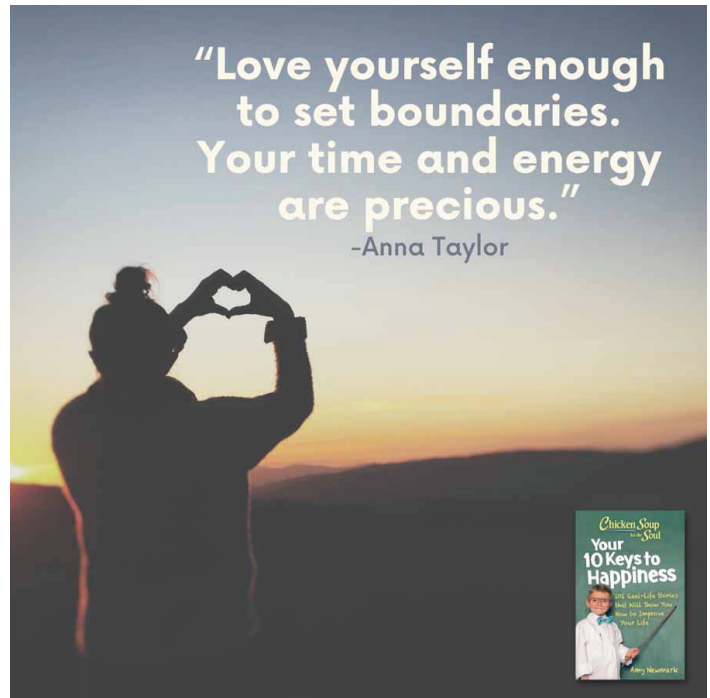


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“Love yourself enough to set boundaries. Your time and energy are precious.”

-Anna Taylor

## Groton Community Calendar

### Thursday, May 4

- School Breakfast: Muffins.
- School Lunch: Goulash, corn, bun.
- Senior Menu: Oven fried chicken, sweet potatoes, mixed vegetables, cookie, dinner roll.
- 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.
- Senior Menu: Taco salad, Mexican rice, breadstick, lemon tart bar.
- Track at Sisseton, 3 p.m.

### Saturday, May 6

- Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Groton City-Wide Rummage Day, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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

### 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.

## **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

from being required to use pronouns that correspond to someone's biological sex. Gov. Ron DeSantis is expected to sign them into law.

- U.S. regulators say Facebook misled parents and failed to protect the privacy of children using its Messenger Kids app, including misrepresenting the access it provided to app developers to private user data.
- At least 14 people have died following a crash between a bus and a truck on a highway in Egypt.
- Jesse L. McFadden, a 39-year-old Oklahoma sex offender released early from prison, shot his wife, her three children and their two friends before killing himself, authorities said.
- Three-time Olympic sprint medalist Tori Bowie has died, her representative said. Bowie, who helped the U.S. win gold in the 100-meter relay at the 2016 Rio Games, was 32.
- Manchester City striker Erling Haaland has broken the all-time record for the most goals in an English Premier League season after scoring his 35th of the campaign, with five games still to play.
- In the ongoing war in Ukraine, Moscow has no choice but to eliminate Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, said Russian former president and prime minister Dmitry Medvedev, who has accused Kyiv of launching a "terrorist attack" on the Kremlin.

### What to Watch in the Day Ahead

- Apple will likely post lower second-quarter revenue and earnings compared to a year ago as sales of its iconic products — iPhone, iPads, Macs and notebooks — drag. The iPhone maker will report after the closing bell. Anheuser-Busch, Moderna, Shopify, and Coinbase Global are also due to report their earnings reports.
- The weekly initial and continuing jobless claims report, productivity and unit-labor costs, and trade deficit data are due at 8:30 a.m. ET.
- Watch for key developments as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky makes a surprise visit to the Netherlands, home to the International Criminal Court (The Hague), a day after dismissing Russian claims over drone attacks.
- A panel of global health experts will meet to decide whether COVID-19 remains an international emergency under the World Health Organization's guidelines.
- It's International Star Wars Day, an informal commemorative day to celebrate the Star Wars media franchise. Created by George Lucas, the day is based on a pun on the line "May the force (fourth) be with you," which was said in all Star Wars films.
- 'Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story,' a historical drama written by Shonda Rhimes, becomes available on Netflix. The mini-series is a spinoff prequel to the Bridgerton TV series and follows the love life of a young Queen Charlotte.
- United Launch Alliance's new rocket, Vulcan Centaur, is set for its long-awaited launch, which will carry Astrobiotic's Peregrine lunar lander alongside scientific instruments and tech demo payloads for NASA and other organizations.

- Police have arrested Deion Patterson suspected of killing one person and injuring four others in a shooting in midtown Atlanta. He was found in Cobb County, around 11 miles from the crime scene.

- An Army sergeant convicted of murdering a protester at Black Lives Matter rally in Austin in 2020 has been denied a retrial by a Texas judge, as Republican Gov. Greg Abbott claims he will seek to pardon the perpetrator.

- Florida Republicans approved two bills to ban diversity programs in colleges and prevent students and teachers

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**Drain tile was being installed at the Groton Municipal Airport on Wednesday.** (Photos by Paul Kosel)



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## Ringgenberg's Walk-off Seals the Deal in Groton Area Tigers Varsity Victory Over Sioux Valley Varsity Cossacks

Groton Area Tigers Varsity took their game in dramatic walk-off fashion, thanks to a walk-off error at the end of the game to topple Sioux Valley Varsity Cossacks. The game was tied at three with Groton Area Tigers Varsity batting in the bottom of the seventh when an error scored one run for Groton Area Tigers Varsity.

Dillon Abeln pitched Groton Area Tigers Varsity to victory. The righthander went seven innings, allowing three runs on two hits and striking out ten.

Connor Gross was on the pitcher's mound for Sioux Valley Varsity Cossacks. The righthander lasted four and two-thirds innings, allowing four hits and two runs while striking out six. Andrew Gunderson threw one and one-third innings in relief.

Bradin Althoff, Colby Dunker, Cade Larson, Logan Ringgenberg, and Brevin Fliehs each managed one hit to lead Groton Area Tigers Varsity.

Sioux Valley Varsity Cossacks **3 - 4** Groton Area Tigers Varsity

Home Wednesday May 03, 2023

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R	H	E
SXVL	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	2	3
GRTN	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	4	5	4

### BATTING

Sioux Valley Varsity	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
C Gross (P, CF, 3B)	4	0	1	1	0	0
T Steffensen (2B)	3	1	0	0	1	1
L Loban (LF)	4	0	1	0	0	2
K Bezdichek (SS)	3	1	0	0	0	2
C Moberg (1B)	3	0	0	0	0	0
B Milton (RF)	2	0	0	0	0	0
A Gunderson (P,...	1	0	0	0	0	1
B Teske (3B, P)	1	1	0	0	2	0
H Steinhaus (CF,...	3	0	0	0	0	2
S Colt (C)	3	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>

**2B:** C Gross, **TB:** L Loban, C Gross 2, **SB:** B Teske, C Gross, **LOB:** 6

### PITCHING

Sioux Valley \	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
C Gross	4.2	4	2	2	2	6	0
<b>A Gunderson</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
B Teske	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>

**L:** A Gunderson, **P-S:** A Gunderson 45-23, B Teske 5-2, C Gross 74-52, **WP:** A Gunderson, **HBP:** C Gross, **BF:** A Gunderson 10, B Teske, C Gross 21

Groton Area Tigers	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
C Simon (CF)	4	0	0	0	0	4
D Abeln (P)	4	0	0	0	0	0
B Althoff (1B)	3	0	1	0	1	0
C Dunker (LF)	3	1	1	0	1	2
L Ringgenberg (RF)	3	0	1	0	1	1
R Groeblichhoff (...)	1	1	0	0	1	1
C Larson (C)	3	1	1	1	0	0
B Fliehs (3B)	3	0	1	1	0	0
B Imrie (2B)	2	0	0	0	1	0
CR: C McInerney	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>

**2B:** C Larson, **3B:** B Fliehs, B Althoff, **TB:** C Larson 2, C Dunker, L Ringgenberg, B Fliehs 3, B Althoff 3, **HBP:** R Groeblichhoff, **SB:** C Dunker, **LOB:** 9

Groton Area \	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
D Abeln	7.0	2	3	1	3	10	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>

**W:** D Abeln, **P-S:** D Abeln 105-67, **WP:** D Abeln, **BF:** D Abeln 30



## Crews battle blaze at Lake Norden Fire Department

LAKE NORDEN, SD - (Hamlin County Sherrif's Office) At 5:35am, Wednesday morning, fire crews from Lake Norden, Estelline, Hayti, Badger, Castlewood, Bryant along with the Estelline Ambulance, Hamlin County Sheriff's Office, Hamlin County Emergency Management, South Dakota Highway Patrol, Codington County Search and Rescue, and Lake Norden Police Department were on scene to a fire at the Lake Norden Fire Department/Ambulance/Police building.



The cause of the fire is being investigated by the South Dakota fire marshal's office.

# GDILIVE.COM

## Groton Area 8-12 Spring Concert/Awards Night

**"There are many paths but only one journey"**

**May 4th, 2023**

**7:00 PM**

Directors:

Mr. Scott Glodt, 8-12 Choir  
Miss Megan Dockter, NSU Junior Field Intern  
Mrs. Desiree Yeigh, 8-12 Band, Flex Band  
Mrs. Janene Harry, MS/HS Art

### 8-12 Choir

Amy Warrington, Accompanist

Simple Gifts.....Arr. John Leavitt  
Why We Sing.....Greg Gilpin

### 8-12 Band

Directed by Miss Megan Dockter, NSU Junior Field Intern  
Pilatus (Mountain of Dragons).....Steven Reineke Arr. Conaway  
Soloists: Carter Barse, Alto Saxophone Gretchen Dinger, Flute

Aces of the Air (March).....Karl L. King Arr. Swearingen

### 8-12 Choir

Amy Warrington, Accompanist  
Country Roads Take Me Home.....B. Danoff, T. Nivert, and J. Denver, Arr. by Chuck Cassey  
From Now On from "The Greatest Showman".....B. Pasek and J. Paul, Arr. by Roger Emerson

### 8-12 Band

Danger Zone.....Arranged by Michael Story

### Flex Band

Home.....Arr. by Michael Brown  
Dedicated to the Class of 2023  
Soloist: Sierra Ehresmann, Trumpet  
The Best of Journey.....Arr. by Paul Murtha  
Soloists: Sierra Ehresmann, Trumpet Carter Barse, Alto Sax

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## Special Thanks:

- Mike Nehls and our custodial staff. Thanks for all you do!
- Mrs. Amy Warrington for accompanying the 8-12 Choir.
- Mrs. Harry and the Art Students for displaying their artwork.
- Our supportive school board, administration, and staff.
- Our amazing music parents for your encouragement and support of our music program.
- Our talented music students. We wouldn't be able to do what we love without you!

## 8-12 Choir:

Soprano: Savannah Bible, \*Anna Bisbee, Mia Crank, Rylee Dunker, Teagan Hanten, Paisley Mitchell, \*+Shaylee Peterson, Hannah Sandness, \*+Cadance Tullis, Natalia Warrington  
Alto: Emma Bahr, Kira Clocksene, ReAnn Dennert, Ashlyn Feser, Carly Gilbert, Brooklyn Hansen, Kennedy Hansen, Breslyn Jeschke, Jerica Locke, Emily Overacker, +KayLynn Overacker, Jaedyn Penning, \*Rebecca Poor, \*Kianna Sander, Cali Tollifson, \*+Elliana Weismantel, Talli Wright  
Tenor: \*+Carter Barse, Lucas Carda, Aiden Heathcote Karsten Jeschke, Elijah Lich, +Tyson Parrow, Turner Thompson, Keegen Tracy, \*Axel Warrington, Logan Warrington,  
Bass: +James Brooks, Riley Carman, Logan Clocksene, Blake Dennert, Teylor Diegel, Brevin Flihs, Ryder Johnson, Jaeger Kampa, Karter Moody, Michael Powers Dinger, Caden McInerney, Gage Sippel, Drew Thurston, Jacob Zak  
\*All State Chorus Member +Senior

## 8-12 Band:

Flute: \*>#<Gretchen Dinger, Rebecca Poor, Jeslyn Kosel, Ashlynn Warrington  
Clarinet: \*Kayla Lehr, <Natalia Warrington, <Kira Clocksene  
Alto Sax: \*#<+Carter Barse, <Cadance Feist, ^Emerlee Jones  
Tenor Sax: #<+Kamryn Flihs, <Kianna Sander  
Trumpet: \*+Sierra Ehresmann, \*<Jayden Schwan, Nathan Unzen, Ben Hoeft, Addison Hoffman, Isaiah Scepaniak  
French Horn: \*>^<Carlee Johnson, #<+Jackson Dinger  
Trombone: \*<Gavin Kroll, ^<Brody Lord, Jackson Hopfinger, <Logan Clocksene  
Baritone: \*<+Ethan Clark, Garrett Schultz Tuba: ^<Blake Lord  
Percussion: <+Ashtyn Bahr, #<+Jacob Lewandowski, #+Cadance Tullis, #<+Elliana Weismantel, <Emily Clark, Faith Flihs, <Axel Warrington, Lincoln Krause, ^<Teagan Hanten

> 2023 MS/HS All State Band Member  
# North Area Honor Band Member  
^ Northwestern Middle School Festival Member

\* Section Leader  
< Flex Band Member  
+ Senior

## Choir Awards

Rising Star Award-The Rising Star Award is presented to a freshman or sophomore who is an emerging leader in the vocal department. This recipient exhibits ongoing and exceptional growth in ensemble and solo voice work, demonstrates leadership and responsibility, and has been active in all facets of the program.

Choral Excellence-This award is presented to the choir students who have shown dedication to the choral program through musicianship, leadership, commitment, and a positive attitude.

Show Choir Leadership Award-This award, voted upon by the show choir members, is given to two students who have set a good example to other show choir members with their leadership, musicianship, and inspiration.

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Outstanding Senior Vocalist-This award is presented to two seniors who have demonstrated achievement, leadership, inspiration, initiative, and service to the vocal program through the use of their voice.

## Band Awards

Excellence in Band Award- Awarded to students that have consistently shown great leadership, reliability, and a positive attitude.

John Phillip Sousa- Awarded to one senior that has demonstrated outstanding dedication to the band program through leadership, reliability, attitude, and musical abilities.

Letterwinners- Any student can letter by achieving a certain number of points for participation in activities outside of the classroom.

## 2022-2023 8-12 Band Achievements

- Gold Rating at NSU Gypsy Days Parade
- All Small Group Ensembles received a Superior Rating at Contest
- Pep Band was selected to play at the State A Girls Basketball Tournament
- Large Group Received a Superior Rating from all 3 judges at Contest

## Team GPA's Awards from SDHSAA

All-State Chorus: 3.91  
Band Solo/Ensemble Group: 3.76  
Large Group Band: 3.63  
Large Group Chorus: 3.36  
Vocal Solo/Ensemble Group: 3.36





## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### Health providers across the US call this Sioux Falls facility for help

**Telemedicine provider lends virtual assistance in 34 states**

**BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - MAY 3, 2023 5:21 PM**

In a small town in rural Nebraska, physician assistant Heather Kreber is one of a handful of health care providers. Patients rely on her for everything from routine checkups to emergency medical care.

On one occasion at 3 in the morning, Kreber received a call about an incoming patient with severe burns.

"It was pretty shocking when they hit the door," she said.

She knew that the situation was critical and every second counted. And thanks to a doctor from Avel eCare, a telemedicine provider in Sioux Falls, Kreber wasn't alone.

"She was so calm," Kreber said. "She said you have got to get past the trauma of what he has been through and what he looks like and still treat your patient."

The virtually present emergency-medicine doctor coached Kreber through administering anesthesia and inserting a tube into the windpipe to maintain breathing – known as intubating a patient.

"They walk you through it," Kreber said. "They can see exactly what you're doing, and they'll say move it to the left, move it to the right, turn it clockwise."

Kreber said without the help that was present via video monitor that night, "There would have been a lot more panic, especially with something that severe, that traumatic."

#### **Crucial for rural providers**

Stories like that play out every day across the more than 700 sites in 34 states that Avel eCare serves. Its telemedicine care includes remote specialists, nurses, emergency care providers, behavioral health experts, and pharmacists all offering their expertise in rural and tribal health care facilities, senior living centers, ambulances and police cars. Some Avel eCare employees even serve as remote school nurses.

Some doctors and nurses work full-time at Avel, while others jump back and forth between hospitals and specialty clinics in Sioux Falls.

Starting in 1993 as Avera eCare, it was one of the first telemedicine providers in the nation to offer clinician-to-clinician services remotely. Avel eCare separated from Avera after the nuns of the Benedictine and Presentation Orders (who sponsor Avera) saw telemedicine had an opportunity to grow beyond Avera's service territory. And thanks to ongoing rural broadband infrastructure expansion, more rural areas – inside and outside of Avera's territory – have been able to leverage the service.

Today, the provider conducts over 1 million interactions with patients and providers annually, according to spokespeople with Avel.

The service is especially appreciated in rural areas. A 2019 poll by NPR, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health found that one of every four people living in rural areas said they couldn't get health care they had recently needed.

By signing up for Avel eCare's services via paid subscription, rural health care institutions are plugged into a plethora of specialists on demand. That subscription is then reviewed and, if necessary, renegotiated at the end of the year.

Dr. Tyler Price, the emergency medical director at Avel eCare, said intubating a patient in a rural town is a daunting task for practitioners who may not be fresh on the specialized training needed to perform such a critical procedure.

"The most anxiousness you'll ever probably experience in an emergency department is an intubation," Price said. "There's what the textbook says, but what about the 'oh, crap' moments? An airway filled with

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blood, a mangled tongue or a pediatric patient?"

Price said niche situations like those are where telemedicine shines, bringing support to rural health care providers by allowing them to consult with specialists in real time.

## Help for shortages and burnout

For rural communities, nurse practitioners are often the first point of contact for patients. They are responsible for everything from diagnosing the problem to providing treatment. However, they may not have the specialized training needed for every situation.

Jamie Hartung is a new nurse practitioner in Faulkton, South Dakota (with a population of 800). She's sometimes the only provider on call.

"I use Avel quite often, just to run things by them and make sure I didn't forget anything," Hartung said.

Hartung said nurses also rely on the service to assist in recording information in the patient's medical record – somebody at Avel actually types up the notes. Meanwhile, the nurses are able to focus on measuring the patient's temperature, pulse, blood pressure and other vitals. This is especially useful as the nation wrestles with a nursing shortage, Hartung said.

Hartung's husband works as a first responder. She said that by leveraging both Verizon and AT&T's networks, Avel's experts are able to be on screen with her husband in the ambulance, even in the most remote settings. And they can simultaneously brief Hartung on an incoming patient.

Dr. Amadin Osayomore, an emergency room doctor in Watertown, said the administrative assistance and expertise offered by Avel eCare reduces burnout for him and his team.

"When you're tired and you want to just sign out, they don't fight you, they just listen," Osayomore said. "Very easy people to work with. After talking so many times, you get to know who you are talking with."

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

## Grants could add 2,400 openings at child care centers

State is distributing federal money from 2021 pandemic relief legislation

BY: SETH TUPPER - MAY 3, 2023 3:05 PM

Money from the federal government could soon help add about 2,400 openings for kids at new and expanding child care centers in South Dakota.

The money comes from the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act, which Congress passed and President Joe Biden signed into law in 2021. The legislation was a response to the economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The state Department of Social Services is making \$17 million of remaining funding from the law available as startup and expansion grants for child care providers.

"I'm pleased to tell you that we've had a very strong response," said Matt Althoff, secretary of the department. He gave an update Wednesday to the Legislature's Interim Appropriations Committee at the Capitol in Pierre.

The application period opened in February. Through the end of April, the department had received 63 qualified applications. They account for \$13 million in requests and would create 2,400 additional openings for children in 37 communities.

Althoff said the department is not yet ready to announce grant awards but will be soon. The department's deputy secretary, Brenda Tidball-Zeltinger, said the applications are from a range of small and large care settings in communities across the state. She referenced applications from Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Aberdeen, Baltic and Porcupine as examples of diversity in community sizes and locations.

"It was a good mix," she said.

New and expanding providers can use the money for health and safety items needed to meet licensure

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requirements, equipment and supplies necessary to open or expand, payroll and benefits, and other operating expenses such as rent and utilities.

The \$17 million grant program is part of a broader, \$38 million pot of remaining money from the American Rescue Plan Act that the department is using to bolster child care in the state.

Here's how the department is splitting up the rest of the money:

\$13 million to upgrade outdated technology used to manage child care licensing, and to modernize the technology that handles billings and payments for child care subsidies.

\$4 million to hire a contractor who will conduct a study of the child care workforce in the state, and to pilot the placement of digital fingerprint scanners at child care centers to streamline required background checks for workers.

\$2 million for an effort at South Dakota State University to develop a framework for rating the quality of child care providers.

\$2 million for a marketing campaign to recruit workers into the child care industry.

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

## Biden rule protecting lesser prairie-chicken overturned by U.S. Senate

**BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA - MAY 3, 2023 7:34 PM**

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Senate on Wednesday passed on a 50-48 vote a resolution overturning a Biden administration rule that listed a popular Southwestern game bird under a federal endangered species designation.

The White House has vowed President Joe Biden would veto the resolution if it clears Congress. Similar legislation has been introduced in the Republican-controlled House.

The point of contention between the rule protecting the bird, known for its complex mating dance, and Republican opponents boils down to land.

Lesser prairie-chickens thrive in native grasses, and conservation groups' efforts to preserve habitat for the birds have undergone pushback from Republican lawmakers who argue the Biden policy is a threat to farmers, ranchers and energy producers.

The Congressional Review Act resolution, brought by Republican Sen. Roger Marshall of Kansas, overturned a rule by the Fish and Wildlife Service to list two Distinct Population Segments, or DPS, of the lesser prairie-chicken under the Endangered Species Act.

Congress can use a CRA to block rules recently promulgated by federal agencies, and in specific other circumstances, by submitting a joint resolution of disapproval.

West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin III was the sole Democrat to vote with Republicans, including South Dakota Sens. John Thune and Mike Rounds, to repeal the rule.

### **Kansans mount opposition**

On the Senate floor, Republican Sen. Jerry Moran of Kansas said the rule threatens ranchers and farmers. "I am confident there are ways to conserve the species without hindering economic opportunity in rural communities," he said.

He said what Kansas needs is "more rainfall not more regulations."

"Farmers and ranchers have always been and will always be the original conservationists," Moran said. "Their livelihood depends upon the continued conservation efforts of the soil and the water they use to produce crops and raise livestock."

Senate Environment and Public Works Chairman Tom Carper defended the bird and the rule.

"Native to the southern Great Plains, the lesser prairie-chicken has long been considered an indicator for healthy grasslands and prairies upon which hundreds of species depend," Carper, a Delaware Democrat, said on the floor. "So, if the lesser prairie-chicken is in peril — in time, other species could be in peril as well."

The Southern DPS of the lesser prairie-chicken is being listed as "endangered" and the Northern DPS of

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the lesser prairie-chicken is being listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act.

