

Groton Daily Independent

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May Groton Community Calendar

Monday, May 1

School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza.
School Lunch: Popcorn chicken, fries.
The Pantry, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, May 2

School Breakfast: French toast.
School Lunch: Corndogs, tater tots.
Track at Milbank, 1 p.m.
Elementary Spring Concert, 7 p.m.
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
The Pantry, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

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



Wednesday, May 3

School Breakfast: Egg Omelets.
School Lunch: Turkey gravy over mashed potatoes.
High School Baseball hosts Sioux Valley, V/JV, 6 p.m.
Groton Chamber Board Meeting at City Hall, Noon.
Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult Bible Study begins at 7 pm
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; PPR Meeting in Conde, 7 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.; Confirmation, 6 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 4

School Breakfast: Muffins.
School Lunch: Goulash, corn, bun.
Girls Golf at Lee Park, Aberdeen, 10 a.m.
High School Spring Concert, 7 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Nigeria Circle, 2 p.m.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

by Newsweek

JANUARY 24, 2023

World in Brief

- Economist and former finance minister Santiago Pena won Paraguay's presidential election in a tightly-contested campaign, tightening the rightwing Colorado Party's nearly eight decades hold on power.
- MasterChef Australia host Jock Zonfrillo died at the age of 46 on the eve of the show's new season. The cause of death was not immediately known.
- Abu Hussein al-Qurayshi, the leader of the Islamic State group, has been killed in Syria in an operation carried out by the Turkish MIT intelligence agency, Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said.
- French President Emmanuel Macron faces nationwide protests on Labor Day as he seeks to move the country forward from his unpopular pension law that has seen pushed his popularity to near record lows.
- Pope Francis urged Hungarians to open their doors to migrants as he wrapped up a visit to the country, a sharp contrast to the anti-immigrant policies of nationalist Prime Minister Viktor Orban.
- Adidas shareholders are suing the sportswear giant over its relationship with Kanye West, accusing it of failing to minimize losses and take more precautionary measures.
- In the ongoing war in Ukraine, Russian missile strikes damaged buildings and wounded nearly 35 people in the eastern city of Pavlohrad. Meanwhile, Ukrainian drones destroyed four Russian tanks, nine armored vehicles and killed 21 Russian soldiers in an unspecified region in Ukraine.

What to Watch in the Day Ahead

- It's a busy week as earnings season continues and major employment data is set to release from Tuesday. All eyes will be on the Federal Reserve's monetary policy meeting. S&P and ISM manufacturing PMI, and construction spending figures are due today, from 9:45 a.m. ET.
- Eli Lilly holds its annual general meeting, while Stryker and Lowes Corp report quarterly results.
- The annual SelectUSA Investment Summit returns to National Harbor, Maryland. The event, from May 1-4, provides opportunities for businesses and investors to establish new connections and grow through investing in the U.S.
- The glitzy annual Met Gala takes place at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. This year's theme is 'Karl Lagerfeld: A Line of Beauty,' celebrating the life and work of the legendary German designer.
- Many countries around the world observe May Day or Labor Day, an annual recognition of the contribution and accomplishments of workers. The May Day parade in Cuba has been canceled for the first time since the 1959 revolution amid acute fuel shortages.

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May Groton Community Calendar

Monday, May 1

School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza.
School Lunch: Popcorn chicken, fries.
The Pantry, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, May 2

School Breakfast: French toast.
School Lunch: Corndogs, tater tots.
Track at Milbank, 1 p.m.
Elementary Spring Concert, 7 p.m.
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
The Pantry, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, May 3

School Breakfast: Egg Omelets.
School Lunch: Turkey gravy over mashed potatoes.
High School Baseball hosts Sioux Valley, V/JV, 6 p.m.
Groton Chamber Board Meeting at City Hall, Noon.
Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult Bible Study begins at 7 pm
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; PPR Meeting in Conde, 7 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.; Confirmation, 6 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 4

School Breakfast: Muffins.
School Lunch: Goulash, corn, bun.
Girls Golf at Lee Park, Aberdeen, 10 a.m.
High School Spring Concert, 7 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Nigeria Circle, 2 p.m.

Friday, May 5

School Breakfast: Eggs and sausage.
School Lunch: Fish nuggets, try taters.
Track at Sisseton, 3 p.m.

Saturday, May 6

North Central Track Meet at Eureka, 10:30 a.m.
Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Groton City-Wide Rummage Day, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sunday, May 7

High School Baseball vs. W.I.N./Elkton at Elkton, noon.
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 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.
United Methodist communion Sunday: 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.
St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m. (Graduation reception); worship with communion at Zion, 11 a.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion (Senior Milestones & Faith Forever Scholarship Awards), 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.

Monday, May 8

School Breakfast: Cook's choice for rest of year.
School Lunch: Zita pasta, bake corn.
The Pantry, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Girls Golf at Milbank, 10 a.m.
FFA Banquet, 6:30 p.m.
School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m..
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6 p.m.

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TREE TRIMMING & REMOVAL
STUMP GRINDING
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605/228-3861

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New Construction
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Hoop Barns
Shops

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605/216-2677
prblocker@hotmail.com

Perry Blocker

Tuesday, May 9

School Lunch: Hamburgers, fries.
The Pantry, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Ladies Aid LWML, 1 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Church Council, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, May 10

School Lunch: Chicken fajitas, refried beans.
Baseball, Softball & TBall Parent Meeting at Groton Community Center, 7:30 p.m.
Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult Bible Study begins at 7 pm
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Bible Study, 2:45 p.m.

Thursday, May 11

School Lunch: Cheeseburger, pasta bake, green beans.
Girls Golf at Madison.
Northeast Conference Track Meet in Groton

Friday, May 12

School Lunch: Hot dogs, baked beans.
Elementary Track and Field Day, 12:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 13

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

Sunday, May 14

MOTHER'S DAY
Graduation, 2 p.m.
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 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 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.

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.

Monday, May 15

School Lunch: Cook's choice for rest of year.
The Pantry, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Girls Golf: NEC at Sisseton, 10 a.m.
NEC JH Track Meet at Sisseton, 10 a.m.
Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m..
Baseball, Softball and T-Ball Uniform pickup at City Hall, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Christian Literature Circle, 7:30 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, May 16

The Pantry, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Baseball, Softball and T-Ball Uniform pickup at City Hall, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.
High School Baseball hosts Hamlin, 6 p.m. (V/JV)
United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.; Conde Ad Council
St. John's Lutheran: Quilting, 9 a.m.
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, May 17

Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult Bible Study begins at 7 pm
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; UMYF Bonfire; Groton Ad Council, 7 p.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Bible Study, 2:45 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: League, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 18

Girls Golf Meet at Sisseton, 10 a.m.
Region 1A Track Meet in Groton
Emmanuel Lutheran: Ascension Worship, 7 p.m.

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Saturday, May 20

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship at Rosewood Court, 10 a.m.

Sunday, May 21

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 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

United Methodist: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.; Newsletter items due.

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; worship at Avantara, 3 p.m.

Monday, May 22

Girls Golf Meet at Olive Grove Golf Course, 10 a.m. The Pantry, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center with potluck at noon.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, May 23

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

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

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, May 24

DARE Graduation, 2 p.m.

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

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.

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

Thursday, May 25

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

Girls Golf Region 1A at Lee Park, Aberdeen, 10 a.m.

State Track Meet in Sioux Falls

Friday, May 26

Faculty In-Service

State Track Meet in Sioux Falls

Saturday, May 27

State Track Meet in Sioux Falls

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

Sunday, May 28

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 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

United Methodist: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m. (Kathy Gubin leading worship)

Legion Baseball: At Clark, 1 game, noon.

Jr. Legion Baseball: at Clark, 1:30 p.m., 1 game

Tuesday, May 30

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

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

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.

Legion Baseball: at Watertown (DH), 5 p.m.

Jr. Teeners: Huron at Groton, DH, 5 p.m.

Wednesday, May 31

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

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

Jr. Legion Baseball: Mobridge at Groton (DH), 5 p.m.

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Residents taking advantage of clean-up week

Groton City residents wasted no time in hauling unwanted items to the city shop location at 10 East Railroad Avenue. This week is free clean-up week as the ad below states. Now is the time to clean up the yard! (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Citywide 2023 Spring Cleanup

April 29-May 5

**ALL ITEMS NEED TO BE DROPPED OFF
BEFORE 10AM ON 5/5/23!!**



Bring anything you wish to dispose of to the City Shop-10 E Railroad Ave starting April 29th.

Please place items in the appropriate pile.

RESIDENTIAL ONLY!!

Keep Metal, Tires, Paint, Batteries & Chemicals Separate

**Pickup can be arranged for
Monday, May 1st to Friday, May 5th ENDING AT 10AM
by calling City Hall 397-8422.**

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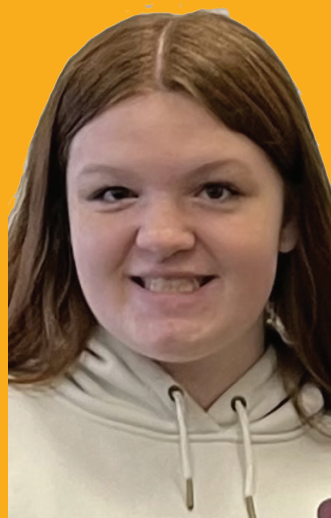
Groton Area March Students of the Month



Gracie Traphagen
Senior



Kyleigh Englund
Junior



Emily Overacker
Sophomore



Olivia Stiegelmeier
Freshman



Colt Williamson
Eighth Grade



Mya Feser
Seventh Grade



Adeline Kotzer
Sixth Grade

Groton Area School works to ensure that all levels of academic instruction also include the necessary life skills teaching, practicing, and modeling that encourages essential personal life habits that are universally understood to facilitate helping our students become good human beings and citizens.

It is learning with our heads, hearts, and hands to be caring and civil, to make healthy decisions, to effectively problem solve, to be respectful and responsible, to be good citizens, and to be empathetic and ethical individuals.

Students are selected based on individual student growth in the areas of: positive behavior, citizenship, good attendance, a thirst for knowledge, and high academic standards.

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"The Case for Iodized Salt"

Imagine how just over one hundred years ago, nearly 1/3 of people in the upper Great Lakes and upper Midwest regions walked around with a goiter on their neck. A goiter is a lump on the throat, which could be as big as an orange, a grapefruit, or larger. Actually an enlargement of the thyroid gland, a goiter can come from an overactive thyroid gland, an under-active thyroid gland, or an autoimmune condition, but in the United States before the 1920s, the reason was almost always deficiency of iodine.



Based on Science, Built on Trust



Andrew Ellsworth, MD.

Iodine is required for making thyroid hormones. In addition to having a goiter, those with iodine deficiency may be fatigued, slow moving, or have poor concentration. Iodine is even more important for brain development for a fetus during pregnancy and for the growing brains in young children. Iodine deficiency can cause fewer IQ points. The archaic term cretinism refers to iodine deficiency syndrome from birth, and affected people are small, mentally slow, and may have an enlarged tongue and thickened skin, among other ailments. Likely 50 million people suffer from iodine deficient brain damage world wide still today.

Iodine is a trace element on the earth's crust, but factors like glaciers and flooding have caused it to be even more scarce in landlocked areas and more prevalent around coastal areas. In the coastal areas the iodine makes its way through the food chain. In the "goiter belt", the upper Midwest and upper Great Lakes regions of the United States, and in Switzerland, goiters were common due to the lack of iodine in the diet.

The ancient Chinese knew ingesting seaweed could shrink a goiter. In the early 1800s, a Swiss physician observed ingesting iodine could treat the goiters of his patients. As with many things, it often takes a war to cause change. In World War I, a Michigan physician observed that over 30% of recruits had a goiter, and for many of them, it was big enough to disqualify them from the military. This finally got people's attention.

In 1917, US physician Dr. David Marine convinced the Akron, Ohio school board to allow him to perform a study with iodine supplementation. The schoolgirls who received iodine had significantly fewer cases of goiter than the girls who did not.

Dr. David Cowie, who founded the pediatrics department at the University of Michigan, proposed the US adopt the Swiss practice of adding iodine to common table salt. It took effort, but thankfully the salt companies adopted the practice, and still today we have a cheap, common remedy to help prevent goiter and iodine deficiency throughout the United States.

Andrew Ellsworth, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show based on science, built on trust for 21 seasons, broadcast on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.

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Weekly Vikings Recap - NFL Draft Review

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

The 2023 NFL Draft was anti-climactic for the Minnesota Vikings as the team made only three draft-day trades and ended up with only six players, their lowest total since 2009.

23rd Overall Pick: Jordan Addison - WR (USC)

For the first time since 2020, the Vikings did not make a draft-day trade with their first-round pick. Although there was some speculation leading up to the draft that the Vikings may trade up in the first round to take one of the quarterbacks, the Vikings stayed put and selected wide receiver Jordan Addison. Addison, who was ranked by some experts as the top wide receiver in this year's draft, fell to the fourth wide receiver taken in the first round, likely because of his slender frame. However, Addison is a natural-born receiver who will bring elite route-running at all levels of the field to the Vikings. If anything, Addison's talent will open even more opportunities for Justin Jefferson and TJ Hockenson this upcoming season.

102nd Overall Pick: Mekhi Blackmon - CB (USC)

After the Vikings traded back with the San Francisco 49ers and acquired the last pick of day 2 of the NFL Draft, the Vikings selected yet another undersized USC player. This time it was Mekhi Blackmon, who is a feisty cornerback that graded out elite in both zone and man coverage at the cornerback position. The knock on Blackmon, besides his lack of size, is that he is already 24 years of age, which is almost 3 years older than most of the other players in the draft. However, because of his age, Blackmon will likely be able to come in right away and compete for playing time on this Vikings' defense, which lacks veteran cornerbacks.

134th Overall Pick: Jay Ward - CB (LSU)

With the Vikings' first pick on the third day of the draft, the Vikings selected yet another cornerback, this time Jay Ward out of LSU. Similar to Mekhi Blackmon, Jay Ward possesses a slight frame at only 188 lbs. However, what Ward brings with him is an ability to play multiple positions on the defense. Ward can line up as the nickel cornerback and defend the opponent's slot receiver, or he can play outside. Ward even has the potential to play the safety position, as well.

141st Overall Pick: Jaquelin Roy - DL (LSU)

The Vikings continued the trend of bolstering the team's defense by taking LSU's humungous nose tackle, Jaquelin Roy. Roy, who weighs 315 lbs., will look to fill the huge void on the defensive line that has been there since Dalvin Tomlinson's departure. Ironically enough, Roy's player comparison coming into the draft was Dalvin Tomlinson. If Roy can reach the potential that so many people think he has, he could become a key piece of this Vikings' defense in the future.

164th Overall Pick: Jaren Hall - QB (BYU)

Kevin O'Connell finally got his developmental quarterback with the selection of Jaren Hall in the fifth round. Hall is a solid quarterback with a quick release and great leadership qualities. However, the problem with Hall is that he is already 25 years old and can get dinged up easily given his smaller size for the quarterback position. Hall projects to be a career backup quarterback, but as we have seen with guys like Brock Purdy and Dak Prescott, if you can put a talented team around these late-round quarterbacks, they can find success very early in their careers.

222nd Overall Pick: DeWayne McBride - RB (UAB)

With the Vikings' last pick of the 2023 NFL draft, the team took DeWayne McBride, a running back who had been on the team's radar for a while now. McBride was invited earlier this year to visit Minnesota as part of the Vikings' official visit of the team's top 30 prospects. McBride is an exciting running back prospect who possesses great balance and elusiveness. This pick is also further proof that the team may be moving on from Dalvin Cook soon.

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Groton Area Tigers Varsity Claws Back, but Falls Just Short Against Redfield Area Muskrats

Groton Area Tigers Varsity fought back after falling down by five runs in the sixth inning. The comeback fell just short though, in a 15-13 defeat to Redfield Area Muskrats on Sunday. Groton Area Tigers Varsity scored three runs on a home run in the seventh inning.

Groton Area Tigers Varsity was right in it until Redfield Area Muskrats walked in the fifth inning.

Groton Area Tigers Varsity captured the lead in the second inning. Groton Area Tigers Varsity scored three runs when Bradin Althoff doubled.

Groton Area Tigers Varsity tallied seven runs in the second inning. Cade Larson, Brevin Fliehs, Cole Simon, and Althoff all moved runners across the plate with RBIs in the inning.

Nolan Gall was the winning pitcher for Redfield Area Muskrats. The righthander lasted four and two-thirds innings, allowing six hits and ten runs while striking out three. Erik Salmen threw two and a third innings in relief out of the bullpen.

Althoff took the loss for Groton Area Tigers Varsity. The lefty allowed five hits and eight runs over three innings, striking out two.

Groton Area Tigers Varsity tallied one home run on the day. Althoff put one out in the seventh inning.

Groton Area Tigers Varsity scattered ten hits in the game. Ryan Groeblichhoff, Simon, and Althoff each collected multiple hits for Groton Area Tigers Varsity. Althoff, Simon, and Groeblichhoff each collected two hits to lead Groton Area Tigers Varsity.

Redfield Area Muskrats collected 11 hits on the day. Gall, Salmen, and Kevin Weller all managed multiple hits for Redfield Area Muskrats.

Groton Area Tigers Varsity Walks Away Victorious Over Madison Bulldogs Varsity, 5-2

Groton Area Tigers Varsity scores more runs than Madison Bulldogs Varsity, takes victory on Sunday to the tune of 5-2

Madison Bulldogs Varsity got on the board in the first inning when an error scored one run for Madison Bulldogs Varsity.

Ryan Groeblichhoff pitched Groton Area Tigers Varsity to victory. The righthander lasted seven innings, allowing four hits and two runs while striking out six and walking one.

Lucas Mork toed the rubber for Madison Bulldogs Varsity. The pitcher surrendered five runs on six hits over five innings, striking out four and walking one. Hayden Kane threw one inning out of the bullpen.

Groton Area Tigers Varsity smacked one home run on the day. Bradin Althoff had a long ball in the first inning.

Althoff, Colby Dunker, Tate Larson, Cole Simon, Dillon Abeln, and Braxton Imrie all had one hit to lead Groton Area Tigers Varsity.

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Groton Area Tigers Varsity **13 - 15** Redfield Area Muskrats

📍 Away 📅 Sunday April 30, 2023

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | R | H | E |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|---|
| GRTN | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 13 | 10 | 4 |
| RDFL | 4 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 2 | X | 15 | 11 | 2 |

BATTING

| Groton Area Tigers | AB | R | H | RBI | BB | SO |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| C Simon (CF, P) | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| D Abeln (SS) | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| B Althoff (P, LF) | 4 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 0 |
| T Larson (1B) | 5 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| C Dunker (LF, P, 2...) | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| L Ringgenberg (RF) | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| R Groeblinghoff (...) | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| C Larson (C) | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| B Flihs (2B, CF) | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| CR: C McInerney | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| CR: B Imrie | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 33 | 13 | 10 | 12 | 7 | 5 |

2B: B Althoff, **HR:** B Althoff, **TB:** T Larson, C Larson, B Althoff 6, C Dunker, B Flihs, R Groeblinghoff 2, C Simon 2, **HBP:** D Abeln, **SB:** C Simon, **LOB:** 7

PITCHING

| Groton Area 1 | IP | H | R | ER | BB | SO | HR |
|----------------|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| B Althoff | 3.0 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 0 |
| C Dunker | 1.0 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| C Simon | 2.0 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Totals | 6.0 | 11 | 15 | 13 | 9 | 3 | 0 |

L: B Althoff, **P-S:** B Althoff 85-47, C Dunker 46-19, C Simon 36-21, **WP:** C Dunker 2, C Simon 2, **HBP:** C Dunker, C Simon, **BF:** B Althoff 21, C Dunker 11, C Simon 11

| Redfield Area Muskrats | AB | R | H | RBI | BB | SO |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| N Gall (P, SS) | 5 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| K Rohlfs (C) | 3 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| E Salmen (SS, P) | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| S Siebrecht (1B) | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| E Komraus (LF) | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| K Weller (2B) | 3 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 0 |
| E Morrissette (3B) | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| R Flihs (RF) | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| M Whitley (CF) | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| Totals | 32 | 15 | 11 | 11 | 9 | 3 |

2B: N Gall, E Salmen, **TB:** N Gall 4, E Salmen 4, K Rohlfs, K Weller 2, E Komraus, S Siebrecht, **HBP:** K Rohlfs, E Komraus, **SB:** N Gall, M Whitley, E Salmen, K Rohlfs 2, E Komraus, S Siebrecht, **LOB:** 10

| Redfield Area | IP | H | R | ER | BB | SO | HR |
|---------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| N Gall | 4.2 | 6 | 10 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 0 |
| E Salmen | 2.1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Totals | 7.0 | 10 | 13 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 1 |

W: N Gall, **P-S:** N Gall 105-54, E Salmen 48-32, **WP:** N Gall, **HBP:** E Salmen, **BF:** N Gall 28, E Salmen 13

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Madison Bulldogs Varsity 2 - 5 Groton Area Tigers Varsity

📍 Home 📅 Sunday April 30, 2023

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | R | H | E |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MDSN | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| GRTN | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | X | 5 | 6 | 3 |

BATTING

| Madison Bulldogs | AB | R | H | RBI | BB | SO |
|-------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| C Wolf (CF) | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| E Barger (LF) | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| M Kennington (SS) | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| T Mechels (1B) | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| J Kennington (DH) | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B Bjorklund (3B) | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| J Pedersen (RF) | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| T McGillivray (C) | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| J Olson (2B) | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| CR: C Kelsey | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 26 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 6 |

TB: B Bjorklund, J Pedersen, J Kennington, T Mechels, **CS:** T McGillivray, **HBP:** T McGillivray, J Kennington, M Kennington, C Wolf, **SB:** B Bjorklund, E Barger, **LOB:** 8

PITCHING

| Madison Bull | IP | H | R | ER | BB | SO | HR |
|---------------|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| L Mork | 5.0 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| H Kane | 1.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 6.0 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 1 |

L: L Mork, **P-S:** H Kane 7-5, L Mork 79-45, **HBP:** L Mork, **BF:** H Kane 3, L Mork 25

| Groton Area Tigers | AB | R | H | RBI | BB | SO |
|---------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| C Simon (CF) | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| D Abeln (SS) | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B Althoff (1B) | 3 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| T Larson (3B) | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| C Dunker (LF) | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| L Ringgenberg (RF) | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| R Groeblinghoff (P) | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| C Larson (C) | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B Imrie (2B) | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 26 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 4 |

2B: T Larson, **HR:** B Althoff, **TB:** D Abeln, C Dunker, C Simon, B Althoff 4, T Larson 2, B Imrie, **HBP:** L Ringgenberg, **SB:** C Simon, L Ringgenberg, **LOB:** 5

| Groton Area | IP | H | R | ER | BB | SO | HR |
|----------------|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| R Groebling... | 7.0 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 0 |
| Totals | 7.0 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 0 |

W: R Groeblinghoff, **P-S:** R Groeblinghoff 94-63, **HBP:** R Groeblinghoff 4, **BF:** R Groeblinghoff 31

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Middle School Spring Concert



The middle school spring concert was held last Thursday with the theme, "Songs from around the world.". The choir, under the direction of Scott Glodt, sang, "Marching with the Saints" and "Kusimama." The band, under the direction of Desiree Yeigh, performed "Adventure in India," "Mah-Ná Mah-Ná" and "Kitty Hawk March." (Photos by Paul Kosel)



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Kyleigh Kroll was recognized as the girl seventh grade Band Student of the Year by Director Desiree Yeigh. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



TC Schuster was recognized as the boy seventh grade Band Student of the Year by Director Desiree Yeigh. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



Novalea Warrington was recognized as the girl sixth grade Band Student of the Year by Director Desiree Yeigh. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



Jordan Schwan was recognized as the boy sixth grade Band Student of the Year by Director Desiree Yeigh. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

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Libby Cole was recognized for her second year in Middle School All State Band by Director Desiree Yeigh. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



Wesley Borg was recognized as the most improved band member by Director Desiree Yeigh. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

State offers portal for local governments to post public information, but few use it

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - APRIL 30, 2023 7:00 AM

Jackson County government officials don't post public information on the internet. The rural western South Dakota county, which serves roughly 2,800 residents spread over 1,871 square miles, doesn't have a website.

And it doesn't intend to, County Auditor Vicki Wilson said.

"It takes more time than we have staff," she said.

State government offers a potential solution, but Jackson County isn't using it. Nor are most other South Dakota counties, cities or other local governments.

It's a website created by the Gov. Kristi Noem administration in 2021 where local governments can voluntarily upload their meeting notices, agendas and minutes, without having to manage their own website.

Only seven counties post information to the website on a regular and timely basis. Only one city, Sioux Falls, regularly posts upcoming meetings. No school boards actively use the site.

That's 1% of all local governments in the state using the site.

Aurora is the sole county government to use the state-maintained website exclusively. Meanwhile, 54 counties have their own websites where many of them share information. Eleven counties, including Jackson, don't appear to post any information online.

As for municipalities, nearly all cities with populations above 500 manage their own websites and keep them up to date. But municipalities with populations less than 500 are not as reliable.

Of 10 randomly picked municipalities with populations under 500, South Dakota Searchlight found that half didn't manage websites or post information online. Two of the 10 that did have websites didn't have current meeting agendas or minutes.

State Sen. Randy Deibert, R-Spearfish, said he wasn't aware of the state's website for local governments. He's also a county commissioner for Lawrence County, serves on the board of the South Dakota Association of County Commissioners, and owns a professional mapping and surveying business working with local governments.

While he thinks having public information available online is important for South Dakotans, he worries about adding another responsibility for local governments to upload information.

"I'm really worried about some of the smaller places in the state," Deibert said. "I've consulted in most of these small places, and if it weren't for grant programs and good people who work for little pay, they wouldn't be successful."

David Reiss, executive director of the South Dakota Municipal League, said he intends to publish an article in the organization's monthly magazine this summer to encourage more municipal involvement on the site.

"The site is underutilized right now," Reiss said. "At the end of the day, providing an access point to public meeting documents is incredibly valuable to keep the public informed. ... There's always a need to read and understand what's going on in local government, and sites like this keep people involved. That's incredibly valuable."

The site is maintained by the South Dakota Bureau of Information and Telecommunications and costs about \$100 a year to host. Other maintenance costs and updates, funded by the Municipal League, have been minimal, said Daniel Hoblick, spokesman for the bureau.

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Another source for public information about local governments is the South Dakota public notices database, which is operated by the South Dakota Newspaper Association.

The site has existed for over a decade, but it was just last year that the database started to include public notices from all local governments and newspapers, rather than merely a portion of them. That was due to a law the Legislature passed during the 2022 session requiring all newspapers to post public notices to the database.

The database isn't funded by the government, so the association and local newspapers are bearing all the costs.

Local governments also continue to pay for the publication of public notices in local printed newspapers, as required by state law. While some local governments have pushed to get rid of those costs (which can range from a few thousand dollars annually for a small city to tens of thousands for cities the size of Sioux Falls or Rapid City), Bordewyk said it's important to have all options available: printed in the paper and on multiple websites – "the more the merrier."

"The more you can provide access and transparency to citizens to access information, all the better," Bordewyk said.

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

COMMENTARY

On wildfire funding, the Forest Service is like the dog that caught the car

DAVE MERTZ

Watching congressional hearings is a really interesting way to find things out that you may otherwise never hear about. Over the past couple of months, there have been Senate hearings for the farm bill with the U.S. Forest Service's Associate Chief Angela Coleman, and Senate Appropriations hearings with Chief Randy Moore. Particularly interesting was the April 18 meeting of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, focusing on the fiscal year 2024 budget request for the Forest Service.

A common theme of all of these hearings is holding the Forest Service accountable to increase timber outputs. Numerous bills have been proposed to hold the Forest Service's feet to the fire — too many to even mention here. It's interesting that this is coming from Republicans, Democrats and an independent. They all want to know what the Forest Service is doing with the billions of dollars that have been appropriated to it in the recent past, and why timber outputs have not seen a resulting increase. They all express a concern in dealing with the wildfire crisis.

Chief Moore primarily gives three reasons why there has not been a dramatic increase and why the target for timber volume sold was not met last fiscal year. We all know the old metaphor that you don't turn an aircraft carrier on a dime, and in this instance, the Forest Service is the aircraft carrier. Moore says that both wildfires and storms wreaked havoc on areas that were planned for timber sales, and this drastically impacted target accomplishments.

