistently shown that the majority of French citizens are opposed to working two more years before being able to reap pension benefits. The government's decision to skirt a parliamentary vote in March by using special constitutional powers renewed the fury of opponents of the measure.

Opponents have challenged the government's choice of including the pension plan in a budget bill, which significantly accelerated the legislative process. They hope it will provide grounds for the Constitutional Council to reject the text as a whole.

Follow AP's coverage of the French government at <https://apnews.com/hub/france-government>

## Powerful Cyclone Ilsa lashes Australia's northwest coast

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Australia's most powerful tropical cyclone in eight years lashed its northwest coast with winds gusting to an apparent record of 289 kilometers (180 miles) per hour Friday but skirted larger population centers and resulted in no immediate reports of injuries.

Cyclone Ilsa crossed the Pilbara coast of Western Australia state as a Category 5 storm, the most severe, but weakened to Category 2 as it moved inland, Australia's Bureau of Meteorology said.

Damage was still being assessed in the path of Ilsa, which made landfall in the early hours 150 kilometers (93 miles) northeast of the iron ore export town of Port Hedland in the rural area of Pardoo.

Pardoo had a population of 47 in the latest census and the Pardoo Roadhouse and Tavern was destroyed. The two owners stayed throughout the storm and were unharmed, emergency officials said.

"They've had a pretty uncomfortable, challenging night," Department of Fire and Emergency Services Superintendent Peter McCarthy said.

Beyond Pardoo, Acting Emergency Services Minister Sue Ellery described the storm damage as "fairly minimal."

Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner Darren Klemm said he was relieved that Ilsa had shifted

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toward Pardoo after tracking from the Indian Ocean toward Port Hedland, the world's largest bulk export port that sends Australian iron ore around the globe. Port Hedland has 16,000 residents and is the largest Pilbara city.

The city's docks had been cleared of ships, including iron ore carriers, before the storm struck.

Port Hedland residents "feel like they've dodged a bullet," Klemm said. "A Category 5 cyclone impact in Port Hedland would have resulted in significant damage."

Ilsa apparently set an Australian record with wind gusts in its path recorded as high as 289 kph (180 mph) at Bedout Island off the Pilbara coast before the island's measuring equipment stopped working, weather bureau manager Todd Smith said. It was not clear whether the equipment malfunctioned or power was cut.

"We're going to do some checks on the data there, but it's likely that that will go down as the strongest wind gusts ever recorded by the bureau's equipment in Australia," Smith said.

Category 5 cyclones have mean wind speeds exceeding 200 kph (124 mph) with gusts exceeding 280 kph (174 mph). The last Category 5 storm to cross the Australian coast was Cyclone Marcia in 2015. Marcia caused hundreds of millions of dollars in damage in the east coast state of Queensland.

Category 2 storms have maximum mean wind speeds of 89 kph to 117 kph (55 mph to 73 mph) with gusts between 125 kph and 164 kph (78 mph and 102 mph).

The storm will continue to weaken as it tracks southeast across land, the weather bureau said. \_\_\_\_

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## Can France's constitutional body halt disputed pension bill?

By SYLVIE CORBET Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — French protesters are bracing for an expected ruling Friday by a top constitutional body that they hope will derail President Emmanuel Macron's unpopular pension reform plan.

If the Constitutional Council greenlights the reform, the bill raising the retirement age from 62 to 64 can enter into force. Yet the body has the power to reject the text, fully or partially. Protesters marched around France on Thursday and plan scattered demonstrations Friday in hopes of pressuring the body to strike it down.

Here's a look at what's at stake.

**WHAT'S THE CONSTITUTIONAL COUNCIL?**

The body's role is to make sure a law is in line with France's Constitution prior to enactment.

In this case, it comes after Macron's centrist government forced the pension bill through parliament without a vote, using a special constitutional power.

The council is currently composed of three women and six men aged between 64 and 77, and is headed by former Socialist Prime Minister Laurent Fabius. Most members are centrists and conservatives, including two named by Macron. The council's discussions and votes are not made public.

Anne Levade, professor of public law at Paris university, said the ruling will be on strictly legal grounds. "The Constitutional Council won't say if the pension reform is right or wrong, if it is politically in favor or against it," she said. "The argument that will be made will be a legal reasoning."

**POTENTIAL SCENARIOS**

Opponents challenged the government's choice to include the pension plan in a budget bill, which significantly accelerated the legislative process, arguing it should have been a regular bill instead. They hope it will provide grounds for the Constitutional Council to reject the text as a whole.

Most likely, the council will approve the biggest part of the bill while rejecting some of its articles — the body often rejects measures which have an insufficient link with the main purpose of the text.

The age measure in that perspective appears in line with a budget bill, experts said.

Rejecting a bill as a whole is "a very rare option," Levade said, noting that only five such decisions have been made since 1959.

Political scientist Benjamin Morel said such a scenario would mean that "the bill disappears ... because the procedure that has been used (to pass it) would be considered as wrong."

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"We don't really know whether a pension reform can go through a social security budget bill," Morel added. "It doesn't seem the natural way (of doing it). But there's nothing ruling it out in the Constitution."

## A LONG SHOT AT A REFERENDUM

Legislators opposing the pension reforms have also filed a request to start a lengthy process that could ultimately lead to a referendum on a proposal for the legal retirement age not to exceed 62.

The Constitutional Council on Friday is also expected to rule on whether that proposal meets the conditions provided by law. If so, opponents to Macron's pension plan will have a nine-month period to register at least 4.8 million signatures — or 10% of voters.

Still, it doesn't mean the proposal would automatically be put to referendum, Levade stressed. Macron's government would instead be able to send it for debate at parliament. A nationwide vote would be organized only if it's not examined by legislators.

In any case, Friday's ruling on the referendum issue would not suspend the pension bill.

## WHAT'S NEXT ?

If the Constitutional Council gives its green light, Macron will be able to enact the bill within 15 days — except for any measures that are rejected.

Macron said last month he wants pension reform to be implemented by the end of the year. Some political observers suggest he could try to appease critics with a government reshuffle in the coming weeks or months.

Meanwhile, unions have vowed to continue their strikes and protests until the withdrawal of the pension plan.

They have in mind the big protests of 2006 against the creation of special contracts to more easily hire and fire people under 26. That law was withdrawn just after being enacted, under pressure of strong public opposition.

On the other hand, previous pension reforms that prompted massive protests in 2010 were still implemented.

## Warsaw Ghetto uprising survivor honored on 80th anniversary

By ILAN BEN ZION and AMI BEN TOV Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Tova Gutstein was born in Warsaw the year Adolf Hitler took power in Germany. She was 10 years old when the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto launched the first act of collective defiance against the Nazis in Europe.

Now 90, she is among the few remaining witnesses of the ghetto uprising — and a vanishing generation of Holocaust survivors — as Israel marks the 80th anniversary of a revolt that has shaped its national consciousness.

On Monday night, Gutstein will be one of six Holocaust survivors honored by Israel as torch-lighters in its annual ceremony at the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem. She said the horrors are still seared in her mind.

"Over 80 years have passed, and I can't forget it," Gutstein told The Associated Press at her home in central Israel.

Israel's Holocaust Memorial Day, marked with solemn ceremonies in schools and workplaces nationwide, begins at sundown on Monday. Theaters, concerts, cafes and restaurants close and television and radio broadcasts break into Holocaust commemorations.

A two-minute siren brings the country to a standstill; traffic freezes as people exit their cars and stand silently in the streets to commemorate the 6 million Jews killed by Nazi Germany and its allies.

A year after occupying Poland in 1939, Nazi Germany confined hundreds of thousands of Jews — 30% of Warsaw's population — into just 2.4% of the city's area in what became known as the Warsaw Ghetto.

At the height of the ghetto's horrors in 1941, one Jew died on average, every nine minutes from infectious diseases, starvation or Nazi violence, said David Silberklang, a senior historian at Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center.



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Gutstein grew up in the ghetto. Her father was forced into a labor camp by the Nazis and never seen again. Fenced in by electrified barbed wire, she and other Jewish children would crawl through the sewers to scavenge for food. Some children fell into the sewage and were swept away to their deaths, she recalled.

"We only thought about bread, food, how to obtain food," she said. "We had no other thoughts."

Around two-thirds of the Warsaw Ghetto, some 265,000 people, were deported to the Majdanek and Treblinka death camps in the summer of 1942. The following spring, the Nazis began preparing to deport the ghetto's remaining 60,000 Jews to their deaths.

The Nazis stationed an army around the ghetto on April 18, 1943. The following day, on the eve of the Jewish Passover holiday, the German forces moved in. Jewish resistance groups fought back.

Gutstein was outside the ghetto when the uprising began.

"German planes and tanks were bombing the ghetto. I was terribly afraid," she said. "The skies were red with fire. I saw buildings suddenly collapsing."

Returning to the ghetto through the sewers, she discovered that her house, along with many others, was destroyed.

"I wandered about and looked for my mother and my siblings but couldn't find anyone," Gutstein said.

The Warsaw Ghetto fighters fought for their lives in bunkers they made inside the ghetto's buildings. Many were killed in the streets or deported to the death camps. After a month of fighting, the Germans destroyed the Great Synagogue.

"The goal of the uprising was not rescue," said Silberklang, the historian. He said it was last-ditch resistance against inevitable death.

The aim was "to go down fighting and influence when and how they die — and hopefully somebody will survive," Silberklang said.

Gutstein fled the ghetto and, against all odds, reached a forest far outside the Polish capital where she met up with a group of partisans. She hid with them until the end of the war, two years later. Gutstein reunited with her mother and siblings in 1946, before immigrating to the nascent state of Israel in 1948.

Now a mother of three, grandmother of eight and great-grandmother of 13, she remains haunted by the memory of a man shot in the head outside her house in the ghetto, she said.

"I go to sleep with this image, and I wake up with it. It's very hard for me to forget it," she said.

The ghetto uprising remains a potent national symbol for Israel. In addition to remembering the victims of the Holocaust, memorial day also is meant to remember acts of courage and heroism.

At last year's Holocaust remembrance ceremony, then-Prime Minister Naftali Bennett described the uprising as "the pinnacle of Jewish heroism."

Yet with each passing year, the number of those who saw it first-hand continues to dwindle, and with it, the living link to the trauma.

Israel, which was established as a refuge for Jews in the wake of the Holocaust, is today home to around 150,600 survivors, according to government figures. That is a drop of over 15,000 from last year. Many of those still alive now were just young children during the war.

Many survivors continue to struggle. Between a quarter and a third live in poverty, survivor advocacy groups report.

"I receive (financial) support from the government, but very little," said Gutstein, who worked as a nurse in Israeli hospitals for over five decades, until she retired at the age of 77.

"They don't attend to citizens today in general, and disregard Holocaust survivors in particular," she said of the authorities. "We are nothing to them."

Silberklang said Yad Vashem and similar institutions are already planning for a time when there are no Holocaust survivors left, documenting and promoting awareness of their stories.

They've had to get creative — one group has created a Holocaust survivor artificial intelligence chat bot. A new project called "Life, Story" connects survivors with volunteers who help relay their stories to future generations.

The organization behind the initiative, called Zikaron BaSalon — or, "Memory in the Living Room" — says

it's racing against time.

"By the year 2035, there will no longer be any Holocaust survivors to tell their stories," the organization says on its website. "We are their voice."

Gutstein said she has dedicated the past decade to telling her story, so that others may bear witness. That way, she said, "it will remain," even when she is gone.

## **Report: Thomas sold real estate to donor, didn't report deal**

By ASHRAF KHALIL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Conservative mega-donor Harlan Crow purchased three properties belonging to Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas and his family, in a transaction worth more than \$100,000 that Thomas never reported, according to the non-profit investigative journalism organization ProPublica.

The 2014 real estate deal shines a new light on Thomas's decades old relationship with Crow, a real estate magnate and longtime financier for conservative causes. That relationship and the material benefits received by Thomas have fueled calls for an official ethics investigation.

ProPublica previously revealed that Thomas and his wife Ginni were gifted with hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of annual vacations and trips by Crow for decades — including international cruises on his mega-yacht, private jet flights and stays at Crow's invitation-only resort in the Adirondacks. But the 2014 real estate deal is the first public evidence of a direct financial transaction between the pair.

Citing state tax documents and property deeds, ProPublica reported that one of Crow's companies paid \$133,363 for the home in Savannah, Georgia where Thomas' mother was living, along with two nearby vacant lots that belonged to Thomas' family members. Thomas mother remained living in the home, which soon underwent tens of thousands of dollars in renovations.

Federal officials, including Supreme Court justices, are required to disclose the details of most real estate transactions with a value of over \$1,000. Thomas would not be required to report the purchase if the property was his or his spouse's primary personal residence, but this stipulation does not apply to this purchase, which Thomas did not report.

Both Thomas and Crow have released statements downplaying the significance of the gifts, with Thomas maintaining that he was not required to disclose the trips. Crow responded to the latest disclosure with a statement to ProPublica saying that he approached Thomas about the purchase with an eye on honoring his legacy.

"My intention is to one day create a public museum at the Thomas home dedicated to telling the story of our nation's second black Supreme Court Justice," the statement said. "Justice Thomas's story represents the best of America."

Thomas' office did not respond to an Associated Press request for comment.

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Associated Press reporter Mark Sherman contributed to this report.

## **Mississippi city faces tough road rebuilding after tornado**

By MICHAEL GOLDBERG Associated Press/Report for America

ROLLING FORK, Miss. (AP) — The scent of the Mississippi Delta's soil took hold of Charlie Weissinger's psyche at an early age, and he has chased it ever since.

Weissinger, 37, works at a bank to support his farming addiction in Rolling Fork, where his family has grown cotton, corn, soybeans, rice or wheat since 1902.

"It's something about the lifestyle, of being able to watch something that you're able to create from start to finish," he said. "It's so strange that you can do everything right, and then Mother Nature can take it away. And so it's a constant battle of man's will versus Mother Nature, of trying to see how well you can do in the face of adversity."

Weissinger's farm was mostly spared when a deadly tornado tore through Rolling Fork last month as it carved a path of destruction through parts of western and northern Mississippi. But many in the predomi-

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nantly Black farming community weren't as fortunate.

The twister killed 13 of Rolling Fork's roughly 1,700 residents, destroyed about 300 homes and businesses and laid waste to entire blocks, leaving many to wonder whether their small-town bonds and shared heritage will be enough to convince one another to stay and try to rebuild.

Rolling Fork has a proud history, claiming blues legend Muddy Waters as a native son and a role in the invention of the teddy bear, after President Theodore Roosevelt refused to shoot a restrained bear during a 1902 hunting trip.

But the city and surrounding Sharkey County are in one of the country's poorest regions and were already facing tough economic challenges before the March 24 tornado lashed the community with 200 mph (320 kph) winds, closing down nearly every local business. Volatile agricultural markets and a lack of jobs and new industry have kept Sharkey's poverty rate at around 35%, nearly double Mississippi's roughly 19% rate and triple the nation's nearly 12% rate.

"We want to keep our Blues heritage. We still want to see some Rolling Fork when it's rebuilt," local Travis Gully said as he walked down a hard-hit street near the roughly 135-year-old Rolling Fork Methodist Church a few days after the tornado hit. "We are the home of Muddy Waters. We are the home of the teddy bear. We want to see the bottle trees in our yards to remind people of our rich heritage."

The destruction can seem unquantifiable to weary residents who have been working alongside a network of volunteers every day since the tornado to sort through mounds of rubble. Some homes were lifted off the ground by their foundations. A bear statue commemorating Roosevelt's visit still stands in the heart of downtown, but the twister left its mark on hundreds of structures, including schools, clinics and the local hospital.

The community has pulled together, but the tornado stacked longstanding challenges on top of newer ones, such as high inflation and rising interest rates. In a rebuilt Rolling Fork, residents want more jobs, better infrastructure and a fighting chance to keep people from fleeing.

"What in the hell are we going to do? That's all I can think," Willard Miller, a 73-year-old lifelong resident, said from his driveway as he looked out on his mangled neighborhood. "There's a lot of young people, they ain't coming back. And they have no reason to other than this is their hometown and their parents are probably here."

Jerry Stevens owned the Cloverfield Laundromat in downtown Rolling Fork for 20 years. Its walls were blown away, but its 26 washers and dryers remain planted to the ground. Even if he rebuilds, he isn't sure if many of his old customers will follow suit.

"I'm scared a lot of the building won't come because inflation is so high right now," Stevens said. "Interest rates on loans are really high. I'm thinking when they get their insurance checks, they may just go somewhere else and buy a house that is already standing."

Rolling Fork has been tested by the elements before. The effects of economic stagnation have been compounded by repeated bouts of heavy rainfall that turn tame backwaters into flooded terrain. In a wet season, water can overtop levees and spill onto fertile soil, swallowing whatever ill-fated crops lie beneath.

In 2019, the worst flooding in the area since 1973 drove some from their homes. But the city now faces a rebuilding effort unlike any it has undertaken.

President Joe Biden, who toured the devastation, approved a disaster declaration for the state, freeing up federal funds for temporary housing, home repairs and loans to cover uninsured property losses. But there is concern about how the aid will be spent.

"The citizens have lost everything," said Calvin Stewart, a five-term alderman representing the city's first ward. "With all the funds people are trying to bring into the city, I need to make sure those funds get to the most impacted folks."

The influx of federal funds comes with Mississippi embroiled in its largest-ever corruption case. A welfare scandal has exposed how millions of dollars intended for the state's neediest people were instead diverted to the rich and powerful.

Amid a current of distrust, communities that have strong social and civic institutions before disasters strike do a better job of allocating relief funds and retaining residents, said David Peters, a professor of



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rural sociology at Iowa State University.

"When natural disasters like tornadoes or floods hit, communities take two different trajectories," Peters said. "Communities where there's strong social capital are fairly resilient. The problem is, those rural communities are fairly rare. In communities that have an absence of social capital, federal monies are mismanaged. And most often, people leave."

Tasmin Bee, a teacher, is among those who plan to stay, even though the storm blew the roof off the home she bought in August. With Rolling Fork's schools closed, she said she has to take her five children out of town to keep them busy.

"There is nothing here for kids. You don't even have a YMCA," Bee said. They got a city pool, but it's small. They had a baseball park. If you want to take the kids to the arcade or something like to have a good time, you've got to travel."

When Charlie Weissinger, the banker-farmer, needs a place to take his two sons, he brings them to the patch of farmland that has had its hooks in him for as long as he can remember.

"My boys can decide to go anywhere in the world they want to," Weissinger said. "But I get them down here, and they get a smell of the dirt. It will follow them for the rest of their lives."

Michael Goldberg is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues. Follow him on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/mikergoldberg>.

## China's Xi to meet Brazil's Lula in Beijing

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese leader Xi Jinping was due to meet visiting Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva on Friday in Beijing as the leaders seek to boost ties between two of the world's largest developing nations.

The meeting comes on the second day of Lula's visit to his country's most important trading partner and ally in his bid to challenge Western-dominated economic institutions.

The visit included the swearing in on Thursday of former Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff as head of the Chinese-backed New Development Bank, which is funding infrastructure projects in Brazil and elsewhere in the developing world.

That NDB portrays itself as an alternative to the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, which often impose loan conditions that developing nations criticize as punitive.

The Brazilian government says the sides are expected to sign at least 20 bilateral agreements, underscoring the improvement in relations since Lula took over from predecessor Jair Bolsonaro in January.

China is Brazil's biggest export market, each year buying tens of billions of dollars worth of soybeans, beef, iron ore, poultry, pulp, sugar cane, cotton and crude oil. Brazil is the biggest recipient of Chinese investment in Latin America, according to Chinese state media, although Lula has spoken against outright Chinese ownership of Brazilian companies.

Lula's China visit follows trips to Argentina and Uruguay in January and to the U.S. in February, signaling the importance he places on international affairs in contrast to Bolsonaro.

A key piece of Lula's outreach abroad is his proposal that Brazil and other developing countries, including China, mediate peace over Ukraine. However, his suggestion that Ukraine cede Crimea as a means to forge peace has angered Kyiv and its closest backers.

China has also sought to play a role in ending the conflict, though in a manner highly supportive of Moscow. It has refused to condemn the invasion, criticized economic sanctions on Russia and accused the U.S. and NATO of provoking the conflict.

Russia and China declared a "no limits" relationship in a 2022 joint statement and Xi reaffirmed the closeness of ties in March by meeting with President Vladimir Putin in Moscow.

A Chinese peace proposal presented in February contains aspects in common with Lula's, such as ceasing hostilities and starting negotiations, but says nothing about the return of Ukrainian territory seized by

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Russia and its separatist allies.

## **New this week: Jeremy Renner, Metallica and 'Cocaine Bear'**

By The Associated Press undefined

Here's a collection curated by The Associated Press' entertainment journalists of what's arriving on TV, streaming services and music and video game platforms this week.

### NEW MOVIES TO STREAM

— "Cocaine Bear" was technically inspired by a true story — a 1985 plane crash that scattered some \$2 million worth of cocaine across Georgia hillsides and resulted in the death of a 175-pound black bear, who overdosed. The film, however, is pure fantasy about what might have happened if the bear went on a coke rampage instead of dying. After its wild trailer went viral, the R-rated pic directed by Elizabeth Banks and starring Keri Russell and O'Shea Jackson Jr. left audiences somewhat divided. Some thought it a B-movie delight, others were left cold by the excess. And starting on Friday, via Peacock, you can access it at home to decide for yourself.

— Katie Holmes directs and stars in "Rare Objects," an adaptation of a novel by Kathleen Tessaro about a woman with a traumatic past trying to rebuild her life starting with a new job at a New York antique shop. Holmes has been working on making this film since 2016, and her adaptation moves the story from its Depression-era Boston origins to contemporary New York. In an interview with Variety, Holmes said she was drawn "to the female friendship and this metaphor of 'you are more beautiful for having been broken.'" The film opens in theaters and on demand on Friday.