The bird can be found in Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico. The rule has been a long-standing point of contention in Kansas.

Kansas Attorney General Kris Kobach in April announced plans to sue the Biden administration over the designation for the lesser prairie-chicken, arguing that federal protections for the bird are illegal, and it could be devastating to landowners and businesses in the state.

The White House defended its policy in its announcement of a veto if the resolution is passed by Congress.

"The lesser prairie-chicken serves as an indicator for healthy grasslands and prairies, making them an important measure of the overall health of America's grasslands, a treasured and storied landscape," the White House said.

"Overturning common-sense protections for the lesser prairie-chicken would undermine America's proud wildlife conservation traditions, risk the extinction of a once-abundant American bird, and create uncertainty for landowners and industries who have been working for years to forge the durable, locally led conservation strategies that this rule supports," the White House continued.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Kentucky Republican, said on the Senate floor that the designation of the bird's status under the Endangered Species Act "is holding American farms, ranches, and other small businesses hostage to an animal called the lesser prairie-chicken."

He argued that local landowners and officials already set aside millions of acres of potential habitat for the bird.

"But the Biden administration wants to plow ahead anyway, throw the book at these Americans, and threaten nearly \$14 billion in agricultural production," McConnell said.

A handful of Senate Republicans co-sponsored the bill including Sens. Moran, Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia, Katie Boyd Britt of Alabama, and James Lankford and Markwayne Mullin of Oklahoma.

## Population decline

Mike Leahy, the senior director of wildlife policy for the National Wildlife Federation, said in a statement that the population of the lesser prairie-chicken has continued to dwindle for decades.

The bird at one time numbered in the hundreds of thousands, but its population is now estimated to be about 30,000, according to FWS. The habitat for the lesser prairie-chicken has diminished by about 90%, according to FWS.

Leahy said the rule "leaves landowners a good deal of flexibility."

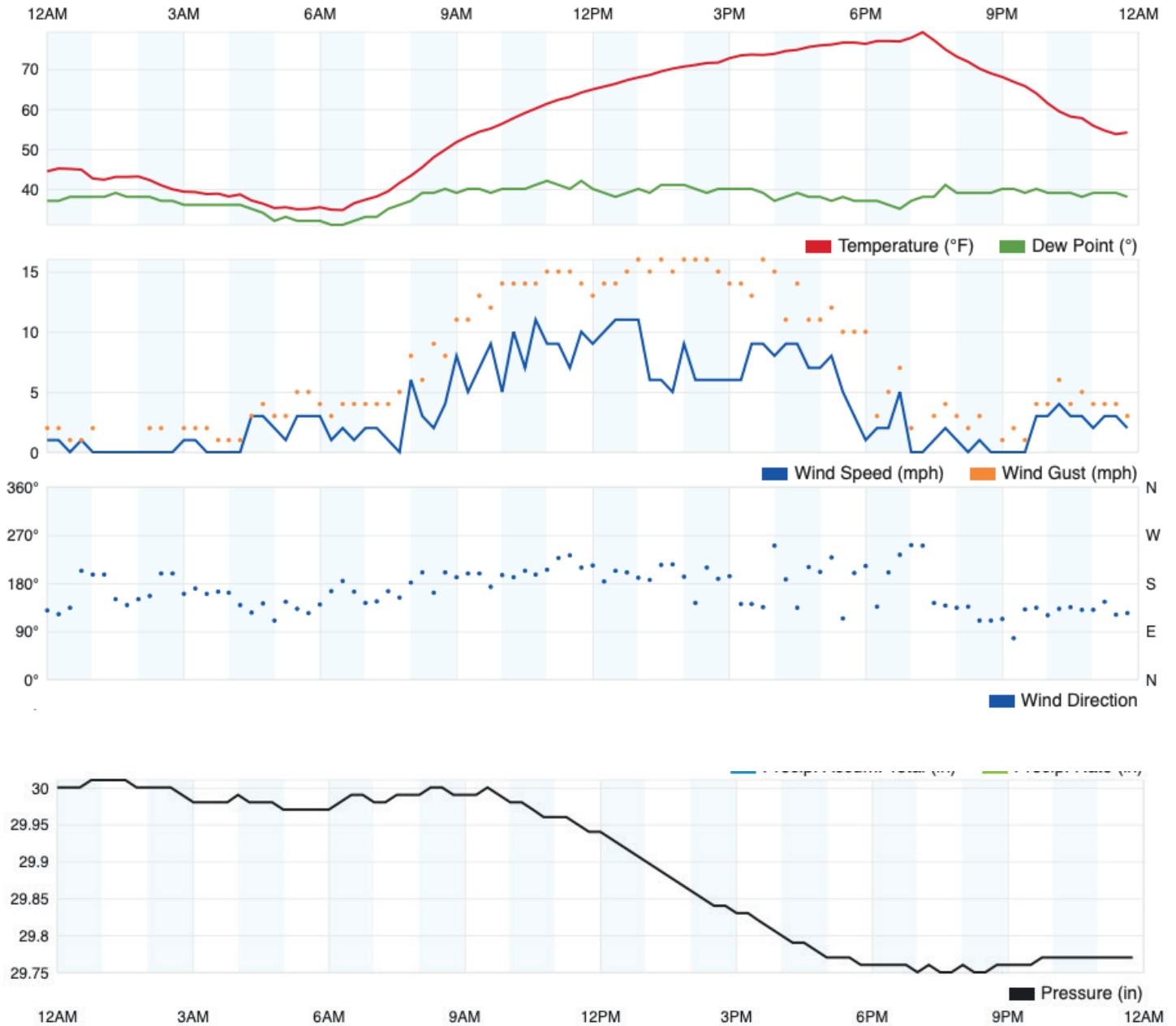
"If we want to recover the lesser prairie-chicken, we need to restore its habitat," he said. "A Congressional Review Act vote is not the right approach because it would not only overturn this particular listing, it would mean this bird could never be listed again no matter how bad things get."

*Ariana covers the nation's capital for States Newsroom. Her areas of coverage include politics and policy, lobbying, elections and campaign finance.*

# Groton Daily Independent





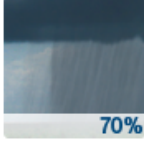

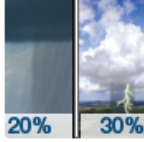
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



# Groton Daily Independent

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Today	Tonight	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
						
Sunny	Mostly Clear	Increasing Clouds	Chance Showers	Showers Likely	Chance T-storms then Chance Showers	Slight Chance Showers then Chance T-storms
High: 73 °F	Low: 42 °F	High: 68 °F	Low: 49 °F	High: 61 °F	Low: 48 °F	High: 71 °F

## Dry Today, Showers and Storms for the Weekend



Today	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
				
Dry and Mild	Cooler	Cooler	Warmer	Mild
Northeast winds 10 to 20mph	Showers and Storms Possible, Mainly Friday Night	Showers and Thunderstorms Likely (60-70%)	Chance of Showers and Storms in the Afternoon	Chance of Showers
HI: 70-80 F	HI: 63-69 F	HI: 58-70 F	HI: 65-75 F	HI: 64-75 F

May 4, 2023 4:22 AM  
 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
 GROTON, CT

Dry and mild conditions can be expected today, with highs in the 70s and low 80s. The weather pattern becomes more active Friday night through Monday with periods of showers and thunderstorms.

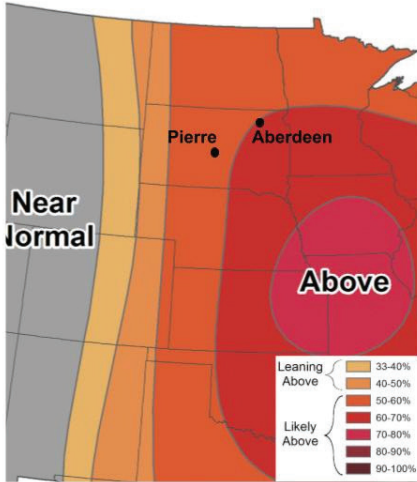
# Broton Daily Independent

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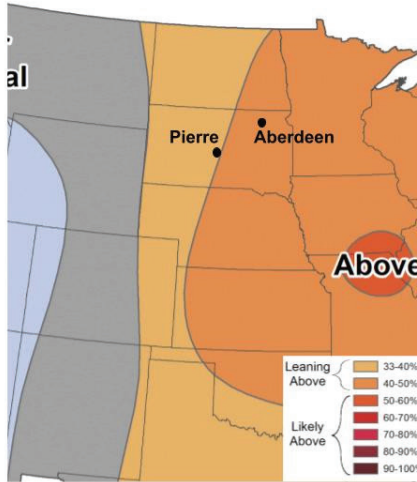
## Generally Warmer Than Normal May Outlooked

The large-scale weather pattern favors warmer temperature than climatological normals through much of May. Average highs increase from ~60-66° in the beginning to ~71-77° by the end of the month. The maps below show the probability (percent chance) for above normal temperatures on the whole through the specified time ranges.

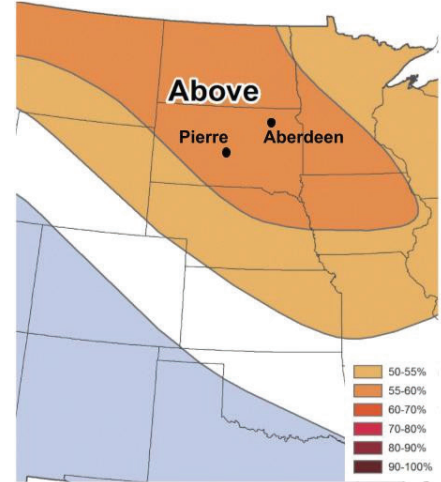
May 8-12th, 2023





May 10-16th, 2023



May 13-26th, 2023



 National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

  Updated: May 3, 2023 1:13 PM

The large-scale weather pattern favors warmer temperature than climatological normals through much of May. Average highs increase from ~60-66° in the beginning to ~71-77° by the end of the month across central and northeastern SD. Above normal precipitation is also favored through the middle of the month, before potentially turning drier thereafter.

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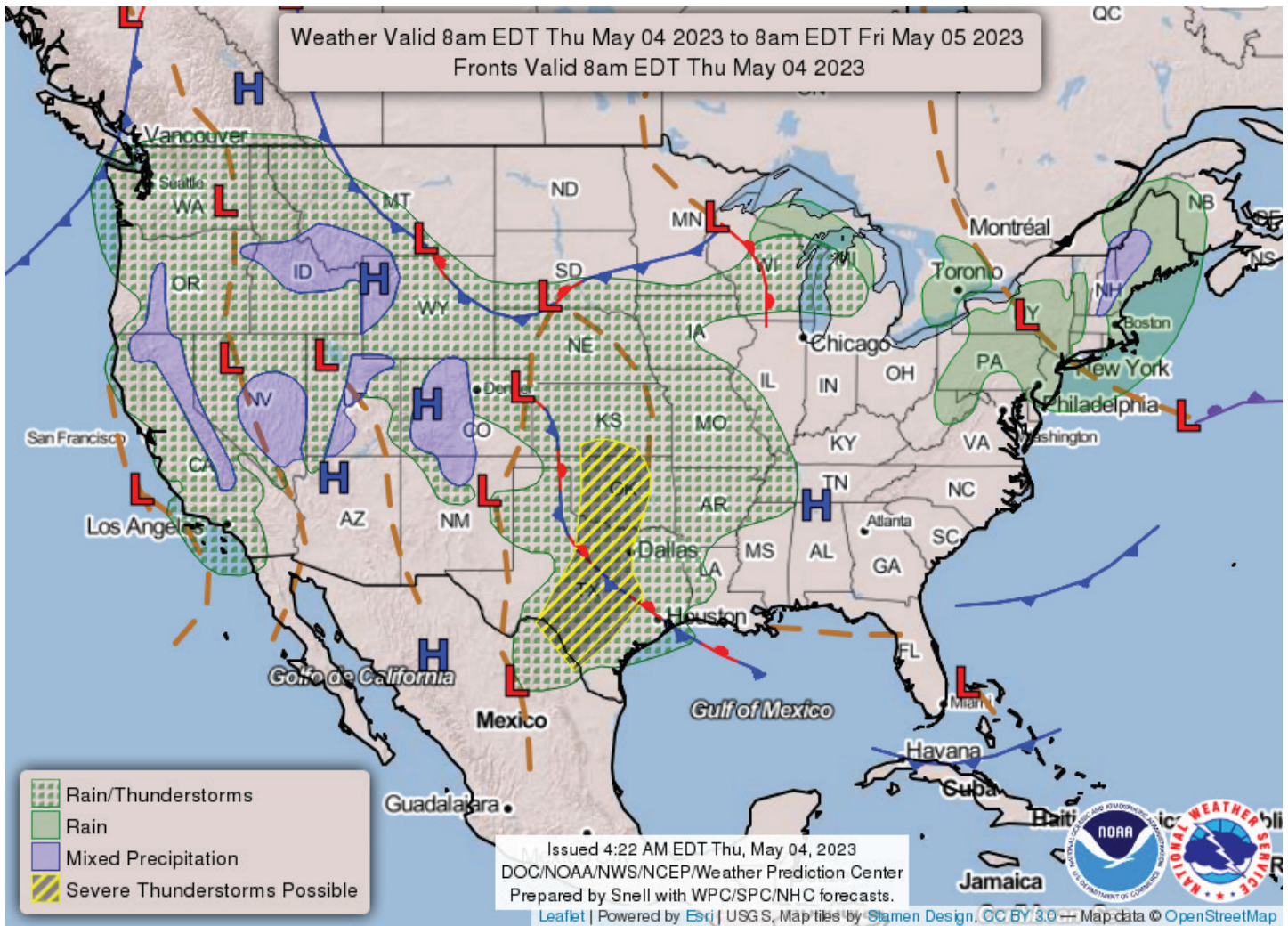
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 79 °F at 7:15 PM**  
**Low Temp: 35 °F at 6:28 AM**  
**Wind: 23 mph at 2:19 PM**  
**Precip: : 0.00**

Day length: 14 hours, 29 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 98 in 1926  
Record Low: 20 in 2005  
Average High: 66  
Average Low: 39  
Average Precip in May.: 0.44  
Precip to date in May.: 0.00  
Average Precip to date: 4.41  
Precip Year to Date: 5.72  
Sunset Tonight: 8:44:00 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:12:56 AM





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## Today in Weather History

May 4, 1964: A tornado touched down southwest of Kadoka causing \$25,000 in damage.

1774: Snow was reported in the Williamsburg Gazette to have fallen in Dumfries, Virginia. George Washington's weather diary logged at Mount Vernon that it was a cold day with spits of snow and a hard wind from the northwest. Thomas Jefferson near Charlottesville recorded that the Blue Ridge Mountains was covered with snow. The late snow and frost killed most of the fruit crop in the northern part of the state. It also snowed north across Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York.

1812 - A storm produced snow from Philadelphia to Maine. A foot of snow fell near Keene NH, and in Massachusetts, nine inches fell at Waltham, located near Boston. (David Ludlum)

1917 - A late season snowstorm in northwest Texas produced up to eight inches of snow in Potter County and Armstrong County. (David Ludlum)

1922: The first of two tornadoes that formed over Austin, Texas was called the "western cloud." It was more visible, but caused much less damage than the "eastern cloud."

1977 - A tornado 500 yards in width struck Pleasant Hill, MO, severely damaging the high school and grade school. Only minor injuries were reported among the more than 1000 teachers and students due to excellent warnings and prior tornado drills. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the southeastern U.S., with South Carolina hardest hit. Thunderstorm winds toppled trees seventy feet high in Spartanburg County SC, and knocked homes off their foundations near Bishopville SC. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced large hail in North Carolina, but brought welcome rains to much of the rest of the eastern U.S. Residents of New England finally saw sunshine after about a week of clouds and rain. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Southern Plains Region and the Lower Mississippi Valley. Thunderstorms spawned fifteen tornadoes, and there were 340 reports of large hail and damaging winds. Hail three inches in diameter, and 9.39 inches of rain, resulted in more than 130 million dollars damage at Monroe LA. Thunderstorm winds gusted to 100 mph at Epps LA and Fort Worth TX. A thunderstorm north of Mineral Wells TX produced high winds which unroofed a nightclub, turning it into a "topless club." (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from the Lower Ohio Valley to Virginia and the Carolinas. A tornado at Augusta Springs VA killed two people and injured ten others, and another tornado caused 1.7 million dollars damage at Colonial Heights VA. Temperatures soared into the 90s in northern California. The high of 98 degrees in downtown Sacramento was their hottest reading of record for so early in the season. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2003: The week of May 4th through the 10th was one of the busiest weeks for tornadoes in U.S. history. On this date through the 5th, the deadliest outbreak of severe weather since May 1999 produced 84 tornadoes, large hail and damaging winds across eight states. Several thunderstorms became tornadic with a total of five distinct tornado touchdowns in the Kansas City metropolitan area. Two of the tornadoes received a rating of F4, two a rating of F2, and the last was rated an F1. Total damage exceeded 144 million dollars. Several of the tornadoes tracked long distances ranging from 15 to 80 miles. More than 3000 homes and businesses were destroyed. At least 38 people were killed in Kansas, Missouri, and Tennessee.

2007: A devastating EF5 twister demolishes nearly every structure in Greensburg around 9:30 pm (CDT) and kills ten. The mammoth wedge tornado cuts a swath 1.7 miles (2.7 km) wide and 22 miles (35 km) long across the Kansas landscape. It is the worst single tornado to touch down in the US in eight years.

Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### LOST AND FOUND

An explorer became lost in a dangerous part of an African jungle. His compass was of no use to him because he did not know where he was or which direction to travel. He became desperate and was filled with fear when a native appeared and offered to take him to his camp.

Hesitatingly, with no options, but hopeful, he asked, "Do you know the way?"

Confidently the native replied, "I am the way."

People all around us are lost, seeking directions, and "looking for the way" for their lives. The world has many maps and GPS systems, but they offer no final destination that provides salvation, peace, and security. They are searching and seeking desperately, trying anything and everything, to discover a way out of their fear and hopelessness.

They need to hear the words of Jesus, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." In Him we have the directions we need for our life here and the life to come.

Prayer: Father, thank You for being "the Way" - our Savior and Guide. Help us to lead others to You, so they will know the Way, the Truth, and have life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me." John 14:6



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:

05.02.23

3 15 16 32 41 9

MegaPlier: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$68,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 33

DRAW: Mins 22 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

05.03.23

8 9 31 43 44 1

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$2,700,000**

NEXT 2 Days 15 Hrs 33

DRAW: Mins 22 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

05.03.23

4 8 12 36 46 13

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT 15 Hrs 3 Mins 22

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

05.03.23

9 21 25 30 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$47,000**

NEXT 2 Days 15 Hrs 33

DRAW: Mins 22 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

05.03.23

11 35 57 60 64 22

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT 2 Days 15 Hrs 32

DRAW: Mins 21 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

05.03.23

21 26 30 45 47 23

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$87,000,000**

NEXT 2 Days 15 Hrs 32

DRAW: Mins 21 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

## News from the Associated Press

### **Police arrest suspect in Atlanta shooting; 1 dead, 4 wounded**

By JEFF AMY and KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Police arrested a man accused of opening fire inside the waiting room of an Atlanta medical practice Wednesday, killing one woman and wounding four. Workers and others in a bustling commercial district took shelter for hours during the manhunt.

Authorities swarmed the city's midtown neighborhood shortly after noon in search of the shooter. Police said in a statement that the suspect, whom they identified as 24-year-old Deion Patterson, was captured in Cobb County, just northwest of Atlanta.

Atlanta Police Deputy Chief Charles Hampton Jr. declined to discuss any details of the investigation or a possible motive, saying, "Why he did what he did, all of that is still under investigation."

Patterson had an appointment at a Northside Medical building and opened fire shortly after arriving in an attack that lasted about two minutes, law enforcement officials said at a news conference Wednesday night. Patterson then went to a Shell gas station and took a pickup truck that had been left running and unattended, authorities said.

News of the shooting prompted workers and lunchgoers in the neighborhood, which is filled with office towers and high-rise apartments, to shelter in place for hours.

A 39-year-old woman was pronounced dead at the scene of the shooting, Atlanta Police Chief Darin Schierbaum said. The Fulton County medical examiner's office identified her as Amy St. Pierre.

The four wounded women — aged 25, 39, 56 and 71 — remained in critical but stable condition Wednesday night, according to Hampton, the deputy chief. Their names were not immediately released.

The shooting comes as cities around the U.S. have been wracked by gun violence and mass shootings in 2023.

Patterson's mother, Minyone Patterson, who police said had accompanied her son to the medical office, told The Associated Press by phone that her son, a former Coast Guardsman, had "some mental instability going on" from medication that he began taking on Friday.

She said her son had wanted Ativan to deal with anxiety and depression but that the Veterans Affairs health system wouldn't give it to him because they said it would be "too addicting." She's a nurse and said she told them he would only have taken the proper dosage.

"Those families, those families," she said, starting to sob. "They're hurting because they wouldn't give my son his damn Ativan. Those families lost their loved ones because he had a mental break because they wouldn't listen to me."

She ended the call without saying what medication her son had been taking.

"We are horrified and saddened to hear of the active shooter situation in Atlanta today," Veterans Affairs Press Secretary Terrence Hayes said in an emailed statement. "Due to patient privacy, we cannot discuss the Veteran's personal information without written consent."

In a statement, the U.S. Coast Guard said Patterson had joined the service in 2018 and was discharged from active duty in January. He was an electrician's mate second class at the time.

Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens applauded the fact that Patterson was arrested and taken into custody alive so he can be prosecuted.

"Right now, we've had a successful end to a traumatic day," Dickens said, while also advocating for tougher gun laws and stressing the importance of police training.

"I hope the city, the region, rests easy that he is in custody, but I also hope that we will stay vigilant to continue to look at a future where individuals who shouldn't have a gun in possession won't have one, and also that individuals are brought to justice, and also that we deal with these things that are mental health or easy access to guns," Dickens said.

Gov. Brian Kemp said in a statement that he was "heartbroken" by the shooting and praying for victims.

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Cobb County Police Chief Stuart VanHoozer said technology played a huge role in finding the suspect, along with Department of Transportation cameras and community members calling with information.

"Those tools are really what got us the clues that we we needed to make this successful — and the people getting those clues," VanHoozer said.

The pickup truck was found in a parking garage not far from the stadium where the Atlanta Braves play. Video aired by WSB-TV showed Patterson was arrested near a tennis court and swimming pool in a nearby condominium complex.

Around the time of the shooting, Cassidy Hale, a medical device representative, said she was driving to the facility to check on a machine in the building's outpatient surgery center.

Hale saw firetrucks but didn't realize anything was wrong until after she parked and found the elevator wasn't working. Hale said she called the operating room manager, who told her there was an active shooter and she should go back to her car.

Hale said police kept her from leaving the parking garage and later checked each car and escorted her out to be interviewed.

She gathered with other employees and patients in a building across the street, where she said "everyone was really in shock" and "trying to process what was going on."

Shortly after the shooting, U.S. Sen. Raphael Warnock of Georgia took to the Senate floor to decry gun violence and to urge his colleagues to advance gun reform.

