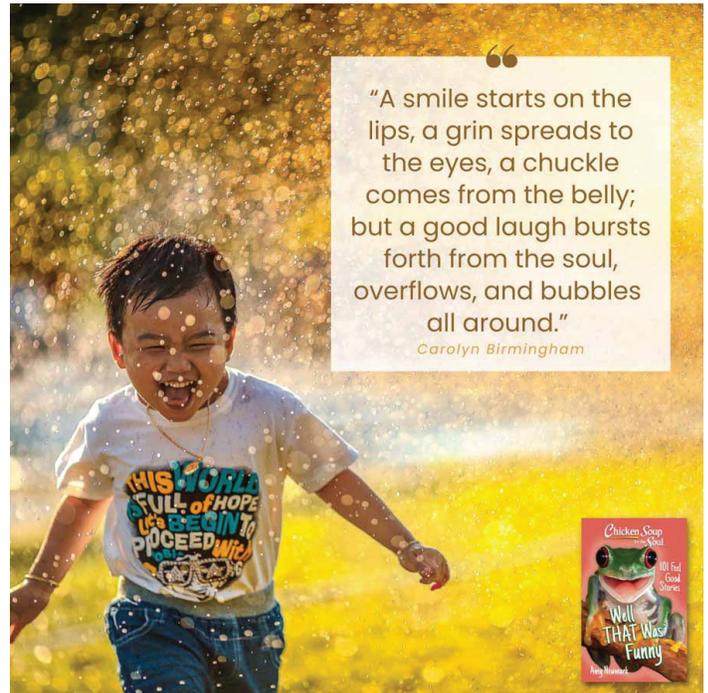


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- [2- Locke, McCollum receive PC diplomas](#)
- [3- Northern Lights Forecast](#)
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- [4- Sunday Extras](#)
- [22- Gov. Noem's Weekly Column](#)
- [23- Thune's Weekly Column](#)
- [24- Johnson's Weekly Column](#)
- [25- Rev. Snyder's Column](#)
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“A smile starts on the lips, a grin spreads to the eyes, a chuckle comes from the belly; but a good laugh bursts forth from the soul, overflows, and bubbles all around.”

Carolyn Birmingham

Groton Community Calendar

Sunday, May 7

High School Baseball vs. W.I.N./Elkton at Elkton, noon.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Worship Service at 10:30 a.m.

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

Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

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

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion (Senior Milestones & Faith Forever Scholarship Awards), 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.

Monday, May 8

School Breakfast: Cook's choice for rest of year.

School Lunch: Zita pasta, bake corn.

Senior Menu: Goulash, green beans, garlic toast, Acini Depepi fruit salad.

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

Girls Golf at Milbank, 10 a.m.

Track Meet at Webster Relays. Varsity starts at 10 a.m.; junior high at 3 p.m.

FFA Banquet, 6:30 p.m.

School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6 p.m.

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

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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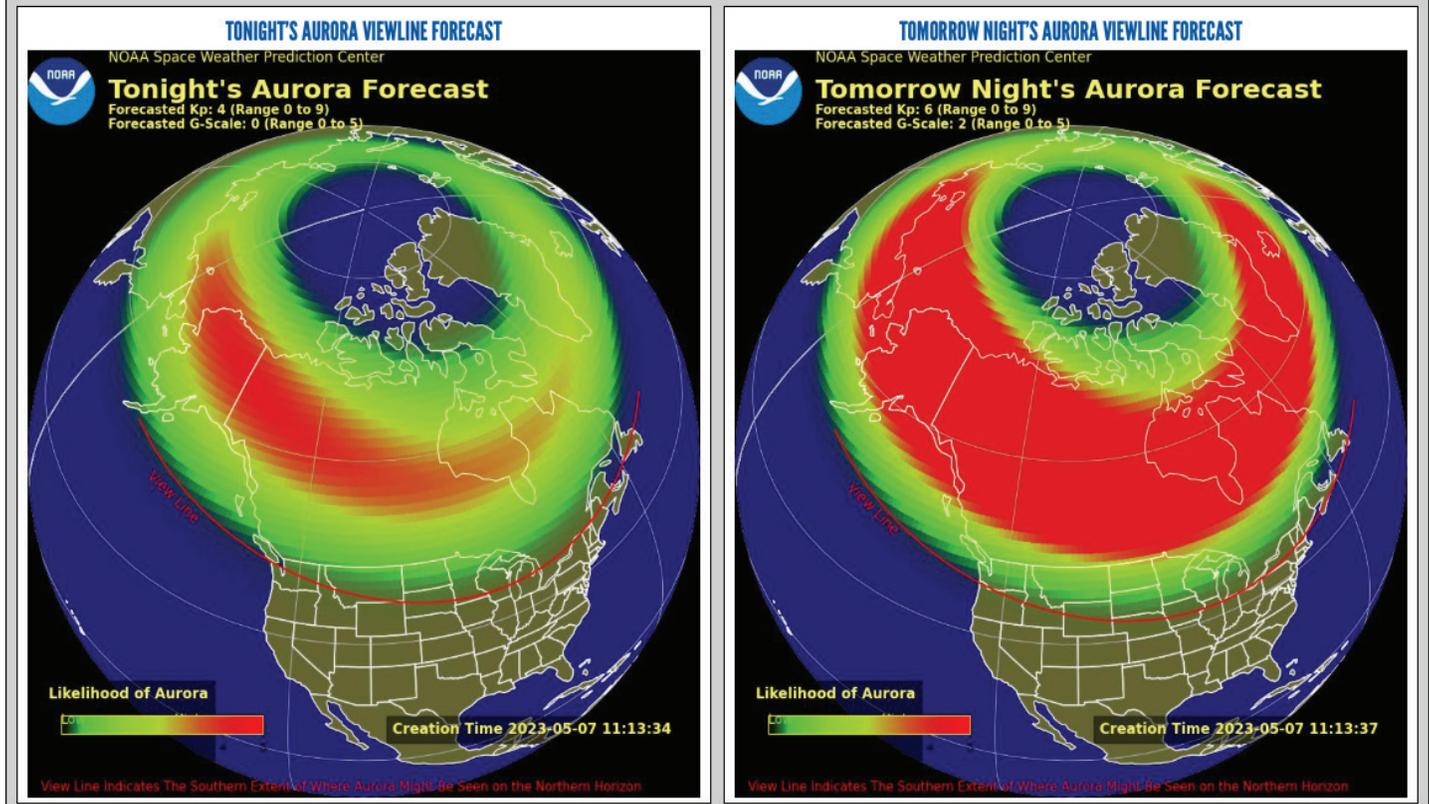
(L-R) Emily Locke (Radiologic Technology) and Krystina McCollum (Nursing), both from Groton, graduated from Presentation College on Saturday. This graduation is the last ceremony at PC because of the announced closer. PC started in 1951.

(Photo by Bruce Babcock)

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WILL I SEE THE AURORA TONIGHT OR TOMORROW NIGHT?



Eight Groton Area relay teams in the top 24

Eight Groton Area relay teams are currently in the top 24 in the state, according to the May 4th rankings by the South Dakota High School Activities Association. The top 24 in the state at the end of the season qualify for the state track meet. Also, Emma Kutter in the shot put, Aspen Johnson and Jacob Zak in the triple jump are in the top 24. The next update will be done on Monday.

Girls 4x100m Relay: Groton Area is rated 28th with a time of 54.84. Currently the 24th spot time is 54.56.
Girls 4x200 Relay: Groton Area is rated 10th with a time of 1:52.57.
Girls 4x400 Relay: Groton Area is rated 24th with a time of 4:30.89.
Girls 4x800m Relay: Groton Area is rated 14th with a time of 10:41.24.
Girls Sprint Medley: Groton Area is rated 14th with a time of 4:37.60.
Shot Put: Emma Kutter is rated 20th with a distance of 34-4.
Triple Jump: Aspen Johnson is rated 14th with a distance of 32-9.
Boys 4x100m Relay: Groton Area is rated 15th with a time of 45.80.
Boys 4x200m Relay: Groton Area is rated 17th with a time of 1:35.87.
Boys 4x400m Relay: Groton Area is rated 15th with a time of 3:40.49.
Boys 4x800m Relay: Groton Area is rated 16th with a time of 8:59.34
Boys Triple Jump: Jacob Zak is currently tied in 23rd with two other athletes with a distance of 39-00.5.



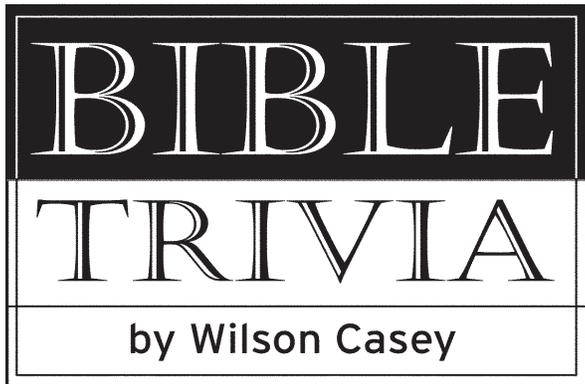
THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

...This water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also – not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand – with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him. ~ 1 PETER 3: 21, 22



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1. Is the book of 2 Revelation (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. From John 20, which person's last recorded words in scripture were, "My Lord and my God"? *Samson, Matthew, Thomas, David*

3. Paul was shipwrecked on what island while on his way to Rome to face charges? *Arvard, Cos, Melita, Samos*

4. Which Psalm begins, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want"? *1, 11, 23, 50*

5. Who wrote the first five books of the Old Testament? *Peter, Abraham, Luke, Moses*

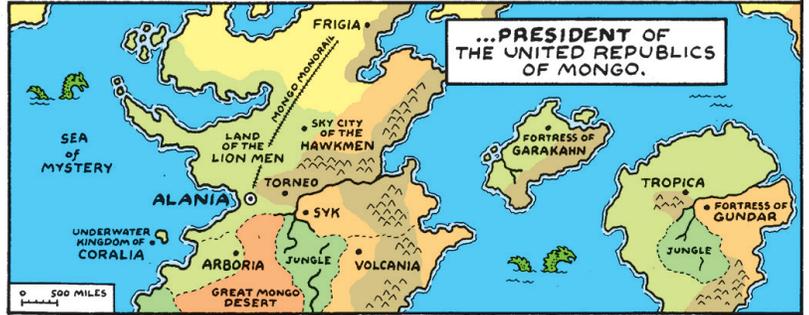
6. What's the longest book of the New Testament? *Luke, John, Acts, Romans*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Thomas, 3) Melita (Malta), 4) 23, 5) Moses, 6) Luke

Comments? More Trivia? Gift ideas? Visit www.TriviaGuy.com.

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FLASH GORDON

BY JIM KEEFE 5-7

FLASH AND DALE COLLECT DATA FROM THE SPACECRAFT THAT FIRST BROUGHT THEM TO THE PLANET MONGO.

BRINGS BACK A LOT OF MEMORIES, DOESN'T IT?

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LIKE THE DAY WE FIRST MET... **KNOCK KNOCK**

SORRY TO INTERRUPT...

ZARKOV'S TESTING THE NEW ROCKETS. HE NEEDS YOUR DATA.

I'LL BRING HIM WHAT WE'VE GOT SO FAR

I'LL BE ALONG SHORTLY.

YOU LOOK WORRIED, BARIN. WHAT'S WRONG?

A SHIPMENT OF RADIUM-X WAS STOLEN. IT'S NOT THE FIRST. THE THIEVES HAVE TO BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE.

IT'S JUST THAT WE DON'T HAVE ANY LEADS... NOTHING!

PATIENCE, BARIN. IF ANYONE CAN CATCH THEM YOU CAN!

HMMMMMM

SOUNDS LIKE THEY'RE TESTING THE ROCKETS.

THERE'S DALE.

THEIR EYES MEET.

THEN SUDDENLY...

KA-BOOM!

DALE!

NEXT THE DEATH OF DALE?!

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

INITIATING THE SWING FROM A FORCED OR MUSCULARLY TENSE POSITION MAKES FOR A JERKY AND POORLY COORDINATED ACTION.

AVOID THAT BY STAYING GENTLY IN MOTION AS YOU COMPLETE YOUR SETUP TO THE BALL.

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EASE YOUR LEGS AND YOUR SHOULDERS LIGHTLY, RELAX YOUR ARMS AND WAGGLE THE CLUB A COUPLE OF TIMES.

THEN START YOUR BACKSWING REFLEXIVELY OFF ONE OF THOSE MOTIONS.



Medication Used for Perimenstrual Asthma Poses Health Risk

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm a 55-year-old perimenopausal woman who developed asthma a few years ago. My symptoms always start right before my menstrual cycle. My doctor ruled out allergies as the cause. I used to get colds and sinus infections premenstrually in my younger years. Most medical practitioners don't see the correlation between hormones and respiratory symptoms.

I sometimes take 10 mg of prednisone when I'm wheezing more than usual, and it seems to help. Is this dose putting me at risk for diabetes if taken regularly? — B.S.

ANSWER: Perimenstrual asthma is a well-recognized condition that is nevertheless not well-known by most nonexperts. It is less likely to be caused by allergies and more likely to be aspirin-sensitive — meaning that aspirin, or other anti-inflammatory drugs (like ibuprofen) commonly taken by women during menstruation, can trigger an asthma attack. Maybe a quarter of women with asthma have perimenstrual asthma. As you say, it is thought to be the hormone changes around menstruation that trigger the asthma.

Oral contraceptives used continuously prevent large changes in progesterone and estradiol, and may be helpful in managing perimenstrual asthma. Although I didn't find a lot about it in literature, I suspect that when your

will get better.

Increased medication at the time of menses is frequently needed. However, because prednisone, even at the fairly small dose of 10 mg, does increase risk of diabetes, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, glaucoma, cataracts and many other conditions, oral prednisone is not my first choice for medication in this situation.

Inhaled steroids would be one choice, but they take a while to begin working. One recommended treatment is the oral medicine montelukast (Singulair), which has been proven effective in a small study and starts working right away.

DR. ROACH WRITES: A recent column regarding a "tip jar" in a living situation for a reader's brother who had suffered a stroke generated very powerful responses. (Respondents included nurses and administrators who worked in care facilities.) Many readers noted that they thought this was illegal in the states they lived in. While many readers responded that they were happy to give gifts to the caregivers, nearly every person wrote that the public nature of the "tip jar" was inappropriate.

The institutions I have been affiliated with have very careful rules about accepting any kind of gift. In my opinion, the "tip jar" grossly violated ethical standards, and nearly all readers agreed with me.

Several readers wished me to mention the state ombudsman program for long-term care. Every state is required to have such a program to address complaints and advocate for improvements. Residents in the U.S. can learn more about the long-term care ombudsman program at ltombudsman.org/about/about-ombudsman.

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

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Lucy Paez and Jennifer Lopez star in "The Mother."

Courtesy of Netflix

"The Mother" (R) -- In this action-drama film directed by Niki Caro, Jennifer Lopez stars as the nameless titular character, an ex-assassin who cuts a deal with the FBI. Forced to leave her newborn baby girl behind, the mother-assassin goes into hiding in order to keep her daughter safe, since there are other dangerous assailants on the lookout for both. So, the Mother remains in hiding until news of her now-12-year-old daughter's kidnapping reaches her. Now, she must resort back to her killer roots to find her daughter and free her from her captors. While the story sounds like it's been done a few times before, Lopez's performance as an action star carries the film, along with other great performances by Gael Garcia Bernal and Joseph Fiennes. Premieres May 12. (Netflix)

"Bupkis" (TV-MA) -- A new series described as the dramatized version of Pete Davidson's life is out now on streaming. The eight-episode, action-comedy series follows the comedian-actor as he tries to navigate his unique family dynamics and the complexities of rising to fame, according to the Hollywood Reporter. Joe Pesci ("The Irishman") and Edie Falco ("The Sopranos") play main roles as Davidson's relatives, while a myriad of big names in Hollywood make guest appearances throughout the half-hour episodes, including Bobby Cannavale, Steve Buscemi, Al Gore, Kenan Thompson and Machine Gun Kelly. While viewers should anticipate lots of self-deprecating humor and absurdist elements, expect some profoundly heartwarming and human moments in between. (Peacock)

"Till" (PG-13) -- The brutal murder of 14-year-old Emmett Till during the Civil Rights Movement in 1955 swept over our nation. His tragic story catapulted the young African-American boy into becoming a historic symbol posthumously, no doubt due to the fact that his mother, Mamie Till-Bradley, refused to let him die in vain. Making conscious choices to leave Emmett's casket open and speaking publicly about the circumstances that lead to his death, Mamie uses an experience that no mother should have to face as a way to help bring about justice for Emmett. This biographical film emphasizes Mamie's powerful activist acts and the weight they still carry decades later. Premieres May 9. (Prime Video)

"Crater" (PG) -- From the producers of "Stranger Things" comes a sci-fi adventure film taking place on a mining colony on the moon! In the year 2257, a boy named Caleb, who spent his entire life in the colony, is about to relocate to a faraway planet after his father passes away. But first, Caleb wants to travel across the moon to a mysterious crater full of wonders that his father once told him about. Opting to bring along his three best friends and a new friend from Earth for the ride, the gang of five steal a rover and embark on a journey of a lifetime. Isaiah Russell-Bailey and Mckenna Grace star, with Scott Mescudi (aka rapper Kid Cudi) taking on the role of Caleb's father. Out on May 12. (Disney+)

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1. Which group released "If You Leave Me Now"?
2. Name the ABBA song that was chosen as the "Best Studio Recording of 1975."
3. Which duo released "Do That to Me One More Time"?
4. Name the singer who released "Slave to the Rhythm."
5. Name the song that contains these lyrics: "I thumbed my way from LA back to Knoxville, I found out those bright lights ain't where I belong."

Answers

1. Chicago, in 1976. The song topped the charts in both the U.S. and the U.K., as well as Ireland, the Netherlands, Canada and Australia.
2. "Fernando." The song hit No. 1 in over a dozen countries, but not, astonishingly enough, on the Hot 100 chart in the U.S. It's been used in several films and TV shows.
3. Captain & Tennille (Daryl Dragon and Toni Tennille), in 1979. The song was the second No. 1 hit for the husband and wife duo.
4. Grace Jones, in 1985. It was taken from her album of the same name.
5. "Smokey Mountain Rain," by Ronnie Milsap, in 1980. The song, telling of a man's trip home to find the woman he left behind, became Tennessee's eighth state song in 2010 by order of the state's General Assembly.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{Wagner}

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



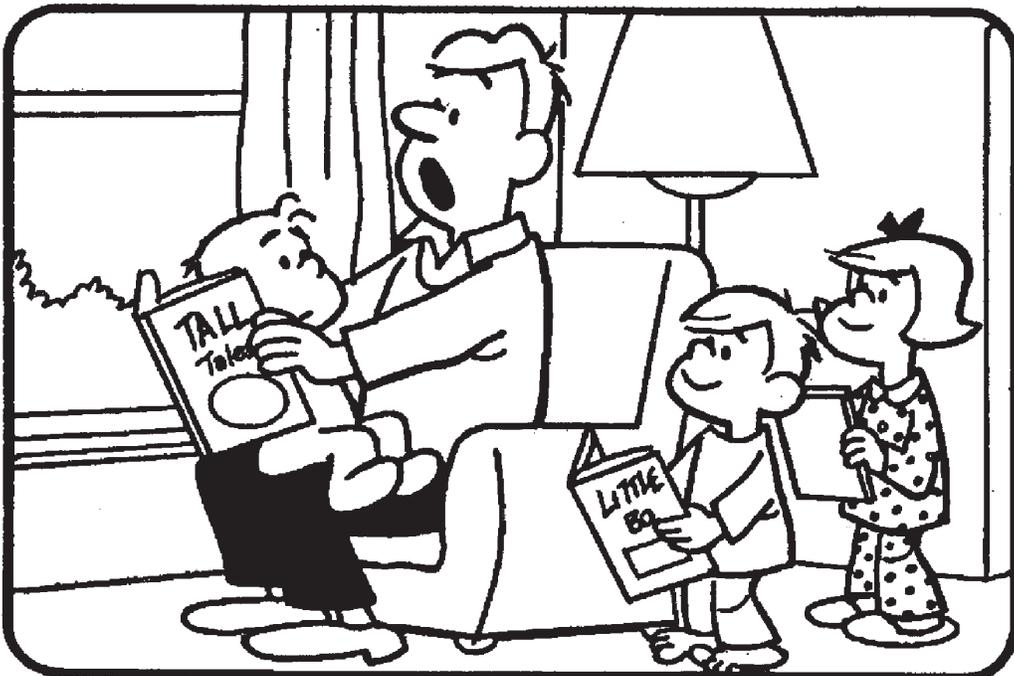
"Your parole requires that you not associate with any known felons. ... You'll have to drive your own getaway car."

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Shade is missing. 2. Title is different. 3. Lamp is moved. 4. Pillow is missing. 5. Switch is missing. 6. Pajamas are different.

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* My mom was dealing with a rough health patch recently, and my dad was in charge of all her doctor visits. There was a lot of follow-up to keep track of, and many different doctors. He used a wallet-size photo holder to corral all the different appointment cards to put them in order of appointment. He really did a great job, and Mom's all better now. -- Y.R. in Ohio

* A fast, cheap and effective treatment for leg cramps is drinking a little bit of pickle juice. I'm not sure if it's the vinegar or the combination of vinegar and salt, but it works -- and fast! My grandpa told me about this, and recently I have seen it in magazine articles and on television shows. Nothing fancy, just take a big slug of the juice at the very first sign of a cramp. -- E.E. in Maine

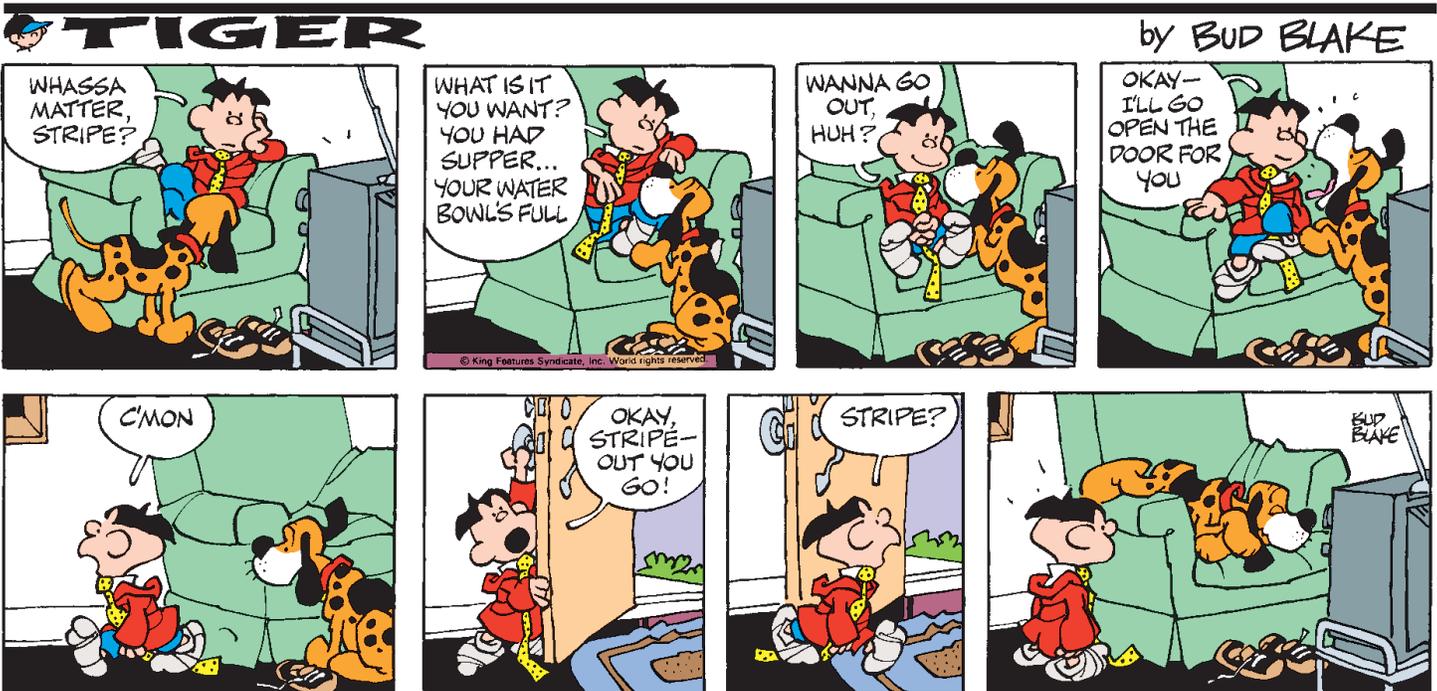
* Here's a tip for brides: For the couple of weeks before your wedding, wear your wedding shoes around the house several times a week. This breaks them in, and you will be more comfortable with all the standing and dancing on your special day!

* I think cleaning wipes are so very handy, but they can be quite expensive. To make my own, I add cleaner to baby wipes, right in the container. I don't have babies in the house, but I do mark the container well so that nobody would use it for his or her skin. They work well for me. -- via email

* To thread a needle, run the tip of your finger and thumb over a stick of lip balm, then roll the end of the thread between your fingers. It keeps the threads together and goes through the eye of the needle much easier.