He went on to say that the Forest Service is having real difficulty in hiring. The process is not working well and continues to be cumbersome. Also, the agency is losing employees through attrition, almost as quick as it can hire them. He said pay levels are a problem, as well as housing in the locations where the agency needs people to work. It's interesting that Moore did not mention the National Environmental Policy Act and lawsuits as reasons for the lack of target accomplishment.

Is it finally time to admit that centralizing human resources and other Forest Service business activities at the Albuquerque Service Center was a big mistake? Previously, the Forest Service had a relatively well-oiled hiring machine. I believe it could have held its own in comparison to most other federal agencies. Moore oversees the center, so if it has serious problems, then he needs to fix it. It would take a lot to

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finally admit the center was a mistake, but maybe that's what needs to happen.

With regard to housing, the Forest Service used to be in the business of providing housing, but then it was seen as time to move on from that. Much of the government housing was sold off. Now that's not looking like such a great decision.

Moore says the Forest Service has a plan to get up to 4 billion board feet of timber by fiscal year 2027. Sen. Angus King, an independent from Maine, stated that Eisenhower took Europe in 11 months, and asked why it would take the Forest Service so long to get to 4 billion board feet. Interesting question. It's also interesting that almost all of these senators expressed concerns about wildfires, but there was little said about increasing prescribed fire or pre-commercial thinning (to thin out the forest, thereby mitigating the severity of wildfires and encouraging the growth of the remaining trees). If they were truly interested in reducing wildfire threats, there could be a whole lot of mitigation through those two methods in comparison to cutting sawtimber-sized trees.

The Forest Service is in a tough spot. For years it stated that if it was just provided with enough money (Moore states that the agency still needs more) it could address the wildfire crisis. That's like the dog who never expected to catch the car, and when it finally did, it didn't know what to do with it.

Moore received some hard questions in the hearing. I felt a little sorry for him. He can't pull a rabbit out of a hat and fix the wildfire crisis overnight, but the Forest Service needs to be upfront about what it can actually do and what the realistic timeframes will be.

Dave Mertz retired from the Black Hills National Forest in 2017 as the forest's natural resource officer. Over the course of his career, he was a forester, silviculturist, forest fire management officer and a fire staff officer.

A top GOP lawyer wants to crack down on the college vote. States already are.

BY: ZACHARY ROTH - APRIL 30, 2023 7:51 PM

A top Republican election lawyer recently caused a stir when she told GOP donors that the party should work to make it harder for college students to vote in key states.

But the comments from Cleta Mitchell, who worked closely with then-President Donald Trump to try to overturn the 2020 election, are perhaps less surprising than they seem.

They follow numerous efforts in recent years by Republican lawmakers across the country to restrict voting by college students, a group that leans Democratic. And they come at a time when the youth vote has been surging.

At an April 15 retreat for donors to the Republican National Committee, Mitchell, a leader in the broader conservative push to impose new voting restrictions, called on her party to find ways to tighten the rules for student voting in several battleground states.

Mitchell's comments were first posted online by the independent progressive journalist Lauren Windsor. With Republicans now enjoying veto-proof majorities in both of North Carolina's chambers, Mitchell said, the party has a chance to crack down on voting by students there.

"We need to be looking at, what are these college campus locations and polling, what is this young people effort that [Democrats] do?" said Mitchell. "They basically put the polling place next to the student dorm, so they just have to roll out of bed, vote, and go back to bed."

"And we need to build strong election integrity task forces in those counties," Mitchell added, naming Durham, Wake, and Mecklenburg counties — all of which are Democratic strongholds and are home to large colleges.

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Wisconsin 'is a big problem'

The Election Integrity Network, which Mitchell chairs, works to build what it calls Election Integrity Task Forces, in which volunteers aim to root out fraud and illegal voting.

Mitchell also lamented that in Wisconsin and Michigan, both of which offer same-day voter registration, polling sites are located on campuses, making it easy for students to register and vote in one trip.

"So they've registered them in one line, and then they vote them in the second line," Mitchell said.

"Wisconsin is a big problem, because of the polling locations on college campuses," Mitchell continued. "Their goal for the Supreme Court race was to turn out 240,000 college students in that Supreme Court race. And we don't have anything like that, and we need to figure out how to do that, and how to combat that."

The recent race for a seat on Wisconsin's Supreme Court, which was won by the liberal candidate backed by Democrats, saw record campus turnout.

Mitchell also brought up New Hampshire, which has a higher share of college students than any other state, as well as statewide elections that are often decided by just a few thousand votes, The Granite State has seen a series of efforts in recent years to impose stricter rules for student voting, despite no evidence of illegal voting by students.

"I just talked to Governor Sununu, and asked him about the college student voting issue that has been a problem," Mitchell said, referring to the state's Republican governor, Chris Sununu.

"He thinks it's fixed. We just need to have an active task force to make sure it's fixed, and do our look back about whether or not they did go back and make sure those college students who presented, who said they were residents, really were."

Finally, Mitchell falsely claimed that, thanks to President Joe Biden, people who apply for federal student loan aid are required to fill out a voter registration form.

A White House executive order does urge federal agencies, including the Department of Education, to offer voter registration opportunities. But no one is required to register.

Banning student IDs for voting

Mitchell's remarks weren't focused only on student voting.

She also declared that if Republicans win full control of Virginia state government this year, they should eliminate early voting and same-day registration in the state. And she said that any group "that's got democracy in their name — those are not friends of ours."

But the comments about voting by college students deserve particular scrutiny because of an ongoing multi-state push to tighten the rules for student voters — including by banning student IDs for voting.

Mike Burns, the national director for the Campus Vote Project, which works as an arm of the nonpartisan Fair Elections Center to expand access to voting for college students, said the tens of millions of students enrolled in higher education across the country already face a unique set of hurdles in casting a ballot: They're less likely than other voters to have a driver's license or utility bill to use as ID; they're less likely to have a car to get to an off-campus polling site; and they often move each year, requiring them to go through the registration process anew each time.

Few states, Burns added, design their election systems to address these challenges. Despite Mitchell's fear about students rolling out of bed to vote, a 2022 Duke University study that looked at 35 states found that nearly three quarters of colleges did not have voting sites on campus.

Given this backdrop, "it's just that much more exasperating," Burns said, "to hear someone talk about intentionally trying to make that even harder, and to do it for political reasons."

Surging youth vote

The issue of student voting has flared lately thanks to a recent surge in the youth vote. The midterm elections of 2018 and 2022 saw the two highest turnout rates for voters under 30 in the last three decades. And in 2020, half of all eligible voters under 30 turned out, a stunning 11-point increase from 2016.

In 2018, those voters went for Democratic candidates by a 49-point margin, and in 2020 they went for Biden over Trump by 24 points — making them easily the most Democratic-leaning age group in both years.

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That's spurred Republican legislators to take action. This year alone, three GOP-controlled states — Missouri, Montana, and Idaho — have tightened their voter ID laws to remove student IDs from the list of documents voters can use to prove their identity.

Montana's law was struck down as a violation of the state constitution. Idaho's is being challenged in court by voting rights groups.

One of the Idaho bill's backers, state Rep. Tina Lambert, said she was concerned that students from neighboring Oregon or Washington might use their student IDs to vote in Idaho, then also vote in their home state. In fact, there has not been a single instance of fraud linked to student IDs in the state.

Idaho saw a 66% increase in registration by 18- and 19-year-olds between November 2018 and September 2022, by far the highest in the country, a Tufts University study found.

A fourth state, Ohio, passed a strict voter ID law with a similar impact. Ohio doesn't allow student IDs for voting, but previously it did allow utility bills. So colleges would issue students zero-dollar utility bills to be used for voter ID purposes. The new law, which is also being challenged in court, eliminates that option by requiring a photo ID.

In Texas, where growing numbers of young and non-white voters threaten to upend the state's politics, one Republican bill introduced this session would ban polling places on college campuses. The bill's sponsor, state Rep. Carrie Isaac, has described it as a safety measure aimed at keeping outsiders off campus, since campus polling places also serve the wider voting public.

Voter advocates charged in a lawsuit that a 2021 Texas law establishing strict residency requirements would particularly burden college students, by preventing them from registering at their prior home address when they temporarily move away for college. A federal judge last year struck down much of the law, but the decision was reversed on appeal.

'They just vote their feelings'

Efforts to make it difficult for students and other young people to vote are almost as old as the 26th Amendment, which went into effect in 1971, enfranchising Americans aged 18 to 20.

In one Texas county with a large, historically Black university, the chief voting official responded to the measure by requiring students to answer questions about their employment status and property ownership, before being stopped by a federal court in a key ruling for student voting rights.

Following the Supreme Court's 2013 decision weakening the Voting Rights Act, Texas imposed a voter ID law that didn't allow student IDs, even those from state universities, though it did include handgun licenses. And North Carolina passed a sweeping 2013 voting law that, among other steps, ended pre-registration of high-school students.

Two years earlier, Wisconsin passed a voter ID law that does allow student IDs from state universities, but mandates that the ID have an expiration date and have been issued within the last two years — requirements that many student IDs don't meet. Though some colleges have created special voter IDs, advocates say the issue still generates significant confusion among students.

New Hampshire has often been a hotspot for efforts to restrict student voting. Backers of these efforts have at times argued that students don't have as much stake in the community as other voters, since they might not stick around after college.

A 2021 bill that died in committee would have barred students from using their campus address to register. "People who go to college in New Hampshire, unless they are really bona fide permanent residents ... should vote by absentee ballot in their home states," the bill's sponsor, Rep. Norman Silver, told Stateline. "It's a matter of simple equity."

Back in 2011, Rep. William O'Brien, then the House speaker and advocating for a bill to tighten residency requirements, was even blunter.

"They go into these general elections, they'll have 900 same-day registrations, which are the kids coming out of the schools and basically doing what I did when I was a kid, which is voting as a liberal," O'Brien said. "That's what kids do. They don't have life experience, and they just vote their feelings and they're taking away the towns' ability to govern themselves. It's not fair."

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Burns, of the Campus Vote Project, said that kind of sentiment not only runs counter not only to the purpose of the 26th Amendment, but to any notion of voting as a civic good.

This is a formative process," said Burns. "We know from research that if people start to vote at a younger age, they will stay involved. It puts them on a trajectory of being more involved in civic life for the rest of their life, and I think that's a good thing."

"Every community is better when more people have their voices heard. And that includes young people," Burns added. "So regardless of who someone's going to vote for, we think they should have equal access."

Zachary Roth is the National Democracy Reporter for States Newsroom.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: I recently heard the term "slow design." Can you enlighten? – J.M., New York, NY

Slow design is a design philosophy that emphasizes quality, longevity and sustainability. It seeks to counteract the fast-paced, disposable nature of contemporary culture by prioritizing thoughtful, intentional design over mass-produced, trend-driven products. It is about creating objects that are functional and beautiful, and that are crafted with care, using materials that are responsibly sourced and manufactured.

At its core, slow design is about taking a more holistic approach to design. It's about considering the entire life cycle of a product, from the materials used to make it to how it will be used and disposed of at the end of its life.

Look for pieces that are created with sustainably harvested wood certified by the Forest Stewardship Council as well as "Cradle-to-Cradle" certification awarded to products produced in eco-friendly ways and that can be recycled after use. Slow design seeks to create products that are not just aesthetically pleasing, but that are also sustainable, durable and socially responsible.

One of the key principles of slow design is the idea of "localism." This means designing products that are made in the same community where they will be used, using materials that are sourced locally whenever possible. By doing this, designers can reduce the carbon footprint of their products, support local economies, and create stronger connections between people and the things they own.

Another important principle of slow design is the concept of "timelessness." Rather than creating products that are trendy or fashionable, slow design focuses on creating products that are classic and enduring. By doing this, designers can help reduce the amount of waste produced by the fashion and design industries, which are notorious for creating products that are quickly discarded and replaced. One example is what's been dubbed the "brown furniture revival," that being wood furnishings that were popular in days gone by but that are seeing a resurgence today due to their timeliness and sturdy quality.

Slow design also emphasizes the importance of craftsmanship and traditional skills. By working with skilled artisans and craftspeople, designers can create products that are not only beautiful and well-made, but that also support traditional forms of production and preserve cultural heritage.

Letting your home grow with you is another key to slow design. "There are those who move into a new place, furnish it in a couple weeks, and are happy to be done decorating," say Apartment Therapy's Katie Holdefehr. "Then there are those who see their home as an ongoing project without a specific end date."

"By not rushing through the process, you can build a home that reflects your life, rather than passing trends," she adds. "Part of embracing a slower pace is being okay with things that are unfinished." As such, leave some room and blank wall space for pieces you discover in the future. "If we give ourselves permission to slow down, we may find that home isn't a static place, but it changes along with us," concludes Holdefehr.

In short, slow design emphasizes sustainability, durability, and quality over speed and disposability. By creating products that are thoughtfully designed, responsibly sourced, and made to last, slow design seeks to promote a more sustainable and ethical approach to design and consumption.



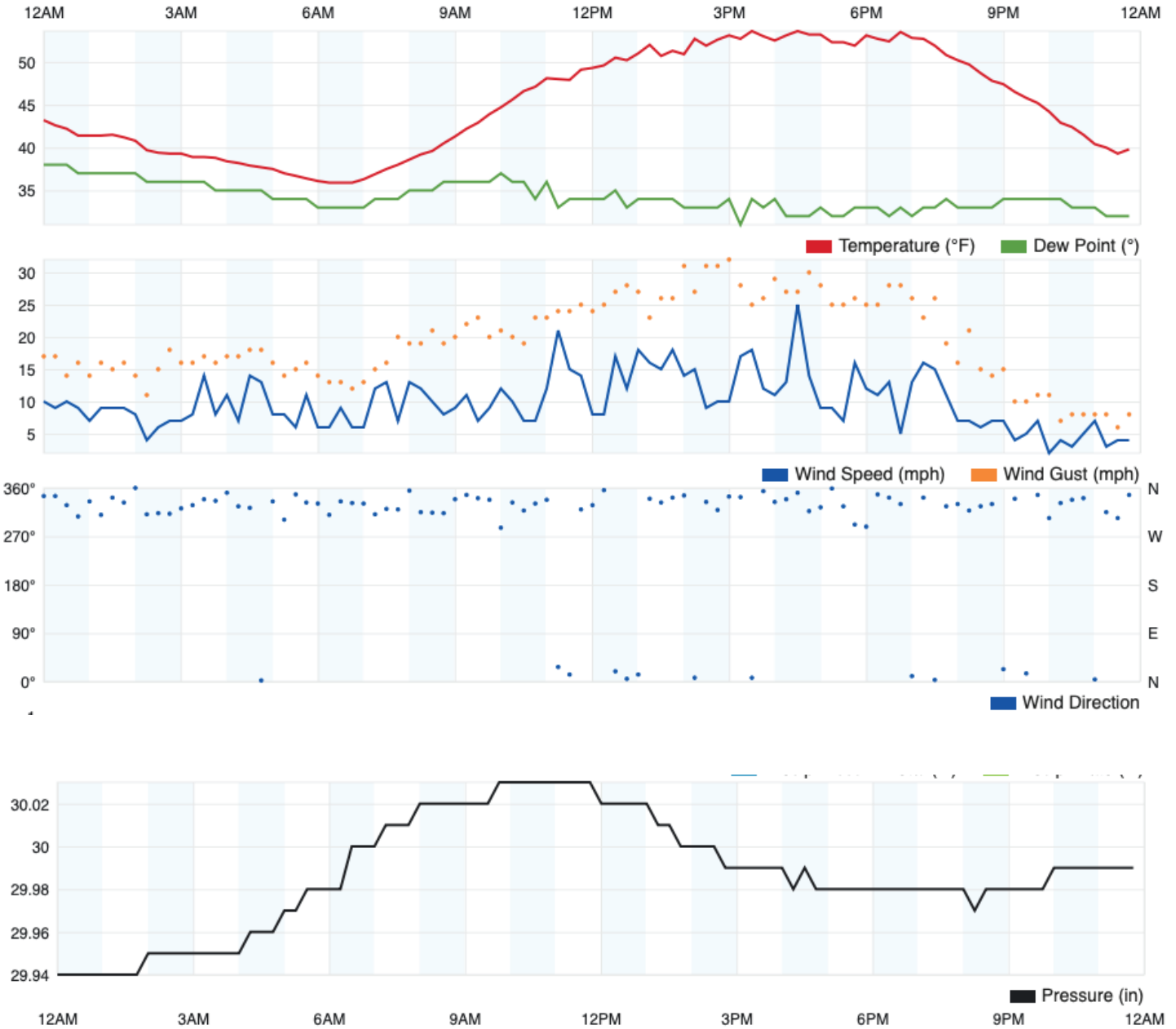
The goal of slow design is counteracting the fast-paced disposable nature of our culture by prioritizing thoughtful, intentional design. Credit:

Pexels.com.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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| Today | Tonight | Tuesday | Tuesday Night | Wednesday | Wednesday Night | Thursday |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sunny and Breezy | Clear and Blustery then Clear | Sunny | Mostly Clear | Sunny | Mostly Clear | Sunny |
| High: 56 °F | Low: 30 °F | High: 60 °F | Low: 33 °F | High: 72 °F | Low: 43 °F | High: 74 °F |

Windy Again Today, Warmer by Midweek

Strong northerly winds will occur today, with gusts in the **30 to 40 mph range** across and east of the Sisseton Hills.

The combination of wind and dry conditions today mean **any fires that ignite could spread easily** across portions of northeastern SD and west central MN.

High pressure leads to a further decrease in winds Tuesday, with warmer temperatures Wednesday and Thursday.

Maximum Wind Gust Forecast

| | 5/1 Mon | | | 5/2 Tue | | |
|-------------|---------|------|-----|---------|-----|------|
| | 6am | 12pm | 6pm | 12am | 6am | 12pm |
| Aberdeen | 30 | 32 | 31 | 17 | 21 | 22 |
| Britton | 29 | 33 | 30 | 22 | 21 | 24 |
| Brookings | 31 | 35 | 32 | 25 | 28 | 29 |
| Chamberlain | 22 | 25 | 24 | 10 | 13 | 14 |
| Eagle Butte | 13 | 20 | 22 | 14 | 12 | 15 |
| Eureka | 26 | 33 | 30 | 13 | 13 | 15 |
| Gettysburg | 22 | 26 | 26 | 15 | 14 | 15 |
| Huron | 30 | 31 | 30 | 16 | 20 | 21 |
| Kennebec | 18 | 24 | 24 | 10 | 13 | 16 |
| McIntosh | 13 | 18 | 23 | 10 | 7 | 14 |
| Milbank | 30 | 38 | 35 | 28 | 31 | 31 |
| Miller | 25 | 30 | 29 | 15 | 16 | 18 |
| Mobridge | 16 | 22 | 22 | 10 | 9 | 13 |
| Murdo | 14 | 18 | 18 | 14 | 9 | 13 |
| Pierre | 14 | 20 | 21 | 10 | 9 | 10 |
| Redfield | 30 | 31 | 30 | 16 | 20 | 20 |
| Sisseton | 31 | 38 | 35 | 26 | 29 | 28 |
| Watertown | 30 | 35 | 32 | 24 | 29 | 29 |
| Webster | 32 | 36 | 35 | 26 | 26 | 29 |
| Wheaton | 31 | 40 | 36 | 26 | 29 | 30 |

*Table values in mph
 **Created: 3 am CDT Mon 5/1/2023
 ***Values are maximums over the period beginning at the time shown.

Maximum Temperature Forecast

| | 5/1 Mon | 5/2 Tue | 5/3 Wed | 5/4 Thu |
|-------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Aberdeen | 57 | 61 | 73 |
| Britton | 53 | 58 | 69 | 70 |
| Brookings | 54 | 60 | 70 | 74 |
| Chamberlain | 61 | 67 | 81 | 80 |
| Eagle Butte | 58 | 63 | 77 | 75 |
| Eureka | 56 | 63 | 75 | 74 |
| Gettysburg | 57 | 63 | 75 | 74 |
| Huron | 58 | 64 | 76 | 78 |
| Kennebec | 61 | 65 | 80 | 81 |
| McIntosh | 57 | 63 | 75 | 73 |
| Milbank | 55 | 58 | 71 | 73 |
| Miller | 57 | 61 | 75 | 76 |
| Mobridge | 61 | 66 | 79 | 78 |
| Murdo | 60 | 66 | 82 | 79 |
| Pierre | 63 | 67 | 82 | 81 |
| Redfield | 57 | 61 | 74 | 76 |
| Sisseton | 55 | 59 | 71 | 73 |
| Watertown | 53 | 58 | 70 | 73 |
| Webster | 51 | 56 | 68 | 70 |
| Wheaton | 53 | 57 | 68 | 70 |

*Table values in °F
 **Created: 3 am CDT Mon 5/1/2023
 ***Values are maximums over the period beginning at the time shown.



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD



Updated: May 1, 2023

3:37 AM

Strong northerly winds will occur today, with gusts in the 30 to 40 mph range across and east of the Sisseton Hills. High pressure leads to a further decrease in winds Tuesday, with warmer temperatures Wednesday and Thursday.

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Not Your Typical Spring



| | Average # of 60° days through April 30th | # of 60° days this year / rank for fewest on record | Record Least / Most |
|--------------------|---|--|------------------------|
| Aberdeen | 16 | 5 / Tied 6th | 3 (1975) / 37 (1910) |
| Watertown | 14 | 5 / Tied 10th | 0 (1975) / 35 (1910) |
| Sisseton | 15 | 4 / Tied 3rd | 1 (1975) / 34 (1981) |
| Wheaton | 14 | 1 / 2nd | 0 (1975) / 32 (1968) |
| Pierre | 22 | 13 / Tied 9th | 7 (1950) / 41 (2012) |
| Mobridge | 18 | 11 / Tied 19th | 3 (1975) / 36 (1911) |
| Kennebec | 26 | 17 / Tied 16th | 8 (1917) / 54 (2012) |
| Timber Lake | 18 | 10 / Tied 13th | 4 (1975) / 40 (2012) |

National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

**# of 60 days this year does not include Apr 30th*

April 30, 2023

12:10 PM

Temperatures so far this spring (since March 1) have been between 5 and 12 degrees below normal across the area. Here's a specific look at the number of 60 degree days we've had so far this year compared to normal and records.

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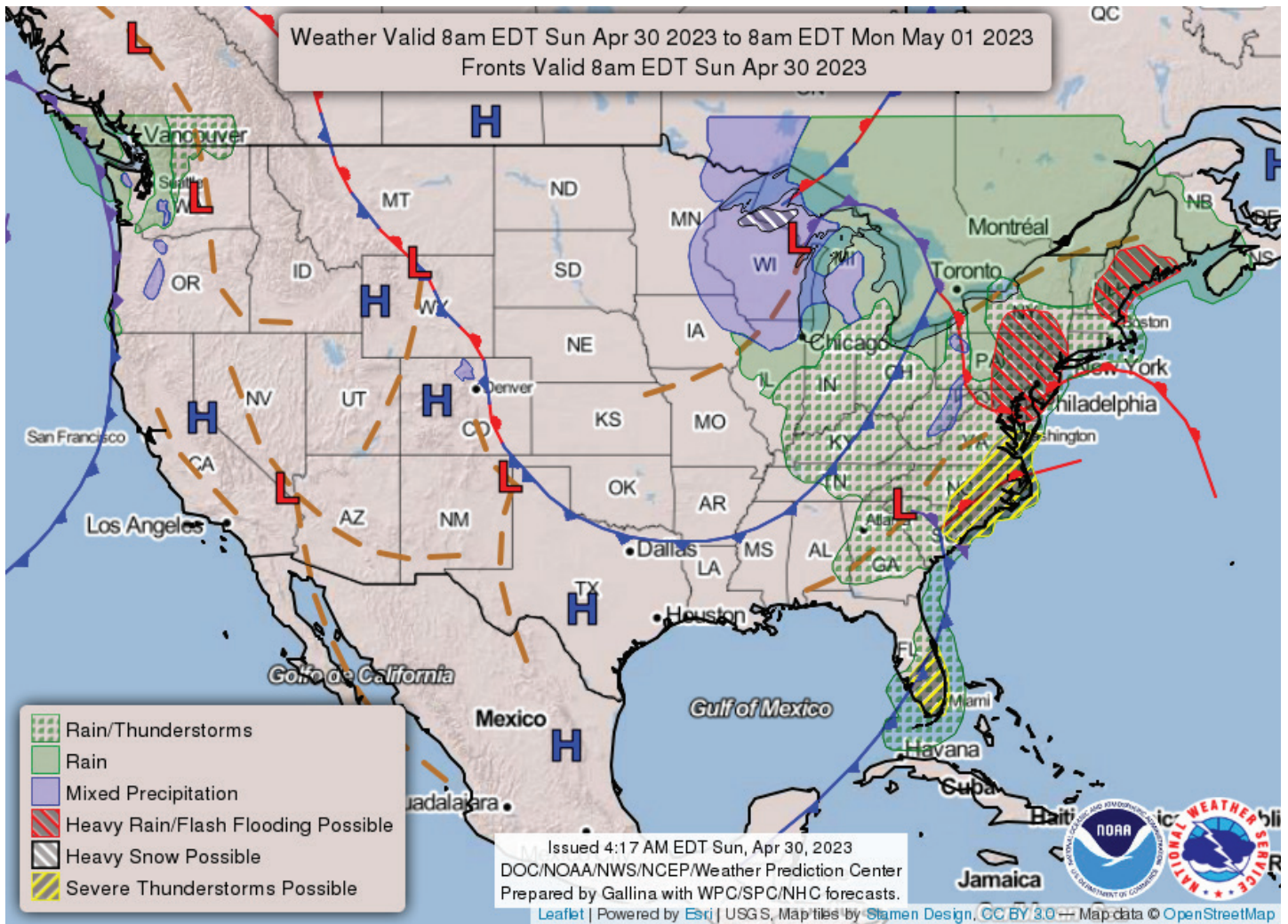
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 54 °F at 4:41 PM
Low Temp: 36 °F at 6:39 AM
Wind: 32 mph at 2:57 PM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 14 hours, 21 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 102 in 1959
Record Low: 19 in 1961
Average High: 65
Average Low: 38
Average Precip in May.: 0.11
Precip to date in May.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 4.08
Precip Year to Date: 5.72
Sunset Tonight: 8:40:12 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:17:17 AM



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Today in Weather History

May 1, 1959: Aberdeen recorded a high temperature of 102, which is the earliest date that Aberdeen reached 100 degrees.

May 1, 1967: One of the latest blizzards on records for South Dakota ended on this day. Snowfall amounts in the west were 5 to 12 inches with a 16-inch report in Lemmon and 30 inches in the northern Black Hills. Winds of 40 to 50 mph caused blowing snow which occasionally reduced visibility to near zero and snow drifts of 4 to 5 feet. Other snowfall amounts include 5 inches in Murdo and 6 miles SE of McIntosh; and 4 inches in Timber Lake.

May 1, 1997: Torrential rains of 1.5 to 2.5 inches with a separate 4.5-inch report fell over central South Dakota and caused flooding to several creeks, streams, low-lying areas, and roads. This early May rain only aggravated the areas flooded in March and April. Lyman County experienced the most significant flooding where 4.5 inches of rain fell, north of Vivian. Part of a golf course was flooded, and some personal property was flooded along with the KOA campground near Kennebec. Some rainfall amounts include 2.5 inches 7 miles NW of Presho and 2.01 inches near Stephan.

1854 - The Connecticut River reached a level of nearly twenty-nine feet at Hartford (the highest level of record up until that time). The record height was reached in the midst of a great New England flood which followed sixty-six hours of steady rain. (David Ludlum)

1857: The Washington Evening Star publishes the first US national weather summary using observations from volunteers to the Smithsonian Institution's cooperative network.

1933: An estimated F4 tornado struck Minden, Louisiana, killing 28 people and injuring 400 others. 500 homes were damaged or destroyed with \$1.3 million in damage.