"There have been so many mass shootings ... that, tragically, we act as if this is routine," the Democrat said. "We behave as if this is normal. It is not normal."

The Atlanta pastor added: "I shudder to say it, but the truth is, in a real sense, it's only a matter of time that this kind of tragedy comes knocking on your door."

Georgia's other U.S. Sen. Jon Ossoff, also a Democrat, echoed his colleague in a statement: "The level of gun violence in America today is unconscionable and unacceptable, and policymakers at all levels have a responsibility to ensure public safety and implement long-overdue reforms."

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This story has been corrected to show that one of the surviving victims was 39, not 29.

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Associated Press writers Jeff Martin in Woodstock, Georgia, and Tara Copp in Washington contributed to this report.

## Forces kill 3 Palestinians behind deaths of British-Israelis

By ISABEL DEBRE and TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

NABLUS, West Bank (AP) — Israeli troops on Thursday killed three Palestinian militants wanted in connection with a shooting attack that killed a British-Israeli woman and two of her daughters, the Israeli military said, the latest bloodshed in a relentless wave of violence.

In a rare daytime incursion launched as residents were starting their day, the military said forces entered the heart of the flashpoint city of Nablus and raided an apartment where the men were located. Troops and the suspects exchanged fire and the three men were killed.

The military said the men were behind an attack last month on a car near a Jewish West Bank settlement that killed Lucy Dee, the British-Israeli mother and two of her daughters, Maya and Rina. Leo Dee, the woman's widower, told The Associated Press he was "comforted" by the news of the militants' death.

In a statement after the raid, the Hamas militant group said the three men, identified as Hassan Qatnani, Moaz al-Masri and Ibrahim Jabr, were its members and the group claimed responsibility for the April attack.

In a separate incident Thursday near the West Bank town of Hawara, a 20-year-old soldier shot and killed 26-year-old Palestinian woman who had stabbed and lightly wounded him.

In Nablus, Israeli shells ripped through the roof of the gunmen's safe house in the heart of Nablus' Old City, leaving nothing but twisted metal, cement blocks and torn mattresses still stained with blood scattered over the rubble. A couple of hours after the army withdrew, young men collected scores of ejected

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bullet shell casings from the narrow alleys.

Nablus, the West Bank's commercial capital and second-largest city, has been the scene of repeated Israeli raids over the past year, but few have been conducted during the day because of the increased risk of friction with local residents. Residents have been caught up in previous fighting.

Manal Abu Safiyeh, 57, said she woke up at 7 a.m. to the sounds of the Israeli army vehicles rumbling through the city. Although it wasn't new to her after a year of intense violence in the Old City, the gunfire sounded closer than she'd ever heard it before. An explosion suddenly blew up her neighbor's house, she said, killing three people. She said she didn't know much about her neighbors other than that Ibrahim Jabr had cancer.

A man who identified himself only as Kareem for fear of reprisals said that he spotted older men and a woman in a long overgarment worn by Muslim women who he had never seen before walking through the limestone alleys and knew instantly they were Israeli special forces. He ran to his house and sheltered there until he heard the gunfire stop.

"So many men from the city have been killed," he said. "We are used to these raids. That's the story of life in Nablus."

After the military pulled out, dozens of masked men paraded through the city while shooting into the air, waving Palestinian flags as onlookers honked in support. A sea of mourners at the men's funeral chanted "God is great."

The violence in Nablus comes at a particularly sensitive time in the region, days after a prominent Palestinian prisoner who was staging a lengthy hunger strike over his detention died in Israeli custody. His death set off a volley of rockets from militants in Gaza and Israeli airstrikes in the coastal enclave that killed one man.

The deadly attack last month on the Israeli car shocked Israelis because in an instant it reduced the Dee family from seven members to four. Hundreds of people packed the funerals and the family's father, Leo, has been a recurring figure in Israeli media, saying he bears no hatred toward the killers of his family and calling for national unity amid a deep societal rift.

"We're grateful to God that this was done in a way that protected the lives of the soldiers and caused minimal if no civilian casualties, as far as we know. And of course, that's very important to us that innocent Palestinians were not injured in this operation," Leo Dee told The Associated Press from his home in the Jewish West Bank settlement of Efrat.

Israeli officials said the raid showed attackers would be hunted down eventually.

"Our message to those who harm us, and those who want to harm us, is that whether it takes a day, a week or a month – you can be certain that we will settle accounts with you," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement.

Israel has been staging near-nightly arrest raids into West Bank villages, towns and cities for more than a year in an operation prompted by a wave of Palestinian attacks against Israelis last year.

Israel says the raids are meant to dismantle militant networks and thwart future attacks. The Palestinians see the attacks as further entrenchment of Israel's 56-year, open-ended occupation of lands they seek for a future independent state. Israel captured those territories — the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip — in the 1967 Mideast war.

Some 250 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire since the raids were launched. Israel says most have been militants, but stone-throwing youth and people not involved in the confrontations have also been killed.

The raids have been met by a surge in Palestinian attacks. Since last spring, nearly 50 people have been killed in Palestinian attacks against Israelis.

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Goldenberg reported from Tel Aviv, Israel. Associated Press reporter Alon Bernstein contributed from Efrat, West Bank.



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## 'Not my king': UK republicans want coronation to be the last

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — On his way to be crowned this week, King Charles III will travel by gilded coach through streets swathed in red, white and blue Union flags — and past a warning from history.

At Trafalgar Square stands a large bronze statue of King Charles I, the 17th-century monarch deposed by Parliament and executed in 1649. On Saturday, more than 1,500 protesters, dressed in yellow for maximum visibility, plan to gather beside it to chant "Not my king" as the royal procession goes by.

"We'll try and keep the atmosphere light, but our aim is to make it impossible to ignore," said Graham Smith, chief executive of the anti-monarchist group Republic.

The coronation, he said, is "a celebration of a corrupt institution. And it is a celebration of one man taking a job that he has not earned."

Republican activists have long struggled to build momentum to dislodge Britain's 1,000-year-old monarchy. But they see the coronation as a moment of opportunity.

Queen Elizabeth II, who died in September after 70 years on the throne, was widely respected because of her longevity and sense of duty. Charles is another matter, a 74-year-old whose family feuds and firm opinions on everything from architecture to the environment have been headline fodder for decades.

Opinion polls suggest opposition and apathy to the monarchy are both growing. In a recent study by the National Center for Social Research, just 29% of respondents thought the monarchy was "very important" — the lowest level in the center's 40 years of research on the subject. Opposition was highest among the young.

"I think it's definitely shifting," said Smith, whose group wants to replace the monarch with an elected head of state. "People are quite happy to criticize Charles in a way they weren't willing to necessarily in public about the queen."

Millions in Britain will watch broadcasts when Charles is crowned in Westminster Abbey. Tens of thousands will line the streets, and neighborhoods across the country will hold parties.

But millions more will ignore the ceremonies. Some will attend alternative events, including a gig in Glasgow by tribute band the Scottish Sex Pistols, recapturing the spirit of punks who sang "God save the queen, the fascist regime" during the late queen's 1977 silver jubilee.

London's Newington Green Meeting House, a gathering place for religious dissenters and radicals for 300 years, is holding an "alternative community party," complete with food, drink and "radical and republican" music.

General manager Nick Toner said that the event is for people who "don't want to sit through hours of footage of ceremonies, carriages and endless Union Jacks, perhaps because they think it's a waste of taxpayers' money or even just plain old boring."

While the BBC, Britain's publicly owned national broadcaster, will offer wall-to-wall coronation coverage on Saturday, rival Channel 4 offers an alternative schedule including a musical about disgraced royal Prince Andrew, soapy drama "The Windsors" and documentary "Farewell to the Monarchy."

Some argue that it's grotesque to spend millions on pomp and pageantry amid a cost-of-living crisis that has brought 10% inflation, driven thousands to food banks and triggered months of strikes by nurses, teachers and other workers seeking higher pay.

Even Charles' slimmed-down ceremony — with about 2,000 guests instead of the 8,000 who attended the queen's coronation in 1953 — carries a big price tag for British taxpayers. The full cost won't be known until afterward, but Elizabeth's 1953 coronation cost 912,000 pounds, the equivalent of 20.5 million pounds (\$26 million) today.

Deputy Prime Minister Oliver Dowden, who helps oversee coronation arrangements, has argued that "people would not want a dour scrimping and scraping" at such a "marvelous moment in our history." Coronation supporters argue that the celebrations will be a boost for brand Britain, attracting tourists and stimulating sales.

Not everyone is convinced.

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"I disagree with it," said Philippa Higgins, a 24-year-old receptionist in London. "I just think it seems a bit silly when we've got so many people struggling, to have something so extravagant right now. But some people argue tradition, I suppose."

Opposition to the lavish coronation is especially strong in Scotland and Wales, where some pro-independence nationalists see the monarchy as part of the U.K. state they want to leave.

Some Scottish nationalists object to the Stone of Destiny — a 275-pound (125-kilogram) chunk of sandstone linked to both Scottish and English monarchs — being sent from Edinburgh to London to take its traditional place under the coronation chair. The iconic rock, a symbol of Scottish nationhood seized by an English king in the 13th century and not returned until 1996, had to be moved to Westminster Abbey in secrecy and amid tight security.

Charles is keen to be seen as a modern monarch, and Buckingham Palace has adapted some of the coronation's ancient traditions for the 21st century. His coronation will be the first to feature contributions from Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh leaders, and the first to include female bishops.

Still, a suggestion from the Church of England that people watching the coronation on TV might want to swear allegiance to the king from their sofas has struck a sour note with some.

Charles is monarch of 14 former British colonies as well as the U.K., and the king has tentatively addressed the legacy of empire. He supports research into the monarchy's links to the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and last year expressed "personal sorrow" at the suffering caused by slavery — though he stopped short of saying sorry.

The number of Charles' realms is likely to dwindle during his reign. Barbados became a republic in 2021 and Jamaica plans to do the same. New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Hipkins said this week he wants his country to jettison the crown, though he added that it's not an "urgent priority."

Craig Prescott, a constitutional law expert at Bangor University in Wales, says that in the U.K., the monarchy is probably safe for now because of Britain's tendency to "muddle through" and gradually adapt its politics and constitution to changing times.

"Clearly, if you were going to start from scratch, you would probably never choose one family and say, 'They're going to provide a head of state forever,'" he said. But the arrangement mostly works, and abolishing the crown "isn't on the horizon of any political party."

Still, he sees danger ahead if a young generation that has endured years of austerity, pandemic and economic pinch continues to struggle.

"If the monarchy stands for the status quo, the status quo isn't necessarily great, in generational terms, for a certain section," Prescott said. "If that continues, then that may be a problem for a lot of national institutions in 20 or 30 years' time."

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Associated Press videojournalist Kwiyeon Ha contributed to this story.

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

## **DIARY: Waiting to leave Sudan, a hotel became a sanctuary**

By JACK JEFFERY Associated Press

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP) — We were a diverse group of more than a dozen people, hunkered down in a small hotel in central Khartoum — a Sudanese family and the Sudanese hotel staff, a few British and French citizens, a Syrian family and a Lebanese man.

In better times, the Lisamin Safari Hotel catered to small tour groups that came to see Sudan's little-known attractions — the ancient pyramids of Merowe and the coral reefs of the Red Sea.

Now, it was simply a five-story place of refuge.

Fighting between Sudan's two most powerful generals had reduced the capital to an urban battlefield. The city had never seen anything like it, as the army and the paramilitary group known as the Rapid Sup-

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port Forces blasted each other in the streets with automatic rifles, artillery and airstrikes.

Each day, millions of Sudanese caught between them faced terrifying choices of how to survive: Stay hiding at home, where a bullet or a missile could blast through a wall, or make a run for it, risking the mayhem outside.

After days trapped in their homes, many chose to flee to the Liasamin Hotel — most of them on foot from the nearby neighborhood known as Khartoum 2, when the destruction became too great. I got to the hotel on the seventh day of the fighting. In this place of temporary safety, we all began to search for a way to escape the city.

We spent long hours together in the hotel lobby, the sound of gunfire almost constant in the mornings. Whenever the explosions got closer, some guests — myself included — moved to the stairwells for safety.

The guests exchanged stories of what they'd endured, seeing death outside their doors, armed men robbing people, looting shops and commandeering buildings. Early on in the fighting, Sudanese military planes flattened several RSF bases in the capital of Khartoum, driving paramilitary fighters into the streets.

"They used our roof to shoot from," said a British woman. She and her group had left for fear the building would be targeted; the structure next door had been hit and caught fire.

The Sudanese family had fled their home with almost nothing. The father was an anthropology researcher at Khartoum University. Their children, a daughter of around 15 and her younger brother, were stoic, rarely complaining. They worried about the books, clothes and electronics they'd left behind and asked their mother if they could return to the house to retrieve them.

"I don't think the RSF are going to steal your books," she told them with a laugh.

We all waited for the hour or so each day when the generator was turned on — if there was fuel to run it — to charge our phones.

Like much of south Khartoum, the hotel fell under the control of the RSF, a force with a ruthless reputation. Its fighters strolled the area in their desert camouflage uniforms. We suspected others, in civilian clothes, were also RSF, from their buzz cuts and thick boots. Some could not have been older than 18.

I had landed in Khartoum from Cairo exactly a month before the fighting broke out, to report on the first phase of Sudan's democratic transition, agreed upon by a handful of Sudanese political parties, the military and the RSF last December.

On paper, the new era promised closure to a 2021 coup in which Sudan's two top generals, Abdel Fattah Burhan, and RSF commander Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, joined forces to overthrow a Western-backed, power-sharing government.

But on the ground, unease was rife. At night, the streets, which normally would have been bustling during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, were still. The start of the transition was delayed repeatedly. The army and the RSF were at loggerheads over merging the paramilitary force into the army, a key clause of the deal. Long-smoldering resentments between the two forces heated up.

Then, convoys of RSF fighters and army troops moved into downtown Khartoum. While Sudanese citizens warned of potential clashes, analysts, journalists and diplomats alike leaned to the logic that each side had too much to lose from open conflict. There was no sign of foreign embassies or aid agencies packing up.

We were wrong. After fighting erupted on April 15, I was trapped in an apartment where I'd been staying in Amarat, a neighborhood just south of Khartoum 2. With no water and food supplies dwindling, remaining there grew more perilous.

Finally, after several missiles struck the road outside, I decided to walk further south to the Lisamin.

Among the guests, fear had different triggers. For me, it was the hum of drones circling above the rooftops. It could drag on ominously for 15 minutes, until there came the sharp whine of a bomb being dropped.

During the lulls in fighting that usually came in the afternoon, our terror morphed into a duller angst. We talked about broader plans for the future. Hanging over us was an unspoken rule: Don't talk about worst-case scenarios.

The owner, Mr. Salah, was generous. A single room cost \$60 a night, a discount given the hardship of the times, and those without money were not charged. At night, the skilled cooks among us become the hotel caterers, using whatever dried and tinned food was left. Everyone knew the supplies would not last

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more than a few days.

All paths beyond the hotel were risky.

The Sudanese guests and staff planned their escape to the countryside and other cities where fighting was less fierce, or, they hoped, to neighboring Egypt. The nearby city of Wadi Medeni was one option, but without a vehicle, fuel or a willing driver, it too was out of reach.

Those of us with European passports pinned our hopes on an eventual evacuation. But with no functioning airport and street fighting still ongoing, this seemed difficult.

By April 23, as foreign governments hinted at potential evacuation operations, it was clear we had to make a move. The Sudanese family found transport to Port Sudan, where the mother had family. Three French women in the hotel were told to make for the embassy by whatever means possible.

Two British nationals, a surgeon and a widow from Glasgow, decided to stay behind. The Syrian family and Lebanese man had few options; they didn't know a government that would help them leave.

In the hotel lobby that morning, we all said our goodbyes and wished each other well.

I was promised a spot on a Turkish-organized land evacuation to neighboring Ethiopia. My colleagues helped find a car to the assembly point, another hotel further south. At checkpoints along the way, my driver charmed his way past RSF soldiers, some of whom stood nervously at attention while others lounged in the shade making sandwiches.

Halfway there, we received a message from my manager that the plan had changed: I was to turn around and head for the French Embassy. Thanks to my colleagues in Paris, I had been added to the French evacuation list. I was lucky, grateful, but most of all, deeply privileged.

While I made it safely into the fortified embassy building, others were not so lucky. A French soldier lay in an embassy hall, a tin foil blanket covering his wounds. A British woman struggled to walk after her foot was struck by a stray bullet.

Our convoy of at least four buses and 25 armored cars set off from the embassy at around 6 p.m., crossing through RSF-held streets into army-held territory, before arriving at the Wadi Seidna airbase just northwest of Khartoum.

To my great surprise, I spotted the hotel owner, Mr. Salah, at the airport hangar. We embraced, and I thanked him for the past three days.

After women, children and the elderly left on flights, other young men and I were bundled onto the final flight of that round of evacuations in the early hours of April 25, heading for Djibouti.

It was not meant to turn out like this. Not for Sudan, not for my colleagues, friends and millions of Sudanese.

Tracking down everyone from the hotel since the evacuation has proved difficult. Some of the staff say they are safe, for now, in other parts of the country. The hotel owner is in Copenhagen with family. The three French women also made it safely to France.

I have had no word from those who stayed behind. The mobile phone network in Khartoum is all but dead.

## Chokehold killed man restrained by NYC subway passengers

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ and BOBBY CAINA CALVAN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A man who had been shouting at people aboard a New York City subway train died after fellow riders tackled him and one put him in a chokehold that lasted until his body went limp, according to police officials and video of the encounter.

Jordan Neely, 30, died from compression of the neck, the city's medical examiner determined Wednesday.

Neely is recognizable to some New Yorkers as a Michael Jackson impersonator who regularly danced in the Times Square transit hub. On Monday afternoon, he was yelling and pacing back and forth on an F train in Manhattan, witnesses and police said, when he was restrained by at least three people, including a U.S. Marine veteran who pulled one arm tightly around his neck.

Video of the altercation posted online by a freelance journalist showed the man lying beneath Neely, holding him in a headlock position for several minutes as Neely tried and failed to break free. A second

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passenger pinned Neely's arms while a third person held down his shoulder.

It was unclear why the group had moved to restrain him.

Neely, who is Black, lost consciousness during the struggle. EMTs and police arrived after the train stopped at a station. He was pronounced dead at a Manhattan hospital shortly after.

The 24-year-old Marine veteran, who appeared to be white, was taken into custody and released without charges. His name has not been released publicly.

The medical examiner's office classified Neely's death as a homicide and the manner as a chokehold, but noted that any determination about criminal culpability would be left to the legal system.

The Manhattan district attorney's office said it is investigating.

"As part of our rigorous ongoing investigation, we will review the Medical Examiner's report, assess all available video and photo footage, identify and interview as many witnesses as possible, and obtain additional medical records," read a statement from a spokesperson for the DA.

As news of Neely's death spread online, video of the encounter evoked strong reactions from New Yorkers and officials. Some described the act as a lethal overreaction to a person in the throes of mental illness and others defended the Marine veteran's actions.

A group of protesters gathered Wednesday afternoon in the station where Neely died to call for an arrest. Kyle Ishmael, a 38-year-old Harlem resident, said the video of the incident left him feeling "disgusted."

"I couldn't believe this was happening on my subway in my city that I grew up in," he said.

Neely's death comes amid a period of heightened public attention to both homelessness and mental illness on New York City's streets and subways. Following several high-profile incidents, including a shooting on a subway train that left 10 people wounded last year, Mayor Eric Adams promised to deploy additional police officers and mental health workers throughout the transit system.

The freelance journalist who recorded the incident, Juan Alberto Vazquez, told the New York Post that Neely was screaming "in an aggressive manner," and complaining of hunger and thirst. Neely did not physically attack anyone, Vazquez said, adding that the Marine veteran approached the man after he threw his jacket to the ground.

The video starts with Neely already on the subway car's floor, with the man's left arm around Neely's neck, locked into his other arm positioned against the man's head. A second man holds Neely's outstretched arm while pinning the other hand against his body. Neely is mostly still, but half a minute later tries to struggle out of the headlock. Eventually, he goes limp.

Dave Giffen, the executive director at Coalition for the Homeless, blamed city and state officials for an inadequate response to the mental health crisis — and questioned why the Marine veteran was not facing criminal charges.

"The fact that someone who took the life of a distressed, mentally ill human being on a subway could be set free without facing any consequences is shocking," he said. "This is an absolute travesty that must be investigated immediately."

Those calls were echoed by several Democratic elected officials, who described the incident as a low point for the city.

During an appearance on CNN on Tuesday night, the mayor said there were still too many unknowns.

"We don't know exactly what happened here," Adams said, adding that "we cannot just blatantly say what a passenger should or should not do in a situation like that, and we should allow the investigation to take its course."

Tribute videos posted online show a loyal fanbase who enjoyed crossing paths with Neely on their daily commutes. Some grew concerned when he went missing early last year, according to YouTube comments.

Jason Williams, an actor, recalled encountering Neely when he first moved to the city in 2007. Then a teenager, Neely was an agile Michael Jackson impersonator, Williams said, soliciting donations as he moonwalked through the subway and lip-synced to "Billie Jean."

"He embodied the hustle spirit of New York," Williams said. "He was a great performer and it's a real tragedy that he was killed so senselessly."

The Rev. Al Sharpton demanded in a statement that Neely's death be investigated as a potential case

of manslaughter. Sharpton referenced the Bernhard Goetz case in 1984, in which a white gunman was convicted of a weapons offense after he shot four Black men on a subway train.

"We cannot end up back to a place where vigilantism is tolerable. It wasn't acceptable then and it cannot be acceptable now," Sharpton said.

Andre Zachery, Neely's father, told the New York Daily News that he had not seen his son in four years. Zachery told the paper that Neely's mother also died violently. Christie Neely was strangled in New Jersey in 2007, according to news accounts at the time. Her body was found days later in a suitcase along a roadway. Neely, who was 14 when she died, testified against his mother's boyfriend at his murder trial.

## In latest abortion law chapter: Bill signings, court rulings

By GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

Courts this week blocked abortion restrictions from taking effect in two states, while lawmakers in a third are forging ahead with a plan for a new ban that's less stringent than most.

Those are some of the latest developments in an abortion landscape that is being crafted by lawmakers, governors and courts across the country in the aftermath of last year's U.S. Supreme Court ruling that overturned Roe v. Wade and the nationwide right to an abortion.

Some things to know:

### NORTH CAROLINA GOP LAWMAKERS GET ON SAME PAGE

North Carolina lawmakers said they have agreed to new abortion restrictions that would be among the least onerous adopted since last year.

The bill, a GOP priority, would ban abortions after 12 weeks of pregnancy with exceptions in cases of rape, incest or fetal abnormality. The current exception for cases where the life of the pregnant woman is in danger would remain. The state currently bans abortion in most cases after 20 weeks of pregnancy.

Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper has indicated that he would veto the measure, which he called "an egregious, unacceptable attack on the women of our state."

But after one state lawmaker flipped from the Democratic Party last month to become Republican, the GOP has veto-proof majorities in both legislative chambers.