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

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Standard
- 4 Like custard
- 8 Jubilation
- 12 Candle count
- 13 Crib cry
- 14 Verdi opera
- 15 "Yellow" band
- 17 Zorro's marks
- 18 Teeny bit
- 19 Lincoln's coin
- 20 Long-limbed
- 22 Wild guess
- 24 "How sweet —!"
- 25 "Light My Fire" band
- 29 Rock's Brian
- 30 Berth places
- 31 Quick swim
- 32 "Jump" band
- 34 Greek cheese
- 35 Always
- 36 Gourmand
- 37 Task
- 40 Vivacity
- 41 Sci-fi prefix
- 42 "Jeremy" band
- 46 Privy to
- 47 Robust
- 48 Mine yield
- 49 Honey bunch?
- 50 Historic Scott
- 51 Evergreen type

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

DOWN

- 1 Lobbying org.
- 11 Relaxed
- 28 Mast
- 2 Previously
- 16 Feet, slangily
- 30 Macadamize
- 3 Seminary
- 19 Cushions
- 33 Marsh birds
- study
- 20 Schreiber
- 34 Flunk
- 4 Void
- of "Ray Donovan"
- 36 Goofed
- 5 Fancy party
- 21 Sicilian volcano
- 37 First bed
- 6 "Today" rival, briefly
- 22 Transparent
- woodwind
- 7 "Rah!"
- 23 Seabird
- 40 Hay bundle
- 8 Garden pavilion
- 25 Scrabble piece
- 42 Third degree?
- 9 Property claim
- 26 Schiller poem used by Beethoven
- 43 Corn serving
- 10 Genesis garden
- 27 Ceremony
- 44 Exist
- 45 Kitten's cry

— King Crossword —

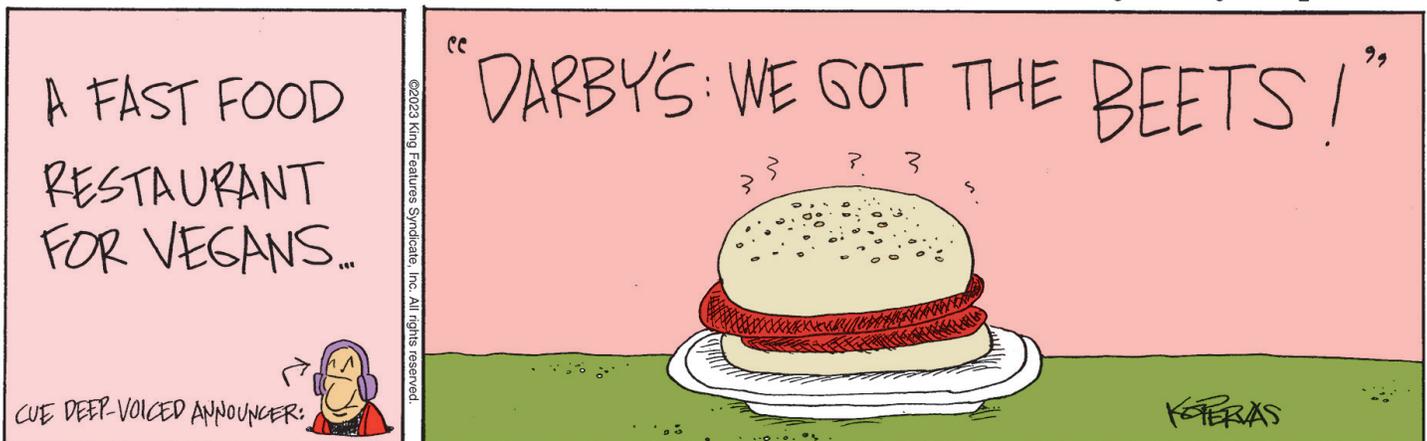
Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

P	A	R		E	G	G	Y		G	L	E	E	
A	G	E		M	A	M	A		A	I	D	A	
C	O	L	D	P	L	A	Y		Z	E	E	S	
		I	O	T	A				P	E	N	N	Y
L	E	G	G	Y		S	T	A	B				
I	T	I	S		T	H	E	D	O	O	R	S	
E	N	O		P	I	E	R	S		D	I	P	
V	A	N	H	A	L	E	N		F	E	T	A	
			E	V	E	R		E	A	T	E	R	
C	H	O	R	E			B	R	I	O			
R	O	B	O		P	E	A	R	L	J	A	M	
I	N	O	N		H	A	L	E		O	R	E	
B	E	E	S		D	R	E	D		Y	E	W	

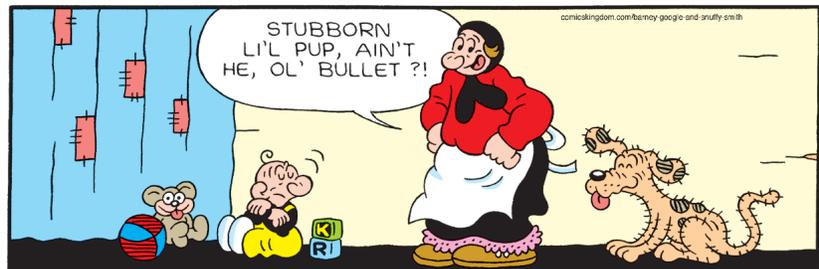
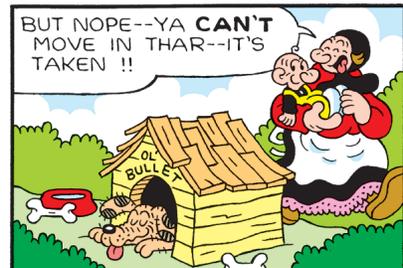
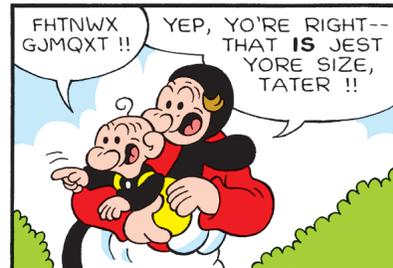
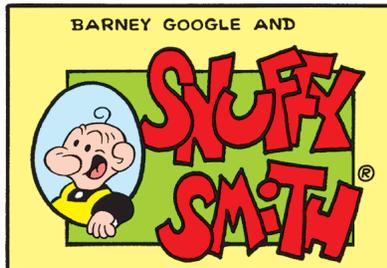
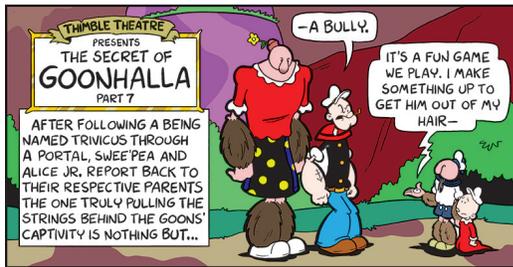
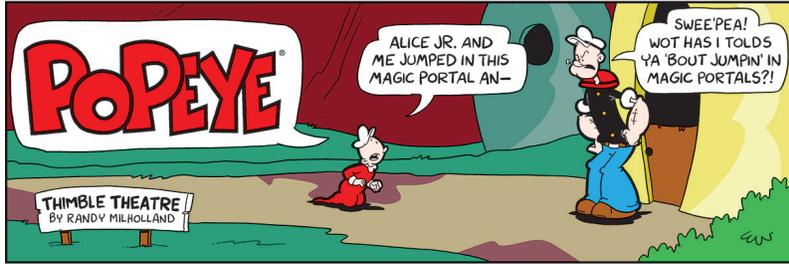
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



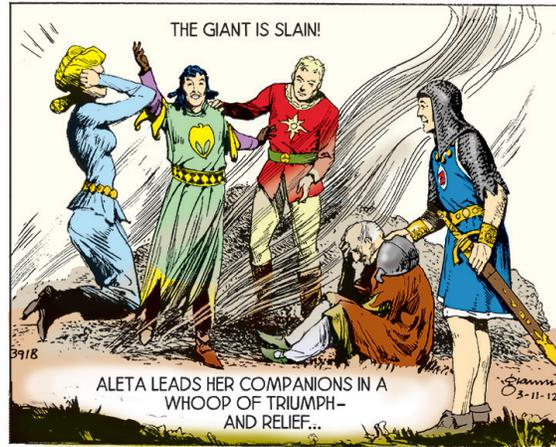
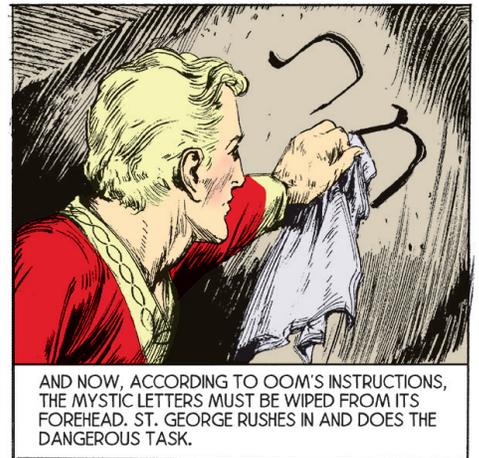
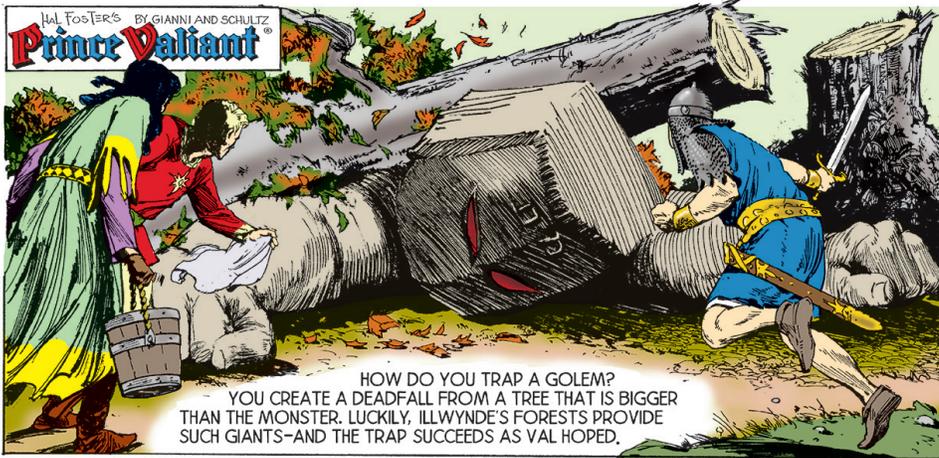
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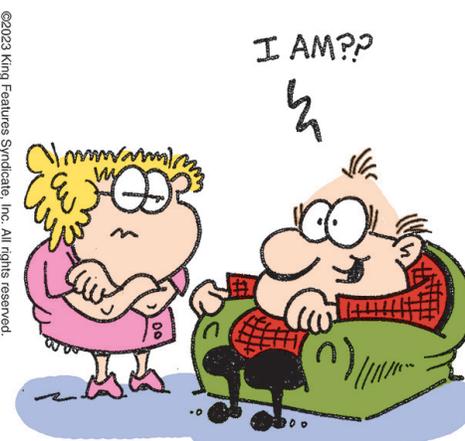
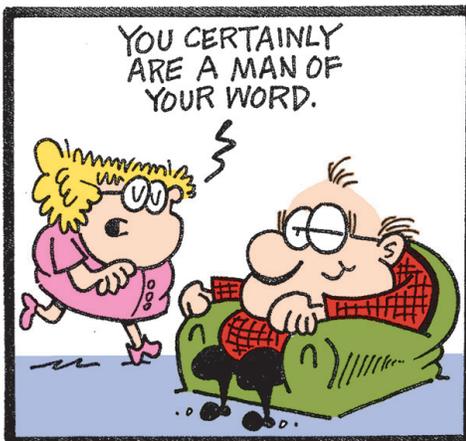
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The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Covid ... Still Here

As of this writing, there are still between 1,500 and 2,000 Covid deaths per week in the U.S. alone.

Pause a moment to consider that number.

Various charts, graphics and statistics for a recent period show a startling fact: We have more Covid deaths per capita than most of the rest of the world. Charts that show deaths per million people rank us three times higher than Brazil, more than 24% higher than France, 75% higher than Italy, nearly three times higher than Germany.

In the U.S., hospital admissions in 14 states are rising over the past week. Only five states showed no cases of Covid in the past week -- because they did not upload their data. No states showed zero Covid deaths, except for the ones that didn't provide information.

For hospital admissions by age, those over age 70 are admitted three times more often than those in the 60-69 age group, and 10 times more often than those under 60.

It's been a long three years and, unfortunately, Covid has not vanished. At this point, we have a new subvariant, XBB.1.16, nicknamed "Arcturus." Keep an ear out for mention of this one in the news; it's the most infectious of all the variants so far, and the most resistant to vaccine. One in 10 cases of Covid are this new variant. It's the one that's causing conjunctivitis, also known as pinkeye, plus other symptoms. At this point it has shown up in over 30 states. If you have symptoms of this variant and believe it's probably seasonal allergies, consider taking a Covid test just to be sure.

And meanwhile, inquiring minds want to know: Where are our masks? Have you noticed that you (and possibly one or two others) are the only ones in stores still wearing a mask?

While the two largest hospital systems near me have now done away with the mask requirement, I have not.

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1. Name the New York Mets relief pitcher who tore his right patellar tendon while celebrating Puerto Rico's win over the Dominican Republic in the 2023 World Baseball Classic?

2. What 2000 Kentucky Derby winner was sold to a breeder for a record \$70 million?

3. Name the left-footed punter who played for the Green Bay Packers (1983-84) and Minnesota Vikings (1987-89).

4. Racecar driver, designer, engineer and inventor Bruce McLaren hailed from what country?

5. In 1919, the Houston Buffaloes became the first minor league team to affiliate with a Major League Baseball club when they made ties with what team?

6. What boxing manager and trainer handled the careers of champions Floyd Patterson, Jose Torres and Mike Tyson?

7. What trophy is awarded annually to the most outstanding college football player who began their college career as a walk-on?



by Ryan A. Berenz

Answers

1. Edwin Diaz.
2. Fusaichi Pegasus.
3. Bucky Scribner.
4. New Zealand.
5. The St. Louis Cardinals.
6. Cus D'Amato.
7. The Burlsworth Trophy.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Readers Sound Off on Dogs' Front Yard "Gifts"

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I have so many thoughts after reading the letter from the woman with the shared driveway whose neighbor leaves her dog's poop on her side.

I'm of the opinion that life would be more enjoyable if people learned to meet others where they are. The dog owner clearly doesn't want to pick up her dog's poop, and I don't think checking with an HOA or municipal ordinance will change that. Maybe she has mobility issues. The writer says she and her neighbor "get along fine," and there's a LOT to be

said for that. If I were her, I would simply buy poop bags and clean up after the dog. If the neighbor sees her and says something, I would say: "I've asked that you pick up after your dog, but I don't want that to become a big issue between us because we get along so well. Your friendship means more to me than my taking a few minutes to clean up the driveway." -- Susan W., via email

another reader shares their advice:

I have had this issue several times in the past. I have successfully resolved this issue every time it has come up.

I used a new tool to solve it -- the power of social media. My solution was simple: When I observed an individual allowing their canine to defecate on my property, I announced loudly from my front door that if they did not clean it up, I would locate their property and defecate on theirs as well. I made the same announcement on the neighborhood's Facebook page.

Aside from the occasional beer can thrown out of a vehicle full of teenagers, we have been at peace. -- Zack in Murieta North

Send your tips, comments or questions to ask@pawscorner.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

* In 1987, a 93-gram radioactive device was stolen from an abandoned hospital in Brazil. After it was passed around, four people died, 112,000 people had to be examined, and several houses had to be destroyed.

* Gal Gadot trained for nine months to gain 17 pounds of muscle for the movie "Wonder Woman."

* Elevator operator Betty Oliver survived a 75-story fall from the Empire State Building in 1945 when a B-25 crashed into it due to fog. Three crewman and 11 people in the building died, but Betty, who died in 1999, still holds the Guinness World Record for longest survived elevator fall.

* A cat named Barsik, in Barnaul, Siberia, won a mayoral race with more than 90% of the vote. Notwithstanding that fact, and his clever campaign slogan -- "Only mice don't vote for Barsik!" -- he was, alas, not allowed to actually take office.

* While John and Clarence Anglin, two of the only three men who ever escaped from Alcatraz, were officially reported to have drowned in the bay, their mother received flowers anonymously every Mother's Day until she died, and two very tall, unknown women were said to have attended her funeral.

Thought for the Day: "Try not to become a man of success, but rather become a man of value." -- Albert Einstein

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Caring for roses

In drier climates, the gardener must regularly provide water for rose bushes. Though generally one should water only the soil around the bushes, sprinkling water directly onto the plants keeps the foliage and blooms clean, retards powdery mildew and repels some pests. Insects that like to feed on rose bushes include aphids, Japanese beetles, spider mites and sawflies. Most of these can be controlled with neem oil or insecticidal soap; if you plant alliums near your roses, they can help repel aphids. - Brenda Weaver

Sources: gardendesign.com, garden.org



by Freddy Groves

Veterans Needed for Gulf War Illness Study

The Department of Veterans Affairs has just hooked up with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to do a five-year study of Gulf War Illness (GWI). The war (Operation Desert Storm/Operation Desert Shield) was from August 1990 to June 1991, and there are nearly 200,000 veterans still suffering the effects. Perhaps you can help.

The symptoms of GWI include headaches, rashes, gastro problems, muscle and joint pain and more. The IN-DEPTH project will be split, with the VA recruiting veterans to participate in the study (veterans who do and don't have GWI) and the NIH doing the research. To be noted, in bold type on the NIH's description page for the study reads: "Participants in the study will not receive treatment." It's all testing that will hopefully lead to treatments.

If you're interested in participating, you must be between the ages of 48 and 70. You'll be admitted to the NIH Clinical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, for 14 days, during which time you'll be tested from one end to the other. Some tests might be performed as outpatient.

To join the program, you'll first do a phone interview and your existing medical records will be checked. They'll do an at-home visit to check your vitals and review your medical questionnaires. If selected, you'll check into the clinic, where you'll undergo tests that include physical exam and strength testing, questions about food preferences, memory tests, wearing a heart monitor, stress tests on a stationary bike and much more. Once back at home, you might be asked to wear a monitor for a little while and to keep a health diary.

It doesn't cost anything to be in the study, but you'll be compensated and your travel may be paid for.

And, since the question will come up, if you've had Covid, you can't be in the study. They'll test you for antibodies during the screening.

If you have questions about the study, send an email to the NIH at gwiindepth@ninds.nih.gov. For the VA, send email to vhawas.indepth@va.gov.

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Wishing Well®

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

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

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1. MOVIES: Which animated movie includes the line, "Fish are friends, not food"?
2. TELEVISION: What is the name of the "Sesame Street" Muppet who lives in a trashcan?
3. GEOGRAPHY: What is the largest country geographically in Africa?
4. ANATOMY: What is complete heterochromia?
5. U.S. STATES: Which two states don't recognize Daylight Savings Time?
6. LITERATURE: Which best-selling novel (1989) is set in Clanton, Mississippi?
7. FOOD & DRINK: What is the national dish of Spain?
8. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a group of leopards called?
9. HISTORY: Which two Greek city-states fought the Peloponnesian War?
10. AD SLOGANS: Which company once urged customers to "reach out and touch someone" by telephone?

Answers

1. "Finding Nemo" (Bruce the Shark).
2. Oscar the Grouch.
3. Algeria.
4. When someone's eyes are two different colors.
5. Hawaii and Arizona.
6. "A Time to Kill," by John Grisham.
7. Paella.
8. A leap of leopards.
9. Sparta and Athens.
10. AT&T.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Travel Forward – Celebrating National Travel and Tourism Week

“Everyone must visit beautiful South Dakota. Pack your bags and rush to the car and start driving. With so many fun and exciting things to see and do, what will you do first?” Those are the words of an elementary school student who visited the Black Hills with his family last summer. He wrote a school report on his trip called “The Best Place to Visit.”

Stories like this are why we’re celebrating National Travel and Tourism Week. From May 7-13, we will appreciate and honor everything that the travel & tourism industry does for South Dakota.

Tourism is one of South Dakota’s largest industries. Visitors spent a record-breaking \$4.7 billion in 2022, generating 11% of total state sales tax collections. And the money that tourism brings in every year eases every South Dakota household’s tax burden by \$1,011.

We are so fortunate to welcome people from across the nation and around the world to our “Great Faces, Great Places.” Here in South Dakota, visitors get to create lifelong memories, and every one of our citizens benefits from that.

We broke records last year, but 2023 is looking even better for the travel industry. 84% of Americans have a tentative trip planned for the next 12 months, with the majority planning to travel in June and July. Excitement for leisure travel is at a record high level – and domestic leisure is travelers’ top discretionary spending priority. While many are concerned about the national economic climate, 53% of consumers are prioritizing travel in 2023, and 93% have travel plans in the next 6 months.

This all fits perfectly with the theme of National Travel and Tourism week: Travel Forward. We as South Dakotans know that attitude well. No matter what we face, our state’s residents know how to buckle down and keep moving forward. We also know how to celebrate – so let’s do it. Let’s come together and use this week as a time to celebrate South Dakota’s thriving travel industry.

We can do this in a lot of different ways. Share your favorite South Dakota stories, destinations, and pictures on social media with #HifromSD, #NTTW23, and #TravelForward to show your appreciation for our hard-working tourism folks during National Travel and Tourism Week from May 7-13.

Most importantly, don’t forget to enjoy this amazing state yourself. Head out in a direction you’ve never been to see what you can find. Discovery is everywhere in this state. Take some time to explore. Even as a lifelong South Dakotan, I am always surprised with the sights and delights I continue to find across our great state. Whether it’s a fresh donut from a small-town bakery, or crossing Spearfish Canyon off your bucket list, see what you can discover. I promise you’ll be surprised with how much is out there.

National Travel and Tourism Week is an important celebration of one of South Dakota’s strongest and most beautiful industries. Let’s rejoice. Let’s explore. Let’s “Travel Forward” into what’s sure to be one of the state’s best tourism years ever.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Border Security Must be a Priority

Five million illegal immigrants have been encountered at the southern border during the Biden administration, more than the population of 26 individual states. Another 1.4 million illegal immigrants, known as “gotaways,” have evaded Border Patrol. And 70 individuals on the terrorist watch list were apprehended in the last six months. But, for over two years, the Biden administration has turned a blind eye to this crisis and rescinded many of the policies that have secured the border in the past.

The number of border crossings only tells part of the tragic story of the border crisis, however. In the last six months alone, Border Patrol seized almost seven tons of fentanyl. Fentanyl entering the United States from Mexico is itself a crisis – fentanyl overdose deaths quadrupled between 2016 and 2021, and it is the leading cause of death for adults age 18-45. And law enforcement officials have attributed the flow of drugs into South Dakota communities to the crisis at our southern border.

Sadly, we may have not seen the worst of what this administration has in store at the southern border. On May 11, the Biden administration will end the use of pandemic-era Title 42 authorities, which have enabled Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to quickly turn back illegal immigrants. While CBP has been overwhelmed thanks to the president dismantling the effective border security policies of his predecessor, Title 42 has been a critical tool for CBP to prevent the open-border crisis from becoming a full-blown catastrophe. Now, Border Patrol expects as many as 13,000 illegal immigrants to cross the border each day when Title 42 is lifted. And border communities, which are already at capacity, are bracing for more migrants, declaring states of emergency, and seeking additional resources.

The Biden administration has largely ignored the border crisis that its early policies helped cause. Now, as this crisis is on the verge of growing much worse, the president has put forward eleventh-hour policy changes attempting to address the expected surge, including sending 1,500 active-duty troops to the border and reinstating some of the very policies he revoked under political pressure. While I hope these actions indicate the president will finally give the border crisis due attention, these measures are too little, too late. What’s needed at the border is presidential leadership, which has been sorely lacking for more than two years now, to uphold the laws on the books and ensure law enforcement can do its job.

For over a year, Republicans, and even some Democrats, warned the president about lifting Title 42 without an adequate plan in place to address the ongoing security and humanitarian crisis. His failure to lead risks further overwhelming Border Patrol, which could allow for drugs, criminals, and terrorists to enter the country undetected and unimpeded while inundating our legal asylum and immigration systems. It’s long past time for the president to seriously acknowledge the crisis, reverse course, and secure the border. I will continue to hold this administration accountable and support legislation to give the Border Patrol the policies and resources they need to help keep our country safe and secure.

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CONGRESSMAN
DUSTY JOHNSON
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



Small Business Week

Small businesses are the heart of our communities, providing employment and driving innovation at the national, state, and local levels. In South Dakota, 88,000 small businesses make up 99% of businesses in the state, employing nearly 210,000 people, more than 58% of our workforce. These businesses make large and small impacts in our communities and beyond.

Running a small business certainly comes with challenges. Many business owners are facing regulatory burdens, unfilled job openings, inflation, and limited access to capital. Because of their investment and impact on our communities, we look for opportunities to support small businesses—not just for their benefit, but for the benefit of our friends and family who work there.

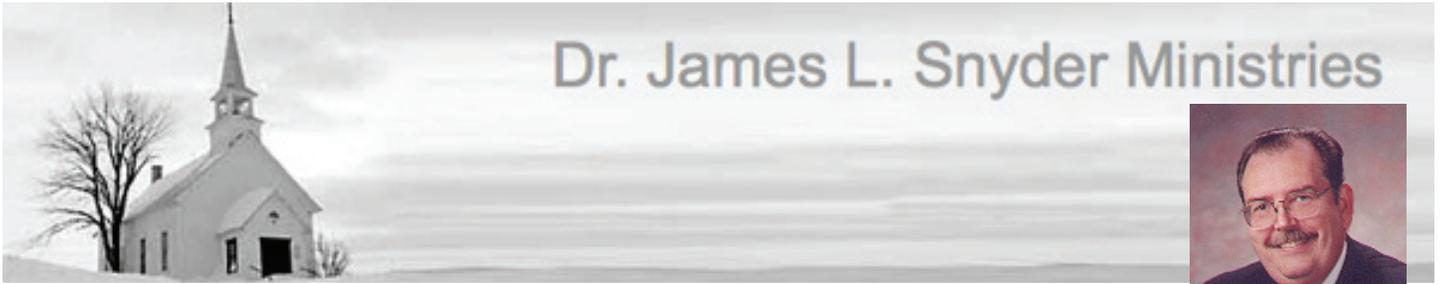
As Chairman of the Republican Main Street Caucus, I lead a group of 70 conservatives in Congress that are committed to implementing pro-growth policies for small businesses and fostering economic and individual prosperity. We strive to preserve main streets across America. Inflation and unfilled job openings continue to pressure small businesses, so it's important to support these businesses however we can. Some ways we can do that are shopping local, eating at a local restaurant, passing policies to support main street, stopping unnecessary federal spending, and reducing overly burdensome regulations.

This Small Business Week, I got to stop by several community favorites in Mitchell like Bonnie's deKor, Craig Ryans, Einstein's Vintage Clothing, and some of my favorite restaurants. It's the people who work at these small businesses that make them so special. Whether it's your favorite local coffee shop, hardware store, auto repair shop, restaurant, or clothing store, the owners likely know you by name and have built a relationship with you. Supporting small businesses keeps our communities thriving and unique. I'm grateful for the ways South Dakota's small businesses support our needs. Our local communities would be vastly different without them.

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My Reward I'll Eat It If I Want To

One day last week, I was up early working in my office as I normally do. I happened to pause what I was doing for a moment and smelled this wonderful aroma.

I know it wasn't me because I hadn't taken a shower yet. The aroma was coming from the kitchen area.