1935 - Snow, ice and sleet brought winter back to parts of southeast Minnesota. Minneapolis received three inches of snow to tie their May record which was established in 1892. (1st-2nd) (The Weather Channel)

1954 - The temperature at Polebridge MT dipped to 5 degrees below zero to establish a state record for the month of May. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced large hail and heavy rain in Texas. Baseball size hail pounded Dublin, and 3.75 inches of rain soaked Brady. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Strong southerly winds ahead of a cold front crossing the Rocky Mountain Region gusted to 90 mph at Lamar CO. High winds created blinding dust storms in eastern Colorado, closing roads around Limon. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced heavy rain in the southeastern U.S. Rainfall totals of 1.84 inches at Charlotte NC and 2.86 inches at Atlanta GA were records for the date. Strong thunderstorm winds uprooted trees in Twiggs County GA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from northern Alabama to North Carolina. There were sixty-three reports of large hail or damaging winds, with hail four inches in diameter reported near Cartersville GA. Ten cities in the southeastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date as readings warmed into the 90s. Jacksonville FL reported a record high of 96 degrees. Late night thunderstorms over central Texas produced up to ten inches of rain in southern Kimble County and northern Edwards County. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1999: Record, low temperatures for the date, were broken in the Deep South. Mobile, Alabama dropped to 46 degrees. Miami fell to 58; Miami Beach bottomed out at 61, and Vero Beach dropped to 47 degrees, all new records. Other stations in Florida also set record cold maximums for the date, including 61 at Jacksonville and Daytona Beach with 66 degrees.

2003: A record-setting 516 tornadoes occurred during May 2003. In particular, during the period May 4-10, 2003, an unprecedented number of tornadoes, 393 total, affected the central and the southern United States. The tornadoes resulted in 39 deaths across four states. Six of these tornadoes were classified as violent (F4) on the Fujita Tornado Intensity Scale.

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

During a lunchtime conversation, a friend said to Samuel Coleridge, the famous poet, "Children should be given a free rein to think and act at an early age, and to make their own decisions."

"Interesting," said Coleridge. "Come with me. Let's visit my flower garden."

Walking outdoors together they came to a plot of ground that was in complete disarray. They stopped and Coleridge pointed and said, "Look at that."

"That's nothing but a bed of weeds," protested the guest.

"It was a rose garden," said the poet. "But this year I just let it grow as it willed, and look what happened to it."

Children, like gardens, need to be well cared for and nourished, given structure and attention. It is critical that parents accept their responsibility to God as well as their children and provide a nurturing and disciplined lifestyle where Christ is always present.

Prayer: We ask, Father, that You give Your insight, strength, and direction to parents as they raise their children to honor You. May You be their example. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it. Proverbs 22:6



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:

04.28.23

18 38 53 62 64 20

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$52,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 17 Hrs 7

DRAW: Mins 3 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.29.23

2 5 8 36 51 2

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$2,600,000

NEXT 17 Hrs 7 Mins 3

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.30.23

8 11 30 37 47 13

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT 16 Hrs 37 Mins 3

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.29.23

4 9 11 13 32

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$43,000

NEXT 2 Days 17 Hrs 7

DRAW: Mins 2 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.29.23

3 13 36 50 61 16

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT 17 Hrs 6 Mins 3

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.29.23

16 53 54 57 65 8

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$60,000,000

NEXT 17 Hrs 6 Mins 3

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

On May Day, workers rally for better labor conditions

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Workers and activists around the world marked May Day on Monday with rallies calling for higher salaries, reduced working hours and other better working conditions.

In France, unions plan massive demonstrations to protest President Emmanuel Macron's recent move to raise the retirement age from 62 to 64. Organizers see the pension reform as a threat to hard-fought worker rights and France's social safety net.

The pension bill unleashed France's biggest protests in years, and the May 1 rallies are expected to be among the largest yet.

May Day, which falls on May 1, is observed in many countries as a day to celebrate workers' rights with rallies, marches and other events. This year's events had bigger turnouts than in previous years, as COVID-19 restrictions were drastically loosened and activists in many countries argued governments should do more to improve workers' lives.

As in previous years, police in Turkey prevented a group of demonstrators from reaching Istanbul's main square, Taksim, and detained around a dozen protesters, the independent television station Sozcu reported. Journalists trying to film demonstrators being forcibly moved into police vans were also pushed back or detained.

The square has symbolic importance for Turkey's trade unions after unknown gunmen opened fire on people celebrating May Day at Taksim in 1977, causing a stampede. Dozens were killed.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government has declared Taksim off-limits to demonstrations, leading to frequent clashes between police and protesters trying to reach the square. Meanwhile, small groups were allowed to enter Taksim to lay wreaths at a monument there.

In Pakistan, authorities have banned rallies in some cities due to a tense security situation or political atmosphere. In Peshawar, in the country's restive northwest, labor organizations and trade unions held indoor events to demand better workers' rights. Labor leader Saifullah Khan said inflation and economic conditions in the country are making people's lives a misery. In the eastern city of Lahore, where political parties are barred from holding rallies ahead of a local May 14 poll, politicians will take part in events and a workers' march will converge on the Punjab Assembly. In the southern port city of Karachi, the country's ruling party is hosting a seminar and several public rallies are taking place.

In South Korea, tens of thousand of people attended various rallies in its biggest May Day gatherings since the pandemic began in early 2020. The two main rallies in the capital, Seoul, were expected to draw about 30,000 people each, according to organizers.

"The price of everything has increased except for our wages. Increase our minimum wages!" an activist at a Seoul rally shouted at the podium. "Reduce our working hours!"

Rally participants accused the conservative government of President Yoon Suk Yeol of clamping down on some unions in the name of reforming alleged irregularities.

In Tokyo, thousands of labor union members, opposition lawmakers and academics gathered at Yoyogi park, demanding wage increases to offset the impact of rising costs as their lives are still recovering from damages of the pandemic.

Union leaders said government measures for salary increases are falling behind rising prices. They criticized Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's plan to double the defense budget, and said the money should be spent on welfare, social security and improving people's daily lives.

Kishida attended a Saturday event at a Tokyo park that drew thousands of workers, politicians and representatives from major unions, where he promised to focus on raising wages.

In Indonesia, rally-goers demanded the government repeal a job creation law they argue would benefit business at the expense of workers and the environment.

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"Job Creation Law must be repealed for the sake of the improvement of working conditions," said protester Sri Ajeng at one rally. "It's only oriented to benefit employers, not workers."

In Taiwan, thousands of workers took to the streets to protest what they call the inadequacies of the self-ruled island's labor policies, putting pressure on the ruling party ahead of the 2024 presidential election.

Gathering in the capital, Taipei, members of labor groups waved flags that represent their organizations. Some medical workers wearing protective gear held placards with messages calling for subsidies, while other held banners criticizing President Tsai Ing-wen's labor policies.

In Lebanon, hundreds of Communist Party and trade syndicate members, as well as a group of migrant domestic workers, marched through the streets of downtown Beirut. The country is in the throes of a crippling economic crisis and spiraling inflation, with some three-quarters of the population now living in poverty.

In North Korea, the country's main Rodong Sinmun newspaper published a lengthy editorial urging workers to lend greater support to leader Kim Jong Un, fulfill their set production quotas and improve public livelihoods.

Protests in Germany kicked off with a "Take Back the Night" rally organized by feminist and queer groups on the eve of May Day to protest against violence directed at women and LGBTQ+ people. Several thousand people took part in the march, which was largely peaceful despite occasional clashes between participants and police. Numerous further rallies by labor unions and left-wing groups are planned in Germany on Monday.

Associated Press writers Mari Yamaguchi and Yuri Kageyama and in Tokyo, Niniek Karmini in Jakarta, Indonesia, Kanis Leung in Hong Kong, Suzan Fraser in Istanbul, Riazat Butt in Islamabad, and Abby Sewell in Beirut contributed to this report.

Fraught U.S-Israel ties on display as Knesset reconvenes

By TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Israeli lawmakers reconvene Monday after a month-long parliament recess, resuming the fight over a contentious government plan to overhaul the judiciary that has split Israelis and drawn concern from Israel's most important ally, the United States.

The tensions will be on full display when the highest-ranking Republican politician in the U.S., House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, addresses the Knesset later Monday.

Israel's government has portrayed McCarthy's visit as a nod to bipartisan U.S. support for Israel as it marks 75 years since its creation. Critics say the rare honor given to McCarthy — he's only the second House speaker to address the Knesset, after Newt Gingrich in 1998 — is a pointed jab at Democratic President Joe Biden. Biden has publicly voiced concern about the legal overhaul and, largely because of it, has so far denied Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu a typically customary invitation to the White House after his election win late last year.

McCarthy's speech underscores the fraught ties between Netanyahu and the Biden White House, driven in part by the legal overhaul and the nationalistic character of the Israel's furthest-right government in its history.

It is also a sign of the gradual transformation of Israel from a bipartisan matter into a wedge issue in U.S. politics. The trend goes back a decade, when Netanyahu began openly siding with Republicans against Democrats. In parallel, some younger progressive Democrats have become more critical of Israel.

McCarthy is addressing the Knesset at a time when both Republicans and Democrats are steeling for presidential nomination races. Republicans are seeking to portray themselves to voters, especially to evangelical Christians, as the best ally to Israel.

Before parliament's break, Netanyahu paused judicial overhaul plans under intense pressure, which has included large weekly protests, a labor strike and threats by military reservists to stop showing up for duty. Biden waded into the criticism, saying Netanyahu "cannot continue down this road."

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While Netanyahu and Biden have known each other for decades, their relationship has soured since Netanyahu returned to office late last year after a brief break as opposition leader. The Biden administration has voiced unease about Netanyahu's government, made up of ultranationalists who were once at the fringes of Israeli politics and now hold senior positions dealing with the Palestinians and other sensitive issues.

Over the years, Netanyahu, a lifelong conservative with American-accented English and deep ties to the U.S., hasn't hidden his Republican leanings even as he's spoken of the importance of keeping Israel a bipartisan issue. In 2015, he delivered a speech to Congress against the Iran nuclear deal which was widely seen as a slight against the Obama administration, which had negotiated the agreement. He was accused of backing Republican Mitt Romney's candidacy for president and was one of President Donald Trump's closest international supporters. That Republican tilt has tested ties with American Jews, most of whom lean Democratic.

Eytan Gilboa, an expert on U.S.-Israel relations, said there's been "serious damage" to Israel's ties to Washington, and that Netanyahu himself "broke the bipartisanship" surrounding Israel. The McCarthy visit, he said, was a way for both Republicans and Netanyahu to stick it to Biden.

"It's a counterweight to Biden," he said. "Netanyahu thinks that if McCarthy visits here it will put pressure on the White House to invite him. Republicans are fighting over who's the greatest supporter of Israel."

The White House snub is another sore point for the embattled leader, whose legal plan has plunged Israel into one of its worst domestic crises, sent his Likud party tanking in public opinion polls and tarnished the 73-year-old leader's legacy. In an interview Sunday with the conservative Israel Hayom daily, McCarthy said that if Biden doesn't invite Netanyahu to the White House, he will invite him to Congress.

The month-long parliamentary break has allowed Israelis to take stock of the tensions set off by the legal plan, which had been proceeding at a feverish pace in the previous session and had reached a boiling point after Netanyahu dismissed his dissenting defense minister.

The future of the plan isn't clear. Netanyahu said last month he was temporarily suspending the drive to change Israel's judicial system to allow the coalition and the opposition to come to a negotiated compromise. But the talks don't appear to have produced many agreements and Netanyahu's allies are pushing him to move ahead if the talks fail.

He's also facing pressure from the streets – tens of thousands of people who support the overhaul filled the area near parliament on Thursday as a show of force in favor of the legal changes. Protests against the overhaul have continued for 17 weeks, including during the parliament recess, with as much intensity.

At a meeting of his Cabinet on Sunday, Netanyahu struck a conciliatory tone.

"We are making every effort to resolve this debate through dialogue. With goodwill by both sides, I am convinced that it is possible to reach agreements -- and I give this my full backing," he said.

As parliament reconvenes, Netanyahu is expected to keep a focus on less divisive issues in the coming weeks, such as passing a budget at a time when Israel's economy is on shaky ground and inflation is rising.

But he will also face hurdles. He is up against a court-ordered deadline in July, which requires the government to legislate a military draft law about the near-blanket exemptions enjoyed by members of Israel's ultra-Orthodox community. Instead of serving in the country's compulsory military, like the majority of secular Jews, ultra-Orthodox men are allowed to study religious texts. Experts say this system keeps the growing community cloistered and does not encourage its integration into the workforce, something seen as necessary to safeguard the future of Israel's economy.

Netanyahu, who is on trial for corruption, and his allies say the overhaul is necessary to rein in an interventionist legal system that has taken power away from elected politicians. They want to weaken the Supreme Court, have the government control who becomes a judge and reduce judicial oversight on legislation.

Critics say the changes will upend Israel's fragile system of checks and balances and imperil the country's democratic foundations.

Russia missile attack on Ukraine injures 34, damages homes

By DAVID RISING Associated Press

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KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia launched its second large salvo of missiles at Ukraine in recent days early Monday, damaging buildings and wounding at least 34 people in the eastern city of Pavlohrad but failing to hit Kyiv, officials said.

Air raid sirens began blaring across the capital at about 3:45 a.m., followed by the sounds of explosions as missiles were intercepted by Ukrainian defense systems.

Eighteen cruise missiles were fired in total from the Murmansk region and the Caspian region, and 15 of them were intercepted, said Ukrainian Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief Valerii Zaluzhnyi.

The head of Kyiv's city administration, Serhii Popko, said all missiles fired at the city were shot down, as well as some drones. He didn't provide further details, but said more information would be available later.

The attack follows Friday's launch of more than 20 cruise missiles and two explosive drones at Ukraine, which was the first to target Kyiv in nearly two months.

In that attack, Russian missiles hit an apartment building in Uman, a city about 215 kilometers (135 miles) south of Kyiv, killing 21 people including three children.

In Monday's attack, missiles hit Pavlohrad, in the eastern Dnipropetrovsk region, wounding 34 people, including five children, according to Serhii Lysak the region's top official.

Seven missiles shot at the city and "some were intercepted" but others hit an industrial facility, sparking a fire, and a residential neighborhood where 19 apartment buildings, 25 homes, six schools and five shops were damaged, he said.

Missiles also hit three other areas in the region, damaging residential buildings and a school, he said.

Moscow has frequently launched long-range missile attacks during the 14-month war, often indiscriminately hitting civilian areas.

Ukraine has recently taken delivery of American-made Patriot missiles, providing improved anti-missile defenses, but it was not clear whether any of them were employed in trying to stop Monday morning's attack.

Ukraine has also been building up its mechanized brigades with armor supplied by its Western allies, who have also been training Ukrainian troops and sending ammunition, as Kyiv prepares for an expected counteroffensive this spring.

On Saturday, two Ukrainian drones hit a Russian oil depot in Crimea in the latest attack on the annexed peninsula as Ukraine gears up for its counteroffensive.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in an interview last week that his country would seek to reclaim the peninsula annexed by Russia in 2014 in the upcoming counteroffensive.

Follow AP's coverage of the war in Ukraine: <https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine>

Daughter of Buccaneers LB Shaq Barrett drowns in family pool

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — The 2-year-old daughter of Tampa Bay Buccaneers linebacker Shaquil Barrett drowned in a swimming pool at the family's home on Sunday, police said.

Officers, responding to a call that a child had fallen into a pool, were sent to Barrett's home in the Beach Park neighborhood in south Tampa shortly before 9:30 a.m. The football player's youngest child, Arrayah, was taken to a hospital and later pronounced dead.

"The investigation is ongoing," the police report said. "It is not believed to be suspicious in nature at this time, but a purely accidental and tragic incident."

Barrett, 30, and his wife, Jordanna, have three other children.

"Today's tragic news is heartbreaking for all members of the Buccaneers family. Our thoughts and prayers are with Shaq, Jordanna and the entire Barrett family during this unimaginably difficult time," the Buccaneers said a statement.

"While no words can provide true comfort at a time such as this," the team added, "we offer our support and love as they begin to process this very profound loss of their beloved Arrayah."

Barrett, who's recovering from a torn Achilles that sidelined him for the second half of last season, is

entering his fifth year with Tampa Bay after spending the first four seasons of his career with the Denver Broncos.

Barrett led the NFL with 19½ sacks in 2019. The following season he helped the Bucs win the Super Bowl.

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/hub/nfl> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

Regulators seize First Republic Bank, sell to JPMorgan Chase

By KEN SWEET AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Regulators seized troubled First Republic Bank early Monday and sold all of its deposits and most of its assets to JPMorgan Chase Bank in a bid to head off further banking turmoil in the U.S.

San Francisco-based First Republic is the third midsize bank to fail in two months. It has struggled since the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank and investors and depositors had grown increasingly worried it might not survive because of its high amount of uninsured deposits and exposure to low interest rate loans.

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation said early Monday that First Republic Bank's 84 branches in eight states will reopen as branches of JPMorgan Chase Bank and depositors will have full access to all of their deposits.

Regulators worked through the weekend to find a way forward before U.S. stock markets opened. Markets in many parts of the world were closed for May 1 holidays Monday. The two markets in Asia that were open, in Tokyo and Sydney, rose.

"Our government invited us and others to step up, and we did," said Jamie Dimon, chairman and CEO of JPMorgan Chase.

As of April 13, First Republic had approximately \$229 billion in total assets and \$104 billion in total deposits, the FDIC said.

At the end of last year, the Federal Reserve ranked it 14th in size among U.S. commercial banks.

Before Silicon Valley Bank failed, First Republic had a banking franchise that was the envy of most of the industry. Its clients — mostly the rich and powerful — rarely defaulted on their loans. The bank has made much of its money making low-cost loans to the wealthy, which reportedly included Meta Platforms CEO Mark Zuckerberg.

Flush with deposits from the well-heeled, First Republic saw total assets more than double from \$102 billion at the end of 2019's first quarter, when its full-time workforce was 4,600.

But the vast majority of its deposits, like those in Silicon Valley and Signature Bank, were uninsured — that is, above the \$250,000 limit set by the FDIC. And that worried analysts and investors. If First Republic were to fail, its depositors might not get all their money back.

Those fears were crystalized in the bank's recent quarterly results. The bank said depositors pulled more than \$100 billion out of the bank during April's crisis. San Francisco-based First Republic said that it was only able to stanch the bleeding after a group of large banks stepped in to save it with \$30 billion in uninsured deposits.

Since the crisis, First Republic has been looking for a way to quickly turn itself around. The bank planned to sell off unprofitable assets, including the low interest mortgages that it provided to wealthy clients. It also announced plans to lay off up to a quarter of its workforce, which totaled about 7,200 employees in late 2022.

Investors remained skeptical. The bank's executives have taken no questions from investors or analysts since the bank reported its results, causing First Republic's stock to sink further.

And it's hard to profitably restructure a balance sheet when a firm has to sell off assets quickly and has fewer bankers to find opportunities for the bank to invest in. It took years for banks like Citigroup and Bank of America to return to profitability after the global financial crisis 15 years ago, and those banks had the benefit of a government-aided backstop to keep them going.

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Associated Press Staff Writer Matt O'Brien in Providence, Rhode Island, contributed to this report.

UK's diverse communities ambivalent about king's coronation

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Musician Deronne White is ready to play on King Charles III's coronation day. The flautist and his fellow young musicians aren't playing anything regal or solemn — they're planning to parade through south London's streets entertaining crowds with an uplifting "coronation carnival" set mixing gospel, jazz, grime, disco and rap. There'll even be a calypso take on the U.K. national anthem.

While he's excited about the gig, White says he has mixed feelings about the coronation. Like some others at the Brixton Chamber Orchestra, White is a descendant of migrants from Jamaica — a former British colony and Commonwealth member that wants to cut its ties with the monarchy and has called for the U.K. royals to address their historical ties to slavery.

"Personally it's a little bit hard to connect to the whole occasion," he said. "I think that the coronation could possibly allow people like me to try and connect to (the monarchy). But it can be a bit tough."

Towns, cities and villages across the U.K. will be awash with Union flags and patriotic decorations to celebrate Charles' coronation at Westminster Abbey this weekend, and officials say the festivities will bring Britain's diverse communities together. But the event is viewed with a large dose of ambivalence by some in the U.K., not least those with African-Caribbean backgrounds and other minorities for whom the British Empire's past wrongs still loom large.

While slavery and the heyday of colonialism may be long gone, the royal family has in recent years struggled to grapple with new accusations of institutional racism — most notably from Prince Harry's wife, Meghan.

The Duchess of Sussex, a biracial American actress, reopened the debate about the monarchy and race when she said last year that an unnamed member of the royal household had asked her how dark her baby's skin might be when she was pregnant with her first child, Archie.

Last year, there was outrage when Ngozi Fulani, a Black charity executive, complained that a close aide of Queen Elizabeth II's repeatedly questioned her at a party about where she was "really" from. Palace officials apologized and the aide, Susan Hussey, resigned.

Charles, 74, has on many occasions spoken about how much he values diversity in modern, multicultural Britain. He has paid tribute to Britain's "Windrush generation" — the West Indians, like White's great-grandparents, who helped rebuild Britain after World War II. In 2021, Charles won praise for acknowledging "the darkest days of our past" and the stain of slavery.

More recently, the monarch expressed for the first time his support for research into the links between the U.K. monarchy and the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

"I think he's definitely trying — maybe not in the best way or the fastest way, but from what I've seen, it's kind of a step in the right way," said Teigan Hastings, 17.

But Hastings, a British Jamaican who plays the tuba alongside White, said that Meghan's claims about how she was treated by her in-laws "opened up a bit of truth within the royal family."

"I guess it wasn't totally unexpected, but at the same time you think there'd be some form of acceptance ... and there hasn't really been," he said. "It's like there's nothing like us normal people can really do about it except hope for change."

The musicians say they hope that their vibrant blend of musical styles will help draw in the crowds, whatever they may think of Charles.

Across the capital in Southall, known as "Little India" — the west London neighborhood is home to one of the largest Indian populations outside India — local politician Jasbir Kaur Anand said the area's British Asians also plan to mark the coronation in their own way.

About 6,000 tickets were snapped up for a coronation shindig complete with a huge television screen broadcasting the ceremony, funfair rides and bands playing Jewish, South American and gospel music, Anand said.

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She added that she will attend a street party organized by a group of local women that promises to feature "lots of Punjabi food, Punjabi dancing and singing."

Anand, whose family moved to Britain from Singapore when the city-state gained independence, said many immigrants of her generation feel gratitude to the U.K. monarchy for embracing them and giving them the opportunities to settle and prosper.

Gulu Anand, who owns Southall's Brilliant curry house and has cooked for Charles several times over the years when he visited the neighborhood, is one vocal supporter of Charles.

Charles "actually listens to you," he said, recalling the royal's demeanor when he ate at his restaurant. "I think he is the people's king."

But Janpal Basran, who heads local charity Southall Community Alliance, said that many communities in the area are from former colonies and "remember what it was like to be ruled by others."

"So they look at the monarchy, they remember all of the associated historical baggage, for want of a better word," Basran said. "There will be people who will be thinking that the monarchy represents an institution which was repressive, discriminatory and violent. Is this something that we want to be supporting to the future?"

Patrick Vernon, a Black activist campaigning for justice for scores of Caribbean migrants who lost their rights as U.K. citizens because of a legal loophole, said Charles could do so much more to show his subjects that the monarchy takes diversity seriously.

He drew attention to a 2021 investigation by the Guardian newspaper that revealed the royal household is still exempt from equality laws preventing race and sex discrimination.

"I think Charles could be in a unique position to start to actually influence that agenda," he said. "It's important to demonstrate change, demonstrate that there's a clear marker that we're different, that we're moving towards the 21st century."

Follow AP's coverage of King Charles III at <https://apnews.com/hub/king-charles-iii>

Paraguay's long-ruling Colorado Party has easy election win

By DÉBORA REY Associated Press

ASUNCIÓN, Paraguay (AP) — Paraguayans voted overwhelmingly to keep the long-ruling Colorado Party in power for five more years, backing its presidential candidate and giving it majorities in both houses of Congress.

Santiago Peña, a 44-year-old economist, had 43% of the votes in a preliminary count from Sunday's election, with nearly all voting places reporting. That was far ahead of the 27% held by his closest challenger, Efraín Alegre of the Pact for a New Paraguay, a broad-based opposition coalition that had united in an effort to bring to an end Colorado's seven-decade stranglehold on power.

The conservative Colorado Party also had a strong showing in other races, winning 15 of the 17 governorships up for election and getting majorities in both the Senate and the lower house.

Led by Alegre, the opposition coalition had been optimistic it was going to be able to win votes due to widespread unhappiness over high levels of corruption and failures in the health and education systems, which took center stage during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yet a significant number of non-Colorado voters instead supported Paraguayo Cubas, a right-wing populist outsider who received 23% of the vote with a strong anti-establishment message, a larger share than had been expected.

There were 13 candidates in all, but Paraguay doesn't require a presidential candidate to get more than 50% of the votes, giving the victory to whomever gets the most votes.

Peña celebrated a showing that on Aug. 15 will make him Paraguay's youngest president since the return of democracy in 1989.

"Today we're not celebrating a personal triumph, we're celebrating the victory of a people who with their vote chose the path of social peace, dialogue, fraternity, and national reconciliation," Peña told a crowd of

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supporters Sunday night. "Long live Paraguay! Long live the Colorado Party!"

Alegre acknowledged defeat soon thereafter.

"Today, the results indicate that perhaps the effort we have made was not enough," Alegre told reporters, adding that divisions among the opposition "prevented us from reaching the goal of being able to bring about the change that the majority of Paraguayans are asking of us."

The first to congratulate the president-elect was the outgoing president, Mario Abdo Benítez. "Congratulations to the Paraguayan people for their great participation in this electoral process, and to the president-elect Santiago Peña," he said on social media. "We will work to initiate an orderly and transparent transition that strengthens our institutions and the country's democracy."

Before the vote, analysts had predicted a close contest for president, saying Alegre could have a chance of unseating South America's longest-governing party, which has essentially ruled Paraguay uninterrupted since 1947.

But many voters preferred to stay with the familiar, an unusual turn in a region where incumbents have not done well in recent elections.

"An unexpected result, very unexpected. I think even the Colorado Party members are shocked by such a wide margin," political consultant Sebastián Acha said. "It gives him enormous legitimacy due to the size of the difference and that makes Peña's victory indisputable."

The results also appeared to mark a victory for former President Horacio Cartes, who governed in 2013-2018, and who the U.S. State Department recently accused of being involved in "significant corruption" as well as having ties to terrorism. He has denied the allegations, while Peña called them "groundless."

Cartes, a local magnate who is also the president of the Colorado Party, is a powerful figure in Paraguayan politics and members of the opposition had characterized Peña as a frontman for Cartes to hold power.

Cartes stood next to Peña as he gave his celebratory speech Sunday night.

"I want to be a tool for you," Cartes told Peña. "I want you to be sure that the Colorado Party is going to be your best tool."

Peña was finance minister in the Cartes government and, until recently, a member of the board of Banco Basa, a local bank owned by the former president.

The U.S. Embassy posted a statement on social media congratulating Peña. "We will continue to work together in strengthening our excellent bilateral relations and promoting transparency and inclusive democracy," it added.

The election in the country of almost 7 million people also had geopolitical implications as Paraguay is the only remaining country in South America to have diplomatic relations with Taiwan, and those ties became an issue in the campaign.

Alegre had called for the landlocked country's relationship with Taiwan to be reviewed, saying they are too costly. Peña defended Paraguay's relationship with Taipei, though he said he would seek more trade with China, without explaining how that would come about.

"We have a diplomatic and historic relationship with Taiwan of more than 60 years, based on principles and democratic values that we believe are fundamental for a society like Paraguay," Peña said.

The Taiwanese Embassy posted a message on social media congratulating "president-elect" Peña.

"Congratulations to the Paraguayan people, who showed the world the democratic power of citizens through their votes," the embassy said.

Brazil's left-of-center president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, also congratulated Peña.

"Good luck in your mandate," the Brazilian wrote on social media. "We will work together for even better and stronger relations between our countries, and for a South America with more unity, development and prosperity."

Alegre, a lawyer who heads the Liberal party, the second-largest political force in Congress, was making his third bid for the presidency, though this time he represented a mix of political parties.

Peña's presidential campaign was hampered by U.S. sanctions on Cartes for alleged bribery and ties to Hezbollah, which Washington designates as a terrorist group. The sanctions blocked Cartes from the U.S. financial system and cut off funding and loans for the party's campaign.

Name etched in gold, King Charles' school remembers him

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — King Charles III hasn't even been crowned yet, but his name is already etched on the walls of Hill House School in London.

A wooden slab just inside the front door records Nov. 7, 1956, as the day the future king enrolled at Hill House, alongside other notable dates in the school's 72-year history. There is a photograph of staff welcoming the then Prince Charles on his first day of school, and another of the 7-year-old boy getting into a Ford Zephyr with his bodyguard for the short trip back to Buckingham Palace.