— Also on demand, on Tuesday, is "Linoleum," a science fiction drama starring Jim Gaffigan as a children's television host who dreams of being an astronaut. The film, which premiered to favorable reviews at South by Southwest last year, turns into fantasy when a satellite lands in his backyard and he starts to try to build it into a rocket of his own. Rhea Seehorn co-stars.

— AP Film Writer Lindsey Bahr

### NEW MUSIC TO STREAM

— Let's just call this Metallica's week. On Thursday, the hard rockers have a listening party in movie theaters worldwide for their upcoming 12th studio album, "72 Seasons." The one-night event will feature the new music in surround sound with music videos and exclusive commentary from the band. The next day the album comes out on vinyl, CD and digital, their first collection of new material since 2016's "Hardwired... To Self-Destruct." Early singles include "Screaming Suicide" and "Lux Æterna," with James Hetfield singing "Full speed or nothing."

— Natalie Merchant returns with lush, gorgeous new horn-heavy music on the album "Keep Your Courage," her first collection of all-new material in almost 10 years. The album was produced by the former singer of 10,000 Maniacs and features contributions from Celtic folk group Lúnasa, Syrian clarinet player Kinan Azmeh, jazz trombonist Steve Davis and singer Abena Koomson-Davis, who adds joy and warmth to "Come On, Aphrodite." "For the most part, this is an album about the human heart. I think the pandemic was a great period of solitude and longing," Merchant says. "I craved and savored human connection; it was the only thing that really mattered."

— AP Entertainment Writer Mark Kennedy

### NEW TELEVISION TO STREAM

— The half-hour critically praised comedy "Single Drunk Female" returns for its second season on Freeform. Executive produced in part by Jenni Konner ("Girls"), it stars Sofia Black-D'Elia as a 20-something magazine writer named Samantha who at the beginning of season one, is sent to rehab after (repeatedly) getting drunk on the job and ultimately assaulting her boss as he's attempting to fire her. Samantha moves back home to build both a community and new life for herself, even if it's a life she never pictured. In season two, Samantha is confident and ready to expand her horizons with independence, like finding her own place, and romance. Season two of "Single Drunk Female" debuts Wednesday and the entire season will hit Hulu on Thursday.

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— Four months after surviving a serious snowplow accident in Nevada, Jeremy Renner's four-part series "Rennervations" debuts on Disney+ on Wednesday. The two-time Oscar nominee, who plays Hawkeye in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, will repurpose, and refurbish vehicles, to assist local communities. Examples include making a water treatment facility out of a delivery truck and transforming a tour bus into a mobile music studio. He's assisted by celebrity friends including fellow Marvel star Anthony Mackie and Vanessa Hudgens. Renner is so passionate about "Rennervations" that he attended a premiere on Tuesday in Los Angeles for the show's premiere.

— It's never too early to teach children about protecting the planet and a new educational series coming to Apple TV+ called "Jane" aims to do just that. "Jane" aims to introduce kids to the ideals and work of primatologist and conservationist, Dr. Jane Goodall. The series is a combo of live action and CGI and stars Ava Louise Murchison as 9-year-old Jane Garcia, who is passionate about protecting the environment and saving endangered animals. Using her creativity and imagination, Jane takes her best friends David and a chimpanzee named Greybeard on adventures around the globe to help rescue wild animals. "Jane" premieres globally on Friday on the streaming service.

— Alicia Rancilio

## NEW VIDEO GAMES TO PLAY

— The 1982 movie "Tron" wasn't a huge success, but it seems like everyone who did see it became a computer game designer. One such acolyte is Mike Bithell, creator of the award-winning indie games Thomas Was Alone and Subsurface Circular. His Bithell Games studio is behind Tron: Identity, a new cyberpunk adventure from Disney. In an abandoned sector of the Grid that's evolved in weird ways, your character is a "detective program" named Query assigned to investigate a break-in and robbery. It's a dialog-driven mystery broken up by defragging puzzles, and its neon-infused look is bound to appeal to anyone who grew up on PC games of the 1980s and '90s. Plug in Tuesday on Nintendo Switch and PC.

— Lou Kesten

Catch up on AP's entertainment coverage here: <https://apnews.com/apf-entertainment>.

## Workers at anti-poverty World Bank struggle to pay bills

By FATIMA HUSSEIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Andre Blount has been serving food to dignitaries at World Bank headquarters for nearly 10 years and says he has gotten exactly one raise -- for 50 cents.

This week, as leaders from around the world are in D.C for the spring meeting of the poverty-fighting organization, Blount and his coworkers are trying to bring attention to what they see as a galling situation:

The workers who put food on the table for an organization whose mission is to fight poverty are themselves struggling to get by. Union leaders say a quarter of the World Bank food workers employed as a contract laborers through Compass Group North America receive public benefits, like SNAP, or food stamps, just to make ends meet.

"It's sickening," Blount, 33, said as he joined red-shirted union members this week on a picket line outside the development bank on a hot afternoon. "They go around the world looking for how to help people, but you have hundreds of employees in D.C. who are struggling."

Inside, meanwhile, suited-up professionals were striding through a lobby where "End Poverty" T-shirts and tote bags are for sale.

The building's expansive cafeteria overlooks an indoor pond and caters to even the most particular palates. There's a soup station called "Ladle and Crust," a "Mediterranean Table" station serving hummus and tabouli, and a sushi chef offering made-to-order rolls and sashimi.

A nearby fine dining room for diplomats and special guests of the bank was hosting lunch for delegations from India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka.

Many of the food service workers, it turns out, come from countries to which the development bank sends missions.

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Blount, after a decade on the job, says he's paid \$18 an hour, above D.C.'s minimum wage of \$16.10. He says feeding some of the world's most important people in a variety of service and catering roles should pay more than the legal minimum.

Blount, a member of the Unite Here Local 23 chapter, is one of roughly 150 Compass workers employed at the World Bank. They are in the midst of contract negotiations, seeking higher wages and better health care benefits.

World Bank spokesperson David Theis said that while the bank is not a party to talks between the union and Compass Group, the bank's staff has "deep admiration and respect" for their food service colleagues. He said the bank ensured the workers were paid throughout the pandemic.

While \$18 per hour may seem like a lot in some areas, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's "living wage" index lists \$22.15 per hour for D.C.

Beginning July 1, the minimum wage in D.C. will increase to \$17 per hour for all workers, one of the highest minimums in the country. The increase comes as persistent high inflation eats at workers' paychecks and the median rent in Washington is \$2,571, according to Zillow.

"The World Bank says its mission is to promote shared prosperity by increasing the incomes of the poorest 40% of people in every country," Unite Here President D. Taylor said on a call with reporters.

"We think that first starts in the United States, by compensating food service workers here. They work hard every day yet struggle to pay their bills."

Compass Group spokesperson Lisa Claybon said the firm was bargaining in good faith and eager to reach a fair agreement. She added that the company has "long history" of working to "do what's best for our employees and clients."

The current negotiations also cover Compass workers who serve food at the Smithsonian, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the National Institutes of Health.

Alex Campbell, director of the International Trade Union Confederation's D.C. office, said workers around the globe "are suffering from a cost-of-living crisis that they didn't cause."

"To end poverty and promote shared prosperity in this turbulent moment, workers everywhere need decent living standards, basic rights on the job, and collective bargaining," Campbell said. "That's true from Compass employees here in D.C. to workers on projects funded by the World Bank Group anywhere in the world."

Blount said he simply believes that his job should pay him what he's worth. He added, "If I were to get a raise from Compass Group, it will help with saving up emergency funds, paying my bills on time instead of being late."

## Top 2024 hopefuls to address NRA convention after shootings

By WILL WEISSERT and TOM DAVIES Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Last year it was Uvalde. Now it's Nashville and Louisville. For the second year in a row, the National Rifle Association is holding its annual convention within days of mass shootings that shook the nation.

The three-day gathering, beginning Friday, will include thousands of the organization's most active members at Indianapolis' convention center and is attracting a bevy of top Republican presidential candidates — enough that it could help shape the early part of next year's GOP primary race.

It illustrates the stark reality that such shootings have become enough of the fabric of American life that the NRA can no longer schedule around them. Nor do they really want to: The convention falls on the second anniversary of the mass shooting at a FedEx facility in Indianapolis that killed nine people.

The NRA calls the convention "one of the most politically significant and popular events in the country, featuring our nation's top Second Amendment leaders." Republican Indiana state Rep. Ben Smaltz said that he appreciated the organization bringing its convention to Indianapolis for the third time in the past decade, and that he thought strong support for gun rights would be a key for any Republican seeking to win the party's presidential nomination.



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"To Republicans, the Second Amendment is very important," said Smaltz, who was the lead sponsor last year of repealing Indiana's requirement for a permit to carry a handgun in public. "To me, personally, it is, to the history of our country, it is important to talk about."

Former President Donald Trump will be speaking at the gathering, his first public appearance since being arrested and arraigned in New York last week on felony charges stemming from hush money payments made to a porn actor during his 2016 campaign.

His Secret Service protection means attendees can't have guns at the convention.

Trump's former vice president, Mike Pence, is also speaking as he considers his own 2024 White House bid. It will be the first time the pair has addressed the same campaign event on the same day since their estrangement following the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.

Two GOP Trump critics — former Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, who announced his 2024 campaign after news of the former president's indictment broke, and New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu, who may launch his own White House bid — will also speak.

Offering video messages are former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, who began her 2024 campaign in February; South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, who announced a presidential exploratory committee this week, and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who is seen as a top rival to Trump even though he's yet to jump into the race.

The convention follows shootings at a Louisville bank that killed five people this week and at a Christian school in Nashville on March 27 that killed three 9-year-old students and three staff members.

Pain over both shooting rampages has crossed party lines. Kentucky Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear talked about having a friend killed in the Louisville shooting, while Republican Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee said he had friends killed during the Nashville school attack.

The NRA convention's tone is nonetheless likely to be as defiant as last year, when the group held its convention in Houston just three days after the massacre of 19 students and two teachers at an elementary school across Texas in the town of Uvalde.

Further overlapping with recent tragedy, Pence and some of the other speakers plan to follow up their NRA speeches by traveling to Nashville to meet with top GOP donors gathered there.

"Every significant national Republican, every Republican that's thrown their hat in the ring to run for president, is showing up this weekend to pledge their undying loyalty to the NRA and the gun lobby," said Democratic Connecticut Sen. Chris Murphy, who championed bipartisan legislation that passed last year and imposed some new federal gun restrictions after the Uvalde shootings. "Our kids are being hunted and the NRA's business model is to give aid to the hunters."

Democratic National Committee Chair Jamie Harrison added, "Republicans are committed to their annual pilgrimage to the NRA convention. It's shameless."

Indeed, support for gun rights among Republican voters remains higher than for voters overall. Some 56% of voters in last fall's midterm elections said they want to see stricter nationwide gun laws, compared with just 28% of Republicans, according to AP VoteCast, a wide-ranging survey of the electorate.

About half of Republicans said gun laws should be left as they are.

Also on display Friday will be the resurgence of the NRA and the key role it is poised to play in next year's presidential race — in a stark departure from 2020. Back then, the organization was trying to regroup and saw its membership and political spending decline following serious legal and financial turmoil — including a failed bankruptcy effort, a class-action lawsuit and a fraud investigation.

Trump, meanwhile, has a contradictory history on guns. The NRA was a key backer of his 2016 campaign, spending some \$30 million to support a candidate who sometimes mentioned carrying his own gun and vowed to eliminate gun-free zones in schools and on military bases. Trump also pledged to establish a national right to carry.

But, as the country reeled from a series of mass shootings, Trump's administration banned bump stocks, which were used in a 2017 attack on a Las Vegas country music concert that killed 60 people. After the Parkland school shooting in Florida the following year, Trump urged congressional Republicans to expand background checks and proposed seizing guns from mentally ill people.

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He also suggested raising the minimum age to buy assault rifles from 18 to 21, and suggested he was open to a conversation about reviving assault weapons bans. After later meeting with the NRA, however, Trump abandoned his push, instead focusing on arming teachers and making schools more secure.

Gun rights advocates continue to celebrate a Supreme Court decision last June that said Americans have a right to carry firearms in public for self-defense. That opened the door to a wave of challenges to firearm restrictions across the country by changing the test that lower courts had long used for evaluating challenges to firearm restrictions.

Amid upheaval in the wake of the ruling, courts have declared unconstitutional laws including federal measures designed to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers and defendants under felony indictment, as well as a ban on possessing guns with the serial number removed. Courts are also considering challenges to state bans on AR-15-style semi-automatic rifles.

Attempting to counter gun rights advocates has been an ascendant gun safety movement that has poured tens of millions of dollars into political campaigns. That includes Moms Demand Action which was among a coalition of groups that derided Friday's speeches as "a cattle call of far-right" presidential candidates.

Weissert reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Jill Colvin in New York, Alanna Durkin Richer in Boston, Arleigh Rodgers in Indianapolis and Hannah Fingerhut in Washington contributed to this report.

## 'Quiet luxury': No flash, no logos, but big-time style

By LEANNE ITALIE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — They're the biggest of brands. But with no logos. And that's the whole point.

Call it stealth wealth, or quiet luxury. For the rich and those who aspire, logo-free fashion with outsized price tags is having a moment — at least among people who can spend in the face of higher inflation and a volatile economy.

It's a come-and-go trend that, while spiking in the pandemic's wake, traces its roots as far back as the American industrialists of the 19th-century Gilded Age and France in the 1700s. And retailers are taking note, as are more designers looking to capture not only the rich but their wannabes, too.

Think Hollywood nepo baby and Goop multimillionaire Gwyneth Paltrow and her head-to-toe Prada, luxurious cashmere sweaters and Celine boots during her week in a Utah courtroom in a dispute over a ski crash.

She was a picture of neutral-toned designer duds, and those who know luxury easily spotted the brands behind her staid, logoless, very pricey wardrobe.

"When you know, you know, and that's sort of the point," says Robert Burke, a luxury retail consultant. "The people they care about, the people in their rooms, know exactly what they're wearing. And they're the only ones who matter."

TV TRENDSETTERS

Cue HBO's hit "Succession," the story of the uber-rich, cutthroat Roys led by the snarly and — SPOILER — now-dead patriarch Logan.

Costume designer Michelle Matland has created pricey yet stealth wardrobes unique to key characters as they have evolved, delighting fans who have followed her fashion breadcrumbs since the show's 2018 premiere.

"It shouldn't have bling quality," she says. "You're always going to have your, I guess, Kardashians — you know, the people who wear things that draw attention. They may have the same amount of money, but different aspirations."

The stealth fashion world is perfectly tailored dark suits, often bespoke; bare baseball caps with perfectly rounded rims; and neutral power pieces worn by the only female Roy sibling, Shiv.

No logos for the Roys and their jet set, though one important striver in their midst had to learn about stealth wealth the hard way.

"It's incredibly accurate. Every time you look at it, it tells you exactly how rich you are," Shiv's outsider husband, Tom Wambsgans, tells Logan of the Patek Philippe he presents the billionaire early in "Succession."

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With a trademark mumble and nothing in the way of a thank you, Logan rebuffs, then gives away, the birthday gift emblazoned with the name of the company whose watches can sell for north of \$300,000.

Fast-forward to the latest season, at yet another Logan birthday bash. This time it's Tom, still the groveler but a far savvier one, dissing wannabe Bridget's display of luxury: a conspicuously huge \$2,890 Burberry tote in a plaid familiar to fans of the company, sans logo.

"She's brought a ludicrously capacious bag," Tom snarls at his underling, Greg. "What's even in there, huh? Flat shoes for the subway? Her lunch pail? I mean, Greg, it's monstrous. It's gargantuan. You could take it camping. You could slide it across the floor after a bank job."

## SPLASHY TO CLASSIC

Paltrow, to be fair, has always been drawn to a sleek, minimalist luxury. But her recent trial wardrobe was blasted out on TV at a time when more brands are putting understated (yet pricey) tones and shapes on runways and shelves.

Some are doing it while also staying true to customers living their spends out loud with flashy, recognizable silhouettes, fabrics, logos and bling.

"The stealth wealth mood was solidified in this season's buys when the usually splashier brands, like Loewe, Saint Laurent, Miu Miu, leaned into the more classic sensibility," says Jodi Kahn, vice president of luxury fashion at the high-end retailer Neiman Marcus.

Those designers joined companies that have always done it, including some worn on "Succession" and the back of Paltrow: The Row, Brunello Cucinelli and Loro Piana among them.

Burke says much of the moment can be explained by the pandemic, when young aspirational buyers flush with stimulus money and savings went after big brands with visibly big statements.

"To some degree, there is a fatigue now, along with uncertainty in the economy," he says. "People are feeling they don't want to show they have a lot of money necessarily."

The quiet luxury moment has counter-moments, as fashion cycles generally do.

Companies from toothpaste makers to discounters are putting more premium items like \$10 toothpastes and \$90 creams on supermarket shelves. Some are looking for new ways to pump up sales and profits by focusing on premium items amid an overall sales slowdown.

Martin Pedraza, CEO of The Luxury Institute, a research, consultancy and employee training firm, says stealth wealth is a long-standing code among the uber-rich. Now, with a white collar recession, "all the people getting laid off want to look very pristine."

Can they afford to do it in the \$1,390 Tom Ford hoodie worn by Kendall, another Roy? Maybe not, but they're picking up more affordable cashmere and other goods from mass-market labels like J.Crew, Banana Republic and Vince. It's the difference between \$400 or less and upwards of \$2,000.

"It's all about fabric and texture," Matland says. "You can have a cashmere sweater you get at J.Crew, but you can see the difference with what a more expensive one from another brand looks like."

## THE EVOLUTION OF QUIET

Analysts note that it's during good times when people want to show off, not when nerves are raw about financial futures. Explains Pedraza: The rich try to imitate the masses as those in the middle and top of the mass mimic the minimalist rich.

He cites other stealth eras in fashion. There was the minimalist aesthetic of the 1990s, when Donna Karan and Miuccia Prada made practical dressing fashionable, and a show of stealth wealth amid the recession of 2008-09.

Patricia Mears, deputy director of the Fashion Institute of Technology's Museum at FIT, goes back even further.

"People with real money and power have always done this, at least in the United States," she says. "We have this sort of WASP culture, Protestant culture, that turns away from maximalism."

That's only part of a larger story, Mears says.

"You really have to go back to the end of the 18th century. You have the fall of the French monarchy, and then you have this sort of dual rise of industrialization and the rise of urbanization. And so men step into what is called the Great Renunciation."

There's a turn away from powdered wigs and floral-brocaded suits covered with lace.

"All of this court life goes away, and now you have the real power base being the industrialists. They come in, they build wealth and power, and they're doing it in a uniform, the dark suit," Mears says. "A lot of scholars have said that this really becomes the respectable uniform if you want to be both powerful and understated."

Does mimicking stealth wealth work? Investing in quality staple pieces is achieved for longer-lasting wear and less waste, but trying to pull the wool over the eyes of the rich with cheaper alternatives can be a problem. Because after all, when you know, you know.

But minimalism isn't everything. No one expects that logos, along with recognizable signature prints and edgier silhouettes, are going anywhere.

"There will always be people who want the logos. Chanel could hardly give up its logo," Pedraza says. "But there are always going to be brands that cave to what's going on."

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Associated Press retail writer Anne D'Innocenzio in New York contributed to this story.

## India's stretched health care fails millions in rural areas

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL AP Science Writer

SURGUJA, India (AP) — Poonam Gond is learning to describe her pain by numbers.

Zero means no pain and 10 is agony. Gond was at seven late last month. "I have never known zero pain," she said, sitting in the plastic chair where she spends most of her days.

The 19-year-old has sickle cell disease, a genetic blood disorder. Her medicine ran out weeks ago.

Gond's social worker, Geeta Aayam, nods as she bustles around Gond. She has the same disease — but, with better care, leads a very different life.

Hundreds of millions of rural Indians struggle to access care for a simple reason: The country just doesn't have enough medical facilities.

India's population has quadrupled since its independence in 1947, and an already fragile medical system has been stretched too thin: In the country's vast countryside, health centers are rare, understaffed and sometimes run out of essential medicines. For hundreds of millions of people, basic health care means a daunting journey to a distant government-run hospital.

Such inequities aren't unique to India, but the sheer scale of its population — it will soon overtake China, making it the world's largest country — widens these gaps. Factors ranging from identity to income have cascading effects on health care, but distance is often how inequities manifest.

What that means for people with chronic problems like sickle cell disease is that small differences in luck can be life-changing.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This story is part of an ongoing series exploring what it means for the 1.4 billion inhabitants of India to live in what is now the world's most populated country.

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Gond's sickle cell disease was diagnosed late, and she often doesn't have access to medicine that keeps the illness under control and reduces her pain. Because of the pain, she can't work, and that further reduces her access to care.

Like Gond, Aayam was born into an Indigenous farming family in central India's Chhattisgarh state, but before her pain began she finished her studies and began working for the public health nonprofit Sangwari in the city. Older, educated and working alongside doctors, she was diagnosed promptly and received treatment. That allowed her to keep the disease under control, hold a job and get consistent care.

India's rural health system has weakened from neglect in past decades, and as health workers gravitated towards better-paying jobs in big cities. India spent only 3.01% of its gross domestic product on health in 2019, less than China's 5.3% and even neighboring Nepal's 4.45%, according to the World Bank.

In Chhattisgarh, which is among India's poorest states and also has a significant Indigenous population,



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there's about one doctor for every 16,000 people. By comparison, the urban capital of New Delhi has one doctor for around every 300 people.