I got up from my desk, walked out into the kitchen and the closer I got the stronger that aroma was. It was so wonderful and I just could not get enough of it.

When I got to the kitchen there was The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage baking cookies. Oh, how delicious those cookies smelled.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"I'm baking cookies for some friends who are having a party tonight. They asked if I could bake them some cookies and I just couldn't refuse."

I smiled and just stared at all those cookies in the kitchen. There were molasses and peanut butter cookies, two of my favorites..

As I was looking at them, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage said to me rather sternly, "These cookies are not for you, they are for my friends. Do not eat them."

She saw me staring at those cookies and said, "Did you hear me?"

Then she told me that she had to go across town to pick up some things. So, she would be out of the house and I will be with the cookies all by myself. I can't think of a better scenario.

There's just no way I can be left alone with all those cookies in the kitchen and not eat some. I think my wife realized that and thought she could negotiate with me and solve the problem at hand.

Looking at me she said, "If you are a good boy today I will allow you to eat one cookie. Just one."

That brought me to quite a dilemma. What is her definition of "a good boy" and most importantly, how did she define "one cookie?"

I walked back to my office as she prepared to leave in the morning and I got back into the project I was working on. At least I tried to get back into my "saddle" for the morning, but it sure wasn't working for me.



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No matter how hard I tried to concentrate on my project all I could think about was those delicious cookies out in the kitchen which I could smell in my office. I don't think it's fair that I should be put in such a situation.

After all, it's really not my fault. It is the fault of The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage who makes cookies so delicious that I cannot refuse them. If it wasn't for that, I could ignore those cookies in the kitchen. So whatever happens, it is not my fault! And I am unanimous in that.

I then remembered that she said if I was a good boy I could have one cookie. That thought just ruminated through my mind and I couldn't handle it any longer and I had to go out into the kitchen and deal with it.

I think I'm a good boy, but that's only my evaluation. I sat for a moment at my desk and tried to think of anything bad I did that morning and I couldn't think of one thing. Therefore, with the evidence on the table, I have been a good boy today.

The next thing I had to deal with was the word "one." What does that word mean?

Looking at the cookies in the kitchen there were only two cookies: one was molasses and the other was peanut butter. So, in my understanding of the situation the word "one" means that I have to choose between the molasses cookie and the peanut butter cookie. That made sense to me.

So, according to my rationality, when I pick "one" cookie I can eat as many of them as I want to. I just can't eat the other one or I will be eating two cookies.

I can't tell you how happy I was in coming to this wonderful conclusion. I'm doing two things. I'm doing what my wife said to do and I am only eating one of the cookies. I love it when a plan comes together.

Going to the kitchen I made up my mind that the "one" cookie will be the peanut butter cookie. Oh, how I love her peanut butter cookies.

Picking out five cookies I joyfully skipped back to my office to enjoy these scrumptious treats. I earned these treats and therefore I'm going to eat them with a great deal of satisfaction.

I had finished those cookies and was working at my desk when I heard the front door open and expected it was The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

I then heard her voice, "Did you eat all these cookies when I told you to eat only one?"

Now I have some "splainin" to do.

A Bible verse came to mind that refreshed me concerning rewards. 2 John 1:8, "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward."

There are times when I convince myself that I deserve a certain reward. All I need to do is twist certain words to my benefit thinking I deserve something when in fact I am not being honest.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: Why are “forever chemicals” so bad, and how can I avoid them? -- M.N., via email

“Forever chemicals” are types of highly persistent and toxic synthetic chemicals widely used in many industries, including firefighting foam, non-stick cookware, food packaging and water-resistant clothing. These chemicals are called “forever” because they do not break down easily in the environment and can persist for decades or even centuries, accumulating in soil, water and air.

The most common types of forever chemicals are per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), which include compounds such as perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS). PFAS have been linked to a range of health problems, including cancer, immune system damage, hormone disruption and developmental delays. The problem with forever chemicals is that they can accumulate in our bodies over time, as well as in the bodies of animals and plants, leading to long-term health and environmental consequences. Because these chemicals do not break down easily in the environment, they can also contaminate soil, water and air, potentially impacting entire ecosystems.

To avoid exposure to forever chemicals, there are several steps you can take. First, avoid using non-stick cookware and other products that contain PFAS. Instead, opt for stainless steel, cast iron or ceramic cookware. Secondly, avoid using products that are labeled water-resistant, stain-resistant or grease-resistant, as they may contain PFAS. Thirdly, use natural, organic and biodegradable cleaning products instead of conventional cleaning products that may contain PFAS. When shopping for food, choose products that are packaged in glass, metal or paper containers instead of plastic containers, as plastic can contain PFAS. Finally, if you live in an area where PFAS contamination is a concern, consider installing a water filtration system that is designed to remove these chemicals.

According to the non-profit Environmental Working Group, a watchdog organization that tracks contaminants and chemicals in food, health and beauty products, nearly all Americans, including newborn babies, have forever chemicals in their bloodstreams, while 200 million of us may well be drinking tap water contaminated with these toxins. And we’re not the only ones at risk. Researchers have found traces of forever chemicals in wildlife all over the world, including some endangered species. Who would’ve thought that such a risk would threaten polar bears in the Arctic let alone tigers, monkeys and pandas in milder locales and even dolphins and fish across the world’s oceans?

Forever chemicals have been ubiquitous in our ecosystems and bloodstreams for decades, but it wasn’t until March 2023 that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) started to address the issue by setting Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) goals for PFAS and related persistent chemicals in drinking water supplies. While this might be too little too late for those of us exposed to these toxins year after year, at least it’s a step in the right direction. “Decades of unchecked use and releases of PFAS chemicals have devastated the planet by contaminating people, drinking water, and food, including fish and wildlife across the globe,” says Tasha Stoiber, a senior scientist at EWG. “The proposed nationwide standards to limit exposure to PFAS in drinking water are a welcome development to address the harms these toxic chemicals have already inflicted upon individuals and communities.”

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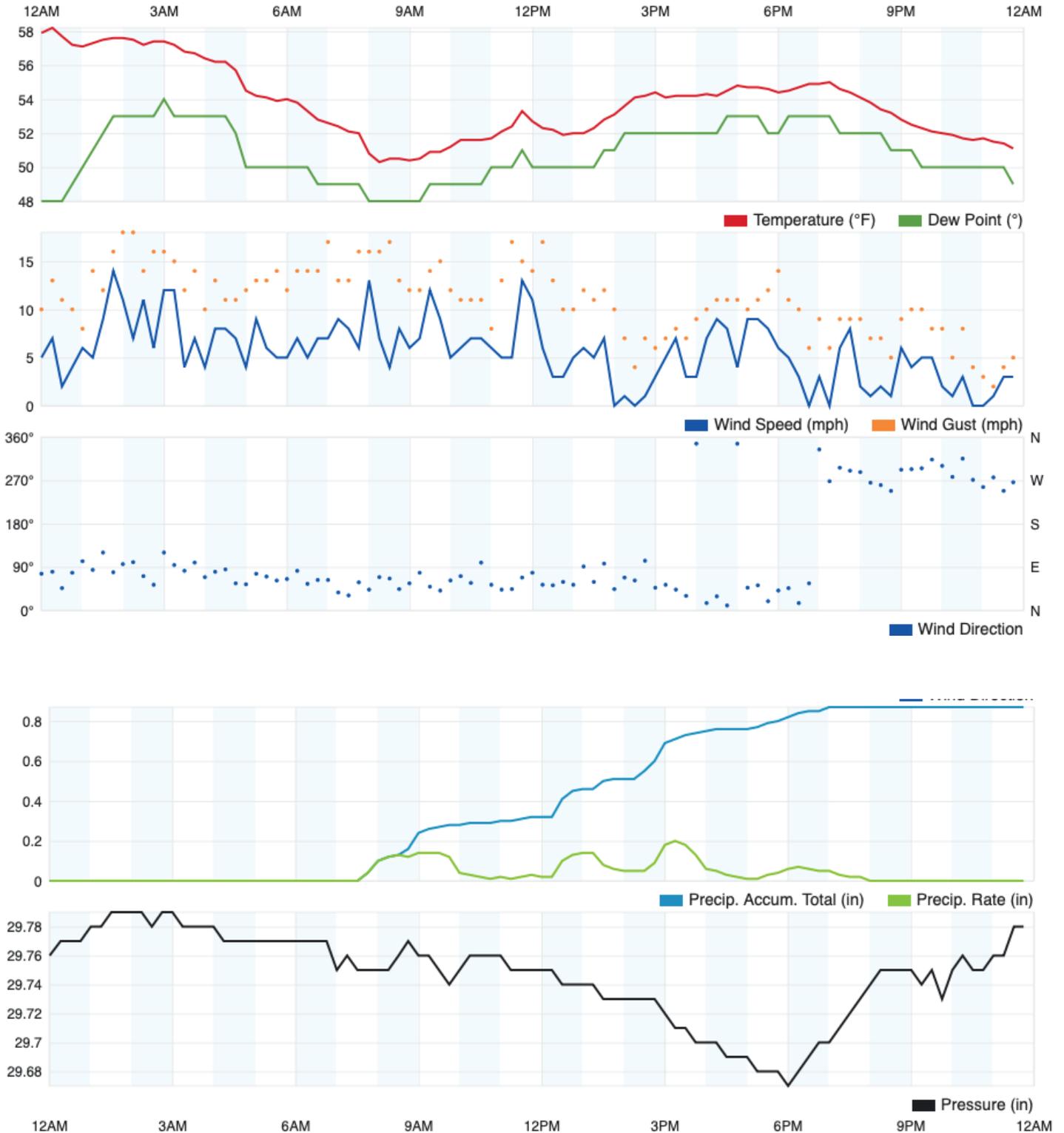


Non-stick pans like these are coated in so-called “forever chemicals” that can potentially flake off into your food. Credit: Alpha, FlickrCC.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
						
Partly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Sunny	Slight Chance T-storms then Slight Chance Showers	Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms
High: 66 °F	Low: 42 °F	High: 66 °F	Low: 45 °F	High: 71 °F	Low: 50 °F	High: 76 °F



Severe Weather Threat Overview

Later this Afternoon through This Evening

Hazards

Isolated to scattered thunderstorms capable of producing small hail and 60 mph winds.

Timing/Location

Storms should develop over western South Dakota later this afternoon and track eastward to the Missouri Valley, mainly after 5 pm CDT. The severe threat will be isolated east of the Missouri River after 8 pm CDT.

Tornado Potential

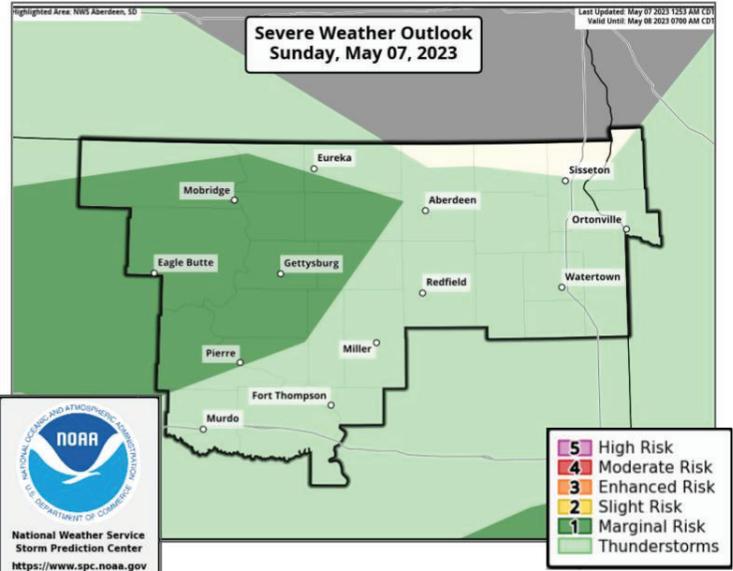
Very Low	Low	Medium	High

Max Hail Size

Dimes	Quarter	Golfball	Baseball

Max Wind Speed

60 mph	60 - 70 mph	70 - 80 mph	> 80 mph



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Isolated to scattered showers and thunderstorms should develop over western South Dakota later this afternoon. The storms will move east into the Missouri River valley this evening. The main threats will be small hail and 60 mph winds.

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Precipitation Chances Through the Week

Probability of Precipitation Forecast

	5/8 Mon			5/9 Tue				5/10 Wed				5/11 Thu				5/12 Fri				5/13 Sat				Maximun
	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	
Aberdeen	10	5	25	25	10	15	35	35	35	30	55	65	65	70	75	75	50	60	60	55	35	40	40	76
Britton	15	30	30	30	10	15	30	35	35	30	45	65	65	70	75	75	55	65	65	65	45	45	45	77
Brookings	15	45	45	35	10	15	15	20	25	40	40	55	55	65	65	65	60	55	55	45	35	40	40	66
Chamberlain	20	40	40	15	25	25	25	35	50	50	65	75	75	75	75	65	45	45	45	40	35	35	35	76
Eagle Butte	30	50	50	10	25	40	40	45	45	50	70	85	85	90	90	70	55	60	60	45	40	45	45	88
Eureka	20	25	35	20	10	20	40	40	40	35	60	75	75	80	80	80	55	65	65	55	35	45	45	81
Gettysburg	15	5	15	15	15	30	45	45	40	40	70	80	80	80	80	75	50	60	60	50	35	40	40	81
Huron	20	45	45	25	10	15	15	25	35	40	55	65	65	70	70	70	55	50	50	45	30	35	35	72
Kennebec	20	25	20	10	25	35	35	45	45	45	75	75	75	70	70	65	40	45	45	40	30	30	30	76
McIntosh	40	55	55	15	15	30	45	45	45	40	65	80	80	90	90	80	60	65	65	55	45	45	45	88
Milbank	10	30	35	35	10	20	20	25	25	30	30	50	50	60	65	65	50	65	65	60	45	50	50	64
Miller	10	15	20	20	20	30	40	40	40	40	75	75	75	75	75	75	45	55	55	55	35	40	40	77
Mobridge	20	40	30	15	15	25	35	40	40	40	60	75	75	85	85	80	55	65	65	50	40	40	40	84
Murdo	20	30	35	15	35	45	45	50	50	50	80	80	80	75	75	60	40	45	45	40	30	30	30	81
Pierre	20	10	15	15	30	40	45	45	45	45	80	80	80	80	80	65	40	50	50	45	30	35	35	81
Redfield	10	10	20	20	15	20	40	40	35	30	65	70	70	65	75	75	45	55	55	55	40	35	35	75
Sisseton	10	20	30	30	10	15	30	30	30	25	40	55	55	60	70	70	50	60	60	60	45	45	45	70
Watertown	10	20	30	30	10	20	30	30	30	30	40	60	60	60	70	70	50	65	65	60	45	45	45	68
Webster	10	5	35	35	10	20	35	35	35	30	50	65	65	65	75	75	55	65	65	65	45	45	45	74
Wheaton	10	30	35	35	15	15	20	25	25	25	30	45	50	55	65	65	50	65	65	60	45	50	50	65

*Table values in %

**Created: 3 am CDT Sun 5/7/2023

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

Don't see your city? Check out weather.gov/forecastpoints

Highlights this Week

The weather pattern will remain active during the upcoming work week with several rounds of showers and thunderstorms.

Cannot rule out strong to severe thunderstorms at times throughout the week.

Locally heavy rainfall will be possible, mainly Thursday through Friday.

Stay weather aware during this active weather pattern!

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 58 °F at 12:09 AM

Low Temp: 50 °F at 8:13 AM

Wind: 18 mph at 1:53 AM

Precip: : 0.87

Day length: 14 hours, 37 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 93 in 2016

Record Low: 23 in 1931

Average High: 67

Average Low: 40

Average Precip in May.: 0.65

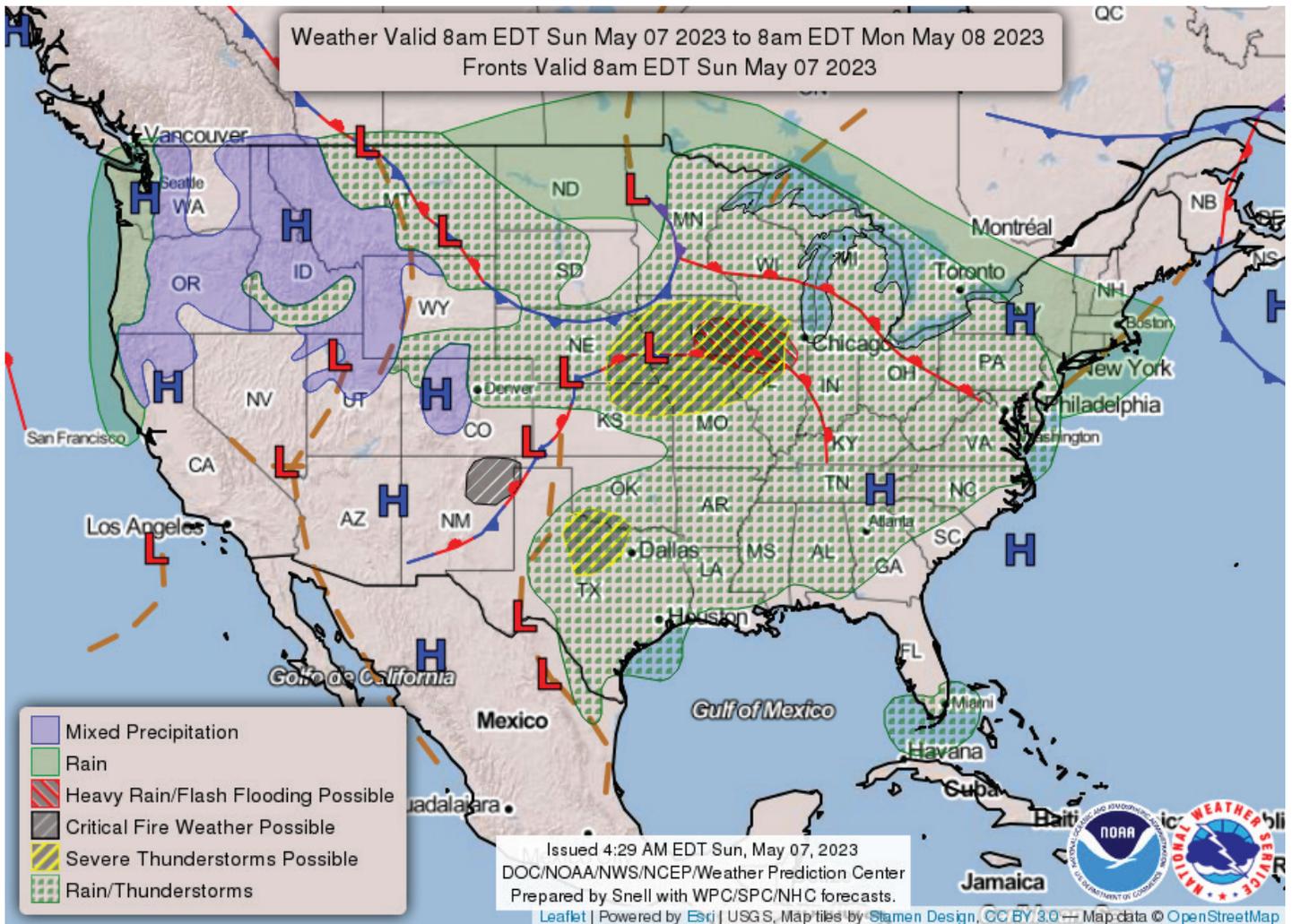
Precip to date in May.: 0.87

Average Precip to date: 4.62

Precip Year to Date: 6.59

Sunset Tonight: 8:47:45 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:08:47 AM



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Today in Weather History

May 7, 1896: A strong, estimated F3 tornado moved northeast from 12 miles SSW of Clark to 3 miles west of Watertown, to beyond Lake Kampeska. It was estimated to be on the ground for a distance of 30 miles. Near the start of the path, a woman was killed, and ten people were injured in one home. Parts of a house were found up to two miles away. The tornado also leveled barns near Watertown.

1840: A powerful tornado wrecked many boats at the Natchez Landing in Mississippi then plowed through the city on the bluff. The tornado killed 317 people and injured 109 others. The storm is currently the second deadliest tornado on record. The actual death toll could be higher as slaves were not counted.

1993: Serious flooding occurred in central Oklahoma following torrential rain and hail on this date through the 8th. Rainfall amounts on this date were generally around one inch. Oklahoma City, OK then recorded 6.64 inches of rain on the 8th, the third greatest daily rainfall amount ever observed in the city. Extensive flooding resulted, which killed four people, and the fire department had to rescue 183 others. More than 2,000 homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed. Damages were estimated at \$8 million.

1975 - A massive tornado hit Omaha, NE, killing three persons, injuring 133 others, and causing 150 million dollars damage. The tornado struck during the late afternoon moving northeastward through the industrial and residential areas of west central Omaha, and lifting over the northern section of the city. The twister, which cut a swath ten miles long and as much as a quarter of a mile wide, was the mostly costly in U.S. history up til that time. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Eighteen cities in California and Oregon reported record high temperatures for the date. Highs of 91 degrees at Portland OR, 101 degrees at Medford OR, and 104 degrees at Sacramento CA, were the warmest of record for so early in the season. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - A major storm brought high winds to the western half of the country. A wind gust of 74 mph at Pueblo CO broke their May record established just four days earlier, and winds in the Arapahoe Ski Basin area of Colorado reached 85 mph. In North Dakota, the high winds reduced visibilities to near zero in blowing dust closing many roads. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989: Thirty-two cities in the central and eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, and 24-hour snowfall totals of 7.2 inches at Buffalo and 10.7 inches at Rochester New York were records for May.

1989 - Sixteen cities in the north central U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date. Morning lows of 17 at Bismarck ND and 26 at Minneapolis MN were the coldest of record for so late in the season. A reading of 43 degrees at the start of the Kentucky Derby was the coldest in 115 years of records. Light snow was reported in the Upper Midwest, with an inch reported at Chicago IL. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Snow and high winds prevailed behind a Pacific cold front crossing the northwestern U.S. Wind gusts above 50 mph were reported in southeastern Idaho, and heavy snow blanketed the Cascade Mountains of Washington State, with twelve inches reported at Stampede Pass. (The National Weather Summary)

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

NOW OR NEVER!

In 1874 Elisha Gray did something that no one else had ever done. He unveiled a machine that transmitted musical notes over a telegraph wire. The audience was fascinated with the sounds. Proudly he said, "If music, why not words?"s

Immediately the New York Times predicted a "Talking Machine," and people expressed a great interest in wanting one.

Gray did nothing with his "machine" for two months. One day he decided to go to the patent office with a drawing. After presenting it to one of the officials, he learned that Alexander Graham Bell had presented an identical sketch two hours earlier.

Gray did not fail. He hesitated. His loss was tremendous and cost him much.

Salvation is God's free gift to everyone who accepts Christ. But like Gray, many put off making a decision to become a Christian until it is too late. Everyone wants to believe there will always be another tomorrow because there was a yesterday. Not true!

Prayer: We pray, Father, for those who need to accept Christ as Savior today! May they realize that "now is the day of salvation" and accept Your offer. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: As God's partners, we beg you not to accept this marvelous gift of God's kindness and then ignore it. For God says, "At just the right time, I heard you. On the day of salvation, I helped you." Indeed, the "right time" is now. Today is the day of salvation. 2 Corinthians 6:1-2



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:
05.05.23

16 18 28 42 43 11

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$83,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.06.23

13 20 42 43 46 1

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$2,750,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.06.23

24 32 35 38 42 2

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 19 Mins 57 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.06.23

2 9 10 14 32

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$51,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.06.23

1 9 20 21 55 11

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.06.23

31 39 47 51 53 6

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$97,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Satellite images show tankers Iran seized off Bandar Abbas

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Satellite images analyzed Sunday by The Associated Press show two oil tankers recently seized by Iran off the coast of one of its key port cities on the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

The photos from Planet Labs PBC showed the Advantage Sweet and the Niovi anchored just south of Bandar Abbas near a naval base in the port city in Iran's Hormozgan province Saturday. Their capture represents just the latest ship seizure conducted by Iran amid tensions with the West over its rapidly advancing nuclear program, though it appears the two ships may have been taken for different reasons.

Iran seized the Marshall Islands-flagged Advantage Sweet, staffed by 23 Indians and one Russian, on April 27 as it traveled in the Gulf of Oman. Tehran claimed the vessel had struck another ship, though tracking data for the Advantage Sweet showed no erratic behavior on its trip. Iran has made claims in the past over ship seizures to cover for the vessels being taken to use as pawns in negotiations with the West.

The Advantage Sweet carried Kuwaiti crude oil for American energy firm Chevron Corp. of San Ramon, California, at the time of its capture. And its seizure comes as another tanker believed to be carrying Iranian crude disappeared from anchorage off Singapore a year after being identified as trying to evade U.S. sanctions.

The Financial Times, as well as the maritime intelligence firm Ambrey, both have reported that ship named Suez Rajan was seized on order of American authorities. U.S. officials and those associated with the Suez Rajan have not responded to questions about the tanker's disappearance while on a path heading West.

The Niovi, a Panama-flagged tanker, was seized by Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard on Wednesday as it left a dry dock in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, bound for Fujairah on the UAE's eastern coast. While not carrying any cargo, data from S&P Global Market Intelligence seen by the AP showed the Niovi in July 2020 received oil from a ship known then as the Oman Pride.

The U.S. Treasury in August 2021 sanctioned the Oman Pride and others associated with the vessel over it being "involved in an international oil smuggling network" that supported the Quds Force, the expeditionary unit of the Revolutionary Guard that operates across the Mideast.

Separately, purported emails published online by Wikiran, a website that solicits leaked documents from the Islamic Republic, suggest that cargo carried by the Niovi was sold onto firms in China without permission.

United Against a Nuclear Iran, which has tracked sanctioned crude shipments by Tehran, "strongly suspects the seizure of the Niovi is related to a dispute over a shipment of Iranian oil," said Claire Jungman, the chief of staff of the organization. Iran has said it seized the Niovi over an unspecified court order in Tehran.

The managers of the Niovi did not answer repeated telephone calls for comment. The Greek Coast Guard have said the Niovi was staffed by Greek, Filipino and Sri Lanka sailors.

Meanwhile Sunday, an internet account describing itself as a group of hackers claimed responsibility for allegedly taking down websites associated with Iran's Foreign Ministry. The claims of the account GhyamSarnegouni, whose name in Farsi means "Rise to Overthrow," were not immediately acknowledged by Iranian media.