To say Hill House is proud of its royal connection as Charles prepares for the coronation ceremony on May 6 would be an understatement.

"It's just so fun to think the king went to our school," said 11-year-old Lola Stewart. "Like, he's worn our uniform. He's probably been in this room. It's just very exciting knowing that."

Charles, the first U.K. monarch to be educated outside the palace walls, began his school career at Hill House, although he spent less than a year there before moving on to Cheam, an elite boarding school in the countryside west of London. Hill House, a family-run primary school in London's tony Knightsbridge neighborhood is just a stone's throw from the luxury department store Harrods and a short drive from Buckingham Palace.

But the future king was treated like anyone else, wearing the school uniform with a burnished gold jumper and walking through the streets to the nearby sports field without a bodyguard, though the headmaster's wife was nearby.

Blessed with anonymity, Charles flourished, said Richard Townend, the son of the school's founder who attended Hill House at the same time, though he was a few years older. The school focused — and still does — on giving students a broad range of experiences in sport, art, music and drama, alongside more academic pursuits.

Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, made a "leap of faith" when they enrolled Charles at Hill House because until then royal children had been educated by tutors, Townend said.

"My father was summoned to tea with the queen in Buckingham Palace. So, of course, he went and met with the queen and she grilled him as I understand it," he said. "And at the end she said, 'I think this is the right school for Charles to go to.' It was as simple as that."

But why Hill House?

"I think it was just the general wackiness of the place," said Townend, whose family still operates the school, which costs up to 19,800 pounds (\$24,575) a year.

The main school, housed in a three-story red brick building, is something of a living monument to the traditions of English private schools — Harry Potter without robes and broomsticks.

The walls are plastered with huge wooden plaques engraved with the names of head boys and girls and winners of contests. Old wooden skis and a racing oar frame the door to the music room. An Olympic flag hangs in the entryway, a souvenir of Townend's father's work on the 1948 London Games.

All pupils learn to swim. Music and art are stressed. French lessons begin in the first year of school, known as reception.

Townend's father — remembered throughout the school as Col. Townend — founded Hill House in 1951 to provide an English education to the children of London's burgeoning international community. After serving in the army during World War II, he believed that bringing children from many countries together at a young age was the path to peace, Townend said.

"This was his great passion," he said. "He wanted to have this international school in which all the children would mix with each other and understand that though children are different, they are all basically the same, they're all similar, and in this way build a more peaceful world."

But it is also an unapologetically English school.

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When the school choir, which includes children from Azerbaijan, Japan and Finland as well as Britain, was asked to sing the patriotic hymn "Jerusalem," the kids belted it out. They didn't need a sheet with the words.

"And did those feet in ancient times Walk upon England's mountains green And was the holy lamb of God On England's pleasant pastures seen," they sang with gusto.

Townend himself looked horrified when asked if the U.K., a multicultural, multiethnic nation of 67 million, still needs a monarchy in the 21st century.

"Absolutely," he said. "Can you imagine if we had a president like you had in America recently or in some of the other countries? No. You need a figurehead who is above politics, who is a focus for all sorts of enthusiasms."

The kids, too, are anxiously awaiting the coronation — particularly the big moment when the crown is placed on Charles' head.

"I'm really looking forward to seeing everyone all together — all the country celebrating and watching it or going to see it ... and seeing the country unify because of such an important event," said James Harris, 13. "It's a really important symbol of our country."

Follow AP's coverage of King Charles III at <https://apnews.com/hub/king-charles-iii>

Kraken beat Avs 2-1, eliminate defending Stanley Cup champs

By PAT GRAHAM AP Sports Writer

DENVER (AP) — The Seattle Kraken converged from all points on the ice to the same spot — Philipp Grubauer's net.

A fitting gathering place to celebrate another first for this young franchise.

Grubauer was stellar in stopping 33 shots, Oliver Bjorkstrand scored twice and the Kraken eliminated the defending Stanley Cup champion Colorado Avalanche with a 2-1 win in Game 7 on Sunday night.

The Kraken became the first expansion team to beat the reigning Stanley Cup champs in their inaugural playoff series, according to NHL Stats.

"A great accomplishment," said Kraken forward Yanni Gourde, who had two assists. "Our fans have been amazing. They deserve this."

Bjorkstrand scored one goal on a fortuitous deflection — the puck hit off a stick and glove — and another with a liner past goaltender Alexandar Georgiev that clanged off the post. Seattle grabbed the lead in every game in the series.

Next up for the second-year Kraken is a second-round series against the Stars that opens in Dallas on Tuesday night. Seattle was 1-1-1 against Dallas in the regular season.

The Kraken take a heap of momentum with them, too.

"It gives them that check mark of success," Seattle coach Dave Hakstol said.

Mikko Rantanen was credited with a power-play goal for Colorado after a shot by Nathan MacKinnon clipped him and went in. MacKinnon appeared to score early in the third period to tie it at 2, but Seattle challenged the play and the goal was disallowed due to Colorado being offside.

Seattle's video crew turned in an MVP-caliber performance all series.

The Avalanche pulled Georgiev with under 2 minutes remaining but couldn't get the equalizer. It allowed the Kraken to accomplish another franchise first — a series-clinching celebration.

"Lots more to come from our group," Grubauer said. "That was only series one."

Colorado has now lost its last six Game 7s. The last time the Avalanche won a winner-take-all Game 7 was 2002, when they beat San Jose 1-0 courtesy of a goal from Hall of Fame forward Peter Forsberg.

Both teams lost players for the series due to hard hits. Jared McCann didn't play again after taking a hit from Cale Makar along the boards in Game 4, which drew a one-game suspension (Game 5) for the Avalanche defenseman. Colorado was without Andrew Cogliano for Game 7 after he suffered a fracture in his neck following a hit along the boards from Kraken forward Jordan Eberle, who didn't face supple-

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mental discipline.

MacKinnon energized the crowd with what looked like a tying goal. But it was taken off the board following a challenge as Artturi Lehkonen was ruled in the zone before the puck entered.

It's the second time this series the Kraken have used a challenge to negate an Avalanche score.

The Kraken also deflated the capacity crowd by doing what they've done in every game this series — score first.

"This is a really good hockey team," Avalanche coach Jared Bednar said of the Kraken. "The one thing they were that we weren't in the series was consistent."

Held without a goal all series coming in, Bjorkstrand was credited with a goal in the second period that glanced the stick of Alex Newhook and then off the glove of Ben Meyers and into the goal. Bjorkstrand scored again nearly four minutes later on a breakaway down the side to make it 2-0.

Bjorkstrand nearly had a hat trick but his shot late in the game hit the post.

"I didn't want to go out and not being able to sleep at night because I didn't perform well," Bjorkstrand explained. "Some nights you just kind of feel the puck better and I feel like this is just one of those nights."

With 27.3 seconds left in the second period, MacKinnon lined a shot that glanced off Rantanen and went by Grubauer. MacKinnon's assist on the play was his 100th career playoff point. He joins the company of Joe Sakic (188) and Forsberg (159) as the only Avalanche players to reach the 100-point milestone in the postseason.

Georgiev finished with 25 saves.

Grubauer was sensational in the first period against his former team. He stopped 16 shots to set the tone for the evening.

The banged-up Avalanche were missing forwards Darren Helm (upper body), Cogliano and Valeri Nichushkin (personal reasons), along with defenseman Josh Manson (lower body) in Game 7.

They've been without captain Gabriel Landeskog all season after he underwent knee surgery in October.

"Tough year overall," MacKinnon said. "Obviously, during the season, we're going to say all of the right things, but it's hard missing the guys. ... We played a really great game, just couldn't find the back of the net."

AROUND THE ICE

Kraken forward Tye Kartye turned 22 on Sunday. ... Colorado finished 2 for 18 on the power play in the series.

AP NHL: <https://apnews.com/hub/stanley-cup> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Man who lost wife, son in Texas mass shooting tells story

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

CLEVELAND, Texas (AP) — Wilson Garcia hadn't even asked his neighbor to stop shooting his gun.

People in their rural town north of Houston are used to people firing their weapons to blow off steam, but it was late Friday night, and Garcia had a month-old son who was crying.

So, Garcia said, he and two other people went to his neighbor's house to "respectfully" ask that he shoot farther away from their home.

"He told us he was on his property, and he could do what he wanted," Garcia said Sunday after a vigil in Cleveland, Texas, for his 9-year-old son who was killed in the attack that soon followed.

The suspect, 38-year-old Francisco Oropeza, remained at large late Sunday despite a search involving more than 200 police from multiple jurisdictions.

Garcia called the police after Oropeza rejected his request. The man shot some more, and now it sounded louder. In the neighborhood of homes on 1-acre lots, Garcia could see the man on his front porch but couldn't tell what he was doing.

His family continued to call police -- five calls in all, Garcia said. Five times the dispatcher assured that help was coming.

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And then, 10 to 20 minutes after Garcia had walked back from Oropeza's house, the man started running toward him, and reloading.

"I told my wife, 'Get inside. This man has loaded his weapon,'" Garcia said. "My wife told me to go inside because 'he won't fire at me, I'm a woman.'"

The gunman walked up to the home and began firing. Garcia's wife, Sonia Argentina Guzman, 25, was at the front door, and the first to die.

The house held 15 people in all, several of them friends who had been there to join Garcia's wife on a church retreat. The gunman seemed intent on killing everyone, Garcia said.

Also among the dead were Garcia's son, Daniel Enrique Laso, and two women who died while shielding Garcia's baby and 2-year-old daughter. Garcia said one of the women had told him to jump out a window "because my children were without a mother and one of their parents had to stay alive to take care of them."

"I am trying to be strong for my children," Garcia said, crying. "My daughter sort of understands. It is very difficult when she begins to ask for mama and for her (older) brother."

Police went door to door Sunday in hopes of finding any clues that would lead them to the suspect. Gov. Greg Abbott put up \$50,000 in reward money and local officials and the FBI also chipped in, bringing the total to \$80,000 for any information about Oropeza's whereabouts.

"I can tell you right now, we have zero leads," James Smith, the FBI special agent in charge, told reporters while again asking the public for tips in the rural town north of Houston where the shooting took place just before midnight Friday.

Police recovered the AR-15-style rifle that they said Oropeza used in the shootings. Authorities were not sure if Oropeza was carrying another weapon after others were found in his home, but said he should be considered armed and dangerous.

He likely fled the area on foot. During the early hours of the search, investigators found clothes and a phone while combing an area that includes dense layers of forest, but tracking dogs lost the scent, San Jacinto County Sheriff Greg Capers said.

Authorities were able to identify Oropeza by an identity card issued by Mexican authorities to citizens who reside outside the country, as well as doorbell camera footage. He said police have also interviewed the suspect's wife multiple times.

Capers said he hoped the reward money would motivate people to provide information, and that there were plans to put up billboards in Spanish to spread the word. Garcia, his slain wife and son and the other three victims — Diana Velazquez Alvarado, 21; Julisa Molina Rivera, 31; and Jose Jonathan Casarez, 18 — were from Honduras.

"We're looking for closure for this family," Capers said.

Asked about response time, Capers said officers got there as fast as they could and that he had only three covering 700 square miles (1,800 square kilometers).

By Sunday, police crime scene tape was removed from around Garcia's home, where some people stopped by to leave flowers.

In the neighborhood, an FBI agent, Texas Department of Public Safety troopers and other officers were seen going door to door. One trooper stopped a red truck and asked to look inside a travel trailer the truck was pulling before letting the driver continue on his way.

Veronica Pineda, 34, who lives across the street from the suspect's home, said authorities asked if they could search her property to see if he might be hiding there. She said she was fearful that the gunman had not yet been captured.

"It is kind of scary," she said. "You never know where he can be."

Pineda said she didn't know Oropeza well but occasionally saw him, his wife and son ride their horses on the street. She said the family had lived there about five or six years and that neighbors have called authorities in the past to complain about people firing guns.

Garcia also did not know Oropeza well, though their wives sometimes talked. Once, he said, the man

helped him cut down a tree.

Associated Press Writer Susan Haigh in Norwich, Connecticut, contributed to this report.

'Waste of time': Community college transfers derail students

By COLLIN BINKLEY AP Education Writer

First came the good news. After taking classes at a community college, Ricki Korba was admitted to California State University, Bakersfield, as a transfer student. But when she logged on to her student account, she got a gut punch: Most of her previous classes wouldn't count.

The university rejected most of her science classes, she was told, because they were deemed less rigorous than those at Bakersfield — even though some used the same textbooks. Several other courses were rejected because Korba exceeded a cap on how many credits can be transferred.

Now Korba, a chemistry and music major, is retaking classes she already passed once. It will add a year to her studies, plus at least \$20,000 in tuition and fees.

"It just feels like a waste of time," said Korba, 23, of Sonora, California. "I thought I was supposed to be going to a CSU and starting hard classes and doing a bunch of cool labs."

Every year, hundreds of thousands of students start at community colleges hoping to transfer to a university later. It's advertised as a cheaper path to a bachelor's degree, an education hack in a world of ever-rising tuition costs.

Yet the reality is rarely that simple. For some students, the transfer process becomes a maze so confusing it derails their college plans.

Among nearly 1 million students who started at a community college in 2016, just one in seven earned a bachelor's degree within six years, according to data from the National Student Clearinghouse.

One of the biggest obstacles is known as credit loss: when students take classes that never end up counting toward a degree.

Sometimes it's a result of poor advising. Without clear guidance from community colleges, students take courses they don't need. Blame can also lie with four-year colleges, which have varying rules for evaluating transfer credits. Some are pickier than others.

The outcome, however, is often the same. Students take longer to finish their degrees, costing more in tuition. For many, the extra work becomes too much to bear. Ultimately, roughly half of community college students drop out.

"It's completely defeating for some students," said Jessie Ryan, vice president of the Campaign for College Opportunity, a research group. "These systems have been designed to work for colleges and educators, but they haven't been designed to work for students."

The search for solutions has yielded scattered success. In many states, colleges and universities have formed partnerships to make sure certain classes transfer. More than a dozen states have adopted common class numbering systems to create consistency across schools.

Still, problems remain frustratingly common.

A recent study at the City University of New York system found, among students who transferred from a community college to a bachelor's program, nearly half lost at least some work. On average, those students lost the equivalent of almost a full semester.

"The pipeline from community college to a bachelor's degree is a very leaky pipeline," said Alexandra Logue, one of the researchers and a former provost at the CUNY system. The outcomes are worst among Black, Hispanic and low-income students, who are more likely to start at community colleges, she said.

Korba thought she was taking the right classes at Columbia College, a community college in Sonora. She worked with a counselor and used an online catalog showing which courses were supposed to transfer to CSU schools.

But when officials at Bakersfield reviewed the transcript, they said most of her classes wouldn't count toward her major.

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University officials declined to comment on Korba's case, but said a small number of transfer credits can fall into a "gray area" and require extra review. Dwayne Cantrell, Bakersfield's chief enrollment officer, said credit loss is rare and many classes from California community colleges are accepted automatically.

Facing an extra year of school, Korba likely will run out of financial aid before she graduates. She's making plans to go part-time in school and work longer hours so she can afford tuition and rent. But she wonders how long she can juggle it all.

"I worry how much more interested I'll be in school than just focusing on getting money from a job," she said.

Stories like Korba's aren't uncommon, especially in California, which has long struggled to connect its 116 community colleges to more than 30 public universities.

Mea Montañez will graduate from San Francisco State University in May, but only after retaking nearly a year's worth of classes she already passed at a community college. The school didn't accept her classes in psychology, her major, because they weren't considered a match.

"I'm taking the classes and I'm like, 'This is exactly what I took,'" said Montañez, 34. "If anything, it was much more challenging at the community college level."

University officials said classes can look the same on paper, but the details of what's taught don't always line up. Still, they acknowledged room for improvement.

"Credit loss happens, but it's something we've been working hard on for a long time," said Lori Beth Way, dean of undergraduate education at SFSU.

When students transfer to any school, their transcripts are often reviewed by faculty. For instance, biology professors would decide whether a biology class from another school should count.

But those judgments can be colored by stigma — some faculty look down at community colleges — and financial incentives, Logue of CUNY said.

Refusing credits, she said, means students must take more classes at their own school. Faculty also sometimes hold a higher standard for accepting a class toward a major than just accepting it as a general requirement.

"That's money, and it keeps people's jobs," she said. "But it's a very short-sighted viewpoint."

Some states have intervened to take subjectivity out of the process. Under a new Maryland rule, a class must be accepted if it shares 70% of the learning objectives with a comparable class. If credits are denied, students and community colleges must receive an explanation.

California made strides with a 2010 law requiring community colleges to offer special associate degrees guaranteeing admission to a CSU campus. A 2021 law will put all eligible students on that track unless they opt out, and create a set of general education classes that must be accepted at all state universities.

Two Virginia colleges have gone further. From their first day on campus, students at Northern Virginia Community College are offered a direct path to a bachelor's at nearby George Mason University. Students receive dual admission at both schools and they can choose from 87 academic pathways telling them exactly which classes they need.

Known as Advance, the program is designed to minimize credit loss and increase graduation rates. George Mason is working on expanding the model to other community colleges.

"Students understand from Day One what they are required to take," said Jason Dodge, director of the program. "They know the rug is not going to slip out from under them along the way."

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Grab your fancy duds for Met Gala mania with Karl Lagerfeld

By LEANNE ITALIE AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — It's the first Monday in May: Welcome to Met Gala mania.

With a livestream available when the evening gets underway, the world's most fashionable fundraiser takes on one of the world's most prolific — and controversial — designers, the late Karl Lagerfeld, as the starry party's theme.

So how would the man of the hour, who died in 2019, feel about all the hullabaloo? Lagerfeld was a student of history, to be sure, but his eyes were forever on the future.

"Karl never wanted to have a retrospective when he was alive. He felt that it was funereal. He made the point that (Cristóbal) Balenciaga and (Coco) Chanel never had them when they were alive," said William Middleton, who wrote the biography "Paradise Now: The Extraordinary Life of Karl Lagerfeld."

So what about now?

"He believed very much in fashion history, so he's a part of fashion history now. I don't think he would have had a problem with it," Middleton surmised.

Others aren't so sure.

Caroline Lebar worked with Lagerfeld for 35 years, rising to senior vice president of image and communications for his eponymous brand. Lagerfeld loved the Met, but he always said: "I'm not an artist, I'm a fashion maker," Lebar said on the company's site.

"He didn't think his work belonged in a museum. Anna Wintour also mentioned this when she made the announcement about the theme," Lebar explained.

The invitation-only gala earned \$17.4 million last year for the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute, a self-funding department with a budget dependent on the A-list affair. The price of attending went up this year to \$300,000 for a table and \$50,000 for a single ticket.

Companies and brands buy tables and host many of the roughly 400 guests expected this year from fashion, film, music, theater, sports, tech and social media. They were asked to dress "in honor of Karl" by gala mastermind Wintour, a close Lagerfeld friend who first signed on to the event in 1995 and took over the helm in 1999.

Fashion publicist Eleanor Lambert thought up the Met Gala back in 1948 as a fundraiser for the newly founded Costume Institute. It was a dinner held elsewhere. The idea is to celebrate the opening of the institute's big exhibition each year, this time called "Karl Lagerfeld: A Line of Beauty."

American fashion was last year's vibe. It followed gilded glamour and white tie. Camp was the theme in 2019, producing what is considered one of the wackiest displays of dress by the celebrity crowd.

Katy Perry wore a chandelier, then slipped into a hamburger outfit. Lady Gaga did a four-layer strip tease on the Met's Grand Staircase and Jared Leto carried a stage version of his own head.

Dressing to the Lagerfeld theme could be a breeze for guests with stylists able to source the best vintage pieces from the fashion houses where he worked: Chanel, Fendi, Chloé, Jean Patou, Balmain, his own brand and more.

This year's five hosts include Wintour, as usual, along with Michaela Coel, longtime Chanel ambassador Penélope Cruz, recently retired tennis superstar Roger Federer and Dua Lipa.

Follow Leanne Italie on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/litalie>

Rising Mississippi River continuing to test flood defenses

DAVENPORT, Iowa (AP) — The rising Mississippi River will continue to test flood defenses in southeast Iowa and northwest Illinois on Monday as it crests in the area.

The peak water levels this spring will likely rank in the top 10 of all time in many places, but the National Weather Service said river levels will generally remain well below past records. That should help most towns along the river withstand the floodwaters though officials will be checking their floodwalls and sandbag barriers closely in the next few days.

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"Luckily we've had relatively dry weather over the last week or so and not expecting much in the way of rainfall as well," National Weather Service meteorologist Tom Philip said. "So it's coming through as forecast for the most part."

The river peaked in the Dubuque area Saturday at 23.03 feet (7 meters)— well below the 25.7 feet (7.8 meters) record — but officials there were grateful to have the floodwall the city built 50 years ago in place.

Without that floodwall, the city would be facing significant problems, said Deron Muehring, a civil engineer for the city of Dubuque.

"The floodwaters would be up to 6 feet deep in the Port of Dubuque and more than 7 feet deep in the south port," Muehring told the Dubuque Telegraph-Herald.

The river is expected to crest at around 21.6 feet (6.6 meters) on Monday in the Quad-Cities area, where several neighboring cities sit along the Iowa-Illinois line. Some roads and parks near the river are closed. The record at that spot is 22.7 feet (6.9 meters).

Once the river crests in an area, it may take up to two weeks for the floodwaters to fully recede.

The flooding is expected to ease as the spring surge of water from melting snow works its way further down the 2,300-mile (3,700-kilometer) length of the river on its way to the Gulf of Mexico. Most of the tributaries in Iowa, Illinois and other Midwest states are running lower than usual, so they won't exacerbate the flooding by dumping large amounts of water into the river.

Case details Sinaloa cartel's fentanyl-fueled evolution

By CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN and MARK STEVENSON Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — With Sinaloa cartel boss Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán serving a life sentence, his sons steered the family business into fentanyl, establishing a network of labs churning out massive quantities of the cheap, deadly drug that they smuggled into the U.S., prosecutors revealed in a recent indictment.

Although Guzmán's trial revolved around cocaine shipments, the case against his sons exposes the inner workings of a cartel undergoing a generational shift as it worked "to manufacture the most potent fentanyl and to sell it in the United States at the lowest price," according to the indictment unsealed April 14 in Manhattan.

Synthetic opioids — mostly fentanyl — now kill more Americans every year than died in the Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan wars combined, feeding an argument among some politicians that the cartels should be branded terrorist organizations and prompting once-unthinkable calls for U.S. military intervention across the border.

"The problem with fentanyl, as some people at the State Department told me, has to be repositioned. It's not a drug problem; it's a poisoning problem," said Alejandro Hope, a security analyst in Mexico, who died Friday. "Very few people go out deliberately looking for fentanyl."

The groundwork for the U.S. fentanyl epidemic was laid more than 20 years ago, with aggressive over-prescribing of the synthetic opioid oxycodone. As U.S. authorities clamped down on its prescription, users moved to heroin, which the Sinaloa cartel happily supplied.

But making its own fentanyl — far more potent and versatile than heroin — in small, easily concealed labs was a game changer. The cartel went from its first makeshift fentanyl lab to a network of labs concentrated in the northern state of Sinaloa in less than a decade.

"These are not super labs, because they give people the illusion that they're like pharmaceutical labs, you know, very sophisticated," said Mike Vigil, former head of international operations for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. "These are nothing more than metal tubs and they use wooden paddles — even shovels — to mix the chemicals."

A single cartel "cook" can press fentanyl into 100,000 counterfeit pills every day to fool Americans into thinking they're taking Xanax, Percocet or oxycodone. The pills are smuggled over the border to supply what son Iván Archivaldo Guzmán Salazar said are "streets of junkies," the indictment said.

Fentanyl is so cheap to make that the cartel reaps massive profits even wholesaling the drug at 50 cents per pill, prosecutors said.

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The drug's potency makes it particularly dangerous. The narcotic dose of fentanyl is so close to the lethal dose that a pill meant to ensure a high for a habituated user can easily kill a less experienced person taking something they didn't know was fentanyl.

Between August 2021 and August of last year, more than 107,000 Americans died from drug overdoses, most from synthetic opioids. Last year, the DEA seized more than 57 million fentanyl-laced counterfeit prescription pills, according to the New York indictment.

To protect and expand that business, the "Chapitos," as the sons are known, have turned to grotesque violence.

Enforcers Ivan Archivaldo Guzmán Salazar and Jesus Alfredo Guzmán Salazar are the lead defendants among 23 associates charged in the New York indictment. Ovidio Guzmán López, alias "the Mouse," who allegedly pushed the cartel into fentanyl, is charged in another indictment in the same district. Mexico arrested him in January and the U.S. government has requested extradition. Joaquín Guzmán López is charged in the Northern District of Illinois

According to the Guzmán Salazar indictment, the cartel does some lab testing on its product but conducts more grisly human testing on kidnapped rivals or addicts who are injected until they overdose.

The purity of the cartel's fentanyl "varies greatly depending on the method and skill of the particular manufacturer," prosecutors noted. After a user overdosed on one batch, it was still shipped to the U.S.

When the elder Guzmán and Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada led the Sinaloa cartel, it operated with a certain degree of restraint. But with Guzmán serving a life sentence and Zambada believed to be suffering from health issues, the Chapitos moved aggressively to avoid a power vacuum that could fragment the cartel.

"What was really a unique advantage of the Sinaloa cartel and El Chapo was the ability to calibrate violence," said Vanda Felbab-Brown, a senior fellow in the Strobe Talbott Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology at the Brookings Institute.

The wide-ranging New York indictment against the Guzmán Salazar brothers details their penchant for feeding enemies to their pet tigers and describes how they tortured two Mexican federal agents, ripping through one's muscles with a corkscrew then stuffing the holes with chile peppers before shooting him.

The indictment also provides context to some recent violence in Mexico.

In August 2022, gunmen shot up Ciudad Juarez across from El Paso, Texas. Two prison inmates and nine civilians in the city were killed. U.S. prosecutors say the Chapitos' security arm ordered their local gang associates to commit the violence, targeting a rival cartel's businesses.

"This is not their father's Sinaloa cartel," Felbab-Brown said. "These guys just operate in very different mindsets than their father."

The Guzmán Salazar indictment makes an initial attempt at disrupting the cartel's supply chain, naming four people tied to a China-based chemical company and a broker in Guatemala who allegedly helped the cartel get the chemicals and even instructed them on the best recipes for fentanyl.

"When they talk about labs and you're trying to focus in on labs, that's not going to have an impact unless you get the finished product or the precursor chemicals," Vigil said.

Mexico's government has stumbled through the mixed messaging of its security forces playing up their decommissioning of labs even while President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has asserted that fentanyl is not being produced in Mexico.

In congressional testimony Thursday, DEA Administrator Anne Milgram was pressed about whether Mexico and China are doing enough to cooperate with U.S.

"We want the Mexicans to work with us and we want them to do more," Milgram said, adding that the DEA wouldn't hesitate to go after public officials in Mexico or elsewhere should it find evidence of ties to the cartels.

Experts say López Obrador is one obstacle to slowing the cartels' fentanyl production. After U.S. prosecutors announced the concerted effort against the Sinaloa cartel, López Obrador reacted angrily. The president accused the U.S. government of "spying" and "interference," suggesting that the case had been built on information gathered by U.S. agents in Mexico.

The president had already severely reduced Mexico's cooperation with the DEA, experts said.

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Hope, the security analyst, said a fundamental problem is that López Obrador doesn't appear to understand fentanyl's threat. The president rails against a deterioration of family values in the United States and paints addiction as a moral failing.

"He's trapped in a moral universe from 50 years ago," Hope said.

Biden's diverse coalition of support risks fraying in 2024

By STEVE PEOPLES and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Sen. Joe Lieberman, the Connecticut Democrat-turned-Independent long known for his centrist views, voted for Joe Biden in 2020. But as Biden's reelection campaign begins, Lieberman is preparing to recruit a third-party candidate capable of defeating the Democratic president.

"Centrists and moderates feel that he's governed more from the left than they hoped," Lieberman, a leader of the group, No Labels, said of Biden in an interview. "He hasn't been able to be the unifier that he promised to be."

Biden's political challenges are not confined to voters in the middle. In the days since he formally launched his 2024 campaign, key members of the sprawling political coalition that lifted him over former President Donald Trump in 2020 are far from excited about the prospect of four more years. That underscores the test confronting Biden as he aims to motivate the coalition of African Americans, Latinos, young people, suburban voters and independents to show up for him again.