"Poor people get poor health care," said Yogesh Jain, a public health specialist at Sangwari, which promotes health care access in rural India.

Gond, 19, saw her life go off track early. Her mother died because of sickle cell disease when she was 6, and the young woman dropped out of school at 14 to help at home. She needed frequent blood transfusions to manage the illness, forcing her to undertake the difficult journey to the district hospital.

But as her pain worsened, she couldn't even get out of bed. In 2021, she needed surgery when bone tissue in her hip died, starved of oxygen. She can no longer walk, sit or sleep without pain. Most days, she pulls the plastic chair where she spends hours to the doorway and looks out as the world passes her by.

Her former schoolmates are in college now and she wishes was with them.

"All I feel is anger. It eats away at my insides," she said.

Hydroxyurea, a pain-relieving drug that India approved in 2021 and provides for free, allows many patients to lead relatively normal lives, but Gond's medicine ran out weeks ago and pharmacists in her village in Surguja district don't have any.

When Gond gets on hydroxyurea for a few weeks, the pain gradually recedes, and she can move around more. But it often runs out, and the sprawling district has only one large government hospital for 3 million, mostly rural, inhabitants. To get medicine from the hospital, Gond's father would need to borrow a motorbike and skip a day's work every month — a significant sacrifice for the family, which lives on less than a dollar a day.

When things get very bad, Gond calls Aayam, the social worker, who drives over with the drugs. But there are thousands of patients who can't access health centers and Aayam can't do this often.

Sickle cell is an inherited disease in which misshapen red blood cells can't properly carry oxygen throughout the body. It can cause severe pain and organ damage and is commonly found in people whose families came from Africa, India, Latin America and parts of the Mediterranean.

In India, the disease is widely, but inaccurately, seen as only affecting the Indigenous population. Like many diseases associated with marginalized communities, it has long been neglected. India approved hydroxyurea for sickle cell disease two decades after the U.S.

The government's current strategy is to eliminate the disease by 2047. The plan is to screen 70 million at-risk people by 2025 to detect the disease early, while counseling those who carry the gene about the risks of marrying each other. But as of April it has only screened 2% of its 2023 target of 10 million people.

Experts warned that similar efforts have failed in the past. Instead, Jain, the public health specialist, argued for strengthening health systems so they can find, diagnose and treat the sick. If patients can't get to the hospital, he asked, "can the health system to go the people?"

Some are trying. Bishwajay Kumar Singh, an official at the Ambikapur hospital, and Nandini Kanwar, a nurse with Sangwari, traveled three hours through forested hills to Dumardih village at the edge of the Surguja district.

Raghubeer Nagesh, a farmer, had brought his son Sujeet, 13, to the hospital the day before. The boy was losing weight steadily, and then one afternoon his leg felt like it was burning. Tests confirmed that he had sickle cell disease. His worried father told hospital officials that several other children in the village had similar symptoms.

In Dumardih, Singh and Kanwar visited houses where people had symptoms, including one where a worried mother asked if the disease would stunt her child's growth and another where a young man who plays music at weddings found out that his pain wasn't just fatigue.

Efforts like this are dwarfed by the sheer scale of India's population. Dumardih has a few thousand residents, making it a tiny village by Indian standards. But the two can only visit four or five homes in a single trip, testing about a dozen people with symptoms.

Again and again, Singh and Kanwar were asked the same question: Is there really no cure? Faces fell as painful calculations were made. A disease that can't be cured means a lifelong reliance on an unreliable

health system, personal expenses and sacrifices.

Kanwar said they would help make the medicines available nearby, but taking it daily was essential. "Then, life can go on," she said.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Science and Educational Media Group. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## **UN: As many as 400,000 migrants may cross Darien Gap in 2023**

PANAMA CITY (AP) — Two U.N. groups said Thursday that the number of migrants crossing the dangerous Darien Gap between Colombia and Panama could soar to as many as 400,000 this year.

That would represent a huge increase from the 250,000 migrants estimated to have crossed the roadless, jungle-clad route in 2022.

The U.N. agencies for refugees and migration said in a report that nearly 100,000 people may have already made the crossing so far this year, six times more than in the similar period of last year.

If that trend keeps up, it could mean many more migrants seeking to reach the United States through Central America and Mexico.

The groups called it "an unprecedented movement (of people) through the Americas."

The United States pledged its forces will assist their Colombian and Panamanian counterparts with intelligence gathering to dismantle smuggling rings operating in the Darien Gap, which is a key route for migrants heading to the U.S. from South America, a senior Biden administration official said Wednesday.

The area is among the most dangerous portions of the long route to the U.S. borders. Migrants and international human rights groups have denounced sexual assaults, robberies and killings in the remote jungle. That's in addition to the natural dangers posed by venomous snakes and rushing rivers.

U.S. forces could assist in targeting smugglers for arrest and locating "stash houses" where smugglers hold migrants, the official said, without specifying whether the U.S. forces involved would be military or civilian law enforcement.

The United States, Panama and Colombia had announced Tuesday an ambitious 60-day campaign to shut down the Darien Gap route.

The official said the 60-day period had not started yet and was still under consideration, but the effort is part of a broader campaign to prepare for the end of pandemic-era restrictions on applying for asylum at the U.S. border set to expire May 11.

The same obstacles that make it a treacherous crossing for migrants will make it impossible for authorities to completely cut off. It is about 60 miles of roadless dense jungle used by organized criminal groups for smuggling drugs and people.

## **Senegal gas deal drives locals to desperation, prostitution**

By SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

SAINT-LOUIS, Senegal (AP) — When the gas rig arrived off the coast of Saint-Louis, residents of this seaside Senegalese town found reason to hope. Fishing has long been the community's lifeblood, but the industry was struggling with climate change and COVID-19. Officials promised the drilling would soon bring thousands of jobs and diversification of the economy.

Instead, residents say, the rig has brought only a wave of problems, unemployment and more poverty. And it's forced some women to turn to prostitution to support their families, they told The Associated Press in interviews.

To make way for the drilling of some 15 trillion cubic feet of natural gas (425 billion cubic meters) discovered off the coasts of Senegal and neighboring Mauritania in West Africa in 2015, access to fertile fishing waters was cut off, with the creation of an exclusion zone that prevents fisherman from working in the area.

At first, the restricted areas were small, but they expanded to 1.6 square kilometers (0.62 square miles), roughly the size of 300 football fields, with construction of the platform that looms about 6 miles (10

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kilometers) offshore.

Soon the work was overtaking the diattara, a word in the local Wolof language for the fertile fishing ground that lies on the ocean floor beneath the platform. With 90% of the town's 250,000 people relying on fishing for income, the catch — and paychecks — were shrinking. Boxes of fish turned into small buckets, then nothing at all.

Saint-Louis, Senegal's historic center for fishing, has faced many troubles over the past decade. Sea erosion from climate change washed away homes, forcing moves. Thousands of foreign industrial trawlers, many of them illegal, snapped up vast amounts of fish, and local men in small wooden boats couldn't compete. The COVID-19 pandemic shut down market sales of the tiny hauls they could manage.

The rig was the final straw for Saint-Louis, pushing it to the brink of economic disaster, according to locals, officials and advocates. The benefits promised from the initial discovery of energy off the coast haven't materialized. Production for the liquified natural gas deal — planned by a partnership among global gas and oil giants BP and Kosmos Energy and Senegal and Mauritania's state-owned oil companies — has yet to begin.

This story was supported by funding from the Walton Family Foundation. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Traditionally, many women make a living processing fish, while the men catch it; sons, husbands and fathers spend weeks at sea. But with the restrictions, families couldn't feed their children or pay rent. They begged for leftovers from neighbors. Some were evicted.

Senegalese officials and the gas companies say people should be patient, as jobs and benefits from the gas deal will materialize. But locals say they've been stripped of their livelihoods and provided with no alternatives. That's driven some women to prostitution, an industry that's been legal in Senegal for five decades but still brings shame for those who break cultural and religious norms.

For them, prostitution is faster and more reliable than working in a shop or restaurant — jobs that don't pay well and can be hard to find.

Four women who have started having sex with men for money since the rig came to town shared their stories with the AP on condition of anonymity because of the shame they associate with the work. They've hidden it from their husbands and families. They say they know many others like them.

The women explain the influx of cash as loans from friends and relatives. They know prostitution is legal but won't register with Senegalese officials. That would mean a health screening and an official ID to carry with them.

They're unwilling to legitimize work they say has been forced upon them.

For one family of seven, hitting bottom came when they were evicted. The father, a 45-year-old fisherman, lost his job. There wasn't enough food to feed the five children, ages 2 to 11.

The mother tried washing clothes and other jobs, but at less than \$10 a day, it wasn't enough. The family moved in with relatives and she had nothing to feed the children before school each morning.

"I'm obliged to find money through prostitution," she told the AP, her shoulders hunched and voice weary in a hotel room where she wouldn't be seen by her husband or friends.

"When we use the money, when my children eat the food I cook from that money, it's hard," she said.

The family and others in Saint-Louis learned of the gas discovery shortly after it was announced in 2015. Two years later, energy companies BP and Kosmos established a presence in both Senegal and Mauritania and partnered with Petrosen and SMHPM, the state-owned companies, respectively.

The Greater Tortue Ahmeyim project, as the overall deal is called, is expected to produce around 2.3 million tons (2.08 million metric tons) of liquified natural gas a year, enough to support production for more than 20 years, according to the gas companies. Total cost for the first and second phases is nearly \$5 billion, according to a report by Environmental Action Germany and Urgewald, a German-based environmental and human rights organization. The energy companies say phase one of the project is a multibillion-dollar

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investment, but didn't specify the amount.

Completion of phase one is expected by the end of this year, when gas production should start, the companies said.

As early as 2018, Saint-Louis residents say, they were warned they would lose access to some of their favored fishing waters. Installation of the breakwater, the area where the platform sits began by 2020.

BP is the operator and investor, owning nearly 60% of the project in Senegal and Mauritania. The deal promises to create thousands of jobs and provide electricity to a nation where approximately 30% of its 17 million people live without power.

The AP asked BP and Kosmos officials via email to comment for this story. The AP also sought comment about the companies' efforts to mitigate effects of lost income in the community, their response to the women who say they've turned to prostitution, and other matters related to the deal.

In a statement to the AP, spokesman Thomas Golembeski said Kosmos had worked to build community relationships and that its employees visit Saint-Louis regularly to inform people of operations and act on feedback. Golembeski emphasized the project will provide a source of low-cost natural gas and expand access to reliable, affordable and cleaner energy. He also cited access to a micro-finance credit fund established for the fishing community.

He referred other questions to BP, as operator of the project.

BP sent prepared statements in response to the AP's inquires. BP said it is engaging with the fishing communities in Senegal and Mauritania and trying to benefit the wider economy by locally sourcing products, developing the workforce and supporting sustainable development. More than 3,000 jobs in some 350 local companies have been generated in Senegal and Mauritania, according to the company. BP also cited its work to renovate the maternity unit at the Saint-Louis hospital and its help of 1,000 patients with a mobile clinic operating in remote areas.

But local officials, advocates and residents say they haven't seen many jobs or other options to combat the economic loss.

BP did not respond to follow-up questions. Neither BP nor Kosmos addressed the AP's questions about women who say they've been driven to prostitution.

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When locals talk about the hardships stemming from the gas project, they use just one word: Fuel. To them, it encompasses all they feel has gone wrong in the community.

The rig looms in the background off the coast. Easy to spot on a clear day, the lights on the platform shine at night and resemble a cruise ship docked offshore. The smell of fish still permeates Saint-Louis, as pirogues — small wooden boats — line the shores and horse-drawn carts carry the diminishing catch to town.

Seasoned fisherman who've weathered past storms and changes to the industry say the gas deal poses problems on a different scale, largely thanks to the exclusion zone. Smaller boats aren't equipped to venture past it, creating overcrowding in other fishing areas and depleting stocks for fisherman.

"Going to the diattara now is like going to hell," said Aminou Kane, vice president for the Association of Fishermen Anglers of Saint-Louis.

Since the area became inaccessible, fisherman are quitting, risking their lives migrating to Europe, or fishing illegally in neighboring Mauritania where they face arrest, he said.

Kane, 46, is in the last group. He used to earn more than \$1,000 a week fishing in Senegal and now makes roughly half that fishing secretly across the border, he said.

The mother who described turning to prostitution said her husband, too, tried to fish in Mauritanian waters. He left home to seek work there one year ago and she hasn't heard from him since.

Despite money coming in from prostitution, the women who spoke to the AP said they and others struggle to feed and shelter their families. Some have pulled children out of private school because they can't pay tuition.

The women can earn about \$40 per client. Most work several times per week, in hotels or at the men's



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homes when wives are away. The women describe most clients as well-off Senegalese men, including business leaders and government officials, though some are from neighboring or Western countries.

They find the clients through local contacts. In some cases, the men are family friends to whom the women initially turned to for money or loans. But they say the men eventually insisted upon sex in return for the cash. Some of the men paid well at first, but not as much anymore.

In other cases, women go through intermediaries with established networks of men looking for prostitutes.

A woman who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity said she's been running a business in Saint-Louis connecting men with prostitutes for seven years. She uses the name Coumbista in her work to protect her identity from her family and said she's seen her clientele drop in recent years, with young fisherman seeing a loss of income due to the gas project.

Simultaneously, she said, the number of women seeking sex work spiked, increasing her roster by half. She knows of nearly 30 women who started sex work because of gas-related financial woes, and because of general poverty. Most then do the work secretly, she said.

A 29-year-old who turned to her for help last year after her husband stopped fishing sneaks out of the house several times a week after putting their three children to bed. She tells her husband she's going to see friends or family.

"I am always afraid that I'll be seen by people who know me," she told the AP in the backseat of a car turning onto a quiet downtown street as she pointed to a nondescript building, one of two hotels where she has had sex with more than 20 men since she started. "I never thought that one day I would be doing this."

The local government admits there has been an increase in illegal prostitution in recent years in Saint-Louis. Officials attribute the rise not directly to the energy deal, but to economic troubles overall.

"It's not only the fishermen population or the traders, but it's poverty in general that forces women into prostitution," said Lamine Ndiaye, deputy to the Saint-Louis mayor.

People's grievances about the rig are overblown and the community needs to be patient as it will take time to see the dividends, at least until after production, he said.

\_\_\_ Fossil fuel extraction hits communities particularly hard when the local economy depends on natural resources, according to environmental experts.

"If the land or sea that farmers or fishers rely on is poisoned and out of bounds, then their jobs and access to food have been robbed, and their communities can fall apart," said Dr. Aliou Ba, head of Greenpeace Africa's oceans campaign and a Senegalese resident. "That has happened in several countries in Africa, including in the Niger Delta. Oil and gas came in, contaminated the water, killed the fish and ruined many fishers' way of life."

He said the process is already playing out in Saint-Louis, and the community is suffering: "If the authorities let this spread along our coast, hundreds of thousands of fisheries jobs will be at risk, and the millions of people in this region who depend on fish for protein will be threatened."

Shortly after the gas deal was signed, the companies noted there could be problems in Saint-Louis. A 2019 environmental and social impact assessment by BP and its partners said there were "a lot of uncertainties around the consequences for Saint-Louis fisherman of losing access to potential fishing grounds." Still, it considered the intensity of the impact low, according to the report.

To mitigate economic consequences, the gas companies are evaluating options for a sustainable artificial reef project in Senegal and supporting 47 national apprentice technicians on a multiyear training program in preparation to work offshore and create jobs and supply chain opportunities, BP said in statements.

The technicians have been provided with 16 months of university training at Scotland's Glasgow Caledonian university and will gain internationally recognized qualifications, BP said.

BP did not respond to questions about whether it stood by the company's initial risk assessment.

Papa Samba Ba, director of hydrocarbons for Senegal's gas and energy ministry, said the objective is that by 2035 half of all gas projects will go to local jobs, companies and services.

Phase one of the project will invest about 8.5% of the gas into Senegal; however, the local gas market

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isn't set up yet and could take up to two years to be operational, he said.

There's also concern among industry experts that because Senegal doesn't have a history of oil and gas drilling, it won't have enough skilled laborers, despite the training.

Fossil liquified natural gas infrastructure provides few direct jobs, and those often go to experts from outside the community, not locals, said Andy Gheorghiu, a climate consultant and co-founder of the Climate Alliance against LNG, a German-based organization focused on the environment.

Some experts point to scenarios that have played out in the U.S. In the fishing village of Cameron in Louisiana, which operates gas export terminals, people haven't benefited from promised jobs and fishermen have been displaced from the community, according to locals.

"If you drive around Cameron Parish, home of three of these export terminals, you would not believe that these terminals have benefited the community in any way," said James Hiatt, who lives close to Cameron and is director of For a Better Bayou, an environmental organization. The gas companies promised a new marina, restaurant and fishing pier, none of which have opened, he said.

The AP emailed Venture Global, the gas terminal operator that residents say made the promises multiple times but received no response.

Environmental watchdogs say it would make more sense to invest in renewable energy. Senegal could create more than five times as many jobs in that sector yearly until 2030, compared with jobs in the fossil fuel industry, according to the Climate Action Tracker, an independent project that tracks government climate action.

But despite the suffering the community attributes to the gas, most say they don't want the companies to leave. What they want is for the situation to change.

"When I think of my former life and my life today, it's hard," said one 40-year-old woman, wiping away tears.

The mother of three said she had to resort to prostitution last year after her husband left the city and cut contact. She's pulled two of her children out of private school and sent them to public school, where the teachers sometimes don't show up for days.

"I hope someone can help me out of this situation," she said. "One in which no one would ever want to live."

## Guardman arrested in leak of classified military documents

By ERIC TUCKER, TARA COPP and MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Massachusetts Air National Guard member was arrested Thursday in connection with the disclosure of highly classified military documents about the Ukraine war and other top national security issues, an alarming breach that has raised fresh questions about America's ability to safeguard its most sensitive secrets.

The guardsman, an IT specialist identified as 21-year-old Jack Teixeira, was taken into custody without incident after FBI officers converged on his Massachusetts home. Attorney General Merrick Garland said he is to be charged with removing or transmitting classified national defense information, a crime under the Espionage Act.

Garland did not reveal a possible motive, but accounts of those in the online private chat group where the documents were disclosed have depicted Teixeira as motivated more by bravado than ideology.

While Thursday's arrest was a pivotal moment in an investigation into the highest-profile intelligence leak in years, the military and Justice Department were still scrutinizing how sensitive government secrets shared in a chat room ended up circulating around the world. The emergence of Teixeira as a primary suspect is bound to raise questions about how such a profound breach, one that the Pentagon termed a "very serious risk to national security," could have been caused by such a young, low-ranking service member.

"We entrust our members with a lot of responsibility at a very early age. Think about a young combat platoon sergeant, and the responsibility and trust that we put into those individuals to lead troops into combat," said Brig. Gen. Patrick Ryder, a Pentagon spokesman.

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Teixeira was a “cyber transport systems specialist,” essentially an IT specialist responsible for military communications networks, including their cabling and hubs. In that role Teixeira would have had a higher level of security clearance because he would have also been tasked with responsibility for ensuring protection for the networks, a defense official told The Associated Press, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive matters.

Hours after the arrest, Rep. Mike Turner, the Republican chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, issued a statement pledging to “examine why this happened, why it went unnoticed for weeks, and how to prevent future leaks.”

Teixeira, who was wearing a T-shirt and shorts at the time heavily armed tactical agents took him into custody, is due to have his initial court appearance in Massachusetts on Friday. He could also face charges in a military court.

It was not immediately clear if he had a lawyer who could speak on his behalf, and a phone message left at a number believed to belong to his mother was not returned.

Garland said the investigation is ongoing, but did not say if other suspects were being pursued.

The Biden administration has scrambled to contain the potential diplomatic and military fallout from the leaks since they were first reported last week, moving to assure allies and assess the scope of damage. Pentagon officials have expressed alarm about the breach. President Joe Biden downplayed the lasting impact of the revelations, telling reporters in Ireland earlier Thursday that “there’s nothing contemporaneous that I’m aware of that is of great consequence.”

The classified documents — which have not been individually authenticated by U.S. officials — range from briefing slides mapping out Ukrainian military positions to assessments of international support for Ukraine and other sensitive topics, including under what circumstances Russian President Vladimir Putin might use nuclear weapons.

There’s no clear answer on how many documents were leaked. The Associated Press has viewed approximately 50 documents; some estimates put the total number in the hundreds.

The leak is believed to have started on a site called Discord, a social media platform popular with people playing online games and where Teixeira is believed to have posted for years about guns, games and his favorite memes — and, according to some chatting with him, closely guarded U.S. secrets.

The investigative website Bellingcat and The New York Times first publicly identified Teixeira, minutes before federal officials confirmed he was a subject of interest in the investigation. They reported tracking profiles on other more obscure sites linked to Teixeira.

In previous Associated Press stories, the leaker was identified as “the O.G.” by a member of the online chat group. The person declined to give his name to the AP, citing concerns for his personal safety.

The chat group, called Thug Shaker Central, drew roughly two dozen enthusiasts who talked about their favorite types of guns and also shared memes and jokes, some of them racist. The group also held a running discussion on wars that included talk of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

In that discussion, “the O.G.” would for months post material that he said was classified — originally typing it out with his own notations, then a few months ago switching to posting images of folded-up papers because he felt his writings weren’t being taken seriously, the person said.

Discord has said it was cooperating with law enforcement.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, in a statement issued after the arrest, said the Pentagon would conduct a review of its “intelligence access, accountability and control procedures” to prevent such a leak from happening again.

There are only a few ways the classified information that was leaked could have been accessed. Typically in classified briefings with slides like those that were placed on Discord, the information is shared electronically. That can be done either through secure computer terminals where users gain access based on their credentials or through tablets that are distributed for briefings and collected later.