However, the Foreign Ministry's website remained down for hours over what it called "scheduled maintenance and upgrades."

Cached versions of the websites of Iranian diplomatic posts in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Munich, Germany, and Seoul, South Korea, appeared to have been defaced with a message in Farsi reading: "Death to Khamenei, Hail Rajavi." Khamenei refers to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, while Rajavi likely refers to Massoud Rajavi, the long-missing leader of the Iranian exile group Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, or his wife Maryam, who is now the public face of the group.

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"There is a great revolution in Iran, the uprising will go until the demolition of the palace of oppression," the message read.

Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at www.twitter.com/jongambrellAP.

Across town from show dogs, a labor to save suffering ones

By JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — On a recent afternoon at a Manhattan animal hospital and adoption center, a pit bull mix called T-Bone, rescued after being tied to a utility pole, gazed out at visitors from his tidy room. Trigger was recuperating from a stab wound, a large incision still visible on his side.

Pert little Melanie had been abandoned at one of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' community veterinary clinics. Tip's owner had been overwhelmed by six dogs and four cats. Friendly, retriever-like Rainbow, surrendered by someone who could not care for him, snoozed in the adoption office.

While the Westminster Kennel Club crowns the cream of the canine elite on one of tennis' most storied courts this week, the ASPCA's facility across town will be tending to dogs that have had far darker lives.

New York is home to both the United States' most prestigious dog show and its oldest humane society, the ASPCA. Their histories connect: Some proceeds from the inaugural Westminster show, in 1877, helped the young ASPCA build its first shelter years later.

Westminster, being held 10 miles (16 km) east, feels like worlds away.

"We have different priorities, different visions," said ASPCA President Matt Bershadker. "The dog shows are focused on breed and composition and movement. And we're focused on the heart and the inside."

Westminster stresses that it aims "to create a better world for all dogs," and the club donates thousands of dollars a year to individual breeds' rescue groups and to pet-friendly domestic violence shelters. Still, the show draws protests every year from animal-rights activists who argue that spotlighting prized purebreds leaves shelter pets in the shadows.

Bershadker, for his part, says ASPCA leaders "don't have a problem with purebreds, but we want them to be responsibly bred."

At the adoption center, there's little reference to breed or might-be breed. Instead, staffers try to characterize dogs by, well, characteristics.

During a recent visit, Sauce ("great on a leash," in adoption center leader Joel Lopez's description) was paired with Gordon ("likes hot dogs!") in the airy, windowed training room.

The two young adult males with gut-twisting histories — Sauce had been stabbed, Gordon starved — were there to learn to play and be around other dogs in a city of shared spaces. They sniffed each other and ran around on leashes, with occasional interventions from staffers when the interactions began to intensify.

Elsewhere in the Upper East Side building, a terrace gives a taste of the outdoors to dogs that may seldom have been there. There's even a mock living room where volunteers can bring animals to get used to just hanging out at home.

"Regardless of where these animals are coming from, these are great pets. They just need a little bit of help to just get them over the hump and get them into the rest of their life," Lopez said.

That help is part of a \$390 million-a-year organization that responds to disasters and large-scale animal cruelty cases nationwide. Its wide-ranging work includes a Miami vet clinic, an Oklahoma City horse adoption initiative, a Los Angeles-area spaying and neutering service, a behavioral rehab facility in North Carolina, and more.

Established in 1866, the ASPCA is familiar to many Americans from its fundraising ads featuring woe-begone animals, particularly a 2007 spot that featured singer-songwriter Sarah McLachlan and ran for years. The charity spent over \$56 million on advertising and promotion alone in 2021, the last year for which its tax returns are publicly available.

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Bershadker says the organization affects hundreds of thousands of animals annually, and its marketing communications form “an essential part of the ASPCA’s lifesaving work” by increasing public awareness and action.

On another end of the dog-rescue spectrum, the all-volunteer Havanese Rescue Inc. takes in an average of about 30 Havanese each year and finds new homes for many within two to four weeks, according to group leaders.

Getting \$5,000 from the Westminster Kennel Club this year is “huge” to a group with a \$60,000-a-year budget and dogs that have come in needing \$10,000 surgeries, President Jennifer Jablonski said.

Westminster also is giving \$5,000 apiece to the Newfoundland Club of America, which has a rescue arm that found new homes for 67 Newfs last year, and to Lagotto Romagnolo Dog Rescue.

At the ASPCA, the New York animal hospital alone treats 9,000 to 10,000 patients a year. In late April, there were at least 50 animals apiece in the adoption and recovery centers and about 100 or more in foster care, with kitten season looming.

There are numerous animal shelters and rescue groups in New York City, and the ASPCA isn’t the go-to place for stray and lost dogs and cats. (The city largely directs such inquiries to Animal Care Centers, another nonprofit group.)

The ASPCA’s charges often come through its work with police, but also from clinics, a food bank partnership and other efforts to connect with people struggling to support their pets because of financial, health or other problems.

While the group helps police to build criminal cases, that’s not the only outcome.

One small dog in the recovery area in late April was to be reunited with its owner. What had seemed like abandonment turned out to be a pet-sitting foul-up, but the owner also needed help with some veterinary issues, said Kris Lindsay, who oversees the recovery center.

“This,” she said, “is one of the cases that we like.”

This one, too: Rainbow has a new home — with a Connecticut man who had adopted dogs before.

New York-based Associated Press journalist Jennifer Peltz has covered the Westminster dog show since 2013.

Nuclear watchdog growingly worried over Ukraine plant safety

By DAVID RISING Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The head of the United Nations’ nuclear watchdog is expressing growing anxiety about the safety of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, after the governor of the Russia-occupied area ordered the evacuation of a town where most plant staff live amid ongoing attacks in the area.

The plant is near the front lines of fighting, and Ukrainian authorities on Sunday said that a 72-year-old woman was killed and three others were wounded when Russian forces fired more than 30 shells at Nikopol, a Ukrainian-held town neighboring the plant.

“The general situation in the area near the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant is becoming increasingly unpredictable and potentially dangerous,” International Atomic Energy Agency head Rafael Grossi said in a warning that came Saturday before the latest report of attacks.

“I’m extremely concerned about the very real nuclear safety and security risks facing the plant.”

Grossi’s comments were prompted by an announcement Friday by Yevgeny Balitsky, the Russian-installed governor of the partially-occupied Zaporizhzhia province, that he had ordered the evacuation of civilians from 18 settlements in the area, including Enerhodar, which is located next to the power plant, which is Europe’s largest.

The settlements affected are about 50 to 70 kilometers (30 to 40 miles) from the front line of fighting between Ukraine and Russia, and Balitsky said that Ukraine had intensified attacks on the area in the past several days.

The region is also widely seen as a likely area where Ukraine may focus its anticipated spring counterof-

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fensive.

The Ukrainian General Staff said Sunday that the evacuation of Enerhodar had already begun.

According to an update posted on Facebook, the General Staff said the first residents evacuated were those who took Russian citizenship following the capture of the town by Moscow early in the war.

They were being taken to the Russia-occupied Azov Sea coast, about 200 kilometers (120 miles) to the southeast.

Grossi said that operating staff of the nuclear power plant, whose six reactors are currently all in shut-down mode, hadn't been evacuated as of Saturday but that most live in Enerhodar and the situation has contributed to "increasingly tense, stressful and challenging conditions for personnel and their families."

He added that IAEA experts at the nuclear site "are continuing to hear shelling on a regular basis."

"We must act now to prevent the threat of a severe nuclear accident and its associated consequence for the population and the environment," Grossi said. "This major nuclear facility must be protected. I will continue to press for a commitment by all sides to achieve this vital objective."

Elsewhere, Russian shelling on Saturday and overnight killed six civilians and wounded four others in Ukraine's southern Kherson region, according to a Telegram update published Sunday by the local administration.

Five civilians were wounded in the eastern Donetsk region, the epicenter of the fighting in recent months, local Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko reported on Sunday morning.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian forces overnight attacked the largest port in the Russia-occupied Crimean Peninsula with drones, a Kremlin-installed local official said on Telegram early Sunday.

According to the post by Mikhail Razvozhayev, the governor of Sevastopol, 10 Ukrainian drones targeted the city, three of which were shot down by air defense systems. Razvozhayev said that there had been no damage.

Joanna Kozłowska contributed to this story from London.

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

S. Korean, Japanese leaders meet again to improve ties

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The leaders of South Korea and Japan met Sunday for their second summit in less than two months, as they push to mend long-running historical grievances and boost ties in the face of North Korea's nuclear program and other regional challenges.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida arrived in South Korea earlier Sunday for a two-day visit, which reciprocates a mid-March trip to Tokyo by South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol. It was the first exchange of visits between the leaders of the Asian neighbors in 12 years.

South Korean media attention on the summit is focused on whether Kishida will make a more direct apology over Japan's 1910-45 colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula. Such comments by Kishida would likely help Yoon win greater support for his push to build stronger ties with Japan and ease domestic criticism that he's preemptively made concessions to Tokyo without receiving corresponding steps in return.

"It took 12 years to restore 'the shuttle diplomacy' but our exchange of visits took less than two months," Yoon said at the start of the meeting. "I think this confirms that South Korean-Japan relations, which have started fresh, are moving forward with a speed."

Yoon said cooperation between Seoul and Tokyo is essential considering "the current grave international political situation and the global polycrisis." He didn't elaborate, but has previously cited North Korea's advancing nuclear program, the intensifying U.S.-China strategic rivalry and global supply chain problems as reasons for greater cooperation with Japan.

Kishida said he and Yoon plan to exchange views to further develop bilateral relations. Kishida said that "a series of dialogues has dynamically started moving" since his summit with Yoon in March, during which

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he said the two leaders "wiped out somewhat shrunk mood to strengthen our dialogue and cooperation."

South Korean and Japanese officials said their leaders would discuss North Korea's nuclear program, South Korean-Japanese economic security and overall relations, and other unspecified international issues.

Ahead of his summit with Yoon, Kishida and his wife, Yuko Kishida, visited the national cemetery in Seoul, where they burned incense and paid a silent tribute before a memorial. Buried or honored in the cemetery are mostly Korean War dead, but include Korean independence fighters during the period of Japanese rule. Kishida was the first Japanese leader to visit the place in 12 years.

In their March summit, Yoon and Kishida agreed to resume leadership-level visits and other talks. In recent weeks, the two countries have also withdrawn the economic retaliatory steps they had earlier taken against each other in previous years when their history row rekindled.

The most recent sticking point in their ties was 2018 court rulings in South Korea that ordered two Japanese companies to financially compensate some of their aging former Korean employees for colonial-era forced labor. The verdicts angered Japan, which has argued that all compensation issues were already settled when the two countries normalized ties in 1965.

In an escalation of tensions, the two countries later downgraded each other's trade status, while Seoul also threatened to spike a military intelligence-sharing pact. Some activists and residents in South Korea staged campaigns to boycott Japanese products, as well.

The strained South Korea-Japan ties complicated U.S. efforts to build a stronger regional alliance to better cope with rising Chinese influence and North Korean nuclear threats.

In March, however, Yoon's conservative government took a major step toward mending the ties by announcing it would use local funds to compensate the forced labor victims without demanding contributions from Japanese companies. Later in March, Yoon traveled to Tokyo to meet with Kishida.

Yoon's push drew strong backlash from some of the forced labor victims and his liberal rivals at home, who have demanded direct compensation from the Japanese companies.

In late April, Yoon made a state visit to the United States and agreed with President Joe Biden to reinforce deterrence capabilities against North Korea's nuclear threats. During a joint news conference, Biden thanked Yoon "for your political courage and personal commitment to diplomacy with Japan."

"White House officials have expressed some frustration with the tepid response from Tokyo on the forced labor compensation deal and hope that Kishida will use an upcoming visit to South Korea in early May to do more," Victor Cha, senior vice president for Asia and Korea Chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, wrote in an analysis published last week.

Yoon, Biden and Kishida are expected to hold a trilateral meeting later this month on the sidelines of the Group of Seven meetings in Hiroshima to discuss North Korea, China's assertiveness and Russia's war on Ukraine. Yoon was invited as one of eight outreach nations.

After his March summit with Yoon, Kishida said he upholds the positions of previous Japanese governments including one carried in the landmark 1998 joint declaration by Tokyo and Seoul on improving ties, but didn't make a new apology. In the 1998 declaration, then-Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi said that "I feel acute remorse and offer an apology from my heart" over the colonial rule.

Japanese governments have expressed remorse or apologies over the colonial period numerous times. But some Japanese officials and politicians have occasionally made comments that have been accused of whitewashing Tokyo's wartime aggressions, prompting Seoul to urge Tokyo to make new, more sincere apologies.

Asked whether he would discuss the forced labor victims with Yoon, Kishida said in his pre-departure comments: "We will frankly exchange our views on this."

Seoul and Tokyo have a slew of other sensitive historical and territorial disputes, mostly related to the Japanese colonization. In a reminder of the delicate nature of their ties, diplomats between the two countries last week spat over a South Korean lawmaker's visit to disputed islets located in the waters between the two countries. Earlier, Seoul protested Kishida's offering of religious offerings to a Tokyo shrine that it views as a symbol of Japan's wartime aggression. ____

Associated Press writer Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo contributed to this report.

'We started running': 8 killed in Texas outlet mall shooting

By JAKE BLEIBERG and REBECCA BOONE Associated Press

ALLEN, Texas (AP) — Hundreds of terrified shoppers fled in panic after a gunman stepped out of a silver sedan and opened fire at a Dallas-area outlet mall, killing eight and wounding seven before being killed by a police officer who happened to be nearby, authorities said.

The shooting in Allen, Texas, on Saturday was the latest eruption of what has been an unprecedented pace of mass killings in the U.S. Barely a week before, authorities say, a man fatally shot five people in Cleveland, Texas, after a neighbor asked him to stop firing his weapon while a baby slept.

Police did not immediately provide details about the victims at Allen Premium Outlets, a sprawling outdoor shopping center, but witnesses reported seeing children among them. Some said they also saw what appeared to be a police officer and a mall security guard unconscious on the ground.

A 16-year-old pretzel stand employee, Maxwell Gum, described a virtual stampede of shoppers. He and others sheltered in a storage room.

"We started running. Kids were getting trampled," Gum said. "My co-worker picked up a 4-year-old girl and gave her to her parents."

Dashcam video circulating online showed the gunman getting out of a car and shooting at people on the sidewalk. More than three dozen shots could be heard as the vehicle that was recording the video drove off.

Allen Fire Chief Jonathan Boyd said seven people including the shooter died at the scene. Nine victims were taken to area hospitals, but two of them died.

Three of the wounded were in critical condition in the evening, Boyd said, and four were stable.

An Allen Police Department officer was in the area on an unrelated call when he heard shots at 3:36 p.m., the department wrote on Facebook.

"The officer engaged the suspect and neutralized the threat. He then called for emergency personnel," the post said.

Mass killings are happening with staggering frequency in the United States this year: an average of about one per week, according to a database maintained by The Associated Press and USA Today in partnership with Northeastern University.

President Biden was briefed on the shooting in Allen and the administration offered support to local officials, the White House said. Republican Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, who has signed laws easing firearms restrictions following past mass shootings, called the mall shooting an "unspeakable tragedy."

A live aerial broadcast from a news station showed armored trucks and other law enforcement vehicles outside the mall. More than 30 police cruisers with lights flashing blocked an entrance, with multiple ambulances on the scene in the city of roughly 105,000 residents about 25 miles (40 kilometers) north of downtown Dallas.

Video shared on social media showed people running through a parking lot amid the sound of gunshots.

Fontayne Payton, 35, was at H&M when he heard the sound of gunshots through his headphones.

"It was so loud, it sounded like it was right outside," Payton said.

People in the store scattered before employees ushered the group into the fitting rooms and then a lockable back room, he said. When they were given the all-clear to leave, Payton saw the store had broken windows and a trail of blood to the door. Discarded sandals and bloodied clothes lay nearby.

Once outside, Payton saw bodies.

"I pray it wasn't kids, but it looked like kids," he said. The bodies were covered in white towels, slumped over bags on the ground. "It broke me when I walked out to see that."

Further away, he saw the body of a heavyset man wearing all black. He assumed it was the shooter, Payton said, because unlike the other bodies it had not been covered.

Tarakram Nunna, 25, and Ramakrishna Mullapudi, 26, said they saw what appeared to be three people motionless on the ground, including one who appeared to be a police officer and another who seemed

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to be a mall security guard.

Another shopper, Sharkie Mouli, 24, said he hid in a Banana Republic during the shooting. As he left, he saw what appeared to be an unconscious police officer lying next to another unconscious person outside the outlet store.

"I have seen his gun lying right next to him and a guy who is like passing out right next to him," Mouli said.

Stan and Mary Ann Greene were browsing in a Columbia sportswear store when the shooting started.

"We had just gotten in, just a couple minutes earlier, and we just heard a lot of loud popping," Mary Ann Greene told The Associated Press.

Employees rolled down the security gate and brought everyone to the rear of the store until police arrived and escorted them out, the Greenses said.

Eber Romero was at an Under Armour store when a cashier mentioned there was a shooting.

As he left, Romero said, the mall appeared empty and all the shops had their security gates down. That is when he started seeing broken glass and victims of the shooting on the floor of the shopping center.

Associated Press writers Gene Johnson in Seattle and Adam Kealoha Causey in Dallas contributed to this report.

Lives immigrants built in Texas town shattered by shooting

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

CLEVELAND, Texas (AP) — Wilson Garcia and his family were among the Latino immigrants who carved out a community inside the thick, piney woods near Cleveland, Texas, through a combination of hard labor, fortitude and love of family, friends and neighbors.

On a 1-acre (4,046 square-meter) plot of land bought with a small down payment, Garcia built a home in the Trails End neighborhood that provided nurturing shelter for his family. It was also an inviting space for friends to visit. The lush green space around his home, located about 60 miles (100 kilometers) north of Houston, reminded Garcia of the countryside of his native Honduras.

"Back home in Honduras, he was a country man ... He talked about how beautiful the country is," said Johnny Ray Gibbs, who has known Garcia for a decade. "I asked him, 'How is it up there (in Cleveland)? He said, 'Beautiful.'"

That beauty was shattered by gunfire on April 28 when authorities say a neighbor, Francisco Oropeza, responded to a request to stop firing his AR-style rifle late at night by charging into Garcia's home and killing five people.

The shooting victims included Garcia's wife, Sonia Argentina Guzman; and 9-year-old son, Daniel Enrique Laso; family friends Diana Velásquez Alvarado, 21; Jose Jonathan Cacerez, 18, and Cacerez's girlfriend, Obdulia Julisa Molina Rivera, 29. All were from Honduras.

As the victims were remembered for their efforts to seek better lives in the U.S. or for their bravery in saving children during the shooting, Garcia and his neighbors were uncertain if they and the community they've worked hard to build would ever recover.

"I don't have words to describe what happened. It's like I am alive but at the same time not. What happened was something horrible, ugly," Garcia told reporters following the shooting.

Oropeza, 38, was captured after a four-day search and jailed on five murder charges.

Weeks before the shooting, Garcia, who works as an electrician, and Guzman had celebrated the birth of their son. He joined Daniel and a 2½ year old sister in their burgeoning family. Also living in the home was Wilson Garcia's brother-in-law, Ramiro Guzman, and his wife and 6-month-old son.

The others in the home during the shooting were extended family and friends who would often stay on weekends, Garcia said.

Shawn Crawford, 52, who lives two houses down, said Garcia and his family "were just good people." Crawford and her grandchildren had attended kids birthday parties and cookouts at Garcia's home.

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Guzman's brother, Germán Guzmán, 28, said his sister came to the U.S. nine years ago so she could help her family.

"Here in Honduras, there's no work," he told The Associated Press from the central Honduras town of La Misión.

Crawford said when Guzman was pregnant last year, Garcia went to Crawford's home and asked if he could buy a pink flower growing from her Yucca plant, saying it was "good for the unborn baby." Crawford told him to take one anytime he saw it bloom.

"That's the neighborhood we were ... Everybody just helped each other," Crawford said.

That help among neighbors was valuable because Trails End was not always an easy place to live.

Residents have been forced to collect money to fix the potholes that riddle the streets because they're considered private roads and not under the county's jurisdiction.

The killings highlighted the ongoing problem of residents firing their weapons for fun and slow law enforcement response times to such incidents. Garcia had asked Oropeza if he could fire his weapon farther away because Garcia's 1½ month old son was trying to sleep.

Dale Tiller, who has lived in the neighborhood for 13 years, said despite these difficult circumstances, people live there because of the "pride in wanting to be a homeowner and live a better life."

Just a week before the shooting, Garcia had finished converting a carport into another room for his home of three years. The building supplies he had used were still in his front yard days after the shooting.

"Besides the issues we do have, there are really good people here," Tiller said.

Idalmy Hernandez, 45, said she and the other immigrants in Trails End have fought for the dream of home ownership. When she spoke to Garcia after the shooting, he told her he felt his dream had ended.

"He is very sad," said Hernandez, who is from Honduras.

At a vigil in front of Garcia's home, 10-year-old Guillermo Tobon recalled how he would often play soccer with Garcia's son, Daniel, as they waited for the morning school bus. Soccer was Daniel's favorite sport. The last time they played was a day before his death.

"We played about 30 minutes until the bus arrived," Tobon said.

Among the flowers and stuffed animals placed at a memorial in front of Garcia's home was a letter addressed to Daniel: "You were the best friend ever. You were so good at golie in soccer. You were the best teammate. You will always be in our hearts."

"It's very hard because nothing like this has ever happened," said Manuela Lara, who would often see Garcia and his family at the neighborhood Mexican food stand that Lara owns.

Velásquez Alvarado's father, Osmán Velásquez, said his daughter had traveled to the United States eight years ago without documents but had recently received U.S. residency status.

Jeffrison Rivera, Velásquez Alvarado's husband, said in a video posted on immigration activist Carlos Eduardo Espina's Facebook page that Jonathan Cacerez was his nephew and had been like a father to Molina Rivera's two children. Rivera said Molina Rivera had only arrived in the last year.

Rivera said his two sons — one 9 months old and the other 6 years old — were among the five children that Velásquez Alvarado and Molina Rivera protected in a closet by hiding them under a pile of clothes.

Oropeza "took my heart. He left my two kids with no mother," Rivera said.

While the remains of four of the victims will be repatriated to Honduras, Velásquez Alvarado will be buried in the U.S.

Crawford said she thinks the shooting along with comments from Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, in which he described the five victims as "illegal immigrants," have residents in her neighborhood scared. She's not sure if things will go back to normal, when neighbors were outside barbecuing, walking around with their families.

"I hope it does because that was the nice part of the neighborhood," Crawford said.

Associated Press reporter Marlon González in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, contributed to this report.

Follow Juan A. Lozano on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/juanlozano70>

Ukraine farmers risk losing their lives or livelihoods

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

POTOMKYNE, Ukraine (AP) — A grassy lane rutted with tire tracks leads to Volodymyr Zaiets' farm in southern Ukraine. He is careful, driving only within those shallow grooves — veering away might cost him his life in the field dotted with explosive mines.

Weeds grow tall where rows of sunflowers once bloomed. Zaiets' land hasn't been touched since the fall of 2021, when it was last seeded with wheat. Now, it's a minefield left by retreating Russian forces.

Zaiets eschewed official warnings and demined this patch of land himself, determined not to lose the year's harvest. He expects that 15% of his 1,600 hectares (4,000 acres) of farmland was salvaged.

Workers like Victor Kostiuk still spot mines, but he's ready to start the tractor.

"We have to do it," he says, "Why be afraid?"

Across Ukraine, the war has forced grain growers into a vicious dilemma. Farmers in areas now free from Russian occupation are risking their lives to strip their land of explosives before the critical spring planting season. Even then, they must cope with soaring production and transportation costs caused by Russia's blockade of many Black Sea ports and recent restrictions that neighboring countries imposed on Ukrainian grain.

The dual crisis is causing many farmers to cut back on sowing crops. Bottlenecks in shipping grain by land and sea are creating losses, with expectations of a 20% to 30% reduction in grain output, poorer quality crops and potentially thousands of bankruptcies next year, according to industry insiders, Ukrainian government officials and international organizations.

The "drastic reduction" of grain crops potentially threatens global food security, said Pierre Vauthier, head of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization in Ukraine. "That is the main thing everybody eats. So that's why it is a big concern."

More than a year since Russia's invasion, the Ukrainian agriculture industry is starting to see the full impact of what's been dubbed "the breadbasket of the world," whose affordable supplies of wheat, barley and sunflower oil are crucial to Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia where people are going hungry.

The FAO says 90% of agricultural businesses lost revenue and 12% reported lands contaminated with mines. Land planted with grain dropped last year to 11.6 million hectares (28.6 million acres) from 16 million hectares (around 40 million acres) in 2021. That's expected to fall to 10.2 million hectares (25.2 million acres) this year.

In the southern Kherson province, between the threat of missiles from the sky and mines on the ground, farmers make the same, often tragic, calculation: Take the risk and plant or lose their livelihoods.

The region is among the highest wheat-producing areas in Ukraine and the most heavily mined. Demining services are overstretched, with infrastructure and civilian homes prioritized over farms.

But growers can't wait: April and May are key planting months for corn, the autumn months for wheat. Many are switching to planting oil seeds that are less costly.

"We have nearly 40 big farmers in our area, and nearly everyone is unable to access their lands except two," said Hanna Shostak-Kuchmiak, head of the Vysokopillya administration that includes several villages in northern Kherson.

Zaiets is one, and Valerii Shkuropat from the nearby village of Ivanivka is the other.

"Our heroes," said Shostak-Kuchmiak, "who were driving their cars around picking up mines and bringing them to our deminers."

Neither farmer felt they had the choice. Both knew that without a harvest this year, they will be insolvent by next.

Everyone understands the risks, said Shkuropat, who's vast 2,500 hectares (more than 6,000 acres) of land once grew peas, barley, millet and sunflowers. He estimates that half can be planted.

Last month, one of his workers was killed and another was wounded while picking up metal missile

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remnants.

"If we sow, if we grow crops, people will have jobs, salaries and they will have a means to feed their families," Shkuropat said. "But if we don't do anything, we will have nothing."

Russia's blockade of Ukraine's Black Sea ports stripped the country of the advantage it once enjoyed over other grain-exporting countries. Transit costs, now four to six times higher than prewar levels, have rendered grain production prohibitively expensive.