### COURTS REBUFF NOVEL RESTRICTIONS

Montana Gov. Greg Gianforte's administration and lawmakers in Utah were testing some abortion restrictions that are outside what other Republican-led states are doing.

In Montana, a new rule would have required doctors to provide documentation showing that an abortion was medically necessary due to rape, incest or a threat to the health of the pregnant woman before the state's Medicaid program would have paid for it.

In Utah, where a ban on abortions at all stages of pregnancy is already on hold as a court considers its legality, lawmakers passed a ban on abortion clinics.

Abortion-rights advocates in both states said the restrictions would have gone too far.

In rulings this week, judges nixed both ideas, at least while courts decide whether they're legal.

### MONTANA REPUBLICANS KEEP PUSHING

The Medicaid rule isn't the only Montana abortion restriction a judge has put on hold. Courts also have blocked enforcement of a ban after 20 weeks of pregnancy.

With that on hold, lawmakers have turned to other restrictions.

On Wednesday, Gianforte signed a law requiring the same Medicaid preauthorization steps that the blocked rule included, along with four other anti-abortion laws.

Among them: a declaration that the state constitution's right to privacy does not include the right to an abortion and banning dilation and evacuation abortions, the most common method used after 15 weeks.

### PROTECTIONS ADVANCE

Just as most Republican-controlled states have enacted bans or deeper abortion restrictions since last year, at least 19 Democratic-dominated states have now taken steps through a law, constitutional amend-

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ment or executive order to protect access.

Most of the states where the status quo remains are those where the political leadership is divided between the two parties.

On Wednesday, Maryland Democratic Gov. Wes Moore signed laws protecting access to both abortion and gender-affirming care. Like other states, Maryland now protects people from being forced to cooperate with criminal investigations by other states into medical treatments that are legal in Maryland.

Additional new laws protect medical and insurance records on reproductive health in electronic health information exchanges and ensure that public colleges and universities have a plan for student access to birth control, including emergency contraception and abortion pills.

Also, a constitutional amendment to protect abortion access will be on the ballot in 2024.

Democrats took complete control of the executive and legislative branches of state government this year after eight years with a Republican governor.

On Tuesday, Oregon representatives passed a similar bill, sending it to the Senate. On Wednesday, Republican senators didn't show up to work, denying the Democrats who control the chamber a quorum and casting doubt on planned votes later this week the legislation.

Also Wednesday, Michigan's House passed a bill that would bar companies from retaliating against employees who obtain abortions, sending it to Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATES

A federal government investigation concluded that two hospitals that refused to provide an emergency abortion violated the law.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is looking at hospitals in Kansas and Missouri that would not provide an abortion for a woman whose water broke early at 17 weeks of pregnancy. Doctors at both said that the fetus would not survive and the woman was at risk of serious infection or losing her uterus. But they wouldn't terminate the pregnancy because a fetal heartbeat was still detectable.

The government said that violates a federal mandate that doctors provide abortions when a woman's health is at risk.

The government did not issue fines but did tell the medical centers to correct the problems that led to the patient being denied an abortion.

## LOCAL RESTRICTIONS

The City Council in Danville, Illinois, on Tuesday narrowly passed an ordinance restricting the shipping of abortion pills

A clinic is proposed for the community near the border with Indiana, where a ban on abortions throughout pregnancy was put on hold by courts. Officials in Illinois, by contrast, have tried to position the state as a safe haven for out-of-state abortion-seekers.

State officials and abortion-rights advocates said the law is both unlawful and unenforceable.

Local restrictions have not done well elsewhere.

Five local governments in Democratic-controlled New Mexico passed them. In March, the state's Supreme Court blocked enforcement for now. And last year, one Ohio town decided to rewrite its restrictions rather than defending them in court.

## Artists to Russia: 'Our Fire is Stronger Than Your Bombs'

By MICHAEL CASEY and VASILISA STEPANENKO Associated Press

GOFFSTOWN, N.H. (AP) — As Ukrainian artists Jenya Polosina and Anna Ivanenko watched missiles descend on their country, the two decided to use their creativity to push back against Russia's invasion. Working in the early days of the war from bunkers or sometimes without electricity and water in Kyiv, they and other artists started drawing.

Some of their war posters are now on display in New Hampshire. In the exhibit entitled "Our Fire is Stronger Than Your Bombs," posters from Ivanenko show children studying in a bomb shelter and Ukrainians fleeing the country soon after the war started. Polosina's drawings celebrate a female gymnast and

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a young mathematician who were killed in missile strikes.

"We understood that it's a good pill, a good medicine for not panicking, for keeping yourself together. So, we started drawing," Ivanenko told The Associated Press from the studio in Kyiv she shares with Polosina. They are among eight artists who contributed 20 posters to the exhibit at the New Hampshire Institute of Politics in Manchester that opened Monday. The posters were shown previously at Dartmouth College and still can be seen as part of a digital exhibit.

Before the war, Polosina was producing illustrations for books and advertising that focused on social themes like human rights and Ukraine's largest LGBTQ rights event, KyivPride.

Ivanenko did book and advertising projects. But they quickly turned their focus to the war and, through Instagram, shared their images. They have been joined by scores of other Ukrainian artists who produce graphic novels, comics and other types of media to spread the news about the war.

The colorful and a times startling posters produced last year have helped rally support for the war among their fellow Ukrainians, raise money for the war effort as well as give them something to do. The posters have also become part of a growing digital effort to draw attention around the globe to the invasion and its impact on Ukraine.

"One hundred pictures from illustrators in Ukraine ... are helping to grow awareness about what is happening and then that will have an impact on those who make decisions," Polosina said.

Polosina said the opportunity to show their work in New Hampshire "is very important for us because this is almost direct communication with viewers outside of Ukraine that can see our reflections, that can see our feelings and be more sympathetic."

Some of the posters on display in New Hampshire have the feel of classical war propaganda aimed at raising the spirits and rallying residents.

One shows four people staring up at a missile featuring the Russian coat of arms and the words "Our Fire Is Stronger Than Your Bombs." Another shows two people holding the Ukrainian flag in Kherson next to the words from the Ukrainian national anthem, "And We Will Show Brothers That We Are Of The Cossack Nation." Russian had taken over Kherson in the early days of the war and Ukraine retook it late last year.

Others serve to document the most dramatic events of the war like the Mariupol theater attack or fighting in Bakhmut, which has become the longest-running battle since Russia launched its full-scale invasion more than a year ago. That poster features a soldier, blood on his chest and white bandages on his head, gripping a red snake in each hand that represent Russian forces struggling to encircle the city. Another shows masked workers in white hazmat suits exhuming a mass grave.

Ivanenko described how she was "charged with rage" and a "desire to stop the war, stop the aggressions" whenever she hears about explosions or another collapsed building in Ukraine. So her posters are her effort to help "in a small way."

Some are more like diary entries of the artists, documenting the daily struggles they encounter. Along with the posters of children and family impacted by the war, one shows children with reflective vests playing, a reference to the precautions they often take during frequent blackouts.

"We focus mostly on some things that are related to our experiences because it's feels little bit more true to us," Ivanenko said. "Of course, some things we hear about in the media, it's also our experience. You can't stay indifferent to everything."

The exhibition was the inspiration of Veronika Yadukha and Hanna Leliv, translators who fled Ukraine and arrived in the United States in September. They are both at Dartmouth and felt that an exhibit of war posters chronicling the first year of the war would be a way to overcome American fatigue around the long-running conflict.

"People get tired very quickly of these horrific events and the news. Usually, when we see the photographs or videos, our mind blocks all this stressful information," Yadukha said. "I realized that these pictures or illustrations work as an alternative media ... People see these pictures. There is space between the real life and the message. They get the information which is the essential thing."

In Manchester, Yadukha and Leliv spent Monday putting up the posters, which were printed at Dartmouth



from digital files provided by the artists. About 60 people came out for the opening, listening to the artists speak about creating the posters and listening to Ukrainian poetry that was inspired by the war.

"It's devastating," said Mary Fuller, a homemaker and former teacher from Concord who had come to the exhibit opening. "It's devastating what these people are going through for money and power. But that is the world ... This is the reality and the depth of the war. It's not superficial. You can feel it in these pictures."

Stepanenko reported from Kyiv.

## Taiwan trade chief warns against 'unnecessary fear' of China

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Taiwan's chief trade representative says his country's semiconductor makers will expand production in the U.S. as much as they can afford to do so, but he insists Taiwan remains an ideal place for that production and other U.S. trade, business and investment, despite tensions with China.

John Chen-Chung Deng spoke to The Associated Press on a visit this week to Washington, where he is leading a Taiwanese trade delegation and meeting with U.S. trade officials.

Deng's visit comes at a time of intensifying efforts to harden the U.S. and Taiwanese militaries and economies against any threat from rival China. As part of this, President Joe Biden and Congress are moving to boost semiconductor production on U.S. soil in the event of any conflict disrupting exports from Asia, especially from Taiwan.

Semiconductors make electronics ranging from phones to electric cars to advanced weapons run, and Taiwan produces more than 90% of the world's more advanced semiconductors.

At the same time, Pentagon leaders have been touring the Indo-Pacific to rally regional allies in bolstering military defenses and deterrence. A House committee last month war-gamed a hypothetical attack by China on Taiwan and U.S. positions as part of a bipartisan congressional effort to find specific ways to boost deterrence.

Deng said Americans should see these efforts as ensuring that Chinese President Xi Jinping will never feel confident enough to invade Taiwan, which China claims as its own.

"We should avoid any exaggeration or rhetoric which doesn't reflect the true situation, that creates fear ... unnecessary fear," said Deng.

He said the U.S. business community in Taiwan assures him it is still expanding and hiring. He cited the experienced workforce and support industries that Taiwan offers for semiconductor producers and for Google, Amazon and other U.S. businesses on its soil.

Relations between the U.S. and China have hit dramatic peaks in tensions over the past two years as Xi's government asserts China's growing strength economically, diplomatically and militarily. That includes China underscoring its broad territorial claims in the region.

China, for its part, accuses the U.S. of meddling in its internal affairs and pursuing a containment strategy against China to prevent its rise.

Taiwan and China split in 1949 after a civil war and have no official relations. They are linked by billions of dollars in trade and investment. The Chinese Communist Party regularly flies fighter planes and bombers near Taiwan to enforce its stance that the island is obliged to unite with the mainland, by force if necessary.

The Biden administration and Republicans and Democrats in Congress broadly support strengthening the U.S. and Taiwanese positions in the region to discourage any Chinese invasion of the island.

For Taiwan, that swell in U.S. support overall has also brought renewed focus from Washington on the island's decades-old appeals to the U.S. to overhaul its tax and trade policies toward the island. Taiwanese leaders say the current U.S. policies make it hard for Taiwanese companies and workers operating in the United States, and could do more to help Taiwan strengthen trade relations with allies.

The U.S. switched its diplomatic relations from Taipei to Beijing in 1979. Without formal relations and the kind of a tax treaty that the U.S. has signed with friendly nations that it recognizes, Taiwanese workers in the U.S. have to pay taxes in both the U.S. and Taiwan. That makes the already more-expensive U.S.

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prohibitively expensive for many Taiwanese.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen in March called it an issue the U.S. needed to address. Senior members of Congress also have urged the U.S. to reach a tax agreement with Taiwan.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration is promising tens of billions of dollars to support construction of U.S. chip foundries and reduce reliance on suppliers in Taiwan and elsewhere in Asia, which Washington sees as a security weakness.

Answering that U.S. call, Taiwanese chip giant Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Corp. is building a chip plant in Arizona and plans a second, for a total investment of \$40 billion.

Deng said he hopes for resolution of the tax issue before that first Taiwanese plant starts operation in Arizona, given the double-tax burden the operation will face.

"Once they start to produce, this is a real problem," the trade official said.

Taiwanese officials also hope in coming weeks to close an initial trade agreement with Washington, in a nod toward the free-trade pacts the U.S. has negotiated with South Korea and other allies.

U.S. worries about angering China have helped keep Washington from signing a free-trade pact with Taiwan in the past. Deng argued the hoped-for U.S. trade agreement would boost the confidence of Taiwan and encourage other allies to increase trade with Taiwan as well.

That would help Taiwan lessen its economic dependence on trade with China, now the customer for 35% to 40% of Taiwan's products, Deng said.

He said Taiwan also sees the strategic point in Biden administration measures aimed at discouraging other countries from exporting semiconductors to China, to starve China's security forces of the advanced chips they need.

Integrated circuits alone account for about 25% of Taiwan's GDP. When it comes to China's share of that, however, Taiwan "realizes there's no sense in sending chips to them, to build up missiles aiming at us," Deng said.

## Lula's gun control push starts with counting Brazil's guns

By LAÍS MARTINS Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — Jonathan Schmidt arrived at Federal Police headquarters in the center of Rio de Janeiro with a travel bag carrying a golden pistol and seven rifles, one peeking out of the zipper.

"I'm in love with guns," said Schmidt. "I'd have over 2,000 if the government allowed."

Schmidt already has his firearms registered with the army, as required by law for sport shooters like him, but experts have cast doubt on the reliability of its database, and said lax oversight has allowed such guns to fall into criminal hands. Schmidt was adding his guns to the police registry on Wednesday to comply with a push by Brazil's new left-wing president.

Over four years in office, former President Jair Bolsonaro tried to convert a country with few weapons into one where firearm ownership and lack of regulation meant personal freedom. Now, his successor Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has been moving to undo Bolsonaro's pro-gun policies, and that starts with requiring gun owners to register their weapons with police. After initial resistance, he started seeing some success.

In Brazil's last gun-control campaign, in 2003, Brazilians were invited to turn in their guns and receive a symbolic payment from the state. It boasted a high level of participation.

In the eyes of right-wing Bolsonaro, however, the disarmament statute was a historic blunder. Echoing aspects of American conservatism, he was the first Brazilian presidential candidate to campaign on a pro-gun platform, saying "good citizens" are entitled to firearms to protect their families and assets. He altered the rules for how much ammunition one can possess and access to restricted-caliber guns, such as submachine guns. He repeatedly claimed that "an armed populace will never be enslaved."

Instituto Sou da Paz, a non-profit that monitors public security, estimates that the number of guns in civilian hands nearly tripled — to 2.2 million in a country of 214 million people — under Bolsonaro. It remains far lower than in the United States and Brazil has no constitutional right to bear arms.

"We had sharp growth in firearm access, including restricted-use weapons," Michele dos Ramos, who is

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leading the workgroup in charge of gun policy within the Justice Ministry, told the AP by phone. "In order to write any guidelines to restructure gun and ammunition policies and regulations, it is important we have a diagnosis of the situation of these weapons."

On his first day in office, Lula issued a decree requiring gun owners to register their weapons with the Federal Police and the original deadline was delayed until May 3. At Rio's Federal Police headquarters, officers have registered guns belonging to as many as 50 people per day. But they were wary.

"There was a lot of concern primarily at the beginning when they arrived here. They believed we were going to confiscate their guns," Marcelo Daemon, the head of the Rio police's department overseeing arms control, said in an interview in his office. "A lot of fake news circulated on social media and people came here with fear."

Some politicians contributed to general reluctance. On March 17, federal lawmaker Julia Zanatta shared a picture of herself holding a machine gun and wearing a T-shirt bearing the words "COME AND TAKE IT" and an image of Lula's hand pierced by three bullet holes. Paulo Bilynskyj, a lawmaker and former police chief from Sao Paulo, shared instructions to follow in case one's weapons were seized.

"We have a more armed country, a stronger gun culture, more representatives focused on the pro-gun agenda," said Carolina Ricardo, executive-director of Instituto Sou da Paz, adding that Congress will be the "thorn in the side" of groups pushing for stricter gun control. The so-called "bullet caucus" of pro-gun lawmakers gained dozens of new seats in last year's election.

Before the registration initiated by Lula's government, the army gathered and retained data on gun ownership for sport shooters, collectors and hunters, known as CACs. Bolsonaro scrapped the requirement for such registrants to undergo the arduous process of submitting documentation, justification and psychological exams to the Federal Police, which for its part registers guns owned for self-defense, and so limited the force's visibility on the total number of guns in circulation.

Army data indicates 762,365 firearms were purchased by CACs since May 7, 2019, when Bolsonaro made major changes to firearm and ammunition access. But Instituto Sou da Paz and the Igarape Institute, another security-focused non-profit, estimate the figure fails to reflect roughly 100,000 additional guns, based on data collected via freedom of information requests.

By requiring in-person registration, the government hopes to determine precisely how many guns and what types are no longer with their original owners and, potentially, in the hands of criminal groups.

Gun advocates have mostly come around, though some have encouraged their followers to do so only begrudgingly. Marcos Pollon, a federal lawmaker who leads a pro-gun group often compared to the National Rifle Association, in mid-March called the government effort "absolutely illegal and unconstitutional." A week later, he published a video on YouTube, where he has over 150,000 subscribers, saying he registered his gun and that those who don't will face the consequences.

The government's next steps remain unclear, however. The group led by Ramos had been scheduled to deliver a series of recommendations to the government by the May 3 deadline.

Ricardo said future government actions could include new rules further limiting the ammunition and guns each person can possess, and integrating the army and Federal Police databases.

Lula's Jan. 1 decree established that guns not registered by the deadline can be seized. That means those who failed to bring their guns to the Federal Police could find themselves in legal jeopardy, even if they are just pulled over on their way to the shooting range.

Schmidt, the gun owner in Rio, had viewed the government's effort as an embarrassment. But now, he says, he recognizes it is important for the Federal Police to know of all weapons owned by civilians.

"This way, we remain legal," he said.

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AP writer David Biller and producer Diarlei Rodrigues contributed from Rio de Janeiro

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## This May the Fourth, Carrie Fisher gets Walk of Fame star

By The Associated Press undefined

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Carrie Fisher is receiving a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, a May the Fourth tribute to one of the “Star Wars” franchise’s most beloved figures.

On Thursday, Fisher — who died in 2016 — joins “Star Wars” co-stars Harrison Ford and Mark Hamill on the Hollywood tourist attraction that recognizes luminaries from film, television, music and other entertainment industries. The trio’s stars are all located on the 6,800 block of Hollywood Boulevard, near where the original film debuted in 1977.

Fisher played Leia Organa, who over six films morphed from a princess to a general leading the forces of good in its fight against oppressive regimes aiming to control a galaxy far, far away. Billie Lourd will be accepting the star on behalf of her mother.

Fans have long campaigned for her to receive a Walk of Fame star. The honor comes on May the Fourth, essentially an official holiday for Star Wars fans that’s a play on a line that Fisher said often in the films, “May the Force be with you.”

Devotees worldwide celebrate with a variety of tributes, while retailers hold special sales on Star Wars merchandise.

The induction ceremony will be held at 11:30 a.m. Pacific and livestreamed by the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce.

Fisher will be given the 2,754th star on the Walk of Fame. Ford received his star in 2003 and Hamill was honored in 2018.

Walk of Fame stars are given to performers who are nominated and a \$75,000 fee is now required to create the star and maintain it.

## AP Was There: Covering the previous coronation in Britain

By ALLEN G. BREED AP National Writer

It might just be the coolest caption in newspaper history: “AP Wirephoto via jet bomber from London”

On Saturday, The Associated Press will deploy a small army of writers, photographers, radio correspondents and video journalists to cover the coronation of Britain’s King Charles III.

But for his mother’s crowning 70 years ago, the world’s oldest news cooperative enlisted the help of an air force as well.

### CONNECTING THE WORLD

Founded in 1846 by competing New York City newspapers looking to share the costs of covering the Mexican War, the AP used boats, barges, trains, sleighs, ponies and pigeons to get stories to its “members.” AP was an early adopter of Samuel Morse’s and Alfred Vail’s telegraph — thus the term “wire service.” With the telegraph, communications technology severed itself permanently from transportation methods.

“Innovation is in our bloodstream — and always has been,” says Valerie Komor, director of AP’s corporate archives.

Another big leap came in 1935, when — after 10 years of development in collaboration with AT&T — the AP launched its Wirephoto service, using a 10,000-mile network of telephone lines to distribute pictures to newspapers simultaneously with the news report. The photos were transmitted using a light bulb called an “exciter lamp.”

The print was wrapped around a cylinder that rotated as the lamp shone its beam across the image, scanning about 1 inch of copy per minute. So, an 8 x 10 black-and-white photo took eight minutes to transmit — that is, if there was no interference on the line.

That technology had changed little by 1953, as the world prepared for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. But the AP had a few tricks up its sleeve.

Today, stories, photos and videos are beamed around the planet via a network of satellites. But this was more than four years before the Soviet Union successfully put Sputnik into orbit.

To get its photos out of London, AP was relying on the “radiophoto,” which used the airwaves to transmit

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images. But there was another hurdle.

Normal commercial radiophoto circuits of the day ran at a rate of 60 revolutions per minute; AP's wire-photo network operated at 100 rpm. So, for the coronation, AP leased a special circuit operating at the higher rate.

Pre-coronation tests were conducted in London. "Results were reasonably good," the AP noted. But, it warned its members, atmospheric storms forecast between London and New York that week "may make radiophoto transmission difficult — perhaps impossible during certain periods." The problem: Radio waves carrying a photo signal across the Atlantic didn't simply follow the Earth's curvature.

"To reach New York successfully they must be reflected from layers of electrified air particles 100 to 200 miles above the Earth," the wire service wrote. "It is the reflection from this 'mirror' which makes possible long distance transmission of pictures by radio."

During atmospheric storms, the AP said, that mirror might become clouded, "like the mirror in your bathroom after your hot shower."

## FLIGHT PLANS

So, as a precaution, AP arranged to have the original photos transported across the Atlantic aboard English Electric Canberra jet planes — the Royal Air Force's new high-altitude bombers — that were already tasked to carry television films.

"These planes will leave London at intervals during the day," the wire service told its members, "with the first jet due in Montreal around 3:30 pm, EST. Original prints will be sent directly onto AP's wirephoto network from a location at St. Hubert's airport in Montreal."

The dual plan worked, and AP prevailed over the "opposition," a committee of the Associated Press Managing Editors group crowed in a postmortem of the photo coverage. The dedicated circuit was used "in contrast to circuits the opposition were using (and cursing), and it was a key factor in AP's success."

"Over this 6,000-mile route from London, AP started moving a picture of Elizabeth wearing her crown only 18 minutes after it was put on her head," the report noted. "By the same method the New York Daily News received the picture of Elizabeth's leaving the palace, and printed it only an hour and 43 minutes after the event. The News called it "an all-time record for picture-handling."

In a battle to be first on American airwaves with footage, CBS and NBC each hired "souped-up" P-51 Mustang fighter planes to ferry film from Canada to Boston, the AP reported. In a scheme dubbed "Operation Astro," NBC even hired a Canberra being delivered to the Venezuelan air force to carry its film, though alleged fuel pump problems forced it to turn around, according to a 1988 retrospective by former network president Reuven Frank.

"The TV networks spared no expense to deliver coronation films to U.S. viewers," the APME panel wrote. "But thanks to the absence of any TV transatlantic link, U.S. afternoon papers had the picture beat."

## WHAT WAS WRITTEN

Despite all the hubbub about photos, AP was still primarily a word operation in 1953. And a team of writers cranked out stories that magically appeared on banks of newsroom teletype machines that clacked away at a stately 60 words per minute — in all caps.