John Paul Mejia, the 20-year-old spokesman for the progressive Sunrise Movement, says Biden has simply not done enough to ensure the young voters who rallied behind him in 2020 would do so again.

"Young people are starving for more," Mejia said, pointing to Biden's recent decision to approve two controversial fossil fuel projects in Alaska. "Biden has to demonstrate the extent to which he's willing to be a fighter. We've seen this sort of two-step on the promises he made to young people."

Biden has also struggled to fulfill key promises to Black voters, perhaps the most loyal group in his political base. While he tapped Ketanji Brown Jackson to become the first Black woman on the Supreme Court, he has been unable to follow through on pledges to protect voting rights against a wave of Republican-backed restrictions or enact policing reform to help stop violence against people of color at the hands of law enforcement.

"There's work to be done," said Rep. Jasmine Crockett, D-Texas, a 42-year-old African American former civil rights attorney who joined Congress in January. "I'm not going to sugar coat it."

Crockett recalled the palpable excitement among the Black community for Barack Obama's reelection. With Biden, there's "a number of people who are concerned and scared" largely because of his age, while others are "indifferent and waiting," despite what she described as Biden's overall strong record of achievement.

Nearly 18 months before Election Day 2024, however, it's unclear how much this lack of enthusiasm will weigh on Biden's reelection prospects. For all the concern, no high-profile Democratic primary challengers have emerged, and none are expected to. To date, only progressive author Marianne Williamson and anti-vaccine activist Robert F. Kennedy Jr. are mounting symbolic challenges to Biden, who has the official support of the Democratic National Committee.

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, Biden's chief rival in the 2020 primary, told The Associated Press just hours after Biden announced that he was endorsing the president and encouraged other progressive leaders to do so as well.

"I intend to do everything I can to see that he is reelected," Sanders said in an interview.

Instead of excitement for the 80-year-old president's reelection, leaders from key factions in Biden's coalition report a serious sense of duty — and fear of the alternative. Trump is currently considered the favorite to claim the Republican presidential nomination, although he's facing opposition from a half dozen rivals.

"It would be a mistake to underestimate Trump or whoever the Republican candidate might be," Sanders said. "There's a lot of discontent in this country. There's a lot of anger in this country."

Indeed, 74% of U.S. adults believe the country is headed in the wrong direction, according to an AP-NORC poll conducted a week before Biden's announcement.

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The poll found that only about half of Democrats think Biden should run again. Despite their reluctance, 81% of Democrats said they would probably support Biden in a general election if he is the nominee. That includes 41% who said they definitely would and 40% who said they probably would.

The warning signs in the Biden coalition are clear.

Just 41% of Black adults want the Democratic president to run again, and only 55% said they are likely to support him in the general election if he is the nominee. Among Latinos, only 27% want Biden to run again in 2024 and 43% said they would definitely or probably support him.

Younger Democrats also remain a reluctant part of Biden's coalition, the AP-NORC poll shows.

Just 25% of those under age 45 said they would definitely support Biden in a general election, compared with 56% of older Democrats.

Still, an additional 51% of younger Democrats say they would probably vote for Biden in a 2024 general election.

Meanwhile, just 14% of independents — adults who don't lean toward either party, who represent a small percentage of the American electorate — want Biden to run again. And only 24% said they'd support him in the general election if he is the Democratic nominee.

Biden's team dismisses the numbers, yet acknowledges that in a party as diverse as the Democrats, some may have other preferred candidates for president. It's just that none of those other people can win, they say, adding that while Biden might not be someone's first choice, he's often everyone's second.

They cite one of Biden's favorite political aphorisms: "Don't judge me against the Almighty, judge me against the alternative."

Their confidence is grounded in Biden's experience in 2020, when he was written off by much of the party, until it unified around him at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic as a consensus candidate best positioned to defeat Trump. While Biden aides are expecting a rematch with Trump, he intends to cast all Republicans as embracing Trump-ism, both as a hedge in case another GOP candidate emerges as the party's standard-bearer and to broadly define the Republicans in an effort to help down-ballot Democrats.

Meanwhile, Biden himself has been open about there being more to do — it's in his campaign rallying cry "finish the job" — and his aides believe it is essential for him to highlight what else he wants to do with another term in office, believing that presidents who solely focus on their records lose reelection.

Biden has begun holding events to highlight popular components of his agenda that got left on the cutting room floor during the Democrats' legislative blitz over the last two years. Last week, he held a Rose Garden gathering to showcase his efforts to boost the affordability and quality of child and long-term care. And he's pushing for tougher gun laws after recent high-profile shootings and to write into law a national right to abortion.

Both are proposals his aides believe have the backing of most Americans — and are of particular importance to the Democratic coalition — but are unlikely to pass unless Democrats also win significant congressional majorities.

In the White House, Biden advisers, particularly chiefs of staff Ron Klain and now Jeff Zients, have kept close ties to grassroots groups across the Democratic firmament. He just secured an endorsement for reelection from the progressive group MoveOn, which said, "This moment requires urgency to solidify behind President Biden and show unified resolve to defeat MAGA and build on the progress of the last two years."

At a donor event in Washington on Friday, Biden's efforts to highlight his support from all swaths of the party were on display, with young progressive Rep. Maxwell Frost joining more establishment lawmakers like Sens. Chris Coons and Bob Casey. Investor Tom Steyer, who was among the Democrats who challenged Biden in 2020, also attended.

Allies said one key reason why the president selected Julie Chavez Rodriguez as his campaign manager was her ability to maintain close ties with a wide swath of the Democratic coalition during her time as White House director of intergovernmental affairs.

"This is not a time to be complacent," Biden said in his announcement video as he vowed to fight for freedom and warned of MAGA extremists and others who support banning abortion and books.

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Meanwhile, Lieberman said he would likely soon begin interviewing potential candidates for No Label's third-party alternative to Biden and the eventual Republican nominee.

Already, No Labels has secured a spot on the presidential ballot in four states, including swing states Arizona and Colorado. Lieberman noted that the group would not field a candidate if polling suggested the so-called unity ticket does not have a viable path to the presidency.

"If No Labels does not run a bipartisan unity ticket, and the two candidates are Trump and Biden, to me, it's an easy choice," Lieberman said. "I will vote for Biden."

Peoples reported from New York. AP writer Hannah Fingerhut contributed.

US readies second attempt at speedy border asylum screenings

By ELLIOT SPAGAT Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — President Joe Biden scrapped expedited asylum screenings during his first month in office as part of a gutting of Trump administration border policies that included building a wall with Mexico. Now he's preparing his own version.

Donald Trump's fast-track reviews drew sharp criticism from internal government watchdog agencies as the percentage of people who passed those "credible fear interviews" plummeted. But the Biden administration has insisted its speedy screening for asylum-seekers is different: Interviews will be done exclusively by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, not by Border Patrol agents, and everyone will have access to legal counsel.

The decision to use fast-track screenings comes as COVID-19 asylum restrictions are set to expire on May 11 and the U.S. government prepares for an expected increase in immigrants trying to cross the border with Mexico.

Normally, about three in four migrants pass credible fear interviews, though far fewer eventually win asylum. But during the five months of the Trump-era program, only 23% passed the initial screening, while 69% failed and 9% withdrew, according to the Government Accountability Office.

Those who get past initial screenings are generally freed in the United States to pursue their cases in immigration court, which typically takes four years. Critics say the court backlog encourages more people to seek asylum.

To pass screenings, migrants must convince an asylum officer they have a "significant possibility" of prevailing before a judge on arguments that they face persecution in their home countries on grounds of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a social group.

Under the Biden administration's fast-track program, those who don't qualify will be deported "in a matter of days or just a few weeks," Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said Thursday.

The expedited screenings will be applied only to single adults, Mayorkas said.

Despite the administration's assurances that people will have access to legal services, some immigrant advocates who were briefed by the administration are doubtful. Katherine Hawkins, senior legal analyst at the Project on Government Oversight, noted that advocates were told attorneys would not be allowed inside holding facilities.

The Trump administration used fast-track reviews from October 2019 until March 2020, when it began using a 1944 public health law known as Title 42 to expel immigrants on the grounds of preventing the spread of COVID-19. The speedy screenings were among Trump-era immigration policies that Biden rolled back in a February 2021 executive order.

Unlike the Trump administration, the Biden administration won't limit migrants to just one phone call. But it's unclear how many calls U.S. authorities can facilitate, especially if there is no answer and attorneys call back, Hawkins said.

Screenings initially will be limited to Spanish-speaking countries to which the U.S. has regular deportation flights, according to Hawkins and others briefed. The administration began limited screening this month in Donna, Texas, in the Rio Grande Valley, and later expanded to large tents in other border cities, including

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San Diego; Yuma, Arizona; and El Paso, Texas.

Mayorkas, a former federal prosecutor, didn't speak in detail about access to legal counsel in remarks Thursday about a broad strategy that, in addition to the screenings, includes processing centers in Guatemala, Colombia and potentially elsewhere for people to come legally to the U.S. through an airport.

"We have expanded our holding capacity and set up equipment and procedures so that individuals have the ability to access counsel," Mayorkas said.

The Homeland Security Department's inspector general took issue with lack of legal representation under Trump's expedited screening. There were four cordless phones for migrants to share when screenings began in El Paso. Guards took them to a shack to consult attorneys.

Phone booths were later installed but didn't have handsets for safety reasons, forcing migrants to speak loudly and within earshot of people outside, the inspector general said.

Facilities built under Biden are more spacious with plenty of phone booths, according to people who have visited.

"There are rows of cubicles, enclosed," said Paulina Reyes, an attorney at advocacy group ImmDef who visited a San Diego holding facility in March.

The administration has not said how many attorneys have volunteered to represent asylum-seekers. Hawkins said officials told advocates they are reaching out to firms that offer low- or no-cost services to people in immigration detention centers.

Erika Pinheiro, executive director of advocacy group Al Otro Lado, which is active in Southern California and Tijuana, Mexico, said she has not been approached but would decline to represent asylum-seekers in expedited screenings. They arrive exhausted and unfamiliar with asylum law, hindering their abilities to effectively tell their stories.

"We know what the conditions are like. We know people are not going to be mentally prepared," she said.

The Biden administration aims to complete screenings within 72 hours, the maximum time Border Patrol is supposed to hold migrants under an agency policy that's routinely ignored.

It's a tall order. It currently takes about four weeks to complete a screening. Under Trump's expedited screenings, about 20% of immigrants were in custody for a week or less, according to the GAO. About 86% were held 20 days or less.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has identified 480 former asylum officers or those with training to assist about 800 on the expedited screenings, said Michael Knowles, president of American Federation of Government Employees Council 119, which represents asylum officers.

"All hands will be on this deck for the foreseeable future," Knowles said. "We don't know how long."

Poll: Americans fault news media for dividing country

By DAVID KLEPPER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — When it comes to the news media and the impact it's having on democracy and political polarization in the United States, Americans are likelier to say it's doing more harm than good.

Nearly three-quarters of U.S. adults say the news media is increasing political polarization in this country, and just under half say they have little to no trust in the media's ability to report the news fairly and accurately, according to a new survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights.

The poll, released before World Press Freedom Day on Wednesday, shows Americans have significant concerns about misinformation — and the role played by the media itself along with politicians and social media companies in spreading it — but that many are also concerned about growing threats to journalists' safety.

"The news riles people up," said 53-year-old Barbara Jordan, a Democrat from Hutchinson, Kansas. Jordan said she now does her own online research instead of going by what she sees on the TV news. "You're better off Googling something and learning about it. I trust the internet more than I do the TV."

That breakdown in trust may prompt many Americans to reject the mainstream news media, often in

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favor of social media and unreliable websites that spread misleading claims and that can become partisan echo chambers, leading to further polarization.

While a slim majority of Americans say they have some degree of confidence in the news media's ability to report the news fully and fairly, only 16% say they are very confident. Forty-five percent say they have little to no confidence at all.

The survey reveals the complicated relationship many Americans have with the media: A majority rate in-depth and investigative reporting as very helpful or extremely helpful for understanding the issues they care about, but they are more likely to say they regularly scan the headlines than read an in-depth investigative article. And while overall trust in the media is low, a majority of respondents say the media is doing at least somewhat well in covering issues they care about.

Four in 10 say the press is doing more to hurt American democracy, while only about 2 in 10 say the press is doing more to protect it. An additional 4 in 10 say neither applies.

Partisan cable news outlets and social media platforms have driven the problem by conditioning many Americans to see one another as enemies, said Joe Salegna, a Republican who lives on Long Island, New York.

"I think it's tearing this country apart," Salegna, 50, told the AP. "Since the 2016 election I think it's gotten a lot worse."

Republicans view the news media less favorably than Democrats, with 61% of Republicans saying the news media is hurting democracy, compared with 23% of Democrats and 36% of independents who don't lean toward either party. Majorities across party lines say the news media fuels political division, but Republicans are much more likely than Democrats to say that's happening a lot.

And more Republicans think the news is strongly influenced by the U.S. government and the political views of journalists.

Coverage of recent presidential elections, the coronavirus pandemic, protests against police killings of Black Americans and other events convinced Janis Fort that the media can't be believed. One station will cover a story that others ignore, she said, leaving viewers not sure whom to trust.

"Everyone tells a different story. The media does nothing but stir up fear," said Fort, a retired 71-year-old Republican who lives in Navarre, Florida. "For me, and for most of the people I know, we feel like we're totally in the dark."

Research has shown that fragmentation of the media ecosystem, driven largely by the internet, has contributed to polarization. Experts say America's heightened political divisions have a number of causes — gerrymandering that reduces political competition, for example, or politicians who stoke fear and distrust — but media fragmentation and misinformation are making a clear impact, too.

"We should be concerned for the health of democracy," said Joshua Tucker, a political scientist at New York University who studies partisanship and co-directs NYU's Center for Social Media.

Concern about the threat posed by misinformation unites Americans of both parties, with about 9 in 10 U.S. adults saying misinformation is a problem. A third of American adults say they see stories with false claims from politicians or misleading headlines every day.

"There still is good journalism, it's just the internet has made it so that anybody can be a quote-unquote journalist," said Chris Nettell, of Hickory Creek, Texas, who said he leans Democratic. "We have some news media that only goes after a certain segment of society, and then those people think, because it's all they read, that everyone else believes it too."

Social media plays a key role, with nearly two-thirds of respondents saying that when they see a news story on social media, they expect it to be inaccurate. Those who said they rely on social media regularly for their news were somewhat more likely to trust it than others.

Overall, about 6 in 10 said the news media bears blame for the spread of misinformation, and a similar percentage also said it has a large amount of responsibility for addressing it. Majorities also think others, including social media companies and politicians, share in the responsibility both for the spread of misinformation and for stopping it from spreading.

"So many people get their information from social media, and people believe whatever they want to

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believe," said Araceli Cervantes, a 39-year-old Chicago woman and mother of four who said she is a Republican.

When it comes to protecting the freedom of the press in the U.S., 44% of respondents say the U.S. government is doing a good job, more than the 24% who say it's doing a bad job. Most Americans are at least somewhat concerned, however, when it comes to the safety of journalists, with roughly a third saying they're very concerned or extremely concerned about attacks on the press.

The poll of 1,002 adults was conducted March 30-April 3 using a sample drawn from NORC's probability-based AmeriSpeak Panel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 4.4 percentage points.

Follow the AP's coverage of misinformation at <https://apnews.com/hub/misinformation>.

LGBTQ+ lawmaker to GOP: 'I'm literally trying to exist'

By BRENDAN FARRINGTON Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — State Sen. Shevrin Jones can often be seen at the Florida Capitol greeting staff and colleagues with a smile or laugh, but when he's alone it's a different story.

"The outward expression is to show God's love. That's what I was taught," said Jones, a Democrat. But, he said, "I have enough tears in my car to fill a lake."

For Jones, who is gay, the past two years have been emotionally draining as Florida passed a flurry of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation.

More than 200 LGBTQ+ lawmakers across the country feel just like Jones, at a time when anti-gay and anti-transgender legislation is flourishing — as if they are under personal attack, and that they need to continually defend their community's right to exist. The issue exploded into the national spotlight last week when Montana Republicans voted to bar Democratic Rep. Zooey Zephyr, who is transgender, from the House floor after a standoff over gender-affirming medical care for minors.

The ACLU is tracking nearly 470 anti-LGBTQ+ bills in 16 states, most with Republican-controlled Legislatures. Texas, Missouri and Tennessee alone account for more than 125 such bills; Florida has ten.

In the leadup to a possible presidential campaign, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis gained national attention for proposing and signing a bill to ban class discussion on sexual orientation and gender identity, which opponents have called "Don't Say Gay" legislation. While DeSantis and other GOP leaders have increasingly waded into the culture wars, as part of their political toolbox, the emotions on both sides are ratcheted up.

"I actually have a policy of no longer crying in Tallahassee," said Florida Rep. Michele Rayner-Goolsby. "I will cry when I go home."

Rayner-Goolsby is a lawyer currently in a Master of Divinity program who was raised with a strong religious background. She's also the first Black lesbian lawmaker in the statehouse to be out.

"I'm literally trying to exist," she said. "The harsh things we're saying are in defense of our life. The harsh things that they're saying are to prop up a governor's political ambition, and their desire and quest for power."

In some cases, LGBTQ+ members who have deep faith are pitted against GOP members saying God doesn't make mistakes, and that there are only two genders. There are also LGBTQ+ members with children who have faced derision and been told that children at large need to be protected from their community.

In Texas, there are three bills that would classify providing gender-affirming care to minors as a form of child abuse.

Other conservative states have followed Florida's example with bills that restrict trans people's access to gender-affirming care, bathrooms that correspond with their gender and LGBTQ+ books, as well as the ability to socially transition at school and to play sports at high school and college.

It's put pressure on LGBTQ+ lawmakers who are encountering opposition, misunderstanding and even hate among their Republican colleagues.

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North Dakota Sen. Ryan Braunberger, a Democrat of Fargo, said it's "frustrating" and "maddening" to be a gay lawmaker in a Legislature where anti-LGBTQ+ bills are debated and most of his colleagues are voting to pass them.

When he was serving on a committee this session and conversation shifted to a bill prohibiting drag shows in public spaces, Braunberger said that a colleague wanted to make it illegal for people to host drag shows in their own homes.

"They want to eliminate members of the LGBTQ+ community from existing," he said. "It's what the extreme right is pushing for ... It represents a small but powerful part of the Legislature. And I fear that if we don't stand up against it, that it will continue to grow."

While LGBTQ+ lawmakers only compose a small fraction of state Legislatures, their numbers are growing, according to the group Out For America.

Statehouse debate about LGBTQ+ rights has increasingly descended into personal attacks and ran counter to the traditional practices of maintaining decorum and respect for one's colleagues.

During a recent committee debate in Florida, Republican Rep. Webster Barnaby called trans people "demons," "mutants" and "imps." In Kansas last year, Republican Rep. Cheryl Helmer made headlines for saying in an email that she didn't want to share a bathroom with a transgender colleague.

The targeted colleague, Democratic Rep. Stephanie Byers was the state's only transgender lawmaker and decided last year to not seek reelection.

After Byers testified against a bill banning transgender athletes from girls and women's sports, a Republican colleague pulled her aside to say he was sorry that Byers had to listen to bill supporters.

Still, he went on to vote for the bill.

The next day, Byers said the lawmaker told another member of what's called the Kansas "queer caucus" that he couldn't look himself in the mirror.

"It's the same thing I think for every LGBTQ+ legislator, in no matter what state they serve in," Byers said. "You don't know what you can trust. When they say, 'I like you, I love you and I'm glad you're here,' is that honest? Or is standing at the well and berating LGBTQ+ people, is that the honest person?"

For Florida Sen. Jones — the first Black gay lawmaker in the state — repeatedly hearing "I love you, but" from people he socializes with and works alongside is depressing, even more so when an anti-LGBTQ+ message carries religious undertones. Despite advice that he wouldn't win reelection, he came out in 2018 and still won his seat.

While difficult, he said he is determined to fight hate with love.

"I pray more now than ever, and I believe in my heart that God loves me more than ever. I hate how they treat people," Jones said of Republican lawmakers crafting these bills. "I hate what they're doing to the transgender community, I hate what they're doing to immigrants. I hate it all. But it is not my job to hate them. It is not my job to do anything but love them."

AP writers John Hanna in Topeka, Kansas, and Arleigh Rodgers in Indianapolis and Trisha Ahmed in Minneapolis contributed to this report.

Curry scores playoff career-high 50 as Warriors down Kings

By JANIE McCAULEY AP Sports Writer

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — With his big-game swagger on display for the world and that signature mouthpiece dangling from a celebratory grin, Stephen Curry drove fearlessly to the basket with jaw-dropping acrobatics all afternoon and he fired with precision from way back in a Game 7 extravaganza for the ages.

He even playfully pretended to push the button and Light the Beam, Sacramento-style.

Curry scored a playoff career-high 50 points in the most prolific Game 7 performance ever and answered time and again to will the Warriors on in their quest for a repeat, sending Golden State into the Western Conference semifinals with a 120-100 win against the Sacramento Kings in Sunday's winner-take-all Game 7.

Curry led a memorable comeback in the series, too, perhaps improbable even for the defending champions when they got down 2-0 and given their road woes all season.

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"It's amazing 'cuz you're still in the fight," Curry said. "Better than the alternative of on the outside looking in. Having been down 0-2 in this series, nothing was guaranteed, you don't take anything for granted."

Curry's points are the most in NBA history in a Game 7, topping former teammate Kevin Durant's 48 for the Nets against Milwaukee in 2021.

"For Steph to be the first player ever to get 50 in a Game 7, he's sublime," coach Steve Kerr said.

Kevon Looney grabbed 21 rebounds for a Warriors team that needed to win twice on the road facing a hostile, cowbell-clanging crowd in the state capital to become the first reigning champion to drop the first two games and win any postseason series.

Now, bring on LeBron James and the Los Angeles Lakers in the Western Conference semifinals with all that NBA Finals history between James and Golden State dating to his Cleveland days. Game 1 is Tuesday night at Chase Center.

Sacramento's special comeback season is over long before these young Kings had planned. After snapping a 16-year playoff drought — longest in NBA history — under Coach of the Year Mike Brown, playoff-starved Sacramento missed advancing to the second round for the first time since 2004.

Curry shot 20 of 38 with seven 3s and delivered after almost every big play by Sacramento as Splash Brother Klay Thompson struggled on both ends again. But Thompson came through in some crucial moments.

"What an incredible performance," Thompson said. "This is a Game 7 I'll forever remember as the Steph Curry game."

Malik Monk's putback and three-point play with 14.6 seconds remaining in the third pulled Sacramento within six only for Thompson to hit a long 3 and convert a four-point play to make it 91-81 heading into the final 12 minutes.

Domantas Sabonis had 22 points, eight rebounds and seven assists but the Warriors held De'Aaron Fox in check as he scored 16 points on 5-for-19 shooting in his third game playing with a broken index finger on his shooting hand.

Trailing 58-56 at halftime, the Warriors opened the second half with a 13-4 burst and held the Kings to 42 points after intermission.

Sacramento had scored early on with a beautiful combination of classic give-and-goes and long jumpers off crisp passing around the perimeter.

But Curry kept coming, and Looney kept scrapping to create second and third opportunities to cap his brilliant series on the boards. They sent Kings fans to the exits late in the fourth.

Thompson began 1 for 10 missing his first five 3s before connecting at the 9:18 mark of the third and finishing with 16 points on 4-for-19 shooting — "disgusting," he said — while playing smothering defense. Golden State, playing just its fourth Game 7 under Kerr since the 2014-15 title run, was smart down the stretch after 18 turnovers in Game 6 led to 23 Kings points and Kerr calling his team "wildly undisciplined."

Kerr had no doubt before the deciding game — and he went back to Draymond Green in the starting lineup for Game 7 with the season on the line after the fiery forward came off the bench the previous three contests following a Game 3 suspension for stepping on Sabonis.

Just before the final buzzer, Kerr offered a long embrace to Brown — Golden State's former top assistant who once coached the Warriors on the postseason stage during Kerr's extended health absence and just guided the Kings' remarkable turnaround.

"I can't dream of nothing like this, gotta see it in person," Monk said of all the successes. "You can't dream anything like this unless you're doing it. Looking forward to being back next year."

LOONEY ON THE BOARDS

Looney wound up with 106 rebounds in the series — 37 on the offensive glass. This was his fifth straight playoff game with double-digit rebounds.

TIP-INS

Kings: The Kings shot 12 for 47 on 3s and 37.5% overall. ... After Sacramento's bench outscored the Warriors 52-21 in Game 6, the reserves again came through — 25-8 in the first half and 41-18 overall.

Warriors: Curry missed consecutive free throws in the second and Thompson couldn't convert a pair

early in the third. Golden State went 19 of 30 from the line after missing 10 free throws in Game 6 (25 of 35). ... Gary Payton II blocked four shots. ... Golden State hadn't been to Game 7 since the 2018 Western Conference Finals at Houston on the way to reaching their fourth straight finals and repeat championship. ... Golden State improved to 19-0 in playoff series against West opponents under Kerr.

AP NBA: <https://apnews.com/hub/nba> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Widening manhunt for Texas gunman slowed by 'zero leads'

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

CLEVELAND, Texas (AP) — A widening manhunt for a Texas gunman who fatally shot five neighbors continued coming up empty Sunday as officers knocked on doors, the governor put up \$50,000 in reward money and the FBI appeared no closer to catching the killer after nearly two days of searching with a team that has grown to hundreds of people.

"I can tell you right now, we have zero leads," James Smith, the FBI special agent in charge, told reporters while again asking the public for tips in the rural town of Cleveland, where the shooting took place just before midnight Friday.

The search for the gunman near Houston has grown in scale: Authorities said that by Sunday evening more than 200 police from multiple jurisdictions were searching for Francisco Oropeza, many of them going door to door in hopes of any clues that would lead to the 38-year-old suspect. Local officials and the FBI also chipped in reward money, bringing the total to \$80,000 for any information about Oropeza's whereabouts.

Oropeza is considered armed and dangerous after fleeing the area Friday night, likely on foot. San Jacinto County Sheriff Greg Capers said authorities had widened the search area beyond the scene of the shooting, which occurred after the suspect's neighbors asked him to stop firing off rounds in his yard late at night because a baby was trying to sleep.

At a Sunday vigil in Cleveland, Wilson Garcia, the father of the 1-month-old, described the terrifying efforts inside his home by friends and family that night to escape, hide and shield themselves and children after Oropeza walked up to the home and began firing, killing his wife first at the front door.

Another of Garcia's children, 9-year-old Daniel Enrique Laso, was also killed. Garcia said he and two other people had gone to "respectfully" ask Oropeza to shoot his gun farther away from the house, which is on a street where residents say it is not uncommon for neighbors to unwind by firing off guns.

Garcia said he walked away and called the police when Oropeza refused. It was 10 to 20 minutes later when he said he saw Oropeza loading his AR-style rifle while running toward the house.

"I told my wife, 'Get inside. This man has loaded his weapon,'" Garcia said. "My wife told me to go inside because, 'He won't fire at me. I'm a woman.'"

Authorities have said at least five other people who were in the house at the time were uninjured.

During the early hours of the search, investigators found clothes and a phone while combing an area that includes dense layers of forest, but tracking dogs lost the scent, Capers said.

Authorities were able to identify Oropeza by an identity card issued by Mexican authorities to citizens who reside outside the country, as well as the doorbell camera footage. He said police have also interviewed the suspect's wife multiple times.

Police recovered the AR-15-style rifle that they said Oropeza used in the shootings. Authorities were not sure if Oropeza was carrying another weapon after others were found in his home.

Capers said he hoped the reward money would motivate people to provide information and that there were plans to put up billboards in Spanish to spread the word.

"We're looking for closure for this family," Capers said.

By Sunday, police crime scene tape was removed from around the victims' home, where some people stopped by to leave flowers.

In the neighborhood, an FBI agent, Texas Department of Public Safety troopers and other officers were

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seen going door to door. One trooper stopped a red truck and asked to look inside before letting the driver continue on his way.

Veronica Pineda, 34, who lives across the street from the suspect's home, said authorities asked if they could search her property to see if he might be hiding there. She said she was fearful that the gunman had not yet been captured.

"It is kind of scary," she said. "You never know where he can be."

Pineda said she didn't know Oropeza well but occasionally saw him, his wife and son ride their horses on the street. She said the family had lived there about five or six years and that neighbors have called authorities in the past to complain about people firing guns.