High costs of fuel, fertilizer and quality seeds only add to farmers' woes. Most must sell their grain at a loss.

Farmers are responding by seeding less, said Andrii Vadaturskyi, CEO of Nibulon, a top Ukrainian grain shipping company.

"No one is paying attention to the fact that already 40% less wheat has been seeded (this year), and we expect 50% less corn will be seeded in Ukraine," he said, drawing on data from 3,000 farmers.

Nibulon once paid an average of \$12 to ship a ton of grain from the southern port city of Odesa. Now it pays \$80-\$100 per ton, Vadaturskyi said,

HarvEast CEO Dmytro Skornyakov said that his agricultural company pays almost \$110 in logistics costs to export every ton of corn.

"It covers our expenses, but doesn't give us any profit," he said.

Negotiations are underway on renewing the U.N.-brokered agreement that allows Ukrainian grain to safely leave three Black Sea ports. Shippers say the deal isn't working efficiently.

Russian inspections are causing long wait times for vessels, piling on fees and making the sea route expensive and unreliable, Ukrainian grain shippers say. Russia denies slowing inspections.

"We had some vessels which were waiting close to 80 days in the queue simply to be loaded," said Vadaturskyi of Nibulon. "Someone has to lose that money, either the buyer, owner of the vessel or trader."

Transit routes through Europe are open even as Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Hungary temporarily banned Ukrainian wheat, corn and some other products over concerns about their own farmers' profits.

But those routes are slow and costly. Shipping by sea accounted for 75% of Ukrainian grain exports at the start of the year.

Meanwhile, some farmers won't risk planting their fields.

Oleh Uskhalo's land in Potomkyne is awash with ammunition, the vast wheat farms reduced to a graveyard of scorched equipment.

Inside a bombed-out grain shed lies piles of wheat grain — Uskhalo's entire prewar harvest — rotting under the sun.

"We can go on for another year," he said. After that, he doesn't know. He hopes for government compensation.

"I cannot send (my workers) to a field where I know mines and bombs are," Uskhalo said. "To send a person to blow themselves up? I can't do that."

He faces resistance from his employees, eager to earn wages.

"The tractor drivers, they say, 'We can go, we can sign a document stating that we take full responsibility,'" Uskhalo said.

It's too risky, he told them.

In the distance, he can see a tractor equipped with disk tillers, a type of plow. "I wonder if it's Volodymyr Mykolaiovych," he said, referring to Zaiets.

"All it takes is for one of those disks to hit a mine and that's it."

That's what happened to Mykola Ozarianskyi.

In April, the farmer took a chance: He hopped on his tractor in his village of Borozenske, in Kherson, to head to a friend's sunflower field to cut stalks.

He swerved to turn down a side farm road. He remembers the explosion, then waking up in a hospital bed with a collapsed lung and broken ribs.

Every day, he thinks of his 16 hectares (around 40 acres) of land, still unseeded.

"I will do it," he said, straining to speak while a tube drains blood from his chest. "For a farmer, not planting means death."

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

Police: 8 killed in Texas mall shooting, gunman also dead

By JAKE BLEIBERG and REBECCA BOONE Associated Press

ALLEN, Texas (AP) — A gunman stepped out of a silver sedan and started shooting people at a Dallas-area outlet mall Saturday, killing eight and wounding seven others — three critically — before being killed by a police officer who happened to be nearby, authorities said.

Authorities did not immediately provide details about the victims at Allen Premium Outlets, a sprawling outdoor shopping center, but witnesses reported seeing children among them. Some said they also saw what appeared to be a police officer and a mall security guard unconscious on the ground.

The shooting, the latest eruption of what has been an unprecedented pace of mass killings in the U.S., sent hundreds fleeing in panic. Barely a week before, authorities say, a man fatally shot five people in Cleveland, Texas, after a neighbor asked him to stop firing his weapon while a baby slept.

A 16-year-old pretzel stand employee, Maxwell Gum, described a virtual stampede of shoppers. He and others sheltered in a storage room.

"We started running. Kids were getting trampled," Gum said. "My co-worker picked up a 4-year-old girl and gave her to her parents."

Dashcam video that circulated online showed the gunman getting out of a car and shooting at people on the sidewalk. More than three dozen shots could be heard as the vehicle recording the video drove off.

Allen Fire Chief Jonathan Boyd said seven people including the shooter died at the scene. Nine victims were taken to area hospitals, but two of them died.

Three of the wounded were in critical condition in the evening, Boyd said, and four were stable.

An Allen Police officer was in the area on an unrelated call when he heard shots at 3:36 p.m., the police department wrote on Facebook.

"The officer engaged the suspect and neutralized the threat. He then called for emergency personnel," it added.

Mass killings are happening with staggering frequency in the United States this year: an average of about one a week, according to a database maintained by The Associated Press and USA Today in partnership with Northeastern University.

The White House said President Biden had been briefed on the shooting and the administration had offered support to local officials. Republican Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, who has signed laws easing firearms restrictions following past mass shootings, called it an "unspeakable tragedy."

Fontayne Payton, 35, was at H&M when he heard the sound of gunshots through his headphones.

"It was so loud, it sounded like it was right outside," Payton said.

People in the store scattered before employees ushered the group into the fitting rooms and then a lockable back room, he said. When they were given the all-clear to leave, Payton saw the store had broken windows and a trail of blood to the door. Discarded sandals and bloodied clothes lay nearby.

Once outside, Payton saw bodies.

"I pray it wasn't kids, but it looked like kids," he said. The bodies were covered in white towels, slumped over bags on the ground.

"It broke me when I walked out to see that," he said.

Further away, he saw the body of a heavyset man wearing all black. He assumed it was the shooter, Payton said, because unlike the other bodies it had not been covered up.

Tarakram Nunna, 25, and Ramakrishna Mullapudi, 26, said they saw what appeared to be three people motionless on the ground, including one who appeared to be a police officer and one who appeared to

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tuaries," opposing laws they believe infringe on gun rights. Some sheriffs have said they will have trouble enforcing something they believe is unconstitutional.

"At the end of the day, the utmost responsibility for a sheriff is to uphold the Constitution," Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott said.

The U.S. is on a record pace for mass shootings so far this year.

Touted as the most powerful tool to stop gun violence before it happens, an Associated Press analysis in September found red flag laws are barely used in the 19 states and the District of Columbia where they exist. Firearms were removed from people 15,049 times since 2020, fewer than 10 per 100,000 adult residents, according to the analysis.

It will be the first time since New Mexico in 2020 that a state has passed a red flag law, but similar legislation is being considered elsewhere as lawmakers seek solutions.

The Minnesota House advanced a wide-ranging public safety bill last month that includes a red flag law. It remains uncertain whether the provision will make it through a conference committee.

After a Nashville school shooting in March killed six people, Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee is calling lawmakers back into session after fellow Republicans declined to take up his "temporary mental health order of protection" proposal at the end of the legislative session they concluded in April.

The Biden administration has sought to foster wider use of state red flag laws and recently approved more than \$200 million to help states and the District of Columbia administer those laws and similar programs.

Red flag legislation introduced following a shooting at Michigan State University, which left three students dead and five others wounded, passed the Democratic-controlled Michigan Legislature last month and is expected to be signed by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer in the coming weeks. It would not take effect until next year at the earliest.

A judge would have 24 hours to decide on a temporary extreme risk protection order after a request is filed. If granted, the judge would then have 14 days to set a hearing during which the flagged person would have to prove they do not pose a significant risk. A standard order would last one year.

Lying to a court when petitioning for a protection order would be a misdemeanor punishable by up to 93 days in jail and a \$500 fine.

Livingston County Sheriff Michael Murphy has already said he will not enforce the protection orders because he said they lack due process and are "ripe for abuse." With 72 of Michigan's 83 counties voting Republican in the last presidential election, many sheriffs will have to choose between following the law or appeasing constituents.

Local officials "do have discretion as to which laws they will enforce with the resources of their office," Attorney General Dana Nessel said in a statement to the AP. She added that arguments against the orders are "based not on the law but the personal whims of what they want to support."

In the Upper Peninsula's Marquette County, Sheriff Greg Zyburt said that while he doesn't agree with everything in the legislation, he "doesn't pick and choose what laws to enforce."

"It's not my place," Zyburt said. "That's why we have different branches of government."

In Colorado, 37 counties that consider themselves "sanctuaries" issued just 45 surrender orders in the two years through 2021, one-fifth fewer per resident than non-sanctuary counties. New Mexico and Nevada reported only about 20 orders combined.

The laws have continued to receive widespread support from the public even with the lack of usage. An AP-NORC poll in late July found 78% of U.S. adults strongly or somewhat favor red flag laws.

Kobylik is a gun owner who considers herself a conservative. She spoke in favor of the red flag law at a Michigan Senate committee hearing in March.

"I'm not here to excuse Ruby's actions," she said. "Far from it. What I am here to tell you is that this never had to happen."

Associated Press writers Jonathan Mattise in Nashville, Tennessee, and Steve Karnowski in St. Paul, Minnesota, contributed to this report.

Follow Joey Cappelletti at <http://twitter.com/Cappelletti7>

To improve kids' mental health, some schools start later

By BROOKE SCHULTZ Associated Press/Report for America

DREXEL HILL, Pa. (AP) — In the hours before he's due at Upper Darby High School, senior Khalid Doulat has time to say prayers, help his mother or prepare for track practice.

It's a welcome shift from last year for him and thousands of students at the school, which pushed its start time back by more than two hours — from a 7:30 a.m. start time to 9:45 a.m. One goal for the change: to ease strains on students that were more visible than ever coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I'll be honest, I've been much happier in the mornings," Doulat said. "I've been more positive, and I've come to school smiling more rather than, you know, grudging out of bed and stuff like that at 7:30."

The idea of later school start times, pushed by many over the years as a way to help adolescents get more sleep, is getting a new look as a way to address the mental health crisis affecting teens across the U.S.

For some schools, the pandemic allowed experimentation to try new schedules. Upper Darby, for one, initially considered later start times in 2019. Ultimately, it found a way to do it this year by using distance learning as a component of the school day.

As students first came back to in-person learning, many dealt with mental health struggles and behavioral issues, Upper Darby Superintendent Daniel McGarry said. Officials saw a breakdown in students respecting the authority of teachers in the classroom.

"We had a lot of those things that we were facing and we're still working our way through it; we're in a much better place," McGarry said. "I think our kids feel better. They're not 100% better." But, he said, much of the social anxiety students felt after being in online school has dissipated.

During the pandemic, soaring numbers of high school students expressed persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, with girls and LGBTQ+ youth reporting the highest levels of poor mental health and suicide attempts. It doesn't help that research suggests middle and high school students aren't getting enough sleep.

"These mental health challenges are already going to happen and then, with the absence of sleep, are much worse," said Orfeu Buxton, director of the Sleep, Health & Society Collaboratory at Penn State University. "The same with decision making, suicidal ideation, those kinds of things."

The reasons why high schools start as early as they do — many begin their day before 7:30 a.m. — are "lost to the sands of history," Buxton said. But now, he said, "everything is baked into that: traffic light patterns, bus schedules and adults' work."

Nationally, at least nine states are considering legislation related to school start times, up from four the previous year, according to the National Conference on State Legislatures. California in 2019 became the first and only state to dictate school start times.

Large school systems including Denver, Philadelphia and Anchorage, Alaska, have been looking into later start times.

It can require innovation to forge a new schedule.

At Upper Darby High, the school day technically still begins at 7:30 a.m., with students assigned coursework to be done remotely that ties into their lessons for the day. But they can use the early morning hours as they see fit — they can meet with teachers during office hours, sleep in or finish other homework. Ultimately, the work assigned for the early morning needs to be done, but when is up to students.

"I think getting more sleep is definitely helping," Elise Olmstead, a junior. "I would be more irritable throughout the day, especially later, because I have a lot of after-school things. I would just have a harder time getting through the day."

The school day still ends by 3 p.m.

Fatima Afrani, a freshman, said that when she gets home, she'll usually relax, then help her mom or do homework.

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"If I'm tired I go to sleep, which was not something I was able to do last year. Last year I just had to get my homework done because there wasn't an option of being able to do it later," she said. "And so I liked that if I was tired, I could listen to my body and just let myself sleep."

Principal Matthew Alloway said educators have noticed fewer students sleeping in class. The new schedule also has allowed "kids to go to school for exactly what they need," he said. About 400 of the school's 4,250 students attend only through virtual learning — an option it offered to compete with online schools.

Critics have argued students have less instruction time in the new schedule. The original 80-minute periods have been shortened, but Alloway said that it's not as if lectures always took up the full 80 minutes.

"It was sometimes a 60-minute concentrated instructional time. But then there was time to write. There was time to read. There was time to view a video," he said.

Other challenges wrought by the pandemic — teacher shortages, for one — have also benefitted from the schedule change, administrators said. Teachers can take care of themselves and their families in the morning. Administrators have more time to replace staffers who call out sick.

Doulat, the Upper Darby senior, said that even if students can't see the effects every day, there's been a big positive impact.

"It's such little changes in our daily lives that we don't notice it," he added. "But they slowly start building up, and we actually see the difference within our own lives."

Brooke Schultz is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

The Associated Press education team receives support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

For far-right activist, lawsuit becomes one-sided standoff

By REBECCA BOONE Associated Press

EMMETT, Idaho (AP) — A far-right activist best known for his showdowns with federal and state law enforcement officials in Oregon and Nevada is now waging a one-sided standoff of a different kind after refusing to comply with court orders in an Idaho defamation lawsuit.

The lawsuit by St. Luke's Regional Health was filed more than a year ago, accusing Ammon Bundy and his close associate Diego Rodriguez of making defamatory statements against the hospital and its employees after Rodriguez's infant grandson was temporarily removed from his family and taken to St. Luke's amid concerns for his health.

Since then, Bundy has ignored court orders related to the lawsuit, filed trespassing complaints against people hired to deliver legal paperwork, and called on scores of his followers to camp at his home for protection when he learned he might be arrested on a warrant for a misdemeanor charge of contempt of court.

"We can build a defense system from here ... This is what is going to keep us safe from all the terrible things that are going to come upon us and throughout the world," Bundy told dozens of people gathered at his home in late April, according to a video of the speech posted to Facebook.

Bundy's rhetoric is similar to how he spoke during his armed standoffs with federal law enforcement in Nevada and Oregon several years ago. But this time — despite frequent YouTube videos, far-right media interviews and a "call to action" text sent to People's Rights network members — Bundy hasn't gained the same traction. The initial gathering of dozens appears to have ebbed to a handful.

In 2016, Bundy led a 41-day armed occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge near Burns, Oregon, to protest the arson convictions of two ranchers who set fires on federal land where they had been grazing their cattle.

The 2014 Nevada confrontation was led by Bundy's father, rancher Cliven Bundy, who rallied supporters

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to stop officers from impounding Bundy Ranch cattle over more than \$1 million in unpaid fees and penalties for grazing livestock on government land.

Ammon Bundy was acquitted of criminal charges in Oregon, and the Nevada criminal case ended in a mistrial.

Bundy and his People's Rights organization next drew attention for a series of protests at the Idaho Statehouse over coronavirus-related measures and he was temporarily banned from the government building in 2020.

In the current civil lawsuit, Bundy seems to be following a "blueprint," using rhetoric similar to that used in the Oregon and Nevada standoffs to escalate the conflict, said Devin Burghess, the director of the Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights. Burghess has been hired by St. Luke's attorneys to serve as an expert witness in the defamation lawsuit.

"Bundy has attempted to take the lawsuit and make it into something larger. If he's able to take this trial and turn it into a larger confrontation, that could be very problematic," Burghess said.

Fewer people seem willing to put their own lives on hold to stay at Bundy's property this time, Burghess noted.

The in-person response may be dwarfed by online reaction. At least three witnesses in the defamation lawsuit are unwilling to testify against Bundy in court, according to court documents filed by St. Luke's, because they fear they might be harmed by Bundy's supporters.

One nurse wrote in court documents that she installed a security system in her home and was scared to wear her hospital badge outside of work. Another health professional said she repeatedly lost sleep and was traumatized because Bundy supporters accused her and others of kidnapping or harming children.

"Intimidation, defamation, doxing, trespass, threats of violence, armed 'protests' at homes and businesses and, when all else fails, armed standoffs with law enforcement — these are the weapons of choice for Ammon Bundy and his more than 60,000-member strong militia, People's Rights Network," attorneys for St. Luke's Health System wrote in a recent court filing.

Bundy, meanwhile, recently told followers that he would rather "go back to Heavenly Father" than return to jail — though contempt convictions generally carry a maximum jail sentence of five days under Idaho law.

Bundy also maintains he won't stop making the allegedly defamatory statements against St. Luke's Regional Medical Center regardless of any court ruling, because he claims his liberty is at stake.

"I believe it's my absolute right to be able to say those things," Bundy told The Associated Press in April. "The judge doesn't have the authority to take those away, they're inalienable rights."

Sheriff's deputies stopped by Bundy's property at least twice in recent weeks to serve the arrest warrant, but left when they were told Bundy wasn't home.

St. Luke's filed the defamation lawsuit in May 2022 against Bundy, his close associate Diego Rodriguez and their various political and business entities, claiming the pair were making false statements against the company, causing millions of dollars in damages and prompting supporters to harass and intimidate staffers.

The case arose from an incident two months earlier, when Rodriguez' 10-month-old grandson was temporarily removed from family custody and taken to St. Luke's over concerns about his health. The baby was temporarily placed in the care of the state, and returned to his parents after about a week.

Bundy and Rodriguez said the child was wrongfully taken from a loving family after he began experiencing episodes of vomiting after trying solid foods. At the time, Meridian Police said medical personnel determined the child was malnourished and had lost weight, but the family maintained the child was healthy and needed to stay with his mother to breastfeed.

Bundy urged his followers to protest the hospital and at the homes of child protection service workers, law enforcement officers and others involved in the child protection case. Rodriguez wrote on his website that the baby was "kidnapped," and suggested that the state and people involved in the case were engaged in "child trafficking" for profit.

In the lawsuit, the hospital claimed Bundy, Diego and their various political organizations orchestrated a

widespread smear campaign against the hospital in order to raise their own profiles and enrich themselves. The company asked a judge to award millions of dollars in damages and to bar both men from making any statements calling the hospital officials criminals or claiming that they participate in the abuse, kidnapping, trafficking or killing of children.

Bundy, who previously said he was ignoring the court documents because he wanted the case to end quickly, has now asked to have the case moved to federal court.

Prince Harry an odd man out at father's coronation spectacle

By BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — In the fairy-tale ending to the ancient pageantry in which King Charles III was crowned monarch, he stepped into a gilded horse-drawn carriage with his queen and rode off to his palace.

Following closely behind was Prince William, his eldest son and heir, along with his family, including 9-year-old Prince George who is second in line to the throne.

The king's youngest son was nowhere to be seen. On his father's biggest day, Prince Harry arrived at Westminster Abbey alone and he left alone. The disgruntled Duke of Sussex was assigned to sit two rows behind his brother.

His isolation was likely the result of him quitting his royal duties and, thus, no longer ranking as a senior family member — as well as alienating himself from his father and brother by airing grievances and telling palace secrets in his explosive best-selling memoir, "Spare."

If anyone was hoping the coronation would help break the ice between Harry and his brother, who were once so close, they are sure to have been disappointed. The siblings were not seen speaking or even acknowledging each other during the ceremony.

After months of speculation about whether he would attend, it was announced about three weeks ago that Harry would come alone, leaving behind his wife, Meghan, and their two young children at their Southern California home.

Harry and Meghan, who is biracial, left royal life and moved to the U.S. in 2020 after complaining about intense scrutiny and racist attitudes from the British press.

In a six-part Netflix series, they lobbed other criticisms at the royal family, alleging racial bias. In January, Harry dropped his bombshell book dishing family dirt along with intimate details about losing his virginity behind a pub at 17, taking drugs and killing enemies in Afghanistan.

The book was particularly unflattering toward his stepmother, Camilla, who was once blamed for wrecking his father's marriage to his mother, the late Princess Diana. He accused Camilla of leaking private conversations to the media to rehabilitate her own image after marrying Charles.

Buckingham Palace had announced before the coronation that Harry and the king's brother, Prince Andrew, would not have any role in the service.

Andrew, the Duke of York, relinquished royal duties after revelations about his friendship with convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. He was later stripped of his honorary military titles and patronages and settled a lawsuit with a woman who said she was forced to have sex with him when she was a teenager.

William played a prominent role, kneeling at his father's feet, pledging his loyalty and then kissing him on the cheek. George served as page boy, helping to carry the train of his grandfather's robes.

Harry entered the cavernous church in a black custom Dior three-piece suit with coattails. An honorary cross hung around his neck and military medals were pinned to the left side of his chest. He nodded, waved and spoke a few words to clergy and several guests already seated.

He proceeded along behind his cousin, Princess Eugenie and her husband, Jack Brooksbank, who followed her father, Andrew. They all sat in the same row.

During the two-hour spectacle, keen attention was focused on Harry by the media and royal watchers. He appeared to join the congregation in one of many refrains of "God save the king" during the pomp and music-filled ceremony.

Some British tabloids even consulted professional lip-readers to interpret what Harry was saying.

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be a mall security guard.

Another shopper, Sharkie Mouli, 24, said he hid in a Banana Republic store during the shooting. As he left, he saw what appeared to be an unconscious police officer lying next to another unconscious person outside the outlet store.

"I have seen his gun lying right next to him and a guy who is like passing out right next to him," Mouli said.

Stan and Mary Ann Greene were browsing in the Columbia sportswear store when the shooting started. "We had just gotten in, just a couple minutes earlier, and we just heard a lot of loud popping," Mary Ann Greene told The Associated Press.

Employees rolled down the security gate and brought everyone to the rear of the store until police arrived and escorted them out, the Greens said.

Eber Romero was at the Under Armour store when a cashier mentioned that there was a shooting.

As he left the store, Romero said, the mall appeared empty, and all the shops had their security gates down. That is when he started seeing broken glass and people who had been shot on the floor.

Video shared on social media showed people running through a parking lot amid the sound of gunshots.

More than 30 police cruisers with lights flashing were blocking an entrance to the mall, with multiple ambulances on the scene.

A live aerial broadcast from a news station showed armored trucks and other law enforcement vehicles outside the mall.

Ambulances from several neighboring cities responded.

The Dallas office of the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives also responded.

Allen, about 25 miles (40 kilometers) north of downtown Dallas, has roughly 105,000 residents.

Associated Press writers Gene Johnson in Seattle and Adam Kealoha Causey in Dallas contributed to this report.

Michigan faces pushback with gun red flag law set to pass

By JOEY CAPPELLETTI Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Karen Kobylik knew her daughter should not have a gun. She had repeatedly called the police since her daughter turned 21, pleading with them to take her firearms because of the risk she posed to herself and others.

"They said we can't take any guns away from her because we cannot step on her Second Amendment right," Kobylik told The Associated Press. "I was like, 'I'm a mother telling you that this kid's got a mental issue that is not currently being addressed.'"

Kobylik's daughter, Ruby Taverner, shot and killed her brother and boyfriend before taking her own life in the early morning of May 8 last year. Kobylik believes all three lives could have been saved had red flag laws, also known as extreme risk protection orders, existed in Michigan that would have allowed police to remove her daughter's guns and prevented her from purchasing more.

Now Michigan is poised to become the 20th state — and the first in nearly three years — to pass a red flag law. It would allow family members, police, mental health professionals, roommates and former dating partners to petition a judge to remove firearms from those they believe pose an imminent threat to themselves or others.

Kobylik said her daughter had been treated for mental health problems including depression since the age of 7 but had stopped taking her medication at 18. Just days before the killings, Taverner purchased the Glock 43X used in the shooting after she had been released from a psychiatric hospital for threatening to take her own life, Kobylik said.

Taverner and her brother, Bishop, were both 22. Her boyfriend, Ray Muscat, was 24.

The red flag measure faces pushback on the local level in a state where gun-owning culture runs deep. Over half of the state's counties have passed resolutions declaring themselves Second Amendment "sanc-

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The Daily Mirror revealed that it appeared he said, "hello," "morning" and "nice to see you" when he entered the church.

Harry has vowed to make media reform part of his mission in life. He has filed several lawsuits against the publishers of British tabloids for a phone-hacking scandal dating back more than a decade.

His trial against the publisher of the Mirror begins Wednesday in the High Court. Harry is expected to testify in June.

After the carriages departed from the church, Harry was seen waiting for a car. He was later seen at Heathrow Airport. His son, Archie, turned 4 on Saturday and it was said he was headed back for his birthday.

A short while later, King Charles III and Queen Camilla stepped out onto the balcony of Buckingham Palace to wave to the crowd gathered below. They were joined by William, his wife, Kate, three children and other senior royals.

LeBron's Lakers rout Warriors 127-97, take 2-1 series lead

By GREG BEACHAM AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — LeBron James didn't take a shot in the first quarter of Game 3 for the first time in his NBA-record 275 playoff appearances, and the Los Angeles Lakers' home crowd rumbled with mild uncertainty each time he passed the ball instead.

Turns out James and his Lakers were just taking a while to warm up before they steamrolled the Golden State Warriors.

Anthony Davis had 25 points and 13 rebounds, a slow-starting James finished with 21 points, eight assists and eight rebounds, and the Lakers took a 2-1 lead in their second-round playoff series with a 127-97 victory Saturday night.

D'Angelo Russell hit five 3-pointers while scoring 21 points for the seventh-seeded Lakers, who remained unbeaten at home in the postseason with a strong defensive effort against the reigning NBA champions. Los Angeles seized control in the middle quarters, outscoring the Warriors 63-38 to turn Game 3 into a laugh.

"We're one of the best defensive teams in the league, if not the best," James said. "For us to reach our potential, we have to defend at a high level. Not one team in this league tests you more in that than Golden State, so we have to be alert for a test on every single possession."

James curiously didn't shoot the ball until well into the second quarter, yet he led the way while Los Angeles pulled away. The 38-year-old also mixed in a handful of plays that defied his age and 20 years of NBA experience, making a deft spin move and blocking a shot on the other end shortly after he leaped the front row of fans and ran well up into the stands following a deflection.

"That's just how the game was going," James said of his unusual start. "I didn't want to force it. Just let the game come to me and make my imprint when needed."

Stephen Curry scored 23 points and Andrew Wiggins had 16 in a collective stinker for the Warriors, who committed 19 turnovers and never mounted a response to the Lakers on either end in the second half. Golden State went 13 for 44 on 3-pointers — making just 10 while the game was still competitive — after hitting 21 in each of the series' first two games in San Francisco.