Hal Boyle wrote about then 4-year-old "PRINCE CHARLIE, BRITAIN'S FAIR-HAIRED BOY," and how the future monarch "STOLE THE PRE-CORONATION SPOTLIGHT FROM HIS REGAL MOTHER BY PLAYING A GAME OF PEEK-A-BOO WITH VAST THROGS OUTSIDE BUCKINGHAM PALACE."

"YOUNG CHARLIE, WEARING A SUIT OF PALE BLUE, STEPPED TO A SECOND FLOOR WINDOW, AND DREW BACK A LACE CURTAIN," Boyle wrote. "SMILING BROADLY, HE WAVED HAPPILY DOWN AT THE CHURNING THROG, WHICH SET UP A CRY, 'THERE HE IS!'"

Boyle, who won a Pulitzer in 1944 for his war dispatches, reported that hundreds of mothers held their children high to see the bonnie prince, "WHO IS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR FIGURES IN THE ROYAL FAMILY BECAUSE, LIKE ANY NORMAL BOY, HE GETS IN HIS FAIR SHARE OF TROUBLE."

Over his long years as sovereign-in-waiting, Charles earned a reputation as somewhat stiff and distant. But 70 years ago, Boyle wrote, the young prince's antics "HAD GIVEN A HUMAN TOUCH TO THE SHOW

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AND TAKEN SOME OF THE TENSION AWAY FROM THE LONG WATCH ..."

Relman "Pat" Morin, already the recipient of the 1951 Pulitzer Prize in International Reporting, would add a second Pulitzer five years later for his coverage of the integration battle in Little Rock, Arkansas. He wrote the AP's "second night lead."

"IN THE MOMENT OF HER CORONATION, ELIZABETH WAS THE VERY VISION OF A QUEEN, BEAUTIFUL, REGAL, AND OUTWARDLY SERENE," he wrote.

Morin said it was a ceremony "OLD TO ENGLAND BUT NEW TO TELEVISION."

"THE BROADCAST BROUGHT OFFICIALLY TO A CLOSE A DAY OF DESTINY THAT HAD KEPT THE QUEEN IN THE PUBLIC EYE 11 HOURS," he wrote. "IT WAS THE MOST-SEEN CORONATION IN HISTORY."

That is, perhaps, until Saturday.

## US sprinter, Olympic medalist Tori Bowie dies at 32

By PAT GRAHAM AP Sports Writer

Tori Bowie, the sprinter who won three Olympic medals at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games, has died. She was 32.

Bowie's death was announced Wednesday by her management company and USA Track and Field. No cause of death was given.

"USATF is deeply saddened by the passing of Tori Bowie, a three-time Olympic medalist and two-time world champion," USA Track and Field CEO Max Siegel said in a statement. "A talented athlete, her impact on the sport is immeasurable, and she will be greatly missed."

According to the Orange County Sheriff's Office in Orlando, Florida, deputies responded Tuesday afternoon to a home in the area "for a well-being check of a woman in her 30s who had not been seen or heard from in several days."

The sheriff's office wrote that a woman, "tentatively identified as Frentorish "Tori" Bowie (DOB: 8/27/1990), was found dead in the home. There were no signs of foul play."

Growing up in Sandhill, Mississippi, Bowie was coaxed into track as a teenager and quickly rose up the ranks as a sprinter and long jumper. She attended Southern Mississippi, where she swept the long jump NCAA championships at the indoor and outdoor events in 2011.

Bowie turned in an electric performance at the 2016 Rio Olympics, where she won silver in the 100 and bronze in the 200. She then ran the anchor leg on a 4x100 team with Tianna Bartoletta, Allyson Felix and English Gardner to take gold.

A year later, she won the 100 meters at the 2017 world championships in London. She also helped the 4x100 team to gold.

"She was a very enthusiastic, sparkling personality," said track coach Craig Poole, who worked with Bowie early in her career and again later. "She was really fun to work with."

The track and field community mourned the loss of Bowie on social media. Jamaican sprint sensation Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce posted on Twitter: "My heart breaks for the family of Tori Bowie. A great competitor and source of light. Your energy and smile will always be with me. Rest in peace."

Added U.S. hurdler Lolo Jones: "Too young. Gutted to hear about Tori Bowie. Incredible talent. A beautiful runner. I pray for the comfort of her family, thank your for blessing us with her. The running community mourns an incredible loss."

Brittney Reese, a three-time Olympic medalist in the long jump, wrote: "I'm so heartbroken over this ... You have made a lot of us proud thank you for representing our state of Mississippi like you did ... RIP!"

Bowie was taken in by her grandmother as an infant after she was left at a foster home. She considered herself a basketball player and only reluctantly showed up for track, but Bowie was a fast learner, becoming a state champion in the 100, 200 and long jump before going to college.

Her first major international medal was a 100-meter bronze at worlds in 2015. After winning, she said, "my entire life my grandmother told me I could do whatever I set my mind to."

In a post on Twitter, Icon Management included a picture of Bowie holding up her hands in the shape

of a heart. The management company wrote: "We've lost a client, dear friend, daughter and sister. Tori was a champion...a beacon of light that shined so bright! We're truly heartbroken and our prayers are with the family and friends."

AP National Writer Eddie Pells contributed to this report.

More AP Olympics: <https://apnews.com/hub/olympic-games> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## Trump calls rape claim 'ridiculous' in video deposition

By MICHAEL R. SISA and LARRY NEUMEISTER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump called a writer's claims that he raped her at a Manhattan department store "the most ridiculous, disgusting story," testifying in a deposition shown in court Wednesday that the allegations were "made up" and that the assault never happened.

Lawyers for accuser E. Jean Carroll played about 30 minutes of excerpts from the former president's deposition, including his emphatic denial of the longtime advice columnist's accusation that he attacked her in the mid-1990s in a Bergdorf Goodman dressing room.

"If it did happen, it would have been reported within minutes," Trump said, contending that shoppers and employees at the "very busy store" would've heard a commotion and alerted authorities.

"It's the most ridiculous, disgusting story. It's just made up," Trump said in the video deposition taken in October.

Several jurors leaned forward, watching without expression as the video played on individual monitors in front of their seats.

In other developments Wednesday, Trump's attorneys said they would not call any witnesses, and the judge said closing arguments would likely happen Monday before the jury begins deliberations on Tuesday.

Trump has not attended the trial and will not testify, giving his deposition more weight. Asked about the case while traveling in Ireland on Wednesday, Trump told reporters: "I hear we're doing very well in New York."

Jurors in federal court in Manhattan are expected to hear more of Trump's deposition Thursday, followed by three more witnesses being called to the stand by Carroll's lawyers.

Carroll is seeking unspecified monetary damages and a retraction of Trump statements that she alleges were defamatory.

Trump has denied ever knowing Carroll, saying once that "she's not my type" and arguing that her claims are politically motivated attempts to smear his reputation and deny him the White House.

His deposition denials punctuated an emotional day in court that saw more allegations of inappropriate behavior with women and the playing of the infamous "Access Hollywood" video in which Trump bragged about grabbing women's genitals without asking permission.

Natasha Stoyneff, a former writer for People magazine, testified through tears that Trump forcibly kissed her against her will while showing her around his Mar-a-Lago estate just after Christmas in 2005 for an article about his first wedding anniversary with his third wife, Melania.

Before the trial, Trump's lawyers were unsuccessful in trying to block jurors from seeing the "Access Hollywood" video and hearing from Stoyneff, who said she told only a few people about the alleged incident at the time, but decided to go public after seeing the tape and Trump's subsequent denials at a 2016 debate.

"The horrifying part to me was that I worried, because I didn't say anything at the time, other women were hurt by him so I had to regret," Stoyneff said.

Stoyneff started to cry when asked about her trip to interview the Trumps in Palm Beach, Florida, reaching for tissues and pausing between questions to pat her eyes. Stoyneff testified that Trump drew her away from staff and a photography crew with a ruse of wanting to show her a "really great room" at the estate, before cornering her and kissing her.

Stoyneff, a Canadian who adopted an old family name for her writing career, recalled the door shutting

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behind her and that Trump soon “had his hands on my shoulders, pushed me against the wall and started kissing me.” The encounter lasted several minutes, said Stoyhoff, whose real name is Nancy Stevens.

“I tried to push him away,” Stoyhoff said, explaining how Trump came at her again and how she again tried shoving him away. She was “so shocked and flustered” she was unable to speak and didn’t scream, she said.

“No words came out of me,” Stoyhoff told jurors.

Trump showed no signs of stopping, but suddenly pulled away when a butler came into the room to report that Melania was ready for the next phase of the interview, Stoyhoff said.

As they walked to a patio area, Stoyhoff said, Trump told her “you know we’re going to have an affair,” and reminded her that his second wife, Marla Maples, had once bragged to a tabloid that sex with Trump was the best she ever had.

Trump has denied that he ever tried to kiss Stoyhoff. Trump’s lawyer, Joseph Tacopina, suggested she had no relevance to Carroll’s case and ended his cross-examination after asking her a single question: Was she involved in any litigation against Trump? She isn’t.

Stoyhoff’s testimony came a day after another woman, former stockbroker Jessica Leeds, testified that Trump grabbed her breasts and tried to put his hand up her skirt when they were seated next to each other on a late-1970s airline flight.

Carroll kept her claims against Trump secret for 17 years, telling just two close friends before going public with the allegations in a 2019 memoir. In the book, she described how a sometimes flirtatious chance encounter with Trump at the department store in spring 1996 ended with violence when Trump cornered her in a dressing room after they challenged each other to try on a piece of lingerie.

Trump’s lawyers attacked Carroll’s credibility through exhaustive cross-examination, questioning why she didn’t scream out for help during the alleged attack and why she never went to police.

A psychologist testifying on Carroll’s behalf said Wednesday that it’s common for rape victims to fall silent and blame themselves.

On Twitter, follow Michael Sisak at <https://twitter.com/mikesisak> and Larry Neumeister at <https://twitter.com/lneumeister>. Send confidential tips by visiting <https://www.ap.org/tips/>.

## Florida Republicans pass school bills on pronouns, diversity

By ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Florida Republicans on Wednesday approved bills to ban diversity programs in colleges and prevent students and teachers from being required to use pronouns that don’t correspond to someone’s sex, building on top priorities of Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis.

The two proposals were given final passage by the Republican supermajorities in the House and Senate. DeSantis is expected to sign the bills into law.

DeSantis, who is expected to announce a presidential campaign in the coming weeks, has driven a hardline conservative agenda as he seeks to bolster support of Republican primary voters ahead of his White House run.

The state’s Legislative session, scheduled to end this week, has been dominated by divisive cultural issues, with Republican allies of DeSantis approving his priority bills on sexual orientation, gender identity, race and education that are expected to aid the governor in his presidential bid.

The Senate on Wednesday voted to expand the law critics call “Don’t Say Gay,” a major calling card of DeSantis, with a sweeping bill that prevents school staffers or students from being required to refer to people by pronouns that don’t correspond to the person’s sex.

It also bans classroom instruction on gender identity and sexual orientation up to the 8th grade, legally reinforcing a DeSantis administration move to prohibit such lessons in all grades. Additionally, the bill strengthens the system in which people can lodge challenges against school books, another DeSantis initiative that has led to the removal of material he and his supporters argue are inappropriate for children.



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"Think about what we're doing, honestly. Think about how this will affect families that don't look like yours," said Sen. Tracie Davis, a Democrat. "They're still families. They're Florida families. But we're treating them like they're outsiders and we're telling them we don't want them here."

Republicans said the bill is intended to shield children from sexualized content and reinforce that teachers should conform to existing state curriculums.

"You see society coming at our children in a culture war that has an agenda to make them confused," Republican Sen. Erin Grall said. "We are depriving children of the ability to figure out who they are when we push an agenda, a sexualized agenda, down onto children."

Separately, Republicans in the House gave final passage to a DeSantis priority bill that bans colleges from using state or federal funding for diversity, equity and inclusion programs.

Such initiatives, sometimes referred to as DEI, have come under increasing criticism from Republicans who argue the programs are racially divisive.

Republican lawmakers in at least a dozen states have proposed more than 30 bills this year targeting diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in higher education, an Associated Press analysis found using the bill-tracking software Plural.

"They want rote belief in the same thing. They say they want inclusion, but they don't unless you believe what they believe," said Rep. Randy Fine, a Republican. "These programs are being used all over the country. Imagine how great our universities will be when we are the only ones who are not."

The House also approved a proposal to ban people from entering bathrooms that do not correspond to their sex, a bill aimed at transgender bathroom use.

DeSantis is expected to formally announce his presidential candidacy after the end of the legislative session. He has spent significant time in recent months traveling to battleground states and elsewhere to promote his conservative agenda and trumpet his policies on race, gender and education.

In the statehouse, Democrats, who have no power to stop the Republican legislation, have increasingly begun to vent over the rightward shift in policy emanating from the GOP.

"The message that resonates from this chamber over the last few years is one of hate and exclusion and punishment," said Democratic Sen. Jason Pizzo. "There is very little grace and very little compassion."

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Associated Press writer Curt Anderson in St. Petersburg, Florida, contributed to this report.

## Protestors arrested at DeSantis' Florida Capitol office

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — About a dozen people were arrested Wednesday night while protesting in Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis' Florida Capitol Office, officials said.

The 14 arrested were charged with misdemeanor trespass and were booked into the Leon County Jail, Florida Department of Law Enforcement spokeswoman Gretl Plessinger told the Tallahassee Democrat.

"Once the building closes, unless you have an office in the Capitol, you're not allowed to be here," Plessinger said, citing Department of Management Services policy.

The arrests were made by the Florida Capitol Police and Florida Highway Patrol, she said.

The protestors said they refused to leave until they had a meeting with the governor. The protest was organized by a human rights group called the Dream Defenders.

A number of controversial bills have been passed and signed into law this legislative session, which ends Friday. They include an abortion ban, illegal immigration restrictions and legislation targeting drag shows, the LGBTQ community and diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

## Prosecutor: Suspected Texas gunman tried to escape to Mexico

By JUAN A. LOZANO and NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

CLEVELAND, Texas (AP) — A man suspected of killing five of his neighbors in Texas after they asked him to stop shooting his gun near their house hid out just miles away from the slayings while he and his

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domestic partner plotted his escape to Mexico, authorities said Wednesday.

Francisco Oropeza showered and slept at the house outside the city of Conroe on Tuesday while Divimara Lamar Nava got him donuts from a nearby store, a prosecutor said. Lamar Nava also acknowledged delivering a message from Oropeza to his cousins in the area asking them to help him get out of the country, the prosecutor said at Lamar Nava's probable cause hearing. The cousins refused to help.

Authorities believe Lamar Nava was talking to investigators at the same time she was trying to help Oropeza, San Jacinto County District Attorney Todd Dillon said at a news conference. She initially told authorities she didn't know where Oropeza was, but later told a federal agent that he showed up at the house about 1:30 a.m. Tuesday, according to the prosecutor at the probable cause hearing.

Oropeza, 38, was arrested there on Tuesday evening, just 20 miles (32 kilometers) from the city of Cleveland, where the shootings took place. Acting on a tip, authorities found him hiding under a pile of laundry in a closet after a four-day manhunt. Lamar Nava, 53, was arrested at the house on Wednesday.

Authorities identified Lamar Nava as Oropeza's wife, though jail records list her as not being married but sharing a home address with him.

The slayings Friday sent shudders through a nation already dealing with a wave of shootings that have put the U.S. on a torrid pace for mass killings this year.

Outside the Conroe-area home, yellow police tape could be seen Wednesday in both the front and back, although the officers were gone. Neighbor Angel Lozano recalled looking up from unloading tools from his truck Tuesday night to see unmarked law enforcement vehicles streaming onto his normally quiet street.

"A bunch of people got out with guns and they went straight to the house and surrounded the area," Lozano, 39, said Wednesday, estimating that at least 50 officers surrounded the home two doors down from his. "It was a really fast job they did. They got him without people getting hurt or another shooting."

Several others have also been arrested, authorities said, although they only shared details about one of them. Domingo Castilla, a friend of Oropeza, was arrested on Tuesday in the Trail's End neighborhood where the victims were shot, Dillon said. Castilla was charged with marijuana possession but authorities also expect to charge him with obstructing Oropeza's apprehension, Dillon said.

At a news conference Wednesday, San Jacinto County Chief Deputy Sheriff Tim Kean said he couldn't go into details about the other people who were arrested, including how many.

Oropeza was charged Wednesday with five counts of first-degree murder during a court hearing in jail, said San Jacinto County Justice of the Peace Judge Randy Ellisor. Bond is set at \$1.5 million per count, for a total of \$7.5 million, Ellisor said. Lamar Nava is being held at the Montgomery County jail on a felony charge of hindering the apprehension or prosecution of a known felon. Her bail has been set at \$250,000. Bond for Castilla was set at \$5,000, Ellisor said.

Oropeza is a Mexican national who has been deported four times between 2009 and 2016, according to U.S. immigration officials.

Police had previously spotted him on Monday afternoon in Montgomery County, prompting several schools to lock down, Kean said at a news conference outside the county jail Wednesday.

"We did confirm that was him on foot, running, but we lost track of him," Kean said.

Kean declined to comment on the tip that led authorities to the Conroe home, which he said was one that had not been previously checked by authorities.

The arrest came after authorities set up a widening dragnet of more than 250 people, drones and search dogs from multiple jurisdictions and offered \$80,000 in reward money. The tip that finally ended the chase came at 5:15 p.m. Tuesday. A little more than an hour later, Oropeza was in custody, said FBI Assistant Special Agent in Charge Jimmy Paul.

Lozano said he hadn't known the residents of the home where Oropeza was arrested but would sometimes say hi to them if they were walking by his house. "We never thought he was going to be right next door," he said.

The victims have been identified as Diana Velásquez Alvarado, 21; Julisa Molina Rivera, 31; Jose Jonathan Casarez, 18; Sonia Argentina Guzman, 25; and Daniel Enrique Laso, 9, all from Honduras. Velásquez Alvarado's father, Osmán Velásquez, said she had recently obtained legal residency in the U.S.

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Argentina Guzman's husband, Wilson Garcia, survived the shooting. He said friends and family in the home tried to hide and shield the children after Oropeza walked up to the home and began firing, killing his wife first at the front door.

When offering a reward for Oropeza's capture, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott called the victims "illegal immigrants," which drew widespread backlash. His office apologized on Monday.

A government official in Honduras said the remains of four of the victims would be repatriated. Velásquez Alvarado will be buried in the United States at the request of her sister and her husband, said Wilson Paz, general director of Honduras' migrant protection service.

Osmán Velásquez said his daughter had traveled to the United States without documents eight years ago with the help of a sister who was already living there.

"Her sister convinced me to let her take my daughter. She told me the United States is a country of opportunities and that's true," he said. "But I never imagined it was just for this."

This story has been edited to correct Kean's title and to note that Wilson Garcia was Sonia Argentina Guzman's husband, not Diana Velásquez Alvarado's.

Merchant reported from Washington. Associated Press reporters Jake Bleiberg in Dallas; Paul J. Weber in Austin, Texas; Mike Wyke in Coldspring, Texas; Marlon González in Tegucigalpa, Honduras; and AP researcher Rhonda Shafner in New York contributed to this report.

## Sex offender fatally shot 6, then killed self, official says

By SEAN MURPHY Associated Press

An Oklahoma sex offender who was released from prison early shot his wife, her three children and their two friends in the head and then killed himself, authorities confirmed Wednesday as concerns grew about why he was free as his trial on new sex charges loomed.

Okmulgee Police Chief Joe Prentice said that the victims had each been shot in the head one to three times with a 9 mm pistol when they were found Monday near a creek and in a heavily wooded area in rural Oklahoma.

The bodies apparently had been moved there from where they were originally killed, the scene "staged" before Jesse McFadden, a 39-year-old convicted sex offender, killed himself, Prentice said in the first major update on the case.

The discovery of the bodies near McFadden's home in Henryetta, a town of about 6,000 about 90 miles (145 kilometers) east of Oklahoma City, came on the very day that he was to stand trial on charges that he solicited nude images from another teen while he was imprisoned for rape.

Authorities have declined to release a motive for the shootings, but McFadden had vowed not to return to prison in a series of ominous messages with his young victim.

According to screen grabs of the messages, forwarded to KOKI in Tulsa by the now 23-year-old woman McFadden allegedly groomed from prison, he said he was having success at a marketing job and "making great money." His "great life" was now crumbling, he wrote, because of the soliciting and possessing images of child sex abuse charges.

"Now it's all gone," he texted. "I told you I wouldn't go back."

"This is all on you for continuing this," he finished.

A solicitation conviction can mean a 10-year sentence; the pornography charge could mean 20 years behind bars.

Prentice declined Wednesday to speculate on whether that is what led to the shooting.

"Everyone wants to understand why," he said. "Normal people can't understand why. People who perpetrate crimes like this are evil and normal folks like us can't understand why they do it."

Authorities began a search after 14-year-old Ivy Webster and 16-year-old Brittany Brewer, who were visiting the family over the weekend, were reported missing. Concerns grew when McFadden failed to

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appear at his long-delayed jury trial.

McFadden had been sentenced to 20 years in 2003 for first-degree rape in the sexual assault of a 17-year-old and was freed three years early, in part for good behavior, despite facing new charges that he used a contraband cell phone in 2016 to trade nude photos with the woman, then 16. He was released in 2020 after serving 16 years and nine months, even though the new charges could send him back to prison for many years if convicted.

"And they rushed him out of prison. How?" asked Janette Mayo, whose daughter, Holly Guess, 35, and her grandchildren, Rylee Elizabeth Allen, 17; Michael James Mayo, 15; and Tiffany Dore Guess, 13, were among those killed.

"Oklahoma failed to protect families. And because of that my children -- my daughter and my grandchildren -- are all gone," Mayo said. "I've lost my daughter and my grandchildren and I'm never going to get to see 'em, never going to get to hold them, and it's killing me."

Justin Webster, who said he allowed Ivy to join a sleepover at the McFadden home not knowing anything about the man's past, raised similar concerns about McFadden's release.

"To get to save some other children, to make a change is what I want to do," Webster told The AP during a tearful interview Tuesday in Henryetta, expressing a determination to "tell Ivy's story and our story and get our government officials and everybody to start speaking up loud and keeping those pedophiles in jail."

"There needs to be repercussions and somebody needs to be held accountable. They let a monster out. They did this," Webster said.

A spokeswoman for the Oklahoma Department of Corrections did not immediately respond to a request for comment Wednesday on why McFadden was released despite facing new felony charges.

Prosecutors objected to any early release from prison, noting that McFadden had tied a 17-year-old's hands and feet to bedposts, cut her shirt off and raped her at knifepoint. At one point, he threatened to use the knife on her if she "did not shut up," court records show.

The circumstances have alarmed Republican state Rep. Justin Humphrey, who chairs his chamber's Criminal Justice and Corrections Committee. He vowed to determine how a person could commit sex crimes in prison and be released on good behavior, and how McFadden was able to be in contact with minors while on sex offender supervision.