The victims were between the ages of 9 and 31 years old and all were believed to have been shot from the neck up, according to authorities. All were believed to be from Honduras.

Enrique Reina, Honduras' secretary of foreign affairs and international cooperation, said on Twitter that the Honduran Consulate in Houston was contacting the families in connection with the repatriation of remains as well as U.S. authorities to keep apprised of the investigation.

The FBI in Houston said in a tweet on Sunday that it was referring to the suspect as Oropesa, not Oropeza, to "better reflect his identity in law enforcement systems." His family lists their name as Oropeza on a sign outside their yard, as well as in public records. Authorities had also previously stated that Garcia's son was 8 years old, but the father and school officials said Sunday that the third grader was 9.

A total of three children found covered in blood in the home were taken to a hospital but found to be uninjured, Capers said. He said they were staying with family members.

FBI spokesperson Christina Garza said investigators do not believe those at the home were members of a single family. In addition to the young boy, the other victims were identified as Sonia Argentina Guzman, 25; Diana Velazquez Alvarado, 21; Julisa Molina Rivera, 31; and Jose Jonathan Casarez, 18.

Garcia said they had called police five times between the time they asked Oropeza to shoot farther away and when the gunman entered their home. Capers said police got there as fast as they could and that he had three officers covering 700 square miles (1,800 square kilometers).

A previous version of this story, based on information from the FBI, incorrectly stated the age of Daniel Enrique Laso as 8 years old. His father said the boy was 9 years old.

Associated Press Writer Susan Haigh in Norwich, Connecticut, contributed to this report.

First Republic up in air as regulators juggle bank's fate

By KEN SWEET AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Regulators continued their search for a solution to First Republic Bank's woes over the weekend before stock markets were set to open Monday.

San Francisco-based First Republic has struggled since the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank in early March, as investors and depositors have grown increasingly worried that the bank may not survive as an independent entity for much longer. The bank's stock closed at \$3.51 on Friday, a fraction of the roughly \$170 a share it traded for a year ago.

First Republic has been seen as the most likely next bank to collapse due to its high amount of uninsured deposits and exposure to low interest rates.

Gary Cohn, a former Goldman Sachs president who served as President Donald Trump's top economic adviser, told CBS News' "Face the Nation" on Sunday that the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation "would prefer to sell the bank in its entirety than in pieces."

"What will most likely happen is the FDIC will seize control and then simultaneously resell the asset to the successful bidder," Cohn said.

Cohn said he believed it will be a "much faster process" than what happened with Silicon Valley Bank.

First Republic reported total assets of \$233 billion as of March 31. At the end of last year, the Federal

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Reserve ranked First Republic 14th in size among U.S. commercial banks.

Before Silicon Valley Bank failed, First Republic had a banking franchise that was the envy of most of the industry. Its clients — mostly the rich and powerful — rarely defaulted on their loans. The 72-branch bank has made much of its money making low-cost loans to the rich, which reportedly included Meta Platforms CEO Mark Zuckerberg.

Flush with deposits from the well-heeled, First Republic saw total assets more than double from \$102 billion at the end of 2019's first quarter, when its full-time workforce was 4,600.

But the vast majority of First Republic's deposits, like those in Silicon Valley and Signature Bank, were uninsured — that is, above the \$250,000 limit set by the FDIC. And that began to fuel worries about the franchise among analysts and investors. If First Republic were to fail, its depositors would be at risk of not getting all their money back.

Those fears were crystalized in the bank's recent quarterly results. The bank said depositors pulled more than \$100 billion out of the bank during April's crisis. San Francisco-based First Republic said that it was only able to stanch the bleeding after a group of large banks stepped in to save it with \$30 billion in uninsured deposits.

But now First Republic is in need of a bigger fix.

"Getting the bank in the hands of a larger one is the best possible economic outcome," said Steven Kelly, a researcher at the Yale School of Management's Program on Financial Stability. "First Republic has lots of knowledge about its customers and has been a profitable bank for its entire history — but its business model is not stable. It needs a big bank balance sheet behind it."

Kelly said that other options, such as government control or continuing to try to survive on its own, would see its value continue to disappear, along with credit and economic growth.

"A successful absorption into a big bank would provide a proper, stable home for the firm to continue to provide its value proposition to the economy," Kelly said.

Since the crisis, First Republic has been looking for a way to quickly turn itself around. The bank planned to sell off unprofitable assets, including the low interest mortgages that it provided to wealthy clients. It also announced plans to lay off up to a quarter of its workforce, which totaled about 7,200 employees at the end of 2022.

But investors have remained skeptical. The bank's executives have taken no questions from investors or analysts since the bank reported its results, causing the stock to sink further.

And it's hard to profitably restructure a balance sheet when a firm has to sell off assets quickly and has fewer bankers to find opportunities for the bank to invest in. It took years for banks like Citigroup and Bank of America to return to profitability after the global financial crisis 15 years ago, and those banks had the benefit of a government-aided backstop to keep them going.

Associated Press Staff Writer Matt O'Brien in Providence, Rhode Island, contributed to this report.

Pope speaks of secret peace 'mission,' help for Ukraine kids

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ABOARD THE PAPAL PLANE (AP) — Pope Francis on Sunday revealed that a secret peace "mission" in Russia's war in Ukraine was under way, though he gave no details, and said the Vatican is willing to help facilitate the return of Ukrainian children taken to Russia during the war.

"I'm available to do anything," Francis said during an airborne press conference en route home from Hungary. "There's a mission that's not public that's underway; when it's public I'll talk about it."

Francis gave no details when asked whether he spoke about peace initiatives during his talks in Budapest this weekend with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban or the representative of the Russian Orthodox Church in Hungary.

Deportations of Ukrainian children have been a concern since Russia invaded Ukraine last year. Francis said the Holy See had already helped mediate some prisoner exchanges and would do "all that is humanly

possible" to reunite families.

"All human gestures help. Gestures of cruelty don't help," Francis said.

The International Criminal Court in March issued an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin and Russia's children's commissioner, accusing them of war crimes for abducting children from Ukraine. Russia has denied any wrongdoing, contending the children were moved for their safety.

Last week Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal met with Francis at the Vatican and asked him to help return Ukrainian children taken following the Russian invasion.

"I asked His Holiness to help us return home Ukrainians, Ukrainian children who are detained, arrested, and criminally deported to Russia," Shmyhal told the Foreign Press Association after the audience.

Francis recalled that the Holy See had facilitated some prisoner exchanges, working through embassies, and was open to Ukraine's request to reunite Ukrainian children with their families.

The prisoner exchanges "went well. I think it could go well also for this. It's important," he said of the family reunifications. "The Holy See is available to do it because it's the right thing," he added. "We have to do all that is humanly possible." _____

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1 killed when plane slams into hillside in LA neighborhood

LOS ANGELES (AP) — One person was killed when a single-engine plane slammed into a grassy hillside above homes in a Los Angeles neighborhood amid dense fog, authorities said.

The Cessna C172 crashed around 8:45 p.m. Saturday on the city's west side, about 8 miles (13 km) southeast of Van Nuys Airport, the Los Angeles Fire Department and Federal Aviation Administration said.

Joubin Solemani was at home with his family in the upscale Beverly Crest area when they all heard a loud crash.

"We thought it might be a car crash. But we looked outside and didn't see anything. We didn't know what the heck it was," Solemani said Sunday. "Then search-and-rescue showed up and were all over the hillside."

After searching for several hours in darkness and "thick ground level fog," crews found the crash site and one person dead in the wreckage, the fire department said in a statement. The pilot was the plane's lone occupant, the FAA said.

When the sun came up Sunday, Solemani said he could see the plane a few hundred feet (meters) above his property in the Santa Monica Mountains. "It's totally mangled," he told The Associated Press.

The pilot was not immediately identified. Fire department personnel recovered the body Sunday afternoon. The plane avoided hitting power lines and a large water tank and, officials said, there was minimal fire.

An air traffic controller initially reported the plane as missing after losing radar contact with the aircraft while it was en route to Van Nuys Airport, the fire department said in an alert shortly after 8 p.m. Saturday.

The FAA and National Transportation Safety Board will investigate.

Pope voices willingness to return Indigenous loot, artifacts

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ABOARD THE PAPAL PLANE (AP) — Pope Francis said Sunday that talks were underway to return colonial-era artifacts in the Vatican Museum that were acquired from Indigenous peoples in Canada and voiced a willingness to return other problematic objects in the Vatican's collection on a case-by-case basis.

"The Seventh Commandment comes to mind: If you steal something you have to give it back," Francis said during an airborne press conference en route home from Hungary.

Recently, Francis returned to Greece the three fragments of the Parthenon sculptures that had been in the Vatican Museums' collection for two centuries. The pope said Sunday that the restitution was "the right gesture" and that when such returns were possible, museums should undertake them.

"In the case where you can return things, where it's necessary to make a gesture, better to do it," he said. "Sometimes you can't, if there are no possibilities — political, real or concrete possibilities. But in the

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cases where you can retribute, please do it. It's good for everyone, so you don't get used to putting your hands in someone else's pockets."

His comments to The Associated Press were his first on a question that has forced many museums in Europe and North America to rethink their ethnographic and anthropological collections. The restitution debate has gathered steam amid a reckoning for the colonial conquests of Africa, the Americas and Asia and demands for restitution of war loot by the countries and communities of origin.

The Vatican has an extensive collection of artifacts and art made by Indigenous peoples from around the world, much of it sent to Rome by Catholic missionaries for a 1925 exhibition in the Vatican gardens.

The Vatican insists the artifacts, including ceremonial masks, wampum belts and feathered headdresses, were gifts. But Indigenous scholars dispute whether Native peoples at the time could have freely offered their handicrafts given the power differentials at play in colonial periods.

Francis, the first-ever Latin American pope, knows the history well. Last year, he travelled to Canada to personally apologize to Indigenous peoples for abuses they endured at the hands of Catholic missionaries at residential schools.

In the run-up to the visit, Indigenous groups visited the Vatican's Anima Mundi museum, saw some of their ancestors' handiwork, and expressed interest in having greater access to the collection, and the return of some items.

"The restitution of the Indigenous things is underway with Canada — at least we agreed to do it," Francis said, adding that the Holy See's experience meeting with the Indigenous groups in Canada had been "very fruitful."

Indeed, just a few weeks ago in another follow-up to the Canada apology, the Vatican formally repudiated the "Doctrine of Discovery." This theory, backed by 15th-century "papal bulls," was used to legitimize the colonial-era seizure of Native lands and forms the basis of some property laws today in the U.S. and Canada.

Francis recalled that looting was a common feature during colonial-era wars and occupations. "They took these decisions to take the good things from the other," he said.

He said going forward, museums "have to make a discernment in each case," but that where possible, restitution of objects should be made.

"And if tomorrow the Egyptians come and ask for the obelisk, what will we do?" he said chuckling, referring to the great obelisk that stands at the center of St. Peter's Square. The Roman Emperor Caligula brought the ancient obelisk to Rome more than 2,000 years ago, and it was moved to the square in the 16th century.

The Vatican Museums are mentioned in the 2020 book "The British Museums," which recounts the sacking of the Royal Court of Benin City by British forces in 1897 and the subsequent dispersal in museums and collections around the globe of its famed Benin Bronzes.

In the appendix, the Vatican is listed as one of the museums, galleries or collections that "may" have objects looted from Benin City, in today's Nigeria, in 1897.

The Vatican Museums hasn't responded to requests for information. The Nigerian Embassy to the Holy See, asked recently about the claim, said its "contact in the Vatican is currently looking into the issue." _____

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Basketball legend Rivers, longtime Globetrotter, dies at 73

SAVANNAH, Ga. (AP) — Larry "Gator" Rivers, who helped integrate high school basketball in Georgia before playing for the Harlem Globetrotters and becoming a county commissioner in his native Savannah, died Saturday at age 73.

Rivers died from cancer, Chatham County Commission Chairman Chester Ellis told the Savannah Morning News. Campbell and Sons Funeral Home said Rivers died at a hospital in Savannah.

Rivers was a sophomore on the all-Black Beach High School team that won the first Georgia High

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School Association basketball tournament to include Black and white players in 1967. He blossomed into an all-state player, graduating from the Savannah high school in 1969 and going on to be a small college All-American at Moberly Junior College in Missouri and an all-conference guard at what is now Missouri Western State University in St. Joseph.

He went on to play and coach for 16 years with the Harlem Globetrotters, reuniting for a time with high school coach Russell Ellington.

Rivers once told WTOC-TV that during his tryout for the Globetrotters, team legend Marques Haynes led Rivers into a closet storing tables and folding chairs, handed Rivers a basketball and said "Let's see you dribble around this."

"So I was dribbling around chairs, under tables, doing anything I could do to impress him," Rivers said.

Rivers came home to Savannah and got involved in the community, volunteering in schools, promoting the rebuilding of neighborhood basketball courts and opening the non-profit youth mentorship organization Gatorball Academy to teach basketball.

Rivers ran for the county commission in 2020 as a Republican and was elected without opposition after the Democratic nominee was disqualified over a previous felony conviction.

"I don't know when we weren't friends," Ellis told WTOC-TV, calling Rivers "a legend."

"That was a big part of him, giving to the children that's behind him," Ellis said. "Like he said, 'Somebody gave to me, and so it's my job and my responsibility to give back.' And that's going to be missing a whole lot."

Rivers' death brought condolences from U.S. Rep. Buddy Carter, Savannah Mayor Van Johnson and others. Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp said Rivers "led a life of accomplishment and chose to spend much of that life serving the people of his community."

Johnson wrote on social media that "Legends never die, so you will always be around, my friend," adding in an official city statement that Rivers "never forgot Savannah or Beach High School and dedicated endless hours of mentoring and teaching the rules of basketball and life to scores of young people. For this, he will always be remembered."

Funeral arrangements had not been announced Sunday.

Quiet and parents' touch help opioid users' newborns: study

By CARLA K. JOHNSON AP Medical Writer

Babies born to opioid users had shorter hospital stays and needed less medication when their care emphasized parent involvement, skin-to-skin contact and a quiet environment, researchers reported Sunday.

Newborns were ready to go home about a week earlier compared to those getting standard care. Fewer received opioid medications to reduce withdrawal symptoms such as tremors and hard-to-soothe crying, about 20% compared to 52% of the standard-care babies.

Babies born to opioid users, including mothers in treatment with medications such as methadone, can develop withdrawal symptoms after exposure in the womb.

Typically, hospitals use a scoring system to decide which babies need medicine to ease withdrawal, which means treatment in newborn intensive care units.

"The mom is sitting there anxiously waiting for the score," said the study's lead author Dr. Leslie Young of the University of Vermont's children's hospital. "This would be really stressful for families."

In the new approach — called Eat, Sleep, Console — nurses involve mothers as they evaluate together whether rocking, breastfeeding or swaddling can calm the baby, Young said. Medicine is an option, but the environment is considered too.

"Is the TV on in the room? Do we need to turn that off? Are the lights on? Do we need to turn those down?" Young said.

About 5,000 nurses were trained during the study, published Sunday by the New England Journal of Medicine.

Researchers studied the care of 1,300 newborns at 26 U.S. hospitals. Babies born before training were

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compared to babies born after.

The National Institutes of Health funded the work as part of an initiative to address the U.S. opioid addiction crisis.

"One of the great strengths of the study is its geographic diversity," said Dr. Diana Bianchi, director of the branch that researches child health and human development. "We've had newborns enrolled from sites as varied as Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Kansas City, Missouri; and Spartanburg, South Carolina."

Many U.S. hospitals have adopted the new approach, Bianchi said, adding she hopes the research will lead to recommendations from pediatrics groups.

Researchers followed the babies for three months and found no difference in urgent care or emergency room visits or hospitalizations — reassuring evidence about the safety of shorter hospital stays.

The new approach could yield "tremendous savings" in hospital resources, Young said, although the study didn't estimate cost.

Researchers will follow the babies until age 2 to monitor their health.

Mothers want to be involved, Young said.

"For the first time, they feel like their role as a mom is valued and like they're important," she said. "We know that those first moments of a mom and a baby being together are really critical to bonding."

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Tornado flips cars, damages homes in coastal Florida city

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. (AP) — A tornado touched down in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, on Saturday as a powerful storm system brought intense rain and powerful winds to the state, overturning cars, damaging homes and snapping tree branches.

The National Weather Service in Miami said the tornado hit late Saturday afternoon with winds of 100 mph (160 kph) near Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center and headed northeast toward the coast.

Storm damage forced authorities in the coastal city to close major roadways as workers cleared debris and inspected wreckage. Images from the scene showed cars flipped over on top of each other, cracked tree limbs resting on vehicles and homes, as well as other debris littering streets.

The Palm Beach Gardens Police Department has not reported any major injuries or fatalities. A spokeswoman for the city said officials have deactivated emergency protocols and were working through lingering issues Sunday.

The National Weather Service had placed a large stretch of central Florida under a tornado watch on Saturday afternoon as thunderstorms were cutting across the state.

When states limit care, some trans people do it themselves

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM and SUMMER BALLENTINE Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — With her insurance about to run out and Republicans in her home state of Missouri ramping up rhetoric against gender-affirming health care, Erin Stille nervously visited a foreign pharmaceutical site as a "last resort" to ensure she could continue getting the hormones she needs.

Stille, 26, sent a \$300 bank transfer to a Taiwan-based supplier for a 6-month supply of estrogen patches and androgen-blocking pills. For three weeks she feared she'd been scammed but breathed a sigh of relief when a large package arrived at her home in St. Peters.

"It's definitely a little scary," Stille said. "Taking a chance like this, I could have my money stolen and there's not much I can do about it. But I figured, at this point, that the benefits outweigh the risks."

Stille, and others nationwide, are scrambling to form contingency plans as Republican politicians rapidly erode access to the gender-affirming treatments many credit as life-saving.

Fears became even more pronounced in Missouri this month after Republican Attorney General Andrew Bailey issued a first-of-its-kind emergency rule that places strict restrictions on that care for minors — and

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adults.

While some doctors say self-medicating trans health care is dangerous, Stille is among a growing population who say they see no other option.

If enacted, the Missouri rule will require people to have experienced an "intense pattern" of documented gender dysphoria for three years and to have received at least 15 hourly sessions with a therapist over 18 months or more before receiving puberty blockers, hormones, surgery or other treatment.

Patients also must first be screened for autism and "social media addiction," and any psychiatric symptoms from mental health issues will have to be treated and resolved. Some people will be able to maintain their prescriptions while undergoing the required assessments, which aren't affordable for many.

Some transgender Missourians and health care providers sued to overthrow the rule, and a St. Louis judge pushed back its effective date from last Thursday to Monday at 5 p.m. as she weighs whether to block its enforcement as the lawsuit proceeds in court. A ruling is expected Monday.

Bailey has touted the rule as a way to shield residents, especially minors, from what he describes as experimental treatments, but puberty blockers and sex hormones have been prescribed for decades and are widely considered medically necessary for many trans people.

Some gender-affirming treatment providers in Missouri are already planning to cut back on care.

Vivent Health Interim President and CEO Brandon Hill said doctors are worried about meeting documentation requirements for new patients, so clinics in St. Louis and Kansas City will only provide gender-affirming health care to current patients. Vivent Health provides HIV-focused and LGBTQ+ friendly health care in St. Louis, Kansas City and other states.

"Do-it-yourself hormone replacement therapy" has become an increasingly common way for trans residents of restrictive states to avoid involuntarily stopping hormone treatment. Trans people like Stille have been discreetly circulating a comprehensive guide and a digital master list of hormone suppliers, some more reliable than others, through social media.

This online marketplace, known as the gray market, is comprised of unregulated suppliers who sell legitimate medications, sometimes name-brand, outside the distribution channels authorized by the manufacturers. Some trans people in GOP-controlled states that have not yet enacted bans are buying from these suppliers to build an emergency stockpile.

But self-administering hormones without adequate supervision can be "extraordinarily dangerous," especially for those taking testosterone, said Dr. Robert Lash, chief medical officer at the Endocrine Society, which represents specialists who treat hormone conditions.

Although taking testosterone can help trans men develop some desired physical features, it also increases their risk of a blood clot or stroke. Lash said doctors need to closely monitor a patient's red blood cell count, lipids and liver function and adjust their dosage accordingly. Estrogen use can also increase risk of blood clots, he said.

"These are powerful medications with a lot of effects on a lot of body systems, not all of which are good," Lash said. "Taking these hormones on your own is just an invitation to running into problems. People need to be extraordinarily careful when using them and really shouldn't without medical supervision."

He cautioned against taking hormones from any unregulated pharmacy, veterinary source or overseas provider.

Even for those willing to assume the risks, not all trans people have the same level of access. Trans men like Levi Sobel, a 30-year-old from Springfield, are finding it much more difficult to source testosterone than other hormones.

Testosterone is classified in the U.S. as a Schedule III controlled substance, along with ketamine and some opioids, and is subjected to more regulations than the typical prescription drug.

Sobel said unregulated testosterone providers are "pretty much nonexistent" in the U.S., and it's unwise to buy from international sellers because of the higher likelihood of the hormone being seized by U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

"This makes it essentially impossible for me to stockpile in the same ways my transfeminine friends can,"

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Sobel said. "The best I can do to stretch it is to make sure I'm using every last drop from every vial."

Stacy Cay, an autistic trans woman and comedian in Kansas City, has already saved up enough injectable estrogen to last about a year. The more she can stockpile, the more time she has to prepare her plan to relocate if the emergency rule isn't blocked in court, she said.

"This feels like the end of Kansas City being my home," Cay said. "It feels like it's being taken away."

Others, like Ellie Bridgman, a gas station attendant in Union, are employing a unique strategy to stockpile hormones. The 23-year-old, who said the attorney general's rule would cut off her treatment access because she's autistic and has depression, started injecting only a half dose of estrogen before her routine blood tests so her hormone levels would read low.

This led her doctor to increase her prescription.

Bridgman said she may consider decreasing her dosage to conserve medication or supplement her supply with an unregulated purchase. Stockpiling is her "No. 1 priority." Without hormone replacement therapy, she said, "the suicidal thoughts and ideation comes back stronger than ever. This is my lifeline."

Schoenbaum reported from Raleigh, North Carolina.

A powerhouse US doctor slain in Sudan, 'killed for nothing'

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Bound to Sudan by ailing parents and his devotion to treating the poor there, American doctor Bushra Ibnauf Sulieman kept working as long as he could after fighting engulfed Sudan's capital.

For days after battles between two rival Sudanese commanders erupted in Khartoum on April 15, the 49-year-old Sulieman treated the city's wounded. He and other doctors ventured out as explosions shook the walls of homes where Khartoum's people cowered inside. Gunfire between the two factions battling for control resounded in the streets.

"Say, 'Nothing will happen to us except what God has decreed for us,'" Sulieman, a U.S.-born gastroenterologist who divided his time and work between Iowa City, Iowa, and Khartoum, said in one of his last messages to worried friends on Facebook last week, as fighting persisted. "And in God let the believers put their trust."

The morning that Sulieman decided he had to risk the dangerous escape from Sudan's capital with his parents, American wife and his two American children was the morning that the war found Sulieman, friends say.

In the wholesale looting that has accompanied fighting in the capital, Khartoum, a city of 5 million, a roving band of strangers surrounded him in his yard Tuesday, stabbing him to death in front of his family. Friends suspect robbery was the motive. He became one of two Americans confirmed killed in Sudan in the fighting, both dual nationals.

Authorities say the other, with ties to Denver, was caught in a crossfire. They have not released that American's name.

Mohamed Eisa, a Sudanese doctor who practices in the Pittsburgh area, was a close colleague of Sulieman. Over the years, "sometimes I asked him, 'Bushra, what are you doing here? What are you doing in Sudan?'" Eisa recalled.

"He always says to me, 'Mohamed, listen — yes, I love living in the United States ... but the United States health care system is very strong,'" and one doctor more or less won't make a difference.

Eisa said Sulieman would tell him: "In Sudan, everything I do has so much impact on so many lives, so many students and so many medical professionals."

The sudden illness and death of Eisa's father in Khartoum meant Eisa was in Sudan when fighting broke out. Now trying to get back to his American wife and children in the U.S., Eisa spoke late last week from Port Sudan, a city on the Red Sea now crowded with Sudanese and foreigners who made the dangerous 500-mile (800-kilometer) drive from the capital in hopes of securing spots on ships leaving Sudan.

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Eisa described a journey through checkpoints manned by armed men, past bodies lying in the streets, and past vehicles carrying other families killed attempting the escape route.

After evacuating all U.S. diplomats and other U.S. government personnel April 22, the U.S. conducted its first evacuation of private American citizens Saturday. It used armed drones to escort buses carrying between 200 and 300 U.S. citizens, permanent residents and others to Port Sudan.

Sudanese in their country and in the U.S. spoke of Sulieman's killing as a special loss.

He was a well-respected colleague at the Gastroenterology Clinic and Mercy Hospital in Iowa City, hospital president Tom Clancy said. Sulieman's older children live in Iowa.

He traveled back to Sudan several times a year with medical supplies he had collected for that country, colleagues said.

A nurse at the Iowa City clinic who declined to be identified because the nurse was not authorized to speak called him one of the best. "His love for his patients was over the top," the nurse said. Colleagues considered him a powerhouse doctor and humanitarian, an upbeat man with an infectious laugh who populated his texts with smiley faces and cats wearing sunglasses.

In Sudan, Sulieman directed the medical faculty at the University of Khartoum and was a founder and director of a doctors' humanitarian group, the Sudanese American Medical Association.

He would help organize and drive medicine and supplies to Sudan's countryside, arrange rural training for midwives and help bring in cardiologists to perform surgeries for free.

His efforts continued after two Sudanese commanders who earlier had joined forces to derail Sudan's moves toward democracy suddenly launched an all-out battle for power.

Two weeks of fighting have killed more than 500 people, according to the Sudanese Health Ministry. Doctors say fighters have abducted at least five physicians, taking them away to treat combatants.

Sulieman was one of many doctors who kept showing up at hospitals, regardless, said Dr. Yasir Elamin, a Sudanese-American doctor in Houston.

Sulieman and other doctors in Khartoum treated the wounded, delivered babies and provided other urgent care until it became too dangerous for him to leave his home.

Concern about taking his father away from needed dialysis had kept Sulieman from leaving Khartoum, colleagues said.

On Tuesday, he decided he would take his father for dialysis, then try to flee Khartoum with his family, he told friends.

The band of men surrounded him before he could leave. They plunged a knife into his chest. Fellow doctors at Khartoum's Soba Hospital, where he had worked, were unable to save him.

In Washington, National Security Council spokesman John Kirby extended "deepest sympathies" to Sulieman's family.

"For nothing. For nothing," Eisa, his colleague in Sudan, said of Sulieman's killing, before finally finding passage over the weekend on a ship out of Sudan.

"You know who you killed?" another Sudanese colleague, Hisham Omar, posted among Facebook tributes from the country's medical workers, in a message aimed at the attackers who killed Sulieman.

"You killed thousands of patients," that colleague wrote, speaking of the impact that Sulieman — one doctor — knew he had in Sudan, and all the Sudanese he would have aided in the years ahead. "You killed thousands of needy people. You killed thousands of his students."

This story has been corrected to reflect that Sulieman was born in the U.S., not Sudan.

Biden, Marcos set to meet as tensions grow with China

By AAMER MADHANI and JIM GOMEZ Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden is set to host President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. of the Philippines for White House talks Monday as concerns grow about the Chinese navy's harassment of Philippine vessels in the South China Sea.

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Marcos' visit to Washington comes after the U.S. and Philippines last week completed their largest war drills ever and as the two countries' air forces on Monday will hold their first joint fighter jet training in the Philippines since 1990. The Philippines this year agreed to give the U.S. access to four more bases on the islands as the U.S. looks to deter China's increasingly aggressive actions toward Taiwan and in the disputed South China Sea.

Meanwhile, China has angered the Philippines by repeatedly harassing its navy and coast guard patrols and chasing away fishermen in waters close to Philippine shores but which Beijing claims as its own.

Before departing for Washington on Sunday, Marcos said he was "determined to forge an ever stronger relationship with the United States in a wide range of areas that not only address the concerns of our times, but also those that are critical to advancing our core interests."

Monday's Oval Office meeting is the latest high-level diplomacy with Pacific leaders by Biden as his administration contends with increased military and economic assertiveness by China and worries about North Korea's nuclear program. Marcos' official visit to Washington is the first by a Philippine president in more than 10 years.