Game 4 is Monday night in Los Angeles.

Davis had an impressive bounce-back game under both baskets, blocking four shots and leading the Lakers' latest strong defensive effort. Los Angeles has built its 16-5 run since March 17 on defense, and the Warriors couldn't hit enough shots from the perimeter to counteract their disadvantages in size and athleticism.

"After that first quarter, guys just really turned it up," Lakers coach Darvin Ham said. "They dialed up their competitiveness, and their communication was great. ... We were just playing a really physical, forceful downhill game."

Klay Thompson had 15 points and seven rebounds for the Warriors, but the rest of the roster beyond their top three scorers struggled mightily, combining for just 18 points before coach Steve Kerr pulled his

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starters with 9:11 to play. Draymond Green had two points in 23 minutes while playing with foul trouble.

"As ugly as this was tonight, we have an opportunity to respond on Monday, so there's no point in dwelling on it and hanging our head and getting discouraged," Thompson said. "We know how to respond. We've done it in our existence for 10 years here."

The Warriors were held under 100 points for only the fifth time in 92 games this season. They also got two technical fouls for arguing with the officials, who whistled Golden State for 22 fouls to the Lakers' 21.

"You can't get distracted by stuff you can't control," Curry said. "As much as it's frustrating, it's the test that every team has to go through throughout the series, blocking out that stuff as much as we can. We obviously know who we are and what we're capable of, all the things we always say after a loss."

After an exciting opener, this much-anticipated playoff rematch between generational superstars James and Curry has featured more garbage time than memorable thrills. After Ham sat down his stars before the fourth quarter of Game 2, Kerr pulled the plug while facing a 26-point deficit early in the fourth quarter of Game 3.

FIGHT ON

James' son, Bronny, announced his decision to play at the University of Southern California about two hours before tipoff. The 18-year-old was among the top uncommitted recruits in the nation, and he chose to stay close to home with a loaded Trojans team coming off its third straight NCAA Tournament appearance. Bronny James, USC hoops coach Andy Enfield and Trojans football coach Lincoln Riley all attended Game 3.

TIP-INS

Warriors: JaMychal Green stayed in the starting lineup even with Kevon Looney available to play in Game 3. Looney missed Game 2 with an illness. ... Andre Iguodala has increased his workload and should return to practice next week, Kerr said. The veteran has been out since March 13 after having surgery on his left wrist. ... Moses Moody got a flagrant foul in the second quarter for tripping Davis.

Lakers: James passed Kareem Abdul-Jabbar for fifth place on the NBA's career playoff rebounding list. ... Another celebrity-laden sellout crowd gathered for the Lakers' longest playoff run in their home arena since 2012. Fans near courtside included Michael B. Jordan, Kim Kardashian, Woody Harrelson, Don Cheadle, Dustin Hoffman, Nia Long, Adele, Andy Garcia, Kevin Hart and quarterback Bryce Young, the Pasadena native and No. 1 overall pick by Carolina in last month's NFL draft.

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

Newton Minow, ex-FCC chief who dubbed TV 'wasteland,' dies

By TAMMY WEBBER Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Newton N. Minow, who as Federal Communications Commission chief in the early 1960s famously proclaimed that network television was a "vast wasteland," died Saturday. He was 97.

Minow, who received a Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2016, died Saturday at home, surrounded by loved ones, said his daughter, Nell Minow.

"He wanted to be at home," she told The Associated Press. "He had a good life."

Though Minow remained in the FCC post just two years, he left a permanent stamp on the broadcasting industry through government steps to foster satellite communications, the passage of a law mandating UHF reception on TV sets and his outspoken advocacy for quality in television.

"My faith is in the belief that this country needs and can support many voices of television — and that the more voices we hear, the better, the richer, the freer we shall be," Minow once said. "After all, the airways belong to the people."

Minow was appointed as FCC chief by President John F. Kennedy in early 1961. He had initially come to know the Kennedys in the 1950s as an aide to Illinois Gov. Adlai Stevenson, the Democrats' presidential nominee in 1952 and 1956.

Minow laid down his famous challenge to TV executives on May 9, 1961, in a speech to the National As-

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sociation of Broadcasters, urging them to sit down and watch their station for a full day, "without a book, magazine, newspaper, profit-and-loss sheet or rating book to distract you."

"I can assure you that you will observe a vast wasteland," he told them. "You will see a procession of game shows, formula comedies about totally unbelievable families, blood and thunder, mayhem, violence, sadism, murder, Western bad men, Western good men, private eyes, gangsters, more violence and cartoons. And, endlessly, commercials — many screaming, cajoling and offending."

As he spoke, the three networks were just about all most viewers had to choose from. Pay television was barely in the planning stage, PBS and "Sesame Street" were several years away, and HBO and niche channels such as Animal Planet were far in the future.

The speech caused a sensation. "Vast wasteland" became a catch phrase. Jimmy Durante opened an NBC special by saying, "Da next hour will be dedicated to upliftin' da quality of television. ... At least, Newt, we're tryin'."

Minow became the first government official to get a George Foster Peabody award for excellence in broadcasting. The New York Times critic Jack Gould (himself a Peabody winner) wrote, "At long last there is a man in Washington who proposes to champion the interests of the public in TV matters and is not timid about ruffling the industry's most august feathers. Tonight some broadcasters were trying to find dark explanations for Mr. Minow's attitude. In this matter the viewer possibly can be a little helpful; Mr. Minow has been watching television."

CBS President Frank Stanton strongly disagreed, calling Minow's comments a "sensationalized and over-simplified approach" that could lead to ill-advised reforms "on the ground that any change is a change for the better."

For the criticism over his speech, Minow said he didn't support censorship, preferring exhortation and measures to broaden public choices. But he also said a broadcasting license was "an enormous gift" from the government that brought with it a responsibility to the public.

His daughter, Nell Minow, told The Associated Press in 2011 that her father loved television and wished he would have been remembered for championing the public interest in television programming, rather than just a few words in his much broader speech.

"His No. 1 goal was to give people choice," she said.

Among the new laws during his tenure were the All-Channel Receiver Act of 1962, that required that TV sets pick up UHF as well as VHF broadcasts, which opened up TV channels numbered above 13 for widespread viewing. Congress also passed a bill that provided funds for educational television, and measures to foster communications satellites.

In a September 2006 interview on National Public Radio, Minow recalled telling Kennedy that such satellites were "more important than sending a man into space. ... Communications satellites will send ideas into space, and ideas live longer than people." On July 10, 1962, Minow was one of the officials making statements on the first live trans-Atlantic television program, a demonstration of AT&T's Telstar satellite.

Children's programming was a particular interest of Minow, a father of three, who told broadcasters the few good children's shows were "drowned out in the massive doses of cartoons, violence and more violence. ... Search your consciences and see if you cannot offer more to your young beneficiaries whose future you guide so many hours each and every day."

Minow resigned in May 1963 to become executive vice president and general counsel for Encyclopedia Britannica Inc. in Chicago.

Nell Minow said her father also was instrumental in getting presidential debates televised, starting with Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon, after watching Stevenson struggle to use the new medium during his 1956 presidential run.

"Minow was appalled by ... the whole charade of having to image-make on television," said Craig Allen, a mass communications professor at Arizona State University who wrote a 2001 book about Minow.

In 1965, Minow returned to his law practice in Chicago, and later served as board member at PBS, CBS Inc. and the advertising company Foote Cone & Belding Communications Inc. He was director of the An-

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nenberg Washington Program in Communications Policy Studies of Northwestern University.

He also gave Barack Obama a summer job at the law firm, where the future president met his wife, Michelle Robinson. Minow also was one of Obama's earliest supporters when the then-Illinois senator considered running for president, Nell Minow said.

Television is one of our century's most important advances "and yet, as a nation, we pay no attention to it," Minow said in a 1991 Associated Press interview.

He continued to push for reforms such as free airtime for political ads and more quality programming while also praising advances in diversity in U.S. television.

"In 1961, I worried that my children would not benefit much from television. But in 1991 I worry that my grandchildren will actually be harmed by it," he said.

Former Associated Press writer Polly Anderson in New York contributed to this story.

Mage wins star-crossed Kentucky Derby amid 7th death

By BETH HARRIS AP Racing Writer

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — After seven deaths raised questions about the future of horse racing, Mage earned a surprising Kentucky Derby victory on Saturday, capping a nerve-rattling day that included two more fatalities ahead of the 149th edition of the world's most famous race.

Mage, a 15-1 shot, had only one win in his career, giving little indication that he could triumph against 17 rivals in a race that is not kind to the inexperienced.

Still, he made a gutsy stretch run, overtaking Two Phil's to his inside and winning by a length. Mage, who didn't race as a 2-year-old, ran 1 1/4 miles in 2:01.57.

Mage joined Justify (2018), Big Brown (2008) and Regret (2015) as Derby winners with just three previous starts.

"He proved today that it didn't matter," assistant trainer and co-owner Gustavo Delgado Jr. said.

The colt was in the skilled hands of Javier Castellano, a Hall of Fame jockey who hasn't been as in-demand lately. The 45-year-old Castellano snapped an 0-for-15 skid in the Derby.

"I never give up," Castellano said. "I always try hard to do the right thing. It took me a little while to get there. I finally got it."

Castellano and trainer Gustavo Delgado are from Venezuela. Mage joined Canonero II as Derby winners with Venezuelan ties. Canonero II won the Derby and Preakness in 1971.

Going into the backstretch, Mage was ahead of just three horses. Castellano and Mage began picking off the competition and on the far turn launched their run.

"Turning for home, he had a lot of heart," Castellano said. "He's a little horse with a big heart."

Two Phil's stormed to the lead at the top of the stretch. Mage swung to the outside and took aim on the leader. Mage passed him at the eighth-pole and went on to victory.

"Everything went according to plan," Delgado Jr. said. "This is the dream I have, a year-and-a-half ago, I wrote a note: 'We're going to win the Derby next year.'"

Forte, the early favorite, was scratched in the morning with a bruised foot, one of five horses that dropped out in the run-up to the race.

Mage paid \$32.42, \$14.58 and \$9.08. The colt earned \$1,860,000 for the biggest win of his brief career.

Two Phil's returned \$10.44 and \$6.52.

"Man, he tried so hard and ran his heart out," said Larry Rivelli, who trains Two Phil's.

Angel of Empire, the 4-1 favorite, was another half-length back in third in front of a crowd of 150,335 on a warm and partly cloudy day at Churchill Downs. He paid \$4.70 to show.

Earlier in the day, Chloe's Dream, a 3-year-old gelding, and Freezing Point, a 3-year-old colt, were euthanized after being injured in their races, becoming the sixth and seventh horses to have died at the track in recent days.

"It's a very difficult subject to touch upon," said Ramiro Restrepo, part of Mage's ownership and a blood

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stock agent. "I'm sure there's going to be some investigations done as to the reason behind that, and hopefully that provides a few more answers."

The string of horse deaths was on the mind of some Derby-goers.

"It's concerning, and I hope they're quickly trying the best they can to correct whatever's going on," said Michael Freeze, who along with his friend dressed up as jockeys. "They need to do whatever is best for the horses, and the sport in general."

Chloe's Dream injured his right front knee, trainer Jeff Hiles told The Associated Press.

"He just took a bad step out there," Hiles said. "They could do the same thing running in the field as they could on the track. So it's very unfortunate. That's what we deal with."

Freezing Point suffered a left ankle injury in the Pat Day Mile, trainer Joe Lejzerowicz told the AP.

"He just got bumped in the backstretch," Lejzerowicz said. "He never took a bad step or bobble. He had a big heart."

New antidoping and medication rules enforced by a central governing body of the sport are scheduled to take effect May 22.

"All I can say is we do our best to take care of our horses. We treat them better than we treat our children. And we have full confidence in the soundness of our horse," Restrepo said. "We've been training here for two weeks, and he actually has been flourishing at this racetrack."

The deaths included Derby contender Wild On Ice. Two of the horses were trained by Saffie Joseph Jr. He was indefinitely suspended by the track, although investigators have yet to determine a cause for the deaths of his horses.

A relieved Tim Yakteen, who trained Reincarnate to a 13th-place finish, said, "The most important thing is the horse came out of it OK."

Hall of Fame trainer Bob Baffert, a two-time Triple Crown winner, is nearing the end of a two-year ban issued by Churchill Downs Inc. One of his horses, Medina Spirit, crossed the finish line first in the 2021 Derby and failed a post-race drug test. The horse was disqualified and Baffert was punished.

In 2019, over 30 horse deaths occurred at California's Santa Anita racetrack, rattling the industry and leading to safety reforms. Kentucky Derby-winning trainer Rick Dutrow had his license revoked in 2011 for 10 years by New York officials. Regulators found syringes loaded with unauthorized medication in a desk in his barn. Dutrow served his punishment and re-opened his stable last month.

Four horses were scratched — Practical Move, Lord Miles, Continuar and Skinner — in recent days. Practical Move and Skinner had fevers, while Continuar wasn't in peak condition, according to his Japanese trainer. Lord Miles was Joseph's Derby horse.

Disarm was fourth, followed by Hit Show, Japan-based Derma Sotogake, Tapit Trice and Raise Cain, Rocket Can, Confidence Game, Sun Thunder, Japan's Mandarin Hero, Reincarnate, Kingsbarns, King Russell, Verifying, Jace's Road and Cyclone Mischief.

AP Sports Writer Gary B. Graves and AP National Writer Claire Galofaro contributed to this report.

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

California reparations panel OKs state apology, payments

By SOPHIE AUSTIN Associated Press/Report for America

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — California's reparations task force voted Saturday to approve recommendations on how the state may compensate and apologize to Black residents for generations of harm caused by discriminatory policies.

The nine-member committee, which first convened nearly two years ago, gave final approval at a meeting in Oakland to a hefty list of proposals that now go to state lawmakers to consider for reparations legislation.

U.S. Rep. Barbara Lee, D-Oakland, who is cosponsoring a bill in Congress to study restitution proposals for African Americans, at the meeting called on states and the federal government to pass reparations

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legislation.

"Reparations are not only morally justifiable, but they have the potential to address longstanding racial disparities and inequalities," Lee said.

The panel's first vote approved a detailed account of historical discrimination against Black Californians in areas such as voting, housing, education, disproportionate policing and incarceration and others.

Other recommendations on the table ranged from the creation of a new agency to provide services to descendants of enslaved people to calculations on what the state owes them in compensation.

"An apology and an admission of wrongdoing just by itself is not going to be satisfactory," said Chris Lodgson, an organizer with the Coalition for a Just and Equitable California, a reparations advocacy group.

An apology crafted by lawmakers must "include a censure of the gravest barbarities" carried out on behalf of the state, according to the draft recommendation approved by the task force.

Those would include a condemnation of former Gov. Peter Hardeman Burnett, the state's first elected governor and a white supremacist who encouraged laws to exclude Black people from California.

After California entered the union in 1850 as a "free" state, it did not enact any laws to guarantee freedom for all, the draft recommendation notes. On the contrary, the state Supreme Court enforced the federal Fugitive Slave Act, which allowed for the capture and return of runaway enslaved people, until for over a decade until emancipation.

"By participating in these horrors, California further perpetuated the harms African Americans faced, imbuing racial prejudice throughout society through segregation, public and private discrimination, and unequal disbursement of state and federal funding," the document says.

The task force approved a public apology acknowledging the state's responsibility for past wrongs and promising the state will not repeat them. It would be issued in the presence of people whose ancestors were enslaved.

California has previously apologized for placing Japanese Americans in internment camps during World War II and for violence against and mistreatment of Native Americans.

The panel also approved a section of the draft report saying reparations should include "cash or its equivalent" for eligible residents.

More than 100 residents and advocates gathered at Mills College of Northeastern University in Oakland, a city that is the birthplace of the Black Panther Party. They shared frustrations over the country's "broken promise" to offer up to 40 acres and a mule to newly freed enslaved people.

Many said it is past time for governments to repair the harms that have kept African Americans from living without fear of being wrongfully prosecuted, retaining property and building wealth.

Elaine Brown, former Black Panther Party chairwoman, urged people to express their frustrations through demonstrations.

Saturday's task force meeting marked a crucial moment in the long fight for local, state and federal governments to atone for discriminatory policies against African Americans. The proposals are far from implementation, however.

"There's no way in the world that many of these recommendations are going to get through because of the inflationary impact," said Roy L. Brooks, a professor and reparations scholar at the University of San Diego School of Law.

Some estimates from economists have projected that the state could owe upwards of \$800 billion, or more than 2.5 times its annual budget, in reparations to Black people.

The figure in the latest draft report released by the task force is far lower. The group has not responded to email and phone requests for comment on the reduction.

Secretary of State Shirley Weber, a former Democratic assemblymember, authored legislation in 2020 creating the task force with a focus on the state's historical culpability for harms against African Americans, and not as a substitute for any additional reparations that may come from the federal government.

The task force voted previously to limit reparations to descendants of enslaved or free Black people who were in the country by the end of the 19th century.

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The group's work has garnered nationwide attention, as efforts to research and secure reparations for African Americans elsewhere have had mixed results.

The Chicago suburb of Evanston, for example, has offered housing vouchers to Black residents but few have benefited from the program so far.

In New York, a bill to acknowledge the inhumanity of slavery in the state and create a commission to study reparations proposals has passed the Assembly but not received a vote in the Senate.

And on the federal level, a decades-old proposal to create a commission studying reparations for African Americans has stalled in Congress.

Oakland city Councilmember Kevin Jenkins called the California task force's work "a powerful example" of what can happen when people work together.

"I am confident that through our collective efforts, we can make a significant drive in advancing reparations in our great state of California and ultimately the country," Jenkins said.

Sophie Austin is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues. Follow Austin on Twitter: @sophieadanna

Mexican families get quick reunions with migrant relatives

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico (AP) — Tears flowed amid heartfelt embraces as Mexican families were allowed brief reunions at the border Saturday with relatives who migrated to the United States.

As a mariachi band played the popular song "Las Mañanitas," about 150 families passed over the Rio Grande to meet with loved ones they had not seen for years.

Margarita Piña could not hide her emotion as she waited to greet her son, whom she hadn't seen since he left home two years ago in the middle of the pandemic to seek a better future in the U.S.

"It's very hard because we don't know what they're suffering over there," Piña said.

Knowing their meeting would be limited to only five minutes, Piña said she would take advantage of the limited time to tell him "that we still love you very much."

It was the 10th edition of the "Hugs, not walls" event, which was organized by humanitarian groups near the Casa de Adobe Museum in the border city of Ciudad Juárez, which sprawls across the border from El Paso, Texas.

Unlike at earlier reunions, a strong guard of U.S. officers was present at the event, which came just days before Washington will lift Title 42 asylum rules imposed for the pandemic that allowed the U.S. to expel more than 2.8 million migrants since March 2020.

The end to the provision Thursday is expected to encourage a surge of migrants toward the border, and U.S. authorities have beefed up security, including stringing barbed wire fencing. The government has said 1,500 troops will be sent to El Paso, in addition to 2,500 National Guardsmen already at the border.

"We have never had a border as militarized as today," said Fernando García, head of the Network in Defense of the Rights of Migrants.

"There is a war against migrants, refugees, against us border crossers," he added.

Butler scores 28, Heat top Knicks 105-86 for 2-1 series lead

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer

MIAMI (AP) — It was one of the worst shooting games of the season for the Miami Heat, by far: 39% from the field, 22% from 3-point range, barely 50% on usually easy shots at the rim.

Didn't matter.

Defense — still the Heat staple, even in these high-scoring NBA days — came through, and moved Miami two wins away from another trip to the Eastern Conference finals.

Jimmy Butler returned from his sprained right ankle to score 28 points, Max Strus added 19 and the Heat topped the New York Knicks 105-86 on Saturday to take a 2-1 lead in their East semifinal series.

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"It's about figuring out how to compete at a really high level," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "What's necessary for that game to be able to win."

For as poorly as the Heat shot, the Knicks were worse — 34% from the field, 20% from 3-point range, 46% from the restricted area around the rim.

And that was the story.

"You've got to win games different ways," Heat guard Kyle Lowry said. "In the playoffs, like I've said many a time and for many years now, every game is seriously different. And this is one of those games where we held them down. ... To win by half a point, one point, two points, 20 points, it's about winning the game however it happens."

Jalen Brunson scored 20 for New York, which got 15 from Josh Hart, 14 from RJ Barrett and 12 from Immanuel Quickley — who left midway through the fourth quarter after spraining an ankle that will be evaluated again Sunday. Julius Randle added 10 points and 14 rebounds for the Knicks.

Game 4 is Monday.

"We couldn't get stops early so we couldn't get any easy buckets," Knicks coach Tom Thibodeau said. "So, we paid the price."

Bam Adebayo had 17 points and 12 rebounds for Miami and Lowry added 14 points as the Heat never trailed. Duncan Robinson opened the second quarter with a 3-pointer, giving Miami an 11-point lead — and the lead remained double digits the rest of the way.

"Hopefully we can get back on the right track and find a way to make some shots next game and come out with a win," Randle said.

There was even a Heat-Knicks dustup under a basket, just like the good ol' days of the teams' playoff rivalry — though this one was nothing like P.J. Brown flipping Charlie Ward in 1997 to start a bench-clearing mess that led to suspensions, or Jeff Van Gundy tugging on Alonzo Mourning's leg in 1998.

This one, such as it was, happened with 14.7 seconds left in the third, after a basket by Quickley got the Knicks within 87-70.

Randle and Cody Zeller got tangled as they fought for rebounding position. Randle ended up getting shoved to the floor, Isaiah Hartenstein took offense and shoved Zeller, Caleb Martin took offense and shoved Hartenstein, and it took about five minutes to sort out a mess that lasted for about five seconds.

The final tally: offsetting technicals on Zeller and Hartenstein, plus a technical on Martin. Randle missed the free throw. And right after it happened, Butler was dancing a bit, enjoying the aftermath of the show.

"Much ado about nothing," Spoelstra said.

Butler missed Game 2 with his ankle sprain and limped at times in the second half Saturday, but was effective throughout. He had 10 points in the opening quarter as Miami set the tone on both ends; the Heat made 10 of their first 15 shots, the Knicks missed 13 of their first 17, and it took until midway through the second quarter for New York to make a shot from anywhere other than the paint.

"We always said we can win games when we defend and not make shots," Butler said. "And this is one of those games."

TIP-INS

Knicks: The 86 points were New York's second-fewest of the season. The Knicks had 85 in a loss to Brooklyn on Nov. 9. ... Barrett was whistled for a technical foul early in the second quarter for throwing the ball into the stanchion in frustration.

Heat: Miami outscored New York by 13 in Martin's 23 minutes. ... Udonis Haslem (stomach illness) missed the game. It was the 224th Heat playoff game of his 20-year tenure; he's played in 148 of those, but this was his first postseason instance of being listed as inactive.

SCORING SPREE

The 58 first-half points by Miami were the most for a team by halftime of a Heat-Knicks playoff game. The Heat had 57 in the first half vs. New York on April 24, 1998. New York's most by halftime in a playoff game against the Heat is 55, set in Game 1 of this series.

CLANK

The teams combined to shoot 15 for 72 on 3-pointers — 8 for 40 by the Knicks, 7 for 32 by the Heat. It

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was the 1,290th game played in the NBA this season and only eight other had a worse combined 3-point percentage than the .208 put together by New York and Miami in this one.

EXPERIENCE MATTERS

The Heat have a huge edge in this series when it comes to playoff experience. Lowry played in his 115th playoff game, Butler his 104th, Kevin Love his 71st, Adebayo his 54th and Robinson his 46th. Brunson played his 33rd, which is tops among those in the Knicks' rotation.

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

Texas panel says lawmaker should be expelled for misconduct

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A Texas legislative committee recommended Saturday that GOP Rep. Bryan Slaton be expelled for inappropriate sexual conduct with a 19-year-old intern. Slaton, from Royse City, could face an expulsion vote by the full House as early as Tuesday.

Slaton, 45, has declined to comment on the allegations, and did not immediately respond to a phone message left by The Associated Press Saturday afternoon, but his attorney last month called the claims "outrageous" and "false." The House General Investigative Committee's recommendation was first reported by The Texas Tribune.

In the written investigation report, the committee said Slaton gave the 19-year-old intern and another young staffer alcohol at his home, that he had sex with the intern after she was intoxicated, and that he later showed the intern a threatening email but said everything would be fine if the incident was kept quiet. Slaton also asked a fellow lawmaker to keep his behavior secret, the committee said.

"Slaton's misconduct is grave and serious," the committee members wrote in a report, and that he furnished alcohol to a minor, violated employment laws, abused his position of power and engaged in harassment.

"The fact that Slaton has not expressed regret or remorse for his conduct is also egregious and unwarranted," the committee wrote. "It is the Committee's unanimous recommendation that, considering the factors stated above, the only appropriate discipline in this matter is expulsion."

Slaton's legislative biography describes him as, "a proud East Texan with values and principles that represent the great people of East Texas" that were formed by his participation in church and family gatherings. It also sites his degrees from a Baptist seminary school and his work serving as a youth minister.

Slaton has repeatedly pushed to ban drag shows for kids and has tweeted his support for laws prohibiting gender-affirming healthcare.

"Children don't need to be focused on sex and sexualization, and we need to let them just grow up to be children and let them do that as they're getting closer to being an adult," Slaton said in an interview last year.

The misconduct investigation began after two 19-year-old legislative aides and a 21-year-old legislative intern filed complaints in April. The committee hired a former state judge to conduct the investigation, which confirmed the complaints, Committee Chairman Andrew Murr, a Republican, told the 150-member House on Saturday.

Murr said he expects a resolution calling for Slaton's expulsion on Tuesday. Expelling Slaton would require a two-thirds vote from House members.

In the complaints, two of the women said they tried to dissuade the intern from spending time with Slaton and suggested that his behavior was inappropriate. But the intern, who one complainant described as "naive," was not convinced and so agreed to Slaton's request to visit his apartment on the night of March 31. The other women went with her, according to the report, and the lawmaker served them rum and cokes.

One of the young women drank enough to vomit; the intern was "really dizzy" and had "split vision" according to the report. The other women eventually left the home but the intern reportedly stayed. She told her friends that Slaton drove her home the next morning, stopping at a drugstore so she could obtain

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emergency contraception on the way, according to the report.