Rep. Scott Fetgatter, who represents the district where the killings occurred, said what happened was "absolutely unacceptable" and vowed to fix any potential loopholes in the law.

Court records show McFadden was charged with the new crimes in 2017 after a relative of the young woman alerted authorities. Set free in October 2020, he was arrested the next month and then released on \$25,000 bond pending trial, which was repeatedly delayed, in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

McFadden married Holly Guess in May 2022; what she knew of his record isn't clear. Mayo said the family didn't learn about her son-in-law's criminal history until a few months ago.

"He lied to my daughter, and he convinced her it was all just a huge mistake," said Mayo, of Westville.

Lee Berlin, a Tulsa-based defense attorney, told The Associated Press on Wednesday that he's shocked by what he described as a "panoply of errors" in the McFadden case. He said they include releasing McFadden from prison despite serious charges pending against him as well as "low" bail for McFadden once he was arrested on the new charges.

"I'm a sex-crimes defense attorney — this is all I do all day every day — and I'm like, how the hell does that happen?" Berlin said.

The grim discovery could push the number of people slain in mass killings past 100 for the year, according to a database maintained by The AP and USA Today in a partnership with Northeastern University.

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Associated Press reporter Heather Hollingsworth in Mission, Kansas, and data journalist Larry Fenn and researcher Rhonda Shafner in New York contributed to this report.

## McDonald's franchises fined for child labor violations

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — Two 10-year-olds are among 300 children who worked at McDonald's restaurants illegally, a Labor Department investigation of franchisees in Kentucky found.

Agency investigators found the 10-year-olds received little or no pay at a McDonald's in Louisville, the Labor Department said. The franchisee for the Louisville store was among three McDonald's franchisees fined \$212,000 in total by the department.

Louisville's Bauer Food LLC, which operates 10 McDonald's locations, employed 24 minors under the age of 16 to work more hours than legally permitted, the agency said. Among those were two 10-year-old children. The agency said the children sometimes worked as late as 2 a.m., but were not paid.

"Below the minimum age for employment, they prepared and distributed food orders, cleaned the store, worked at the drive-thru window and operated a register," the Labor Department said Tuesday, adding that one child also was allowed to operate a deep fryer, which is prohibited task for workers under 16.

Franchise owner-operator Sean Bauer said the two 10-year-olds cited in the Labor Department's statement were visiting their parent, a night manager, and weren't employees.

"Any 'work' was done at the direction of — and in the presence of — the parent without authorization by franchisee organization management or leadership," Bauer said Wednesday in a prepared statement, adding that they've since reiterated the child visitation policy to employees.

Federal child labor regulations put strict limits on the types of jobs children can perform and the hours they can work.

The Kentucky investigations are part of an ongoing effort by the Labor Department's Wage and Hour Division to stop child labor abuses in the Southeast.

"Too often, employers fail to follow the child labor laws that protect young workers," said division Director Karen Garnett-Civils. "Under no circumstances should there ever be a 10-year-old child working in a fast-food kitchen around hot grills, ovens and deep fryers."

In addition, Walton-based Archways Richwood LLC and Louisville-based Bell Restaurant Group I LLC allowed minors ages 14 and 15 to work beyond allowable hours, the department said. Archway Richwood didn't immediately return a call seeking comment and Brdancat Management Inc., which Bell Restaurant Group is part of, declined comment.

"These reports are unacceptable, deeply troubling and run afoul of the high expectations we have for the entire McDonald's brand," McDonald's USA spokeswoman Tiffanie Boyd said. "We are committed to ensuring our franchisees have the resources they need to foster safe workplaces for all employees and maintain compliance with all labor laws."

## Hate passwords? You're in luck - Google is sidelining them

By DAVID HAMILTON AP Business Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Good news for all the password-haters out there: Google has taken a big step toward making them an afterthought by adding "passkeys" as a more straightforward and secure way to log into its services.

Here's what you need to know:

### WHAT ARE PASSKEYS?

Passkeys offer a safer alternative to passwords and texted confirmation codes. Users won't ever see them directly; instead, an online service like Gmail will use them to communicate directly with a trusted device such as your phone or computer to log you in.

All you'll have to do is verify your identity on the device using a PIN unlock code, biometrics such as your fingerprint or a face scan or a more sophisticated physical security dongle.

Google designed its passkeys to work with a variety of devices, so you can use them on iPhones, Macs and Windows computers as well as Google's own Android phones.

### WHY ARE PASSKEYS NECESSARY?

Thanks to clever hackers and human fallibility, passwords are just too easy to steal or defeat. And mak-

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ing them more complex just opens the door to users defeating themselves.

For starters, many people choose passwords they can remember — and easy-to-recall passwords are also easy to hack. For years, analysis of hacked password caches found that the most common password in use was “password123.” A more recent study by the password manager NordPass found that it’s now just “password.” This isn’t fooling anyone.

Passwords are also frequently compromised in security breaches. Stronger passwords are more secure, but only if you choose ones that are unique, complex and non-obvious. And once you’ve settled on “er-Vex411\$%” as your password, good luck remembering it.

In short, passwords put security and ease of use directly at odds. Software-based password managers, which can create and store complex passwords for you, are valuable tools that can improve security. But even password managers have a master password you need to protect, and that plunges you back into the swamp.

In addition to sidestepping all those problems, passkeys have one additional advantage over passwords. They’re specific to particular websites, so scammer sites can’t steal a passkey from a dating site and use it to raid your bank account.

## HOW DO I START USING PASSKEYS?

First step is to enable them for your Google account. On any trusted phone or computer, open the browser and sign into your Google account. Then visit the page [g.co/passkeys](https://g.co/passkeys) and click the option to “start using passkeys.” Voila! The passkey feature is now activated for that account.

If you’re on an Apple device, you’ll first be prompted to set up the Keychain app if you’re not already using it; it securely stores passwords and now passkeys as well.

Next step is to create the actual passkeys that will connect your trusted device. If you’re using an Android phone that’s already logged into your Google account, you’re most of the way there; Android phones are automatically ready to use passkeys, though you still have enable the function first.

On the same Google account page noted above, look for the “Create a passkey” button. Pressing it will open a window and let you create a passkey either on your current device or on another device. There’s no wrong choice; the system will simply notify you if that passkey already exists.

If you’re on a PC that can’t create a passkey, it will open a QR code that you can scan with the ordinary cameras on iPhones and Android devices. You may have to move the phone closer until the message “Set up passkey” appears on the image. Tap that and you’re on your way.

## AND THEN WHAT?

From that point on, signing into Google will only require you to enter your email address. If you’ve gotten passkeys set up properly, you’ll simply get a message on your phone or other device asking you to for your fingerprint, your face or a PIN.

Of course, your password is still there. But if passkeys take off, odds are good you won’t be needing it very much. You may even choose to delete it from your account someday.

## AP Source: Lionel Messi set to leave PSG at end of season

By JAMES ROBSON and STEVE DOUGLAS AP Sports Writers

Lionel Messi is set to leave Paris Saint-Germain when his contract expires at the end of the season after two years with the French club, a person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly comment on the Argentine great’s status.

The person said Messi’s departure was a mutual decision, with his contract effectively allowed to run down since January.

The news comes a day after PSG suspended the seven-time Ballon d’Or winner following his trip to Saudi Arabia without the club’s permission.

Messi has a commercial contract with Saudi Arabia to promote tourism in the Middle Eastern country and has been linked with a lucrative move there at the end of the season.

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There has also been talk of a return to Barcelona, where he spent the majority of his career, or to the United States to play in MLS.

Barring a late change of heart from him or PSG, this seems certain be his final season in the French capital.

His suspension and news of his impending exit comes at a time when PSG is embroiled in an increasingly fraught French league title race.

Messi was supposed to be training alongside his teammates on Monday, but was instead in Saudi Arabia, holding a falcon on his arm, watching a palm-weaving demonstration and looking around the Arabian Horse Museum as part of his commercial contract with the kingdom to promote tourism there.

It was an expensive trip for the recent World Cup winner, who won't get paid or be allowed to train or play with the team during his suspension.

It looks like it will be a disappointing end to a turbulent and somewhat underwhelming two-season spell at a club where soap opera-style drama, on and off the field, is rarely far away given the presence of other superstars like Kylian Mbappé and Neymar in the squad.

It also exposes the tensions now that Qatar and Saudi Arabia — gulf neighbors and fierce recent rivals in regional politics — have become major influencers in the world of soccer.

Messi is right in the middle of it all, through his own making and because everyone — inside and outside the game — wants a piece of one of the all-time greats.

The Argentina forward never intended to be playing for PSG, a club owned by Qatar Sports Investments, but found himself moving there in 2021 after previous team Barcelona, the soccer love of his life, plunged into financial problems that still persist.

Immediately, it thrust Messi into the hands of the Qataris, given QSI is a subsidiary of the emirate's sovereign wealth fund, and invited accusations against him of sportswashing.

Messi placed himself in an even more delicate position last year when, just a few months before the World Cup in Qatar, he signed up to be essentially an ambassador for Saudi Arabia.

Hence this week's trip to the kingdom, which he decided to make without PSG's permission and covering a period when the squad had been asked to train in response to the team's 3-1 loss at home against Lorient on Sunday.

According to French daily *L'Equipe*, PSG coach Christophe Galtier had pledged to give his players Monday and Tuesday off if they beat Lorient. Instead, the team trained on Monday and had Tuesday off.

In the wake of Messi's resulting suspension, the Saudi Tourism Authority released a long statement detailing the movements of the man it called a "football icon" and his family on a day he was supposed to still be in France. Other aspects of the trip included "feeding the indigenous Arabian gazelles," while the Messis apparently also were "charmed by the authenticity and architecture of At-Turaif and the beauty of the Arabian horses."

It would make interesting reading for PSG president Nasser Al-Khelaifi, chairman of QSI and beIN Media Group, which has been the victim of broadcasting piracy in Saudi Arabia in recent years.

Indeed, Saudi Arabia and Qatar are engaged in a proxy battle to be the epicenter of Asian soccer. The presidency of the Asian Football Confederation is vacant in 2027 and both have potential candidates lined up.

Since elections in February, the presidents of the Saudi and Qatari soccer federations — Yasser Almisheal and Sheikh Hamad Al Thani, respectively — are members of the FIFA Council, the executive body that makes the decisions in world soccer.

The neighbors and rivals were competing to host the 2027 Asian Cup, until a solution emerged that rewarded both.

Qatar stepped up when China handed back hosting rights to the 2023 edition, citing the COVID-19 pandemic, and that tournament will start in Doha in January. The AFC then awarded Saudi Arabia the 2027 edition — a likely audition for ambitions to stage a future World Cup, possibly in 2034.

It does not stop at soccer. Doha will host the multi-sport Asian Games in 2030 and Qatar is widely expected to launch another campaign to host an Olympics in the city, this time in 2036.

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The 2034 Asian Games are in Riyadh, and Saudi Arabia won a bid to host the 2029 Asian Winter Games in a futuristic mountains resort, Trojena, that is not yet built.

All of this, of course, is way above Messi's head but his decision-making over the past two years has placed him front and center in this regional contest.

His ties with PSG may be coming to end, however. His contract expires at the end of this season and there's uncertainty about his next destination, with reports linking him to Inter Miami in MLS, a return to Barcelona and, naturally, a money-spinning move to a Saudi team, potentially Al-Hilal.

Playing for Al-Hilal would place him in direct confrontation with longtime rival Cristiano Ronaldo, who has been at Saudi team Al-Nassr since the start of the year.

Shifting the Messi-Ronaldo rivalry to Saudi Arabia would sum up modern-day soccer, with the riches of the Middle East proving as enticing to two of the game's GOATs as they are to FIFA and other sports bodies.

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AP Sports Writer Graham Dunbar in Geneva contributed to this report.

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More AP soccer: <https://apnews.com/hub/soccer> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## How a Fed increase could affect credit card debt, auto loans

By CORA LEWIS and ADRIANA MORGA Associated Press Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — The Federal Reserve has raised its key interest rate yet again in its drive to cool inflation, a move that will directly affect most Americans.

On Wednesday, the central bank boosted its benchmark rate by a quarter-point to 5.1%. Rates on credit cards, mortgages and auto loans, which have been surging since the Fed began raising rates last year, all stand to rise even more. The result will be more burdensome loan costs for both consumers and businesses.

On the other hand, many banks are now offering higher rates on savings accounts, giving savers the opportunity to earn more interest.

Economists worry, though, that the Fed's streak of 10 rate hikes since March 2022 could eventually cause the economy to slow too much and cause a recession.

Here's what to know:

### WHAT'S PROMPTING THE RATE INCREASES?

The short answer: inflation. Inflation has been slowing in recent months, but it's still high. Measured over a year earlier, consumer prices were up 5% in March, down sharply from February's 6% year-over-year increase.

The Fed's goal is to slow consumer spending, thereby reducing demand for homes, cars and other goods and services, eventually cooling the economy and lowering prices.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell has acknowledged in the past that aggressively raising rates would bring "some pain" for households but said that doing so is necessary to crush high inflation.

### WHO IS MOST AFFECTED?

Anyone borrowing money to make a large purchase, such as a home, car or large appliance, will likely take a hit. The new rate will also increase monthly payments and costs for any consumer who is already paying interest on credit card debt.

"Consumers should focus on building up emergency savings and paying down debt," said Greg McBride, Bankrate.com's chief financial analyst. "Even if this proves to be the final Fed rate hike, interest rates are still high and will remain that way."

### WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH CREDIT CARDS?

Even before the Fed's latest move, credit card borrowing had reached the highest level since 1996, according to Bankrate.com.

The most recent data available showed that 46% of people were carrying debt from month to month, up from 39% a year ago. Total credit card balances were \$986 billion in the fourth quarter of 2022, according to the Fed, a record high, though that amount isn't adjusted for inflation.



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For those who don't qualify for low-rate credit cards because of weak credit scores, the higher interest rates are already affecting their balances.

## HOW WILL AN INCREASE AFFECT CREDIT CARD RATES?

The Fed doesn't directly dictate how much interest you pay on your credit card debt. But the Fed's rate is the basis for your bank's prime rate. In combination with other factors, such as your credit score, the prime rate helps determine the Annual Percentage Rate, or APR, on your credit card.

The latest increase will likely raise the APR on your credit card 0.25%. So, if you have a 20.9% rate, which is the average according to the Fed's data, it might increase to 21.15%.

If you don't carry a balance from month to month, the APR is less important.

But suppose you have a \$4,000 credit balance and your interest rate is 20%. If you made only a fixed payment of \$110 per month, it would take you a bit under five years to pay off your credit card debt, and you would pay about \$2,200 in interest.

If your APR increased by a percentage point, paying off your balance would take two months longer and cost an additional \$215.

## WHAT IF I HAVE MONEY TO SAVE?

After years of paying low rates for savers, some banks are finally offering better interest on deposits. Though the increases may seem small, compounding interest adds up over the years.

Interest on savings accounts doesn't always track what the Fed does. But as rates have continued to rise, some banks have improved their terms for savers as well. Even if you're only keeping modest savings in your bank account, you could make more significant gains over the long term by finding an account with a better rate.

While the biggest national banks have yet to dramatically change the rates on their savings accounts (clocking in at an average of just 0.23%, according to Bankrate), some mid-size and smaller banks have made changes more in line with the Fed's moves.

Online banks in particular — which save money by not having brick-and-mortar branches and associated expenses — are now offering savings accounts with annual percentage yields of between 3% and 4%, or even higher, as well as 4% or higher on one-year Certificates of Deposit (CDs). Some promotional rates can reach as high as 5%.

## WILL THIS AFFECT HOME OWNERSHIP?

Last week, mortgage buyer Freddie Mac reported that the average rate on the benchmark 30-year mortgage edged up to 6.43% from 6.39% the week prior. A year ago, the average rate was lower: 5.10%. Higher rates can add hundreds of dollars a month to mortgage payments.

Rates for 30-year mortgages usually track the moves in the 10-year Treasury yield. Rates can also be influenced by investors' expectations for future inflation, global demand for U.S. Treasuries and what the Fed does.

Most mortgages last for decades, so if you already have a mortgage, you won't be impacted. But if you're looking to buy and already paying more for food, gas and other necessities, a higher mortgage rate could put home ownership out of reach.

## WHAT IF I WANT TO BUY A CAR?

With shortages of computer chips and other parts easing, automakers are producing more vehicles. Many are even reducing prices or offering limited discounts. But rising loan rates and lower used-vehicle trade-in values have erased much of the savings on monthly payments.

Since the Fed began raising rates in March 2022, the average new-vehicle loan rate has jumped from 4.5% to 7%, according to Edmunds data. Used vehicle loans dropped slightly to 11.1%. Loan durations average around 70 months — nearly six years — for new and used vehicles.

Largely because of rate increases, the average monthly payment for both new and used vehicles has risen since March 2022, Edmunds says. The average new vehicle payment is up \$72 to \$729, Edmunds says. For used vehicles, the payment rose \$20 a month to \$546.

The higher rates will keep out of the market people who have the ability to wait for more favorable

terms, said Joseph Yoon, Edmunds' consumer insights analyst.

"But with inventory levels improving, it's a matter of time before discounts and incentives start coming back into the equation," attracting more buyers, Yoon said.

New vehicle average prices are down from the end of last year to \$47,749. But they're still high compared with even a year ago. The average used vehicle price dropped 7% from last May's peak, to \$28,729, but prices are edging back up.

Financing a new vehicle now costs \$8,655 in interest. Analysts say that's enough to chase many out of the auto market.

Any Fed rate increase is typically passed through to auto borrowers, though it will be offset a bit by subsidized rates from manufacturers.

#### WHAT ABOUT MY JOB?

The nation's employers kept hiring in March, adding a healthy 236,000 jobs. The unemployment rate fell to 3.5%, just above the 53-year low of 3.4% set in January. At the same time, the report from the Labor Department suggested a slowdown, with pay growth also easing.

Some economists argue that layoffs could help slow rising prices, and that a tight labor market fuels wage growth and higher inflation.

Economists expect the unemployment rate to go up to 3.6% in April, a slight increase from January's half-century low of 3.4%.

#### WILL THIS AFFECT STUDENT LOANS?

Borrowers who take out new private student loans should prepare to pay more as rates increase. The current range for federal loans is between about 5% and 7.5%.

That said, payments on federal student loans are suspended with zero interest until summer 2023 as part of an emergency measure put in place early in the pandemic. President Joe Biden has also announced some loan forgiveness, of up to \$10,000 for most borrowers, and up to \$20,000 for Pell Grant recipients — a policy that's now being challenged in the courts.

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AP Business Writers Christopher Rugaber in Washington, Tom Krisher in Detroit and Damian Troise and Ken Sweet in New York contributed to this report.

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## Galactic gobble: Star swallows planet in one big gulp

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — For the first time, scientists have caught a star in the act of swallowing a planet — not just a nibble or bite, but one big gulp.

Astronomers on Wednesday reported their observations of what appeared to be a gas giant around the size of Jupiter or bigger being eaten by its star. The sun-like star had been puffing up with old age for eons and finally got so big that it engulfed the close-orbiting planet.

It's a gloomy preview of what will happen to Earth when our sun morphs into a red giant and gobbles the four inner planets.

"If it's any consolation, this will happen in about 5 billion years," said co-author Morgan MacLeod of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

This galactic feast happened between 10,000 and 15,000 years ago near the Aquila constellation when the star was around 10 billion years old. As the planet went down the stellar hatch, there was a swift hot outburst of light, followed by a long-lasting stream of dust shining brightly in cold infrared energy, the researchers said.

While there had been previous signs of other stars nibbling at planets and their digestive aftermath, this

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was the first time the swallow itself was observed, according to the study appearing in the journal Nature. Massachusetts Institute of Technology researcher Kishalay De spotted the luminous outburst in 2020 while reviewing sky scans taken by the California Institute of Technology's Palomar Observatory. It took additional observations and data-crunching to unravel the mystery: Instead of a star gobbling up its companion star, this one had devoured its planet.

Given a star's lifetime of billions of years, the swallow itself was quite brief — occurring in essentially one fell swoop, said Caltech's Mansi Kasliwal, who was part of the study.

The findings are "very plausible," said Carole Haswell, an astrophysicist at Britain's Open University, who had no role in the research. Haswell led a team in 2010 that used the Hubble Space Telescope to identify the star WASP-12 in the process of eating its planet.

"This is a different sort of eating. This star gobbled a whole planet in one gulp," Haswell said in an email. "In contrast, WASP-12 b and the other hot Jupiters we have previously studied are being delicately licked and nibbled."

Astronomers don't know if more planets are circling this star at a safer distance. If so, De said they may have thousands of years before becoming the star's second or third course.

Now that they know what to look for, the researchers will be on the lookout for more cosmic gulps. They suspect thousands of planets around other stars will suffer the same fate as this one did and, eventually, so will our solar system.

"All that we see around us, all the stuff that we've built around us, this will all be gone in a flash," De said.

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

## Griner back to work on and off court after whirlwind trips

By JOHN MARSHALL AP Sports Writer

PHOENIX (AP) — Brittney Griner caught a flight to Washington, D.C., to attend the White House Correspondents' Association dinner, landed back at Phoenix around 4 a.m. and was up five hours later for the start of training camp.

After going through her first workout with the Phoenix Mercury, she hopped on a plane to New York to attend the Met Gala, schmoozing with Usher, Patrick Mahomes and Dwyane Wade before returning to the desert. Griner didn't get back until after 1 a.m. and was back on the court with the Mercury later that morning.

Whew!

"It's been a whirlwind," Griner said Wednesday at the Mercury's media day. "I have a lot of respect for the stars that do that. It's not me. I don't know how they do it. It was amazing, two big honors to be able to go and be there, but I'm taking a big nap today."

Griner mostly kept a low profile since a nearly 10-month detainment in Russia on drug-related charges ended with a prisoner swap in December. Now that the WNBA season is just around the corner, the Mercury star has been front and center on the court and off it.

Griner's return to the Mercury rekindles hope the franchise can make another run to the WNBA Finals. The extra exposure from being detained in Russia for having vape cartridges containing cannabis oil in her luggage has given Griner a platform to advocate for other Americans being detained abroad.

"It's cool because now I'm able to reach even more people and bring them into the WNBA, but then also keep them aware of other people that are still left behind right now and trying to get home," Griner said. "Just using that bigger outlet to continue to support others that don't have the spotlight or the media coverage that they should be able to get."

Griner has been an LGBTQ+ activist since publicly coming out in 2013 and became the first openly gay athlete to be sponsored by Nike. She made an appearance last month at a women's empowerment luncheon held during the Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network event and last week said she will

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use her elevated platform to continue fighting for LGBTQ+ rights during her first news conference since being released.

"That definitely is high on the list of things that I will be fighting for and speaking up against," she said. "Everyone deserves the right to play, everyone deserves the right to come here to sit in these seats and feel safe and not feel like there's a threat or they can't be who they are. I think it's a crime to separate someone for any reason."

Following her detainment in Russia, Griner has taken an active role in trying to help bring home other Americans detained in foreign countries.

Griner announced last week she is working with Bring Our Families Home, a campaign formed in 2022 by the family members of American hostages and wrongful detainees held overseas. She said her team has been in contact with the family of Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich, who is being detained in Russia on espionage charges.