If the slides need to be printed out instead, they can only be sent to secured printers that are able to handle classified documents — and that keep a digital record of everyone who has requested a printout.

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For those with a security clearance, their handling of classified material is based largely on training and trust that they will safeguard the information.

"When you join the military, depending on your position, you may require a security clearance," Ryder said. "And if you are working in the intelligence community, and you require a security clearance, you're going to go through the proper vetting."

Ryder said each service member who obtains a clearance signs a non-disclosure agreement and is trained on the military's strict guidelines for handling classified material. The leaks were "a deliberate criminal act, a violation of those guidelines."

Associated Press writers Michelle R. Smith in Dighton, Massachusetts, Nomaan Merchant, Zeke Miller and Tara Copp in Washington, Alanna Durkin Richer in Boston and Colleen Long and Darlene Superville in Dublin contributed to this report.

## Trump answers questions for 7 hours in NY fraud lawsuit

By MICHAEL R. SISAK ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP) — Former President Donald Trump answered questions for nearly seven hours Thursday during his second deposition in a legal battle with New York's attorney general over his company's business practices, reversing an earlier decision to invoke his Fifth Amendment protection against self-incrimination and remain silent.

The Republican met all day with lawyers for Attorney General Letitia James, who sued Trump last year. Her lawsuit claims Trump and his family misled banks and business associates by giving them false information about his net worth and the value of assets such as hotels and golf courses.

Shortly after Trump entered the Manhattan skyscraper that houses James' offices, his attorney, Alina Habba, said he was "not only willing but also eager to testify."

After the deposition was finished, a lawyer for Trump's businesses, Christopher Kise, said the former president had spent nearly seven hours "describing in detail his extraordinary business success."

"The transactions at the center of this case were wildly profitable for the banks and for the Trump entities," Kise said. "When the facts of this success, and not politically engineered soundbites, are out in the open, everyone will scoff at the notion any fraud took place."

The lawsuit is unrelated to the felony criminal charges filed against Trump by the Manhattan district attorney, which led last week to his historic arraignment, the first for a former president.

James declined to answer a question about the deposition at a news conference on an unrelated matter Wednesday.

Trump previously met with James' lawyers Aug. 10, but refused to answer all but a few procedural questions, invoking his Fifth Amendment rights more than 400 times. At the time, James had not yet brought her lawsuit and it was unclear whether questions about the way Trump valued his company would become the basis of a criminal case.

"Anyone in my position not taking the Fifth Amendment would be a fool, an absolute fool," he said in that deposition, which was recorded on video and later released publicly. Trump predicted a "renegade" prosecutor would try to make a criminal case out of his answers, if he gave them.

"One statement or answer that is ever so slightly off, just ever so slightly, by accident, by mistake, such as it was a sunny, beautiful day, when actually it was slightly overcast, would be met by law enforcement at a level seldom seen in this country, because I've experienced it," he said.

Circumstances since then have changed. The criminal charges brought by the Manhattan district attorney focused on how the company accounted internally for payments to a lawyer, Michael Cohen, for his work paying off people not to go public with stories about extramarital sexual encounters Trump said never happened.

James' lawsuit focused on allegations that Trump lied repeatedly about his own wealth and exaggerated the value of his assets on financial statements.



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In a social media post Thursday morning, Trump called the suit “ridiculous, just like all of the other Election Interference cases being brought against me.”

He raised a fist as he left his apartment at Trump Tower in the morning, arriving by motorcade at the attorney general’s office around 9:40. The two sides took a break for lunch. Trump departed in the motorcade just before 6:15 p.m. and did not stop to speak to reporters.

The lawsuit James brought is scheduled to go to trial in October. Video recordings of Trump’s depositions could potentially be played at the trial, if the lawsuit is not settled.

Thursday’s deposition was conducted in private.

## G7 diplomats to grapple with Ukraine, China, N. Korea crises

By FOSTER KLUG Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Russian threats to nuke Ukraine. China’s belligerent military moves around rival Taiwan. North Korea’s unprecedented run of missile testing.

The top diplomats from some of the world’s most powerful democracies will have plenty to discuss when they gather in the hot spring resort town of Karuizawa on Sunday for the so-called Group of Seven foreign ministers’ meeting.

Some believe that with the weakening of the United Nations, amid Russian and Chinese intransigence on the Security Council, global forums like the G7 are even more important. But there’s also considerable doubt that diplomats from mostly Western democracies can find ways to influence, let alone stop, authoritarian nations that are more and more willing to use violence, or its threat, to pursue their interests.

Besides the global hotspots, foreign ministers from Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Canada, Italy and the European Union are expected to discuss ways to improve human rights and democracy, and also issues important to poorer nations that may feel underrepresented by the focus on wealthy countries with stable governments.

The agenda will be dominated, however, by worries over Russia, China and North Korea, and an awareness of the unmistakable interconnectedness of these and other foreign policy headaches.

This year’s G7 meetings are the most important in the gathering’s history, given the pressing need to end Russia’s war in Ukraine and to stop a potential invasion of Taiwan by China, according to Yuichi Hosoya, an international politics professor at Keio University in Japan.

With the stakes so high, here is a look at what diplomats will face in talks that end Tuesday:

### THE WAR IN UKRAINE

A broad concentration on nuclear issues was always going to be important at this year’s G7 talks, which culminate with the main leaders’ summit next month in Hiroshima, the target of the first nuclear bomb used in war.

The issue is more urgent amid fears that Russian President Vladimir Putin, as he becomes desperate over failures in Ukraine, might use a tactical nuclear weapon to win the war.

China is seen as one of the few nations that might influence Russia’s moves in Ukraine, and the foreign policy alignment between the world’s two largest autocracies will be a major focus in Karuizawa.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping, who appears increasingly emboldened to pursue his authoritarian impulses, recently traveled to Moscow and committed to deepen bilateral relations. That has “cast a shadow over hopes that Beijing would pressure Putin to draw down (his) conflict,” according to Stephen Nagy, an Asia expert at International Christian University in Tokyo.

During his visit to Beijing this month, French President Emmanuel Macron appealed to Xi to “bring Russia to its senses,” but received only a tepid response and additional calls for a political resolution.

Japan might use the G7 to announce a boost to its already substantial support of Ukraine, said Jeffrey Hall, a lecturer at Kanda University of International Studies.

“Japan’s leadership sees cooperation on security issues related to Ukraine as a possible avenue towards greater security cooperation in the Pacific,” Hall said.

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## CHINA'S RISE

China's increasingly bold attempts to intimidate self-governing Taiwan were on full display when Beijing recently sent planes and ships to conduct a simulated encirclement of the island, which China claims as its territory. China's broad military expansion, including a rapid jump in its nuclear warheads, a tougher line on its claim to the South China Sea and recent statements from Xi painting a scenario of impending confrontation have galvanized fears among G7 nations.

Beijing and Pyongyang are especially worried about Japanese military expansion, which they see as an attempt to "weaken both capitals' efforts to rewrite the regional security architecture in their favor," Nagy said.

Under Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Tokyo has made a major break from its self-defense-only post-World War II principles, looking to acquire preemptive strike capabilities and cruise missiles to counter growing threats from North Korea, China and Russia.

While the G7 examines ways to manage China's rise, Beijing is bolstering relations with countries from Pakistan to Argentina eager for trade and investment. This will massively expand China's global footprint and challenge North American and European attempts to link investment to good governance and respect for human rights.

Kishida's decision to invite Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the leaders' summit next month "signals Japan's desire to strengthen security cooperation with one of China's rivals. When Japan calls for a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific,' it is calling for nations to stand against the way China and Russia conduct themselves internationally," Hall said. \_\_\_\_

## NORTH KOREAN THREATS

This year's G7 talks are crucial in revitalizing diplomacy aimed at pressuring a hostile North Korea to return to disarmament negotiations, especially with a dysfunctional U.N. Security Council that's divided between permanent members, according to Park Won Gon, a professor at Seoul's Ewha Womans University.

Since last year North Korea has test-fired around 100 missiles, including intercontinental ballistic missiles that showed the potential of reaching the U.S. mainland and a variety of other shorter-range weapons that threaten South Korea and Japan.

Leader Kim Jong Un may be looking to use the global distraction of Russia's war on Ukraine to expand a nuclear arsenal he sees as the strongest guarantee of his family's dynastic rule.

Beijing and Moscow last year blocked a U.S.-led drive to tighten Security Council sanctions on North Korea over its major missile tests.

It's unlikely that the Security Council will tighten sanctions even if North Korea conducts what would be its first nuclear test since 2017. But a meaningful punitive response could be generated by a network of unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States, its allies and "like-minded" European partners gathered at the G7, a tact similar to the way Washington pressures Moscow over its aggression in Ukraine, Park said.

"The importance of the G7 has been greatly strengthened as it's obvious that the role and function of the U.N. Security Council is being unraveled by Russia and China and there is a need to find something new to replace it," Park said.

AP writers Kim Tong-hyung in Seoul and Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo contributed to this story.

## Snowmelt spurs flooding from Southwest to Rockies, 2 rescues

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — A rapid spring snowmelt after an unusually wet winter is unleashing flooding from the Southwest to the Rockies, causing residents there and in the Upper Midwest to evacuate or stock up on sandbags amid surging creeks and rivers.

In New Mexico, emergency crews rescued people from at least two vehicles from high water Thursday night in Jemez Pueblo north of Albuquerque, the National Weather Service said.

But there were no immediate reports of any deaths or serious injuries. A flood warning was in effect for

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communities along the Jemez River into next week.

In Flagstaff, Arizona, neighbors on one street have been working side by side since Tuesday with shovels to stave off floodwaters from their homes.

Three creek-retention basins installed last year helped better navigate water that rushed down from burned mountains above the city, officials said. Still, water engulfed the shoulder of a local highway, and several roads and sidewalks were closed this week as the weather warmed and snow melted, making its way into neighborhoods. Sections of urban trails also were submerged.

Officials said it was a scenario that came without a playbook.

"It would be nice to have an exact model of what we need to do, but we don't," Flagstaff Vice Mayor Austin Aslan told the Arizona Daily Sun. "We don't know what the next fire will look like, or where that scar will be. There's small differences that will direct water to one neighborhood or another."

Sandoval County in north-central New Mexico issued an emergency disaster declaration in the wake of severe flooding in communities near the Jemez River.

No evacuations had been ordered, but residents in an area between Jemez Pueblo and Jemez Springs that regularly floods in the summer rainy season were collecting sandbags as a precaution. A local police chief estimated a dozen homes and other structures along the river could be at risk of being inundated with water.

"Warm temperatures continue to cause rapid melting of snowpack, causing increased river flows," the National Weather Service in Albuquerque said Thursday night.

The deluge also led to spillover from a wastewater treatment plant, which was contributing recycled water into the Jemez River. The U.S. Forest Service advised people not to fish in the river or drink water south of the plant.

In Salt Lake City, Mayor Erin Mendenhall signed an emergency order late Wednesday aimed at helping residents whose homes were threatened by flooding in the southeastern part of the city. Rapidly melting snow in the nearby mountains sent water coursing through a creek in the neighborhood, prompting the voluntary evacuation of about 100 homes.

The water was receding as cooler weather moved into the area. Even so, multiple mudslides were reported on canyon roads, including one that forced the temporary closure of Interstate 80 southeast of the city early Thursday.

On Wednesday, local officials north of Salt Lake City issued evacuation orders for at least 20 homes in Kaysville, where flooding ripped a large gash that damaged a street, sidewalks and driveways in a subdivision that was under construction.

Meanwhile, heavy snowpack and highs expected to reach 60 degrees Thursday were causing flooding in northwest Colorado, where transportation officials closed Highway 40 between Craig and Steamboat Springs, a popular ski area that has received more than 400 inches (1,016 centimeters) of snow this winter.

Flooding in the small mountain town of Hayden forced schools to close. Rain was in the forecast Thursday afternoon, with the expectation of turning to snow overnight.

The Colorado Department of Transportation posted photos online showing Dry Creek spilling over its banks at a bridge there, as well as floodwater threatening several parked recreational vehicles.

The National Weather Service said some roads might become impassable during the weekend and urged motorists not to drive through flooded crossings.

There were no reports of major damage, however, in Utah or Colorado as of Thursday.

In the Northern Plains, a speedy snowmelt and possible April showers stoked fears of heavy flooding. Residents have been assembling thousands — if not hundreds of thousands — of sandbags to hold back water.

The Red River Valley, which includes Fargo in North Dakota and Moorhead in Minnesota, had one of the snowiest winters on record. Heavy rain could cause the river to rise quickly, Moorhead city engineer Bob Zimmerman told Minnesota Public Radio.

Minnesota's Democratic Gov. Tim Walz said Thursday at a news conference that the state is ready to respond with financial help for flooding if needed.

He added that warmer temperatures and rising waters from climate change have factored into the state's

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months-long preparation for the spring flooding season.

Local, state and federal public safety and emergency management partners have ramped up monitoring and preparation efforts, according to the state's Department of Public Safety.

North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum has declared a statewide emergency for spring flooding, and he made the National Guard available to help fight floods in the coming weeks, the Bismarck Tribune reported. The city of Bismarck opened sites for residents to fill their own sandbags.

In northern Montana, the Milk River was expected to rise to its highest level in more than a decade and swamp some rural areas.

Emergency officials along the river in Glasgow were patrolling the levee protecting the city of about 3,200 people to make sure it held up, said Valley County Disaster and Emergency Services coordinator Rick Seiler. Shelters were being arranged in case low-lying areas need evacuations.

The flooding was forecast to continue through next week, according to the National Weather Service.

Heavy rain was falling across the region on Thursday while snow continued to pile up at higher elevations, Seiler said.

Associated Press writers Trisha Ahmed in Minneapolis; Matthew Brown in Billings, Montana; Terry Tang in Phoenix; Thomas Peipert in Denver; and Scott Sonner in Reno, Nevada, contributed to this report.

## A cyclone-hit Indian hamlet pins its hopes on a sea wall

By LEKSHMI GOPALAKRISHNAN, Press Trust of India undefined

KOCHI, India (AP) — Nearly two years ago, Mary Sebastian was hoisted on a chair and carried by a policeman in waist-deep floodwaters, leaving behind her now damaged home where she had spent more than 70 years of her life. She never thought she would return.

So, when Sebastian, now 85, recently recounted her experience during Cyclone Tauktae, which hammered parts of southern India in May 2021, she became emotional as the memories came rushing back. Having returned to the same tiny, tiled-roof home, she expressed hope that a sea wall being erected on the coast just in front of her house would check raging waves of the Arabian sea and keep her safe.

"I feel that at least now we have a shield to protect the coast," she said. "To stop the waves suddenly hitting the shores and sending it back to the sea."

"Nothing like that had been here for years," she added.

Like many native dwellers of Chellanam, a fishing hamlet of 40,000 people in India's southern state of Kerala, Sebastian is living with fears of many weather events exacerbated by climate change: cyclones, surging seas, flooding and erosion. Tens of millions of people in India, this year expected to become the world's most populous nation, live along coastlines and thus are exposed to major weather events.

One common adaptation technique, in India and other countries hit hard by rising seas and oceanic storms, is to build sea walls. While they provide a barrier that seas have to get over, scientists and climate adaptation experts warn that such structures can only provide so much protection.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is part of a series produced under the India Climate Journalism Program, a collaboration between The Associated Press, the Stanley Center for Peace and Security and the Press Trust of India.

Deadly tropical cyclones like Tauktae and Ockhi a few years before, in 2017, formed in the Arabian Sea, devastated the hamlet and aggravated the existing coastal issues. For years, different parts of Chellanam and surrounding areas have had a patchwork of small sea walls and other methods to try and reduce destruction.

At least 10,000-12,000 residents are affected by the coastal erosion and extreme wave issues every year, according to K L Joseph, former president of Chellanam's village council.

Joseph said Chellanam has tried other methods to protect homes and people, such as a large project some years ago involving geotubes. Laid along coastlines, tubes made of polymer are filled with sand, thus providing a barrier that is flexible to accommodate waves. But parts of the tubes broke apart, with



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local news reports recounting how chunks were washed out to sea.

"It failed," Joseph said of the project.

Less-than-certain protection isn't the only downside of any kind of sea barrier. Erecting a structure to keep waves in check simply means the water, pushed back to sea, will go somewhere else, potentially creating higher surf in other parts of nearby coastlines, which may not have sea walls. Sea walls also limit, or altogether remove, a beach area. Fishermen in Chellanam have already had to move where they dock their boats.

Joseph Mathew, a Kerala-based coastal protection expert, said the loss of the beach will disrupt Chellanam's ecosystem. For example, waves hitting the sea wall will be pushed toward the ends of the wall, creating higher surf, and thus erosion, in those areas.

"It denies a permanent ecosystem for beach fauna," he said. "Creatures cannot survive in a place where waves break constantly."

For years, Chellanam witnessed intense protests demanding that authorities provide a more permanent solution to protect the shores. Last year, Pinarayi Vijayan, the state's chief minister, inaugurated a new coastal protection project that included a sea wall made of concrete structures called tetrapods and a network of groynes, low barriers built from the coast into the sea.

Today, heaps of dusty granites and tetrapods, weighing between 2,000 to 5,000 kilograms (4,409 to 11,023 pounds) line broken pathways and vacant plots near the Chellanam coastline, about 20 kilometers (12 miles) from the port city of Kochi. A chain of six T-shaped groynes is also under construction.

"DANGER. STAY OUT FROM SUSPENDED LOADS," warns a sign with an image of a stickman potentially being crushed by a tetrapod.

With much of the first phase of the new sea wall completed in a 7 kilometer (4 mile) stretch from Chellanam harbor to Puthenthodu Beach, at least for now residents like Sebastian feel more secure.

She and other family members living with her — a son, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren — are still processing painful memories from the cyclone that washed away their savings and many dreams.

In the aftermath, there was nothing but some chunks of previous sea barriers and a fence of sandbags that her son, Esidor Rajan, and some neighbors had filled every year.

All the furniture, silverware and their television were either washed away or destroyed in flooding, his wife Juliet recalled.

"Some noble people gave us their used television, utensils and so on," she said. "Now, we are surviving with this."

The family tried to leave the home for good, spending stints with extended family or in relief shelters, but ultimately returned because they couldn't afford to rent another place.

Today, freshly painted walls of the living room have cracks, fissures and mud marks behind the plastering, subtle remnants of the destructive cyclone.

Memories and remnants of destruction are all around the area.

Reetha Maria, 55, a resident of nearby Kandakkadavu ward, has yet to recover from the frightening sight she came across after the cyclone hit.

"I was shocked to see waves carrying huge granite stones of the old sea wall and tons of water gushing directly to my home. You may have no idea how many days that we took to clean the stinking mud and filth brought by the seawater," she said.

Hima Rose, 29, showed her balcony garden, where a hybrid mango tree and curry leaf plant among some other such fauna, are planted on colorful pots.

"This is nothing but post-cyclone impact," she said with a smile. "We don't want to lose our darling plants to yet another cyclone and high waves. So, we decided to grow them on the balcony. Luckily, we have a two-story house."

Rose said that after Tauktae, she welcomed neighbors to her home, providing them shelter and food for several days.

Today, construction work on the sea wall is almost complete in Kandakkadavu.

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As the sun sets in the evenings, children climb the slanting granite structures and sit atop the tetrapods. An abandoned one-story house, battered by the cyclone, remains standing just some meters (yards) away from the sea wall, a constant reminder of the harrowing aftermath of the cyclone's sea surge, displacements and relief camps.

For those who can't afford to leave their homes, and live and work along the coast, the construction of the sea wall is priceless but not a complete fix, as workers race to finish before the next monsoon, which could be any day now.

Sebastian, a fisherman who is in his late seventies who only gave his first name, summed up the cautious optimism many are feeling.

"We can be confident about the new sea wall only after another mighty cyclone like Tauktae hits the shore," he said.

## Russian court fines Wikipedia for article about Ukraine war

A Moscow court on Thursday again fined Wikipedia for a Russian-language article it refused to remove about Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the latest in a series of government moves to silence objective reporting or criticism of the war and restrict the Russian public's access to information.

The court fined Wikimedia Foundation, the nonprofit that runs the free, publicly-edited online encyclopedia, 2 million rubles (\$24,464) for not removing a Wikipedia article titled "Russian occupation of the Zaporizhzhia region," a reference to one of four Ukrainian provinces that Russia annexed last September. Most countries have condemned the annexation, as well as that by Russia in 2014 of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, as illegal.

The state Tass news agency said the Wikimedia Foundation had failed to heed the demands of Russia's state communications watchdog Roskomnadzor to remove articles containing "false information." Tass said a Wikipedia representative asked the court to reject the removal demand as vague.

President Vladimir Putin in recent years has increased his crackdown on criticism and factual reporting that doesn't correspond to his government's views or versions of events. The crackdown has widened since his troops invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022, focusing especially on information and dissent against what he calls Russia's "special military operation" in the neighboring country.

Through Roskomnadzor, his government has also tried, with mixed success, to technically limit Western news reports that can be seen in Russia. The BBC and some Voice of America sites are among those it has blocked but which Russians can access using virtual private networks.

This is not the first time Wikipedia has been fined for refusing to delete "false" information about the war in Ukraine.

Last week, the same Moscow court issued a fine of 800,000 rubles (\$9,785) to the Wikimedia Foundation for not removing materials linked to a song by a Russian rock band called Psychea, which Russian authorities consider to be extremist.

In November 2022, the organization was fined 2 million rubles for refusing to delete "false" information in seven Wikipedia articles about the "special military operation," including information about atrocities in Bucha and the destruction of Mariupol's theater.