The Associated Press found that between 2017 and 2021, at least 120 state lawmakers in 41 states have faced public allegations of sexual misconduct or harassment. Among those cases was an Idaho lawmaker who was eventually convicted in 2022 of raping a legislative intern.

Often, lawmakers accused of sexual misconduct run again for office and are re-elected. Efforts to remove them are rarer.

But this year, a handful of lawmakers nationwide have been expelled or barred from Statehouses for simply taking part in protests or violating "decorum" rules. Montana Rep. Zooey Zephyr, who is transgender, was barred by Republicans from the House floor after she rebuked colleagues supporting a ban on gender-affirming care for children and opposed their efforts to silence her. Two Democratic lawmakers from Tennessee were expelled by Republicans in April for their role in a protest calling for more gun control after a deadly school shooting in Nashville.

In London, Brazil's Lula calls for efforts to free Assange

By DAVID BILLER and TATIANA POLLASTRI Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — After attending the coronation of King Charles III in London, Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva denounced the lack of concerted efforts to free WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, who has spent four years in Britain's Belmarsh Prison.

"It is an embarrassment that a journalist who denounced trickery by one state against another is arrested, condemned to die in jail and we do nothing to free him. It's a crazy thing," Lula told reporters. "We talk about freedom of expression; the guy is in prison because he denounced wrongdoing. And the press doesn't do anything in defense of this journalist. I can't understand it."

Lula offered the remarks in response to a question about Assange, who is a native Australian. He said he had forgotten to discuss the matter with U.K. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, but that he would write to him upon returning to Brazil.

Assange has been fighting extradition to the United States, and Lula's comments come at a moment that he has shown little reluctance to voice his differences of opinion with Washington regarding geopolitical matters, particularly in his opposition to providing arms to Ukraine for its war against Russia, and accusing the US and Europe of encouraging the fighting. His stance and repeated statements have drawn sharp rebukes from the White House and Europe.

For its part, Australia has been stepping up diplomatic pressure on the US government to call off its prosecution of Assange.

On Friday, Australia's Prime Minister Albanese told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. in an interview that "enough is enough. There is nothing to be served by his ongoing incarceration." Last November, Albanese told Parliament that his "position is clear and has been made clear to the U.S. administration: That it is time that this matter be brought to a close."

Assange has battled in British courts for years to avoid being sent to the U.S., where he faces 17 charges of espionage and one charge of computer misuse that stem from WikiLeaks' publication of a huge trove of classified documents in 2010.

American prosecutors allege he helped U.S. Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning steal classified diplomatic cables and military files that WikiLeaks later published, putting lives at risk.

To his supporters, Assange is a secrecy-busting journalist who exposed U.S. military wrongdoing in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"I think there must be a movement of world press in his defense. Not in regard to his person, but to defend the right to denounce," Lula told reporters. "The guy didn't denounce anything vulgar. He denounced that a state was spying on others, and that became a crime against the journalist. The press, which defends freedom of the press, does nothing to free this citizen. It's sad, but it's true."

Last year, Assange's father John Shipton sought to convince Mexico's President Andrés Manuel López Obrador to address the issue of his son's prosecution with the US' top diplomat, and to get Australia's

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Albanese to raise the issue with US President Joe Biden at Queen Elizabeth II's funeral.

In his comments to reporters on Saturday, Lula also noted that Charles III asked him to take care of the Amazon rainforest, and that he responded he needs resources in order to do so. Prime Minister Sunak on Friday pledged to contribute 80 million pounds (\$101 million) to Brazil's Amazon Fund that aims to stop deforestation, adding to contributions from Norway and Germany, as well as a recent promise from the Biden to seek congressional approval for \$500 million.

But Lula told reporters that the amount pledged by Britain "is not sufficient".

Pollastri reported from Sao Paulo

King Charles III crowned with regal pomp, cheers and shrugs

By DANICA KIRKA and JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — King Charles III was crowned Saturday at Westminster Abbey, in a ceremony steeped in ancient ritual and brimming with bling at a time when the monarchy is striving to remain relevant in a fractured modern Britain.

At a coronation with displays of royal power straight out of the Middle Ages, Charles was given an orb, a sword and scepter and had the solid gold, bejeweled St. Edward's Crown placed atop his head as he sat upon a 700-year-old oak chair.

In front of world leaders, foreign royals, dignitaries and a smattering of stars, the monarch declared, "I come not to be served but to serve," and was presented as Britain's "undoubted king."

Inside the medieval abbey, trumpets sounded, and the congregation of more than 2,000 shouted "God save the king!" Outside, thousands of troops, hundreds of thousands of spectators and scores of protesters converged.

It was the culmination of a seven-decade journey for the king from heir to monarch.

To the royal family and government, the occasion — code-named Operation Golden Orb — was a display of heritage, tradition and spectacle unmatched around the world.

To the crowds gathered under rainy skies — thousands of whom had camped overnight — it was a chance to be part of a historic event.

Julie Newman, a 77-year-old visitor from Canada, said the royal procession had been "absolutely fabulous. Couldn't ask for anything better."

"But we're ready to go back home and watch it all on the television," she added.

But to millions more, the day was greeted with a shrug, the awe and reverence the ceremony was designed to evoke largely gone.

And to a few, it was reason to protest. Hundreds who want to see Britain become a republic gathered to holler "Not my king." They see the monarchy as an institution that stands for privilege and inequality, in a country of deepening poverty and fraying social ties. A handful were arrested.

As the day began, the abbey buzzed with excitement and was abloom with fragrant flowers and colorful hats. Notables streamed in: U.S. first lady Jill Biden, first lady Olena Zelenska of Ukraine, French President Emmanuel Macron, eight current and former British prime ministers, judges in wigs, soldiers with gleaming medals, and celebrities including Judi Dench, Emma Thompson and Lionel Richie.

During the traditional Anglican service slightly tweaked for modern times, Charles, clad in crimson and cream velvet and ermine-trimmed robes, swore on a Bible that he is a "true Protestant."

But a preface was added to the coronation oath to say the Anglican church "will seek to foster an environment where people of all faiths and beliefs may live freely." It was the first ceremony to include representatives of the Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh faiths, as well as the first in which female clergy took part.

Charles was anointed with oil from the Mount of Olives in the Holy Land — a part of the ceremony so sacred it was concealed behind screens — before being presented with the Sovereign's Orb and other regalia.

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Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby then placed the crown on Charles' head, while he sat in the Coronation Chair — once gilded, now worn and etched with graffiti. Underneath the seat was a sacred slab known as the Stone of Scone, on which ancient Scottish kings were crowned.

For 1,000 years and more, such grandiose ceremonies have confirmed the right of British kings to rule. Charles was the 40th sovereign to be enthroned in the abbey — and, at 74, the oldest.

These days, the king no longer has executive or political power, and the service is purely ceremonial since Charles automatically became king upon death of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II, in September.

The king does remain the U.K.'s head of state and a symbol of national identity — and Charles will have to work to bring together a multicultural nation and shore up support for the monarchy at a time when it is waning, especially among younger people.

While most Britons view the monarchy on a spectrum ranging from apathy to mild interest, some are fervently opposed to it. The anti-monarchy group Republic said several of its members, including its chief executive, were arrested as they arrived at a protest in central London.

Police, who'd warned they would have a "low tolerance" for people seeking to disrupt the day, said they made 52 arrests. Human Rights Watch said arrests of peaceful protesters were "something you would expect to see in Moscow, not London."

The multimillion-pound cost of the all the pomp — the exact figure unknown — also rankled some amid a cost-of-living crisis that has meant many Britons are struggling to pay energy bills and buy food.

Charles has sought to lead a smaller, less expensive royal machine for the 21st century, and his was a shorter, smaller affair than his mother's coronation.

The notoriously feuding royal family put on its own show of unity. Prince William, who is next in line to be king, his wife, Kate, and their three children were all in attendance. Towards the end of the ceremony, William knelt before his father and pledged loyalty to the king — before kissing him on the cheek.

Then Archbishop Welby invited everyone in the abbey to swear "true allegiance" to the monarch. He said people watching on television could pay homage, too — though that part of the ceremony was toned down after some criticized it as a tone-deaf effort to demand a public oath of allegiance for Charles.

William's younger brother Prince Harry, who has publicly sparred with the family, arrived alone. His wife Meghan and their children remained at home in California, where the couple has lived since quitting as working royals in 2020.

As Charles and the key royals joined a magnificent military procession after the ceremony, Harry stood waiting outside the abbey until a car arrived to drive him away.

Large crowds cheered as Charles and Queen Camilla, who was also crowned, rode in the Gold State Carriage from the abbey to Buckingham Palace, accompanied by a procession of 4,000 troops and military bands playing jaunty tunes. From the palace balcony, the king and queen waved to a sea of people who cheered and shouted "God Save the king!"

For many other Britons, the day's events drew mild curiosity, at best.

Cherie Duffy, who was visiting London from Anglesey, Wales, on a trip planned before the coronation date was set, watched the ceremony on TV — but only because someone else turned it on.

"There's a general not-botheredness," she said about how she and her friends felt.

Associated Press writers Sylvia Hui and Brian Melley contributed to this report.

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

Over 200 dead, many more missing after Congo floods

By JUSTIN KABUMBA ASSOCIATED PRESS

KALEHE, Congo (AP) — The death toll from flash floods and landslides in eastern Congo has risen beyond 200, with many more people still missing, according to local authorities in the province of South Kivu.

Thomas Bakenge, administrator of Kalehe, the worst-hit territory, told reporters on the scene Saturday

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that 203 bodies had been recovered so far, but that efforts to find others were continuing.

In the village of Nyamakubi, where hundreds of homes were washed away, rescue workers and survivors dug through the ruins Saturday looking for more bodies in the mud.

Villagers wept as they gathered around some of the bodies recovered so far, which lay on the grass covered in muddy cloths near a rescue workers post.

Grieving survivor Anuarite Zikujuwa said she had lost her entire family, including her in-laws, as well as many of her neighbors. "The whole village has been turned into a wasteland. There's only stones left and we can't even tell where our land once was," she said.

Michake Ntamana, a rescue worker helping look for and bury the dead, said villagers were trying to identify and collect the bodies of loved ones found so far. He said some bodies washed down from villages higher in the hills were being buried shrouded just in leaves off the trees. "It's truly sad because we have nothing else here," he said.

Rivers broke their banks in villages in the territory of Kalehe, close to the shores of Lake Kivu on Thursday. Authorities have reported scores of people injured. One survivor told AP the flash floods came so fast that they took everyone by surprise.

South Kivu Gov. Théo Ngwabidje visited the area to see the destruction for himself. He posted on his Twitter account that the provincial government had dispatched medical, shelter and food supplies.

Several main roads to the affected area have been made impassable by the rains, hampering the relief efforts.

President Felix Tshisekedi has declared a national day of mourning on Monday to honor the victims, and the central government is sending a crisis management team to South Kivu to support the provincial government.

Heavy rains in recent days have brought misery to thousands in East Africa, with parts of Uganda and Kenya also seeing heavy rainfall.

Flooding and landslides in Rwanda, which borders Congo, left 129 people dead earlier this week.

Local government official Bakenge told AP, "This is the fourth time that such damage has been caused by the same rivers. Not 10 years pass without them causing enormous damage."

—
Jean Yves Kamale in Kinshasa contributed to this story.

Russia says bomber who injured novelist acted for Ukraine

By DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — Russia's top investigative agency on Saturday said the suspect in a car bombing that injured a prominent pro-Kremlin novelist and killed his driver has admitted acting at the behest of Ukraine's special services.

The blast that hit the car of Zakhar Prilepin, a well-known nationalist writer and an ardent supporter of Russia's war in Ukraine, was the third explosion involving prominent pro-Kremlin figures since the start of the conflict.

It took place in the region of Nizhny Novgorod, about 400 kilometers (250 miles) east of Moscow. Prilepin was hospitalized with broken bones, bruised lungs and other injuries; the regional governor said he had been put into a "medical sleep," but did not elaborate.

Russia's Investigative Committee said the suspect was a Ukrainian native and had admitted under questioning that he was working under orders from Ukraine.

The Foreign Ministry in turn blamed not only Ukraine but the United States as well.

"Responsibility for this and other terrorist acts lies not only with the Ukrainian authorities, but with their Western patrons, in the first place, the United States, who since the coup d'état of February 2014 have painstakingly nurtured the anti-Russian neo-Nazi project in Ukraine," the ministry said, referring to the 2014 uprising in Kyiv that forced the Russia-friendly president to flee.

In August 2022, a car bombing on the outskirts of Moscow killed Daria Dugina, the daughter of an in-

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fluent Russian political theorist often referred to as "Putin's brain." The authorities alleged that Ukraine was behind the blast.

Last month, an explosion in a cafe in St. Petersburg killed a popular military blogger, Vladlen Tatarsky. Officials once again blamed Ukrainian intelligence agencies.

Russian news outlet RBC reported, citing unnamed sources, that Prilepin was traveling back to Moscow on Saturday from Ukraine's partially occupied Donetsk and Luhansk regions and stopped in the Nizhny Novogorod region for a meal.

Prilepin became a supporter of Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2014, after Putin illegally annexed the Crimean peninsula. He was involved in the conflict in eastern Ukraine on the side of Russian-backed separatists. Last year, he was sanctioned by the European Union for his support of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

In 2020, he founded a political party, For the Truth, which Russian media reported was backed by the Kremlin. A year later, Prilepin's party merged with the nationalist A Just Russia party that has seats in the parliament.

A co-chair of the newly formed party, Prilepin won a seat in the State Duma, Russia's lower house of parliament, in the 2021 election, but gave it up.

Party leader Sergei Mironov called the incident on Saturday "a terrorist act" and blamed Ukraine. Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova echoed Mironov's sentiment in a post on the messaging app Telegram, adding that responsibility also lay with the U.S. and NATO.

"Washington and NATO have nursed yet another international terrorist cell — the Kyiv regime," Zakharova wrote. "Direct responsibility of the U.S. and Britain. We're praying for Zakhar."

The deputy chair of Russia's Security Council, former President Dmitry Medvedev put the blame on "Nazi extremists" in a telegram he sent to Prilepin.

Ukrainian officials haven't commented directly on the allegations. However, Ukraine's presidential adviser, Mykhailo Podolyak, in a tweet on Saturday, appeared to point the finger at the Kremlin, saying that "to prolong the agony of Putin's clan and maintain the illusionary 'total control,' the Russian repression machine picks up the pace and catches up with everyone," including supporters of the Ukraine war.

Chris Strachwitz, founded Arhoolie label, dies age 91

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Chris Strachwitz, a producer, musicologist and one-man preservation society whose Arhoolie Records released thousands of songs by regional performers and comprised an extraordinary American archive that became known and loved worldwide, has died. He was 91.

Strachwitz, recipient in 2016 of a Grammy Trustee Award, passed away Friday from complications with congestive heart failure at an assisted living facility in the San Francisco Bay Area's Marin County, the Arhoolie Foundation said Saturday.

Admired by Bob Dylan, Bonnie Raitt and many others, Strachwitz was an unlikely champion of the American vernacular — a native German born into privilege who fell deeply for his adopted country's music and was among the most intrepid field recorders to emerge after Alan Lomax.

He founded Arhoolie in 1960 and over the following decades traveled to Mississippi, Texas and Louisiana among other states on a mission that rarely relented: taping little-known artists in their home environments, be it a dance hall, a front porch, a beer joint, a backyard.

"My stuff isn't produced. I just catch it as it is," he explained in the 2014 documentary "This Ain't No Mouse Music."

The name Arhoolie, suggested by fellow musicologist Mack McCormick, is allegedly a regional expression for field holler.

Ry Cooder would call him "El Fanatico," the kind of true believer for whom just the rumor of a musician worth hearing would inspire him to get on a bus and ride hundreds of miles — like the time he sought out bluesman Lightnin' Hopkins in Houston. Strachwitz amassed a vast catalog of blues, Tejano, folk,

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jazz, gospel and Zydeco, with Grammy winners Flaco Jimenez and Clifton Chenier among those who later attracted wider followings. An Arhoolie 50-year anniversary box set featured Maria Muldaur, Taj Mahal, Savoy Family Band and Cooder, who would cite the Arhoolie release "Mississippi's Big Joe Williams and His Nine-String Guitar" as an early inspiration.

"It just jumped out of the speaker on this little school record player," Cooder told NPR in 2013, adding that he decided "once and for all" to become a musician. "I'm gonna do this, too. I'm gonna get good on guitar, and I'm gonna play it like that."

Strachwitz despised most commercial music — "mouse music," he called it — but he did have just enough success to keep Arhoolie going. In the mid-1960s, he recorded an album in his living room for no charge by Berkeley-based folk performer Joe McDonald, who in turn granted publishing rights to Arhoolie. By 1969, McDonald was leading Country Joe McDonald and the Fish and one song from the Arhoolie sessions, the anti-war anthem "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die Rag," was a highlight of the Woodstock festival and soundtrack.

Arhoolie releases were cherished by blues fans in England, including Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones. Around the same time Strachwitz met with McDonald, he taped more than a dozen songs by bluesman "Mississippi" Fred McDowell, including McDowell's version of an old spiritual, "You Gotta Move." The Stones sang a few lines from it during the 1970 documentary "Gimme Shelter" and recorded a cover that appeared on their acclaimed 1971 album "Sticky Fingers." Strachwitz prevailed over the resistance of the band's lawyers and ensured that royalties were given to McDowell, who was dying of cancer.

"I was able to give Fred McDowell the biggest check he'd ever seen in his life," Strachwitz later said.

In 1993, Arhoolie was boosted again when country star Alan Jackson had a hit with "Mercury Blues," a song co-written and first performed by K.C. Douglas for the label.

Besides his Grammy, Strachwitz received a lifetime achievement award from the Blues Symposium and was inducted as a non-performing member of the Blues Hall of Fame. In 1995, Strachwitz established the Arhoolie Foundation to "document, preserve, present and disseminate authentic traditional and regional vernacular music," with advisers including Dylan, Bonnie Raitt and Linda Ronstadt. In 2016, Strachwitz sold his majority interest in the record label to Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, part of the national museum in Washington.

"The ripple effect of Chris Strachwitz in the world of is immeasurable in preserving this music," Raitt, a longtime friend, told the podcast The Kitchen Sisters Present in 2019.

The son of wealthy farm owners, he was born Count Christian Alexander Maria Strachwitz in the German region of Silesia, now part of Poland. His family, displaced at the end of World War II, moved to the United States in 1947, eventually settling in Santa Barbara, California. Strachwitz had already been exposed to swing overseas through Armed Forces Radio and became a jazz fan after seeing the movie "New Orleans," a 1947 musical featuring Louis Armstrong and Billie Holiday. He also felt a strong kinship with country and other forms of "hillbilly music."

"I felt it all had this kind of earthiness to it that I didn't hear in any other kind of music. They sang about how lonesome you are, and how you miss your girlfriend and all this other thing," Strachwitz told NPR. "Those songs really spoke to me."

By his early 20s, he was taping local radio and live performances and he perfected his craft while attending the University of California at Berkeley. He served two years in the Army, completed his studies at Berkeley through the GI Bill and, starting in the late 1950s, taught high school for a few years in Los Gatos, California.

Often short on money, Strachwitz sold pressings from his collection of old 78s to support his early recording efforts. Arhoolie's first release was Mance Lipscomb's "Texas Sharecropper and Songster," for which Strachwitz and friends personally assembled 250 copies.

"So much of pop music has all this slop added, with this mush background that I can't even call music," he said in a 2013 interview with the online publication waytoindie.com. "You can hardly hear the voices! They bury the voices. If somebody wants to sing, sing god damn it! You know? In the old days, you could hear them sing."

Ukraine downs Russian hypersonic missile with US Patriot

By DAVID RISING Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine's air force claimed Saturday to have downed a Russian hypersonic missile over Kyiv using newly acquired American Patriot defense systems, the first known time the country has been able to intercept one of Moscow's most modern missiles.

Air Force commander Mykola Oleshchuk said in a Telegram post that the Kinzhal-type ballistic missile had been intercepted in an overnight attack on the Ukrainian capital earlier in the week. It was also the first time Ukraine is known to have used the Patriot defense systems.

"Yes, we shot down the 'unique' Kinzhal," Oleshchuk wrote. "It happened during the night-time attack on May 4 in the skies of the Kyiv region."

Oleshchuk said the Kh-47 missile was launched by a MiG-31K aircraft from Russian territory and was shot down with a Patriot missile.

The Kinzhal is one of the latest and most advanced Russian weapons. The Russian military says the air-launched ballistic missile has a range of up to 2,000 kilometers (about 1,250 miles) and flies at 10 times the speed of sound, making it hard to intercept.

A combination of hypersonic speed and a heavy warhead allows the Kinzhal to destroy heavily fortified targets, like underground bunkers or mountain tunnels.

The Ukrainian military has previously admitted lacking assets to intercept the Kinzhals.

"They were saying that the Patriot is an outdated American weapon, and Russian weapons are the best in the world," Air Force spokesman Yuriy Ihnat said on Ukraine's Channel 24 television. "Well, there is confirmation that it effectively works against even a super-hypersonic missile." Ihnat said.

He said successfully intercepting the Kinzhal was "a slap in the face for Russia."

Ukraine took its first delivery of the Patriot missiles in late April. It has not specified how many of the systems it has or where they have been deployed, but they are known to have been provided by the United States, Germany and the Netherlands.

Germany and the U.S. have acknowledged each sending at least one battery and the Netherlands has said it has provided two launchers, although it is not clear how many are currently in operation.

Ukrainian troops have received the extensive training needed to be able to effectively locate a target with the systems, lock on with radar, and fire. Each battery requires up to 90 personnel to operate and maintain.

Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov said he first asked for Patriot systems when visiting the U.S. in August 2021, months before Russia's full-scale invasion but seven years after Russia illegally annexed Ukraine's Crimea peninsula.

He has described possessing the system as "a dream" but said he was told in the U.S. at the time that it was impossible.

The Patriot was first deployed by the U.S. in the 1980s. The system costs approximately \$4 million per missile, and the launchers cost about \$10 million each, according to analysts.

At such a cost, it was widely thought that Ukraine would only use the Patriots against Russian aircraft or hypersonic missiles.

In a Telegram post on Saturday, Valerii Zaluzhnyi, the commander-in-chief of Ukraine's Armed Forces, said he had thanked U.S. Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, for the ongoing American aid to Ukraine.

Zaluzhnyi said he also briefed Milley "about the situation at the front and preparations" for Ukraine's counteroffensive against Russia.

Ukraine has not said when it might launch the counteroffensive, but it is widely anticipated this spring.

In an interview this week with Foreign Affairs magazine, Milley said he would not speculate on if or when it might come, but that with NATO assistance to help train and equip nine brigades' worth of combined arms, armor and mechanized infantry, "the Ukrainians right now have the capability to attack."

He also said that their capability to defend was "significantly enhanced from what they were just a year

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ago.”

“I don’t want to suggest that they may or may not conduct an offensive operation in the coming weeks,” he said. “That’ll be up to them. They’ve got a significant amount of planning and coordination and all of that to do, if they were to do an offensive operation. But they’re prepared to do offense or defense.”

In other developments, officials in both Russia and Ukraine said they had carried out another of their regular exchanges of prisoners of war.

The Russian Defense Ministry said it brought three military pilots back to Russia, and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s chief of staff, Andriy Yermak, said 45 fighters who defended the Azovstal steel mill in Mariupol had been returned to Ukraine.

Also on Saturday, Ukraine’s Special Operations Forces accused Russia of using phosphorus munitions in its attempt to wrest control of the eastern city of Bakhmut from Ukrainian forces.

Russian troops have been trying to take the city for more than nine months, but Ukrainian forces are still clinging to positions on the western outskirts.

On Saturday, the Ukrainska Pravda newspaper quoted military officials as saying that “the enemy used phosphorus and incendiary ammunition in Bakhmut in an attempt to wipe the city off the face of the earth.”

A photo accompanying the newspaper report showed an urban area lit up with fire in multiple places.

The allegations could not be independently verified.

Russian forces have not commented on the claim but have rejected previous accusations from Ukraine that they had used phosphorus.

International law prohibits the use of white phosphorus or other incendiary weapons — munitions designed to set fire to objects or cause burn injuries — in areas where there could be concentrations of civilians.

White phosphorous can also be used for illumination or to create smoke screens.

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

Taylor Swift returns to Nashville, reveals ‘Speak Now’ date

By KRISTIN M. HALL AP Entertainment Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Taylor Swift is playing catch-up with her fans this year in a massive and impressive stadium show that embraces her artistic reinventions.

Nearly two months into the 52-show Eras Tour, Swift returned Friday to the origins of her musical career in Nashville, Tennessee, a city she outgrew as a country starlet destined for pop stardom.

In front of 70,000 fans, Swift dropped the news that she would be releasing a re-recording of her Nashville-era 2010 record, “Speak Now,” on July 7.

Swift started releasing new versions of her early albums in 2021, after a dispute over the ownership of the masters, which were sold to — and then by — music executive Scooter Braun. “Speak Now,” Swift’s third album, will also be the third “Taylor’s Version” recording — she released the re-recordings of 2008’s “Fearless” and 2012’s “Red” in 2021.

“Speak Now” was an album she wrote entirely by herself and she performed one of the singles, “Sparks Fly” after her announcement, followed by “Teardrops on My Guitar,” from her 2006 self-titled debut record.

The tour started chaotically with a breakdown of Ticketmaster’s ability to withstand the demand of fans, who were eager to see Swift after an extended hiatus from touring due to the coronavirus pandemic. Those who were lucky enough to get into the first of three shows in Nashville made sure to show out in their cosplay outfits inspired by Taylor’s songs, ranging from marching band geek to cardigans and cottagecore.

“I moved to Nashville nearly 20 years ago,” she told the crowd. “And this dream I had since I was so little I can’t even remember even first having it, this dream came true because of this town and the people in it.”

She started off the nearly 3.5-hour show with a line from “Miss Americana & The Heartbreak Prince” as a gentle spring rain sprinkled on the crowd: “It’s been a long time coming, but it’s you and me, that’s my whole world.”

The Eras tour theme is a natural fit for an artist whose music is often so self-referential, winking and

smiling at the previous Taylors and their moments. The show is broken up into acts, not moving chronologically through her discography, but instead presenting like a house with many rooms. The color schemes, choreographed dancers and outfits support the overall feeling of musical theater, with a stage that incorporates rising platforms and hidden trap doors she can disappear through.