The U.S. president hosted South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol for a state visit last week in which the two leaders introduced new steps aimed at deterring North Korea from launching an attack on neighbors. Biden is scheduled to travel to Japan and Australia in May.

The two sides are expected to discuss the security situation and come out with new economic, education, climate and other initiatives as part of Marcos' four-day visit to Washington, a senior administration official told The Associated Press.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to preview the visit, said Biden administration officials are looking to redevelop "habits of alliance building" with the Philippines as aspects of the historically complicated relationship have "atrophied" over the years.

Increased Chinese harassment of vessels in the South China Sea have added another dimension to the visit. On April 23, journalists from AP and other outlets were aboard the Philippine coast guard's BRP Malapascua near Second Thomas Shoal when a Chinese coast guard ship blocked the Philippine patrol vessel steaming into the disputed shoal. The Philippines has filed more than 200 diplomatic protests against China since last year, at least 77 since Marcos took office in June.

State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller on Saturday called media reporting on the encounters a "stark reminder" of Chinese "harassment and intimidation of Philippine vessels as they undertake routine patrols within their exclusive economic zone. We call upon Beijing to desist from its provocative and unsafe conduct."

Close U.S.-Philippines relations were not a given when Marcos took office. The son and namesake of the late Philippines strongman had seemed intent on following the path of his predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte, who pursued closer ties with China.

Before Marcos took office last year, Kurt Campbell, coordinator for Indo-Pacific affairs on the White House National Security Council, acknowledged that "historical considerations" could present "challenges" to the relationship with Marcos Jr. It was an oblique reference to long-standing litigation in the United States against the estate of his father, Ferdinand Marcos.

A U.S. appeals court in 1996 upheld damages of about \$2 billion against the elder Marcos' estate for the torture and killings of thousands of Filipinos. The court upheld a 1994 verdict of a jury in Hawaii, where he fled after being forced from power in 1986. He died there in 1989.

Biden and Marcos met in September during the U.N. General Assembly, where the U.S. president acknowledged the two countries' sometimes "rocky" past.

During their private meeting, Biden stressed to Marcos his desire to improve relations and asked Marcos how the administration could "fulfill your dreams and hopes" for that, according to the senior administration official.

Marcos is also slated to visit the Pentagon, meet Cabinet members and business leaders and make remarks at a Washington think-tank during the visit.

Gomez reported from Manila.

'Super Mario Bros. Movie' hits \$1B, is No. 1 for 4 weeks

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — It's still Mario Time at the box office.

"The Super Mario Bros. Movie" led ticket sales for the fourth straight weekend in U.S. and Canadian theaters with \$40 million as the global haul for the Universal Pictures release surpassed \$1 billion, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The Nintendo videogame adaptation dominated the month of April in theaters, smashing records along the way. Over the weekend, it faced little new competition, though that will change next week when Marvel's "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3" kicks off the summer movie calendar and is expected to move Mario to the side. Studios spent the last week at CinemaCon in Las Vegas promoting coming blockbusters and promising big returns at the summer box office.

"The Super Mario Bros. Movie" was estimated to easily cross \$1 billion in worldwide box office Sunday, making it the 10th animated film to reach that milestone and the first since 2019. With a domestic total thus far of \$490 million, international sales are even stronger. The Illumination-animated release took in \$68.3 million overseas over the weekend, pushing its international haul to \$532.5 million.

Second place went to "Evil Dead Rise." The horror sequel from Warner Bros. held well in its second week, especially for a horror film, dipping 50% with \$12.2 million.

Among the weekend's newcomers, the Judy Blume adaptation "Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret" fared the best. The Lionsgate release grossed \$6.8 million in 3,343 locations, a decent start for the \$30 million-budgeted coming-of-age tale written and directed by Kelly Fremon Craig ("The Edge of Seventeen").

As expected, "Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret," about an 11-year-old (Abby Ryder Fortson) going through puberty, drew an overwhelming female audience. With stellar reviews (99% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes) and strong audience scores (an "A" CinemaScore), "Are You There God? It's Me Margaret," should play well through Mother's Day.

Lionsgate also released the Finnish action movie "Sisu" in 1,006 locations. The film, about a prospector (Jorma Tommila) whose gold is stolen by Nazis, grossed an estimated \$3.3 million. That was a solid result for the rare international film to receive a nationwide opening. Reviews have been good (93% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes) for writer-director Jalmari Helander's film.

"Sisu" managed to surpass the weekend's most heavyweight new release: "Big George Foreman: The Miraculous Story of the Once and Future Heavyweight Champion of the World." The film, from Sony's Christian production company Affirm Films, gives a faith-based twist to the sports biopic. But after getting dinged by bad review, it didn't punch very hard, with \$3 million in 3,054 theaters.

Nida Manzoor's "Polite Society," about a British-Pakistani high-schooler (Priya Kansara) with dreams of becoming a stuntwoman, debuted with \$800,000 in 927 theaters. The Focus Features film, one of the standouts of January's Sundance Film Festival, blends kung-fu with Jane Austen in a story about London sisters.

One of the weekend's biggest successes was a familiar box-office force. The Walt Disney Co.'s rerelease of "Star Wars: Return of the Jedi" grossed \$4.7 million in just 475 theaters. Disney put "Jedi" (the 1997 special edition version) back into theaters to commemorate the 1983 film's 40th anniversary.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. "The Super Mario Bros. Movie," \$40 million.
2. "Evil Dead Rise," \$12.2 million.
3. "Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret," \$6.8 million.
4. "John Wick: Chapter 4," \$5 million.
5. "Star Wars: Return of the Jedi," \$4.7 million.
6. "Dungeons and Dragons: Honor Among Thieves," \$4.1 million.
7. "Air," \$4 million.

8. "Ponniyin Selvan: Part Two," \$3.6 million.
9. "The Covenant," \$3.6 million.
10. "Sisu," \$3.3 million.

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

What GOP's plan for Medicaid work requirements would mean

By AMANDA SEITZ Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — More than a half million of the poorest Americans could be left without health insurance under legislation passed by House Republicans that would require people to work in exchange for health care coverage through Medicaid.

It's one of dozens of provisions tucked into a GOP bill that would allow for an increase in the debt limit but curb government spending over the next decade. The bill is unlikely to become law, though. It is being used by House Republicans to draw Democrats to the negotiating table and avoid a debt default.

Democrats have strongly opposed the Medicaid work requirement provision, saying it won't incentivize people to get a job and will drive up the number of uninsured in the country.

Here's a look at how the proposal might save taxpayers money but cost some Americans access to health care coverage.

WHO WOULD BE REQUIRED TO WORK?

The work requirements say able-bodied adults ages 19 to 55 who don't have children or other dependents would be required to work, train for a job or perform community service to stay on Medicaid. They would have to put in at least 80 hours a month to stay on the government-sponsored health care coverage.

About 84 million people are enrolled in Medicaid, and the Congressional Budget Office estimates 15 million would be subject to the requirement. The Health and Human Services Department, however, predicts millions more — about a third of enrollees altogether — would be required to work.

WHY ARE WORK REQUIREMENTS CONTROVERSIAL?

Republicans say the move would help push Americans into jobs that eventually might put them in a position to move off of government aid.

The requirements would also be more equitable for those who are working to support their families, said House Majority Leader Steve Scalise, R-La.

"That single mom that's working two or three jobs right now to make ends meet under this tough economy, she doesn't want to have to pay for somebody who's sitting at home," Scalise said.

Democrats argue that work requirements could unfairly push people out of Medicaid, too.

Some people were wrongly kicked off Medicaid in Arkansas when the state briefly introduced work requirements, Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, told lawmakers. In some cases, people were not required to work but didn't fill out the required paperwork.

"It's not just people who are subject to the requirements that often get caught up in red tape," she said. "It can often be people who are exempted."

About 1 in 4 people who were required to work lost coverage during Arkansas' experience with work requirements in 2018.

Work requirements can put Medicaid enrollees in a bind. While no one has been kicked off Medicaid over the last three years because of the pandemic, that changed in April when the federal government required states to review income eligibility for all enrollees to see who now makes too much money to qualify for the health care benefits.

People who picked up work, earned a small raise or switched jobs are finding that those new incomes could soon cost them coverage.

Amy Shaw, 39, of Rochester, New Hampshire, lost her family's Medicaid coverage in April because of her husband's 50-cent raise to \$17 per hour at an auto parts store. Shaw wouldn't be subject to the GOP's work requirement because she has two daughters, but the family's case illustrates how modest incomes

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can push people out of Medicaid coverage — and cost them big time.

Suddenly, instead of a \$3 copay, she was billed \$120 for a cancer screening ordered by her doctor. Meanwhile, their rent increased by 40% since the pandemic started, and the cost of food, utilities and other essential have gone up.

“It just seems like the system is set up so that you don’t want to go back (to work) because you lose more than you gain,” Shaw said. “It makes me not want to go and get my mammogram and my colonoscopy. I don’t even want to go to these appointments because it’s going to cost so much money.”

HOW MUCH WOULD THE REPUBLICAN PROPOSAL SAVE?

That largely depends on how many people who would be required to work opt not to or don’t fill out the proper paperwork to remain covered.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates the requirements would save \$109 billion over the next decade. Those savings would come in two ways: from about 600,000 people who would be dropped from Medicaid, then 900,000 who would lose federal funding for their Medicaid, but remain enrolled in the program through their state.

That analysis also says the bill would do little to improve employment among Medicaid enrollees.

WHAT’S NEXT?

The House GOP bill won’t pass a Democratic-controlled Senate or be signed into law by President Joe Biden in its current state.

But don’t expect the issue of work requirements and trimming Medicaid benefits to go away anytime soon. The number of people enrolled in Medicaid has ballooned in recent years, growing by more than 20 million since 2020.

If you ask Democrats, that’s a great thing — they’ve pointed to the record low uninsured rate that’s given more people access to medical care. Democratic-led states have also pitched new ways to expand Medicaid under the Biden administration, granting more access to recently released convicts and new mothers, for example.

Republicans, however, want to scale back safety net programs to pre-pandemic levels. And, Republicans in some states are already trying to implement work requirements of their own. Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders asked the federal government to OK a proposal that would move anyone who doesn’t comply with work requirements off Medicaid’s private insurance to traditional fee-for-service Medicaid.

Associated Press writers Holly Ramer in Concord, New Hampshire, and Kevin Freking and Lisa Mascaro in Washington contributed.

Battle for late Johnny Winter’s music to play out in court

By DAVE COLLINS Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — Nearly nine years after Johnny Winter’s death, a battle for control of the legendary blues guitarist’s music is being fought in court with allegations of theft and greed flying back and forth.

The legal fight pits Winter’s former personal manager and bandmate, Paul Nelson, against the family of the bluesman’s late wife, Susan, who died in 2019.

Winter’s in-laws say Nelson and his wife improperly took more than \$1.5 million from Winter’s music business, including auctioning off some of the late musician’s guitars.

Nelson and his wife have countersued, saying Susan Winter’s siblings swooped in when she was medicated and dying of cancer and tricked her into giving them control of Winter’s music, stripping away Nelson’s rights as the beneficiary of Susan Winter’s estate.

The case was scheduled to go to trial in a Connecticut court in April, but was rescheduled for September.

At stake is ownership of Winter’s music catalogue, proceeds from record and merchandise sales and authority to approve any commercial use of his songs, the value of which is uncertain.

“The case is about preserving Johnny Winter’s legacy and vindicating and making sure the Nelsons

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haven't improperly taken the moneys rightfully owed to the plaintiffs," said Timothy Diemand, a lawyer for the Susan Winter's siblings, Bonnie and Christopher Warford.

Nelson wants to be reinstated as the beneficiary of Susan Winter's estate.

"The Plaintiffs orchestrated the wrongful termination of Paul Nelson during a difficult time in Susan Winter's last year of life," the Nelsons said in a statement released by their lawyer, Matthew Mason. They said it was clear that both Johnny and Susan Winter wanted Nelson to be responsible for Johnny Winter's music and legacy.

John Dawson Winter III was born and raised in Beaumont, Texas. He burst onto the world blues scene in the 1960s, dazzling crowds with his fast licks while his trademark long, white hair flew about from under his cowboy hat. He and his brother Edgar — both born with albinism — were both reknowned musicians.

Winter played at Woodstock in 1969 and went on to produce albums for Blues icon Muddy Waters in addition to his own music. In 1988 he was inducted into the Blues Foundation Hall of Fame.

Rolling Stone magazine listed him as the No. 63 best guitar player of all time in 2015. He released more than two dozen albums and was nominated for several Grammy awards, winning his first one posthumously in 2015 for Best Blues Album for "Step Back." Nelson produced the album and also took home a Grammy for it.

Winter, who spent two decades living in Easton, Connecticut, before his death, battled heroin addiction for years and credited Nelson, whom he met in 1999, with helping him get off methadone, according to the 2014 documentary "Johnny Winter: Down & Dirty."

Before he got clean, bandmates and friends said they were concerned because of his frail appearance and trouble talking. Nelson also credits himself with reviving Winter's music career.

The Winters and Nelsons became good friends. Paul Nelson played guitar in Johnny Winter's band and started running his music company beginning in 2005. Nelson's wife, Marion Nelson, did bookkeeping for the Winters and the music business, according to legal filings in the lawsuit.

Winter died at the age of 70 on July 16, 2014, in a hotel room just outside Zurich, Switzerland, while on tour. Susan Winter and Paul Nelson have said the cause of death was likely emphysema.

Susan Winter was the sole beneficiary of her husband's estate, which she put in a trust in late 2016. She named herself as the trust's sole trustee and Nelson as the successor trustee, meaning he would inherit the rights to Johnny Winter's music after she died.

But in June 2019, four months before her death from lung cancer, Susan Winter removed Nelson as the successor and replaced him with her sister and brother.

The Nelsons allege in their lawsuit that Bonnie and Christopher Warford got control by lying to their sister, wrongly telling her the Nelsons were mismanaging the music business and her affairs.

The Warfords' lawsuit accuses the Nelsons of improperly taking more than \$1.5 million out of Winter's business "under the guise of royalty income, commissions, reimbursements, fees, social media expenses and other mechanisms, while obfuscating and misrepresenting these dealings to Susan Winter."

They have also accused the Nelsons of taking three of Winter's guitars, worth about \$300,000 total, and selling them at auction without permission. The Nelsons deny the allegation.

"In short, this is the classic case of a manager taking advantage of an artist-client, and worse here, an artist's surviving family," Diemand wrote in a legal filing.

It's not clear why Edgar Winter, a noted musician in his own right, was not involved in his brother's estate after his death. Edgar Winter and his representatives did not return phone and email messages seeking comment.

The Warfords' lawsuit is similar to one the Winters filed against Johnny Winter's former manager Teddy Slatius for alleged financial wrongdoing around 2005. Slatius died in late 2005. It's not clear what happened with the lawsuit.

"Johnny and Susan have been battling lawsuits all their lives, and still can't rest in peace," said Mary Lou Sullivan, who wrote a biography titled "Raisin' Cane: The Wild and Raucous Story of Johnny Winter" published in 2010.

Both the Warfords, of Charlotte, North Carolina, and Nelsons, of Weston, Connecticut, declined interview

requests by The Associated Press.

Texas mass shooting suspect could be anywhere, sheriff says

By JUAN A. LOZANO and PAUL J. WEBER Associated Press

CLEVELAND, Texas (AP) — The search for a Texas man who allegedly shot his neighbors after they asked him to stop firing off rounds in his yard stretched into a second day Sunday, with authorities saying the man could be anywhere by now.

Francisco Oropeza, 38, fled after the shooting Friday night that left five people dead, including an 8-year-old boy. San Jacinto County Sheriff Greg Capers said Saturday evening that authorities had widened the search to as far as 20 miles (32 kilometers) from the scene of the shooting.

Investigators found clothes and a phone while combing a rural area that includes dense layers of forest, but tracking dogs lost the scent, Capers said.

Police recovered the AR-15-style rifle that Oropeza allegedly used in the shootings but authorities were not sure if he was carrying another weapon, the sheriff said.

"He could be anywhere now," Capers said.

The attack happened near the town of Cleveland, north of Houston, on a street where some residents say neighbors often unwind by firing off guns.

Capers said the victims were between the ages of 8 and 31 years old and that all were believed to be from Honduras. All were shot "from the neck up," he said.

The attack was the latest act of gun violence in what has been a record pace of mass shootings in the U.S. so far this year, some of which have also involved semiautomatic rifles.

The mass killings have played out in a variety of places — a Nashville school, a Kentucky bank, a Southern California dance hall, and now a rural Texas neighborhood inside a single-story home.

Capers said there were 10 people in the house — some of whom had just moved there earlier in the week — but that no one else was injured. He said two of the victims were found in a bedroom laying over two children in an apparent attempt to shield them.

A total of three children found covered in blood in the home were taken to a hospital but found to be uninjured, Capers said.

FBI spokesperson Christina Garza said investigators do not believe everyone at the home were members of a single family. The victims were identified as Sonia Argentina Guzman, 25; Diana Velazquez Alvarado, 21; Julisa Molina Rivera, 31; Jose Jonathan Casarez, 18; and Daniel Enrique Laso, 8.

The confrontation followed the neighbors walking up to the fence and asking the suspect to stop shooting rounds, Capers said. The suspect responded by telling them that it was his property, Capers said, and one person in the house got a video of the suspect walking up to the front door with the rifle.

The shooting took place on a rural pothole-riddled street where single-story homes sit on wide 1-acre lots and are surrounded by a thick canopy of trees. A horse could be seen behind the victim's home, while in the front yard of Oropeza's house a dog and chickens wandered.

Rene Arevalo Sr., who lives a few houses down, said he heard gunshots around midnight but didn't think anything of it.

"It's a normal thing people do around here, especially on Fridays after work," Arevalo said. "They get home and start drinking in their backyards and shooting out there."

Capers said his deputies had been to Oropeza's home at least once before and spoken with him about "shooting his gun in the yard." It was not clear whether any action was taken at the time. At a news conference Saturday evening, the sheriff said firing a gun on your own property can be illegal, but he did not say whether Oropeza had previously broken the law.

Capers said the new arrivals in the home had moved from Houston earlier in the week, but he said he did not know whether they were planning to stay there.

Across the U.S. since Jan. 1, there have been at least 18 shootings that left four or more people dead, according to a database maintained by The Associated Press and USA Today, in partnership with North-

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eastern University. The violence is sparked by a range of motives: murder-suicides and domestic violence; gang retaliation; school shootings; and workplace vendettas.

Texas has confronted multiple mass shootings in recent years, including last year's attack at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde; a racist attack at an El Paso Walmart in 2019; and a gunman opening fire at a church in the tiny town of Sutherland Springs in 2017.

Republican leaders in Texas have continually rejected calls for new firearm restrictions, including this year over the protests of several families whose children were killed in Uvalde.

A few months ago, Arevalo said Oropeza threatened to kill his dog after it got loose in the neighborhood and chased the pit bull in his truck.

"I tell my wife all the time, 'Stay away from the neighbors. Don't argue with them. You never know how they're going to react,'" Arevalo said. "I tell her that because Texas is a state where you don't know who has a gun and who is going to react that way."

A previous version of this story, based on information from a San Jacinto County prosecutor, incorrectly identified one of the victims as 15 years old. This story also clarifies that police recovered an AR-15-style rifle in 4th paragraph.

Weber reported from Austin, Texas. Associated Press writer Ken Miller contributed to this report.

'Woolly delinquents' celebrate Charles' coronation in yarn

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Heather Howarth tugged at King Charles III's ears and tittered with satisfaction.

The other ladies who gather to knit and natter in her small English village thought the ears should be bigger. But when creating a crocheted likeness of the new king, she was determined not to cause offense.

"He might not like this one," she said reaching out to give the king a fond pat. "But he'll love his Grenadier Guards!"

Howarth and her friends in the village of Hurst, a stone's throw from Reading, west of London, have fashioned a woolly coronation procession to rival the pomp and circumstance that will take place when Charles is crowned on May 6 at Westminster Abbey. Sheathing the 29 posts that circle the community pond with their knitted and crocheted creations, the women have recreated the cast of characters set to attend the big event.

There's the king, of course, the queen consort and the Archbishop of Canterbury. And lots of Grenadier Guards. They even threw in Paddington Bear — a sort of honorary member of the royal family after he shared tea with the late Queen Elizabeth II in a film celebrating her 70 years on the throne.

The Hurst Hookers are part of a phenomenon that has taken hold across Britain in recent years, with guerrilla knitters and crochet enthusiasts celebrating holidays and royal occasions by decorating the nation's iconic red post boxes and other public spaces with their handiwork. There's no money in it, and the creations are sometimes stolen. But they do it anyway because they have fun brightening their communities, even if no one asked them to.

"Yarn bombers" around the country have been hard at work for months creating everything from golden coaches to crenelated castles and jewel-encrusted crowns that will add fuzzy bits of color to the coronation festivities.

But how to explain the Hurst Hookers?

This is a group that got started during the coronavirus pandemic, meeting every couple of weeks at the local cricket club when Britain's intermittent lockdowns would permit. It's bring your own gin and tonic, but there's tea for anyone who wants it. When the 18 women aren't meeting up for crocheting and community, they keep in touch via WhatsApp. The pings are so incessant at least one member has had to turn off her alerts.

They began planning and creating their coronation scene in early September, soon after the queen died

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and Charles became king. By April, it was finally time to install it.

The "guerrilla" action began just after 5:30 p.m. on a recent Friday as the setting sun bathed the newly cleaned pond in a peaceful light.

Clad in jackets and sweaters on a chilly spring night, the women arrived with their creations tucked inside huge shopping bags emblazoned with supermarket logos, then swooped down on the posts surrounding the pond.

There was little stealth, but much determination.

First they pulled out the crocheted likenesses of Charles, wearing a crown and a cape fashioned from an old Christmas stocking, and Camilla, with a flash of unruly blond hair. Then came the archbishop, whose spectacles rest on a bulbous woolen nose. And finally, the red-coated guardsmen.

Quick as you like, the figures were pulled down over the posts and firmly stapled in place, with the precisely embroidered medals, moustaches, sergeant stripes and other embellishments getting an extra staple or three.

"King Charles wants our support, doesn't he?" Howarth said. "How else do I show that I am supporting him?"

Valerie Thorn, who did the embroidery, carefully researched all the decorations, so that every medal was from a different campaign in which the guards participated. The insignia on Charles' chest is so precise that from a few feet you mistake it for the real thing. The archbishop's miter, modeled after the one he wore at his installation, is immediately recognizable.

So far, the fat sergeant character seems to be the village favorite.

A Daily Mail newspaper columnist described crafters such as these as "unhinged ... woolly delinquents." Rather than taking offense, the ladies of the Hurst Hookers embraced the jibe.

"I'm going to embroider that on a T-shirt," said Thorn, 76, with pride. "If I am unhinged, what is wrong with that?"

And when the installation was almost complete, there was the moment to put the icing on the confection.

Pip Etheridge pulled out a resplendent copy of St. Edward's Crown — the crown that will be placed on Charles' head next weekend — and handed it to Janette Vorster because she didn't want to be in the pictures.

In a procession all their own, the group trooped to the village store for the piece de resistance, installing the crown atop the post box out front.

As they chatted around the post box, the group debated whether their handiwork was more about the coronation or about themselves. They giggled, talked about posting the photos on social media and wondered what the neighbors might say. And they just kept laughing.

"If you swapped that one with the real one," Etheridge asked, nodding to her crown, "do you think he'd notice?"

What's behind shortages of Adderall, Ozempic and other meds?

By TOM MURPHY AP Health Writer

Shortages of drugs like Adderall are growing in the United States, and experts see no clear path to resolving them. For patients, that can mean treatment delays, medication switches and other hassles filling a prescription.

In recent months, unexpected demand spikes, manufacturing problems and tight ingredient supplies have contributed to shortages that stress patients, parents and doctors. For some drugs, such as stimulants that treat ADHD, several factors fueled a shortage and make it hard to predict when it will end.

Shortages, particularly of generic drugs, have been a longstanding problem. The industry has consolidated and some manufacturers have little incentive to solve shortages because cheap generics generate thin profits.

Here's a deeper look at the issue.

HOW MANY DRUG SHORTAGES ARE THERE?

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There were 301 active national drug shortages through this year's first quarter, according to the University of Utah Drug Information Service. That's 49% higher than the 202 recorded in the first three months of 2018.

Patients don't feel all drug shortages because doctors may be able to substitute different medications or because other parts of the drug supply system mask the issue, said Stephen Schondelmeyer, a University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy professor.

"But there are more shortages now, and they're becoming more visible," he said.

WHICH DRUGS ARE IN SHORTAGE?

In the fall, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced a shortage of the attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder treatment Adderall due to a manufacturing problem. That has persisted and grown at times to include other stimulants that treat the condition.

That situation seems to be improving, said University of Utah Health researcher Erin Fox. But several extended-release doses of the medication, its most popular form, remain in short supply.

The FDA also has tracked a shortage of the diabetes treatment Ozempic, which doctors also prescribe for weight loss. Prescriptions for Ozempic — touted by celebrities and others on social media — have doubled since the summer of 2021 to more than 1.2 million, according to the health data firm IQVIA.

A spokeswoman for Ozempic maker Novo Nordisk says all doses of the drug are now available at pharmacies nationwide.

Last year, a spike in respiratory illnesses forced drugstore chains to temporarily limit purchases of fever-reducing medicines for children. A shortage of the antibiotic amoxicillin also cropped up around then.

Injectable drugs used in hospitals and clinics, such as IV saline and some cancer treatments, are more than twice as likely as tablets or topical treatments to experience a shortage, according to a recent report written by Sen. Gary Peters, D-Mich., chairman of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

WHY DO DRUG SHORTAGES DEVELOP?

Reasons can vary, and a combination of factors fuels many shortages.

The Adderall manufacturing problem hit as more people started taking the drug.

During the pandemic, prescriptions climbed as regulators started allowing doctors to prescribe the drug without first seeing a patient in person. Prescriptions for Adderall and its generic equivalents jumped 20% between February 2020 and the end of last year, according to IQVIA.

Adderall supplies face an additional challenge when demand spikes. Federal regulators limit supplies for the drug each year because it is a controlled substance.

Pricing might also be a factor with some drugs.

Ozempic is a diabetes drug. The same medication, semaglutide, is sold under a different brand name, Wegovy, for weight loss. Schondelmeyer noted the per-milligram price for Wegovy can be more than twice as much as Ozempic.

"They've been having a run on Ozempic because people don't want to spend that much on Wegovy," Schondelmeyer said.

Novo Nordisk spokeswoman Allison Schneider said price was not connected to the shortage. She tied that to a combination of demand and global supply constraints.

Another factor driving shortages: Medications like Adderall and amoxicillin generate thin profits so companies don't have an incentive to make and store large amounts in case a shortage develops, Fox said.

"Once a shortage starts with something you make just in time anyway, it's really hard to resolve it unless all the suppliers are back," she said.

HOW ARE PATIENTS AFFECTED BY DRUG SHORTAGES?

Shortages might lead to treatment delays, which can hurt patients dealing with time-sensitive conditions like cancer.

Doctors are sometimes forced to prescribe alternatives that might not be as effective. That also can lead to medication errors if the doctor is less familiar with the other medication.

Patients also may run out of their prescriptions or be forced to hunt for a pharmacy that has enough

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supply to refill it.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

It's tough to predict when many shortages may be resolved, partly because measuring demand is hard. "You can estimate you're going to increase your production by 10%," said Mike Ganio, senior director of pharmacy practice and quality with the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, "but is that going to be enough?"

Meanwhile, conditions that could feed future shortages still exist. The Senate report cited an overreliance on foreign sources as a concern.

Factories in China and India supply most of the raw materials used in American medicines. Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, India restricted exports of 13 active pharmaceutical ingredients and finished drugs made from those chemicals, to protect its domestic drug supply.

Once shortages develop, they can last years. And it can be tough for patients to get reliable information. Fox said there is no legal requirement for drugmakers to update the public.

The Senate report notes that "no federal agency or private industry partner has end-to-end visibility into the entire U.S. pharmaceutical supply chain."

Fox says the stimulant shortage has been particularly frustrating. Companies have said they aren't getting enough raw materials to make the drugs, and the federal government says companies aren't using what they have.

"There's been a lot of finger pointing back and forth," Fox said.