In a statement Thursday, Wikimedia's senior legal manager, Leighanna Mixter, said the organization has not taken down the disputed content and will continue to challenge the rulings as without foundation. She said the "the steady stream of takedown orders" Wikimedia has received in recent months challenge information that is "well-sourced and in line with applicable Wikipedia policies — improved by Wikipedia volunteer editors with more citations and up-to-date information."

Wikimedia has two active appeals for fines related to takedown notices for topics regarding the invasion of Ukraine — and the latest case "does not present any new legal issues," she said.

"These orders are part of an ongoing effort by the Russian government to limit the spread of reliable, well-sourced information in the country," she added, asserting that Wikimedia would resist all attempts to "try to curb free knowledge."

A Wikipedia page on the issue notes, "Since the early 2010s, Russian Wikipedia and its editors have experienced numerous and increasing threats of nationwide blocks and country-wide enforcement of blacklisting by the Russian government, as well as several attempts to censor pages, spread propaganda, and disinform."

Tass said Roskomnadzor will label Wikimedia in search engines as a violator of Russian law, and more action against specific articles is planned.

AP Technology Writer Frank Bajak contributed from Boston.

## Mini hydro company raises \$18M to generate power in canals

By ISABELLA O'MALLEY Associated Press

A startup business that places small turbines in irrigation canals to generate electricity has raised \$18.4 million to scale up its technology for carbon-free hydropower.

Emily Morris, CEO and founder of Emrgy, said her inspiration for making electricity in places that some people might find unlikely was seeing water swiftly flowing through the vast network of U.S. irrigation infrastructure. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation alone operates 1,600 miles of main canals.

In the same way that putting solar on rooftops avoids disturbing the land, making use of existing canals means the hydropower turbines don't have to disturb the natural environment.

"Our infrastructure represents a new sector of renewable energy real estate," Morris said in an interview.

Irrigation canals in the U.S. are made of concrete or stone and transport water from main sources to fields. Emrgy units look something like a propeller with blades rotating parallel to the ground. Water in the canals turns them and then flows past; there is no dam. The spinning turbines do change how the water moves through the canals, slowing it, so Emrgy works closely with water operators.

Emrgy's installations are very small in the commercial sense — between 2 and 10 megawatts. But that's approximately enough to power a neighborhood or a small campus.

It "can amount to a pretty significant amount of power," said John Gulliver, an engineering professor emeritus at the University of Minnesota, given the miles of canals.

An installation is made up of modules that each generate 5-25 kilowatts, but Morris said the company would never deploy a single turbine, just as a solar company would not install a single solar panel on a roof.

"We need everything we can get from all of the renewable energy sources," said Dan Reicher, senior scholar at the Stanford University School of Sustainability. "So I do think this energy generation is meaningful." It's also environmentally low impact, he said.

Daniel Kirschen, an engineering professor at the University of Washington made the same point. "If we can generate a reasonable amount of power from them, it's very useful," he said.

Traditional large-scale hydropower projects have faced scrutiny for their environmental impact, including submerging communities, slowing rivers, and blocking fish migration. Some are being demolished. On the other hand, they generate enormous amount of energy, as long as it rains and snows.

The Emrgy systems connect to the grid the same way any distributed wind or solar does. Sometimes electric distribution lines run right along canals. The turbines can be installed quickly without lengthy permitting.

"I've watched how solar has risen to dominate the renewable energy mix over recent years," said Morris. "We know the faster we can generate new power means we will be more impactful and can grow."

Emrgy's systems are currently in use at Denver Water, Oakdale Irrigation District in California, a district in Salt Lake City and one in New Zealand. The company has a pilot in South Africa and is expanding.

The \$18.4 million will go to hire more people, develop projects, and open a first assembly facility in Aurora, Colorado.

The Inflation Reduction Act signed last fall is helping. It offers incentives for U.S.-based clean energy manufacturing. Emrgy gets a 10% tax credit for sourcing its machinery and components in the U.S. and a 30% federal investment tax credit for renewable energy development.

"This is definitely a renewable resource that needs to be tapped and it's fantastic they have an economic solution," said Kirschen.

Associated Press climate and environmental coverage receives support from several private foundations. See more about AP's climate initiative here. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## Tech consultant charged in killing of Cash App founder Lee

By OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ and JANIE HAR Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A tech consultant was arrested and charged with murder Thursday in the stabbing death of the gregarious and popular Cash App founder Bob Lee last week in downtown San Francisco, authorities said.

Nima Momeni, 38, and Lee, 43, knew each other, San Francisco Police Chief Bill Scott said at a news conference, but he declined to elaborate on their connection. Momeni was taken into custody Thursday morning in Emeryville, a San Francisco suburb, and booked on suspicion of murder.

The stabbing death of Lee shocked the tech industry, with friends and former colleagues mourning the demise of a brilliant and generous man. Police found Lee with stab wounds in the Rincon Hill neighborhood of San Francisco at 2:30 a.m. April 4. He died at a hospital.

Scott declined to give details on how they linked the killing to Momeni. The chief also refused to disclose a possible motive. Investigators served search warrants in San Francisco and Emeryville. Scott would not say whether a weapon has been found.

San Francisco District Attorney Brooke Jenkins said in a statement that Momeni has been charged with murder in Lee's death and is expected to be arraigned Friday. Prosecutors will ask a judge to hold him without bail, she said.

It was not immediately clear whether Momeni has an attorney who could speak on his behalf.

On his LinkedIn profile, Momeni describes himself as an "IT Consultant/Entrepreneur" as well as the owner of a company called Expand IT. Business filings with the state list Momeni as the chief executive officer, secretary and chief financial officer of Expand IT INC, described as an information technology consulting business. He signed the filing in August 2022.

According to his LinkedIn profile, Momeni has been "a dedicated technology partner since 2005" and that he started Expand IT in 2010.

Criminal records show Momeni was charged with carrying a switchblade in 2011, a misdemeanor offense. The case was dismissed the following year after he took a plea.

Publicist Sam Singer met Momeni about a month ago as Singer has an office next door to Momeni's live-work loft in the stylish Besler Building Lofts. Singer described Momeni as "very welcoming, warm" and his loft as a "typical Bay Area technology consultant's office" with a big pool table, gourmet food and high-end stereo system.

Lee is known for creating the widely used mobile payment service Cash App while working as chief technology officer of the payment company Square, now known as Block. He was the chief product officer for the cryptocurrency firm MobileCoin at the time of his death.

Lee was raised in Missouri and had recently moved to Miami with his father, but was back in San Francisco for business when he was killed. Friends described him as adventurous and fearless, and a doting father to his two children.

"I acknowledge and understand how the loss of a young, vibrant leader and innovator has rocked our city and even beyond," Jenkins said at the news conference.

Lee's brother, Tim Oliver Lee, posted on Facebook the family's gratitude to the San Francisco Police Department for catching the suspect. Tim Lee said his brother dreamed of making technology accessible to all and that he made friends from all walks of life.

"Bob loved being in San Francisco, and San Francisco loved Bob. Walking down the street would sometimes be difficult because every young person with a dream would search him out, and he would make



time for every one," his brother wrote.

After Lee's killing, prominent tech leaders, including tech billionaire Elon Musk, took to Twitter to mourn Lee's death and blame San Francisco for what they called the city's lax attitude toward crime.

Musk tweeted at Jenkins, saying that crime in San Francisco is "horrific" and that even when attackers are caught, they are often immediately released.

Mayor London Breed and other top city officials have pushed against that narrative and on Thursday, Jenkins addressed Musk directly.

"I must point out that reckless and irresponsible statements like those contained in Mr. Musk tweet that assumed incorrect circumstances about Mr. Lee's death serve to mislead the world in their perceptions of San Francisco," Jenkins said.

Stefanie Dazio contributed from Los Angeles.

## **Biden says he's expanding some migrants' health care access**

By ZEKE MILLER, AMANDA SEITZ and MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden announced Thursday that hundreds of thousands of immigrants brought to the U.S. illegally as children will be able to apply for Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act's health insurance exchanges.

The action will allow participants in the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, to access government-funded health insurance programs.

"They're American in every way except for on paper," Biden said in a video released on his Twitter page. "We need to give Dreamers the opportunities and support they deserve."

The action is likely to generate significant pushback from conservative leaders of states that have been reluctant to expand Medicaid and critical of the Biden administration's response to migrants who enter the U.S. illegally. While the federal government provides funding and guidelines for Medicaid, the program is administered by the states.

Then-President Barack Obama launched the 2012 DACA initiative to shield from deportation immigrants who were brought to the U.S. illegally by their parents as children and to allow them to work legally in the country. However, the immigrants, known as "Dreamers," were still ineligible for government-subsidized health insurance programs because they did not meet the definition for having "lawful presence" in the U.S. Biden's Department of Health and Human Services will aim to change that by the end of the month.

The White House action comes as the DACA program is in legal peril and the number of people eligible is shrinking.

An estimated 580,000 people were still enrolled in DACA at the end of last year, according to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. That number is down from previous years. Court orders currently prevent the U.S. Department of Homeland Security from processing new applications. The DACA program has been mired in legal challenges for years, while Congress has been unable to reach consensus on broader immigration reforms.

DACA recipients can work legally and must pay taxes, but they don't have full legal status and are denied many benefits, including access to federally funded health insurance, available to U.S. citizens and foreigners living in the U.S.

Paloma Bouhid, 26, a DACA recipient originally from Brazil and small business owner in Orlando, Florida, where she grew up, said the announcement was a "huge sigh of relief." Bouhid said she began her business in 2021 after losing her job with the Walt Disney company in 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic, but being self-employed meant she had to pay \$500 a month for private insurance following a health scare last year.

"This past year I have really been scrambling to just get all of my doctors appointments in," Bouhid said. "Any doctor's visits due, everything that I possibly can, because prior to today's announcement, I really couldn't afford to keep it any more than the year I have had it."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many people signed up for Medicaid, the program that provides health

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care coverage for the poorest Americans. And the government increased federal subsidies to drive down the cost of insurance plans on the Affordable Care Act's marketplace. As of last year, just 8% of Americans were without health insurance, according to Health and Human Services.

But immigrants living in the U.S. without documentation are far more likely than others to not have health insurance. More than a third of DACA recipients are estimated to be without health care coverage, HHS said. About half of the roughly 20 million immigrants who are living in the U.S. without documentation are uninsured, according to research from the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Providing more people with insurance could have a positive impact on the entire health care system because it would give more people access to routine checkups and avoid emergency visits, said Jamila Michener, associate professor of government and policy at Cornell University.

"Having sizeable groups of people who live, work, go to school and make their home in the U.S. but cannot access vital health benefits is bad for everyone," Michener said in an email. "It makes preventive care less accessible thus driving up the cost of emergency care."

Jose Muñoz, national communications manager for immigration advocacy organization United We Dream, said the announcement was a "major victory." He said that until today, hundreds of thousands of people who benefit from DACA have been obligated to pay higher quantities for private insurance if their employers did not offer insurance or they were self-employed, or go uninsured.

"When you are thinking about going to the doctor for an annual checkup or like when you're sick, those are a part of life and it is such a human need," Muñoz said. "Unfortunately for far too many people, especially for undocumented people, getting affordable health insurance is often inaccessible."

Jose Magaña-Salgado, founder of the Masa consulting group and a DACA recipient, said that growing up he witnessed his cousin, who was undocumented, be put in hospice and pass away after being diagnosed with cancer because she did not have insurance to help her pay for treatment. Magaña-Salgado has spent years advocating for health insurance for his fellow recipients and all immigrants.

"I went for several years without health insurance wondering if a medical bill was going to send me to bankruptcy or, even worse, lead to passing away early," Magaña-Salgado said.

While there's bipartisan support to enact some sort of protections for the immigrants, negotiations have often broken down over in debates about border security and whether an expansion of protections might induce others to try to enter the U.S. without permission. Biden, a Democrat, has repeatedly called on Congress to provide a pathway to citizenship for immigrants brought to the U.S. illegally as children.

Other classes of immigrants — including asylum seekers and people with temporary protected status — are already eligible to purchase insurance through the marketplaces of the ACA, Obama's 2010 health care law, often called "Obamacare."

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Associated Press writer Acacia Coronado contributed to this report from Austin, Texas.

## DOJ to ask Supreme Court to put abortion pill limits on hold

By PAUL J. WEBER and JESSICA GRESKO Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — The Justice Department said Thursday that it will again go to the Supreme Court over abortion after a lower court ruling allowed the abortion pill mifepristone to remain available in the U.S. but reimposed past restrictions on getting and using the drug.

At stake in the accelerating court battle that began in Texas is widespread access to the most common method of abortion in the U.S., less than a year after the reversal of *Roe v. Wade* prompted more than a dozen states to effectively ban abortion outright.

In a ruling late Wednesday, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans temporarily narrowed a ruling by a lower court judge in Texas that had completely blocked the Food and Drug Administration's approval of mifepristone. But a divided three-judge panel still reduced the period of pregnancy when the drug can be taken and said it could not be dispensed by mail.

The ruling preventing the pill from being sent by mail amounts to another significant constraint of abor-

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tion access that could be felt even in states where abortion remains legal, some of which have already begun stockpiling mifepristone over worries that the drug will become unavailable.

The Justice Department said it would ask the U.S. Supreme Court for an emergency order to stop the lower court ruling from taking effect.

"We are going to continue to fight in the courts, we believe the law is on our side, and we will prevail," White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Thursday, speaking from Dublin during a visit by President Joe Biden.

Mifepristone was approved by the FDA more than two decades ago and is used in combination with a second drug, misoprostol.

Abortion rights groups expressed both relief over FDA approval remaining in place and outrage over the appeals court reinstating restrictions. Whole Woman's Health, an abortion provider that operates six clinics in five states, said in a tweet it was continuing to offer mifepristone in clinics and through virtual services while reviewing the decision.

In the 2-1 decision, the judges put on hold changes made by the regulator since 2016 that relaxed the rules for prescribing and dispensing mifepristone. Those included extending the period of pregnancy when the drug can be used from seven weeks to 10 and allowing it to be dispensed by mail, without any need to visit a doctor's office.

The panel's decision came just days after the Justice Department appealed last week's far-reaching ruling out of Texas that blocked the FDA's approval of the pill. The lawsuit was filed by the Alliance Defending Freedom, a conservative legal group that also argued to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, and is representing a group of anti-abortion doctors.

There is virtually no precedent for a lone judge overturning the regulator's medical decisions.

Attorneys for the plaintiffs indicated Thursday that they were content with the court's order and did not plan to seek an appeal that might restore the Texas court's full ruling.

"The 5th Circuit's decision is a significant victory for the doctors we represent, women's health, and every American who deserves an accountable federal government acting within the bounds of the law," said Erin Hawley, an attorney for Alliance Defending Freedom.

The two judges who voted to tighten restrictions, Kurt Engelhardt and Andrew Oldham, are both appointees of former President Donald Trump. The third judge, Catharina Haynes, is an appointee of former President George W. Bush. She said she would have put the lower court ruling on hold entirely for now to allow oral arguments in the case.

Adding to the uncertainty, a separate federal judge in Washington state last week ordered the FDA not to do anything that might block mifepristone's availability in 17 Democrat-led states suing to keep it on the market. The judge in that case clarified Thursday that his order requires the FDA to keep access the same as it was in January in those states, leaving the agency facing conflicting court orders.

"This is just as much of a binding court order as whatever comes out of Texas," said David S. Cohen, a law professor at Drexel University's Thomas R. Kline School of Law.

The New Orleans appeals court judges in the majority in Wednesday's decision noted that the Biden administration and mifepristone's manufacturer "warn us of significant public consequences" that would result if mifepristone were withdrawn entirely from the market under the lower court ruling.

But the judges suggested FDA changes making mifepristone easier to obtain since 2016 were less consequential than its initial approval of the drug in 2000. It would be "difficult" to argue the changes were "so critical to the public given that the nation operated — and mifepristone was administered to millions of women — without them for 16 years" the judges wrote.

When the drug was initially approved, the FDA limited its use to up to seven weeks of pregnancy. It also required three in-person office visits: the first to administer mifepristone, the next to administer the second drug, misoprostol, and the third to address any complications. It also required a doctor's supervision and a reporting system for any serious consequences of the drug.

If the appeals court's action stands, those would again be the terms under which mifepristone could be dispensed for now.

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Democratic leaders in states where abortion remains legal since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* last year say they are preparing in case mifepristone becomes restricted. New York Gov. Kathy Hochul said Tuesday that her state would stockpile 150,000 doses of misoprostol.

The White House also has contingency plans in place, but Jean-Pierre held off detailing them while legal action continued. Instead, she described a proposed new federal rule to limit how law enforcement and state officials collect medical records if they investigate women who flee their home states to seek abortions elsewhere.

At the core of the Texas lawsuit is the allegation that the FDA's initial approval of mifepristone was flawed because the agency did not adequately review safety risks.

Mifepristone has been used by millions of women over the past 23 years. While less drastic than completely overturning the drug's approval, the latest ruling still represents a stark challenge to the FDA's authority overseeing how prescription drugs are used in the U.S. The panel overturned multiple decisions made by FDA regulators after years of scientific review.

Common side effects with mifepristone include cramping, bleeding, nausea, headache and diarrhea. In rare cases, women can experience excess bleeding that requires surgery to stop.

Still, in loosening restrictions on mifepristone, FDA regulators cited "exceedingly low rates of serious adverse events."

More than 5.6 million women in the U.S. had used the drug as of June 2022, according to the FDA. In that period, the agency received 4,200 reports of complications in women, or less than one-tenth of 1% of women who took the drug.

Gresko reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Mark Sherman and Lindsay Whitehurst in Washington, Colleen Long in Dublin and Matt Perrone in Atlanta contributed to this report.

## Why Sen. Feinstein's absence is a big problem for Democrats

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Dianne Feinstein's monthslong absence from the Senate to recover in California from shingles has become a vexing problem for Democrats who want to confirm President Joe Biden's nominees to the federal courts. Now there is some pressure from within her party, and her state, to resign.

With frustration mounting among Democrats, Feinstein on Wednesday asked to be temporarily replaced on the Senate Judiciary Committee while she recuperates. The statement came shortly after a member of California's House delegation, Democratic Rep. Ro Khanna, called on her to step down, saying it is "unacceptable" for her to miss votes to confirm judges who could be weighing in on abortion rights, a key Democratic priority.

It will not be easy to temporarily replace Feinstein on the influential committee. Republicans could block such a move, given that the full Senate must approve committee assignments.

The conundrum for Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., stems from his party's fragile hold on power. Democrats are clinging to a 51-49 majority in an aging Senate where there have been several absences due to health issues this year.

A look at the politics surrounding Feinstein's absence, and how Democrats are navigating the situation:  
EXTENDED ABSENCE

Feinstein, 89, has been away from the Senate since Feb. 27, just two weeks after she announced she would not run for reelection in 2024.

Her office disclosed March 2 that she had been hospitalized in San Francisco and was being treated for a case of shingles. "I hope to return to the Senate later this month," she said in a statement at the time.

Now, six weeks later, Feinstein's office will not give a timeline for her return, even as Congress comes back into session Monday from a two-week recess.

It is unclear how long Feinstein expects to be away from Washington or whether she might resign before the end of her term. She has already faced questions in recent years about her cognitive health and



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memory, and has appeared increasingly frail. But she has defended her effectiveness.

## STALLED JUDGES

Since February, Feinstein has missed more than 50 votes. Her absence on the Judiciary Committee means that Democrats can only confirm judges who have some Republican support because Democrats only have a one-seat majority on the panel.

The committee chairman, Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., has acknowledged that the pace of confirmations has slowed.

"I can't consider nominees in these circumstances because a tie vote is a losing vote in committee," Durbin told CNN.

There are currently 12 federal judge nominees whom Democrats say they have been unable to advance because of Feinstein's absence. It is not clear how many would have Republican support.

## AN UNUSUAL REQUEST

Feinstein's request to be temporarily replaced on the panel is uncommon and the politics at play are complicated.

Committee assignments are typically approved easily in the full Senate at the beginning of each two-year session. Replacements are generally only made when a senator dies or resigns.

To change the committee membership, Democrats will have to hold a vote. While committee rosters are generally approved by a voice vote, just one Republican objection would trigger a roll call. Because of Senate rules, Democrats probably would need 60 votes to replace Feinstein — meaning at least 10 Republicans would have to help Democrats and support the move.

That is far from assured. Judicial nominations are a high-stakes matter for both sides, and the process has become steeped in partisanship.

Republicans have so far stayed quiet. Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky has said he will return from his own medical absence on Monday, after a head injury in a fall last month.

## CALIFORNIA POLITICS

Feinstein's February announcement that she will retire from Congress when her term ends next year has triggered a scramble for her seat in a strongly Democratic state.

Democratic Reps. Barbara Lee, Katie Porter and Adam Schiff have already launched Senate campaigns to succeed Feinstein.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, said in 2021 that he would nominate a Black woman to fill the seat if Feinstein were to step aside before her term ends. Khanna has endorsed Lee, who is Black.

Other Californians — including former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi — have come to Feinstein's defense.

Pelosi told a San Francisco TV station that she's "seen up close and firsthand her great leadership for our country, but especially for our state of California. She deserves the respect to get well and be back on duty."

Pelosi suggested sexism has played a role in the way Feinstein has been treated.

"I don't know what political agendas are at work that are going after Sen. Feinstein in that way," Pelosi said. "I've never seen them go after a man who was sick in the Senate in that way."

## A STORIED CAREER

Feinstein has been a political trailblazer since she was the first woman to serve as president of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in the 1970s. First elected to the Senate in 1992, she was the first woman to head the Senate Intelligence Committee, privy to the nation's top secrets, and the first woman to serve as the Judiciary Committee's top Democrat.

While she often has worked across party lines, she faced criticism in recent years from Democrats who said she was letting Republicans off easy in bruising judicial fights.