With over 40 songs on the setlist from her 10 albums, Swift hits a lot of the highlights of her singles, ranging from "You Belong With Me," "Shake It Off," "Bad Blood," "Anti-Hero" and "We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together." But she also made time for special songs, like her 10-minute fan favorite "All Too Well," and brought back opening act Phoebe Bridgers to perform their duet "Nothing New," a vault track released on "Red (Taylor's Version)."

It was a five-year wait to see all the glittering chapters of Swift's career on stage together, but the pop star's marathon performance carried fans through to the last notes.

AP journalist Kimberlee Kruesi contributed to this report.

Abortion pill legal challenge threatens miscarriage care

By LAURA UNGAR AP Science Writer

Less than a year after losing her daughter Emilia at five days old, Jillian Phillips suffered a miscarriage. It was Halloween weekend in 2016, and her doctor said she could wait for it to end naturally, have a surgical procedure or take medication. She chose the medicine, passed the remains of her nine-week pregnancy at home and buried them in a memorial garden, near some of Emilia's ashes.

"Once I found out that the baby inside me was no longer viable, I didn't want to just walk around carrying the emotional trauma of that," said Phillips, a 41-year-old single mother of three from North Brookfield, Mass. "You just kind of want it finished. And the medication works pretty quickly."

But the future of this common miscarriage treatment is in peril. The pill, mifepristone, is used in abortions, making it a target.

Last month, a federal judge in Texas ruled to block mifepristone's approval by the Food and Drug Administration. The Supreme Court later preserved access to the drug while the lawsuit winds through the courts, a long road that continues with arguments before an appeals court on May 17.

Doctors and patients fear mifepristone could be pulled off the market when the legal wrangling ends. Already, they say, a chilling effect keeps some doctors from prescribing it.

A million U.S. women a year suffer miscarriages, which occur in at least 15% of known pregnancies. Mifepristone was approved in 2000 for early abortions but it is often used "off label" to treat early pregnancy loss or to speed up delivery when a fetus dies later in pregnancy. These uses are so common that U.S. senators urged manufacturer Danco to apply to the FDA to add miscarriage to the label of its drug, Mifeprex.

Denise Harle, an attorney for the group that filed the Texas lawsuit on behalf of anti-abortion doctors and health care organizations, said they aren't challenging uses of the drug beyond abortion. But legal experts say if it's taken off the market for its approved use, it wouldn't be available for pregnancy loss.

Dr. Kristyn Brandi said that would take away "the gold standard of miscarriage management," the two-drug combination of mifepristone and misoprostol that helps empty the uterus and reduce the chance of infection.

"I offer it to every single patient whose miscarriage I manage," said Brandi, an OB-GYN in Newark, New Jersey. "There will be a big impact if I am no longer able to use that medication."

HELP THROUGH THE PAIN

Brandi said medication speeds up the miscarriage process at a time when women are already suffering physically and emotionally.

Most patients naturally pass pregnancy tissue within two weeks of their diagnosis, but it can take several weeks, according to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Tissue generally passes within 48 hours when women take the medication, which studies show is about 80%-90% effective.

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Brandi gives mifepristone to patients in her office. It blocks the hormone progesterone and primes the uterus to respond to the contraction-causing effect of misoprostol, which is taken later at home.

Phillips, a social worker, said the medicine made a horrible situation a little more bearable.

At her second ultrasound, doctors couldn't detect cardiac activity in the fetus. Phillips considered getting a "dilation and curettage" procedure, but didn't like that she would need general anesthesia and couldn't take the remains home. Medication seemed a better option.

She took mifepristone and wound up needing two doses of misoprostol. "But the miscarriage itself was not really any more significant than my worst periods," she said. "And I was in the comfort of my home with my family."

Today, she finds solace in her memorial garden, where small angel figurines are arranged near a tree in her front yard.

Myriad Norris, 25, of Lexington, Kentucky, said she was glad mifepristone was available when she had a miscarriage in late March — even though she ended up not needing it.

About 12 hours after discovering she was pregnant, Norris started cramping, then bleeding. Worried she could develop an infection, she asked her doctor about mifepristone. She was just over five weeks pregnant, and the tissue passed on its own.

Soon news broke about the Texas judge's ruling. Norris, a stay-at-home mom who is active in the group Kentucky for Reproductive Freedom, said it brought "an additional layer of grief."

'CHILLING EFFECT' AND BACKUP PLANS

Mifepristone has long been subject to special restrictions, though experts say it's as safe as the over-the-counter painkiller ibuprofen. For example, the FDA requires it to be dispensed by, or under the supervision of, a certified prescriber.

Doctors say the current legal climate is tightening access further.

"It's kind of creating this chilling effect" where even though it's still approved and available, doctors "aren't going to give it because they're too worried about whatever ramifications are coming afterward," Brandi said.

Dr. Sarah Prager, an OB-GYN at the University of Washington School of Medicine, said her health system doesn't restrict mifepristone, but others in her state do.

"Facilities that don't want to have anything to do with abortion have chosen not to carry mifepristone on site," she said. That includes Catholic facilities, which house a growing percentage of acute care hospital beds.

As doctors wait to learn mifepristone's fate, they're making backup plans for miscarriage care.

One involves using only misoprostol to manage miscarriages. While it's safe, research shows it's not as effective at helping expel pregnancy tissue — which can lead to a dangerous infection if it stays in the uterus. The treatment success rate for miscarriage patients who got misoprostol only was 67%, compared with 84% for those who took the two drugs, a 2018 study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found.

That means misoprostol-only patients are more likely to need a follow-up surgical procedure or additional doses. It also leads to "significantly more discomfort," Prager said.

"It really feels like we're just punishing people by not being able to give them an evidence-based and least-impactful regimen of medication," she said.

Phillips said patients deserve all the options she had.

During a miscarriage, "you already feel completely traumatized and devastated," Phillips said. "It's frightening to think that people may be in the same situation that I was and would not be able to get appropriate health care."

Associated Press reporter Heather Hollingsworth contributed to this report from Mission, Kansas.

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Early Kentucky Derby favorite Forte scratched from race

By BETH HARRIS AP Racing Writer

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — The early favorite for the Kentucky Derby was scratched Saturday hours before the race.

Forte was declared out of the 149th Derby, according to Churchill Downs spokesman Darren Rogers. Co-owner Mike Repole said Kentucky Horse Racing Commission veterinarians had concerns about a bruised right front foot.

It was the fifth scratch this week from the \$3 million race, the first time that many were scratched since 1936. That year 19 horses were entered and 14 ran.

The colt stumbled on the track during a workout Thursday, although trainer Todd Pletcher had downplayed it.

Five horses have died at Churchill Downs in recent days, including two trained by Saffie Joseph Jr. He was suspended by the track and had his Derby horse, Lord Miles, scratched.

State veterinarians were at Pletcher's barn early Saturday to observe and examine Forte, who galloped on the track and then jogged outside the barn.

Forte had a five-race winning streak and was the early 3-1 favorite. His jockey, Irad Ortiz Jr., will now ride Cyclone Mischief.

That leaves 18 horses to run in the 1 1/4-mile Derby. The horses will break from posts 1 through 18 in the 20-stall starting gate. Posts 19 and 20 will be empty.

It was another pre-Derby disappointment for Repole.

He owned Uncle Mo, the early favorite for the 2011 Derby who was scratched the day before the race. The colt had a gastrointestinal infection and was eventually diagnosed with a rare liver disease. He resumed racing before retiring in November of that year.

Other horses that were scratched this week were Practical Move and Skinner, both because of fever, and Continuar.

Pletcher, a two-time Derby winner, will still saddle Tapit Trice and Kingsbarns.

It's not the first time the favorite has been scratched.

In 2019, Omaha Beach missed the race because of an entrapped epiglottis, which affected his breathing. He had surgery and went on to race later that year.

In 2009, I Want Revenge was scratched on Derby day after a soft tissue injury to his left front ankle was discovered that morning.

Churchill Downs said specific wagers placed before the scratch will revert to the post-time favorite. Other wagers will receive consolation payouts. All other advance wagers on Forte, except for the Derby future wager, will be refunded.

Post time for the Derby is shortly before 7 p.m. EDT.

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

W.Va. politicians keep fighting over 2020; voters, not so much

By LEAH WILLINGHAM Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — Some Republican officeholders in West Virginia are already revving up campaigns for governor in 2024. But first, they have to sort out what happened in 2020.

Years after Democrat Joe Biden was declared the White House winner, Secretary of State Mac Warner and Attorney General Patrick Morrisey say they remain concerned his victory was not legitimate. They persist in those views despite repeated investigations, audits and court cases concluding there was no evidence of widespread voter fraud or improper counting that could have changed the results in Donald Trump's favor.

Warner, who runs elections in West Virginia, toed the line for more than two years before going on a talk show this week to say he can "now firmly say" he believes the election was stolen.

"That election was thrown, it was stolen, and we should not rest easy," he said on Talk Radio WRNR in

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the state's Eastern Panhandle.

Asserting that the 2020 presidential race was stolen has been a staple for some Republicans. Trump himself has fanned those accusations, though he has recently shifted his complaints somewhat from specific disputes about voting procedures in swing states. He has embraced broader claims that tech companies, the media and federal intelligence officials colluded to cover up incriminating information found on the laptop of Biden's son Hunter.

It's these allegations Warner says he finds credible, pushing past the denials by social media executives and federal law enforcement that they were pressured by Democrats to suppress the story. In an interview this past week, Warner called the alleged actions "treasonous" and said they need to be examined more deeply before the next election.

But even in West Virginia, where Trump twice carried every county, some voters see recurring concerns about 2020 as nothing more than a GOP check-off.

"It doesn't matter what Republican is going to be in the field, they're all going to say that 2020 was fake," said Trevor Southerly, a 20-year-old community college student from Moorefield. "It's a political move, and they have to make the move or they're going to lose."

Southerly said what draws him to Morrissey is his support for school choice programs and expanding West Virginia's energy production workforce.

The Republican Party, Southerly said, has become too focused on "national issues" and talking points instead of what matters to people at the local level — especially in West Virginia, which consistently ranks among the highest in the nation for poverty and overdose death rates and among the lowest for life expectancy and educational attainment.

He thinks Morrissey has better plans to address those issues.

Serving as attorney general since 2013 has given Morrissey an opportunity to promote his self-described role as the state's "conservative fighter." He has defended laws passed by the Republican-controlled Legislature on school choice, transgender participation in sports and abortion.

Before that, he joined a lawsuit to overturn the 2020 election that was dismissed by the conservative-dominated U.S. Supreme Court.

In an interview this past week, Morrissey repeated past claims about "significant irregularities" in the 2020 election. He refused to say definitively whether he believes Biden's victory was fraudulent.

"He's serving as the president of the United States. We know that that's what's going on right now," Morrissey said.

After West Virginia was the last in the nation to certify a presidential winner in 2020, Army veteran Warner said he supported the state's involvement in the legal effort to challenge the results.

Warner also made an appearance at a "March for Trump" rally in Charleston after the election, where he appeared to be holding up a "Stop the Steal" sign.

Warner was one of the first GOP election officials to opt to withdraw from the Electronic Registration Information Center, a nonpartisan group with a record of combating voter fraud. Trump has characterized it as a "terrible" system that "pumps the rolls" for Democrats and does nothing to clean them up.

But Warner never said publicly before this week that he believes the election was stolen, saying that view has crystallized in his mind as new information has come out.

But even voters who agree say other issues matter more.

Ken Drum, who leads the GOP in Harrison County, said he doesn't believe Biden won the race legitimately, but his top concern is finding a candidate who will keep almost all abortions illegal in the state and protect gun rights. For him, that's Morrissey.

Dee Truman, a welder's helper from Roane County, said she trusts Warner because his family has lived in West Virginia for six generations and he understands why preserving coal and getting the state's gas pipelines going again are important to workers like her.

She said she has concerns about election security nationally after 2020, but she's been impressed by Warner's work to remove people from the voting rolls who he said weren't eligible to vote. His office says that

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since 2017, it has identified 300,000 people, in a state of 1.8 million, no longer able to vote because they moved, died or were convicted of a felony. During Warner's tenure, 260,000 new voters have registered.

Truman said those efforts make her feel like West Virginia is "probably one of the safest" states when it comes to election security.

Lori and Tim Smith are both registered independents and run a Marshall County business helping people make homes and business accessible for people with disabilities. Lori Smith, 54, said changes Warner made as secretary of state have saved them hours of paperwork.

Warner also started a pilot project that allowed military and overseas citizens to use a mobile voting application. That mattered to Tim Smith, an Army veteran, who had experienced challenges voting when he was deployed.

"He is wanting people to legitimately, rightfully vote and eliminate any type of cheating, quite honestly," Lori Smith said. "I don't feel that there's anything wrong with wanting to make a system more efficient and more fair."

The Associated Press receives support from several private foundations to enhance its explanatory coverage of elections and democracy. See more about AP's democracy initiative here. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

How Mexico City's mural movement transformed walls into art

By MARÍA TERESA HERNÁNDEZ Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Across the main entrance of a former Jesuit college in the heart of Mexico City, a bright-colored mural depicting Our Lady of Guadalupe represents both the Indigenous religiosity and the Christianity that shaped the culture of post-colonial Mexico.

The mural was created by Mexican artist Fermín Revueltas between 1922 and 1923, when the walls of Antigua Colegio de San Ildefonso became the canvases for the country's emerging muralist movement.

To honor the art of Revueltas, Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco, who among others led the artistic movement a century ago, the baroque building that currently serves as a museum hosts an exhibition that reflects on the significance of their monumental art.

The exhibit, which is regularly updated, recently welcomed a contemporary mural created by Mexican craftsmen who were inspired by the old masters and will run through June 12. That mural, called "La Muerte de las Culturas" ("The Death of Cultures"), depicts how Mexicans of African descent struggled for freedom and equality, and how the community's identity was forged from that.

Jonatan Chávez, historian of San Ildefonso, said that muralism arose in a highly politicized context.

Many of the wall paintings criticize political leaders, inequality or the Catholic Church because the young muralists were influenced by revolutionary nationalism and academic scholarship that transformed their ideas about the Indigenous population.

Some artists expressed their social and political views by painting divine figures or religious references.

A 1924 fresco that José Clemente Orozco titled "La Alcancía" ("The Piggy Bank") shows two slender hands depositing coins into a box that is open at the bottom and drops the money into another hand that looks more powerful and represents the Catholic Church.

For a few other muralists – such as Revueltas and Fernando Leal – the goal was to find new ways to portray what the military and spiritual conquest led by the Spaniards meant.

"San Ildefonso has that reminiscence where the religious is present because it is part of the cultural identity of the people," Chávez said.

It is no coincidence that muralism was born in this place. Hundreds of years before 1923, when the earliest murals were finished, this was the place where the Jesuits led their educational work.

The Jesuits arrived in the capital half a century after the Spanish conquest, in 1572, and a few years later they founded San Ildefonso, a school for seminarians and missionaries. Their objective was to educate the descendants of Spaniards – the "criollo" – who were born in the colony, Chávez said.

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Before they were expelled from the Spanish Empire in 1767, the Jesuits travelled extensively. According to Chávez, these priests visited remote towns and sought to understand the worldview of the “criollo” people, whose Indigenous spiritual practices intertwined with new Christian customs and beliefs.

“They went beyond these branches of spiritual identity or the diffusion of faith,” Chávez said.

This dynamic allowed the Jesuits to teach the “criollo” arts and crafts, but it also strengthened the concept of “criollo” identity throughout the territory, a theme that muralists portrayed in the 20th century.

“Alegoría de la Virgen de Guadalupe” (“Allegory of the Virgin of Guadalupe”) is an example. In the mural created by Revueltas, the Catholic image of Virgin Mary is in the top center and her children – men and women with different skin tones – pray around her.

The painting is not meant to inspire devotion, Chávez said, but to portray how Our Lady of Guadalupe unifies people of different races and origins.

A few steps away, two murals are in dialogue with each other and share a common theme.

On the right side of the main stairs of San Ildefonso, a piece by Jean Charlot illustrates the massacre that the Spaniards led in the most sacred site of the Aztec empire – Templo Mayor – in 1521. On the opposite wall, Leal portrays what came after the conquest and the imported Christianity of the Spanish: religious festivities where sacred and profane symbols blend.

In a recent article published in a digital magazine from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, art historians Rita Eder and Renato González explain that these murals praise the country’s ancient cultures while strongly rejecting the violence brought by the Spanish conquest.

Artists like Charlot, the article says, “identify the Conquest as the most significant process in the history of Mexico, and its characterization as a struggle between civilization and barbarism (the latter, of course, represented by the armored attackers).”

According to Chávez, these murals will never lose relevance because they are a way to understand how history triggers a constant redefinition of spaces.

“Our past is important because it speaks of our present,” he said. “These murals tell a lot about who we are and what we are made of.”

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New Twitter rules expose election offices to spoof accounts

By ALI SWENSON Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Tracking down accurate information about Philadelphia’s elections on Twitter used to be easy. The account for the city commissioners who run elections, @phillyvotes, was the only one carrying a blue check mark, a sign of authenticity.

But ever since the social media platform overhauled its verification service last month, the check mark has disappeared. That’s made it harder to distinguish @phillyvotes from a list of random accounts not run by the elections office but with very similar names.

The election commission applied weeks ago for a gray check mark — Twitter’s new symbol to help users identify official government accounts — but has yet to hear back from the Twitter, commission spokesman Nick Custodio said. It’s unclear whether @phillyvotes is an eligible government account under Twitter’s new rules.

That’s troubling, Custodio said, because Pennsylvania has a primary election May 16 and the commission uses its account to share important information with voters in real time. If the account remains unverified, it will be easier to impersonate — and harder for voters to trust — heading into Election Day.

Impostor accounts on social media are among many concerns election security experts have heading into next year’s presidential election. Experts have warned that foreign adversaries or others may try to influence the election, either through online disinformation campaigns or by hacking into election infrastructure.

Election administrators across the country have struggled to figure out the best way to respond after

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Twitter owner Elon Musk threw the platform's verification service into disarray, given that Twitter has been among their most effective tools for communicating with the public.

Some are taking other steps allowed by Twitter, such as buying check marks for their profiles or applying for a special label reserved for government entities, but success has been mixed. Election and security experts say the inconsistency of Twitter's new verification system is a misinformation disaster waiting to happen.

"The lack of clear, at-a-glance verification on Twitter is a ticking time bomb for disinformation," said Rachel Tobac, CEO of the cybersecurity company SocialProof Security. "That will confuse users – especially on important days like election days."

The blue check marks that Twitter once doled out to notable celebrities, public figures, government entities and journalists began disappearing from the platform in April. To replace them, Musk told users that anyone could pay \$8 a month for an individual blue check mark or \$1,000 a month for a gold check mark as a "verified organization."

The policy change quickly opened the door for pranksters to pose convincingly as celebrities, politicians and government entities, which could no longer be identified as authentic. While some impostor accounts were clear jokes, others created confusion.

Fake accounts posing as Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot, the city's Department of Transportation and the Illinois Department of Transportation falsely claimed the city was closing one of its main thoroughfares to private traffic. The fake accounts used the same photos, biographical text and home page links as the real ones. Their posts amassed hundreds of thousands of views before being taken down.

Twitter's new policy invites government agencies and certain affiliated organizations to apply to be labeled as official with a gray check. But at the state and local level, qualifying agencies are limited to "main executive office accounts and main agency accounts overseeing crisis response, public safety, law enforcement, and regulatory issues," the policy says.

The rules do not mention agencies that run elections. So while the main Philadelphia city government account quickly received its gray check mark last month, the local election commission has not heard back.

Election offices in four of the country's five most populous counties — Cook County in Illinois, Harris County in Texas, Maricopa County in Arizona and San Diego County — remain unverified, a Twitter search shows. Maricopa, which includes Phoenix, has been targeted repeatedly by election conspiracy theorists as the most populous and consequential county in one of the most closely divided political battleground states.

Some counties contacted by The Associated Press said they have minimal concerns about impersonation or plan to apply for a gray check later, but others said they already have applied and have not heard back from Twitter.

Even some state election offices are waiting for government labels. Among them is the office of Maine Secretary of State Shenna Bellows.

In an April 24 email to Bellows' communications director reviewed by The Associated Press, a Twitter representative wrote that there was "nothing to do as we continue to manually process applications from around the world." The representative added in a later email that Twitter stands "ready to swiftly enforce any impersonation, so please don't hesitate to flag any problematic accounts."

An email sent to Twitter's press office and a company safety officer requesting comment was answered only with an auto-reply of a poop emoji.

"Our job is to reinforce public confidence," Bellows told the AP. "Even a minor setback, like no longer being able to ensure that our information on Twitter is verified, contributes to an environment that is less predictable and less safe."

Some government accounts, including the one representing Pennsylvania's second-largest county, have purchased blue checks because they were told it was required to continue advertising on the platform.

Allegheny County posts ads for elections and jobs on Twitter, so the blue check mark "was necessary," said Amie Downs, the county's communications director.

When anyone can buy verification and when government accounts are not consistently labeled, the check

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mark loses its meaning, Colorado Secretary of State Jena Griswold said.

Griswold's office received a gray check mark to maintain trust with voters, but she told the AP she would not buy verification for her personal Twitter account because "it doesn't carry the same weight" it once did.

Custodio, at the Philadelphia elections commission, said his office would not buy verification either, even if it gets denied a gray check.

"The blue or gold check mark just verifies you as a paid subscriber and does not verify identity," he said.

Experts and advocates tracking election discourse on social media say Twitter's changes do not just incentivize bad actors to run disinformation campaigns — they also make it harder for well-meaning users to know what's safe to share.

"Because Twitter is dropping the ball on verification, the burden will fall on voters to double check that the information they are consuming and sharing is legitimate," said Jill Greene, voting and elections manager for Common Cause Pennsylvania.

That dampens an aspect of Twitter that until now had been seen as one of its strengths — allowing community members to rally together to elevate authoritative information, said Mike Caulfield, a research scientist at the University of Washington's Center for an Informed Public.

"The first rule of a good online community user interface is to 'help the helpers.' This is the opposite of that," Caulfield said. "It takes a community of people who want to help boost good information, and robs them of the tools to make fast, accurate decisions."

_____ The Associated Press receives support from several private foundations to enhance its explanatory coverage of elections and democracy. See more about AP's democracy initiative here. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Today in History: May 7, Germany's surrender

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, May 7, the 127th day of 2023. There are 238 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 7, 1945, Germany signed an unconditional surrender at Allied headquarters in Rheims (rams), France, ending its role in World War II.

On this date:

In 1889, the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore opened its doors.

In 1915, a German U-boat torpedoed and sank the British liner RMS Lusitania off the southern coast of Ireland, killing 1,198 people, including 128 Americans, out of the nearly 2,000 on board.

In 1928, the minimum voting age for British women was lowered from 30 to 21 — the same age as men.

In 1939, Germany and Italy announced a military and political alliance known as the Rome-Berlin Axis.

In 1941, Glenn Miller and His Orchestra recorded "Chattanooga Choo Choo" for RCA Victor.

In 1954, the 55-day Battle of Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam ended with Vietnamese insurgents overrunning French forces.

In 1963, the United States launched the Telstar 2 communications satellite.

In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford formally declared an end to the "Vietnam era."

In Ho Chi Minh City — formerly Saigon — the Viet Cong celebrated its takeover.

In 1977, Seattle Slew won the Kentucky Derby, the first of his Triple Crown victories.

In 2010, a BP-chartered vessel lowered a 100-ton concrete-and-steel vault onto the ruptured Deepwater Horizon well in an unprecedented, and ultimately unsuccessful, attempt to stop most of the gushing crude fouling the sea.

In 2019, two students opened fire inside a charter school in a Denver suburb not far from Columbine High School, killing a fellow student, 18-year-old Kendrick Castillo, who authorities said had charged at the shooters to protect classmates. (Both attackers would be sentenced to life in prison; one who was 16 at the time of the shooting could be eligible for parole after about 20 years.)

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In 2020, Georgia authorities arrested a white father and son and charged them with murder in the February shooting death of Ahmaud Arbery, a Black man they had pursued in a truck after spotting him running in their neighborhood near the port city of Brunswick. (The two men and a third white man would be convicted of murder in state court, and hate crimes in federal court.)

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama and South Korea's new leader, Park Geun-hye (goon-hay), met at the White House, where they projected a united front as they warned North Korea against further nuclear provocations. Twenty-four people were killed by a gas tanker-truck explosion on the outskirts of Mexico City. The Dow Jones industrial average closed above 15,000 for the first time, ending the day at 15,056.20, up 87.31 points. Movie special effects wizard Ray Harryhausen, 92, died in London.

Five years ago: First lady Melania Trump unveiled what she called the "Be Best" public awareness campaign to help children, focusing on childhood well-being, social media use and opioid abuse. Retired Lt. Col. Oliver North, the Marine at the center of the Iran-Contra affair in the Reagan administration, was named president of the National Rifle Association. New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman announced that he would be resigning from office after he was accused of physical violence by women with whom he had been involved; Schneiderman had been a high-profile advocate for women's issues.

One year ago: Russian forces fired cruise missiles at the southern Ukrainian city of Odesa and bombarded a steel mill in Mariupol housing Ukrainian civilians and fighters, hoping to complete their conquest of the port city in time for Victory Day celebrations. Ukraine announced that all women, children and elderly had been evacuated from the steel plant, a key Russian war objective that has long been under siege. Relatives of the missing in Cuba's capital desperately searched for victims of an explosion at one of Havana's most luxurious hotels that killed more than 40 people. Rich Strike, an 80-1 long shot, won the Kentucky Derby in the second biggest upset in the 148-year history of America's best-known horse race.

Today's Birthdays: R&B singer Thelma Houston is 80. Actor Robin Strasser is 78. Singer-songwriter Bill Danoff is 77. Rock musician Bill Kreutzmann (Grateful Dead) is 77. Former Utah Gov. Gary Herbert is 76. Rock musician Prairie Prince is 73. Movie writer-director Amy Heckerling is 71. Actor Michael E. Knight is 64. Rock musician Phil Campbell (Motorhead) is 62. Rock singer-musician Chris O'Connor (Primitive Radio Gods) is 58. Actor Traci Lords is 55. Actor Morocco Omari is 53. Singer Eagle-Eye Cherry is 52. Actor Breckin Meyer is 49. Rock musician Matt Helders (Arctic Monkeys) is 37. Actor-comedian Aidy Bryant is 36. Actor Taylor Abrahamse is 32. Actor Alexander Ludwig is 31. Actor Dylan Gelula is 29.