"I would say to everyone that is being wrongly detained across the world: Stay strong. Keep fighting. Don't give up. Just keep waking up," she said. "Find a little routine and stick to that routine. Just keep pushing, because we're not going to stop. We're not going to stop fighting. We're not going to stop bringing awareness to everyone that's left behind right now."

Griner took small steps after her release, reacclimating herself to life at home while rebuilding her body so it will be ready to play basketball again.

The activity has ramped up on and off the court as the season has drawn nearer, but little else has changed about Griner.

She still is one of the best basketball players in the world, still an active advocate for those who need it, still an ebullient force to those who enter her orbit.

"She looks the same and even when she got back, the first time I saw her it was like, it's still BG," Mercury forward Sophie Cunningham said. "I'm like, why do you still have this vibe about you? I love it, but are you OK? But no, I am super proud of where she's at. I'm proud of where she's at mentally, emotionally, and physically."

AP sports: <https://apnews.com/hub/sports> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## Real or not, reported Kremlin drone attack unsettles Russia

By JIM HEINTZ Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — As Russian officials tell it, two Ukrainian drones flew into the very heart of Moscow under the cover of darkness, reaching the Kremlin before they were shot down at the last minute.

A cloud of questions hangs over the claim.

Why did the Kremlin announcement come about 12 hours after the purported incident? Why did no reports of explosions emerge prior to the announcement on the messaging apps that remain full of chatter despite Russia's crackdown on media and criticism of the war in Ukraine? Why didn't videos of the purported attacks appear until after the announcement? Why haven't the images been verified?

A drone attack on the Kremlin would be the most severe penetration of Russian airspace since German teen Matthias Rust landed his little single-engine plane on the fringes of Red Square in 1987. Announcing the attack — or even faking it — risks Russia undermining its citizens' trust in its frequent assertions of military superiority.

Adding to that humiliation is that the incident occurred less than a week before Victory Day, Russia's paramount military holiday. In some of the videos of the claimed attack, the decorated viewing stands and tribune for the day's ritual Red Square military parade can be seen prominently.

For President Vladimir Putin, the confession of Ukrainian drones reaching the Kremlin could be justification for a brutal step-up of attacks on Ukraine. Russian officials persistently contend — repeated evidence to the contrary — that the military goes after only military targets.

Severe retaliation is already in the wind, including threats aimed specifically at Ukrainian President

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Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who denied attacking the Kremlin.

"After today's terrorist act, no variant remains other than the physical elimination of Zelenskyy and his clique," said former Russian president and deputy chairman of the Russian security council, Dmitry Medvedev,

The chairman of the powerful lower house of parliament, Vyacheslav Volodin, compared the Ukrainian government with the terrorist Islamic State and said he will demand "the use of weapons capable of destroying it."

Russia's nuclear doctrine says the country can use nuclear weapons if it comes under a nuclear strike or if it faces an attack with conventional weapons that threatens "the very existence" of the Russian state. The West has accused Putin of nuclear saber-rattling during the Ukraine war

But Phillips O'Brien, a professor of strategic studies at University of St. Andrews, downplayed the possibility related to the alleged Kremlin attack.

"You're not going to say, 'Now that there has been an attack with a tiny drone, now we can go nuclear,'" he said.

Commentator Abbas Gallyamov, a former Putin speechwriter who has fled the country, also raised doubts.

"If enemy drones reach the Kremlin, it means that any other object on the territory of the European part of Russia is generally defenseless," he said. "Therefore, I do not believe that this was a provocation conceived by the Kremlin in order to influence public opinion."

If Ukraine had indeed attacked, "consider it a performative strike, a demonstration of capability and a declaration of intent: Don't think Moscow is safe," said Mark Galeotti, a Russian military and security analyst at University College, London.

Less clear, he said on Twitter, "is whether it shakes Russians' nerve or angers them."

Russians' nerves already have been frayed by attacks, either likely from Ukraine or from domestic opponents, that have risen sharply in recent weeks.

Two freight trains derailed this week in bomb explosions in the Bryansk region that borders Ukraine. Notably, the region's authorities did not blame Ukraine, which could be an attempt to whitewash Ukrainian sabotage capacities.

But Bryansk authorities in March claimed that two people were shot and killed when alleged Ukrainian saboteurs penetrated the region. The region also has been hit with sporadic cross-border shelling, including one that killed four people in April.

Ukrainian drones reportedly have penetrated deep into Russia several times. In December, Russia claimed to have shot down drones at airfields in the Saratov and Ryazan regions. Three soldiers were reported killed in the attack in Saratov, which targeted an important military airfield.

Earlier, Russia reported shooting down a Ukrainian drone that targeted the headquarters of its Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol in Russia-annexed Crimea.

In addition, two prominent supporters of Russia's war in Ukraine have been killed on their home ground. Darya Dugina, a commentator with a nationalist TV channel, died in a car bombing outside Moscow that officials blamed on Ukraine. And authorities said Ukrainian intelligence was behind the killing of prominent pro-war blogger Vladlen Tatarsky, who was killed in April when a bomb inside a statuette he was handed at a party exploded.

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

## **Bolsonaro home searched as Brazil probes fake vaccine cards**

By CARLA BRIDI and DAVID BILLER Associated Press

BRASILIA, Brazil (AP) — Brazil's Federal Police searched former President Jair Bolsonaro's home and seized his phone Wednesday in what they said was an investigation into alleged falsification of COVID-19 vaccine cards. Several other locations also were searched and a half dozen people faced arrest, police said.

The former president confirmed the search of his residence while speaking with reporters, as did his

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wife, Michelle, on her Instagram account.

A police official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the person wasn't authorized to speak publicly, said Bolsonaro would be questioned at Federal Police headquarters and confirmed that one of his closest allies, Mauro Cid, was arrested.

Asked about the search of Bolsonaro's home, the Federal Police's press office provided a statement saying officers were carrying out 16 searches and six arrests in Rio de Janeiro related to the introduction of fraudulent data related to the COVID-19 vaccine into the nation's health system. The statement didn't name Bolsonaro or Cid.

Local media reported that the vaccine cards of Bolsonaro, his advisers and his family members were altered. The police statement said the investigation focused on cards altered in order to comply with U.S. vaccine requirements to enter the country.

"There was no adulteration on my part, it didn't happen," Bolsonaro told reporters after the search. "I didn't take the vaccine, period. I never denied that."

In an interview for Jovem Pan television, Bolsonaro said his vaccination records were not required for any of his trips to the U.S.

"The way heads of state are treated is different than for the common citizen. Everything is arranged ahead of time, and in my travels to the United States, I was not at any time required to have a vaccination card," Bolsonaro said.

Bolsonaro visited the U.S. at least three times after it began generally requiring in November 2021 that non-citizens be fully vaccinated to enter. He went in June 2022 for the Summit of the Americas, September 2022 for the U.N. General Assembly and last December after he left office for a stay in Florida.

The investigation raises questions about whether falsified vaccine information might have been included in documentation for any members of the former president's entourage during those trips.

During the pandemic, Bolsonaro spent months sowing doubt about the efficacy of the vaccine and defiantly refusing to get a shot. In September 2021, that had prompted doubt about whether he would be able to attend the U.N.'s General Assembly in New York, though he did attend.

The search adds to Bolsonaro's mounting legal headaches. Federal Police have questioned him at their Brasilia headquarters twice in the past month related to separate investigations — first, about three sets of diamond jewelry he received from Saudi Arabia and, second, regarding his potential role in sparking the Jan. 8 uprising by his supporters in the capital.

Bolsonaro is also the subject of several investigations by Brazil's electoral court into his actions during the presidential election campaign, particularly his unsubstantiated claims that the nation's electronic voting system is susceptible to fraud. Those threaten to strip him of his political rights and render him unable to run for office in upcoming elections.

Separately, Bolsonaro and his allies are also facing a sprawling Supreme Court-led investigation regarding the spread of alleged falsehoods and disinformation in Brazil, and a federal police investigation for the alleged genocide of the Indigenous Yanomami people in the Amazon rainforest by encouraging illegal miners to invade their territory and thereby endangering their lives.

The former president has denied any wrongdoing in all of the various cases under investigation.

The police statement said that the insertion of false COVID-19 data occurred between November 2021 and December 2022, and enabled the people whose vaccine cards were altered to comply with the U.S. vaccine requirement to enter the country.

Bolsonaro's former press adviser and lawyer Fabio Wajngarten confirmed to reporters at the Federal Police headquarters in Brasilia that military police officer and Bolsonaro's adviser Max Guilherme was arrested and had already given his statement to investigators.

Cid, an army lieutenant colonel who has been Bolsonaro's right-hand man, reportedly had not yet talked with investigators.

Cid reportedly is a key figure in the scandal over jewels given to Bolsonaro. The former president is accused of either failing to declare the jewels as official gifts to the Brazilian presidency or trying to bring

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them into the country as private gifts without paying required taxes.

One of the sets was seized at Sao Paulo airport, and reports have said Cid tried to intervene with authorities there in efforts to retrieve them on Bolsonaro's behalf.

The investigation into the coronavirus documents involves alterations related to "ideological agendas" and meant to "sustain the discourse aimed at attacking the vaccine against COVID-19," the police statement said.

For months, Bolsonaro insisted that the anti-malarial hydroxychloroquine was a treatment for COVID-19, despite a lack of robust medical evidence. At one point, he warned Brazilians that there would be no legal recourse against Pfizer for anyone suffering irreversible side effects. He also linked the vaccine to AIDS — an assertion rejected by doctors and scientists — prompting a justice of Brazil's top court to order his comments be investigated.

Brazil's pandemic death toll was the second-highest in the world, though it ranks about 20th in per capita deaths. A congressional investigation determined Bolsonaro should be indicted for bungling the nation's COVID-19 response, including his support for unproven treatments.

Bolsonaro recently returned to Brazil after several months outside Orlando, where he mostly kept a low profile aside from a few speaking engagements. Over the weekend, as he seeks to reclaim his position of influence in Brazil, he traveled to the interior of Sao Paulo state and appeared at a huge agriculture show.

Billler reported from Rio de Janeiro.

## **FTC: Facebook misled parents, failed to guard kids' privacy**

By BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writer

U.S. regulators say Facebook misled parents and failed to protect the privacy of children using its Messenger Kids app, including misrepresenting the access it provided to app developers to private user data.

As a result, The Federal Trade Commission on Wednesday proposed sweeping changes to a 2020 privacy order with Facebook — now called Meta — that would prohibit it from profiting from data it collects on users under 18. This would include data collected through its virtual-reality products. The FTC said the company has failed to fully comply with the 2020 order.

Meta would also be subject to other limitations, including with its use of face-recognition technology and be required to provide additional privacy protections for its users.

"Facebook has repeatedly violated its privacy promises," said Samuel Levine, director of the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection. "The company's recklessness has put young users at risk, and Facebook needs to answer for its failures."

Meta called the announcement a "political stunt."

"Despite three years of continual engagement with the FTC around our agreement, they provided no opportunity to discuss this new, totally unprecedented theory. Let's be clear about what the FTC is trying to do: usurp the authority of Congress to set industry-wide standards and instead single out one American company while allowing Chinese companies, like TikTok, to operate without constraint on American soil," Meta said in a prepared statement.

The Menlo Park, California company added that it will "vigorously fight" the FTC's action and expects to prevail.

Facebook launched Messenger Kids in 2017, pitching it as a way for children to chat with family members and friends approved by their parents. The app doesn't give kids separate Facebook or Messenger accounts. Rather, it works as an extension of a parent's account, and parents get controls, such as the ability to decide with whom their kids can chat.

At the time, Facebook said Messenger Kids wouldn't show ads or collect data for marketing, though it would collect some data it said was necessary to run the service.

But child-development experts raised immediate concerns.

In early 2018, a group of 100 experts, advocates and parenting organizations contested Facebook's

claims that the app was filling a need kids had for a messaging service. The group included nonprofits, psychiatrists, pediatricians, educators and the children's music singer Raffi Cavoukian.

"Messenger Kids is not responding to a need — it is creating one," the letter said. "It appeals primarily to children who otherwise would not have their own social media accounts." Another passage criticized Facebook for "targeting younger children with a new product."

Facebook, in response to the letter, said at the time that the app "helps parents and children to chat in a safer way," and emphasized that parents are "always in control" of their kids' activity.

The FTC now says this has not been the case. The 2020 privacy order, which required Facebook to pay a \$5 billion fine, required an independent assessor to evaluate the company's privacy practices. The FTC said the assessor "identified several gaps and weaknesses in Facebook's privacy program."

The FTC also said Facebook, from late 2017 until 2019, "misrepresented that parents could control whom their children communicated with through its Messenger Kids product."

"Despite the company's promises that children using Messenger Kids would only be able to communicate with contacts approved by their parents, children in certain circumstances were able to communicate with unapproved contacts in group text chats and group video calls," the FTC said.

Meta critics applauded the FTC's action. Jeffrey Chester, the executive director of the nonprofit Center for Digital Democracy, called it a "a long-overdue intervention into what has become a huge national crisis for young people."

Meta, and with its platforms like Instagram and Facebook, Chester added, "are at the center of a powerful commercialized social media system that has spiraled out of control, threatening the mental health and well-being of children and adolescents."

The company, he added, has not done enough to address existing problems — and is now unleashing "even more powerful data gathering and targeting tactics fueled by immersive content, virtual reality and artificial intelligence, while pushing youth further into the metaverse with no meaningful safeguards."

As part of the proposed changes to the FTC's 2020 order (which was announced in 2019 and finalized later), Meta would also be required to pause launching new products and services without "written confirmation from the assessor that its privacy program is in full compliance" with the order.

Meta has 30 days to respond to the FTC's latest action.

## **Police: Serbia school shooter had list of students to target**

By JOVANA GEC and DUSAN STOJANOVIC Associated Press

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP) — A 13-year-old who opened fire Wednesday at his school in Serbia's capital drew sketches of classrooms and made a list of children he intended to target in a meticulously planned attack, police said. He killed eight fellow students and a guard before calling the police and being arrested.

Mass shootings are extremely rare in the Balkan region, although Serbia is awash in guns left over from the wars of the 1990s. No mass shootings have been reported at Serbian schools in recent years.

The shooter killed a school guard and then three students in a hallway of the Vladislav Ribnikar school in central Belgrade, according to senior police official Veselin Milic. He then entered a history classroom close to the school entrance and opened fire again, Milic said. Seven girls and one boy were killed, he said.

The victims included a girl with French citizenship, French Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Anne-Claire Legendre said in a statement. She provided no other details.

Ljiljana Radicevic told The Associated Press that her granddaughter was also killed in the shooting. Ana was near the school entrance when the assailant shot the school guard, "and then he shot at my Ana," Radicevic said. "As soon as she did not answer, I knew it was over." Radicevic did not provide Ana's full name or age.

Six children and a teacher were also hospitalized. Two children remained in serious condition after hourslong surgeries, doctors said later Wednesday.

The assailant called police himself after the shooting was over. Authorities also received a call reporting the shooting two minutes earlier.



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"The child who committed the crime said when he called the police that he shot some people in the school and that ... he is a psychopath who needs to calm down," Milic told state television station RTS. "He said that after committing (the crime) he was caught by fear and panic and funny breathing, and that it was the right thing to call the police and report the event."

The father of a student said the shooter entered his daughter's classroom, then fired at her teacher and classmates as they ducked under their desks. Most students escaped through a back door, according to a local official.

Milic said the shooter planned the attack for a month, sketching classrooms and writing out a list of children he planned to "liquidate." Authorities said they did not know a motive for the shooting. It was unclear if he shot any of the students whom he named on his list.

The rarity of such attacks added to the shock many felt. Commentators on television and officials repeatedly said it was the kind of thing they expected to read about elsewhere, particularly in the United States. In the last mass shooting, a Balkan war veteran in 2013 killed 13 people, including family members and neighbors, in a central Serbian village.

Police identified the shooter as 13-year-old Kosta Kecmanovic, a student at the Vladislav Ribnikar school. He can't face criminal charges because he is under 14, the Belgrade prosecutor's office said. Social services will determine what happens to him.

He carried two guns belonging to his father — at least one a handgun — and four Molotov cocktails, officials said. Interior Minister Bratislav Gasic said the weapons were licensed and kept in a safe but that the teen apparently knew the code. The father was also arrested but has yet to be charged.

It's not clear how many rounds were fired, but police said the shooter reloaded the handgun.

Authorities declared three days of nationwide mourning starting Friday. People left flowers and lit candles at a outside the school.

"Today is one of the toughest days in Serbia's modern history," said the populist President Aleksandar Vucic, who addressed the nation in a somber manner, crying occasionally. "Unfortunately, Serbia is united in grief."

Vucic said the shooter was taken to a psychiatric clinic and that the police also detained the teenager's mother. He didn't elaborate.

He also listed a set of proposed measures to improve gun control; tighten media and internet restrictions for violent content; and conduct drug tests in schools.

TV footage showed a commotion as police officers led the shooter with his head covered to a car. Police sealed off the streets around the school. Authorities later carried body bags to a waiting van.

Police said they received a call about the shooting at around 8:40 a.m., as classes resumed after a long weekend for the May 1 holiday.

"I was able to hear the shooting. It was nonstop," said a student who was in a sports class when gunfire erupted. Her mother asked that her name be withheld because of her age. "I didn't know what was happening."

She described the shooter as a "quiet guy" with good grades.

Milan Milosevic, whose daughter was in the history class where some shooting took place, told N1 television that he rushed to the school when he heard what had happened. His daughter called him to say she had escaped the building and was unharmed.

"He (the shooter) fired first at the teacher and then the children who ducked under the desks," Milosevic said his daughter told him.

Milan Nedeljkovic, the mayor of the Belgrade area of Vracar where the shooting happened, said most of the students were removed from the school through a back door.

"We have video surveillance, but now this is a lesson, we need metal detectors too," he said. "It is a huge tragedy ... something like this (happening) in Belgrade."

While such attacks are rare, experts have repeatedly warned of the danger posed by the number of weapons in a highly divided country, where convicted war criminals are glorified and violence against minority groups often goes unpunished.

They also note that decades of instability stemming from the conflicts of the 1990s as well as ongoing economic hardship could trigger such outbursts.

Luka Babic, a former student at Vladislav Ribnikar, bemoaned the culture of violence.

"We can't put the blame on this school or its teachers. ... It's a tragedy of a society that promotes violence," Babic said. "We live in the society of violence, and it has been promoted in media, in public spaces, on social media."

Education Minister Branko Ruzic was quick to blame "the cancerous, pernicious influence of the internet, video games, so-called Western values." Such criticism is common in Serbia, where pro-Russian and anti-Western sentiment have thrived in recent years.

Ruzic said Belgrade schools, which canceled classes after the shooting, will reopen on Thursday. Authorities have not said when classes will resume at the Vladislav Ribnikar school.

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Associated Press video journalist Ivana Bzganovic contributed to this report.

## US approves 1st vaccine for RSV after decades of attempts

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. approved the first vaccine for RSV on Wednesday, shots to protect older adults against a respiratory virus that's most notorious for attacking babies but endangers their grandparents, too.

The Food and Drug Administration decision makes GSK's shot, called Arexvy, the first of several potential vaccines in the pipeline for RSV to be licensed anywhere.

The move sets the stage for adults 60 and older to get vaccinated this fall — but first, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention must decide if every senior really needs RSV protection or only those considered at high risk from the respiratory syncytial virus. CDC's advisers will debate that question in June.

After decades of failure in the quest for an RSV vaccine, doctors are anxious to finally have something to offer — especially after a virus surge that strained hospitals last fall.

"This is a great first step ... to protect older persons from serious RSV disease," said Dr. William Schaffner, medical director of the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, who wasn't involved with its development. Next, "we're going to be working our way down the age ladder" for what's expected to be a string of new protections.

The FDA is considering competitor Pfizer's similar vaccine for older adults. Pfizer also is seeking approval to vaccinate pregnant women, so their babies are born with some of mom's protection.

There isn't a vaccine for kids yet but high-risk infants often get monthly doses of a protective drug during RSV season — and European regulators recently approved the first one-dose option. The FDA also is considering whether to approve Sanofi and AstraZeneca's one-shot medicine.

"This is a very exciting time with multiple potential RSV solutions coming out after years of really nothing," said Dr. Phil Dormitzer, chief of vaccine research and development for GSK, formerly known as GlaxoSmithKline.

RSV is a cold-like nuisance for most people but it can be life-threatening for the very young, the elderly and people with certain high-risk health problems. It can impede babies' breathing by inflaming their tiny airways, or creep deep into seniors' lungs to cause pneumonia.

In the U.S., about 58,000 children younger than 5 are hospitalized for RSV each year and several hundred die. Among older adults, as many as 177,000 are hospitalized with RSV and up to 14,000 die annually.

Why has it taken so long to come up with a vaccine? The field suffered a major setback in the 1960s when an experimental shot worsened infections in children. Scientists finally figured out a better way to develop these vaccines — although modern candidates still were first tested with adults.

GSK's new vaccine for older adults trains the immune system to recognize a protein on RSV's surface, and contains an ingredient called an adjuvant to further rev up that immune reaction.

In an international study of about 25,000 people 60 and older, one dose of the vaccine was nearly 83% effective at preventing RSV lung infections, and reduced the risk of severe infections by 94%.

To see how long protection lasts, GSK is tracking study participants for three years, comparing some who get just one vaccination during that time and others given a yearly booster.

Shot reactions were typical of vaccinations, such as muscle pain and fatigue.

There was a hint of a rare but serious risk — one case of Guillain-Barre syndrome, which can cause usually temporary paralysis, and two cases of a type of brain and spinal cord inflammation. The FDA said it was requiring the company to continue studying if there really is a link to the vaccine.

If the CDC ultimately recommends the vaccination for some or even all seniors, it will add another shot for the fall along with their yearly flu vaccine – and maybe another COVID-19 booster.

“We’ll have to educate the population that this virus that not everyone has heard about is actually an important threat to their health in the wintertime,” said Schaffner, an infectious disease expert at Vanderbilt University. \_\_\_\_

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

## 4 dangers that most worry AI pioneer Geoffrey Hinton

By DAVID HAMILTON AP Business Reporter

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Geoffrey Hinton, an award-winning computer scientist known as the “godfather of artificial intelligence,” is having some serious second thoughts about the fruits of his labors.

Hinton helped pioneer AI technologies critical to a new generation of highly capable chatbots such as ChatGPT. But in recent interviews, he says that he recently resigned a high-profile job at Google specifically to share his concerns that unchecked AI development could pose danger to humanity.

“I have suddenly switched my views on whether these things are going to be more intelligent than us,” he said in an interview with MIT Technology Review. “I think they’re very close to it now and they will be much more intelligent than us in the future.... How do we survive that?”

Hinton is not alone in his concerns. Shortly after the Microsoft-backed startup OpenAI released its latest AI model called GPT-4 in March, more than 1,000 researchers and technologists signed a letter calling for a six-month pause on AI development because, they said, it poses “profound risks to society and humanity.”

Here’s a look at Hinton’s biggest concerns about the future of AI ... and humanity.