Feinstein infuriated liberals in 2020 when she closed out confirmation hearings for now-Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett with an embrace of the then-Senate Judiciary Committee chairman, Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and thanked him for a job well done.

A month later, she announced she would remain on the committee but step down as the senior Democrat.

Associated Press writers Michael Blood in Los Angeles and Seung Min Kim contributed to this report,

## Suspect in leak probe talked about God, guns and war secrets

By NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The suspect was relatively easy to find.

In a social media world that produces traceable digital fingerprints, it didn't take long for federal authorities and journalists adept at sifting through data to land on the name of Jack Teixeira.

Teixeira, 21, who served in the Massachusetts Air National Guard, was arrested Thursday in connection with the far-reaching leak of classified documents that have shaken capitals from Washington to Kyiv to Seoul with revelations of U.S. spying on allies and foes alike and the disclosure of sensitive military intelligence about the war in Ukraine.

Attorney General Merrick Garland said Teixeira would be charged with the unauthorized removal of classified national defense information.

There were clues in messages posted in a chatroom on Discord, a social media platform where Teixeira is believed to have posted for years about guns, games and his favorite memes — and, according to some others chatting with him, closely guarded U.S. secrets.

The investigative website Bellingcat and The New York Times first publicly identified Teixeira, minutes before federal officials confirmed he was a subject of interest in the investigation. They reported tracking profiles on other more obscure sites linked to Teixeira.

The suspect, as part of his duties, reportedly had access to highly classified information.

The case underscores the challenges the U.S. and other governments have in keeping secrets in an era of omnipresent data and an ever growing army of savvy users who know how to exploit it.

When asked how such a young service member could have had access to highly sensitive documents, the Pentagon spokesman, Brig. Gen. Patrick Ryder, said it was the nature of the military to trust its very young service members with high and sometimes grave levels of responsibility, including high levels of security clearance.

Soldiers fresh out of high school went to fight in Iraq, Afghanistan and other combat zones for a generation, often using top-secret intelligence and programs to target adversaries.

"We entrust our members with a lot of responsibility at a very early age. Think about a young combat platoon sergeant, and the responsibility and trust that we put into those individuals to lead troops into combat," Ryder said.

In previous Associated Press stories, the leaker was identified as "the O.G." by a member of an online chat group where Teixeira and others posted for years. The member of the chat group declined to give his name to the AP, citing concerns for his personal safety.

The chat group, called "Thug Shaker Central," drew roughly two dozen enthusiasts who talked about their favorite types of guns and also shared memes and jokes, some of them racist. The group also included a running discussion on wars that included talk of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

In that discussion, "the O.G." would for months post material that he said was classified — originally typing it out with his own notations, then a few months ago switching to posting images of folded-up papers because he felt his writings weren't being taken seriously, the person said.

A different participant in the group shared some of the files several weeks ago in a different chat group — and from there they appear to have spread across the Internet.

The person who spoke to the AP said he had not communicated with Teixeira on Thursday but had stayed in touch earlier in the week. Teixeira had said he knew the FBI was looking for him, the person said.

Teixeira was an airman first class detailed to an Air Force intelligence unit, according to Facebook posts from the 102nd Intelligence Wing based at Otis Air National Guard Base in Massachusetts.

Teixeira's specialty in the Air National Guard was as a "cyber transport systems specialist," essentially an IT specialist responsible for military communications networks, including their cabling and hubs. In that role Teixeira would have had a higher level of security clearance because he would have also been

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tasked with responsibility to access and ensure protection for the network, a defense official told the AP. The National Guard issued a statement saying it was aware of the investigation and "takes this issue very seriously."

"National security is our foremost priority and any attempt to undermine it compromises our values and degrades trust among our members, the public, allies and partners," the statement said.

Local police on Thursday had blocked off the street in front of a home listed as belonging to his family. The person who spoke to the AP says "the O.G." — who he acknowledged Thursday was Teixeira — was an observant Christian who often spoke of God and prayed with members of the chat group.

While he was enlisted, Teixeira opposed many of the priorities of the U.S. government and denounced the military "since it was run by the elite politicians," the person said, adding that he didn't know why Teixeira had signed up in the first place.

"He expressed regret (about) joining a lot," the person said. "He even said he'd kick my ass if I thought about joining."

But the person has stressed that he didn't believe Teixeira leaked documents to undermine the U.S. government or for an ideological reason.

When The New York Times first published a story last week about the documents, the person said, members of the group were on a video call when "the O.G." talked to them.

"Basically what he said was, 'I'm sorry, guys, I prayed every single day that this wouldn't happen,'" the person said. "I prayed, and I prayed, and now it's only up to God what happens next."

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Associated Press writer Tara Copp contributed to this report.

## Minneapolis to pay \$8.9M over Chauvin's actions before Floyd

By JIM SALTER Associated Press

The city of Minneapolis agreed Thursday to pay nearly \$9 million to settle lawsuits filed by two people who said former police officer Derek Chauvin pressed his knee into their necks years before he used the same move to kill George Floyd.

John Pope Jr. will receive \$7.5 million and Zoya Code will receive \$1.375 million. The settlements were announced during a meeting of the Minneapolis City Council.

Both lawsuits stemmed from arrests in 2017 — three years before Chauvin killed Floyd during an arrest captured on video that sparked protests worldwide, prompted a national reckoning on racial injustice and compelled a Minneapolis Police Department overhaul.

At a news conference Thursday, Mayor Jacob Frey apologized to all victims of Chauvin and said that if police supervisors "had done the right thing, George Floyd would not have been murdered."

"He should have been fired in 2017. He should have been held accountable in 2017," Frey told reporters.

Both lawsuits named Chauvin and several other officers. The lawsuits alleged police misconduct, excessive force, and racism — Pope and Code are Black; Chauvin is white. They also said the city knew that Chauvin had a record of misconduct but didn't stop him.

Bob Bennett, an attorney for Pope and Code, noted that other officers failed to intervene or report Chauvin, and police leaders allowed Chauvin to keep working even though they had video evidence from body cameras of his wrongdoing.

In edited body camera footage released Thursday by Bennett's law firm, Pope is heard crying while lying on his stomach, his hands cuffed behind his back and Chauvin's knee on his neck.

"My neck really hurts," he says more than once. At one point, the videos show the other officers in the room walked out after Pope began crying.

"The easy thing is to blame Chauvin for everything," Bennett said in a written statement. "The important thing that the video shows is that none of those nine to a dozen officers at the scene ever reported it, ever tried to stop it. They violated their own policy and really any sense of humanity."

Police Chief Brian O'Hara said the department is "forced to reckon once again with the deplorable acts

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of someone who has proven to be a national embarrassment." But he also cited "systemic failure" within the Minneapolis Police Department.

"I am appalled at the repetitive behavior of this coward and disgusted by the inaction and acceptance of that behavior by members of this department. Such conduct is a disgrace to the badge and an embarrassment to what is truly a very noble profession," O'Hara said in a statement.

Code, who has a history of homelessness and mental health problems, was arrested in June 2017 after she allegedly tried to strangle her mother with an extension cord. Pope was 14 in September 2017 when, according to his lawsuit, Chauvin subjected him to excessive force while responding to a domestic assault report.

The lawsuits said body camera recordings showed Chauvin used many of the same tactics on Pope and Code that he used on Floyd. Chauvin was sentenced to 22 1/2 years in prison on a state murder charge for killing Floyd by pressing his knee to Floyd's neck for 9 1/2 minutes as he pleaded that he couldn't breathe. The city also paid \$27 million to Floyd's family.

Code's lawsuit said she was in handcuffs when Chauvin slammed her head to the ground and pinned his knee on the back of her neck for 4 minutes and 41 seconds. A second officer didn't intervene and a responding police sergeant approved the force, the lawsuit stated.

Pope's lawsuit said his mother was drunk when she called police because she was upset that he and his 16-year-old sister left their cellphone chargers plugged in, leading to a physical confrontation. It alleged Chauvin struck Pope in the head with a large metal flashlight at least four times. It says he then put Pope in a chokehold before pinning him to the floor and putting his knee on Pope's neck.

"Chauvin would proceed to hold John in this prone position for more than fifteen minutes, all while John was completely subdued and not resisting," the complaint alleged. "Over those minutes, John repeatedly cried out that he could not breathe."

The complaint alleged that at least eight other officers did nothing to intervene. It said Chauvin did not mention in his report that he had hit Pope with his flashlight, nor did he mention pinning Pope for so long. Chauvin's sergeant reviewed and approved his report and use of force "despite having firsthand knowledge that the report was false and misleading," the lawsuit alleged.

Chauvin admitted to many of Pope's allegations when he pleaded guilty in December 2021 to federal charges for violating the civil rights of both Floyd and Pope. He was sentenced in July to 21 years on those charges.

Chauvin is serving his sentences concurrently in a federal prison in Arizona.

For more of AP's coverage on the killing of George Floyd and the aftermath: <https://apnews.com/hub/death-of-george-floyd>

## Mother of young boy who shot teacher arrested in Virginia

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. (AP) — The mother of a 6-year-old boy who shot and wounded his teacher in Virginia has been formally arrested on charges of child neglect and failing to secure her handgun, police announced Thursday.

The Newport News Police Department released a booking photo of the woman, 25, and a brief statement that said she turned herself in at the local jail. She was released from custody after posting a \$5,000 bond and has a status hearing scheduled Friday in Newport News Circuit Court, said James Ellenson, her attorney.

The Associated Press isn't naming the mother to shield the identity of her son.

Authorities had announced Monday that she was being charged with felony child neglect and a misdemeanor charge of endangering a child by reckless storage of a firearm.

"She is nervous and scared because she has never been charged before, but holding up well," Ellenson wrote in an email Thursday.

The woman's arrest comes more than three months after police say her son shot and wounded first-



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grade teacher Abby Zwerner as she sat at a reading table in her classroom. Police said the child used his mother's gun, which was legally purchased.

Zwerner filed a \$40 million lawsuit against the school system last week, accusing school officials of gross negligence and of ignoring multiple warnings from teachers and others that the boy had taken a gun to school that day.

The city prosecutor's office said Tuesday that it is investigating whether the "actions or omissions" of any school employees could lead to criminal charges.

The January shooting at Richneck Elementary has rattled Newport News, a shipbuilding city of about 185,000 people near the Chesapeake Bay.

Police Chief Steve Drew has repeatedly characterized the shooting as "intentional." He said there was no warning and no struggle before the child pointed the gun at Zwerner and fired one round, striking her in the hand and chest.

Zwerner, 25, hustled her students out of the classroom before being rushed to the hospital, where she stayed for nearly two weeks.

The felony neglect charge filed against the boy's mother is punishable by up to five years in prison. The misdemeanor charge of recklessly storing a firearm is punishable by up to one year in jail.

Ellenson has said previously that she has no criminal record. He has also said that her gun was secured on a top shelf in her closet and had a trigger lock.

The family has said the boy has an "acute disability" and was under a care plan that included his mother or father accompanying him to class every day. The week of the shooting was the first when a parent was not in class with him, the family said.

## Rays tie record with 13-0 start, rally to beat Red Sox 9-3

By DICK SCANLON Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — After going unbeaten against four teams with losing records, the Tampa Bay Rays headed to Toronto to try setting Major League Baseball's post-1900 record for consecutive wins at a season's start.

"We're a small-market team and people around the league not all the time have great things to say about us, but we play together," Manuel Margot said through a translator after the Rays beat the Boston Red Sox 9-3 Thursday for a 13-0 start.

Tampa Bay rallied in a seven-run fifth inning that Harold Ramirez began and capped with doubles, and the Rays matched the 13-win start of the 1982 Atlanta Braves and 1987 Milwaukee Brewers.

The only longer opening streak was 20-0 by the 1884 St. Louis Maroons of the Union Association. The Rays have won all but two of the games by four or more runs and have outscored opponents 101-30 with the most runs in the big leagues and the fewest allowed.

"When you do something like that you're playing really well," manager Kevin Cash said. "There's not one part of our game right now that we don't feel good about."

Playing before a crowd of 21,175, the largest at Tropicana Field since opening day, the Rays set a team record for winning streak at any point in a season by topping a 12-game run in June 2004. The streak includes series against Detroit, Washington and Oakland.

Boston, held to four hits, has lost 13 consecutive games at the Trop.

"They pitch when they need to pitch. They put the ball in play and they drive guys in," Christian Arroyo said.

Rays starter Jeffrey Springs left two pitches into the fourth inning with what the team said was ulnar neuritis, inflammation of the ulnar nerve that causes numbness or weakness. He was relieved after throwing a 79.8 mph changeup and a 83.5 mph to Justin Turner, then looking at his hand and elbow.

"The pitch prior, kind of just felt a little bit of something in the elbow, forearm area," Springs said. "It was kind of hard to pinpoint."

He said the sensation felt like a shock rather than pain and he planned to get imaging on Friday. Cash

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said Springs is likely to miss at least one start.

"Hopefully, it's just a nerve thing that kind of flared up," Springs said. "I didn't feel anything pop or anything like that."

Tampa Bay trailed 3-1 in the fifth against the Red Sox. Ramirez started the big rally with a double off Corey Kluber (0-3) and broke open the game with a three-run double against Richard Bleier.

Francisco Mejía cut the deficit with a run-scoring single and Brandon Lowe greeted Bleier with a tying RBI single.

Randy Arozarena singled for a 4-3 lead, Wander Franco was hit by a pitch and Margot dropped down a run-scoring bunt single.

"I noticed the third baseman, he was playing back," Margot said of Bobby Dalbec.

Ramirez then lined a double into the left-field corner for an 8-3 advantage.

"When Harold led off with a double, it sparked the lineup. It kind of let everyone breathe a little bit," Brandon Lowe said.

Lowe added a seventh-inning home run off Kutter Crawford, his fifth this season.

Yandy Díaz tied the score 1-1 in the first with his fourth this season for the Rays, who lead the major leagues with 32. Only the 2019 Seattle Mariners and 2000 St. Louis Cardinals with 33 each homered more through 13 games.

Kevin Kelly (1-0) pitched 2 2/3 innings for the win.

Braden Bristo, a 28-year-old right-hander, pitched three hitless innings with four strikeouts and a walk in his major league debut after seven seasons in the New York Yankees minor league system.

Rob Refsnyder homered in the first, the first run off Springs in three starts this season.

Kiké Hernández hit into a run-scoring groundout in the fourth, an inning that included Triston Casas's 14-pitch walk against Garret Cleavinger. Justin Turner had an RBI single in the fifth on a soft fly to center that dropped just in front of center fielder Josh Lowe.

## TURNSTILES

The Rays entered averaging 16,770 at hom, ahead of only Oakland, Miami and Kansas City.

## SLUMPING

Yu Chang is 0 for 12 this season and 0 for 22 since Sept. 22.

## ROSTER MOVES

Red Sox: RHP Zack Kelly was placed on the 15-day IL after leaving Wednesday night's game with an elbow injury, and RHP Kutter Crawford was recalled from Triple-A Worcester.

Rays: RHP Taj Bradley, who won his major league debut on Wednesday, was optioned to Triple-A Durham. ... Bristo's contract was selected from Durham and RHP Shane Baz (Tommy John surgery) was transferred to the 60-day IL.

## UP NEXT

Red Sox: RHP Tanner Houck (2-0) starts Friday's homerstand opener against Los Angeles Angels and LHP Patrick Sandoval (1-0).

Rays: RHP Drew Rasmussen (2-0) starts Friday's series opener at Toronto, which goes with RHP José Berrios (0-2).

AP MLB: <https://apnews.com/hub/mlb> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## Pitcher criticizes MLB teams for extending alcohol sales

CINCINNATI (AP) — A pitcher with the Philadelphia Phillies is criticizing some Major League Baseball teams for extending alcohol sales with games running around 30 minutes shorter due to the sport's new pitch clock.

Matt Strahm said Thursday on the Baseball Isn't Boring podcast that teams should be moving the cutoff for beer sales up to the sixth inning, rather than stretching to the eighth or later, since fans will have less time to sober up and drive home.

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At least five teams — the Houston Astros, Arizona Diamondbacks, Texas Rangers, Minnesota Twins and Milwaukee Brewers — have extended alcohol sales past the traditional seventh-inning cutoff. The Baltimore Orioles had already allowed sales into the eighth.

Other teams haven't ruled out changes.

"The reason we stopped it in the seventh before was to give our fans time to sober up and drive home safe, correct?" Strahm said. "So now with a faster pace game, and me just being a man of common sense, if the game is going to finish quicker, would we not move the beer sales back to the sixth inning to give our fans time to sober up and drive home?"

"Instead, we're going to the eighth, and now you're putting our fans and our family at risk driving home with people who have just drunk beers 22 minutes ago."

Strahm suggested team owners should re-evaluate whether the extension of beer sales looks out for the safety of fans, or whether it's a "way to make their dollars back."

Through the first 1 1/2 weeks of the season, the average MLB game time has been down 31 minutes because of the rule changes, particularly the new pitch clock.

That means fans are spending less time — and perhaps less money — at stadiums.

For the nonprofit Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the extension of beer sales doesn't change much. The goal remains keeping drunk people off the road.

"If it cuts off sales in the seventh inning, the eighth inning or the ninth inning, that really doesn't affect our stance because regardless, we just don't want people to drink alcohol and then drive home from the game," Erin Payton, regional executive director of MADD, told The Associated Press in a statement.

Yankees reliever Michael King also believes "there's a responsibility on everybody" to prevent drunk driving, "regardless if you're getting served in the seventh or eighth inning."

The Astros were the latest team to announce an extension of alcohol sales. The team said Thursday fans would be able to purchase alcohol at limited locations through the end of the game.

The Rangers allowed some alcohol sales in the eighth inning last season, but have made that option more widely available in 2023. The team said the move to offer in-seat service to everyone — fans can order on their phones — was done partly in reaction to the pitch clock and the potential of shorter game times so fans would not have to miss extended action waiting in lines at concession stands.

Brewers President of business operations Rick Schlesinger confirmed to MLB.com that their team's move to extend alcohol sales through the eighth was an experiment.

"If it turns out that this is causing an issue or we feel that it might cause an issue, then we'll revert to what we have done previously," Schlesinger said.

MLB says it does not regulate when teams sell alcohol. Most franchises have used the seventh inning as a cutoff, at least partly to avoid overserving customers who could then get in their cars and drive home.

But in reality, most teams already had areas around the ballpark where fans could get alcohol after the seventh, even if the concession stands stopped serving. Many parks are connected to restaurants or have VIP areas where the booze still flows.

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Freelancer Larry Fleisher contributed.

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AP MLB: <https://apnews.com/hub/MLB> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## Actor Drake Bell found safe after being declared missing

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Jared "Drake" Bell, an actor best known as a star of the Nickelodeon television show "Drake & Josh," was found safe on Thursday, hours after authorities in Florida said he was "missing and endangered."

Bell was in touch with police officers and wasn't in danger, Daytona Beach Police Department spokesperson Carrie McCallister said in an email, without providing further details.

"At this time we can confirm law enforcement officials are in contact and Mr. Bell is safe," McCallister said.

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McCallister referred requests for further details to the Orange County Sheriff's Office in Orlando, which didn't respond to an emailed message.

Hours earlier, the police department put out a statement declaring Bell "missing and endangered" and asked the public for help in locating him.

Before being found mid-day Thursday, Bell was last seen Wednesday night near a Daytona Beach high school.

Representatives for the 36-year-old actor did not immediately reply to The Associated Press' requests for comment.

Bell began acting as a child and was catapulted to fame as a teen with Nickelodeon's "The Amanda Show" and later "Drake & Josh." The Nickelodeon show starring Bell and Josh Peck ran from 2004 until 2007, and was accompanied by two movies. Since then, Bell has mostly worked as a voice actor in addition to roles in little-seen TV series and movies. He also launched a music career.

In 2021, Bell was charged with child endangerment relating to a girl who attended a 2017 concert of his in Cleveland when she was 15 and had met him online years before. He pleaded guilty to felony attempted child endangerment and a misdemeanor charge of disseminating matter harmful to juveniles and was sentenced to two years' probation. He was allowed to serve his probation and 200 hours of community service in California.

## Bill Hader gets deep on human nature in 'Barry' final season

By KRYSTA FAURIA Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "In every man, of course, a demon lies hidden — the demon of rage," says the intellectual brother, Ivan, in Fyodor Dostoevsky's "The Brothers Karamazov," a theme to which the Russian novelist frequently returns.

It is also a theme central to the HBO series, "Barry," whose fourth and final season premieres on Sunday, as the show's titular hit man seeks to convince himself and others that he is ultimately a good person.

And while Bill Hader, the co-creator and star of "Barry," is reluctant to advertise the influence that Dostoevsky and other Russian authors have had on his Emmy-winning series, he disclosed that this kind of exploration of morality played a significant role in his creative process when he set out to make the show.

"I'm always like, 'Yeah, I don't watch a lot of TV.' But I leave out that part, that I was reading big Russian books," Hader laughed.

At the suggestion of his friend, author George Saunders, Hader took an interest in Russian literature and immersed himself in novels like Leo Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina" and "War and Peace."

One aspect of these stories which Hader sought to bring to "Barry" was their contentment in probing philosophical questions about human nature, violence and revenge without necessarily expecting to find answers.

"Barry" is billed as a comedy, though its dark content can preclude some from being able to enjoy its humor. It follows a Marine veteran-turned-hit man (Hader) who tries repeatedly but fails to denounce his profession after he takes an interest in acting.

If the premise sounds absurd, that's because it is.

"It's a bad, bad logline," said Stephen Root, who plays Fuches, Barry's handler and old family friend.

But many of the show's stars, including seasoned actors like Henry Winkler, sang the praises of "Barry" for its originality.