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Deadly heat waves threaten older people as summer nears

By ANITA SNOW Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Paramedics summoned to an Arizona retirement community last summer found an 80-year-old woman slumped inside her mobile home, enveloped in the suffocating 99-degree (37 C) heat she suffered for days after her air conditioner broke down. Efforts to revive her failed, and her death was ruled environmental heat exposure aggravated by heart disease and diabetes.

In America's hottest big metro, older people like the Sun Lakes mobile home resident accounted for most of the 77 people who died last summer in broiling heat inside their homes, almost all without air conditioning. Now, the heat dangers long known in greater Phoenix are becoming familiar nationwide as global warming creates new challenges to protect the aged.

From the Pacific Northwest to Chicago to North Carolina, health clinics, utilities and local governments are being tested to keep older people safe when temperatures soar. They're adopting rules for disconnecting electricity, mandating when to switch on communal air conditioning and improving communication with at-risk people living alone.

Situated in the Sonoran Desert, Phoenix and its suburbs are ground zero for heat-associated deaths in the U.S. Such fatalities are so common that Arizona's largest county keeps a weekly online tally during the six-month hot season from May through October. Temperatures this year were already hitting the high 90s the first week of April.

A WARMING WORLD

"Phoenix really is the model for what we'll be seeing in other places," said researcher Jennifer Ailshire, a native of the desert city now at the University of Southern California's Leonard Davis School of Gerontology where she studies how environmental factors affect health and aging. "The world is changing rapidly and I fear we are not acting fast enough to teach people how harmful rising temperatures can be."

A 2021 study estimated more than a third of U.S. heat deaths each year can be attributed to human-caused global warming. It found more than 1,100 deaths a year from climate change-caused heat in some 200 U.S. cities, many in the East and Midwest, where people often don't have air conditioning or are not acclimated to hot weather. Another study showed that in coming decades dangerous heat will hit much

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of the world at least three times as hard as climate change worsens.

Isolated and vulnerable, the heat victims last year during Maricopa County's deadliest summer on record included a couple in their 80s without known relatives, an 83-year-old woman with dementia living alone after her husband entered hospice care and a 62-year-old Rwandan refugee whose air conditioner broke down.

While most of the county's confirmed 378 heat-associated deaths were outdoors, those who died indoors were especially vulnerable because of isolation, mobility issues or medical problems as outside summertime highs hit 115 degrees (46.1 C).

Older people of color, with a greater tendency for chronic conditions like diabetes, obesity and high blood pressure are especially at risk.

In Chicago, three African American women in their 60s and 70s died in spring 2022 when the centrally controlled heating in their housing complex remained on and the air conditioning was off despite unseasonable 90-degree weather in mid-May.

An undetermined number of older people died during the summer of 2021 when an unexpected heat wave swept across the U.S. Pacific Northwest. Canada reported that coroners confirmed more than 600 people died from the heat in neighboring British Columbia.

CHECKING ON OLDER PEOPLE

Many U.S. cities, including Phoenix, have plans to protect people during heat waves, opening cooling centers and distributing bottled water.

But many older people need personalized attention, said Dr. Aaron Bernstein, who directs the Center for Climate, Health, and the Global Environment at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

"If you are elderly and sick you are unlikely to get into an Uber or bus to get to a cooling center," said Bernstein, who vividly recalls a 1995 heat wave that killed 739 mostly older people in Chicago, his hometown. "So many were socially isolated and at tremendous risk."

Sociologist Eric M. Klinenberg, who wrote about the catastrophe in his book "Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago," has noted social contacts can protect older people during disasters.

"Older people are more prone to live alone," he said, "and they are the most likely to die."

That's true of all extreme weather.

When Hurricane Katrina devastated Louisiana in 2005, around half of the 1,000 people killed were 75 or older, most of them drowned when their homes flooded.

Chicago encourages residents to check on older relatives and neighbors on hot days and city workers visit people's home. But last year's deaths at a Chicago apartment house shows more is needed.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINICS CAN HELP

Bernstein's center is working with relief organization Americares to help community health clinics prepare vulnerable patients for heat waves and other extreme weather.

A "climate resilience tool kit" includes tips like making sure patients have wall thermometers and know how to check weather forecasts on a smart phone. Patients learn simple ways to beat the heat, like taking a shower or sponge bath to cool off and drinking plenty of water.

Alexis Hodges, a family nurse practitioner at the Community Care Clinic of Dare in coastal North Carolina, said rising temperatures can cause renal failure in patients with kidney problems and exacerbate dehydration from medications like diuretics.

Hodges contributed to the climate kit from a region that experiences all the weather events it covers: extreme heat, hurricanes, flooding and wildfires.

At the nonprofit Mountain Park Health centers that annually serve 100,000 patients in greater Phoenix, nurse practitioner Anthony Carano has written numerous letters to utility companies for low-income patients with chronic conditions, asking them not to turn off power despite missed payments.

"This is such an at-risk population," Carano said of the overwhelmingly Latino patient population that suffer from diabetes and other ailments aggravated by warm weather. About one-tenth of the patients are 60 and older.

Francisca Canes, a 77-year-old patient visiting for back pain, said she's fortunate to live with two daughters

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who take care of her during hot spells. In the summertime, she stays in shape by joining several women friends at 4 a.m. most mornings for a 4-mile (6.4 kilometers) walk.

AIR CONDITIONER REPLACEMENT AND REPAIR

Maricopa County in April used federal funds to to allocate another \$10 million to its air conditioner replacement and repair program for people who qualify, bringing total funding to \$13.65 million. In greater Phoenix and several rural Arizona counties, older low-income people can apply for free repair or replacement of air conditioners through a separate non-profit program.

The Healthy Homes Air Conditioning Program run by the nonprofit Foundation for Senior Living last summer ensured about 30 people got new air conditioners or repairs and helped others with home improvements.

Priority goes to older people, those with disabilities and families with very small children, who are also vulnerable to the heat. A person living alone must earn \$27,180 or less, said Laura Simone, program coordinator for FSL Home Improvements.

The program recently installed energy efficient windows in the 1930s home of 81-year-old widow Socorro Silvas.

"I am so grateful they are taking care of low-income people like me," said Silvas, who got her air conditioner in the middle of a sweltering summer several years ago through a program run by Tolleson, a suburb west of Phoenix.

Utility companies can also help protect vulnerable people by halting power disconnections during hot periods.

"In Arizona, air conditioning is a matter of life and death, especially if you are older," said Dana Kennedy, the state director of AARP, which has fought for stricter regulations preventing summertime power cutoffs.

STRICTER REGULATIONS

New rules for Arizona utilities were adopted after 72-year-old Stephanie Pullman died in August 2018 at her Phoenix area home as outside temperatures reached 107 degrees (41.6 Celsius).

The medical examiner's office said Pullman died from "environmental heat exposure" combined with cardiovascular disease after her power was shut off over a \$176.84. debt.

The Arizona agency that regulates utilities now bans electricity cutoffs for nonpayment during the hottest months.

After the three Chicago women died last year, residential buildings for older people in the city now must provide air-conditioned common areas and administrators no longer have to keep centrally controlled heat on during unseasonably warm weather. The Illinois state Senate recently passed legislation requiring that all affordable housing have air-conditioning operating when the temperature is 80 degrees (26.6 C) or higher and must be operable by residents.

Kennedy said mobile homes are especially dangerous as high temperatures transform them into a hot metal containers.

"A lot are not insulated," said Kennedy, who has advised an Arizona State University group working to make mobile homes safer with more surrounding shade and on-site cooling centers. "These heat deaths truly are heartbreaking. But in many cases we can help prevent them."

This report was written with the support of a journalism fellowship from The Gerontological Society of America, The Journalists Network on Generations and The John A. Hartford Foundation.

Wildfires in Anchorage? Climate change sparks disaster fears

By MARK THIESSEN Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — Research on a flat spot for air evacuations. Talk of old-style civil defense sirens to warn of fast-moving wildfires. Hundreds of urban firefighters training in wildland firefighting techniques while snow still blankets the ground.

This is the new reality in Alaska's largest city, where a recent series of wildfires near Anchorage and the hottest day on record have sparked fears that a warming climate could soon mean serious, untenable blazes in urban areas — just like in the rest of the drought-plagued American West.

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The risk is particularly high in the city's burgeoning Anchorage Hillside neighborhood, where multi-million dollar homes have pushed further and further up steep slopes and to the forest's edge. Making the challenge even greater is that many of these areas on the Hillside — home to about 35,000 people — have but one road in and out, meaning that fleeing residents could clog a roadway or be cut off from reaching Anchorage at all.

The prospect of a major wildfire there keeps Anchorage Fire Chief Doug Schrage awake at night when conditions are hot and dry.

"I've characterized this as probably the single largest threat to the municipality of Anchorage," he said.

Schrage's city fire department is adept at fighting blazes in buildings. But as Anchorage has grown, the available land is higher up, where wild and urban areas intersect, and those fires are very different from what his firefighters are trained to combat.

The city also has limited wildfire equipment, and it's nearly impossible to get a fire engine up some switchback roads to homes nestled high up mountains.

"Our strategy is basically to put as many resources as we have on duty on a small fire so that we can keep it contained" while waiting for assistance from the Alaska Division of Forestry and Fire Protection, Schrage said.

This spring, 360 city firefighters are training on wildland firefighting tactics like using water hoses to create a line around the perimeter of a fire and the city is encouraging homeowners to participate in a program to identify hazards like brush and old trees that would feed a fire before it's too late. In one hilly neighborhood, a community council is researching locations for a makeshift helipad that could be used for air evacuations.

That same small neighborhood with but one road in and out has also discussed installing sirens to warn residents on the city's wooded fringes of fire danger and hopes to build a database of all residents for emergency communications.

"As much as you wouldn't want to do it ... it's like rolling the dice on being alive or dead," said Matt Moore, who fled his home in 2019 lest he be trapped on the wrong side of the flames on the single road.

Such precautions — common in parched and fire-prone states like California and Colorado — are relatively new in Anchorage in the face of increased fire risk fueled by global warming. The city reached 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius) four years ago, the city's hottest temperature on record, and it's had five significant wildfires over the past seven years that were all extinguished before causing much damage.

Still, the U.S. is headed into an El Nino year this season, which traditionally means a bigger fire year and further raises concerns, said Brian Brettschneider, a climate scientist with National Weather Service, Alaska Region.

More than 4,844 square miles (12,546 square kilometers) burned statewide last year — an area just under the size of Connecticut.

Since 1950, there have been 14 years in which more than 4,687 square miles (12,139 square kilometers) — the equivalent of 3 million acres (1.2 million hectares) — have burned during Alaska's short but intense fire season. Half of those fire seasons have occurred since 2002, including the worst year on record — 2004 — when over 10,156 square miles (26,304 square kilometers) burned.

From his home high above Anchorage in 2019, Moore saw the black smoke billowing from a fire miles away in a heavily wooded area of the city. He gathered his pets and important papers in his vehicle — his wife was already safe in Anchorage — and drove 5 miles (8 kilometers) down the only road serving the roughly 600 neighborhood residents to safety.

"Thankfully, they started getting it under control," he said.

For now, both the city and Schrage's fire department are focused on keeping things under control — implementing as many preventative measures as possible.

The city department has removed evergreen trees and reduced brush in strips of 100 feet (30 meters) next to neighborhoods to help contain any future fires and Anchorage has cleared trees and other hazards in parks and along greenbelts.

Firefighters have also conducted inspections at people's homes to identify fire hazards such as firewood

kept too close to their homes or too much vegetation on their property — all in hopes of preserving homes, livelihoods and the community in a time of growing climate uncertainty.

GOP election officials walking fine line on fraud, integrity

By JULIE CARR SMYTH Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — The Republican secretaries of state in Ohio, West Virginia and Missouri have promoted their states' elections as fair and secure. Yet each also is navigating a fine line on how to address election fraud conspiracies as they gear up campaigns for U.S. Senate or governor in 2024.

The split-screen messaging of Ohio's Frank LaRose, West Virginia's Mac Warner and Missouri's Jay Ashcroft shows just how deeply election lies have burrowed into the Republican Party, where more than half of voters believe Democrat Joe Biden was not legitimately elected president. Even election officials who tout running clean elections at home are routinely pushing for more voting restrictions and additional scrutiny on the process as they prepare to face GOP primary voters next year.

All three withdrew their states last month from the Electronic Registration Information Center, a bipartisan, multistate effort to ensure accurate voter lists. LaRose did so less than a month after calling the group "one of the best fraud-fighting tools that we have" and vowing to maintain Ohio's membership. He defied backlash against the organization stoked by former President Donald Trump before relenting.

The three also have supported increased voter restrictions in their states — part of a national trend for Republicans that they say is intended to boost public confidence. Those bills impose new voter ID requirements, shrink windows for processing ballots or ease the ability to consolidate voting precincts.

For Republicans aspiring to higher office, "it's kind of hard to skip some of these things if you want to succeed" in GOP primaries, said Nancy Martorano Miller, an associate professor of political science at the University of Dayton.

That includes appearing responsive to Republican voters' belief in Trump's false claims of a stolen 2020 presidential election at the same time they promote the job they're doing in their own states.

"You're secretary of state, so it's your job to run elections and make sure they're fraud-free," Martorano Miller said. "You're kind of stuck between, 'I need to show I'm doing these things to battle fraud,' but at the same time, 'if I make it seem like there's too much fraud, it looks like I'm not doing my job.'"

Warner and Ashcroft have announced campaigns for governor while LaRose is considering a U.S. Senate run.

When he unveiled legislation in February aimed at standardizing election data, LaRose said it was all about providing transparency so voters would "have confidence in knowing that when the election is over, that the true voice of the people was heard."

A couple weeks later, he was sitting on an elections panel titled "They Stole It From Us Legally" at the annual Conservative Political Action Conference.

LaRose's spokesperson said the panel was renamed at the last minute, but the secretary used the opportunity to promote the integrity of Ohio elections.

"Voter fraud is exceedingly rare in Ohio because we take election security very seriously, aggressively pursue those who commit it and refer the potential crime to the attorney general and county prosecutors," Rob Nichols said.

Similarly, Ashcroft has said Missouri has secure elections and praised Gov. Mike Parson for signing a package of election law changes last year that included a new photo ID requirement.

"Missouri voters are passionate about their right to vote," he said. "This bill makes Missouri elections safer and more transparent, which instills confidence and trust."

Then in January, Ashcroft hosted a meeting at his office with MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell, a conspiracy theorist who travels the country fueling distrust in elections. The meeting alarmed some voting rights advocates in the state.

Warner has defended Trump's false claims of a fraudulent 2020 election and demonstrated alongside "Stop the Steal" protesters, while also promoting the integrity of West Virginia's elections.

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He said in a recent interview that he is working to strike a balance between those on the right who believe the 2020 election was stolen and those on the left who argue "there's nothing to see here."

"The truth is obviously somewhere in the middle," he said, while adding: "I will admit Biden won the election, but did he do it legitimately? Or did that happen outside the election laws that legislatures in certain states had put in place? That's where I balk and say no."

Warner said he would like to see an "after-action review" of the 2020 election, like those conducted in the military, to ease citizens' minds and make elections better.

Trump and others have criticized the expansion of mail voting in 2020 in the COVID-19 pandemic, although there is no evidence of any widespread fraud and multiple reviews in the battleground states where Trump contested his loss have upheld the results. The House committee that investigated the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol found that Trump advisers and administration officials repeatedly debunked allegations of fraud in the weeks after the 2020 election, but Trump continued to push the lies, anyway.

In a recently settled defamation case against Fox News, a Delaware Superior Court judge ruled it was "CRYSTAL clear" that none of the claims repeatedly aired on the network about Dominion Voting Systems machines rigging votes against Trump was true.

Christopher McKnight Nichols, an Ohio State University professor of history, said it's confusing for voters when secretaries of state claim elections they run are fair but then raise questions or hint at problems, without evidence, about elections elsewhere.

An earlier era of Republicans "absolutely would have been chagrined, embarrassed, and perhaps pushed out fellow Republicans who flip-flopped so radically, or promoted lies," he said. "Their brand was the principled and consistent politician."

In Ohio, LaRose spent years assuring the public that voter fraud represents a tiny fraction of Ohio's cast ballots and that election tallies were nearly perfect. Then during his reelection campaign last year, he said Trump "is right to say that voter fraud is a serious problem" and blamed the mainstream media for "trying to minimize voter fraud to suit their narrative."

In October, he joined a national Republican trend by opening a unit to investigate election law violations in Ohio, among other duties. He said that day that Ohio has a "strong national reputation for secure, accurate and accessible elections" — but added that anything short of "absolute confidence" in election integrity "weakens the very foundation of our democracy."

Willie Nelson inhales the love at 90th birthday concert

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "Are there any more real cowboys?" Neil Young sang Saturday night at the Hollywood Bowl on a rare evening when he was neither the headliner nor, at age 77, even close to the oldest artist on the bill.

Providing an instant answer, Willie Nelson, wearing a cowboy hat and red-white-and-blue guitar strap, slowly strolled on to the stage on his 90th birthday, bringing the crowd of more than 17,000 to its feet.

Nelson sat in a chair — one of the few onstage concessions he's made to age — and joined Young for the rest of their 1985 duet, "Are There Any More Real Cowboys?"

"I want to thank all the artists who came out tonight to help celebrate whatever it is we're celebrating," said Nelson, feigning senility and getting a laugh.

The moment came three hours into the first of a two-night celebration of the country legend at the open-air Los Angeles amphitheater, where generations of stars sang his songs in tribute.

"As a kid growing up in Texas, it seemed like there was nothing bigger than Willie Nelson," said Owen Wilson, one of the evening's emcees along with Helen Mirren, Ethan Hawke and Jennifer Garner. "And looking out at the Hollywood Bowl tonight, it still feels like there's nothing bigger than Willie Nelson."

After Young, Nelson brought out George Strait, a country superstar of the following generation, for their self-referential duet, "Sing One With Willie," followed by the Willie perennial, "Pancho and Lefty," with Strait singing the part once played by the late Merle Haggard.

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Nelson then shouted, "Come out and roll one with me Snoop!"

Strutting out came rapper Snoop Dogg, sitting next to Nelson as they launched into their stoner anthem, "Roll Me Up and Smoke Me When I Die." Perhaps fittingly, each seemed to forget the words at times. The two friends looked too happy to care.

"Somebody make some noise for the legend Mr. Willie Nelson!" Snoop shouted mid-song.

The parade of partners illustrated one of the night's themes: Willie brings people together.

"All of the sudden, it didn't matter if you were a hillbilly or a hippie, everyone was a Willie Nelson fan," Wilson said of Nelson's late-blooming emergence as a singing superstar when he left Nashville, Tennessee, and returned to his native Texas in the 1970s. "Even the Dalai Lama is a Willie Nelson fan. It's true."

The crowd, which ranged from small children to seniors, illustrated the point. The stands were dotted with cowboy hats while hippies danced in the aisles and weed smoke wafted in the air.

Miranda Lambert thrilled them with a rousing, sing-along version of "Mammas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Cowboys," Nelson's 1978 hit with Waylon Jennings. The Chicks blazed through 1970's "Bloody Mary Morning" at the same break-neck pace that Willie and his Family Band played it live in their prime.

Nelson has outlived nearly every member of that band, which backed him for decades of constant touring and recording. His little sister and piano player, Bobbie Nelson, died last year. She got her own tribute from Norah Jones, who banged the keys through the younger Nelson's saloon-style solo song, "Down Yonder," from Willie Nelson's definitive 1975 album, "Red Headed Stranger."

While many of the women who took the stage played rousing rockers, most of the men went in for quiet emotion.

Chris Stapleton kept his guitar at his side through a soft, reflective rendition of "Always on My Mind," Nelson's biggest solo hit of the 1980s. Nelson's son Lukas sang "Angel Flying Too Close to The Ground" alone with his acoustic guitar, his voice a dead ringer for his dad's.

Another surviving member of the Family Band, harmonica master Mickey Raphael, was part of the week-end's house band, led by Don Was, which backed almost everyone.

Nelson also has outlived most of his classic collaborators. But an essential one, his 86-year-old Highwaymen bandmate Kris Kristofferson, made it to the stage to join Rosanne Cash, the daughter of another Highwayman: Johnny Cash.

Rosanne Cash was singing Nelson's "Loving Her Was Easier (Than Anything I'll Ever Do Again)" when Kristofferson, who wrote the song, came out and harmonized with her on the choruses.

Nelson's musical diversity was another evening theme.

"He blends and bends genres," Mirren said from the stage. "His timing and categories are his own."

Leon Bridges' "Night Life" showed off Nelson's affinity for the blues, as did Jones' jazzy trip through "Funny How Time Slips Away" from 1961, when Nelson was known primarily as a songwriter of hits for others.

Ziggy Marley sang "Still Is Still Moving To Me," which Nelson recorded in 1993 and later sang with Toots and the Maytals in one of his occasional forays into reggae. Marley shouted "Wee-lay!" in his Jamaican accent during the song.

Sunday's night show will feature a whole different range of acts including Dave Matthews, Sheryl Crow and Emmylou Harris.

Young first took the stage with his early collaborator Stephen Stills. The pair played a revved up version of "For What It's Worth," swapping guitar solos on the classic hit they made as members of Buffalo Springfield in 1966.

Nelson brought out all the evening's artists to join him for the Carter Family's 1935 song, "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?" a longtime live favorite of his and the classic closing song for all of country music.

It was clearly intended to be the end, as Hawke took the mic and started to thank everyone for coming.

But the 90-year-old wasn't ready to stop. He interrupted and broke into Mac Davis' "It's Hard to Be Humble," which Nelson and his sons recorded in 2019.

It was a funny choice for a final song, but its chorus was a perfect comic coda for a man who had been drowned in adoration all night:

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"To know me is to love me, I must be a hell of a man. Oh lord, it's hard to be humble. But I'm doing the best that I can."

Chinese who reported on COVID to be released after 3 years

By KANIS LEUNG and HUIZHONG WU Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Chinese authorities were preparing Sunday to release a man who disappeared three years ago after publicizing videos of overcrowded hospitals and bodies during the COVID-19 outbreak, a relative and another person familiar with his case said.

Fang Bin and other members of the public who were dubbed citizen journalists posted details of the pandemic in early 2020 on the internet and social media, embarrassing Chinese officials who faced criticism for failing to control the outbreak. The last video Fang, a seller of traditional Chinese clothing, posted on Twitter was of a piece of paper reading, "All citizens resist, hand power back to the people."

Fang's case is part of Beijing's crackdown on criticism of China's early handling of the pandemic, as the ruling Communist Party seeks to control the narrative of the country.

He was scheduled to be released Sunday, according to two people who did not want to be identified for fear of government retribution. One of them said Fang was sentenced to three years in prison for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble," a vague charge traditionally used against political dissidents.

The Associated Press could not independently confirm his release and could not confirm the details with the authorities.

Two offices of Wuhan's public security bureau did not provide a phone number of their information office or answer any questions. Phone calls to a court that reportedly sentenced Fang rang unanswered on Sunday afternoon. A woman from another court that had reportedly handled Fang's appeal said she was not authorized to answer questions.

In early 2020, the initial COVID outbreak devastated the city of Wuhan, home to 11 million residents, in central China's Hubei province. Under a 76-day lockdown, its streets were deserted for months, apart from ambulances and security personnel.

At that time, a small number of citizen journalists tried to tell their stories and those of others with smart phones and social media accounts, defying the Communist Party's tightly policed monopoly on information. Although their movement was small, the scale was unprecedented in any previous major disease outbreak or disaster in China.

But the information they posed soon got them into trouble. Fang and another citizen journalist, Chen Qiushi, disappeared in February.

Chen in September 2021 resurfaced on his friend's live video feed on YouTube, saying he had suffered from depression. But he did not provide details about his disappearance.

Another citizen journalist, Zhang Zhan, who also had reported on the early stage of the outbreak, was sentenced to four years in prison on charges of picking fights and provoking trouble in December 2020. About eight months later, her lawyer said she was in ill health after staging a long-running hunger strike.

Wu reported from Taipei, Taiwan.

Today in History: May 1, Americans hear of bin Laden's death

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, May 1, the 121st day of 2023. There are 244 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 1, 2011, President Barack Obama announced the death of Osama bin Laden during a U.S. commando operation. (Because of the time difference, it was early May 2 in Pakistan, where the al-Qaida leader met his end.)

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On this date:

In 1707, the Kingdom of Great Britain was created as a treaty merging England and Scotland took effect.

In 1866, three days of race-related rioting erupted in Memphis, Tennessee, as white mobs targeted Blacks, 46 of whom were killed, along with two whites. (The violence spurred passage of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution defining American citizenship and equal protection under the law.)

In 1960, the Soviet Union shot down an American U-2 reconnaissance plane over Sverdlovsk and captured its pilot, Francis Gary Powers.

In 1963, James W. Whittaker became the first American to conquer Mount Everest as he and Sherpa guide Nawang Gombu reached the summit.

In 1964, the computer programming language BASIC (Beginner's All-Purpose Symbolic Instruction Code) was created by Dartmouth College professors John G. Kemeny and Thomas E. Kurtz.

In 1971, the intercity passenger rail service Amtrak went into operation.

In 1991, Nolan Ryan of the Texas Rangers threw his seventh no-hitter at age 44, shutting out the Toronto Blue Jays 3-0.

In 1992, on the third day of the Los Angeles riots, a visibly shaken Rodney King appeared in public to appeal for calm, pleading, "Can we all get along?"

In 2009, Supreme Court Justice David Souter announced his retirement effective at the end of the court's term in late June. (President Barack Obama chose federal judge Sonia Sotomayor to succeed him.)

In 2011, Pope Benedict XVI beatified Pope John Paul II, moving his predecessor a step closer to sainthood in a Vatican Mass attended by some 1.5 million pilgrims.

In 2015, Baltimore's top prosecutor charged six police officers with felonies ranging from assault to murder in the death of Freddie Gray, a Black man who'd suffered a spinal injury while riding in a police van. (None of the officers would be convicted.)

In 2020, U.S. regulators allowed emergency use of remdesivir, the first drug that appeared to help some COVID-19 patients recover faster.

Ten years ago: Workers around the world united in anger during May Day rallies — from fury in Europe over austerity measures that cut wages, reduced benefits and eliminated many jobs altogether, to rage in Asia over relentlessly low pay, the rising cost of living and hideous working conditions. Portland Trail Blazers point guard Damian Lillard was a unanimous choice as the NBA's Rookie of the Year. Chris Kelly, 34, half of the 1990s kid rap duo Kris Kross, died in Atlanta.

Five years ago: Entering the State Department headquarters for the first time as America's top diplomat, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo vowed to reinvigorate American diplomacy and help the United States get "back our swagger." Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein lashed out at Republican allies of President Donald Trump who had drafted articles of impeachment against Rosenstein, saying the Justice Department would not give in to threats.

One year ago: A long-awaited effort to evacuate people from a sprawling steel plant in the Ukrainian city of Mariupol began. The United Nations said the operation was being carried out by the International Committee of the Red Cross and in coordination with Ukrainian and Russian officials. A top-level U.S. congressional delegation led by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi made a surprise visit to Ukraine undertaken in extraordinary secrecy, holding a three-hour meeting in Kyiv with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at which Pelosi vowed the U.S. would stand with him "until the fight is done." Jacky Hunt-Broersma, A South African amputee athlete, set a new world record for the number of daily consecutive marathons by running her 104th in a row. A woman was rescued from the rubble of a building in central China more than 50 hours after it collapsed, leaving dozens trapped or missing.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Judy Collins is 84. Actor Stephen Macht is 81. Singer Rita Coolidge is 78. Pop singer Nick Fortuna (The Buckingham) is 77. Actor-director Douglas Barr is 74. Actor Dann Florek is 72. Singer-songwriter Ray Parker Jr. is 69. Actor Byron Stewart is 67. Hall of Fame jockey Steve Cauthen is 63. Actor Maia Morgenstern is 61. Actor Scott Coffey is 59. Country singer Wayne Hancock is 58. Actor Charlie Schlatter is 57. Country singer Tim McGraw is 56. Rock musician Johnny Colt is 55. Rock musician

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D'Arcy Wretzky is 55. Movie director Wes Anderson is 54. Actor Julie Benz is 51. Actor Bailey Chase is 51. Country singer Cory Morrow is 51. Gospel/R&B singer Tina Campbell (Mary Mary) is 49. Actor Darius McCrary is 47. Actor Jamie Dornan is 41. Actor Kerry Bishe is 39. TV personality Abby Huntsman is 37. Actor Lizzy Greene is 20.