### IT’S ALL ABOUT THE NEURAL NETWORKS

Our human brains can solve calculus equations, drive cars and keep track of the characters in “Succession” thanks to their native talent for organizing and storing information and reasoning out solutions to thorny problems. The roughly 86 billion neurons packed into our skulls — and, more important, the 100 trillion connections those neurons forge among themselves — make that possible.

By contrast, the technology underlying ChatGPT features between 500 billion and a trillion connections, Hinton said in the interview. While that would seem to put it at a major disadvantage relative to us, Hinton notes that GPT-4, the latest AI model from OpenAI, knows “hundreds of times more” than any single human. Maybe, he suggests, it has a “much better learning algorithm” than we do, making it more efficient at cognitive tasks.

### AI MAY ALREADY BE SMARTER THAN US

Researchers have long noted that artificial neural networks take much more time to absorb and apply new knowledge than people do, since training them requires tremendous amounts of both energy and data. That’s no longer the case, Hinton argues, noting that systems like GPT-4 can learn new things very quickly once properly trained by researchers. That’s not unlike the way a trained professional physicist can wrap her brain around new experimental findings much more quickly than a typical high school science student could.

That leads Hinton to the conclusion that AI systems might already be outsmarting us. Not only can AI systems learn things faster, he notes, they can also share copies of their knowledge with each other almost instantly.

“It’s a completely different form of intelligence,” he told the publication. “A new and better form of intel-

ligence.”

## WARS AND RUMORS OF WARS

What would smarter-than-human AI systems do? One unnerving possibility is that malicious individuals, groups or nation-states might simply co-opt them to further their own ends. Hinton is particularly concerned that these tools could be trained to sway elections and even to wage wars.

Election misinformation spread via AI chatbots, for instance, could be the future version of election misinformation spread via Facebook and other social media platforms.

And that might just be the beginning. “Don’t think for a moment that Putin wouldn’t make hyper-intelligent robots with the goal of killing Ukrainians,” Hinton said in the article. “He wouldn’t hesitate.”

## A SHORTAGE OF SOLUTIONS

What’s not clear is how anyone would stop a power like Russia from using AI technology to dominate its neighbors or its own citizens. Hinton suggests that a global agreement similar to the 1997 Chemical Weapons Convention might be a good first step toward establishing international rules against weaponized AI.

Though it’s also worth noting that the chemical weapons compact did not stop what investigators found were likely Syrian attacks using chlorine gas and the nerve agent sarin against civilians in 2017 and 2018 during the nation’s bloody civil war.

## What do striking Hollywood writers want? A look at demands

By The Associated Press undefined

The 11,500 members of the Writers Guild of America went on strike Tuesday after negotiations with Hollywood studios that began in March failed to result in an agreement. The guild has billed the issues behind the labor dispute as “an existential crisis.” Writers say they’re facing a host of new issues brought on by streaming and other recent technological shifts in the industry.

Here’s a look at the demands behind the first Hollywood strike in 15 years, as the industry braces for a long hiatus:

### INCREASED PAY

The guild is seeking higher compensation for writers across the board. Though there are more jobs available to WGA members than ever before because of the proliferation of streaming services, pay for most writers is down. Ten years ago, 33% of TV writers were paid the minimum rate. Now, according to the WGA, 49% are. Accounting for inflation, writer pay has declined 14% in the last five years. The median weekly writer-producer pay is down 23% over the last decade, with inflation factored in. Writers say many of their members aren’t even making a living wage. They are also seeking increases for their pension plan and health fund.

### BETTER RESIDUALS

For more than half a century, residuals have been a foundational way for writers to make money. But streaming has upended those payouts. Writers used to be handsomely compensated anytime their work went into syndication or was sold for overseas territories. Reruns meant a big payday. But now, series and films often simply land a streaming service and stay there. Streaming services also generally don’t share viewership data with filmmakers and writers, meaning writers don’t know how valuable their work has been. To replace backend residuals, the WGA is seeking more upfront fees.

### STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

The union wants TV shows to staff a certain number of writers for a period of time. At issue is the rising practice of “mini rooms” where only a handful of writers are working on a series. Such writer rooms are often employed during development, before a show is greenlit. That means writers can be working on a series that doesn’t get picked up for as much as a year after they worked on it, or not at all. The process has circumvented some of the protections WGA members have from being overworked and understaffed. The use of mini rooms accelerated during the pandemic, with writers often meeting by Zoom — a still commonplace practice.

### SHORTER EXCLUSIVITY DEALS

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Many of the rules around TV writing are also still based on a now increasingly outdated model. Writers might have once expected to spend almost a year working on a 22- to 25-episode season of broadcast TV. Now, the average season is much shorter. Popular shows like "Bridgerton" might have only eight episodes. Not only does that diminish writers' per-episode pay, it can limit them from working on other programs if they're tied to longer terms of exclusivity.

## ASSURANCE ON AI

Writers are also increasingly concerned that producers will use artificial intelligence to write scripts or at least fill in the blanks on unfinished screenplays. The fast-advancing technology has potentially widespread ramifications for Hollywood, and, in some cases, may be a useful tool. But the WGA wants production companies to agree to safeguards around its usage.

## Attacks on delivery drivers add fears among gig workers

By ALEXANDRA OLSON and WYATTE GRANTHAM-PHILIPS AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — A homeowner fired shots at a couple's car when they mistakenly turned onto his property while making an Instacart delivery. A Florida man was charged with killing and dismembering an Uber Eats delivery driver who brought food to his home. A woman was kidnapped and sexually assaulted while making a DoorDash delivery to a hotel.

Ride-hailing and food delivery companies say such violent episodes are exceedingly rare among the millions of trips completed each week, and point to numerous safety measures they have taken over the years.

But the three attacks, which occurred within days of each other in Florida last month, sent new ripples of fear among some app-based drivers, who say company safety policies are still better geared toward customers than workers.

Winifred Kinanda, who sometimes drives for Instacart in the San Francisco Bay Area, said she had never felt unsafe making deliveries for the grocery app until she heard about the Florida couple. That day, she got an Instacart order and constantly checked to make sure she had the right address, saying she felt particularly vulnerable as a person of color.

"It got me scared," said Kinanda, an immigrant from Kenya who also drives for Uber and Lyft to supplement her income as an elder caregiver. "At the end of the day, being Black is really hard. People see us and think we are doing something wrong."

A Pew Research Center poll in 2021 found that 16% of people in the U.S. had earned money from an online gig platform. That poll found that 35% of them have felt unsafe while doing those jobs, including 19% who said they had experienced unwanted sexual advances.

Ride-hailing and delivery driving are among the deadliest occupations in the country, according to occupational fatalities and injury data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which includes delivery workers for companies like Instacart and DoorDash in its "driver/sales" category and Uber and Lyft drivers in its "taxi" category. While most deaths and injuries are from traffic accidents, the data also shows drivers are more at risk of assaults than other occupations.

The activist group Gig Workers Rising said on-the-job deaths and injuries among gig workers are almost certainly undercounted because the companies are not obligated to report such incidents to government agencies for workers who are not direct employees. The group also said that other sources, such as police reports, may not note that a gig driver was working when they were killed.

In a report released Monday, Gig Workers Rising said its own research found that 80 app-based workers have been victims of homicides while on job between 2017 and 2022. The majority were ride-hailing drivers, but at least 20 delivery workers were also killed, according to the report, which relied on press accounts, court records and police reports.

More difficult to quantify are threats that gig drivers encounter frequently but rarely make headlines, including traffic accidents, robberies, carjackings and harassment. While Uber and Lyft have released safety reports that includes some of that data, the major food delivery apps do not, and Uber does not do so for Uber Eats trips.

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Roberto Moreno, 48, stopped working as both a ride-hailing and food deliver driver in San Diego County at the beginning of this year because of safety concerns.

Moreno said he joined a WhatsApp group with other Latino gig drivers to support each other while they were on the job, from helping each other with flat tires to activating geolocation during shifts for safety.

"We have to look out for ourselves because the companies don't do it," said Moreno, who worked for Grubhub and Postmates, which was bought out by Uber Eats in 2020, as well as Lyft and Uber.

Drivers also complain they can't be sure who is getting into their cars because it's too easy for riders to use fake names, nicknames or order rides for other people.

The companies have drivers take "a selfie, do background checks on us (and) collect all of our personal information" said Moreno, who belongs to a driver-led union called Rideshare Drivers United. "But we don't know anything about the passengers or the people who we're delivering to."

In response to those concerns, Uber said it started an audit last fall of rider accounts and began freezing those with obviously fake names. The company also has an extra layer of verification for users who use anonymous forms of payment such as prepaid cards.

"We have heard loud and clear from drivers that they want more information about who they are picking up," Uber said in a statement.

Critics also say gig workers are more vulnerable because as contract workers, they often don't have the right to benefits such as worker compensation or health insurance. DoorDash and Instacart both provide free automatic insurance for on-the job injuries or deaths, while Uber and Lyft offer drivers insurance policies for accidents.

DoorDash, Grubhub, Instacart, Uber and Lyft have added safety features to their apps over the years, including emergency buttons that allow people to silently connect with emergency services or private security, and GPS-sharing features that allow friends or family to track rides.

DoorDash last fall introduced new technology to automatically check in on a worker if a delivery is taking longer than expected, while Grubhub is rolling out a new feature this year that will send ID and location data to emergency responders if workers call 911 via the app.

Gig worker advocates say they want deeper changes, arguing erratic pay and fear of being deactivated from the platform pressures workers into accepting risky jobs or continue driving with belligerent riders.

The Chicago Gig Alliance, for instance, is campaigning for a local ordinance that would require companies to conduct passenger verification, give notice before suspending drivers, and allow them to appeal such decisions.

Kinanda said she feels safer making deliveries than giving rides. She said she appreciates an Uber policy that allows her to cancel trips for safety reasons with no penalty, but erratic pay sometimes forces to her working into the night, which she tries to avoid because of drunken passengers.

But other gig workers say they prefer ride-hailing because delivery comes with more daily nuisances and danger.

Sedeq Alshujaa, 29, said he stopped doing food delivery three years ago and sticks to ride-hailing.

Alshujaa, who is a member of the California Gig Workers Union, said delivery workers are often sent to neighborhoods they don't know and get suspicious looks while trying to find the right door.

"People don't know why you're there," said Alshujaa, who spoke in Arabic through a translator from the Service Employees International Union.

Once, a dog tried to bite him when he opened a gate. Another time, he had to deliver a pizza during a protest in Oakland. He called the customer and asked them if they could meet at his car, but they refused to leave their building. He left the pizza at the building's front door and notified the customer, who reported not receiving the order. The cost of the food was deducted from his earning.

"The driver is always the one who takes the blame and loses," Alshujaa said.

## Eli Lilly says experimental drug slows Alzheimer's worsening

WASHINGTON (AP) — Eli Lilly and Co. said Wednesday its experimental Alzheimer's drug appeared to slow worsening of the mind-robbing disease in a large study.

In the 18-month trial, people in the early stages of Alzheimer's who received infusions of donanemab showed 35% less decline in thinking skills compared to those given a dummy drug, Lilly announced in a press release.

The drug is designed to target and clear away a sticky protein called beta-amyloid that builds up into brain-clogging plaques that are one hallmark of Alzheimer's.

A similar amyloid-targeting drug, Eisai and Biogen's Leqembi, recently hit the market with similar evidence that it could modestly slow Alzheimer's — and also some safety concerns, brain swelling or small brain bleeds.

Donanemab also comes with that risk. Lilly said in its study, the brain side effects caused the deaths of two participants and a third also died after a serious case.

The preliminary study results haven't been vetted by outside experts. Indianapolis-based Lilly plans to release more details at an international Alzheimer's meeting this summer and is seeking Food and Drug Administration approval of the drug.

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## Oklahoma woman: Sex offender controlled my daughter's family

By SEAN MURPHY Associated Press

HENRYETTA, Okla. (AP) — As law enforcement officials went silent while investigating what led to the killing of seven people in rural Oklahoma, family members of those slain recalled the domineering nature of one of the dead, who was a registered sex offender.

Since announcing the bodies were found Monday, authorities have released scant information on who was dead, how they died and who killed them. But grieving relatives working to piece together the horror story that started with two teenagers being reported missing, said law enforcement told them all the victims were shot to death in slayings that have stunned the community of Henryetta.

Janette Mayo was the first to say publicly that her daughter and three teenage grandchildren were among the dead. Her daughter was married to Jesse McFadden, a sex offender who Okmulgee County Sheriff Eddy Rice said Monday had also been killed and linked to two other teenagers reported missing this week.

McFadden had been controlling, Mayo said, which had concerned her. But she said the family didn't learn about her son-in-law's criminal history until a few months ago.

"He lied to my daughter, and he convinced her it was all just a huge mistake," Mayo, of Westville, told The Associated Press. "He was very standoffish, generally very quiet, but he kept my daughter and the kids basically under lock and key. He had to know where they were at all times, which sent red flags up."

On Monday, Rice said the bodies were found on the property where McFadden lived near Henryetta, a town of about 6,000 about 90 miles (145 kilometers) east of Oklahoma City. The dead bodies included two teens who had been reported as missing and in danger — Ivy Webster, 14, and Brittany Brewer, 16 — and who were last seen with McFadden. Rice said the state medical examiner would have to confirm the victims' identities.

Mayo, 59, of Westville, Oklahoma, near the Arkansas border, said the sheriff's office notified her late Monday that the other four victims were her daughter, Holly Guess, 35, and her grandchildren, Rylee Elizabeth Allen, 17; Michael James Mayo, 15; and Tiffany Dore Guess, 13. Mayo said Tiffany was close friends with Ivy and Brittany, who were spending the weekend with the family.

While Rice declined to provide details of how they died, Mayo said the sheriff's office told her that her daughter and grandchildren were all found shot to death in various locations on McFadden's property.

Ivy's father, Justin Webster, said he filed a missing person report with the local sheriff's office when she

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didn't return home Sunday night after spending the weekend with McFadden, Guess and her children. Justin Webster said he thought the children went with McFadden to spend some time on a ranch where he was working near McAlester.

He said law enforcement officials also told him that all of the victims suffered gunshot wounds, that some had been lined up and were located across the property.

Webster echoed descriptions of McFadden as controlling and unusual, but said he had no idea about McFadden's criminal background.

"I would say he was weird," Webster said. "He was always getting into his kids' phones and reading all their snap messages and all that. It wasn't in a way of a concerned parent. It was more of keeping tabs on the kids."

The missing endangered person advisory issued early Monday said Webster and Brewer had been seen traveling with McFadden, who was on the state's sex offender registry. Oklahoma Department of Corrections prison records show he was convicted of first-degree rape in 2003 and released in October 2020.

McFadden had been scheduled to appear in court Monday for the start of a jury trial on charges of soliciting sexual conduct with a minor and possession of child pornography. Court records show he was communicating with a then-16-year-old girl using a contraband cellphone while he was incarcerated at a state prison near Muskogee. The teen's grandfather reported their communications to prison officials, according to an affidavit from a Department of Corrections investigator.

Webster hopes this whole ordeal leads to harsher criminal penalties for sex offenders, especially those who target children.

"The sexual (offender) registry doesn't work," he said. "I think there needs to be action taken. There needs to be repercussions, and someone needs to be held accountable. They let a monster out. They did this."

McFadden's attorney in that case has not responded to a phone message left Monday evening.

The grim discovery in Oklahoma keeps the U.S. on a torrid pace for mass killings in 2023 and could push the number of people slain in mass killings past 100 for the year, according to a database maintained by The Associated Press and USA Today in a partnership with Northeastern University.

In speaking to reporters Monday, Rice acknowledged another gruesome homicide case last fall in in Okmulgee County. The bodies of four men were found Oct. 14 in the Deep Fork River in Okmulgee, a small town about 15 miles (24 kilometers) north of Henryetta. Joseph Kennedy, 68, has been charged with four counts of first-degree murder.

"We've had our share of troubles and woes, but this one is pretty bad," the sheriff said.

Lisa Thomas, who runs Bear Bottom Antiques on Main Street in downtown Henryetta, said the killings sent a shock wave through the tight-knit community.

"It is truly like a Mayberry here," she said as she arranged sunflowers in a barrel outside her shop. "All the people that come into my shop are just wonderful. We are just in shock, absolute shock."

Brittany Brewer's father told KOTV in Tulsa that one of the bodies discovered was his daughter.

"Brittany was an outgoing person. She was actually selected to be Miss Henryetta ... coming up in July for this Miss National Miss pageant in Tulsa. And now she ain't gonna make it because she's dead. She's gone," Nathan Brewer said.

At a Monday night vigil, Brewer told hundreds of people: "It's just a parent's worst nightmare, and I'm living it."

He said his daughter had aspired to be a teacher or a veterinarian.

"I am just lost," he said.

Ivy Webster's mother, Ashleigh, described her daughter as a great kid who loved animals.

"She loved softball. She loved people, animals. She was just a genuine good person. She really was," Ashleigh Webster said.

Mayo described her daughter, Holly Guess, as a doting parent.

"She was a fantastic mother. She loved her children beyond belief. She was overprotective," Mayo said. "She was supportive if they wanted to do something. She'd go out 100%."

Granddaughter Rylee Allen "had a talent with a paint brush," she said. "Rylee wanted to be an artist and



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wanted to be a doctor so she could help people.”

Michael Mayo ran track and cross-country, and when he wanted to play football, his mother went out and bought the family T-shirts and sweatshirts to support the team, Mayo said. Tiffany Guess also ran cross-country, she performed in the choir and had just tried out for the cheerleading squad.

“She was the sweetest, most loving girl you’d ever met,” Mayo said. “We called her ‘Tiffasaurus’ because when she’d get mad at you, she’d growl.”

Henryetta Public Schools said the community is grieving the loss of several students.

“Our hearts are hurting, and we have considered what would be best for our students in the coming days,” the district said in a message posted online.

Associated Press data journalist Larry Fenn and researcher Rhonda Shafner in New York contributed to this report.

## Today in History: May 4, four killed at Kent State

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Thursday, May 4, the 124th day of 2023. There are 241 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On May 4, 1970, Ohio National Guardsmen opened fire during an anti-war protest at Kent State University, killing four students and wounding nine others.

On this date:

In 1776, Rhode Island declared its freedom from England, two months before the Declaration of Independence was adopted.

In 1886, at Haymarket Square in Chicago, a labor demonstration for an 8-hour work day turned into a deadly riot when a bomb exploded.

In 1904, the United States took over construction of the Panama Canal from the French.

In 1932, mobster Al Capone, convicted of income-tax evasion, entered the federal penitentiary in Atlanta. (Capone was later transferred to Alcatraz Island.)

In 1942, the Battle of the Coral Sea, the first naval clash fought entirely with carrier aircraft, began in the Pacific during World War II. (The outcome was considered a tactical victory for Japan, but ultimately a strategic one for the Allies.)

In 1945, during World War II, German forces in the Netherlands, Denmark and northwest Germany agreed to surrender.

In 1961, the first group of “Freedom Riders” left Washington, D.C., to challenge racial segregation on interstate buses and in bus terminals.

In 1998, Unabomber Theodore Kaczynski (kah-ZIHN’-skee) was given four life sentences plus 30 years by a federal judge in Sacramento, California, under a plea agreement that spared him the death penalty.

In 2001, Bonny Lee Bakley, wife of actor Robert Blake, was shot to death as she sat in a car near a restaurant in Los Angeles. (Blake, accused of Bakley’s murder, was acquitted in a criminal trial but found liable by a civil jury and ordered to pay damages.)

In 2006, a federal judge sentenced Zacarias Moussaoui (zak-uh-REE’-uhs moo-SOW’-ee) to life in prison for his role in the 9/11 attacks, telling the convicted terrorist, “You will die with a whimper.”

In 2011, President Barack Obama said he had decided not to release death photos of Osama bin Laden because their graphic nature could incite violence and create national security risks. Officials told The Associated Press that the Navy SEALs who’d stormed bin Laden’s compound in Pakistan shot and killed him after they saw him appear to lunge for a weapon.

In 2020, New York state reported more than 1,700 previously undisclosed coronavirus deaths at nursing homes and adult care facilities. Struggling fashion brand J.Crew became the first major retailer to file for bankruptcy protection since the start of the pandemic. Former Miami Dolphins coach Don Shula died at

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90; he'd won more games than any other NFL coach.

Ten years ago: National Rifle Association leaders told members during a meeting in Houston that the fight against gun control legislation was far from over, and vowed that none in the organization would ever have to surrender their weapons. A limousine taking nine women to a bachelorette party erupted in flames on the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge over San Francisco Bay, killing five of the passengers, including the bride-to-be. Orb powered to a 2 1/2-length victory on a sloppy track to win the Kentucky Derby. Floyd Mayweather came back from a year's absence to win a unanimous 12-round decision over Robert Guerrero in their welterweight title fight in Las Vegas.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump suggested that his newly-hired attorney Rudy Giuliani needed to "get his facts straight" about the hush money paid to porn actress Stormy Daniels just before the 2016 election; Giuliani had earlier said that Trump knew about the payment to Daniels made by his personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, and that Trump had paid Cohen back. The Connecticut Supreme Court overturned the murder conviction of Kennedy cousin Michael Skakel in the 1975 bludgeoning death of a girl in Greenwich, finding that Skakel's trial attorney had failed to present evidence of an alibi. (The U.S. Supreme Court later left in place the Connecticut high court ruling.) Los Angeles Angels slugger Albert Pujols got his 3,000th hit, reaching the mark with a broken-bat single against the Seattle Mariners.

One year ago: Complaining that the West was "stuffing Ukraine with weapons," Russia pounded railroad stations and other supply-line points across the country, as the European Union moved to further punish Moscow for the war by proposing a ban on oil imports, a crucial source of revenue. Heavy fighting also raged at the Azovstal steel mill in Mariupol. Donald Trump Jr., oldest son of former President Donald Trump, met with the congressional committee investigating the 2021 riot at the U.S. Capitol. Comedian Dave Chappelle was tackled during a performance at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles. Security guards chased and overpowered the attacker.

Today's Birthdays: Katherine Jackson, matriarch of the Jackson musical family, is 93. Jazz musician Ron Carter is 86. Pulitzer Prize-winning political commentator George Will is 82. Pop singer Peggy Santiglia Davison (The Angels) is 79. Actor Richard Jenkins is 76. Country singer Stella Parton is 74. Actor-turned-clergyman Hilly Hicks is 73. Singer Jackie Jackson (The Jacksons) is 72. Singer-actor Pia Zadora is 71. R&B singer Oleta Adams is 70. Violinist Soozie Tyrell (Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band) is 66. Country singer Randy Travis is 64. Actor Mary McDonough is 62. Comedian Ana Gasteyer is 56. Actor Will Arnett is 53. Rock musician Mike Dirnt (Green Day) is 51. Contemporary Christian singer Chris Tomlin is 51. TV personality and fashion designer Kimora Lee Simmons is 48. Sports reporter Erin Andrews is 45. Singer Lance Bass ('N Sync) is 44. Actor Ruth Negga is 42. Rapper/singer Jidenna is 38. Actor Alexander Gould is 29. Country singer RaeLynn is 29. Actor Amara (uh-MAH'-ruh) Miller is 23. Actor Brooklynn Prince (Film: "The Florida Project") is 13.