Although limited to 30-minute episodes, "Barry" isn't afraid to punch above its weight class, with clear inspiration from lauded cinema and prestige television like "The Sopranos" and "Twin Peaks."

Hader, described by his co-stars as a "total cinephile," relied heavily on his extensive knowledge of film when considering how the series would grapple with weighty questions like whether humans are intrinsically violent.

"It's always been really interesting to me, actually, is inherent violence within people," Hader said, citing films that have played a role in his meditation on the subject, including "A Clockwork Orange," "Goodfel-



las" and Terrence Malick's "The Thin Red Line."

Throughout the show, Barry struggles to break out of a ceaseless cycle of carnage, while maintaining over and over that he is not defined by his past.

By the end of the third season, Barry's actions have — either directly or indirectly — driven nearly every character to the precipice of violence. While those around him frequently describe Barry as "a violent guy," they themselves are almost always willing to pull the trigger when the opportunity for revenge presents itself.

But although Hader wanted to avoid facile portrayals of characters who are purely good or purely evil, he also hopes it is apparent that Barry is not someone he wants audiences to root for.

"It was weird how people did have sympathy for him. I think the thing was just trying to make him human," Hader said. "But what I always never want to lose focus of is that, you know, he murders people."

The final season further explores the implications of its characters' descent into crime and punishment, though the line between fantasy and reality is increasingly blurry, prompting the viewer to wonder how much, if any, of season four is meant to be understood as "real."

"Barry" often alludes to its self-awareness in its portrayals of both Hollywood tropes and murder. The horror that Barry's former acting teacher (Winkler) expresses in season four at the thought of "glorifying a psychopath" feels like a kind of nod to the show's humanization of a killer.

Barring its bleak subject matter, "Barry" is very much a comedy whose tendency to get dark is ameliorated by humor, though those moments of respite become increasingly rare and increasingly absurd as the show progresses.

But Winkler said that didn't stop their "fearless leader" from occasionally breaking out of character and into laughter throughout the making of the show.

"You'd see his shoulders bounce up and down because he's laughing. You have to remind him, 'You're in the scene, Bill,'" he said.

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Follow Krysta Fauria on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/krystafauria>

## Second expelled Black Democrat reinstated to Tennessee House

By JONATHAN MATTISE and KIMBERLEE KRUESI Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — The second of two Black Democrats who were kicked out of the Republican-led Tennessee House followed his colleague back to work at the Capitol on Thursday, a week after their expulsion for participating in a gun control protest propelled them into the national spotlight.

State Rep. Justin Pearson, of Memphis, was sworn in Thursday outside the Statehouse. The day before, Shelby County commissioners unanimously voted to reinstate him.

"Yes indeed, happy resurrection day," Pearson said as he signed paperwork for his return.

"There will be a new building of this building, with a foundation built on love," Pearson said during a fiery speech outside the Capitol after being sworn in. "With pillars of justice rising up. With rafters of courage covering us. With doors that are open to everybody in the state of Tennessee. Not just rich somebodies, but everybody. Not just straight somebodies, but everybody. Not just Republican somebodies, but everybody."

After delivering his speech to supporters and reporters outside the Capitol, Pearson walked into the House chamber as debate on bills was underway. He pumped his fists and silently mouthed, "This is our House." Those in the gallery pumped their fists back and mouthed "Our House" as Pearson circled around the floor.

Before Pearson returned to the chamber, lawmakers cheered and applauded as the police officers who responded to the deadly March 27 mass shooting at a Nashville elementary school shooting — the event that prompted the gun control protest — were honored in the chamber. Democratic state Rep. Bob Freeman praised the officers' bravery but also stressed to his fellow lawmakers that "inaction is not an option" on how to respond to the tragedy.

Republicans banished Pearson and state Rep. Justin Jones last week over their role in the protest on the House floor over the shooting, which left three children and three adults dead.

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In his address outside the Capitol, Pearson read the names of those killed and referenced another mass shooting on Monday at a bank in Louisville, Kentucky, in which five people were killed and eight others were injured.

"Our law enforcement, which many people praise, are being forced to go to war when they just are going to work," Pearson said. "Kids are told to go to fortresses, instead of to go to school and places of learning. We're told to go to church, carrying the status quo's thoughts and prayers, while we must be in fear that somebody will walk in with an assault weapon."

Upon Pearson's return to the House floor, lawmakers debated legislation that deals with the teaching of "divisive concepts" regarding race, gender and sex on college campuses. After a brief spirited debate involving Pearson and Jones, Republicans used procedural rules to immediately halt discussion and force members to vote on the bill. The move exasperated Democrats, who immediately pointed out that cutting off debate and silencing dissenters was what led the so-called Tennessee three to break House rules after being cut off from previous debates.

The Nashville Metropolitan Council took only a few minutes Monday to restore Jones to office. He was quickly reinstated to his House seat that day.

The appointments are interim, though both Jones and Pearson plan to run in special elections for the seats later this year.

The House's vote to remove Pearson and Jones but keep white state Rep. Gloria Johnson drew accusations of racism. Johnson survived by one vote. Republican leadership denied that race was a factor, noting that Johnson's role in the protest didn't involve some steps that Jones and Pearson took, including speaking into a bullhorn.

Banishment is a move the chamber has used only a handful times since the Civil War. Most state legislatures have the power to expel members, but it is generally reserved as a punishment for lawmakers accused of serious misconduct, not used as a weapon against political opponents.

The expulsions last Thursday made Tennessee a new front in the battle for the future of American democracy. In the span of a few days, the two raised thousands of campaign dollars and the Tennessee Democratic Party received a new jolt of support from across the U.S.

Political tensions rose when Pearson, Johnson and Jones, from the House floor, joined with hundreds of demonstrators who packed the Capitol to call for passage of gun control measures.

As protesters filled the galleries, the lawmakers approached the front of the House chamber with a bullhorn and participated in a chant. The scene unfolded days after the shooting at the Covenant School, a private Christian school. Their participation from the front of the chamber broke House rules because the three did not have permission from the House speaker.

In Tennessee, Republican lawmakers have been supportive of the idea to strengthen school safety, but they have largely rejected calls for stricter gun controls with only weeks to go in the legislative session.

The shooting and aftermath have pushed some, including Republican Gov. Bill Lee, to support some changes.

Lee has since called on the General Assembly to pass legislation aimed at keeping dangerous people from acquiring weapons. It's unclear how successful he will be at drumming up support from lawmakers within his party at the tail end of the legislative session.

Lee, meanwhile, has avoided commenting on the lawmakers' expulsions, saying the controversy is a House issue.

## Scorsese waltzes with David Johansen in 'Personality Crisis'

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Martin Scorsese was knee-deep in preparation for "Killers of the Flower Moon" when Mara Hennessey reached out to invite him to see David Johansen. The former frontman for the trailblazing 1970s proto-punk band the New York Dolls — and Hennessey's husband — was performing a new show at the Café Carlyle.

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Scorsese, a longtime fan of Johansen (he had once played the Dolls to rile up his actors for a fight scene), went eagerly with a handful of others, including his frequent documentary collaborator David Tedeschi. There, they saw Johansen perform a lounge act of grit and grace.

Here was a downtown fixture relocated to one of uptown's swankiest rooms. As his pompadoured alter ego, Buster Poindexter, Johansen was performing stripped-down versions of his own songs and Dolls hits, with plenty of reflective, comic interludes. Scorsese, smitten by Johansen's performance, immediately resolved to shoot it — the still ringing echo of a vanished New York.

"It was just a natural feel: We have to do this," Scorsese explained in an interview. "We have to capture it before it goes."

"Personality Crisis: One Night Only," which debuts Friday on Showtime, is the result, mixing footage Scorsese and co-director David Tedeschi shot over two nights at the Carlyle in January 2020 with flashbacks through Johansen's wildly varied career and intimate interviews taped during the pandemic by Johansen and Hennessey's daughter, Leah.

Like Scorsese's recent Netflix series "Pretend It's a City" with Fran Lebowitz, it's also a portrait of a still clarion, still vibrant New York voice in a city that now hardly resembles the one they were all forged in.

"The environment that he came out of in the '70s, in a way, I'm still there," says Scorsese, whose third feature film, "Mean Streets," debuted the same year as the Dolls' first album. "It has to do with New York because we live in New York. I'm not doing L.A. I'm not doing Chicago. I live in New York. And this is a part of where I came from. It turns out that it's changed, it's finished, it's gone, it's going somewhere else."

Time is much on the mind of Scorsese, 80, who in a month will debut at Cannes "Killers of the Flower Moon," his sprawling adaptation of David Grann's bestseller about a series of murders of members of the Osage tribe in 1920s Oklahoma. The scope of the Apple release — with a budget of \$200 million and a reported runtime of nearly four hours — makes it one of Scorsese's biggest undertakings.

"It's not four hours," he says. "It's lengthy. It's an epic."

Adding in "The Irishman," Scorsese's ambitions seem to be only growing with age. Bigger productions, he says, are what he's aiming toward now — even if he's less accustomed to directing the movement of mass groups of people the way Steven Spielberg or Ridley Scott can.

"They just snap their fingers and it happens. But I can't. Maybe I could," says Scorsese. "Something else happens. If the character finds himself in a story that takes a longer period of time to tell, then I feel comfortable with that. And I think there's an audience for that. Or I should say I think there's still an audience for that."

Other big projects may loom, Scorsese says.

"If I get there," he says. "You got to get there."

All of which makes "Personality Crisis," sandwiched between two monumental masterworks, a stirring intimate contrast.

"I was surprised by how much I liked it," says Johansen. "I hardly cringed."

The Staten Island-born Johansen, now 73, was a pivotal figure of '70s East Village New York and the New York Dolls presaged the punk movement. Since then, he's reinvented himself as the lounge-singing Buster Poindexter, who had the 1980s hit "Hot Hot Hot" (a song that Johansen now more or less disowns). He's acted, too. Many will remember Johansen as the taxi-driving ghost of Christmas past in "Scrooged."

Part of the joy of "Personality Crisis" is that it takes Johansen — so often associated with particular eras of rock — out of those contexts. Here, he's simply a gravel-voiced lounge lizard supreme — a rock 'n' roll survivor with the anecdotes to go with it.

"It's not a rock doc," says Hennessey. "To me, it's a portrait of an artist."

Almost since the beginning, Scorsese has toggled between narrative features and documentaries, though he and Tedeschi don't love the term "documentary." ("We'd rather have fun," says Tedeschi.) Each are simply films, Scorsese says, with different rhythms, choreographies and grammar. And they inform each other, a back-and-forth alchemy that began with 1974's "Italian American," a dialogue with his parents released in between "Mean Streets" and "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore."

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"These films that David and I do free me to think differently about the narrative films I'm making. The narrative films I'm making are becoming more like novels. These are not quite," says Scorsese. "Sometimes you get locked in by what's around you and the way things are supposed to be done. 'Italian American,' I just hold the camera on my mother and my father speaking and it was interesting. It changed everything for me."

"The Last Waltz," Scorsese's seminal film with The Band, he says shaped "Raging Bull." "The Rolling Thunder Revue: A Bob Dylan Story" (2019), Scorsese connects with 2016's "Silence" — both in their way about the performance of a spiritual act.

"Personality Crisis" likewise influenced "Killers of the Flower Moon." Several songs Scorsese heard while listening to Johansen's wide-ranging satellite radio show "Mansion of Fun" made it into the movie, including Mamie Smith's "Crazy Blues." Charlie Musselwhite plays harmonica alongside Johansen in "Personality Crisis"; he also, by coincidence, is an actor in "Killers of the Flower Moon."

"They just seem to come together," says Scorsese of his nonfiction and fiction films.

The same could be said for Johansen and Scorsese. They've known each other for decades. Johansen remembers seeing "Mean Streets" when it came out, not knowing anything about the director.

"It was so fundamentally good," he says, shaking his head. Johansen, though, initially wasn't thrilled about the idea of a documentary.

"People always ask me, 'Would you be in this documentary? It's about punk.' I would just say nope," Johansen says. "Because when I see myself in that situation, I feel like, 'Who is this idiot and where did he come from?'"

But making a film with Scorsese — whose long line of rock 'n' roll chronicles includes "George Harrison: Living in the Material World" and the Rolling Stones concert film "Shine a Light" — was an easier call.

"I like him for a lot of reasons but one of the reasons I like him is because he, like myself, finds music so inspiring," says Johansen.

Johansen and Hennessey first thought about turning the Carlyle concert into an off-Broadway show, but Scorsese said it should be filmed.

"Marty said, 'Ask my wife. I fall asleep in the theater,'" recalls Johansen.

Scorsese and Tedeschi shot his performances unsure of what shape it would take. Over the pandemic, it morphed into a film, and perhaps the clearest and most unfiltered recording of Johansen yet. (A soundtrack is forthcoming.)

"I used to think about my voice like: 'What's it gonna sound like? What's it going to be when I do this song?' And I'd get myself into a knot about it," says Johansen. "At some point in my life, I decided: 'Just sing the f---ing song. With whatever you got.' To me, I go on stage and whatever mood I'm in, I just claw my way out of it, essentially."

Scorsese, too, has been trying to persevere without compromise in a sometimes inhospitable environment for cinema. Along with his extensive efforts to preserve and restore old films with the Film Foundation and attempts to bring classic films to new audiences with the Restoration Screening Room, Scorsese has often publicly spoken against the predominance of blockbusters in today's moviegoing.

"I did a film ('The Irishman') with Netflix. That was a great experience. The same with Apple — even more so because we're going theatrical," he says of the film to open in theaters Oct. 20. "The experience watching at home is OK. It's OK. But it's not what it should be."

He worries that a generation will grow up with the idea that a theatrical movie is a blockbuster, and everything else is "alternative cinema."

"Who said movies were going to be made like they were in the first 75, 80 years? Because they were made for theaters," says Scorsese. "That may not be the case anymore. It's a new world."

But Scorsese is still holding out hope. He'd like to see streaming companies build theaters.

"Maybe these new companies might say: Let's invest in the future of the new generations for creativity," Scorsese says. "Because a young person actually going to see a film in the theater, that person, who knows, five or 10 years later could be a wonderful novelist, painter, musician, composer, filmmaker, whatever. You don't know where that inspiration is going to land when you throw it out there. But it's got to be out there."



Follow AP Film Writer Jake Coyle on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/jakecoyleAP>

## Haven't filed taxes yet? Don't panic. Here's what to know

By ADRIANA MORGA Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The deadline to file your taxes is Tuesday, which is just around the corner. Filing U.S. tax returns — especially for the first time — can seem like a daunting task, but there are steps you can take to make it less stressful.

Whether you do your taxes yourself, go to a tax clinic or hire a professional, navigating the tax system can be complicated and stressful. Courtney Alev, a consumer financial advocate for Credit Karma, recommends you go easy on yourself.

"Take a breath. Take some time, set out an hour, or go through it over the weekend. You'll hopefully see that it's a lot simpler than you think," Alev said.

If you find the process too confusing, there are plenty of free resources to help you get through it.

If you are worried that you might not have enough time to file your taxes before the deadline, you can file for an extension, though it's not ideal (more on that below.)

Here's what you need to know:

### WHEN IS THE DEADLINE TO FILE TAXES?

Taxpayers have until Tuesday to submit their returns from 2022.

### WHAT DO I NEED TO FILE MY TAX RETURN?

While the required documents might depend on your individual case, here is a general list of what everyone needs:

- Social Security number
- W-2 forms, if you are employed
- 1099-G, if you are unemployed
- 1099 forms, if you are self-employed
- Savings and investment records
- Any eligible deduction, such as educational expenses, medical bills, charitable donations, etc.
- Tax credits, such as child tax credit, retirement savings contributions credit, etc.

To find a more detailed document list, visit the IRS website.

Tom O'Saben, director of tax content and government relations at the National Association of Tax Professionals, recommends gathering all of your documents in one place before you start your tax return and also having your documents from last year if your financial situation has drastically changed.

Theresa Grover, site coordinator for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, also recommends taxpayers create an identity protection PIN number with the IRS to guard against identity theft. Once you create a number, the IRS will require it to file your tax return.

### HOW DO I FILE MY TAXES?

You can either file your taxes online or on paper. However, there is a big time difference between the two options. Paper filing can take up to six months for the IRS to process, while electronic filing cuts it down to three weeks.

### WHAT RESOURCES ARE OUT THERE?

For those who make \$73,000 or less per year, the IRS offers free guided tax preparation that does the math for you. If you have questions while working on your tax forms, the IRS also offers an interactive tax assistant tool that can provide answers based on your information.

Beyond the popular companies such as TurboTax and H&R Block, taxpayers can also hire licensed professionals, such as certified public accountants. The IRS offers a directory of tax preparers across the United States.

The IRS also funds two types of programs that offer free tax help: VITA and the Tax Counseling for the Elderly program (TCE). People who earn \$60,000 or less a year, have disabilities or are limited English

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speakers, qualify for the VITA program. Those who are 60 or older, qualify for the TCE program. The IRS has a site for locating organizations hosting VITA and TCE clinics.

If you have a tax problem, there are clinics around the country that can help you resolve these issues. Generally, these tax clinics also offer services in other languages such as Spanish, Chinese and Vietnamese.

## HOW CAN I AVOID MISTAKES IN MY TAX RETURN?

Many people fear getting in trouble with the IRS if they make a mistake. Here's how to avoid some of the most common ones:

— Double check your name on your Social Security card.

When working with clients, O'Saben always asks them to bring their Social Security card to double-check their number and their legal name, which can change when when people get married.

"You may have changed your name but you didn't change it with Social Security," O'Saben said. "If the Social Security number doesn't match to the first four letters of the last name, the return will be rejected and that will delay processing."

— Search for tax statements if you have opted out of paper mail.

Many people like to opt out of snail mail, but paper mail can also include your tax documents.

"If you didn't get anything in the mail doesn't mean that there isn't an information document out there that you need to be aware of and report accordingly," O'Saben said.

— Make sure you report all of your income.

If you had more than one job in 2022, you need the W-2 forms for each — not just the one from the job you ended the year with, says Christina Wease, interim director of the tax clinic at Michigan State University.

Additionally, if you have a business that uses PayPal or Venmo as a service, it must be reported in your tax return. For 2022, the use of those services needs to be reported if they amounted to 200 transactions in the calendar year and more than \$20,000 in sales from goods or services.

## WHAT IF I MAKE A MISTAKE?

Mistakes happen, and the IRS takes different approaches depending on each case. In general, if you make a mistake or you're missing something in your tax records, the IRS will audit you, Alev said. An audit means that the IRS will ask you for more documentation.

"Generally, they are very understanding and willing to work with folks. You're not going to get arrested if you type in the wrong field," Alev said.

## WHAT IF I NEED AN EXTENSION?

If you run out of time to file your tax return, you can file for an extension. However, it is important to remember that the extension is only to file your taxes, not to pay them. If you owe taxes, you should pay an estimated amount before the deadline so you avoid paying penalties and interest. If you expect to receive a refund, you will still receive your money when you file your taxes.

The deadline to file for an extension is Tuesday, which will give you until Oct. 16 to file your taxes. You can file for an extension through your tax software or preparer of preference, the IRS Free File tool or via mail.

## WHAT IF I MISS THE TAX DEADLINE?

If you missed the tax deadline and you didn't file for an extension, there are several penalties that you might receive. If you missed the deadline you might receive a failure-to-file penalty. This penalty will be 5% of the unpaid taxes for each month the tax return is late, according to the IRS.

If you owe taxes and you didn't pay them prior to the tax deadline, you will receive a failure-to-pay penalty. Interest will also be charged on both taxes and penalties owed. If you are due for a refund, you will not receive a penalty and you will receive your tax return payment. If you had special circumstances that meant you were unable to file or pay your taxes on time, you might be able to remove or reduce your penalty.

If the amount of taxes you owe becomes too large, you can apply for a payment plan. Payment plans will allow you to pay off over time.

## WHAT IF I HAVEN'T FILED FOR YEARS?

Wease explains that you can file taxes late and, if you were supposed to get a refund, you might still get it. If you haven't filed for years and you owe money to the IRS, you may be hit with penalties but the agency will can work with you to manage payment plans.

## HOW CAN I AVOID SCAMS?

Tax season is prime time for tax scams, according to the IRS. These scams can come via phone, text, email and social media. The IRS uses none of those means to contact taxpayers.

Sometimes scams are even operated by tax preparers so it's important to ask lots of questions. If a tax preparer says you will get a refund that is larger than what you've received in previous years, for example, that may be a red flag, O'Saben said.

If you can't see what your tax preparer is working on, get a copy of the tax return and ask questions about each of the entries.

## HOW LONG SHOULD I KEEP COPIES OF MY TAX RETURNS?

It's always good practice to keep a record of your tax returns, just in case the IRS audits you for an item you reported years ago. Both Wease and O'Saben recommend keeping copies of your tax return documents for up to seven years.

Follow all of AP's financial wellness coverage at: <https://apnews.com/hub/financial-wellness>

The Associated Press receives support from Charles Schwab Foundation for educational and explanatory reporting to improve financial literacy. The independent foundation is separate from Charles Schwab and Co. Inc. The AP is solely responsible for its journalism.

## First QB helmet designed to help reduce concussions approved

By ROB MAADDI AP Pro Football Writer

The first quarterback-specific helmet designed to help reduce concussions has been approved for use by the NFL and NFLPA, the AP has learned.

The helmet, manufactured by Vicis, reduces severity of helmet-to-ground impacts, which league data says account for approximately half of quarterback concussions, including the one suffered by Miami's Tua Tagovailoa last season when his head slammed violently against the turf during a Thursday night game against Cincinnati.

"We've now analyzed with our engineers and with the Players Association more than a 1,000 concussions on field, we have a pretty good database of how these injuries occur," NFL executive Jeff Miller told the AP about the helmet-to-ground impacts. "This helmet performs better in laboratory testing than any helmets we have ever seen for those sorts of impacts."

The helmet performed 7% better than the most popular helmet worn by quarterbacks last season, the league said in a memo sent to team executives on Thursday.

Jason Neubauer, an executive for Vicis, said the company began designing its Zero2 Matrix QB helmet in early 2022.

"The unique thing is that it has a deformal outer shell, which means when you take an impact in any location on that helmet, it will deform or basically dent in that location to absorb the impact," Neubauer said. "What that means for us, as designers or engineers, as we're looking to optimize it for different types of impacts, we're able to change unique locations to try to optimize the impact mitigation in any one area."

It's unknown how many quarterbacks will switch to the new QB-specific helmet. The league and the players' union share information from the helmet studies with teams so players make informed decisions on helmet choice. The only other position-specific helmet already approved is the Vicis Zero2-R Trench for offensive and defensive linemen.

The memo sent to teams also includes the results of the 2023 helmet laboratory testing study. Miller told the AP seven helmets the league highly recommended in 2020 have now been downgraded to prohibited as a result of new testing.

"That's a great sign," Miller said. "Hopefully we can continue to stimulate that either with position-specific helmets designed for each position group or for a general all-purpose helmet to be able to say to players: 'Work with us, be willing to change helmets because better and better products are coming online every year.'"

AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/hub/nfl> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](https://twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## First image of a black hole gets a makeover with AI

By MADDIE BURAKOFF AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The first image of a black hole captured four years ago revealed a fuzzy, fiery doughnut-shaped object. Now, researchers have used artificial intelligence to give that cosmic beauty shot a touch-up.

The updated picture, published Thursday in the *Astrophysical Journal Letters*, keeps the original shape, but with a skinnier ring and a sharper resolution.

The image released in 2019 gave a peek at the enormous black hole at the center of the M87 galaxy, 53 million light-years from Earth. A light-year is 5.8 trillion miles. It was made using data gathered by a network of radio telescopes around the world, showing swirling light and gas.

But even with many telescopes working together, gaps remained in the data. In the latest study, scientists relied on the same data and used machine learning to fill in the missing pieces.

The resulting picture looks similar to the original, but with a thinner "doughnut" and a darker center, researchers said.

"For me, it feels like we're really seeing it for the first time," said lead author Lia Medeiros, an astrophysicist at the Institute for Advanced Study in New Jersey.

By having a clearer picture, researchers hope to learn more about the black hole's properties and gravity in future studies. And Medeiros said the team plans to use machine learning on other images of celestial objects, including possibly the black hole at the center of our Milky Way galaxy.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Science and Educational Media Group. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## Biden says nothing of 'great consequence' in Pentagon leaks

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE and COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

DUBLIN (AP) — President Joe Biden on Thursday said while he was concerned that sensitive government documents had been leaked, "there's nothing contemporaneous that I'm aware of that is of great consequence."

It was the first time Biden has commented publicly about the release of Pentagon documents that were posted on several social media sites. They appear to detail U.S. and NATO aid to Ukraine and U.S. intelligence assessments regarding U.S. allies that could strain ties with those nations. The Justice Department has opened an investigation.

"I'm concerned that it happened, but there's nothing contemporaneous that I'm aware of that is of great consequence," said Biden, who is in Dublin visiting with Irish leaders Thursday.

Biden noted that a "full-blown" investigation was underway by the intelligence community and the Justice Department on who leaked the information. "We're getting close," he said on answers. "But I don't have an answer."

There are no clear answers on how many documents were leaked. The Associated Press has viewed approximately 50 documents; some estimates put the total number in the hundreds.

Some of the documents may have been altered or used as part of a misinformation campaign, U.S. officials said. National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby on Monday urged caution, "since we know at least in some cases that information was doctored."



No one knows for sure where they came from, not even the Pentagon chief.

"They were somewhere in the web, and where exactly, and who had access at that point, we don't know. We simply don't know," Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said at a news conference Tuesday. "We will continue to investigate and turn over every rock until we find the source of this and the extent of it."

It's possible, though, that the leak may have started on a site called Discord.

Discord is a social media platform popular with people playing online games. The Discord site hosts real-time voice, video and text chats for groups and describes itself as a place "where you can belong to a school club, a gaming group, or a worldwide art community."

On Thursday, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre urged social media companies to "avoid facilitating the circulation of material detrimental to public safety and national security."

"We do believe that social media companies have a responsibility to their users and the country to manage the private sector infrastructure that they create and then operate," she said.

## Longboard dance: Moves, music, risk elevate a skating hybrid

By KRISTINA LINNEA GARCIA Associated Press

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP) — This winter's been a hard one in Southern California. Highways flood and the rain keeps coming. Pedestrians pick their way across fallen cypress trees, around puddles on sidewalks roped off with caution tape. Between fire, flood, and drought, sometimes it feels like the end of the world.

But tonight, there's a break. Just east of the Santa Monica boardwalk, a dozen or so longboarders cruise in loping patterns along the empty stretch of South Lot 4, a mostly empty parking area.

Hannah Dooling glides down the pavement, earbuds hidden by long brown hair tucked beneath a baseball cap. She steps off her longboard, flips it in a semi-circle in the air while taking a few running steps, and hops back on the board, landing with a resounding thud.

"That's cool, right?" another woman asks.

It is, in fact, really cool. The trick is the half moon, named for the arc the board makes in the sky, and it's one that Dooling, 30, has shown other women how to master. They include Yun Huang, a 33-year-old tech worker, and Jane Kang and Christie Goodman, both 29, who work as a nanny and real estate agent, respectively.

They're all here in wide-leg pants and zero-drop sneakers for the longboard session, bundled against the wind in hoodies, puffer coats or trucker jackets.

They get together most Saturday and Sunday afternoons if the weather's good, at meetups supported by Dancing Foundation, a non-profit started with a matching grant from Google by Achille Brighton, a 39-year-old software engineer.

Longboard dance is still in its infancy, but Brighton says it has already spread — here, in Paris, in Seoul — anywhere with public squares or wide, open sidewalks where people can watch.

"You don't need skate parks. You just need roads," he says. "And because you do it in public, you're out there, people see it. And they're like, 'Oh, that's kind of cool.'"

Originally designed for surfers entertaining themselves between sets, most longboards range from 3 to 4 feet in length, about a foot longer than traditional skateboards. The longer decks can be cumbersome, but also graceful. They're used for carving sidewalk turns and bombing hills, as well as longboard dancing, a skate/dance hybrid that fuses movement, music and danger.

"When you're doing longboard dancing, you're listening to music, typically, and you're moving your body to the beat," Brighton says. "There's this effect where the rest of the world melts away. And I think that is like one of the things that gets you addicted."

Dooling was an early adopter, learning how to skate in Seattle. If anyone wants to learn a trick, she can probably show them how. She works remotely for Amazon and moved to L.A. with her partner in 2021 during "peak COVID," not knowing anyone. Skating was a way to find community.

Huang, a native of Melbourne, Australia, started skating during the pandemic. Some days, her board and her dog were the only things that would get her outdoors and moving.

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"We were all kind of depressed from COVID," she says. "I tried meditation before. That didn't work for me, but I felt like I could really be in the zone with this."

At first, Huang just wanted to learn how to skate. Then she got sucked into "the longboard dancing hole of Instagram," where a 30-second clip can be posted with music. That's how Huang learned about Brighton and Longboard Dancing Los Angeles.

Says Dooling: "As a woman, skating can feel intimidating and not welcoming." But during the pandemic, people were connecting through social media, finding their niche.

Longboard dance was featured in a commercial for Facebook Groups during the 2021 Tokyo Summer Olympics, showing skaters of different genders, races and nationalities finding each other online. You could watch reels and think, "I identify, or I see myself, or connect with the people that I'm seeing doing this," Dooling says.

Goodman, flashing a "rock on" sign with her index and pinky finger, says, "I was like, Tony Hawk!" The women laugh, but Goodman is semi-serious. "Yeah! I was obsessed with him! And now I'm like, I can do some of those tricks!"

The four women jump in and out of conversation, their speech overlapping. Kang is the most reticent, a former dancer attracted to the sport's grace. Dooling is unassuming yet self-assured, a quietly rebellious "solo sporter" who grew up snowboarding and practicing Tae Kwan Do. Huang, also a snowboarder, sports a sea-green manicure and dark hair balayaged into blonde.

Goodman is animated, her long red hair moving with her as she gesticulates.

"Don't laugh at me, I'm fulfilling my 12-year-old dreams, OK?" she says.

Goodman first stepped on a skateboard in 2021. Now she's sponsored, as is Huang.

Goodman does downhill, descending inclines at rapid speed. It's dangerous; it's exciting; "it brings up all the emotions," she says.

The thing that ties together longboarding and longboard dancing is danger, Brighton says. You might miss a step; you might fall; you might get hurt, he says. "And that's the exciting bit."

Brighton has ADHD and falls on the autism spectrum, he says. Longboarding attracts a neurodiverse community, says Goodman, who also has ADHD. "It's, like, seeking that adrenaline," she says.

On a longboard, Brighton says, he doesn't have to try to concentrate. It's built into the movement. If you don't pay attention, you're going to get hurt, he says.

"You're on a board. Your brain now needs to learn not only where the body is, but also where the board is, and how the board is moving with relation to the ground," he says. Longboarders "jump in and out of two different planes of movement... You need to be able to keep track of those two states."

When one of the women lands a new trick, "we fully celebrate," Goodman says. They hang out after sessions, walking up to Samosa House on Main St., Jameson's, or Venice Beach Bar, which you can skate down to.

The sun is lowering on the horizon, which is thick with clouds. The sand has turned gray and damp. Waves and wind have pushed sand onto the boardwalk, where it swirls and drifts in marbled patterns punctuated by footsteps, stroller wheels, and the tire patterns of a bike caravan glowing with LED lights, revolutions of pink and green slowly cycling towards the Ferris wheel.

The women, shivering in ripped jeans, want to make the most of the light that's left. "We need to move," Huang says, and, laughing, they glide off into the sunset.

## Australia's most powerful cyclone in 8 years to cross coast

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — A tropical cyclone nearing Australia is forecast to be the most powerful storm in eight years to hit the country, bringing wind gusts of up to 315 kilometers (196 miles) per hour as it crosses the northwest coast, meteorologists said Thursday.

Cyclones are common along the sparsely populated Pilbara coast of Western Australia state and fatalities are rare, but authorities fear that Cyclone Ilsa's extraordinary wind speeds could take some in its path by

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surprise.

Ilsa reached the highest Category 5 intensity Thursday over the Indian Ocean and is expected to maintain that destructive level as it crosses the Pilbara coast by early Friday, Australia's Bureau of Meteorology said.

Category 5 cyclones have mean wind speeds exceeding 200 kph (124 mph) with gusts exceeding 280 kph (174 mph). They typically cause widespread destruction, the bureau said.

The last Category 5 storm to cross the Australian coast was Cyclone Marcia in 2015. Marcia caused hundreds of millions of dollars in damage in the east coast state of Queensland.

In 2019, Category 5 Cyclone Veronica did not cross the Pilbara coast, but damaged infrastructure and disrupted the region's mining and offshore gas industries.

Ilsa is expected to cross the coast somewhere in a 220-kilometer (137-mile) span between the iron ore export town of Port Hedland and Wallal Downs Station, a 200,000-hectare (500,000-acre) cattle ranch to the east.

Those close to where Ilsa makes landfall will experience gusts of up to 315 kph (196 mph), the bureau said.

The storm's expected landfall is near the remote Pardoo Roadhouse and Tavern where manager Will Batth planned to shelter.

"We haven't had any as strong as this in many years. This is a big one," Batth said. "There's no point in worrying. I can't stop it."

On Thursday, police closed the highway along the Pilbara coast between Port Hedland and the tourist town of Broome, 610 kilometers (380 miles) to the northeast, to prevent motorists from risking the worsening conditions. Authorities expect the North West Coastal Highway will be impassable due to flooding before Ilsa passes.

Port Hedland and Broome are the largest population centers in the Pilbara region with 16,000 and 15,000 people respectively.

Bidyadanga, home to around 700 people midway between Wallal Downs Station and Broome, stocked enough food and fuel by Thursday to last a week in case the community is isolated by floodwater. Bidyadanga CEO Tania Baxter said maintaining the community's electricity would be critical to how they weather the storm.

"Without power, we haven't got water and possibly even communications," Baxter said. "So if we can maintain power supply, then we'll be fine. We'll manage everything else that comes with it and any damage that comes."

Many in the cyclone's path have evacuated in recent days. In Port Hedland, from which the world's largest bulk export port sends Australian iron ore around the globe, evacuation centers have opened to people whose homes might not withstand the storm, Mayor Peter Carter said.

"Everyone is on edge," Carter said. "They understand that cyclones are what they are. They're very, very unpredictable."

Long-term Port Hedland resident Julie Arif, who has experienced several cyclones, said she was concerned for those in Ilsa's path.

"They'll be prepared and riding it out. But it is still terrifying, absolutely terrifying," Arif said. "When you're inside in a house and there's just the roar of the wind outside and thumping and banging and crashing. And cyclones happen at nighttime. You don't know what it is and it's frightening."

The weather bureau warned of damaging winds, flooding rain and abnormally high tides along the Pilbara coast as Ilsa passes.

Many people in the Pilbara region are involved in the mining and cattle industries or are tourists taking advantage of the school vacation period that began this week.

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This story corrects that the most recent Category 5 cyclone to cross Australia's coast was Marcia in 2015, not Yasia in 2011.

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## Cannes sets slate with Wes Anderson, Todd Haynes, the Weeknd

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

New films by Wes Anderson, Alice Rohrwacher, Hirokazu Kore-eda, Todd Haynes and Wim Wenders will compete for the Cannes Film Festival's coveted top honor, the Palme d'Or, as will a record number of films directed by women.

Cannes artistic director Thierry Frémaux and president Iris Knobloch, who took over the post last year from Pierre Lescure, announced a lineup heavy on big-name international auteurs, along with some new faces, in a press conference Thursday in Paris.

Among the 19 films selected for Cannes' prestigious competition slate are Anderson's sci-fi homage "Asteroid City," Wenders' "Perfect Days"; Kor-eda's "Monster"; Alice Rohrwacher's "La Chimera"; and Haynes' "May December," a romance with Natalie Portman and Julianne Moore. Ken Loach, long a Cannes regular, will return with "The Old Oak." Jonathan Glazer will premiere his first feature since 2013's "Under the Skin" with his Martin Amis adaptation "Zone of Interest."

After a scaled-down 2021 event and a comeback festival in 2022, this year's Cannes finds the festival back on level ground and its organizers triumphant that their mission — celebrating the best in world cinema as an inherently theatrical experience — has persevered.

"The films are back in theaters and the public is back in theaters," said Knobloch. "The moviemakers, the artists, the professionals are all in agreement. Nothing can replace the cultural event represented by a release in a theater for a movie."

Joining Rohrwacher, the Italian director of "Happy as Lazzaro," in competition are five more female directors: France's Catherine Breillat with "Last Summer"; Austria's Jessica Hausner with "Club Zero"; France's Justine Triet's "Anatomy of a Fall"; Senegalese-French director Ramata-Toulaye Sy with "Banel & Adama"; and Tunisia's Kaouther Ben Hania with the documentary "Olfa's Daughters."

Cannes has often come under criticism for selecting few films by women for its prestigious competition lineup. Only two female filmmakers have ever won the Palme d'Or: Jane Campion in 1993 for "The Piano" and Julia Ducournau in 2021 for "Titane." While six out of 19 films is a new high, it still falls below the parity that some have sought.

Several of Cannes' splashiest premieres had already been announced. "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny" will debut in Cannes, along with a special tribute to Harrison Ford, as will Martin Scorsese's "Killers of the Flower Moon," his big-budget adaptation for Apple of David Grann's non-fiction bestseller. Frémaux said he urged Scorsese to screen "Killers of the Flower Moon" in competition at the festival, but it isn't currently scheduled to compete for the Palme.

On Tuesday, Cannes said that the Pedro Almodóvar short "Strange Way of Life," with Pedro Pascal and Ethan Hawke, will also premiere at the festival.

Cannes gets underway May 16 with the opening-night selection "Jeanne du Barry," starring Johnny Depp as King Louis XV. The film, directed by and co-starring the French actress and filmmaker Maiwenn, has been billed as Depp's comeback film following his explosive trial last year with Amber Heard, his ex-wife. The festival runs through May 27.

The much-anticipated HBO series "The Idol," from "Euphoria" creator Sam Levinson and starring the Weeknd and Lily-Rose Depp, will also debut in Cannes. Steve McQueen, the director of "12 Years a Slave" and the film anthology "Small Axe," will present his "Occupied City," a documentary about Amsterdam under Nazi occupation during World War II.

The jury that will decide the Palme d'Or will this year be led by the Swedish filmmaker Ruben Östlund, a two-time Palme winner. After winning Cannes top honor for 2017's "The Square," Östlund won last year for the social satire "Triangle of Sadness."

Cannes is coming off a movie year that has reinforced the French festival's position as arguably the premiere international launching pad for film. Three of this year's best-picture nominees at the Oscars premiered in Cannes: "Top Gun: Maverick," "Elvis" and "Triangle of Sadness."



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## Today in History: April 14, Abraham Lincoln is shot

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Friday, April 14, the 104th day of 2023. There are 261 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 14, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln was shot and mortally wounded by John Wilkes Booth during a performance of "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theatre in Washington.

On this date:

In 1828, the first edition of Noah Webster's "American Dictionary of the English Language" was published.

In 1902, James Cash Penney opened his first store, The Golden Rule, in Kemmerer, Wyoming.

In 1912, the British liner RMS Titanic collided with an iceberg in the North Atlantic at 11:40 p.m. ship's time and began sinking. (The ship went under two hours and 40 minutes later with the loss of 1,514 lives.)

In 1910, President William Howard Taft became the first U.S. chief executive to throw the ceremonial first pitch at a baseball game as the Washington Senators beat the Philadelphia Athletics 3-0.

In 1935, the "Black Sunday" dust storm descended upon the central Plains, turning a sunny afternoon into total darkness.

In 1949, the "Wilhelmstrasse Trial" in Nuremberg ended with 19 former Nazi Foreign Office officials sentenced by an American tribunal to prison terms ranging from four to 25 years.

In 1960, Tamla Records and Motown Records, founded by Berry Gordy Jr., were incorporated as Motown Record Corp.

In 1981, the first test flight of America's first operational space shuttle, the Columbia, ended successfully with a landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

In 1994, two U.S. Air Force F-15 warplanes mistakenly shot down two U.S. Army Black Hawk helicopters over northern Iraq, killing 26 people, including 15 Americans.

In 1999, NATO mistakenly bombed a convoy of ethnic Albanian refugees; Yugoslav officials said 75 people were killed.

In 2007, riot police beat and detained protesters as thousands defied an official ban and attempted to stage a rally in Moscow against Russian President Vladimir Putin's government.

In 2021, A white former suburban Minneapolis police officer, Kim Potter, was charged with second-degree manslaughter for killing 20-year-old Black motorist Daunte Wright in a shooting that ignited days of unrest.

Ten years ago: Hugo Chavez's hand-picked successor, Nicolas Maduro, won Venezuela's presidential election by a narrow margin over challenger Henrique Capriles. Adam Scott became the first Australian to win the Masters, beating Angel Cabrera on the second hole of a playoff on a rainy day at Augusta National. Colin Davis, 85, former principal conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra and one of Britain's elder statesmen of classical music, died in London.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump declared "Mission Accomplished" for a U.S.-led allied missile attack on Syria's chemical weapons program, but the Pentagon said the Assad government was still capable of using chemical weapons against civilians if it chose to do so. Gun rights supporters gathered at state capitols across the country to push back against efforts to pass stricter gun control laws. Czech filmmaker Milos Forman, whose American movies "Amadeus" and "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" won a deluge of Academy Awards including Oscars for best director, died at a Connecticut hospital at the age of 86.

One year ago: The flagship of Russia's Black Sea fleet, a guided-missile cruiser that became a potent target of Ukrainian defiance in the opening days of the invasion, sank after it was heavily damaged. Ukrainian officials said their forces hit the Moskva with missiles, while Russia acknowledged a fire aboard the Moskva but no attack. Tesla CEO Elon Musk offered to buy Twitter, saying the social media platform he criticized for not living up to free speech principles needed to be transformed as a private company. (Musk would become Twitter's owner about six months later.)

Today's Birthdays: Actor Julie Christie is 83. Retired MLB All-Star Pete Rose is 82. Rock musician Ritchie Blackmore is 78. Actor John Shea is 75. Actor Peter Capaldi is 65. Actor-turned-race car driver Brian Forster

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is 63. Actor Brad Garrett is 63. Actor Robert Carlyle is 62. Rock singer-musician John Bell (Widespread Panic) is 61. Actor Robert Clendenin is 59. Actor Catherine Dent is 58. Actor Lloyd Owen is 57. Baseball Hall of Famer Greg Maddux is 57. Rock musician Barrett Martin is 56. Actor Anthony Michael Hall is 55. Actor Adrien Brody is 50. Classical singer David Miller (Il Divo) is 50. Rapper Da Brat is 49. Actor Antwon Tanner is 48. Actor Sarah Michelle Gellar is 46. Actor-producer Rob McElhenney is 46. Roots singer JD McPherson is 46. Actor Claire Coffee is 43. Actor Christian Alexander is 33. Actor Nick Krause is 31. Actor Vivien Cardone is 30. Actor Graham Phillips is 30. Actor Skyler Samuels is 29. Actor Abigail Breslin is 27.